SEVENTEENTH CENTURY RITUAL

Sir,—I have before me a pamphlet of four pages, entitled "A Letter from a Dissenter to the Divines of the Church of England, In Order to a Union." At the end it is stated to have been "printed" and "to be sold by Randal Taylor, near Stationers' Hall, MDCXXXVII." On page 2 I find the following:

"You know what has hinder'd us hitherto from joyning with your Church: We have always suspected you for Papists in Masquerade; The many Ceremonies you have retain'd, your Crosses, and Altars, and Tapers, and Surplices, and Bowings; Your Confessions and Absolutions, and Mass-Forms of Prayer, &c., have oblig'd us to these Thoughts; and that tho' you pretend to have left Babylon, yet by the Rags and Livery you have brought along with you, we could not but still suspect you of her Retinue."

Have we not here evidence that in the year 1687, "tapers" were "retained and in use" in the Church of England?

W. F. CLEMENTS.
Kentish Town, Festival of St. Nicolas, 1875.
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Natchez 1768

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HIERASPISTES:

A

DEFENCE by way of APOLOGY FOR THE

Ministry and Ministers

OF THE

CHURCH of ENGLAND:

HUMBLY PRESENTED

To the Consciences of all those that
excell in VIRTUE.

By JOHN GAUDENT, D.D.,

and MINISTER of that Church

at BOCKING in ESSEX.

Mat. 28.19. Goe ye therefore, and teach all Nations, baptizing them, &c.

20. And loe, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world.

Tit. 1.5. That thou shouldst ordain Presbyters in every City, as I had appointed thee.

Heb. 13.17. They watch for your souls, as they that must give an account, &c.

Presbyteris qui sunt in Ecclesia obaudire oportet, qui sucessionem habent ab Apostolis, et cum sucessione Charismata veritatis certum acceperunt secum accipere, secundum Parvis beneplacitum; Qui vero a principali absunt sucessionis, quoque loco colliguntur, suspectos habere oportet, vel haereticos, vel sententiae, vel scindentes et elatos, vel sibi placentes; Omnes bi decidunt a veritate, Sophista & verborum magis esse volentes, quam discipuli veritatis. Irenæ. l. 3. c. 40. & l. 4. c. 43.

Printed for Andrew Crooke, and are to be sold at the

Green Dragon in St. Pauls-Church-yard, 1653.
To the Reader.

The ensuing Apologetick defence of the Ministry and Ministers of the Church of England, can hardly expect more Readers than severe Censurers; of whom some will be wearied with the length, others offended with the freedom: some despisers of the manner, others contradieters of the matter: In sum, it looks for not many, or any friends; but such as are humble, judicious, and impartial; And not a few enemies, of those that are proud, ignorant and biased by secular interests. So prevalent are our enemies grown even in matters of Religion, that few can bear, either their diseases, or their remedies. Albeit the age extreamly wants, yet it can hardly endure a plain and faithful full tyle; though it keeps the medium between severity and flattery, bitterness and dulness, morose antiquity and petulant novelty. It is some mens Religion to have none settled by education or profession; Others cavill at all that hath been taught or established: Many esteem their Levity in opinions, and inconstancy in profession to be a kind of Empire and Sovereignty in Religion; Never thinking themselves to be, what they should be, till they are, what they lift: judging that Liberty, which is Lawlesness, and that freedome, which is without fear of God, or reverence of man: calling that piety with peace, which is the dissolving and desolating of all publique society, order, unity, and polity in Churches; crying up their Later fragments, and broken meats, being all those loaves and fishes, with which Christ hath for so many
To the Reader.

many hundred of years fed his Church and people in all the
world.

Others of deeper reaches taking the advantage of such pop-
lar easiness and credulity, which is less separable from
the vulgar, than shadows are from grosse bodies, study to
vibrate and shift the extern forms and models of Religion,
until the sacred and eternall interests of Gods glory, and mans
salvation are drawn to into, or forced to comply with
temporary desigues, and secular policies; where Christ must
be made to serve Belial; God to bow down to Mammon; the
Ark must become captive to Dagon; piety turn page to avar-
rice; and Religion be aloneely entertained as a lackey for Amb-
ition; Where there are such abasings, distortings and de-
formings of the beauty and restitude of Christian Religion,
flowing the wine of Primitive verity, simplicity, and charity,
with the vinegar of worldly jealouse, craft and cruelty) what
can be expected, as to anything written, in behalf of Reli-
gion, and its holy Institutions, with a plain, free, and upright
genius, but aloneely such fate and doome, as the severall humors,
parties, prejudices, and worldly interests of men will afford:
which being so divided, and thwarting each other,
it will be hard to please any one, without displeasing
many.

The Author therefore (who writes as addicted to no faction;)
nor personally injured, or obliged by any novel parties, but stu-
dying only to discharge a good conscience, as to men, so chiefly
toward God, (the assistance of whose Heroick spirit, and free
grace he humbly begs through all this work) neither seeks,
nor hopes to please any men, whose passionate adherence
to any sifications either in civill or religious concernments, less
eclines them to that calm, judicious, and charitable temper,
which is Scripturall, Catholick, and truly Christian; This he
aloneely studies, this he preacheth, for this he prays, this he
commends, this he admires: Not doting upon any rust or
dross, which ancient and venerable Episcopacy might in many
hundred of years easily contract, and from which it may as
easily be cleared, if men impartially sought the things of
To the Reader.

Jesus Christ, and his Churches prosperity, without gratifying any passion in themselves or others. Nor yet doth the Author any whit admire those rigid Reformations, which some rash, envious, or ambitious Presbyters drive on, who know not how to shave their Fathers beards without cutting their throats; nor to pair their nailes without cropping off their hands. They are unskilfull Chymists, who cannot refine from droffe without consuming what is precious: And they are pitifull Empiricks, who cannot purge without casting into bloody Fluxes. Nor in the last place doth this Apologist so far temporise, as in the least kind to magnifie the violent breakings, and hotter melttings of any bolder Independents; who make Religion and Reformation run to any new moulds, which they fancy, to separating, to seeking, to shaking, to nothing; that owns any Ordinance, order, publick establishment; Christian communion, or holy profession; being wholly resolved into these two principles; the pleasing of themselves, and the confounding of others.

Amidst these sad distractions and various confidences of men in their opinions, and undertakings, there is no wise man, but discerns the pulse of mans Ambition equally beating in spirits Monarchicall, Aristocraticall, and Democraticall: as in covet policies, so also in religious administrations; some are for primacy and priority, others for paucity and parity, a third sort for popularity and vulgarity: where as indeed the best constitution in any government, is rather from the harmonious temperament and proportionate mixture of all three, than from the predominance of any one, so as to oppresse the other two. Men of eminent parts are prone to affect to govern alone, without any flatness or allay from inferiours: Men of moderate abilities are content to goe in a joint flock, mutually supplying those defects, to which singly they are conscious: Men of low and mean endowments are for bundles, one and all; where no one man is so much confident of himself, as indeed he is envious at all others, and impatient to see anything done without him: Whereas in true wisdom, the eminency of the first, the mediocrity of the second,
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and the meanness yet multitudinousness of the third, should be fairly modelled and composed, as the head, hands, and other members of the body are, to the common welfare. And certainly they did of old (in the best times and tempers of Christians) all meet in a most happy harmony, Church-order, and constitution; no lesse than the humours, bloud, and spirits doe in healthy and vigorous bodies: All experience tells us that the disorder of any one of them, causeth sickness, weakness, or dissolution of Christian charity, society, and sweet communion, as to their extern polity and profession of Religion.

Which sad effects, or symptoms at least of them in this Church, this Author with grief and shame beholding, hath endeavoured with the greatest serenity and expediteness of soul (before he leaves this Bacha and Aceldama, this valley of tears, contention, and confusion) to ascend himself, and lead others, as much in him lies, to the height, and top of that Primitive verity, unity and charity, which made Christians so much admired, and venerated, even when they were most cruelly persecuted. From which free and un-engaged prospect, both he and they, may with a clear and full view behold the later and worser changes in extern matters of Religion; wherein various opinions, and different designes of Christians have either strayed from, or quite crossed the great road of pious and plain hearted Antiquity, which no doubt best knew, beyond all the censorious Criticks, and factious Novelists of after times, what was the minde of the blessed Apostles, of the Primitive Martyrs and Confessors: who most exactly followed those methods, which the Apostolical wisdome and piety had prescribed to those Churches they planted, watered and preserved, chiefly aiming at the Catholick good, and common benefit of all Churches.

From which, private fancies, aims and interests, afterward varying, both in opinion and practice, occasioned those many uncomfortable schisms, and uncharitable factions, which (in all times, and now as much as ever) so divide the unity, destroy the charity, and deform the beauty of Christian Religion;
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That many, if not most Christians, do not only read, and hear; write, and dispute; pray, and preach; but they believe, and repent; love, or hate; damn, or save; communicate with, or excommunicate one another, most-what, out of their natural constitutions, as they are of more calm and choleric tempers, or out of those prejudices and prepossessions, which custom and education have formed in them; or from adherence to parties and mutual agitations, whereby they hope to drive on some worldly and secular concerns; rather than from true and impartial principles of right reason, Scriptural precept, and Ecclesiastical practice; which threefold cord, twisted into one, is not easily broken: And which, beyond all disputes, affords, both in doctrine and discipline, in opinion and practise, as to inward piety, and outward policy, the surest measures of Religion, and bounds of conscience, which are then most pure and unblameable, when they look directly to those great designes and ends of every wise man and good Christian, the glory of God, the honour of Christ, the peace of the Church, and Souls eternal welfare; without any sinister squintings to secular ends, or warpings to worldly designes, which are the moths of Religion, the pests of society, the overlayings of charity, and the Incubuses of Conscience; easily seising upon Christians of weak judgements, and strong passions, for which we need not goe far to see many and unhappy instances.

For, what seriousness and well advis’d Christian sees not, how vehement drawings and impulses in matters of Religion are made upon men by weak, and at first scarce perceptible, by asse of opinions, and hopes of advantages: How want of solidity or sincerity is the greatest motion of violent affections in most men: How, the leffe they weigh those things, they call Religion and Reformation, the more eagerly they pursue and extoll them: (The most wise and gracious men being always the most grave and calm, the most serious and constant) Vulgar devotion and heats, like weak fires, and dubious flames, are usually kindled by light fennel, and fomented with fear materials; Blazing, like Comets, the more prodigiously, by
by how much they have more of grosse and earthly vapours.

Hence, not only the glory of outward successes, and worldly prosperities, attending the number, policy, or prevalency of any faction, makes many Christians, (ere they are aware of it) turn Turkes, and secretly subscribe to Mahometanism, (which for many centuries hath outvived Christianity in point of victorious progress, military advantages, and latitude of Empire) The current of worldly events, like quick-tides, easily and undiscernibly carrying many Christians from that course of pious strictness, and conscientious exactness in truth, justice, and charity, which they ought always to steer without any variation, according to the clear and fixed Word of God in Scripture; and not according to his dark permissions, or unsearchable workings in providence; which are always just and to be admired, as from the divine wisdom and justice; but not always to be approved or imitated, as from mans wickedness and folly; which like poysenous drugs are in themselves deadly and to be abhorred: however the skill of the great and good Physician, God, knows how to attemper and apply them as Physick and Theriacals, to purge, or punish; to cure, or correct the distempers of his Church and people.

Nor is it this temptation onely of events, (in which is a strong delusion, able, if possible, to deceive the very elect; which none but seditious judgements, and exact consciences can resist;) But even the smallest differences, the most easie and triviall considerations, which are but as the dust of the balance in Reason or Religion, in piety or prudence, these, like motes, falling into some mens eyes, presently appeare as mountaines; and so possesse their sight, that they will owne nothing for Religion in any men, or any Church, which appears not just after that colour, figure and notion, which they are taken withall.

How many peoples Religion consists much in the very extern modes of dressing themselves, or others, in the fashion of their own or others clothes, for their plainness, or costliness; for
for their novelty, or Antiquity: yea in the length, or shortness, in the laying out, or hiding of their hair: Hence their censures, scandals, or approbations of others; their confidences, and ostentations of themselves, even as to piety, purity, and holiness; (which are indeed seldom seen in russia and dissolute fashions: yet, often in those proportions of elegance and decency, as to the outward garb, and fashions, which some mens rusticity, severity, or slovenliness cannot bear:) Because they do not understand, that, in things of this kind, not Scripture, but Nature gives rules to the Religion of them; which is their usefulness and their comeliness, 1 Cor. ii. 3, 14. And this, not by any moral innate principles, but by those (mores gentium) customs of Countries, and dictates of social nature, which not by written Lawes, but by tacit consent and use doe for the most part prescribe what is agreeable to humanity, modesty, and civility; which customary measures and civill rules of ornament and outward fashions in any country, are not scrupulously to be quarrelled at; nor cynically neglected, nor morosely retained; but may with freedom, and ingenuity be used, and altered, according to the genius of all things, of extern mode and fashion, as cloathing, dressing, building, planting, fortifying, speaking, &c. which depend much upon the fancies of men; and so are mutable, without any sin, or immorality, as all things are, within the compass of mortality.

How many mens Religion lies in their admiration of some mens persons, gifts, piety, and supposed zeal, in their being of his sect, way, body, fraternity, and confederacy? when yet many times they have but an Idol for their God, though they glory to have a Levite to be their Priest: Able men may have great infirmities; and learned men grosse errors; foul diseases oft attend fair faces: Doting sectaries will worship the pudenda of their Priests, and magnifie what is most dishonest, and uncomely in their ringleaders. Yea, many silly souls we see are everywhere much taken with other mens ignorance, set off meerly with impudence, where the want of
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Of all true worth for ability and authority is attended with the want of all shame and modesty; factional spirits in poor people makes them content to have their religion hatchet under the wing and feathers of any foolish and unclean bird.

In how many Christians is their religion blown up, (as the paper kites of boyes) meerly with their own breath, or other mens applauds; setting off all that is done in their way with the epithites of rare, precious, holy, gracious, spiritual, sweet, divine, Saint-like, &c. when yet wise men, that weigh their boastings, evidently finde, much of these mens religion to be deformed with mimick affections of words and phrases, with studied tones, scurrilous expressions, antick gestures, and ridiculous behaviours: Much in them is fulsome by the length, lowdnesse, tumultuation, unpreparednesse and confusednesse even of those duties, which they count religious, holy, and spiritual: which are so far scandalous, and suspected to sober Christians, as they finde them not onely full of faction, but also destitute of that common sense, order, comeliness, gravity, discretion, reason and judgement, which are to be found in others; from whom they separate not out of scruple so much as scorn; not out of conscience, but pride and arrogancy; when yet they bring forth, after all their swelling and tympanies, nothing comparable to what others in an orderly way have done, either for the soul and essence of Religion, which is truth and charity; or for the body and ornament of it, so far as it appears to others in order and decency.

Many have little that they can fancy, or call Religion in them, but onely a fierceness for that side, to which they take, a moroseness, censoriousness, and supercilious indifference towards all, but those whom they count theirs. Vehemently opposing, what ever Adversary they undertake; abhorring all they doe, or hold in piety or prudence; branding all they like not with the mark of Antichrist; and crying downe what ever by any Christians is diversely observed in the fashion of their Religion: Hence many of the lowest form of Christians, place much of their Religion, in innovating Church.
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Church government, contending for discipline; disputing against all Liturgies: in scuffling with ceremonies; in beating the air, and fighting with the shadows of Religion; the measure of all which, as to piety, prudence and conscience, stands in their relation to the main end, God's glory, the Churches peace, and the salvation of souls, which, wherever they are with truth, holiness, order, and charity carried on in any Church, Christians need no more scruple the extern form and manner, wherein they are decently set forth; than they need quarrell at the room, table, or dish, where wholesome meat is handsomely presented to them; whether in a plainer or more costly way.

Others of more airy and elevated fancies, are altogether in Millenary dreams, religious fantasies, Apocalyptic raptures, Prophetick accomplishments; not caring much how they break any moral precept of Law or Gospel, if they think, thereby they may help to fulfill a Prophecy, which every opinion is prone to imagine strongly portendeth the advancement of his opinion, party, and way in Religion; untill they come to such a sovereignty, as may be able to govern and oppresse others; their Mopsicall humors being never satisfied, but in fancying themselves as Kings, and reigning with Christ; Not in the inward power of his grace and spirit (which is a Christians commendable ambition) joined with an holy and humble subjection to God and man; which makes them conquerours over the lusts in themselves, and their love of the world; whence flows the greatest peace both to Churches and States: but in that extern worldly power and policy which enables them to rule others, after the same bloody arts and cruel methods of government, which Zimri, or Herod, or Alexander, or Cesar exercised; and not the Lord Jesus Christ, who was meek and lowly, as one that served and obeyed. And herein not only the weak, illiterate and fanatick vulgar are oft observed to act mad and ridiculous pranks in Religion; but even men of some learning and seeming piety, oft lose themselves in their wild, and melancholy rovings; which make all Pro-

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Prophecies found to their tune, and to be for their party and opinion; though never so novell, small and inconsiderable: Nothing is more easily abused even by easie wits, than Prophetick emblemes, and allusions, which like soft waxe are capable of severall shapes and figurations, by which, no doubt, the Spirit of God aimed at the general aspect and grand proportions of the Catholick Church in its visible profession and outward estate: for whose use all Scripture is written, and to whose elevation, or depression, either in the Orthodoxie, or corruption of doctrine, in its integrity, or schisms; in its peace, or persecution, prophecies are generally calculated; and in no sort to those lesser occasions, obscure events, or alterations, incident to particular persons, countries, or Churches. It is hard to discerne the Star of Prophecy so over any one man, or place, or time, as that was over the house where Christ was in Bethlehem; Hence many meteors, falling Stars, and fatuous fires, are frequently discovered in the writings of fancifull and factious men; as if all they did, or desired, or approved, were evidently foretold and commended in the Revelation; In whose Visions one sees this Princeps; another sees that learned man; a third, that State or Kingdome; a fourth, that Commander and Conqueror, &c. according as men lift to fancy themselves, or flatter others; whose sparks are far extinct, and their glory presently vanisheth, as no way proportionable to that fixed light and ample glory, which the spirit of prophecy holds forth, chiefly to the Christian world, in opposition to Heathens, Jews, or Antichrists. After the way of these Prophetick fancies, and passionate methods of some mens misinterpreting, and misapplying Prophecies; great Religion, we see, hath been placed by small minde, in pulling down and extirpating the ancient order and government of Episcopacy, (which was in all Churches, as here in England, from the first plantation of Christianity;) Also in setting up the supremacy of an headlesse Eldership and Presbytery; or in dashing both of them into sheards, and small pieces by the little stone of In-dependency;
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dependency: How doe some glory in their dividing and destroying the ancient goodly frames of Churches, that they may new model them to their popular way of calling, chusing, and ordaining of Ministers: Many boast much in their forsaking the calling and communion of all former Ministers and religious assemblies; in their despising and demolishing the very places of publice meeting to serve God, (which, not conscience of any divine particular precept, but common reason and civility have presented Christian Religion withall, for its honour and its professors convenience.)

Some, here with us in England, (a place whose Genius much disposeth people to prophecies, novelties, and varieties) are (as Pygmalion with his Image) so inamoured with their (Corpusculo's) the little new bodies of their gathered Churches, that they deny any Nationall Church in any larger associating of Christians, by harmonies of confession, and peaceable subordinations; yea, and many will allow no Catholick Church; nor any religious sense to that article of our Creed, denying any true Church at all to be now in the world. Some place all Church power in paucities, in parities, in popular levellings, and Independencies; others contemn all those broken bodies, as schismatical slips, having nothing in them of that goodly beauty, stature, strength, and integrity, to which the Church of Christ was wont to grow, and wherein it flourished and continued conspicuous so many hundred of years; before these novelties were broached or brewed, either in England, or any other countrey.

The height of some mens Religion and Reformation is, to have neither Bishops, nor Ministers, of the ancient authority, succession, and ordination; Others refuse these also of the new Presbyterian stamp; (which is not much older here in England, than the figure and superscription of the last coin) A third will have no Minister, but such as the common people shall try, chuse, consecrate, and judge. Some will have no Minister at all, by office, or divine mission: others

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will have any man a Minister or Prophet that lifts to make, or call himself one. In like manner some will allow Baptism to no Infants; others to none but such, whose parents they judge to be Saints; a third baptize the children of all that profess they believe the truth of the Gospell; a fourth sort deny the use of any water Baptism at all; By a Cata baptistical boldnartie, or blindness, magisterially contradicting, and soppishly disputing, against the express letter of the Scripture; against the command of Jesus Christ; against the practice of all the Apostles; and against the custom of all Christian Churches: Pretending, as a rare and warm invention, that the Baptism of fire and of the Spirit, (which they now at last hold forth) will both supply and explode that colder ceremony of sprinkling or dipping in water. It is strange these Rabbies and Masters in Israel should be so silly, as not to know, that long before their brain brought forth any such blasphemous brood against baptizing by water, all judicious Christians ever esteemed baptism by water to be an extern sign and means, by which the wisdom of Christ thought fit to administer to his Church on earth, not only that distinctive mark of being his Disciples, but also the representation of his blood, shed for their redemption, and the obisignation of that Baptismal grace, which his Spirit confers on those that are his by the cleansing of the conscience, and renewing of the inward man: 1 Pet. 3. 21. Christians, must not after the short and more compendious methods of their fancies, therefore neglect the sign or ceremony, because they presume of the thing signified; but rather with humble obedience doe the duty and use the means divinely instituted, that they may obtain the grace offered. On the same grounds, all outward Ministra tions among Christians may be despised and abolished, by those that pretend to the Spirits inward efficacy, which is never in any man that doth not obey the Gospell in its outward mandates, as well as the Spirit in its inward motions: Proud, idle and ignorant fancies are daily finding shorter ways to heaven than the wisdom of Christ hath laid.
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laid out to his Church, in following of which no good Christian can judge, that there is either piety, peace, or safety.

Some boast much of their popular and plausible gifts, for knowledge, utterance, prayer, &c. others flight all, but inward grace, and the Spirits dwelling in them. Some do much upon their select fraternities and covenanting congregations; others are only for private illuminations, solitary feelings, sublime raptures, and higher assurances. Some admire themselves in their tedious strictnesses, and severer rigours, by which they gird up the loins of their Religion so strait, that it can hardly take civil breath, or the air of common courtesie: others joy, as much, in the Liberty they fancy themselves to have attained both of opinions and actions. Some make every thing a sin and errour, which they like not; others count nothing a sin, to which they have an impulse, and are free as they call it. Some tolerate all wayes of Religion in all men, till it comes to be private Atheisme, and publique confusion; others crack all strings, which will not be wound up to their pitch, damning and destroying all, that are not of their particular mode and heresie, though never so novel, and differing not onely from the Catholick practice of the primitive Churches, but also from the expresse rule of the Scriptures.

Whom would not these monsters of novelties, varieties, and contradictions among Christians in their Religion, as it is Christian, and reformed too, even amaze and greatly astonish; ready to scare all men from anything, that wee in England call Religion, Reformation, Church, or Conscience, if judicious, choise and well grounded Christians did not (as they doe) seriously consider these things, which may establish them in that holy profession of this Church, wherein they have been baptized and educated?

First, the natural levity and instability of mens mindes; which can have no fixation (like the magnetick needle) but onely in one point, or line; where it is in conjunctur with its Loadstone, the Truth of God; from which, while
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the minde is wandering, and shaking, it is prone to love
noveltie with lies, and detriment, rather than wonted things
of religion with truth, and benefit. The itching humors
of mens lascivious fancies and lusts, chafe to scratch them-
selves to bloud and forenesse, rather than enjoy a constant
soundnesse; which distemper among those of the reformed
Churches, never want vigilant and subrill fomenters;
whose design is, to spread any infection among Protestants
to the most pestilent contagions; that so they being sick
and ashamed of themselves, under the scandals, and mad-
nesses of that profession, they may, at last, seek to Rome
for cure; and entertain forain Physitans, who will easily
perswade such diseased Protestants, that those old sores and
lingering maladies (with which the Romish party hath a long
time laboured, and with which it is justly charged, however
it refuse to be healed) are much safer for soules, than these
new quick feavers, pestilent Agues, and desperate Apoplexies
among us, which threaten utterly to kill all piety, to de-
stroy all Christianitie, to extirpate all charity, and dis-
solve all society both as men, and as Christians: while
neither morals, nor ritualus of Christianity are observed;
neither the superstructure of Catholick customes, nor the
foundation of Scripture commands; neither truth, nor peace,
things of piety, or Christian polity, are inviolable: but all
old things must be dissolv'd and passe away, that some
men may shew their skill to create new heavens and new
earths, in which, not order and righteousnesse, but all inju-
riousnesse and confusion must dwell.

Secondly, besides this innate fondnesse of men, which
is always finding out new (evill, or vain) inventions, (as
unwholsome bodies are ever breaking out,) there are al-
so crafty colourings, and politick affectations of piety, which
grow as scurfe or scabs, over thole prurient novelties of o-
pinion: by which unwonted formes (as with severall vi-
Kards and plaisters) hypocrifie seckes as to amuse the vul-
gar, so to cover, and hide its cunning, and cruelty; its a-
varice, ambition, revenge, and sacrilege: still avoiding the
discoveries
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discoveries of its deep plots and wicked designs, by specious pretensions of serving God in some more acceptable way, and better manner, than others have done; when indeed every true factionist, who is Master of his Art, at last, winds up the thread of that Religion he spins, upon his own bottom, so as may best serve his own turn, nor is he ever so modest, so mortified, or so self-denying, with his pious novelties, but that he will possess himself, and his party of any places for worldly profit, power or honour, to which he can attain, though it be by the violent and unjust ruining and outning of others: which is no very great symptom of an amended or heightned Christian.

Lastly, sober Christians doe, and ought to consider those just judgements of God, either as diseases, or medicines, usually falling upon Christians, (as here in England) when they are surfeited with peace and plenty, cloyed with preaching and praying, wantonly weary of wonted duties, and wholesome forms of sound religion, though never so holy, and comely; Burenhed with the weekly and daily importunities of Ministers doctrine, and examples, (where the sin and misery was; not that people had no true light, or no true Church, and no true Ministers, but that, having all these, they rejoiced not in them, they neglected them, and sinned the more provokingly against them;) Hence it is, that squeamish, nauseating, and glutted Christians, easily turn, as foul stomachs, and wanton appetites, all they take, (though never so wholesome) into peccant and morbifique humors, to pride and passion, to self conceit, and scorn of others, to ambitious lusts of disputing, contending, and conquering in matters of Religion, endeavouring to destroy all, that they and their way may alone prevail and govern: which is the last result of all unwarrantable and unjustifiable commotions in Church or State. Nor doe men ever intend that such victories (which begin with the tongue or pen, and end in the hand and sword: commencing with piety and religion, but concluding with sovereignty and dominion,) shall be either inglorious or fruit-lesse.
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leffe; Seditious and schismatical Champions for Religion will be sure (as soone as they have power) to carve out their own crowns and rewards; the determination of scruples in conscience, and differences in opinion, must end, not onely in imperious denying others, the liberties of conscience (at first craved or contended for) but in the outing others of different minde, from their places, callings, profits, and enjoyments: which is very far from that taking up the croffe of Christ and following him; from being crucified to the world in its lufts, pride and vanity, as becomes those that will be Chrifts Disciples, in verity, justice, and charity: To such mountains of changes and mighty oppressions doe little mole-hills in Religion usually swell, when the justice of God suffers pietie to be both poison-ed with policies, and Religion perverted with humane passions. Little differences in Religion, (like Crocodiles eggs) bring forth prodgies; which are ever growing greater, till they dye, adding fury to faction; passion to opinion; cruelty to novelty; Self-interests to Conscience: Divine vengeance oft punishing sin with sin; extravagancies of judg-ments, with exorbitancies of deeds; suffering the greater luft, or stronger faction (like pikes in a pond) to devour the lesser; and one error to be both executioner and heir to another; Because men obeyed not the Truth in love, nor practised what they knew, with a pure heart, in an humble, meek, and charitable conversation, which alwayes chuseth rather to suffer with peacefull and holy antiquity, than to triumph with turbulent and injurious novelty.

From which have rifen those many Church-Tragedies, as of ancient, so of later times, which make the blood of Chri-stians, (yea of Jesus Christ too) so cheap and vile in one anothers eyes: Hence those unstanched effusions; those un-closed wounds; those irreconcilable feuds; those intracta-ble sores; those wide gaping gulphs of faction and division, malice and emulation, war and contention, which are enlarged and deep like hell, threatening to swallow up and exhaust whole kingdoms, flourishing Nations, and famous Churches:
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Churche?, sometimes professing Christian, and reformed Religion, with order, peace, and truth. Where now countrymen, and neighbors, kindred and brethren, Ministers and people, teachers and disciples, are so far from that charity, sympathy and compassion becoming believers in Jesus Christ, (so as to weep with those that weep, and to rejoice with those that rejoice) that contrarily, there is nothing almost to be heard or seen, but such a face of cruelty and confusion, as a shipwreck, a troubled Sea, or Scarefire is wonted to present: The tears of some mingled with their owne, or others blood; the cries and sighs of some with the laughter of others: Smiles with sorrows, hopes with desairs, joyes with terrors, Lamentations of some with the triumphs of others. The insolency of any prevailing faction hardly enduring the underling or suppressed party, to plead their cause, either by law or prepossession: to deplore their losses, defeats, poverties, and oppressions, which they either feel or fear; nor yet to enjoy the liberty of their private consciences: And all this struggling, fury and confusion both in Church and State merely to bring forth, or to nourish up some Pharaoh or Esau, some opinion or faction, which must come in by a breach, and prevale by violence. After this horrid scene and fashion, and on such Theaters (of mutuall massacris, fightings and wars) are divided Churches, broken factions, and uncharitable Christians always ready to act their sad and sanguinary parts of Religion, (if there be not wise and powerfull Magistrates, to curb and restrain them.) Some mens spirits are ever dancing in the circles of Reformations; trampling on the ruines of Churches and States, of charity and peace; lost in endlesse disputes, and wearied with restlesse agitations; starting many things, and long pursuuing nothing: Ever hunting for novelties, and following with eagerness and lowdness the game they last sprang, or put up, till they light on another: Still casting away all that is old, though never so good and proper, for any thing that is new, though never so bad and impertinent: being better pleased with a fooles coat of yesteryeares (c) making
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making, though never so fantastick and ridiculous; than with the ancient robes of a wise and grave Counsellour, never so rich, and comely; preferring a rent or piece of Christ coat before the whole and entire garment.

Thus, ever learning, fancying, cavilling, contending; disputing, and, if they can, destroying one another for matters of religion, poor mortals and consummationary Christians tear others, and tire out themselves, untill (having thus wasted the fervor of their spirits, and more youthfull activity of their lives) at length the dulness of age, or the burthen of infirmities, or the defeat of their designes, or the decline of their faction, or the wasting of their estates, or the conscience of their follies, or the summons of death, so dispirit and appale these sometimes so great Zealots and sticklers, for what they call Religion, that they appeare like very Ghosts, and Carcasses of Christians; poor, blinde, naked, withered, deformed, and tattered in their Religion, both as to Conscience comfort, and credit; Far enough (God knowes) from that soundnesse of judgement, that settlednesse in the faith, that sobernesse of zeal, that warmth of charity, that constancy of comfort, that sinceritie of joy, that faint-like patience, that blessed peace, and that lively hope, which becomes and usually appeares in those, that have been, and are sincerely religious and truly gracious; that is, knowing, serious, and conscientious Christians; who have, a long time, been entertained, not with splendid fancies, and specious novelties, wrested prophecies, and rare inventions; touching government of Churches, modelling of Religion, and Saints reigning: but with the treasures of divine wisdome; with the rivers of spiritual pleasures; with the fulnesse of heavenly joyes; with the sweetnesse of Christ's love, and Christians communion; with the feasts of faith unfeigned; with the banquets of well grounded hope, with the marrow and fatnesse of good works; of an useful full Holy life: which are to be had not in fantastique novelties, and curious impertinencies, in unwarrantable and self-condemning practices; but in the serious study of
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the Scriptures; in the diligent attending on the Ministry of the Word, and all other holy duties; in fervent and frequent prayers; in Catholick communion with charity towards all that profess to be Christians; in a patient, meek, orderly, just, and honest conversation toward all men whatever.

From which, whoever swerves, though with never so specious and successful aberrations, which vulgar minds may think gay and glorious novelties of Religion, like the flying of Simon Magus, or Mahomet's extasies; yet they are to be pitied, not followed, by any children of true wisdom, which is from above, both pure and peaceable, 1 Tim. 3:17. Whose lawful progenie, the professors of pure Religion, and undisturbed, have in all times been, as in worth far superior, so in number and power oft inferior to the spurious issues, and by-blows of faction and superstition; which, as easily fall into fractures among themselves, as they naturally confederate against that only true and legitimate offspring of Heaven, True Religion: which is (as the Poets feigned of Pallas) the daughter of the Divine minde; the descent and darling of the true God; For, as it hath been wonderfully brought forth, so it hath always been tenderly brought up, by that power, wisdom, and love, which are in those eternal relations, infinite perfections, and essential endearments, wherewith the Divine Nature everlastingly happy, recreates and enjoys it self; which are set forth to us under the familiar names, yet mysterious and adorabla Persons of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; in whom is an holy variety with an happy Unity; a real diversity, yet an essential identity: Who have taught the Church true Religion in a few words: Know and doe the will of God: Believe and repent; Live in light, and love; in verity and charity; in righteousness and true holiness: without which all Religion is vain; either fantastical, or hypocritical, unprofitable, or damnable.

From which plain paths and grand principles of true Christian Religion the Author of this defence, having ob-

(c 2)
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served the great and confused variations of many Christians, as in all ages, so never more than in this; his intent in this work must be, and is, (as he said) Not to gratifie any side or faction, never to swell with plausible pretensions, with pleasant fancies, with gainfull successes; or overgrown with splenitick severities, and melancholy discontents: but onely to make good by the impartiality of clear Scripture, sound Reason, and purest Antiquity, that station, and office, wherein the providence of God hath placed him, (and many others, far his betters) in the publique Ministry of that Religion, which as Christian and reformed, was established and professed here in the Church of England. Which, of any Reformed Church, hath ever since the Reformation had the honor, of being, both much admired, and mightily opposed: So that its miraculous peace, and prosperity for so many years past, as they were the effects of Gods indulgence; and of the great wisdome of governours in Church and State; So they were always set off and improved by those many and smart oppositions, both forain and domestick, which were made against it, both as to its truth and peace, its doctrine and discipline.

All which, men of excellent learning, and lives in this Church, have valiantly sustaine, and happily repelled; to the great advancement of Gods glory, the prosperity of this Nation, the honour of this reformed Church, and the comfort of all judicious Christians; And this was chiefly done by the able and accurate pens of the godly and learned Ministers; who needed (in those times) no other defence on their part, either for order, government, maintenance, Ministry or doctrine; All which were then preserved from vulgar injuries and insolencies by the same power and sword, which defended those civill sanctions and lawes, which established and preserved all things of sacred and Ecclesiastick, as well as of civill and secular concernment.

Until these last fatall times, which pregnant with civill
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Wars and diffensions, have brought forth such great revelations and changes in Church and State, wherein Scholars and Churchmen, in stead of pens and bookes, have to contend with swords and pistols. Which weapons of carnall warfare, were unwonted to be applied either to the planting, propagating, or reforming of Christian Religion; only proper to be used for the preservation of what is by law established, from seditious and schismaticall perturbations; (For it was not the vinegar, but the oil of Christian Religion; not its fierinesse, but its meeknesse; not its force, but its patience, that ever made its way through the hardest rocks, and hearts.) And by these strange Engines, these new armes of flesh, we have hitherto only seen acted and fulfilled with much horror, misery and confusion, those things in this Church and Nation, which were foreseen and foretold by two eminent, and learned persons, yet of different opinions, as to the extern matters of Ecclesiastical polity; Mr. Richard Hooker, and Mr. Thomas Brightman, the one in the preface to his Ecclesiastical polity; the other in his comment on the third chapter of the Revelations. Who many years agoe in times of peace, and setlednesse in this Church of England foretold, not by any infallible spirit of prophecy, (for then the later of them would not have been so much mistaken in the fate of his dear Philadelphia of Scotland) but meerly out of prudence, conjecturing, what was probable to come to pass, according to the fears of the one, and the hopes of the other: in case the then spreading, though suppressed differences and parties in Religion, (which they then saw made many Zealous & boldly discontented) came to obtain such power, as every side aims at, when they pretend to carry on matters of Religion, and Reformation; wherein, immoderation being usually stiled Zeal; and moderation, lukewarmnesse, it was easie for fagacious men to foreseee and foretell, what excesses, the transports of inferiours would in all probability urge upon superiours; if ever these managed power so weakly and unadvisedly, that any aspiring and discontented party might come to gain power, in a way not
usual; which at the very first rupture and advantage, would think itself easily absolved from all former ties of obedience, and subjection to governors in Church or State; without which liberty and absolution, it is not possible to carry on by force any Novelties and pretended amendments of Religion contrary to what is established in any Church or Nation.

Indeed, we see, to our smart and sorrow; that the deluge foretold would break in, hath so overflowed this and the neighbour Churches; that not only Mr. Brightman's bear-eyed Leah, his odious Peninnah, his so abhorred Hierarchy, (the Episcopal order and eminency) but even his beloved Rachel, his admired Hannah, his divine Presbytery itself; yea & the whole function of the Ministry feels, and fears the terror of that inundation, which far beyond his divination, hath prevailed, not only over his so despised Laodicea, which he made to be type of the Church of England, (truly) not without passion and partiality, (as I think with far wiser men.) He not calmly distinguishing between the constitution and execution of things: between the faults of persons, and the order of places: between what was prudential, and what is necessary, what is tolerable, and what is abominable in any Church, as to its extern form and polity: but also over his darling and so adored Philadelphia, which he makes to answer to the Scottish, Palatinate or Geneva form of Presbyterian government and discipline; as if that Church of Philadelphia in its primitive constitution under the presidency and government of its Angell, had any thing different from, or better than the other neighbour Churches, which is no way probable, nor appears either in Scripture or Ecclesiastical histories; However, it might be commendable in its Angell or President, for its greater zeal and exacter care to preserve that doctrine, discipline, and order, which it had lately received from the Apostles; and which, no doubt; was the same in each Church, who had their several Angels or Overseers alike; which all Antiquity owned for those Pastors, Presidents, or Bishops, to whose charge they were respectively committed.

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As for that evomition, or God's spewing this Church of England out of his mouth, which Mr. Brightman so dreadfully threatens; it must be confessed that the sins of all sorts of Christians in this Church, and of Ministers as much as any, have made them nauseous and burthensome to the Divine patience; both in their lukewarm formalities, and fulsome affectations of Religion; in their empty pompes, and emptier popularities: So that God's patience once turned into just fury, hath indeed terribly powred out his vengeance on all degrees and estates in this Nation: by suffering floods of miseries, and billows of contempt to overwhelm (for a time) the face of this Church, (as of old wars, heresies, and schisms wasted the Asiatick, African, and Latin Churches) not more, it may be, upon the account of Ministers weakness and unworthiness, than upon that of peoples levity, pride, and ingrateful inconstancy; which hath been a great means to bring on and continue these overflowing streams: Which nothing but the mighty power of God, by the help of good and wise men, can reprove and asswage; so that the face of this Church and its Ministry may yet appear in greater beauty and true Reforma-

But when, and by what means this shall be done, the Author of this Apology doth not, as a Prophet, undertake to foretell; onely he observeth the usuall methods of God's Providence, in the midst of judgement to remember mercy: and after he hath sorely afflicted, to repent of the evil, and return to an humble penitent people, with tender mercies; so that we may hope his wrath will not endure for ever, nor that he hath quite forgotten to be gracious, or shut up his loving kindness in displeasure. Also hee considers the wanted vicissitudes of humane affairs, arising from the changes incident to mens minds, who weary of those disorders and pressures necessarily attending all forcible changes in Church or State; and long frustrated with vain expectations,
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...tions of enjoying those better conditions in things civil and religious, which are alwayes at first liberally promised and expected; at last they are prone with the same impetuosity, to retire, (as the ebbing Sea) from those fallacious or pernicious novelties, to which the breath of some politic or passionate spirits had raised them, so much above the ordinary mark of true Christian religion, as to drown or threaten to carry away all those many happy enjoyments of truth, peace, order, government, and Ministry, which formerly they enjoyed: Not wholly (it may be) without; but yet with fewer and more tolerable grievances; which humble Christians ought to look upon in any settled Church and State, rather as exercises of their patience, duty, and charity; than as oppressions of their spirits: Knowing that impatience usually punisheth it self, by applying remedies sharper than the sufferings; easily and hastily running down the hill, as from health to sickness, from peace to war, from good to bad, from bad to worse; but very slowly returning from evil to good, or recovering up the hill, from worse to better.

It is true, the Ministers of the Church of England, of all degrees, seem, now, to have an harder part to act, for their honor and wisdome, than ever they had under any Rulers, professing to be Christian and reformed. But they may not therefore weakly disclaim, or meanly desert their Ordination and holy function; nor may they despair of Gods (if they have not mans) protection, who can soon make their very enemies to be at peace with them; and stir up many friends unexpectedly for them. It may be through the Lords mercy, this winter's flond shall be for their mendment or fertility, and not for their utter devastation and ruine: This fire shall not consume them, but refine them; this winnowing will be their purging; and this shaking their settling: (As oppositions of old gave the greatest confirmations and polishings to those Truths, which were most exercised with the hammer, or file of heriticall pravity, or schismaticall fury.)
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If it be the mending, and not the ending; the reformation, and not the extirpation of Ministers, which their severc cen-
surers and opposers seek for: why should not time of trial be given; and all honest industry used to improve these well grown and flourishing fig trees, before they be hewed down and stubbed up, which heretofore have not been either barren or unfruitfull to God and man:

If either Papal, or Anabaptistical and Levelling ene-
mies must at length after severall windings and turnings be gratified with their utter ruine and destruction, (which God forbid) yet while Ministers have leave and liberty to pray, to preach, to print, to doe well, and worthily, God for-
bid they should so farre injure God, good men, and so good a cause, as not Christianly to endeavour its defence, which at worst is to be done by comely suffering: And who knows but that when these witnesses both against superstition and confusion in the Church shall seem to be slain, cast out, and buryed, they may live again, to the astonishment both of friends and enemies:

But if the sins of this Nation, and the decrees of divine justice, doe indeed hasten an utter overthrow here of the reformed Ministry, and the reformed Religion: If Minis-
ters of the ancient Ordination, lawfull heirs of the true A-
postolick succession, are therefore accounted as sheep for the slaughter, because they are better fed, and better bred, than others of leaner soules, and meaner spirits: If they are therefore to the men of this world, as a savour of death unto death, because they hold forth the Word of Truth, and Life, to the just reproach of a lying, dying, and self-destroy-
ing generation: If we must at last perish and fall, with our whole function and fraternity,after all our studies, char-
ges, labours, and sufferings: Yet, it is fit some of us (and the more the better, lest our silence may argue guilt) give the world both at present, and in after ages some account; why, and how in so learned, valiant, wise, and religious a Nation as this of England hath been, wee as Ministers have stood so long; what pious frauds, and holy (d)
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arts we had, whereby to impose so many hundreds of years, upon so many wise Princes, so many venerable Parliaments; so many pious professors of Christian and reformed Religion: And lastly, upon so quick and high spirited a people, as these of England generally are; neither so grosse, as to be easily deluded, nor so base, as patiently to suffer themselves in so high a nature to be abused.

That so, at least if the world can leffe discern, for what caufe the Miniftiry and Ministers are now to be destroyed, they may see upon what grounds of piety, or policy they were so long preserved in peace, plenty, and honour: And for what reasons they now seek (as their pious predecessors did) to maintain not their persons so much, as their office and function, in its due order and authority; that so they might have transmitted it in an holy and unblameable succession to posterity; as that, which in their confciences they verily think to be a most divine and Christian Institution: Beneficiall for the good of the Church, and of all mankind; which in former ages, was ever esteemed the glory, and blessing of this, or any other Nation; The fetter forth of the light, wisdome, power, and love of the eternall God in his Son Jesus Christ for the salvation of sinners; and which thousands of Christians in all ages and places have experienced, and approved to be to their soules the Sa- vour of life unto life, the mighty power of God to salva- tion.

The Author easily observes the present face of our hea- vens, which are much darkned by those black, and lowing clouds, which chiefly hang over constant, true, and faithfull Ministers heads; menacing them above any rank or calling of men; Nor is he ignorant of the touchinesse, and roughnesse; the jealousies, and timorousnesse, of many mens spirits in these times, whose highest pretentions to piety are set forth, either by fierce oppositions against the Ministry; or by such a weak pleading for, and wary owning of their succession and ordination, their calling and persons, as ra-rather invites opposition, contempt, and insolency, than any way
way gives credit or countenance to them and their function; whose remaining branches of Presbytery will hardly thrive by the watering of those hands which have been, and are destroyers of its root, the Primitive Apostolicall Episcopacy; they are pitifull defenders of that, who are passionate opposers of this: who, of all men, have given the greatest advantages to those that seek to abrogate the whole function and calling, or to arrogate it to vulgar ignorance and impudence.

The grim and sad aspect on all hands upon Ministers; makes the Author out of charity to himself and others, as willing to give a fair account of his profession, so loath to offend any sober and judicious Reader, or to contract the enmity of any others of ruder tempers, by any rash stroke or inconsiderate dash of his pen, to which he may be subject, and for which he begs pardon, both of God and man, if any have escaped; which yet may be so far venial; as its innocent sharpnesse aims at no one's person, but only at their supposed errors, which are grown in some so rough and insolent, both in words and deeds, against poor Ministers, that they had need to meet with something, that hath good metal and useful sharpnesse; and not with that phlegmatick and sanguine softnesse, which impudent men easily baffle and put both to the blush and silence: yet hee meddles not, save with great respect and tendernesse, with any thing of Civill Power; which no man may wisely dispute, that is not able to resist, (it is foolish to shake the pen against the sword, or oppose armed Legions with flocks of Geese;) No man may discreetly offend, while, as he must necessarily, so he may honestly and safely be subject: Prudence commands private men to leave the accounts of Ruling power to mens own consciences, and to the Supream Over-ruler; who best knowes, as by what means they obtain it, so to what ends, and in what manner they use it. It is enough for private persons at convenient distances to warm themselves by the light and heat of prevailing power; neither scorching themselves by too near approaches, nor consuming them-
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Selves by indirect contests with it: Modesty also forbids such as are in subjeetion to dispute the actions, or disparage the counsels of any that are above them; who being many and so stronger, are commonly by esteem supposed wiser than any one man: and being successfull are usually esteemed blest and happy. Although it is most certain, That the many beginning from one, and combined strength or counsel being but the twisting of single feebleness (as so many hairs together) the united many may be mistaken, as well as the divided unites: Yea, one sick man may infect many whole: especially if his disease hath something catching and pleasing in it. But if there happen, by the Divine displeasure, pestilent airs, and noxious breaths in any countrey, the strong, the wise, the great and the many, are as liable to contagion and destruction, as the weak, the few, and the foolish: yea to Epidemical and contagious diseaees, pestered cities, and crowds of men are more subject than cells, and solitudes. No men are so wise, but they may have errors; And the sooner they see them to amendment, the wiser they will be: Nor is it the least part of wisdome in inferiors to shew to superiors their misapprehensions and failings, rather by obliquely intimating than directly thwarting; by great reflexions, than rude affronts: Especially in those things wherein a private man may be competently versed, both by study and education; yet no way trenching upon that tender point of civill power and dominion, which is not a fit subject for a pen and inkhorn.

Therefore this Author presumes, that the fair and free vindication of so publique an interest, as this of the Ministry (which is his proper sphere and calling,) can displease no men, that have candor, wit, honesty, honour, good conscience, or true Religion in them: Nor will it anger sober men to be shewed what is amiss, and how it may be mended, which possibly they may be as unable, as willing to doe: Diseases may sometimes exceed the Art of Physitians; violent Paroxysms are sometimes better left to spend themselves, than provoked and encountered with medicines. As for others of vain, violent, and foolish tempers, it is better to offend.
offend than to flatter them; and to suffer from them (if God
will have it so) is more honorable than to be rewarded by them.

The greatest danger indeed is, from those, that are (sto-
lide ferces) full of those boisterous, rude and brutifh pas-
fions, which grow as bristles upon hogs backs, from ig-
norance, pride, rusticity, and prejudice, which make men,
either unable to read, or impatient to bear, or unwilling
to understand, the words of truth and sobernesse; trusting
more to bestiall than rationall or religious strength: which
most unmanly, and unchristian disorders in mens foules,
how prevalent and epidemicall foever they may be, yet
they must not be here either flattered, or fomented: By calling
their darkness light, or their evill good, their presumpti-
ons, inspirations; their duller dreams high devotion; their
dissolute licentiousnesse, Christian liberty, their silliness, fan-
crity; their fiercenesse, zeal; their self-confidence and in-
trusion, a divine call; their disorderly activity, speciall abili-
ties; their jejune novelties, pretious rarities; or their old
errors, and rotten opinions, extraordinary and unheard of
perfections.

When, indeed, their root is for the most part nothing but
an illiterate and illiberall disposition; neither learned to mo-
rality, nor polished to civility; neither softened nor settled
by good education or true Religion: being full of levity,
vulgarity, unsatiatc thirst and desire of novelties; their
fruit also is little else, but malice, cruelty, avarice, ambition,
worldly policy, hypocrisie, superstition, loosenesse, and
profaneness; all conspiring, as upon untrue and unjust pre-
tentions, so to evill ends; namely to abase and destroy the
true and ancient Ministry of the Gospell in this Nation, and
to bring into contempt all holy duties, and divine Mini-
istrations in this Church of Christ; to cry down all good learn-
ing; to corrupt the mindes of men with error and ignorance;
to debauch their manners by licentiousnesse, or superstition;
to bring shame upon the reformed Religion here professed;
to wildfire the judgements, to maif the comforts, to shipwreck
the conscience, and to damn the soules of poore people.
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Where the Apologist meets with this black guard, these factors for error and sin, these agitators for the Prince of darkness, these enemies to God, to Christ Jesus, to all good Christians, and to mankind, God forbid he should give place to them, or not charge them home, and resist them to their face: His duty and design is to detect their frauds and wickedness; to counteract their deep projects; to frustrate their desperate counsels; to fortify the minds of all good Christians against their strong delusions, and oppositions; to pull down their high imaginations; to demolish their self-conceited strong holds; to maintain the honour of this Nation, the glory of this reformed Church, and the worth of its godly, learned, and industrious Ministry, against their envious cavils and ungrateful calumnies.

If any men, apart from fanatick presumptions, secular interests, popular applauses, rusticall clamors, and ignorant confidences, shall, upon rationall, prudent, and religious grounds, propound any thing in a more excellent way, either for kindc, or degree, whereby to advance the glory of God, the honour of Jesus Christ, the reall propagating of the Gospel, the exercise of usefull gifts, and graces of Gods Spirit in this Church; for the encrease of charity, or comforts among Christians; for the encouragement of learning, vertue and godliness; for the welfare of this Nation, or the serious reforming of Religion, and the Ministry of it, beyond what hath been, still is, and ever may be had, from the gifts and graces, the order and office, the labours and lives of those, that are the chief professors, preachers, and pillars of learning and religion in this Nation; which are the able, and faithfull Ministers of a due succession and right Ordination;

God forbid they should not, with all candor and impartiality be heard, with all cheerfulness accepted, and with all uprightnesse be entertained. No good man or worthy Minister is so vain, as to fancy he may not be mended, and happily improved: But first let those alterations and novelties, which bear this title of reformation, and amendment,
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ment, be publiquely set forth; duly, seriously, and impartially be weighed in the balance of sober demonstrations, and found reasonings, so, as becomes the honour, wisdom, and piety of this Nation; before they be injuriously concluded, and forcibly obtruded upon conscientious Ministers, or people. The English world (as other Protestant Churches) hath had enough of the Apes and Peacocks, which crafty Merchants have ever sought to vend to the vulgar: if they have any gold and spices; any commodities that are of real use and worth; it is pity, the worlds wants have not been sooner supplied, and their expectations satisfied; which being so long deluded, and oft frustrated, hath made sober Christians to suspect the whole fraught of some mens religious novelties, to be nothing else but farfetcht and dear bought toys, varying so much from the uniform judgement, and universall practise of all ancient and modern Churches, of the best note and account, no lesse, than from the worthy constitution, and wise frame of this reformed Church of England, whose honor and renown was justly great in the Christian world, for its piety and peace, its order, and its proficiency in all good learning, sound doctrine, and holy manners: which owed as much, as any Church under heaven, to the wisdome, piety, and impartiality of its Ministers and reformers (under God) as also to its establishers and defenders.

Nor have the effects of later offers and endeavours to mend or change their work, been yet so excellent or blest, as to give any cause to preferre these, before them; who no doubt could easily have reached those later seeming heights and raptures of Religion and Reformation, which some men so much boast of, in their hotter, yet looser tempers; but those learned, grave and godly men considered, in the extern polity and frame of Religion, what was then most necessary, and convenient for men and times, what latitudes of prudence and graines of charity are to be allowed by Christian piety: Not prescribing their plat-formes, then fitted to the publicque good, as the Non ultras of Reformation; but giving posterity.
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posterity a pattern; that, if we would indeed attain to further perfection, we should imitate their wise and charitable moderation; and tread in their humble, easy, and even steps; which were not slippery with blood, nor rough with insolences, nor unequal with factions, nor dark with policies, nor extravagant with varieties; but fairly laid on by due authority, with publick and impartial counsel, in a peaceable way, to a general uniformity, and satisfaction of both the most, and the best.

Whereas, among the many specious offers, and earnest importunities, either formerly, or lately made by some men in reference to Religion, and the Ministry of it in this Church, little hath hitherto appeared to have any uniform or well-formed face of further edification, or future bettering of Religion, in doctrine, government, discipline, or manners. Some few, it may be, of honest hearts have taken to themselves a liberty to serve God in that way they best fancy and most affect; But thousands have run to error, ignorance, atheism and licentiousness, under that colour of freedom, which besides the laxation and confusion brought among the bad, hath occasioned great heart-burning and distance and uncharitableness among those that seemed to be good. In some things indeed sober and wise men have offered good counsel; and propounded some things fit to be considered of and embraced; but the noise and violence of other (mens passions and interests) suffer not those mens calmer voices to be heard; Their rougher work seemes to be all with axes and hammers; not for building or repairing the Temple of God, without noise; but for beating all down, with the greatest stir, and clamour they can make; All is for demolishing Schools and Universities; for despising all learning and sciences; for taking away all order, society, larger communion, subordination, and government in the Church; for casting away all ancient Ordination, and authoritative Ministry; that we may be left in the next age, like the Tohu and Bohu of the Chaos, void of light and full of confusion; without good learning or true Religion,
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...gion, without any form, or power of godliness; so far are those lines, which the Antiministeriall fury and folly drawes, from running parallel to piety, or Christianity, to right Reason or true Religion; that they are most diametrically opposite to all civility, prudence, policy, sense of honour, and principles of humanity: Of which deformities and defects none are lesse patient to hear, than they that are most guilty; whose preposterous activity, rather than still, must needs employ it self in pulling all down; which is indeed the work of plebeian hands, and pragmaticall spirits; but to build or repair either Church or State, is the business onely of wise and well advised persons, such as having publique and generall consent, to deliberate of such things, may also have an univerfal influence in the reason and authority of their determinations: But such able men are hardly found in Countrey crowds, and illiterate heaps; nor are they very forward to obtrude themselves upon publique works, without a very fair call from God, and man; which they doe not think to be the either countrey, mans whistle, or the armed mans trumpet.

From neither of which, as this Author hath any invitation to this work; so he hath no temptation in it, to captivate favour with the giddy and uncertain vulgar; by seeming to adore their Diana's, or admire their many new masters, and their rarer gifts; which make them worthy indeed of such soft and sequacious disciples.

Nor yet hath he any design to ingratiate with supercilious, and self-suspecting greatness; or to comply with the more solemn errors, and graver extravagancies of those, who study safety, more than piety; who think to flatter Magistrates by crying down Ministers, being more afraid of that sword, which can but kill the body, than of that, which proceeds out of the mouth of Christ, and is able to slay both soul and body.

He bespeaks no men further, than the truth, justice, and merit of this cause of the Evangelicall Ministry, made good by Scripture, Antiquity, and good experience among us here
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Here in England, may perswade them to look favourably, and friendly on the Author and his endeavour: where in, albeit every one, that owns himself to be a Christian in this Church, is highly concerned; yet the undertaking seemes to have very little tempting in it, or inviting to it; as (now) the face of the Ministry of the Church of England seemes to appear besmeared, and disguised with infinite odious aspersions; loaded with unmerited injuries and indignities; a wonder to its enemies and friends; a sad spectacle to all good men and good Angels; (whom it cannot but afflict to see those that are the Brethren of Angels in heaven, Rev. 19. 10. and the fathers of Christians on earth, 1 Cor. 4. 15.) thus treated and threatned by some men, who have this onely of proportion and equity in them, to pursue the greatest virtues, with the greatest hatred.

The Apologist therefore hath purposely declined to bring the odium or envy of Dedication upon any one particular person; left this defence should seem like a blazing Star, threatening with malignant influence any mans greatness, and honour, either of ancient or modern edition; which may be jealous, left the patronising, or pleading for the distressed, and despised Ministry, should be the next way to their diminution; left the dust and rubbidge of the so much battered and defaced Clergy, should deform or bury them. Besides, he thought it in vain to single out any one Patron to this book, and its Subject: For first how few persons of more ample conditions, splendid fortune, and higher quality in civill estimation, doe much lay to heart the afflictions of these Josephs, godly Ministers and good scholars: Most are intent to their policy, profit, or pleasure; or to their sufferings, revenges, and reparations: Nothing costs a grose spirited Gentleman, who lives like a great earth-worm in a fat dunghill, leffe, either as to his purse, or his care, than the interests of Learning or Religion; The ignorance and dissoluteness of many mak's them indifferent, if not enemies to piety and good education; as lights that reproch their deformities, or bonds that restrain their
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Some are best pleased when least molested by any moral or gracious opportunities: esteeming those their best friends, who suffer them to degenerate to beasts, or to devils; or to both, at once, in being Hypocrites or Atheists: who have the stupidness of the beast, and the malice of the devill.

Not that I would diminish the honour of the Nobility and Gentry of this Nation, the good and gallant sort of whom none in the world exceeds for civility, fidelity, justice, constancy, and piety. Though some be the shame of honour, and the stain of Gentry, as bags of chaffe, puffs of airy vanity, illiterate vice, insolent ignorance; and folly well fed: who have nothing to boast of but empty names of reproached ancestors and undeserved titles, which are comely when inscribed on the Escutcheon of virtues, but deformed and ridiculous, when usurped by pultroones, and such, whom no worth redeems from being vile and despicable to wise and serious mindes. Yet there are not a few eminent persons of true honour and real worth (which consists in just valour, judicious piety, useful virtue, both to private and publique relations) whose purses have been as crusoe, and their houses sanctuaries to many godly and learned men in the distresses of these times. Yet in stead of paying a respect and honour to any of these truly noble and generous persons it might be but an injury to single out any one of them, in the cloud and jealousies of these times, to be as a publique refuge and Asylum to this work and its cause, which carries with it something more immense and ponderous, than ordinary occurrences in the world: And besides its high concernment to Church and State, to the temporall and eternal good of men; it hath vast difficulties attending it; rough oppositions, implacable odiums, and incorrigible malices to contend with: In the midst of all which there must needs be a very great deadness, and almost despair, for any one man never so worthy and well-affected, to advance beyond honest desires, and sincere, but ineffectuall endeavours.
Furthermore to take a right scantling of things, what one mans shoulders, I befeech you, how potent forever, can bear the burthens, which are now cast upon the Ministry and Ministers of this Church of England? What hands can raise their declined state; what arms can support, or stay their tottering and threatening ruines? Alas, what private influence can be so benign, as to oversway, or counterpoise that malignity, which some men pretend to discover, not onely in the mindes of men on earth, but even in the very Stars and constellations of heaven, which some say, fight against the Ministry now, as they sometime did against Sisera? If these Western wise men (who seem to be of a different strain and way from those Eastern Magi, that came to worship Christ in the Manger, with their persons, and presents) if I say they had not daily intelligence from heaven, and sat near to the Cabinet Councell of that High Court; truly good Christians would hardly beleeve, or regard their reports; It being very improbable, that the Stars, either fixed or planetary, should be enemies to those, who bear their name in the Church; as Ministers doe, being called both Stars and Angels, Revel. 3. 1. And who have ever been, as much brighter in their light, so more necessary to the Church, and more dear to God, than those are in the Firmament or visible heavens; by how much the intellectuall and eternall light of mens soules exceeds that which is onely sensible, and momentary to their eyes; by how much reason and truth are above the beames and lustre of the Sun, which is infinitely short of the divine glory of Christ, and those spiritual benefits; which by his healing wings (the Ministers and Ministrations of his Church) are derived to the world.

Although the study, and knowledge of the Stars be very worthy of a wise and Christian man, because in their beauty, lustre, and numberlesse number, in their vast magnitude, and height, in their admirable motion, and various influences, the wonderfull glory of the Creators power and wisdom is eminentely set forth, beyond what vulgar eyes discern.
yet, experience tells the truly learned and religious Astronomer, (for such there are) that nothing is so blinde and bold as an hungry Astrologaster: who must flatter, that he may feed (starveling wizards like witches, threaten all that do not give to them, or approve them:) But if Wise Men by their moral liberty of virtue and grace, may over-rule the Stars natural inclinations upon them; sure they may (as the wisest of Men, both Christian and heathen, ever did) despite those sorry Star-gazers and silly divinators, of whom Tacitus in the first book of his history writes, That they were oft banished from Rome, and yet could never be kept out; a verminly generation (ever destroyed, yet ever breeding,) who owe their best education to their bellies, their wit and science, to the sense and knowledge of their wants: Who pretend to get their harvest out of heaven, and glean their food from among the stars, when indeed they have their greatest influence upon the spirits, and harvest from the purses of credulous and simple people. They are always fawning and unfaithful to great men; Deceivers of all, that expect any great, or good matters from them; thus he, a learned Heathen: So that the insolency among Christians must needs be great and intolerable, to see Almanacks dashing against their Bibles, and some Almanack-makers calling a generall and publique scorn upon their Ministers and Ministry: imputing both unjustly and indignly the folly and ridiculous impotency of some Ministers' passions and actions, which may be but too true to the whole function, venerable order and learned fraternity, without limitation or distinction of the wise from the foolish.

But the badnesse of the times, or madnesse rather of any men in them, makes this cause never the worse; Indeed it is so great and so good, having in it so much of Gods glory, and mans welfare, that it merits what it can hardly finde in secular greatness, a proportionate patron, who had need to be one of the best men, and the boldest of Christians; And therefore is the address so generall, that besides our great Master the Lord Jesus Christ (the founder (c.3)
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and protector of our order and function, this work might finde some pious and excellent Patrons in every corner; whither so great a Truth hath of late been driven, to hide it selfe, by the boldness and cruelty of some; the cowardise and inconstancy of others: This book requires not the cold, and customary formality of patron-like accepting it, and laying it aside, but the reality of serious reading, generous asserting, and conscientious vindicating.

Who ever dares to countenance this Apology in its main Subject, The true and ancient Ministry of the Church of England, must expect to adopt many enemies, and it may be, some great ones: Whom he must consider, at once, as enemies to his Baptism, his Faith, his Graces, and Sacramentall seals to his spirituall comforts, his hopes of heaven; to his very being being a Christian, or true member of this, or any other found part of the Catholick Church: Enemies also to his friends, and posterities eternall happiness: The means of which will never be truly found in any Church, or enjoyed by any Christians, under any Ministry, if it were not in that, which hath been enjoyed, and prospered in England, not onely ever since the reformation, but even from the first Apostolicall plantation of Christian Religion in this Island.

Of which blessed priviledge, ancient honour, and true happiness, no good Christian, or honest English man, can with patience or indifferency suffer himself, his Countrey, and posterity to be either cunningly cheated, or violently plundered: Certainly there is no one point of Religion merits more the constancy of Martyrs, and will more bear the honour of Martyrdom, than this of the divine Institution, authority, and succession of the true Ministry of the Church; which is the onely ordinary means appointed by Jesus Christ, to hold forth the Scriptures and their true meaning to the world; and with them all saving necessary truths, duties, means, and Ministractions, wherein not onely the foundation, but the whole fabrick of Christian Religion is contained, which in all ages hath been as a
pillar of heavenly fire, and as a shield of invincible strength, to plant and preserve, to shine and to protect, to propagate and defend the faith, name and worship of the true God and his Son our Lord Jesus Christ.

This makes the Author not despaired to meet with some
Patrons and Protectors of this Defence in Senates, Councils, Armies, and on the house top, no lesse, than in closets, and private houses; To whom it cannot be unaccountable to see those many plausible pretensions, and potent oppositions made by some men against the Divine authority, and sacred Office, and peculiar calling of the Ministry, to discovered, as they shall appeare to be not more specious, and subtil, than dangerous and destructive, to the temporal and eternall welfare of all true. Protestants, sober Christians, and honest hearted English men; who, certainly, next the pleasing of God, and the saving of their souls, have nothing of so great concernment to themselves and their posterity, as this, The preserving, and encouraging of a true and authoritative Ministry, which is the great hinge on which all learning and civility; all piety and charity; all gracious hopes and comforts, all true Religion and Christianity it self depends, as much, as the light, beauty, regular motion, and safety of the body, doth upon its having eyes to see.

But if this freer and plainer Defence should neither merit nor obtaine such ample measure of favour, and publique acceptance in the sight of judicious Readers, as it is ambitious of, and (at least) may stand in need of; yet hath the Author the comfort of endeavouring with all uprightnesse of heart to doe his duty, though he be but as an unprofitable servant.

And (possibly) this great and noble Subject, the necessity, dignity, and divine authority of the Ministry of the Church of England, so far carried on by this Essay; (which sets forth, 1. The Scripture grounds establisht by the authority of Christ and his Apostles. 2. The Catholick consent and practice of the Church in all ages and places. 3. The con-
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Reason and order observed by all Nations in their Religion, and specially to the Institutes of God among the Jewish Church. 4. The Churches constant want of it, in its plantation, propagation, and perfection. 5. The benefit of it to all mankind, who without an authoritative Ministry would never know whom to hear with credit and respect, or what to believe with comfort. 6. The great blessings flowing from this holy function to this Church and Nation, in all kinds.) These and the like grand considerations and fair aspects which this subject affords to learned, judicious and godly men, may yet provoke some nobler pen, and able person to undertake it with more grateful and successful endeavors: whose charitable eyes finding the sometime famous and flourishing Ministry of this Church, thus exposed in a weeping, floating, and forlorn condition, to the mercy of Nilus, and its Monsters, (the threatening, if not overflowing streams of modern violent errors) may take pity on it, and from this Ark of Bulrushes, which is here suddenly framed, may bring it up to far greater strength and public honor, than the parent of this Moses could expect from his obscurer gifts and fortunes.

To which although he is very conscious, as being of himself altogether insufficient for so great a work, and so good a word; yet the confidence of the greatnesse and goodness of the cause; the experience of Gods, and (generally) all good Christians, attestation to it, in all former ages of the Church: The hopes also of Gods gracious assistance, in a work designed with all humility and gratitude wholly to his glory, and his Churches service: These made him not wholly refractory, or obstinate against the entreaties of some persons, whose eminent merit in all learning, piety, and virtue, might encourage by their command to great insufficiencies to so great an undertaking: Which is not to fire a Beacon of faction or contention; but to establish a pillar of Truth, and certainty; Also to hold forth a Shield of defence and safety: such as may direct and protect, stay and
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and secure the minds of good Christians in the midst of praying, backsliding, and Apostatizing times, wherein many seek to weary God, his Ministers, and all men but themselves, with their varying wickedness.

The weight and worth of this great Subject, the Ministry of this, and so of all true Churches, in which, as in Noah’s Ark all that we call Religion, all that is sacred, Christian, and reformed, is deposited and embarked, would have (indeed) required a more proportionate assertor: who might, out of the good treasure of his heart, have given more strength, and ornament to so divine and necessary an Institution.

But who sees not the methods and choices of Gods wisdom and power; who (oft-times) makes his light and glory to shine clearest through the darkest Lanterns? He appears in a bush, when he purposed the great redemption of his Church out of Egypt: The skillfull hand of God can write as well with a Goose quill, as with a Swans or Eagles. The self-demonstrating beams of sacred Truths need no borrowed reflexions: By soft and easie breathings the Lord hath oft dispelled the grossest fogs and blindest mists, which rose in his Church; His fair and most orient pearls are frequently found in rough and unpolished hells; The excellency of his heavenly Treasure, and power doth best appeare in earthen vessels. The plain and main Truths of Chriftian Religion (among which this of an holy ordained Ministry is one) like soverain and victorious Beauties lose nothing by the meannessse of their dressse, or unaccuratenesse of their habit; it is enough if they can but freely appeare like themselves.

This fashion of writing by way of Apology (which requires a diffused and pathetick stile)was, indeed, judged the best and fittest, as for the Subject and the times, so also for this Author; considering the little leisure, the short timne, the great variety of other businessse, and distractions upon him; besides the terror and precipitancy of the ruine, daily threatening the Ministry and Ministers; if God by the justice,

(f) wisdom,
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wisdom, and piety of some men did not defend them and divert that mischief. For the preventing of which some others have wrote in vindication of the Ministry after a more succinct and Syllogistick way of argumentation; But the Antiministeriall disease, having seised not so much the heads, as the hearts of men; and depraved affections having swerved many from the judgements; it was thought necessary to apply some remedy at once to both, setting Christians in the Truth, and exciting them to such a love of it and zeal to it, as may best encounter the heady boldnesse of those which oppose it.

If the Authour have in this larger way done any thing worthy so excellent a Subject, it must be first imputed to Gods gracious assistance, and the blessing of prayers, more than of studies; wherein it may be the charitable flames of many worthy Christians have greatly helped his infirmities; Next, it must be ascribed to the sacredness, dignity, and ampleness of the matter, or Subject handled, which (as Orators of old observed) like rich soile, and good ground raiseth to generous productions the weaker spirits of any thing sown, or planted in them.

It is true, the Authors ambition is in nothing more than to excell in the discharge of his duty, as a Minister of this Church; that he might finish his course with joy; and also to have equalled with height of abilities and industry, the excellency of this Cause, which is of so high concernment, to the glory of God; to the honour of his Saviour; (to the salvation of so many soules) to the happinesse of this Church; to the blessing of this Nation; to the preservation of so many worthy men, his Fathers and Brethren of the Ministry, who make conscience not only to discharge their duty, but also to preserve the divine authority, and holy succession of their heavenly calling as Christian Ministers; whom the blessing of God hath as much honored and confirmed in this Church of England, as in any other under heaven; having made them in every place, where they were planted, as the trees of knowledge and of life; bringing the defolate
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defolate and barren wildernesses to become as the garden of God, by their good husbandry, their learned and godly industry; which meriteth all encouragement and protection of all good men; to whose vindication and assistance if this Author hath come in either too late, or too weak, it will be his great grief.

And if he have not been able to add to any strength or honor to this cause, (which some others before him, have either fairly touched, or somewhat fully handled;) yet he may add to the number of the witnesses, who have or shall give testimony to this great Truth, holy Order, and happy Institution of Jesus Christ, who must not cease to prophecy, though they be clothed in sackcloth, Rev. 11.3.

To conclude; Nothing seemed, in honor and conscience, to him more vile and uncomely, than to see this Reformed Church of England, which hath brought up so many learned and valiant sons, which lately was so much praised and extolled by them in her prosperity, to be now so much deserted by many of her children, both Ministers and others, in this day of her great agony and calamity; wherein ignorant, mechanick and meritlesse spirits, think it not enough to endeavour to strip her of her ornaments, to rob her of her garments, to deprive her of her dowry, to divorce her from her best friends, and faithfulllest servants; but they must also cast dirt in her face; spitefully scratching her, wanonly rending her, cruelly wounding her; and most scornfully destroying her, as if she were an impure prostitute, a most abhorred Adulteresse, when indeed shee was, and is, a fair Daughter of heaven, and the fruitfull Mother of us all; Justly esteemed by all learned, sober, and godly men, both at home, and abroad, as wise, grave, chaste, and venerable a Matron, as any, in all the Christian, or reformed world. Nor doth shee cease to be comely, though she be now black and scorched; There appears beauty amidst her ashes, and lovelinesse amidst her scratches: the Spirit of glory shines through her Sackcloth; still meriting, and therefore not despairing of the love, favour, pity, and protection of all worthy persons who are considerable;
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considerable either for counsel or in power, and commendable either for honesty or Religion: Suffering indignities, and dayly fearing more from none but those that are enemies, as to all learning, order, and religion, so to all honesty, modesty, and humanity; Her sad, deplorable fate and (by such men threatened) if this Author cannot hinder or help to recover, yet he shall, with Jeremie, heartily pity, deeply lament, and most passionately pray for her, and her children, so long as he lives; as thou wilt (O Christian and compassionate Reader) if thou beest of his minde, who bids thee Farewell.
Hieraspistes:
Or a
Defence
By Way Of
Apoloogy;
For the
Ministry And Ministers
Of the
Church of
England:
Humbly Presented
To the Consciences of all those
That excel in Virtue.

Am neither afraid, nor ashamed to present to
your view and patrocinia, in whom is a more
Excellent Spirit, this Apology; For which,
as I have no encouragement, so I expect no
acceptance, or thanks from any men, who
carry on other designs, than those of Glory to
God, Peace to their own Consciences, wel-
fare to this Nation, and Love to this and
other Reformed Churches of Christ. I know,
That Secular Projects, and Ambitious Policies, have (for the most
part) such jealousies, partialities, and unevennesses in their Counsels
and Motions, as can hardly allow or bear that *Generous Integrity and
Freedom, which is most necessary, as well as most comely, for the

*πεπλόθαι ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἠγαθόν ἡ ἁγίατος τοῦ Χριστοῦ.
The Address.

Cause of Christ, which I in my Conscience take to be this of his Faithful and true Ministers, of this Church, and of the Reformed Religion: Of which, in no case, and at no time, any true Christian, least of all a Minister of that Sacred Name and Mystery, may without sin be ashamed, or afraid, to own before men, in the place where God hath set him, and after that manner which becomes Heavenly Wisdom, when she is justified by any of her Children. It is your Honor, and happiness to Excel; not only in that Wisdom, which can discern, but also in that Candor, which cheerfully accepts, in that courage, which dares publicly own what shall appear to be the Cause of God, the Institution of Christ, and his Churches Concernments, amidst the Contempt, Calumnies, and Depressions, which they meet with, from the Ignorance, Errors, Passions, Prejudices, Lufts, Interests, and Jealousies of the World.

The excellency of the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (which you have attained by the blessing of God upon his and, for Christ's sake, your servants, the able, faithful, and true Ministers of the Gospel, in this Church of England,) hath taught you to esteem all things in comparison, but as lost, and dying, to chose to be with Christ in his storms, (if the will of God be so) rather than enjoy the world's calms. There was never, I think, any time, or cause, since the Name of Christ had place upon Earth, wherein your real and commendable excellencies, had more opportunities to shew, or greater occasions to exercise themselves, than now: This being the first adventure of some men impudent Impiety, attempting at once to annul, and abrogate, the whole Function and Office, the Institution and uninterrupted Succession of the Evangelical Ministry: Which prodigious attempt, no ancient Heretics, no Schismatics, none that ever owned the name of Christians, were so fo lycity of, as some now seem to be: So that now, if ever, you are expected, both by God, and good men, to appear worthy of your selves, and your holy Profession, either in Pity to God, and Zeal to the Name of your Saviour Jesus Christ; or in justice and gratitude to those your true Ministers, who have Preached to you the true way of eternal life; or in Pity and Charity, not so much to them, as to your selves; indeed, and your posterity (the means of whose Salvation is disputed, and endangered;) or in any other Christian Affections, and heresick Motions, such as are comely for those that are filled with holy Humanity; being therefore the best of men, because they have in them the most of Saints.

2.

True Saints Characters. Saints, I say, Not because great, but good men; not as applauded by men, but approved of God; not as Arbitrators of outward, but enjoyers of inward Peace; not because Conquerors of others, by the arm of flesh, but more than Conquerors of themselves; by the Graces of God's Spirit; not as violent Rulers of others, but voluntary sub-

wJiich jemensions, juftìfied not fr' place being courage, faireon, which ich Of Saints, by pen, wherein not duers or none not of Schnips, fhil. Tutiora euritates. pitl, u horn, 9'imttx*, Faithful leaftofall Ckafe. Religivn. Faithful, leaft of all Ckafe. Religivn. Faithful, leaft of all Ckafe. Religivn, itis your Honor, and happiness to Excel; not only in that Wisdom, which can discern, but also in that Candor, which cheerfully accepts, in that courage, which dares publicly own what shall appear to be the Cause of God, the Institution of Christ, and his Churches Concernments, amidst the Contempt, Calumnies, and Depressions, which they meet with, from the Ignorance, Errors, Passions, Prejudices, Lufts, Interests, and Jealousies of the World.

The excellency of the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (which you have attained by the blessing of God upon his and, for Christ's sake, your servants, the able, faithful, and true Ministers of the Gospel, in this Church of England,) hath taught you to esteem all things in comparison, but as lost, and dying, to choose to be with Christ in his storms, (if the will of God be so) rather than enjoy the world's calms. There was never, I think, any time, or cause, since the Name of Christ had place upon Earth, wherein your real and commendable excellencies, had more opportunities to shew, or greater occasions to exercise themselves, than now: This being the first adventure of some men impudent Impiety, attempting at once to annul, and abrogate, the whole Function and Office, the Institution and uninterrupted Succession of the Evangelical Ministry: Which prodigious attempt, no ancient Heretics, no Schismatics, none that ever owned the name of Christians, were so loycity of, as some now seem to be: So that now, if ever, you are expected, both by God, and good men, to appear worthy of your selves, and your holy Profession, either in Pity to God, and Zeal to the Name of your Saviour Jesus Christ; or in justice and gratitude to those your true Ministers, who have Preached to you the true way of eternal life; or in Pity and Charity, not so much to them, as to your selves; indeed, and your posterity (the means of whose Salvation is disputed, and endangered;) or in any other Christian Affections, and heresick Motions, such as are comely for those that are filled with holy Humanity; being therefore the best of men, because they have in them the most of Saints.

2.

True Saints Characters. Saints, I say, Not because great, but good men; not as applauded by men, but approved of God; not as Arbitrators of outward, but enjoyers of inward Peace; not because Conquerors of others, by the arm of flesh, but more than Conquerors of themselves; by the Graces of God's Spirit; not as violent Rulers of others, but voluntary sub-

wJiich jemensions, juftìfied not fr' place being courage, faireon, which ich Of Saints, by pen, wherein not duers or none not of Schnips, fhil. Tutiora euritates. pitl, u horn, 9'imttx*, Faithful leaftofall Ckafe. Religivn. Faithful, leaft of all Ckafe. Religivn. Faithful, leaft of all Ckafe. Religivn, itis your Honor, and happiness to Excel; not only in that Wisdom, which can discern, but also in that Candor, which cheerfully accepts, in that courage, which dares publicly own what shall appear to be the Cause of God, the Institution of Christ, and his Churches Concernments, amidst the Contempt, Calumnies, and Depressions, which they meet with, from the Ignorance, Errors, Passions, Prejudices, Lufts, Interests, and Jealousies of the World.

The excellency of the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (which you have attained by the blessing of God upon his and, for Christ's sake, your servants, the able, faithful, and true Ministers of the Gospel, in this Church of England,) hath taught you to esteem all things in comparison, but as lost, and dying, to choose to be with Christ in his storms, (if the will of God be so) rather than enjoy the world's calms. There was never, I think, any time, or cause, since the Name of Christ had place upon Earth, wherein your real and commendable excellencies, had more opportunities to shew, or greater occasions to exercise themselves, than now: This being the first adventure of some men impudent Impiety, attempting at once to annul, and abrogate, the whole Function and Office, the Institution and uninterrupted Succession of the Evangelical Ministry: Which prodigious attempt, no ancient Heretics, no Schismatics, none that ever owned the name of Christians, were so loycity of, as some now seem to be: So that now, if ever, you are expected, both by God, and good men, to appear worthy of your selves, and your holy Profession, either in Pity to God, and Zeal to the Name of your Saviour Jesus Christ; or in justice and gratitude to those your true Ministers, who have Preached to you the true way of eternal life; or in Pity and Charity, not so much to them, as to your selves; indeed, and your posterity (the means of whose Salvation is disputed, and endangered;) or in any other Christian Affections, and heresick Motions, such as are comely for those that are filled with holy Humanity; being therefore the best of men, because they have in them the most of Saints.

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Character of the Saints.

such living and true Saints, I may humbly and earnestly supplicate (without any Superfition) who affect least, but merit most, that title upon Earth, who are God's visible Jewels; the Darlings of Jesus Christ; the Lights and Beauties of the World; the regenerate Honor of degenerate Human Nature; the rivals and competitors with Angels, yet their care and charge; the candidates of Eternal Glory, and Heirs of an Heavenly Kingdom; the crown and rejoicing of every true Minister; the Blessed Fruit of their Labors, and happy Harvest of their Souls: The high Esteemers, the hearty Lovers, the liberal Reliefers, the unenlighted Pitiers, the faithful Advocates, and the earnest Intercessors, for the distressed Ministers; the so much delighted, and (by many) despised Ministry of this Church. You, in whom is the Spirit of the most Holy God; shining on your minds, with the settled wisdom of sound Knowledge, and saving Truths; captivating all wandering fancies, and pulling down all high imaginations; which exalt themselves beyond the written Rule of Christ; and the Analogy of that Faith, which was once delivered to the Saints, in the holy Oracles of the Scriptures, and continued to this day, by the Ministry and Fidelity of the Church; which is the pillar and ground of Truth; both propounding and establishing it, against all unbelief, and opposition. You, whose wills are redeemed from the servitude of sinful lusts, lascivious fears, secular fancies, whose Consciences and Conversations are bound by the silver Cord of the Love of God and Christ, to all Sacred Verity, real Piety, unenlighted Charity, sincere Purity, exact Equity, comely Order, holy Policy, and Christian Unity, from all prophane novelties, seditious Extravagancies, licentious Liberties, fanatick Enthusiasms, pragmattick Factions, and hellish Confusions: You, that are strengthened with all holy and humble Resolutions, which become the sober courage, and calm magnanimity of true Christians, either
To whom? For whom.

Heb. 11:25.
For his and your true Ministers, or else to chuse with Moses, rather to suffer with them, than to be any way assiduous to, rejoicing in, or complaint with, the ruine of them; that so in all things you may adorn the doctrine of Christ, and honor the true Reformed Christian Religion, establisht and professed in this Church of England.

To your judicious Zeal, sincere Piety, unbyassed Charity, holy Discretion, which have no leaven of sinister ends, nor unworthy policies, (being got above the vain hopes, fears, diffidences, and designs of meer men,) I do in all Christian Charity and Humility, present this Apology, in the behalf of those Pearls, the true Ministers of this Church of England, whose worth is not abated, though their lustre be obscured, nor are they less precious when trampled by Swine under their feet, nor less Stars in Christ's right hand, and fixed in the Firmament of the true Church, when they are clouded by these Fogs and Vapors, which ascend from the Earth, or from the bottomless pits, from the malice and rage of men or devils.

Nothing more adorned and perfected Christ's divine Person, and meritorious Patience, than his being blinded, buffettet, scourged, mocked, reviled, stripped, crowned with Thorns, and Crucified; nor was he less King and Saviour, when his Purple Robe was taken off, and his own Garments divided among the soldiers. He was not less the Messiah, the first, and anointed of God, the Great Preacher, and fullfller of Righteousness, when he was the scorn and outcast of men; nor a less precious Foundation, and corner Stone, when refused by foolish builders, who dashed themselves against him, instead of building and resting by Faith upon him.

In like sort, the true Ministers of this Church; (whom the pride and wantonnes of some men glories to account, as the filth and off-scouring of all things, to speak and do all manner of evil against them, falsely and injuriously;) if they may be so far blest of God, and honored, as to suffer after Christ's example, and to make up to their measure the remainder of the sufferings of Christ in his Body, the Church; there is no doubt, but the Spirit of Glory will more reft upon them, the power of Christ be more perfected in them, and the light of Gods countenance be more shining on them, than when their Corn, and Wine, and Oyl increased; their faces will then appear most, as Angels of God, when with Saint Stephen, they are beed withкровес оставы, overwhelmed with all manner of hard speeches, and rude indignities. Thus it becomes the proud and petulant world to act; and thus it becomes learned, able, and humble Ministers to suffer. Who have then least cause to be ashamed, when they are most opposed, and oppressed for Christ's sake; For mockers
in the wine-press of mans displeasure, they may then yield the noblest juyce, and most generous expressions of their Zeal, Courage, and Constancy.

Wherefore I have adventured, although the weakest and unworthy among many of my Fathers and Brethren, the Ministers of this Church of England, so far to satisfy the worlds curiosity, as to give them some prospect, and view of the Ministers of England, in their present distresses, fears, and afflictions; that men may see, with how stedfast countenances, they can look upon their adversaries, while they stop their ears against them, gnash their teeth at them, and threaten utterly to destroy them; that, their causeless and implacable enemies, may behold, with what divine comfort and assurance, they can walk, both cheerfully and uprightly amidst their fiery furnaces; into which they are therefore cast, because they will not fall down and worship, * those Idol-shepherds; those False-prophets, those Meek-images of Ministers, which have set up themselves as gods in the Church of God; such, as neither they, nor their Fore-fathers, nor any Church of Christ for One thousand six hundred yeers, ever knew, or heard of; who were ever blessed, and thankfully contented in all times, either of persecution, or peace, with those true Ministers, who in a right way of due Ordination, descended from, and succeeded in the place, and ordinary power of the Apostles, and the other Disciples which were first sent and ordained by Christ: Which the true Ministers of the Church of England, being conscious to themselves, (as I shall after prove) that they have rightly received, they have this confidence still, That they are neither to forsaken of God, nor destitute of good Consciences, nor despised by good men, nor do they despair, but that they may have leave, be able, and permitted, with just freedom, and modest courage, to plead their cause, before any Tribunal of men; not doubting, but they may have so fair an hearing, as St. Paul (their Great Predecessor, both in Preaching and Sufferings) hoped from Felix, Festus, Agrippa, or Cæsar: Of whole pietie the Apostle having no great persuasion, yet he charitably presumed to finde so much equity, and common humanity in them, as not to be condemned by them, being unheard; or to be acquitted, as to any crimes falsely laid to his charge; if he had but the favor of a fair Tribunal, and impartial hearing. So hard it is for a good man ever to despair in a good cause.

And however my confidence be just, and well-grounded, as to the merit of that Cause, which I have (by Gods help) undertaken; yet Reason of when I consider my strength, which is small; my infirmities, which are many; my defects, which are manifest; my interest with men of place and power, which is very little; and the prejudice, against whatever I, or any other Minister can do in this kinde (which may be
be great and many) I have (as feeble Creatures, conscious to their
weaknesses, are wont to do) fled to the refuge and assistance, first of
God's grace (which is sufficient for me, and which in the midst of
threatenings, storms, and shipwrecks, bids me be of good cheer.) Next,
to that of your mediation, (O excellent Souls!) who are every where
dispersed in this Nation; whose soundness of mind, and incorrupt-
ness of manners (yet remaining) hath hitherto preserved this back-
sliding and unseaworthy age from utter rottenness and corruption: Possi-
ibly your mediation may so far prevail among all estates of men, as to
alay those aspersions, abate those animosities, remove those prejudices;
satisfy those jealousies, under which, the Ministers and Ministry of
this Church, do now lie in many men's minds; and, it may be, in
some of theirs, who are become men of power and renown.

Whose eminency, I hope, will not be offended, if I humbly put
them in mind, That their glory and greatness is not more evident
to others (who are prone to measure their hopes and fears, by the
beams or shadows which they cast upon them) than most of all to be
seriously considered by themselves; since, from those rains, on which
they are railed, and from that height, to which they are exalted, they
may easily look down, and learn, in how slippery a station, and how
torturing a posture all, humane glory, and excellency doth consist.
That, the triumphs of such poor mortals carry their own deaths after
them, as well as other men's before them; that, as bubbles, they have
the same principles of frailty in them, by which others have suddenly
disappeared, who lately swelled as big, and swam as high above the
waters, as these now do. All religious experience tells the most subtle
and elated spirits, the profoundest projectors, and the most potent
actors. That they can have but a short time here, may have a sudden
change or period, and must give an account of all actions they
do, and all advantages they enjoy, in this present world: Of all
which, they shall carry no more comfort with them, than they have
made conscience to do the work of God, according to his will, re-
vealed to mankind in the holy and sacred Oracles of his written
Word.

It is manifest, That some men have been a staff of bonds in
God's left hand, to punish the sins, or exercise the Graces of many in
these three Nations; whether they shall be a staff of beauty in his
right hand, for the support of Piety, Peace, Order, and true Religion,
the event will best shew. They have acted many things as Men,
with great policy and power; it is now expected, they should act as
truly Reformed and wisely Reforming Christians, with Piety and
Charity; (if, at least, that may be hoped in the time of the Gospel,
which was denied to David's zeal, under the Law: That such as have
shed much blood in Civil Wars, should be instrumental to build the
House
Of Apologies.

House of God: Peradventure they may be means, if not to repair its great decayes, yet to hinder it from that total ruin, and utter vallation, which by many and bad men are threatened; but, we hope by more and better men (with Gods help) will be prevented.

And truly, if I knew, how I might most acceptably make my Address, and fairly plead my excuse with men in place and power; if I understood what might most merit to Apologize before all great, good, and ingenuous men, for the boldness of now publishing this Apology, I would in the most soft words, and comely terms, befpeak their favor, and deprecate their offence, for so it becomes Candidates and Petitioners: But my integrity is beyond all oratory; and my plainness beyond all artifice or study: I having no design, but onely this, (which I take to be, as pious and just, so not altogether misbelieving the station wherein God hath set me) That from the Country obscurity, (wherein I am not wholly buried) I may crave leave to use honest Christian Liberty in this one thing, which relates, not so much to my Person, as to my Profession and Function: And in this, to appear in publick not as a Counsellor, or Dictator, or Threatner, but as an humble Client and Surer, among those many, which always attend those who have power to save, or to destroy; to do good or evil. Nor in this am I pragmatically suggesting, what I might foolishly imagine fitted to be done in State affairs, (from which, as from Pitch and Birdlime, I am most willingly a stranger;) but onely propounding, in all humble and due respect, what is by many men, much wiser and worthier than myself, conceived as most necessary for this particular Church of God in England: And wherein the fears of very many Excellent Christians are so urgent upon them, that it were better to offend by speaking in love, than by silence to act the part, both of an Enemy and a Coward. Yet in this freedom, I would not willingly offend any, that really are, or esteem themselves, my Better, and Superiors, so, as to exasperate them by any rash or rude expressions. I earnestly deprecate all such failings in myself, and such suspicions in others. This restraint and caution, I have, not so much out of fear of men, (yet do I fear men, as far as fear is due;) but rather out of that fear of God, which is the beginning of Wisdom, and that reverence I ow to my self, and my Profession, as a Christian, and a Minifter, whom nothing less becomes, than the badge and livery of Passion; or the jaundice of Chedrick Diffusions, evident in the face of their writings. I love not (if they were safe) affectations of Language, which power may interpret Seditious, Turbulent, or: Treasonable: I have learned to be patient under hard things, thankful for moderate, hopeful for better; Nor do I disdain to beseech mans favor, whose fury God can restrain, and turn the remainder of wrath, to his praise and his Churches good. Let others complain of their Civil Burthens, which
(which I feel, as well as they.) Let them agitate secular Interests, which never want their vicissitudes, crosses, and defeats: My senfe and address in this Apology, is chiefly for those things which concern the true Ministry, and the Reformed Religion established in England; (In which, not custom, and education, but judgment and conscience, I hope, hath confirmed me by God's grace,) And for those men especially, whose office and duty I think it is, by Preaching, doing and suffering, as Christian Ministers, according to the Will of God, to vindicate and preserve true Christian Religion, and to transmit it as Reformed, in an unblemished, and unquestionable succession to Posterity.

Your Virtuous Excellencies, upon whose favor, chiefly, I have adventured this Address, to the view of the supercilious, and more untractable World, are not ignorant what noble Precedents may be alleged for my writing in this manner of Apology, (which is or ought to be a * twitting of Logick and Rethorick together; a Chequer-work of Arguments and Oratory: studying to cloth the Bones and Sinews of Syllogisms, with the smoothness and beauty of Eloquence,) seeking at once, both to convince the Understanding, and to excite the Affections: For besides those lefser and obscurer pieces recorded by the Antients, of Aristides, Melito, * Quadratus, Apollinaris, Methodius, Johannes Gram. Themistius, and Apollonius; (this last, being a Roman Senator, wrote and recited in the Senate; his Apology for the Christians, and was after crowned with Martyrdom;) We have also extant those famous Apologies of Justin Martyr, who dedicated his first to the Roman Senate, and his second to Antoninus Pius Augustus; also that of Tertullian, who in the time of Severus the Emperor, seeing Christians persecuted only, for the Name, as a sufficient crime, (as many Ministers now are by some men) wrote his Learned, large, and accurate Apology, dedicating it to the Emperor and his Son. Saint Hilary also, wrote a Defence for the Orthodox, against the Arians, presenting it to Constantius the Emperor. And of later times (in its kinde, inferior to none) is that Apology of the Learned, Pious, and incomparable Bishop Jewel *. The former wrote their Learned, Modest, and Eloquent Apologies for Christian Religion, as it then stood (like the Lilly among the Thorns) baited, persecuted, and condemned on all sides by the Heathen, who wanted neither numbers, nor arts, nor power to oppress; yet was it boyled up and preferred by Gods blessing on the learned Courage, and industrious Constancy of those, and other holy Men. This last (our Renowned Countryman) vindicated the Reformed Churches (and particularly this of England,) for their not complying with, and submitting to the Council of Trent; and for their necessary receding from the Church of Rome; so far, onely, as this did in Doctrine or Maners from the Scripture Rules; and from
from the **Primitive Judgement, Canons, and practice of the Fathers, the first Councils, and the Primitive purest Churches**: That excellent Prelate, no doubt, would have then fully asserted (as he did other points then in dispute) the Order, Honor, Office, and Authority of the Ministry of the Church of England; if either the ignorance, or malice of those times had been so far guilty and ingenious, as to question or oppose it, which some men now do; who dare any thing, but to be wise, honest, and humble.

I know myself unworthy to bring up the rear of so gallant a Troop of Worthies, in all Ages; nor is it from the ignorance of my own Tenuries, or other men’s Sufficiencies, that I have thus far ventured to lift myself in the Army of Christian Apologists, or to march under the Banner of this Apology: Only in some respects, I seemed to some men (if not to myself) to be signed out by providence to this duty (or endeavor, at least) in as much as I may be thought redeemed somewhat beyond the ordinary, from that grand prejudice, which is like a beam in many Readers eyes; or like a dead Fly ready to viciate the sweetest Confections, made by any Minister in this kinde: As if all were done, only for that livelihood and estate which their Church-Livings afford them; that any Ministers so stickle, and contend to uphold their Function and Ministry, either by speech or writing.

Few men stand freer from the dafsies of this suspicion, than myself; in regard of either present benefit, or future expectation, by any employment in the Ministry; which is such, as neither an idle man would undertake the work, nor a covetous man much envy the reward: Yet, I thank God, I want not either abilities or opportunities to exercise Piety and Charity among a company of poor (for the most part) yet good and orderly people; whose love, respect, and peaceable carriage to me in these times hath merited, that I should prefer the good of their souls, before any private advantages, so long as I am over them, in the Lord. I thank God, I have far less temptations of private interest; than would be required to put any discreet man upon so rough an adventure in a tempestuous Sea, where silence with safety were to be chosen, rather than publickness with peril; if I did not consciously and charitable look much more upon the publick; where taking a general view of the State and condition wherein most of my Brethren the Ministers, either are, or are like to be in this Church, (if some men may have their wills,) I cannot but with shame and sorrow behold in all corners of the Land, to how low an ebb, not only their persons, but the whole profession of the Ministry, now is, or is like to be brought; for Government, Maintenance, Reputation, Authority, and Succession, in these Churches, through the discontents of these times.
And truly in the midst of our dust and ashes, we the Ministers of England must confess, That with no less justice, than severity, the Lord hath poured upon us this shame and confusion of face, as well as upon other ranks and orders of men, since our many great spots, and foul stains, both in Doctrine and Manners, could not but be the more remarkably offensive to God, and man, by how much, in the sacredness and eminency of that Calling, more exact holiness was expected from us, and pretended by us.

And here, I hope, I shall not give any my Betters, or my Brethren, any offence, while I humbly prostrate myself in the Boreb and Threshold of this Apology, giving glory to God, and taking shame to myself, as well as others; Not by an uncharitable censoring of any man, but by a penitential searching and discovering the true cause, for which I think the Lord hath poured this contempt upon the Ministers of this Church. Herein to begin aright with God, and our own Con sciences, may best relieve us with men; the disburthening of a ship, is half burying it up, when sunk or aground. Ingracious confession is a good part, and a great pledge of future amendment. Some diseases are half healed, as soon as well searched and discovered.

It may be, we may finde the same readiness both in God and man, to forgive our failings, as David did, who, no sooner had confessed, I have sinned against the Lord, but he heard that gracious reply, The Lord hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die.

In the first place, this for certain we may conclude; That it is not the galling and stinging of these flesh flies, (now our busy and bitter enemies of the Anti-ministerial faction) that first brought this sore and rawness upon us; but it is some foul and corrupt humor from within us, which first brake out, through polluted fores and wounds, which have invited those to feast upon our ulcers and deformities.

In a matter, then most fit for deep and serious searching, I cannot be so superficial, as some have been, who like Lapwings, only out loudish, when furthest from their Nests, being fierce tempters of all men, but themselves so hectic to feend and confess their boffon sins; or to own the deformities of their darlings; hardly permitted to cast away the * Moses and Bats (to the dark and deformed crew of Heretical novelies, and Schismaticack minurities) those specious and gilded Idols, Teraphim of their own imaginations, which their fancies have forged, and with Mica’s devotion, set up to themselves as Divine.

Sure, it is but a very poor and pitiful account (the product of Passion, not of Reason) which some men give, while they, with a vulgar vehemency, accuse all the Crime and Ministers of England for their former conformities and subjections to Authority; in things

Of Ministers lapse in reputation.
to some men disputable for their nature and use; yet, then, according to Law; that is, approved, established, and enjoined by the public consent, wisdom, and piety of all estates; in this Church and State. And which things, very holy and learned men generally used, accounting them, if burdens to weaker consciences, yet to wise and stronger men, as lawful; as it was for St. Paul to save in the ship; whole sign was Caesar and Religion. Acts 28. 1. Yea, and so far necessary, as (being agreeable to their judgements) the use and external observation of them was enjoined in the Church by due Authority, and approved by their own personal subscriptions; being no way destructive to any thing of Christian Faith, or Holy Life: Certainly, a sober and good Christian must not tear in pieces, or cast away his Bible, because it is not so neatly bound, as he would fancy; Nor would I believe, any humble Primitive Martyr, or Conscion, have defiled Salvation by Jesus Christ alone, duly exhibited in the Word and Sacraments, as they were in this Church, nor have refused Communion, with this; or any part of the Catholick Church; truly professing Christ Crucified, although the nails of the Cross had been much sharper and heavier, than any thing was in the established Order and Ministry of the Church of England; which few Churches since the first hundred years, wherein the Apostles lived, ever enjoyed with more Purity, Order, and Simplicity, as to the main, than the Reformed Church here in England did.

Ecclesiastical Policy, with incomparable Learning, and gravity of Judgement, hath beyond any Reply, vindicated both the integrity of his own Conscience, and the honor of this Church, in things of external order; Mish 305, * Ipsa unitatis conscientia sibi incidunt utilitate, avocat perpetuam. August, ep. 19.

So that many wise, and good men, begin now to think (since these unhappy disputes have by attrition been kindled, and far driven on to fire and sword) seeming heretofore to have risen from humble, meek, and charitably tender spirits;) That the greatest ticklers against those things (which were oft declared to be, not any part of piety, duty, or devotion in themselves; but only as matters of external order, decency, and consequence;) were rather curious (for the most part) than conscientious; Diffenters being either very weak, or very wilful. And some have since sufficiently appeared, rather wantonly nice, loose, and given to change, than any way grave, fetled, or curiously solicitous in matters of Religious Order, and Publick Ministrations. Possibly, it was not the least of our follies and this, that we did not with more thankfulness enjoy the many rich mercies.
ministerial Conformities. 

Hinc in bella civilis precipitamur, quod malam miracum nimium cauter
**mus. Erf.**
*Quia in levibus a quoddam recedit con-

fueudina*, Magnus Boet vir sic certituantum horis illum sapere noris. Verculam.

mercies, we then had; instead of that regret and querulous impati-
ence, which was so loth to hear any such defects or burthenes, as some
men imagined; wherein (for the most part) ignorance, or easiness,
or vulgarity of minde and manners, made greater out-eyes, and
aggravations, than either truth of judgement, or tendernes of well-

Banners,

informed Consciences. The after-imitability in some men minde,
and stupidnes of their maners, shews the Vertigo and Lethargy of
their Brains: For many men, who, when it began to be in fashion,
strained at those gnats, which formerly for many years, they had
digested, yet afterward made no bones to swallow Camels of greater
innovations, such as no distinctions can mince or chew small enough
for a good Conscience. And it is confessed by those, that have now
attained their after-wits, that those former conformities enjoyned by
Law, were but motes, in comparison of those beams, which now
threaten to eclipse the lights of this English World, and to put out
the very eyes of the Seers and Watchmen of this Church.

Many excellent Ministers, for Learning, Piety, and Industry,
(besides innumerable other Christians) did in former times, grow up,
to great thirst in sound knowledge; and all beauties of holinesse, even
amidst those so much suspected and decayed weeds of Conformity;
which if they were not, as sweet Mariorains, very favory; yet sure,
they were not as (mors in olla) Colloquintida or Hemlock, very
hurtful, or death in the pot; being judged by the wisdom of the
Church and State here, and by the most learned Divines abroad, to
be within the liberty and compass of those things, of Order and De-
cency, which by that one grand charter, 1 Cor. 14.40. are allowed
by God to be ordered by the prudence of any particular National
Church; And in which, all Churches, in all ages and places, have
esteemed their several Custom, as Laws to them, without any breach
of Charity, or prejudice of Christian Liberty, or blemish of the Faith;
yet never (perhaps) without the offence of some particular Members
in the Churches, whose fancies easily finde fault with any things,
whereof themselves are not Fathers, or at least Gossips. Humble
Christians will thank God for moderate enjoyments; nor are they
bound to contend for what they think best, to the perturbance of the
publick Peace. Patience is a remedy always near, easie, and safe;
nor is it likely, that the state of any Church on Earth will ever be
so happily compleated, as to have nothing in it, which may displease
any good man, or which may not exercise his tolerancy, and cha-

rity; which are generally more commendable and unsuspected vir-
tues, than those of zealous activity, and publick opposition, which
commonly draw somewhat upon the dregs of self, either as to Passi-
on or Interest, Party or Concernment: For, who is so mortified,
that doth not hope to get something of credit, profit, or honor, by
adhering
Of Ministers former Conformity.

Adhering to any side or new faction, against the former set-
lings?

How many learned and godly men are, and ever will be (till
better grounds be produced, from Scripture, Reason, and practice of
the Primitive Church) unsatisfied with the parity and novelty, yet
pretended Divine Right, or of the sole-headless-Presbytery; which
challenges to it self, as from Christ, such a supreme power, as is ex-
clusive and destructive of all Episcopacy; that is, of the constant
Presidency of one, among other Presbyters; so placed by their
own choice and consent?

And no less unsatisfied are thousands of learned, and good Chri-
tians, with that power of Lay Elders; (for so they are best called,
for distinction sake; and not Ruling Elders; left by that title of
Ruling, they should fancy and usurp the sole power of rule to them-
selves; which undoubtedly, is equally, if not eminently due to the
Preaching Elders, who labor in the Word and Doctrine:) Touch-
ing which point of Lay Elders in the Church, I have read two
Books written above thirty years since, by a very learned, godly,
and impartial Divine, Master Chibald of London: In the first of
which, he proved these Lay Elders to have no place, office, use,
power, or maintenance assigned them by Scripture; nor ever in any
Church of Christ: which he demonstrates in the second Book (which
is full of excellent reading) as to the Fathers, Councils, and Histories
of the Church: In none of which he finds them to have any foot-
ing, as to office and power, upon any Divine Right, ever owned in
the Church; nor can they now have in every little Parish, or pri-
ivate Congregation; where the Country plainness may afford care-
ful Over-seers for the Poor, and Church-wardens; but not fit men
to match with the Minister, and to sit as Rulers to govern their other
Neighbors; who will hardly believe they have authority from Hea-
ven to rule them, unless they see more abilities in them, than usu-
ally can be found. What use may be made of such Elders, in the way of
Prudence among greater Representations of the Church, as in Synods
and Councils, he leaves to the wisdom of those, that have power in
such Conventions to call and regulate them: But he denies any
thing, as of Divine Right, belonging to them; so, as to bind every
Parish or Congregation to have them, which would be ridiculous, and
most inconvenient. Both these Books being seven years since com-
mittted to the hands of Master Coleman, as then a Licencier, were un-
happily, either smothered and embezzled, or carelessly lost; to the
great detriment of truth, in that particular: For, truly, in my best
judgement, and in other mens of far better, to whom I imparted
them, never any thing was written, of that subject, more learnedly,
more uprightly, more copiously, or more candidly; especially, con-
considering
sidering the Author was one that scrupuled some things of Conformity.

In like manner, how few Christians in any Reformed Church are satisfied with those new, and strange Limbs, rather than Bodies of Independent Churches; (which word of bodying into small Corporations, is as a novel, to a very gross expression, and hath something of a Solecmum, not only in Religion, which owns properly but one Body of Christ, which is his Catholike Church; whole communion with Christ, the only Head, and one another, as Members in several Offices and Operations, is by the same Faith, the same Scriptures, the same Ministry, the same Ministraions, and as to the main and substance, the same Christian Profession:) But it is also incongruous and absurd in ordinary Significancy of Language; while by such a singular Bodying, they mean a Spiritual Union of those, that pretend to be most Spiritual Christians: Which names, and novel inventions, about constituting and completing Churches, in so many fractions, parcels, and places, apart from all others, by the means of an explicit Church Covenant; (as they call it;) how unscriptural, how unconform to the examples of all ancient Churches; how impertinent as to Piety; how dangerous and destructive to the Truth, Union, Harmony, and Dependance (which ought to be among all Christians, and all Churches, to avoid Schism in that one Catholike Body of Christ;) do they seem to many judicious and gracious Christians? who think themselves, and all others, that profess to be Christians, sufficiently added, and united to the Church, as the Primitive Believers, being once baptized, were without any more ado, yea, and declaredly bound by their * Baptism and Profession, to all Christian conversation, charitable communions, and holy walking, by these Publick Bonds, and Sacraments of Religion, which they own; and of which, they were publickly partakers and professors.

So that, not onely in these, but in many another things, we see the remedies, which some men apply to former seeming disempers, do (to many men) seem worse than the disempers ever were: The little finger of grievances, scruples, disorders, and scandals, being far heavier than the lyers of the Law were in former-times; where, if there was leis liberty by the restraints, which men had by Laws laid on themselves; yet there was also far less ignorance in minds, fewer errors in judgements, blasphemies in opinions, breakenews in affections, dissolutions in discipline, unceaschies in sacred admistations, and licentiousness in the ordinary matters of men? So that if those times were not the golden age of the Church, sure these cannot brag to be beyond the iron, or brazen.

No leis superficial and uncatching are those Conjectures or Censures, which a late Writer makes of Ministers oditations of reading,
Causes of Ministers lapse.

reading, and humane learning in their Sermons, (of which, many men cannot be guilty, unless it be of making shews of more than indeed they have.) Also, he allegeth, as an occasion of Ministers lapse in their love, and respect among the people, their small regard, and strangeness to godly people. When it is evident, many mens and womens godliness, brings forth now no better fruit, than first, quarrelling with; then neglecting; afterward, despising; next, separating from; after that, bitter railing against; and lastly, stirring up faction, not only against that one Minister, but his whole calling. Certainly, some are become such godly brambles, and holy thistles, as are not to be converted with more than needs must, and are never to be treated with bare hands. But in case some Ministers, by many indignities provoked, grow more teachy and morose to these mens thrift, inconstant, and unprofitable godliness; If they fortifie what they affert, by the testimonies of learned men, (which is no more than is sometimes needful, among captious, curious, and contemptuous auditors;) yet, if they seem to some feverer eulogists, something to exceed, in these particulars, those bounds of gravity, and discretion, which were to be desired; yet, what wise man can think, that such fleecitises or scratches (in comparison) can send forth so great corruption, or occasion so ill a favor in the nostrils of God and man; that, for these things chiefly, Ministers should be so much underclouds of obloquy and disrespect; that, although they have every seventh day, at least, wherein to do men good, and to gain upon their good wills, yet many of them are so loll, that there are but few can give them so much as a good word.

But, some men are willing to mistake the Image and Goats' hair 1 Sam.19. 11. 1 Sam.19. 11. for David, and pretend with Rachel, infirmities; when they fix upon their Idols. Alas, these cannot be the symptoms of so great conflicts and paroxysms, as many Ministers now labor under, who were sometimes esteemed very precious men, and highly lifted up on the wings of popular love and fame: In which respects, no men suffer now a greater ebb, than those that were sometime most active, forward, and applauded. The shrieks and shameful of lesser scandals, and common failings among Ministers, might kindle some flashes to sing and search some of them; but these could not make so lasting flames, so fierce and consuming a fire, as this is: In which, many, or most Ministers, that thought themselves much refined, and understands to be refiners of others, are now, either tried, or tormented. Who sees not, that the fire and wood of this Topher, which God hath prepared, 1 Sam.19. 11. 1 Sam.19. 11. is not (as some conceive) onely for Princes and Prelates, for Archbishops, and Bishops, & c. (In some of whom, what ever there was of want of zeal for God's glory, of sincere love to the truth, of charity to mens souls, I cannot excuse, or justify, since they could not
not but be as highly displeasing to God and man, as from both they enjoyed very great and noble advantages above other men, of glorifying God, advancing Christian Religion, and encouraging all true holiness: Nor was the having of Dignities and Revenues their sin, but the not faithful using of them; no wonder, if of them, to whom much was given, much be required, either in duty, or in penalty,) But this Tophet is also (we see) enlarged, for the generality of Presbyters, and such as disdain'd to be counted the inferior Ministers; nor is this fire thus kindled in the valley of Hinnom, nourished only by the bones and carcasses of ignorant, profane, and immoral Ministers (who are as dry sticks, and trash; twice dead, to conscience, and to modesty; fit indeed to be pulled up by the roots;) but even those greater Cedars of Lebanon have added much to this pile, and fuel, who sometimes seemed to be Trees of the Lord, tall and full of sap; very able and useful in the Church; and, while within their due ranks and station, they were faithful, flourishing, and fruitful; whose very Children, and Converts, (their former disciples, followers, favorers, and beloved ones,) now in many places, turn Champs, pointing and laughing at their Father's real or seeming nakedness; Who drinking perhaps too much of the new wine of state policies, opinions, and strange fashions of reformation, possibly may have been so far overtaken with the strength of that thick and heady liquor, as to expose something of shame and uncomeliness to the view of the wanton world; where, not strangers, open enemies, proud, and profane aliens, but even Protestants, Professors, Domessticks, and near Allies, sit in the highest seat of scorers; inviting all the enemies of our Church, our Ministry, and our Reformed Religion, to the theatre of these times; Where, among other bloody and tragical spectacles, this is by some prepared for the farce and interlude; to expose by Jesuitical engines and machinations, the learned and godly Ministers, together with the whole Ministry of this Church of England, to be baited, mocked, and destroy'd, with all manner of irony, injuries, and insolency: And alas, there are not many, that dare appear, to hinder the project; or redeem, either the persons, or the function; yea, many are afraid to pity them, or to plead for them.

The merciful hearted, and tender handed God, who smites us, (whole hand we should all see, and return to him, who hath appointed this rod and punishment) doth not use to make so deep wounds and incisions for little corruptions, which are but superficial and skin-deep; nor to shoot so sharp and deadly arrows, in the faces of those that stand before him, as his Ministers; unless they first provoke him to his face, by their greater follies in Israel, as Eli's sons did. Wherefore, I conceive, a further penitent search and discovery ought to be made of Ministers sins and failings, for which the Lord hath brought this
Of true Honor.

this great evil upon them; which although it be a just punishment, yet it may prove a fatherly chastisement to us all; and at once, both purge us, as fire from our dross, and by exciting those gifts and graces, truly Christian and Ministerial in us, it may prepare us, both for greater service, andampler mercies, than ever yet we enjoyed, as Ministers in this Church; who have always lain under, and contended (since the Reformation,) not only with the burthen of our own iniquities and defects, but also with the evil eyes, the envious hearts, the sacrilegious hands, the profane manners, the superstitious, and factious humors of many men, both open enemies, and seeming friends: Some mens innate lewdness and pravity endures anything easier, than an able, and faithful Minister; others Cynical fowndis grudges at any thing left, than to see Ministers enjoy either honor, or estate, beyond the vulgar: Both are ready to be severe censurers of Ministers faults, that so they may justify their hatred or envy; but neither are likely to judge righteous judgement, nor shall we, I hope, ever stand to these mens sentence.

For my particular, I desire, both my self, and others of my minde, and Profession, may by an ingenious acknowledgement of our failings, be fitted for Gods and mans absolution, both in present and ceived the after ages; that it may not be said, The Ministers of England erred true cause, greatly, and were punished sharply, yet knew not how to repent humbly, and truly; every one palliating their own errors, and transferring the blame and guilt still upon others, when themselves were in somethings more blamable than any men, and merited, in their own censure, to be esteemed the chief of sinners.

... You then, O excellent Christians, know (in general) That all true honor from man, is but the agnition or reflexion of those Virtues and Graces, by which men are, or appear likest to God; that is, truly good and useful to others: From God, honor bestowed on any man, is a testifying before men (in some way of his providence) his approbation of those graces and endeavors in us; by which we draw nearest to that resemblance of the Divine goodness, and holiness, which is lively set forth in the Word of God, and the example of Jesus Christ; who is the visible express image of the fathers glory: By the gracious imitation of which glory, human nature attains and partakes somthing of the divine; and by a kind of transfiguration both of minde and manner (as Moses and Elias in Christs company on the Mount) both Christian Magistrates and Ministers, acting in holy and good ways, cannot fail by sincere honoring of God, to attain that honor which God hath promised; which consists, not so much in those preterments and applauses of the world, (which are for the most part vain, like it self;) but in that holy wisdom, gravity, and constancy, which becomes a Christian, either in wel-doing, or in comly suffering.
according to the clear will of God in his Word; which gives both precepts and patterns of all true excellencies. The robes of true honor are not made of the flight and thin cob-webs of popular opinions and practices; but are (telà crassa re ) of more solid and substantial virtues, as GonSalvo said. Worthy actions do always, not onely joy the soul, calm the conscience, and strengthen the heart; but also they make the face of good men to shine; conciliating such a majesty to virtue, and such beauty to true holiness, that even those who hate, and persecute them, (as to the interests of their worldly lufts) cannot in their judgements, but approve, reverence, and esteem them, even in the midst of their sufferings; which do not less honor and adorn them, than their well-doings: For nothing discountenanceth a Christian, but the conscience of vile actions, and Gods displeasure. In the judicious and constant way of holy walking, and honorably suffering, no man can lightly speak evil of another, without a secret shame, and reproach to himself; nor injure, or despight them, without some inward regret and pain.

And certainly, the Christian World here in England, (which owed and owned as much to their Ministers heretofore, and esteemed them as highly, and treated them as honorably and ingenuously, as any people under Heaven could do their Teachers in Religion) would never have so much opened their mouths, and withdrawn their love and respect from many, if not most Ministers; nor would some men have dared so far to meditate, and endeavor their total ruine and extirpation; if we Ministers had not in some things (beyond the venials of common infirmity) either much exceeded, or come very short of those due bounds, wherein true Christian virtues, and especially Ministers excellencies do consist.

Nor is it to be thought here, that the eyes of men are so severely fixt, onely, or chiefly, upon the ordinary defects of Ministers, either in gifts or industry, proper to their calling; Although (God knows) even herein too many of us may be justly blamed, and without injury despised; as either wanting those ministerial abilities, which we might by prayer and study attain; wherewith competently to discharge, and adorn that sacred Work, and redeem it from vulgar invasion, which brings the highest contempt of it. The ignorance, idlenes, indigence, and needless non-residency of some of us, from our charges, is not to be concealed. In others, the neglect of our studies, both in Divinity, and in all kinds of good learning, by which our profiting might appear to all men, is to be deplored: It is not expectable, that Ministers should increase in favor with God and man, unless (as Christ did) they grow in wisdom too, as well as in age or stature: And alas, what fruit of honor to Ministers, or glory to God, or good to mens souls, can be reaped, either from those that

Preach
Preach and Pray, chiefly for applatise and popular air, taking much pains to little or no purpose; or, yet from that contrary declension of others in their preaching to such a popular flatness, which stretcheth forth dead sermons, and spirits prayers, meekly to an excessive length, (as if the Pulpits were their coffins;) with so much insipidness, vain repetitions, vulgar flatteary, senseless oratory; yea, and sometimes with strange figures of Rhetoriques, which manner of some mens preaching hath given (we fee) the very meancift fort of heares (who heretofore were wonted to more useful, and more sober preaching and praying;) if they have any thing of parts, or pragmaticaftness in them, not so much a presumption, as a just confidence, that they can both preach and pray, as well or better, than such lazy, supine, superficial, and empty Ministers; whose duller plainness, and under fervency, is not that demonstration of the spirit, which sets forth divine truths in their native Scripture-simplicity; which is their greatest strength and beauty (as the Sun's, when it shines clearest from all mists and cloudings;) Nor are those mens robust and deformed hearts, that judicious zeal, which becomes great Ministers, both as sobermer, and holy Orators from God to the Church: For expressions ought always to be proportioned, in true oratory, to the weight of the matter in hand: Yea, where the unaffected quicknings of a Ministers own spirit, or the dullnes of his Auditors, requires more than ordinary vehemency; yet still it must be carried with very comly hearts and emotions, either for voice or gesture; but all the whole Pageantry of some mens preaching is, onely a gratifying their own fancies and passions, or else a miserable way of mocking God; and cheating the poor peoples souls; who (some of them) are well content with chaff, as with good corn, or the bread of life; and if the flail be still going, they care not what gift ariseth: Others thinking for the pure and wholesome waters of life, the idleness and poverty of these men, gives them to drink, onely of that (fud) stagnant water, which is at their doors; in the shallow puddles and foul puddles of their own dull inventions; where their sudden and confused thoughts are oftentimes sooner out of their mouths, than in their minds: And this for want of either ability, or industry, to dig to the depths of those sacred springs, the Scriptures; which chiefly afford that living water, which can refresh-thussing, whaf polluted, and save sinful souls; which are not to be wrought upon by flat, or fine notions, by soft expressions, or by feminine infinmations; but by sound demonstrations, learned arguments, serious conveffions, and masculine ways of expressions; such as become the Embassadors of God to man.

But, as not their Ministerial defects, in their peculiar Function; so neither are they the private immoralities of their lives (which
usually attend the negligence of their calling, and bring many scandals upon both their persons, and their profession. These are not the spots, or that kind of leprous, which could have thus made the whole body of their profession to be esteemed by many as unclean: For under these personal failings and deformities, (wherein some, and it may be too many of us, have been blamable in all times,) yet still, that abilitie, soundness, and diligence, which was found in many other worthy Ministers, both as to their learning and piety, was sufficient to preserve the dignity and venerableness of the function, from general obloquy, and contempt; nor ever was it brought to that precipice, where now it seems to stand, both as to disrespect and danger.

Until, that those thick clouds, and grocer vapor (heretofore unknown among Protestant Ministers in England) like a Scotch mist, or Egyptian darkness, came over the whole Firmament (almost) of this Church; darkness, and turning into Blood, even many of those Stars of the second and third magnitude, at least, which formerly shined, without blemish, in the soundness of their judgement, well-guided zeal, meekness of their spirits, and diligence in their places, to all exemplary holiness; who (good men) probably did not know, while their nails were pared, and kept short, by the Laws and Government above them, how much they could scratch (even till the blood came) if once the liberty of times suffered them to grow long, that some mens secular projects might use them, as the Ape did the Cats paw. Then indeed it soon appeared, that though Ministers might be well-gifted, and well-affected men, as to the Reformed Religion, to the Laws, and all publick Relations, yet they were but men; yea, though they were able and useful, while fixed in their Ecclesiastical orb and sphere; yet when they came to be planetary and eccentric to that duty and modesty, which the Laws of God and man most exactly require of them, as lights and patterns to others, than did their beams and influences begin to grow malign, fiery, and combustive.

Hence too many Ministers are looked upon, (how justly God knows; and the World, with their own consciences, not I, must judge) as great incendiaries; full of violence, immoderation, tumultuary heats, and passionate transports; beyond, what was either comly, or just for grave men of their calm and sober profession; into which high diftempers, it was as easie for men of learned parts, of zealous spirits, and little experience in humane publick affairs, especially that of a Civil war, to fall; as for constitutions of high colour, and sanguine complexion, to lapse into Feavers or Calentures; which by degrees, if not allayed, bring the wisest and strongest men to ravings, and fits of distraction: Such did those violent fits and inordinate
inordinate activities seem to be (upon the second thoughts and cooler reflections of people) wherein many Ministers, so much, and so busily, appeared in Senates and Armies; in Conventicles and Tumults; more like Statesmen, Politicians, and Soldiers; or what became only light and vain persons, than like learned, grave, and godly men; such as were called to a spiritual, holy, and unbloody warfare: This forwardness in sanguinary motions, rendered Ministers vile, and contemned, even to those, who were content to use their uncomly activities. The sound of Trumpets, the clashing of Swords, the thundring of Canons, were not a newer and greater terror to mens ears in England, than were those bold Philippicks, those bitter Orations, those sharp Invectives, those cruel Railings, used by some Ministers, even in their Prayers and Preachings, against those, to whom they formerly shewed a fair compliance and subjection: Who, if they had deferred evil language, and railing accusations, yet of all men these did not become the mouths of Ministers; who should in publick appear, as the Angels of God; with such modesty, light, and beauty, as set them farthest off from any passionate-darknesses of minde, or deformity of manners, or undecency of expressions. Since Christ hath commanded them most eminently to blest those that curse them; to pray for those that persecute them, &c.

After these, followed other vials of wrath, (poured forth from those, who should have been onely Pitchers with Lamps, filled with holy oyl, and fired onely with holy fire,) strange and new prodigies of opinions, in doctrine, government, and manners; sudden and violent changes (like wilde-fire) running even to all extremes; greater jealousies and impatiences of sufferings, than of sinning: Fierceness to be revenged upon any, by whom they sometimes thought themselves injured in the least measure, when it may be, it was not the man, as the Law, by which they suffered.

Yea, when some Ministers were gratified with such measures of revenge, as might move even envy it self to pity those persons, who suffered indeed justly from God for their sins; yet from man, they chose affliction, rather than sin: Yet still many Ministers followed with severer censures, and harsh declamings, even the miseries of those their Brethren, or Fathers; (who were in all true worth, equal to them, and in many things, as well as in an envied authority, above them;) Yet in those sad ruines of some learned, grave, and godly men, they seemed to glory; casting faggots of calumnies into their fires; shewing to little pity, and so much severity to them in calamities. That it will be no wonder to see many of their own Thumbs Judges 1.7. and Toes cut off; and themselves brought to creep under, even enemies tables, for their Bread; who helped or joyed so cruelly in maiming others, and bringing them even to a morsel of bread: Shewing

D 3
lefs pity and humanity to their destroyed Brethren and Fathers, than
the Israelites did to the wasted Beniamites; more rejoicing in the
victory of a party, than deploiring the sin, disorders, and miseries of
the whole.

The mean complings also of some Ministers, with those weak-
nesses and extravagancies of some mens opinions and practises in Re-
ligion, which they then knew, or suspected to be evil and dangerous;
of which, they have since been forced oft to complain with bitterness
of soul, for want of timely reproving, and resolute opposing. Add to
these, what is frequently observed, and with great scandal, Their shift-
ings and variations from one living to another, under pretence of
Gods, or the peoples call, (where the greater benefice is always the
louder voice, and most effectual call) being always deaf to any
thing, that may in any kinde diminish their profit, or preferment:
Still feising (like ravenous Birds and Beasts, or cunning Woodmen)
on any prey they can espie; upon which they gain by a thousand
windings, and wily ambushes, though never so injurious to the true
owners, even their Fellow Ministers, and their whole Families.

These, and such like frequent publick passagges, together with
some Ministers most imprudent neglects of opportunities, sometimes
offered, and much in their power, by which, to have brought differ-
ences to an happy compofure, especially in matters of Religion;
which were neither great nor hard to have been reconciled by men of
true Prudence and Christian moderation; (which virtues have great
influence in things of extern form and policy in the Church of Christ.)
The fatal omissions and rejections of fair offers; those cruel defeats
also which have followed after, and the unsuccessfull blastings of all
those plausible projects, and specious designs, which many of them
had, for some time, driven on (as Jehu) very furiously, and as they
thought very triumpantly; These, I say, and the like notorious im-
prudies, if not scandalous impieties, seem to many sober men, to
have been among the chief nuisances and clouds, both of folly and infamy,
which have risen from too many Ministers lives and manners, and so
much eclipsed the glory and face of their whole Function, which they
have rendred too many men suspected, as having more of the Jesuit-
tick cunning and activity, than of that meek and quiet spirit which
was so eminent in Jesus Christ; That from a pragmatical fierceness
(which sought to have an Oak in every Boat) many Ministers are
by many thought so superfluous, both in Church and State, that they
are ready to throw them all over-board; as thinking there is no use
of them, neither in the solemnities of Christians burial (who
beyond all men, dying in the Lord, and in hope of a blessed Resur-
rection, ought not to be buried with the burial of an Afl, or an In-
sidet) nor in the joyful celebrities of marriage, where there needs not
The dishonor of Ministers.

not only much of humane prudence, as to choice; but more of divine benediction, as to the holy use, and happy success of marriage, which among true Christians, ought to be in the Lord; and so may, very well, bear the publick benediction of those, who are to bless the people in the name of the Lord; yea, even in matters peculiar to their office, and ever so esteemed, and used in the Church of Christ, both as to the Church-Government, Discipline, and holy Ministra-
tions, of Prayer, Preaching, and Sacramental Celebrations, are Ministers, by many, thought more easily to be spared, and dispensed withal, as to any publick necessity; than any Bailiff in an Hundred, or a Constable in a Village: And no wonder, for nothing is more ordinary, than for the most excellent things, once degenerated to abuses, so far to lapel in the opinion and esteem of vulgar and passion
te mindes, that they are ready, foolishly to wish, and greedily to wel-
come, the total disuse and abolition of them.

I cannot write it, and I hope no good Protestant, or true Eng-
lisli heart, will read it, without grief and shame, That I have lived to see that verisified and fulfilled in too great measure, which * Campian, an Eloquent raider, sometimes wrote (not with more malice, than ap-
parent falsity, at that time, when the state of the Ministry in England had not more of publick favor, than of true honor and merit, both for learning, piety, and order,) Nothing (as he) is more putrid and con
temptible, than the English Clergy. O that this reproach were with truth now to be contradicted, or confuted; which hath so heavi-
ly befallen us, and so justly; since too many Ministers became so prag-
matick, so impertinent, so unsuccessful in State policies, in worldly pro-
jects, in secular agitations, in counsels and actions of war and blood, which they have agitated more intensively, than Church affairs and matters properly religious. How odious must it needs be, when they are publicly seen so vastly differing from that Spirit of the Gospel, which they Preach? So disguised in their Habit? So degenerating from their Calling? So different from the rule and example of the Lord Jesus Christ, of the holy Apostles, of the blessed Martyrs, of the primitive Bishops, Presbyters, and Confessors? These might be seen (possibly) after the pattern of their Saviour, riding weekly on an AS, or, as Ignatius, on some vile beast, to be crucified; but they were never met, on red, and pale, and black horses; threatening blood, and war, and famine, and death, to the Ages, and Churches, in which they lived: By the imitation of whose wisdom from above; which was pure, and peaceable, and gentle, and easy to be intreated; by walking in the good old ways of meekness, patience, gentleness, and Christian Charity, Ministers were heretofore so highly esteemed, in

* Precept et vul-
gi animus, &

infano impetu a

verum abusa,

adversus uhi

ium propetun-
tur, Petrarcli.

9. The dishon-
cast by some

The English

* Campian.

10. Ratio.

Nobil cleris Au-

ticano putidius.
The dishonor of Ministers.

This Church, That nothing was thought too much, or too dear for them: But, when by worldly passions and secular engagements, they are found too light for the balance of the Sanctuary, (where only learned humility gives weight, and an holy gravity to them;) when these sons of God court the daughters of men, and disguise themselves into the forms of Politicians; when they carry on vain and violent projects, and opinions, by pride, choler, fiecreness, tumultuaries, faction, and sedition; or by rusticity, grossness, levity, and credulity, or in ways of scurrility, popularity, and cruelty; when to advance themselves to some shew of power, they cry up the Scepter and * Kingdom of Jesus Christ, to be carried on, after the fashions of this world, with Arms and Engines of War, to be erected upon the Bones and Skulls of their Brethren and Fathers; when Reformation of Religion must be squallid, and besmeared with the blood of Christians; when they make the Throne of Christ to be supported, as Solomons on both sides, with Lyons, or Tigers, Bears and Wolves, instead of Lambs and Doves: As if Ministers had changed, or lost, their meek, humble, patient, silent, crucified Messias, and had got some Mauzim; a Mahometan God of forces; who is to be served in * Buff Coats, and Armor, with the (Opima Polia) the godly spoils and victims of lain Christians, their Neighbors, Brethren, and Fathers.

Alas, who is so blinde as not to see; who so dull, as not to consider, how destructive such distempers are (even in the justest secular conflicts) to the dignity; how contrary to the duty of true Ministers of the Gofpel: Whole honor consists, in meekness, patience, humility, constancy, diligence, charity, tenderness, and gravity in their Preaching, Praying, and Living, joyned to good learning, and sound knowledge? The want of these holy deportments conjured up those evil spirits of sacrifice, sedition, perjury, cruelty, contempt, and confusion, against them, and among them, which are not easily laid again: No man, ordinarily, being ashamed to offer that measure of scorn, evil speaking, ruine, and oppression; which they see, even some Ministers themselves have offered liberally to their Brethren, and Betters: Who can make conscience to destroy those, that make so little, to confume and devour one another? And this, at length, with the greater odium, because with the greater deceit: Honest meaning Christians expecting nothing less than such conclusions from the specious premisses of zeal for Religion, and a through Reformation; when it is too evident, how much, not only the minds and manners of men, but the general form and face of the Christian and Reformed Religion, was never tending to more deformity, either in Doctrine, Government, or true Discipline, than now it is; as other where, so in England, through the miscarriages of many Ministers, as well as people.
Ministers duty in civil dissentions.

people. No wonder, if ordinary men (who naturally love not a Minister of God's truth) do casually disesteem those, who so little reverence themselves, and their holy Function: No marvel, if men make so little conscience to hear, or believe them, whose actions so contradict, and palpably confute, their former doctrine and manners: Yea, many now make conscience to neglect, desist, for sake, and separate from them; yea, some seek utterly to depose and destroy them; not only as useful, but as dangerous and pernicious creatures, who seem to have more of the Wolf and Fox, than of the Sheep and Lamb. Thus from Ministers of God's truth, peace, and salvation, they are too much slain to be esteemed as State-firebrands; and by some as vessels of wrath, solely fitted for destruction: What was sometime cried up as a commendable zeal (and who but Phinehas with his Javelin, was then thought fit to be a Priest to the Lord!) is now looked upon, as either miserable folly, or detestable fury.

And certainly, (in the calmest representation of things) if some warmth of natural zeal, and sparks of humane affections were allowable to Ministers (who are still but men) in civil and secular affairs; relating (as they thought) to the good and safety of their Country, their Laws, Religion, Liberties, Estates, and Governors; yet should these warmer gleams in Ministers hearts, rather have vented themselves in soft dews and sweet showers, than in lightnings and hot thunderbolts, or coals of fire: Their politick Preaching, their earnest Prayers, their unseigned Tears should have attempered, both their own and other mens passionate heats and propensities to civil flames: They should, as * the Priests of the Lord, have stood and wept between the Porch and the Altar; crying mightily to Heaven, that God would spare his Church, and people; And with men on earth, they should have interceded, that they would pity themselves, and one another. Ministers of all men, should have studied, preached, prayed, wept, and fasted, all sorts and degrees of men in this Nation, (who were so many ways nearer related to one another) into calmness, moderation, Christian temper, forbearings, mutual condiscendings, and proneness to reconciliation: If this would not do, they should have stood in the gap, or lain prostrate (as Cæcina did) in the unhappy breach, and rather chose to be trodden under the feet of Armies, Men, and Horses, than to see the woful day, in which their King, and Country-men, and Fellow Christians, and Brethren, should rush into an unnatural war, to cut one another's throats.

This I say; godly and tender-hearted Ministers should rather have done, than in the least kinde, have kindled or fomented such

that I should not destroy it, but I found none. Cæcina *cum militis, nec auctoritate, nec precibus, nec manu retinere posset, projectus in limine, migratione demum quis per legati corpus eundum erat, clausit viam. Tacit. An. L.X.

E
unnatural
unnatural flames, and unchristian feelings; rudely intruding themselves into all Councils; full of restful stickings, State agitations, politick plottings, cunning insinuations, putid flatterings, secret whisperings, evil surmisings, uncomly clamors, and rude exasperations of fears to feelings, of jealousies to enmities, of misapprehensions to irreconcilable distances, especially in matters wherein their proper interests (as in those of Church-Government and Discipline) might seem any stop or difficulty to peace, or any occasion to war: Who concludes not, that in such violent deeds and demands, Ministers forget and forlook the greatest honor and duty of their Function! which is, to be blessed peace-makers, to beseech men to be reconciled to God, and for Christ's sake to one another; by whole precious blood, they, above all men, should shew they are redeemed from those fierce wraths, and cruel angers, which cannot but be curfed; and merit to be seriously and deeply repented, left for them, Ministers be divided in Jacob, and scattered in Israel. And however, many better spirited Ministers, might have honest hearts to God and man; yet it appears they had but weak heads, and were not aware, That secular policies and worldly interests, though they begin never so plausibly, and ascend like vapors from fair grounds, yet they presently thicken like mists into black clouds, drawing on jealousies and fears like strong winds: These drive men to new counsels; after they plead necessities; and from necessity obtain what indulgences and dispensations forever, either prosperity, or adversity require, in order to that great Idol Self-preservation; which even in the Church of Christ exalts itself above all that is called God; far different from primitive prattises, which were in ways of self-denial, Christian patience, and civil subjection, losing their lives to save them; following of Christ, in taking up his cross, * when they wanted not numbers. All which holy Christian arts, by the unnecessary designs, precipitant counsels, and rash adventures, of some passionate, weak, or self-seeking men, are oft forced to value, and give place to that, which is falsely called Reason of State; which loves not to be too straight-laced with any ties of true and self-denying Religion; whose passiveness is the best preservative, both of the Church, and of any true Minister whatsoever.

All true and wise Ministers teach, (and so they should practice) That it is better patiently to suffer * some deformities in Church, and pressures in State, than to be violent aviors of any new ones, as a means to reform the old. And since the minds of men are generally prone to measure counsels, and purposes, by the events, they do easily conclude, That God never leaves a good cause (wherein his glory, and Churches good were said to be to highly interested, so in the laws and lappes,) (as now the Presbyterian cause seems to be,) unless
unless it were carried on by impure hearts, or unwashed hands; either hypocritie leavening the end, or iniquity defiling the means: Truly it is feldom, that God waters good plants with so falt streams, as he hath done that, which some Ministers sought to resolutely to plant in the Garden of this Church, what pains or perils ever it cost them, or the publick.

So that the present dangers, distrefles, and complaints of many Ministers seem to most people to be, but as the just retributions of vengeance upon the rude forwardnefs, and factious forwardnefs, of many of them in civil troubles, which was far different from the tender and mild charity of the good Samaritan. For these men finding this Church and State much wounded, as it was going from the Jericho of some grievances, to the Jerusalem of a thorough Reformation, (as was pretended) were too liberal of their vinegar, and too nigardly of their oil; by rash infusions, by undiscreeet and unskilful searching the wounds, they made them deeper, wider, more fetred and incurable: (Clergy-mens hands usually poyfoning those light hurts in State, which they touch, or undertake to cure, with neglect of their Spiritual cures and callings.)

Thus justly, and usually there follows the black shadow of shame and confusion, when Ministers of the Church had rather appear curing active State-men, than honeft quiet Churchmen; studying machiavel, more than the Gospel; as if they were ashamed of the still * voice and quiet spirit of Jesus Christ; which descended upon his Apostles, not in the shape of flaming and dividing swords, but off * fiery cloven tongues: And this, not to let the world on fire, or to scorch and burn men, but softly to enlighten them; and by variety of gifts and graces, sweetly to warm them to a love of God, and mutual charity: Which is far from bringing in, either Christian Religion, or any Reformations, with wilde-fires, whirl-winds, and earth-quakes; wherein Christians had rather quite caft off the crofs of Christ from their shoulders, than bear it with any thing, which they count a civil burthen; and wherein the meanef t Ministers are more ambitious to wear a piece of the Popes Triple Crown on their heads, in an imaginary parity of power, than either that of thorns, or that of olive branches; the one an embleme of their patience, the other of their peaceableness: When the very Novices and Beardless striplings, in the Ministry, which have but lately been manumitted from the rod and ferna, are more eager to rule and govern all in an absolute community, and Country parity, than either able to rule themselves, or patient to be ruled, even by those that are worthy to be their Fathers, as every way their Elders and Better; whom Age and Nature, Custom, Law, Reason, Religion, all order and polity among men, would have set as over-fears over them; (howsoever,
Ministers ambition preposterous.

to some uses and ends, those, the younger Preachers, may be fit to be set over others, as Others of lower Forms :) When the passions and exorbitancies of some Ministers, shall punish other mens failings and sins, with greater of their own; and exceed what was most blamable in others, by such defects of charity, or excesses of cruelty, as are most condemnable in such as hold forth the love of God, and mercies of Christ to the World. What stability can be hoped in mens esteem and love, to such as are of so variable tempers, that they are not double, but treble minded men? Sometimes Episcopal, then Presbyterian, after Independents, next nothing at all, unless it be something of an hobling Erastian; who runs like a Badger, with varying and unequal motions, yet still keeping where the rigd of secular power goes highest; who is ashamed, not to seem a Christian, but yet afraid to be taught and governed, as Christians were in primitive times, when they had not the support of Civil Magistrates; whose protection in Government and duties religious, the Church willingly and thankfully embraces; but it cannot own the derivation of either its Institutions, or its Discipline, from secular Powers and Laws.

Not, that all mutation is the companion of folly or weakness; there are happy inconstancies, and blessed Apostacies; from Error to Truth; from Herefie and Schism to Verity and Catholike unity; from factionous pride, to obedient humility; from impotent desires of governing, to patient submissions under due and settled Government; from the Devils camps, to Gods Tents. But then truth, and not faction; piety, and not apparent self-interest; a change of manners to the better, as well as of side, and principles, will follow; and not the least appearance once of evil. From which, Ministers of all men, must abstain. There must be no show or shadow of worships and decays in holiness; of greater indifferencies in Religion; of any licentiousness and immanities in manners; of any which, discover their bellies, or this world, to be their god, more than Jesus Christ, or the true God.

And (which is most ridiculous and intolerable) many Ministers in their greatest ramblings and strifings, and separatings from themselves, and from all gravity, order, and modesty; deferting their former Station, Ministry, and Ordination; or taking it up upon some fanciful new way; some easie account of popular calling to any place; yet still they are many times eager declamers against Sets and Schisms, Herefies and Separations, Errors and corrupt Opinions, &c. that is against all that are not of their party, way, and faction: Not considering, that like Gehazi, the Herefie of those Syrians, cleaves to many of their own foreheads, who carry their heads full high.

Now after all this, (which I reckon up, not in bitterness, but in
Ministers recovery.

in charity, not for a reproach, but for a motive to repentance, in my self, or any other, that may be guilty of any thing, unworthy and scandalous to our holy Profession; it cannot seem strange, if Ministers are generally looked upon, as naked and ashamed of themselves; since many of them, have wantonly sinned themselves out of that innocency and protection (together with that love, respect, estate, and honor) which formerly they enjoyed; when publick Laws and Authority compassed them about; keeping them, as in subjecti

on and due obedience, so in plenty, safety, love, and respect. Which last, (preferving them from irreverence, affronts, and vulgar inso

lency) is easily obtained, when once the common people see that Power stands Centinel, and Civil Favor keeps a Guard, on any Men, or any Calling. Indeed, with the common sort of people, it matters not much, what straw and cloths the Scare-crow be made of, so it be set upon a Pole.

By these secular and worldly temptations, hath the Devil, in great part, beguiled the Ministers and the Ministry of England, of Ministers that favor, and those blessings which they once enjoyed; which to way of re

cover, by Gods help, must be the work, not of weak, ready, popular, covetous, famous, and clamorous men, who are resolved never to confess any error or transport, but to continue in that troublesome and rugged path of novel opinions, State projects, and secular ambi

tions; wherein they see they have lost themselves past all recovery, without ingenious retraction and speedy amendment. The rash

ness and obstinacy of such Uzzahs, is not fit to stay the tottering Ark, who have almost quite overturned it; nor ever will they be able to bring back the pristines honor of the Ministry, or the majesty of the Reformed Religion: Their penitence, publick, real, and as bold as their sin and error, will more recover and recommend them, than all those murmurings and complaints, by which they scratch one another's itch; and confirm each other in their erroneous obstinacy, and defeated novelies. Ingenious confessions and forlakings of their follies, facilities, superstitious beats and immoderations, will bell reconcile them, not only to God and man, but also to them

selves: Who can have little peace, while they are pertinacious in their errors, and are impatient to recant any thing, either in opinion or practice, although never so much amis and blasted, both by the disfavor of God and man. This opiniativeness and reflivenes in extern Forms of Religion, is likely to be the greatest obstruction, which will hinder the recovery of Ministers to unity, order, and honor; which was ever greatest, when for their painful preaching, and peaceable living, they were persecuted by others, Heathens, or Hereticks, or Schismaticks; who never wanted will to vex the Orthodox Christians, when ever they had power; were their begin

nings
The humble constancy of some Ministers.

ings never so gentle, and their pretensions never so specious: But then is the regard to Ministers left, or none at all, when they turn Pragmatists instead of Preachers; Persecutors instead of Peace-makers; and sticklers for, and with the world, rather than sufferers with, and for Christ. Since, being Ministers of Jesus Christ, the Lamb slain for the sins of the World, they are more comly on the rack, and at the stake; in the prison and dungeon, with bolts and chains, with wounds and brands for Christs sake, than with Buff-coats and Belts, and Banners, and Trophys, dipped in and defiled with the blood of their People, and Neighbours, and Governors, in any case whatsoever. Sure, it is hard for Ministers of the Gospel, to pick out Letters of Mart from the Gospel, or to have any Commisision to kill and slay, from Jesus Christ; in order to reform Religion, or to plant any of his clearest Institutions, much less to pull down any antient good orders in the Church, or to set up any new ones; which have so much of mans vanity and passion, that they cannot have any thing of Christs divine appointment.

Nor is this meek and passive temper, requisite in a true Minister, any softness and cowardly, but the greatest valor and magnanimity; which, having least of revenge, passion, self-seeking, humane faction, and worldly interest, (which are always dubious in their rise, and prone to be exorbitant in their progress, and most injurious in their success) have most of Love, Patience, and Christian Charity; which are indisputably commendable in the Christian, though they be to the mans own hinderance.

It will not be asked of Ministers of the Gospel, at the last account, who fought, and slew, and spoiled, &c. but who fasted and prayed, and mourned, for the sins and judgements on the Nation, and Church; nor will they easily be found in Gods Book of Martyrs, who died upon disputable quarrels in Civil Wars, while they neglected the indisputable duty of their Office and Ministry.

Ministers never reap less crops of love or respect from men, than when they sow that forbidden mislane; the Tares and Cockle of passionate novelties, unproved opinions, and civil dissensions, among the seeds of Religion, and essays of Reformation: From which mixtures, those Ministers, whose gravity, wisdom, and humility, have most withheld, or soonest withdrawn their hearts and hands, are the likeliest men, by their piety, moderation, patience, and constancy, in holy and indisturbable ways, to recover and restore the dignity of their Calling; Who in the midst of those great and wide inroads, which have much broken down the fence, and occasioned the letting in all sorts of wilde beasts upon the Lords Vineyard of this Church; while others, like dead stakes, formerly making a great show in the hedge, are found rotten, weak, and unfound: These are evidenced to all true
true Christians, to be as living standards; well rooted in their pious principles, and not easily removed from that steadfastness, and meekness of their practice in ways of judicious constancy; which they have hitherto with patience maintained, in the midst of those tempests, which have not so utterly overwhelmed them, but that in many places they appear fixed and unmoved in their pious integrity, and patient charity; which makes them looked upon with some eye of pity, love, and honor, by all ingenious spectators; while yet, they generally reflect with scorn and laughter, on many others; who in the publick storm, thought themselves gallant sailors and skilful steersmen; yet having made great waste of their patience, obedience, and discretion, they seem also much cracked in their conscience, credit, and reputation; For seeking, inconsiderately, to pull down, or to possess themselves of others cabins, (who as pilots had a long time safely steered the ship) they have almost split, and sunk the whole vessel, wherein they and others were embarked: Nor will they any way be able to buoy it up again, or stop the daily increasing, and threatening leaks, till for taking those soft and shameful compliances with factious novelties, and immoderate ways of vulgar reformings, they return to that 

primitive firmness, and indissoluble simplicity of the Antient (which were the purest and best formed) Churches, both as to Doctrine, Discipline, and Government; which no learned and unpassionate man needs go far to finde out, either in Scripture pattern, or in the Churches after-imitation; by which the dignity of the Ministry, and Holy Mysteries of the Gospel, always preferred themselves, amidst the hottest persecutions, both in the love, and obedience of all sound and sober Christians.

So that in my judgement, who know how hard it is to play an after-game in point of Reputation, and who have no design but a Publick and Common good, (writing thus freely, as under the favor, so without the offence, I hope, of any good man) The Ministers of this Church will never be able to stand before thos men of Ai, their many adversaries; who are daily scattering them into many feeble factions, and pursuing them everywhere (so divided) with scorn, and afflicting them with many affronts and injuries; until having taken a serious review of their late extravagancies, and making a serious scrutiny into their consciences; and finding (as they needs must, if they be not wilfully blinde, or obstinate) some accursed thing, some Babylonish garment, and wedg of Gold; something wherein proud, or ambitious, or covetous, or revengeful, or injurious emulations, or other more venial errors have tempted them to offend; they cast them quite away; and so humbly really themselves, to that Primitive Harmony, that Excellent Discipline, Order, and Government, wherein was the honor, beauty, and consistency of
of the Church and Christian Religion, even when least protected and most opposed by secular powers: Of whom Christian Bishops, Ministers, and People, never asked leave, either to believe in Jesus Christ, or to live after that holy form and publick order, wherein Jesus Christ, and the blessed Apostles after him, established and left them, which obtained universal imitation, and use in all Churches, for many hundred of years, from true Christians, both Pastors and People, in the midst of perfections.

Out of which old and good way of Primitive Unity, Order, Government, Discipline, and holy Ministrations, if those immoralsities be kept, (as they may most easily) to which (we see) the lusts and passions of men are prone to run, even in all * novel forms and inventions, (pretend they never so much, at first, to glorious Reformations;) Nothing can be a more present and oversein reformative for this Church, and the true Reformed Religion, to settle with truth, and peace among us; both to the comfort of all able Ministers, and the satisfaction of all sober Christians; who study the truth, and unity of the Faith, not the power and prevalency of any faction. We need not go far to seek the root and source of our miseries present or impending, which have brought forth so bitter fruits; whereby God at once would shew and satisfy vain men with their own delusions *. In which, heady and high-minded men, trusting more to their own wits or tongues, and to the * arm of flesh, in politic machinations, than to the living God, in holy and humble ways of truth and peace, have soon found them to be, both vain and cursed things.

As it is evident at this day in the sad state, which some Ministers folly, presumption, and precipitancy, together with other sinful frailties, and excesses, have brought upon themselves and their whole Function in this Church. Who, first defying, then destroying the Antient and Catholike conduits of their Order and Ministry, (which, derived from Christ, by his Apostles; went on in an after constant succession of true, Ministerial Power and Authority,) have digged to themselves, empty, broken eisbem, of novel and divided ways, which can hardly hold any water; but like wandering clouds without water, affecting Supremacy, or Parity, or Popularity in Church power; they have almost brought it to a nullity; through the increasing and over-bearing of Plebeian Insolence; who finding Ministers thus divided among themselves, and scrambling for Church power in common, without any order or distinction, either of age, or gifts, and parts; the common people (being the most) begin to conceive and
Gods mercy to true Ministers.

and challenge to themselves, first a share, next the supremacy and original of all Church power; as if in the illiterate heads, illiberal hearts, and mechanick hands of the common sort of Christians, (and, without reproach, the most part of them, and the forwardest of them, against the Function of the Ministry, have been and ever will be of no higher rank, breeding or capacity,) Jesus Christ had placed the Keyes of Heaven, the power eminent and paramount of all Church authority, and holy administrations; which Christ eminently, and his Apostles ministerially had, and exercised; afterward committing them to able and faithful men; such as (doubtless) were many degrees raised above the vulgar, and distinguished in gifts and power Ministerial, both ordinary and extraordinary.

Thus from the head, and shoulders, and arms, (Jesus Christ, the Apostles, the succeeding Bishops and Presbyters) which were of Gold and Silver, Church power is by some forced to descend to the belly, thighs, and feet of the people, which are part of Iron, and part of miry-clay; Most of whom, so much stickling to be controllers of Chrift's household (the Church) are not in any discreet and sober man's judgement, fit to be stewards, or scarce in any degree of ingenuous service, in a well ordered family; They may make good Gibeonites for the house of God, but very ill Levites or Priests.

Thus I have shewed how the sparks of many Ministers passionate opinions, and violent practices, flying up and down in their many disorderly breathings and extravagant Motions, both in Church and State; they at last, lighting upon the thatched houses, the combustible stuff of common peoples minds, and manners, have set their own houses on fire, to the deformity, discontent, and danger of all that dare own themselves, and their holy Function, as delivered to them from a better and diviner hand.

And indeed it is of the Lords mercies, that we have not been, ere this, utterly consumed both root and branch, for our follies and strange fires, by the malice, cruelty, and despight of those, to whose rage, as to the Seas, the Lord hath hitherto set bounds; who are our enemies, not for our sins and failings, but for the reformed truths, and Gospels fake, which we preach and profess. Amidst the sequestrings, plunderings, silencings, waffings, affronts, calumnies, indignities, and discouragements cast upon, or threatened by some, against those of the Ministry, above any other calling; as if the Crosses taken down from Steeples and Churches, were to be laid on the necks and shoulders of Ministers; It is a wonder, that any remnant of godly, able, and true Ministers, hath hitherto escaped, through the indulgence of God, and the favor or moderation of some in power; who know not (it seems) how to reprobate all those as Antichristians, by whose Ministry, they may hope, themselves and others, either are, or may be brought
Politick and Atheistical plots against the true Ministry.

brought to the saving faith of Jesus Christ, and to the hope of God's elect: Nor can they yet be persuad'd, to act as Pharaoh's, that knew not Joseph.

So that we cannot, but wonder (with thankfulness to God, and to those who now exercise civil power amongst) that, the Reformed Ministers and Ministry in this Church, have not been made like Sodom and Gomorrah; when we consider, how many showers of fiery darts, from violent and cruel men, like thick clouds (pregnant with thunders and lightnings) hang over our heads. Who like Julian the Apostate, are impatient of nothing so much as this, That their should be any true Ministers or Ministry, in due order, holy Authority, Evangelical succession, and settled maintenance, continued in this, or any other Reformed Church. Who seeking to join the Lyons skin to the Fox's, would fain leven Military spirits against the Ministry; thereby to overwhelm and extinguish those lights of true Religion: pretending, that some Troopers flaming swords, as the guard of Cherubins, will be more useful to keep the way of the tree of life, than all those burning and shining lights of the true Ministers, who are rightly called and ordained in the Church; whose learned labors, and patient sufferings in all ages, from the Apostles times, have undoubtedy planted, watered, propagated, and (under God) preferred the true Christian Religion; either from Heathenish ignorance, Idolatry, Atheism, Prophaneness and Persecution, on the one side; or from Antichristian Errors, Superstitions, Corruptions and Confusions, on the other.

Yet are there now, not onely secret underminings, but open engines used, by which some men endeavor utterly to overthrow these great boundaries, firm supports, and divine constitutions of Christian Religion; the Authority, Office, Power, and Succession of the true Ministers, and Ministry of the Gospel: Which plots and practices can be nothing else, but the devils high-way, either to utter Atheism, Irreligion, and Prophaneness; or to the old groser Popery, Error, and Superstition; or, at best, to those detestable and damnable formalities in matters of Religion, which our late Seraphick Sadduces, or Matchiavelian Christians have learned, and confidently profess. Some of whom (like Jezebel, that made her self a Prophetess, or like the old * Gnosticks, Montanists, Maniches, Carpocratians, Circumcellians, Valentinians, and the like rabble of wretches) have their wilde speculations, beyond what is written in the holy Scriptures, or ever believed and practis'd in the Churches of Christ; who

Rev. 2. 20. * Irenæus l. 35.
Carpocratæ & Gnosticorum docitima, per
sidem & operationem salutis hominum; religna indifferentia secundum opinionem hominum bona aut mala vocati; cum nihil naturae malum st.

* teach
teach men to think, say, and write, That God, Christ Jesus, the holy Spirit, good Angels and Devils; the Scriptures, Law, and Gospel, Ministry and Sacraments; the Souls immortality and eternity; the Resurrection and Judgement to come; all Virtue and Vice; Good and Evil; Heaven and Hell, all are but mere fanciful forms of words, fabulous imaginations, feigned dreams, empty names; being nothing without us, or above us. That all this, which men call Religion, is nothing else, but the issues of humane inventions; which, by the cunning of some, the credulity of others, and the custom of most men, leaves, where seconded with power, to scare and amuse the world, so as to keep the vulgar in some awe and subjection.

And in their best and soberest temper, they hold, That no Religion is, or ought to be other, than a lackey and dependant, on secular power; that piety must be subordinate to policy; that there the people serve God well enough, where they are kept in subjection to those that rule them: From whose politic dispensations and allowances, they are humbly and contentedly to receive what Scriptures, Law, and Gospel, holy Institutions, Ministry, and Religion, those who govern them, think fittest, whereby to preserve themselves in power, and others in peace under them. That, where the principles of Christian, or Reformed Religion (which hath so far obtained credit in these Western parts of the World) do crofs, or condemn the designs, and interests of those in Sovereignty, (how unjustifiable soever they are for righteousness or true holiness;) yet are they, by Reasons of State, and the supposed Laws of Necessity, first to be dispensed withall, and actually violated: Next, by secret warpings, variations, connivencies, and tolerations, they are to be ravelled, weakened, discompos'd, and decry'd. Thus gradually, and slyly introducing new parties and factions in Religion; which, cryed up by men of looser principles, profaner wits, and flattering tongues; also set off and sweetened with novelty, profit, and power, will soon bear down, and cast out, with specious shews, of easier, cheaper, freer, and safer mouldings, all true Religion; and the true Ministry of it; and all the antients, (if they seem contrariant ways) though never so well feded, and approved, not onely by the best and holiest of men; but, as to their constant preservation, even by God himself.

Indeed, all experience teacheth us, That no passion in the soul of man is less patient of sober, just, and truly religious bounds, than Ambition; which will rather adventure, as it were, to countermand, and over-rule God himself, than fail to rule over man. Nor

* Lucullan & egregius humana ambitio Christi juxta Dei imperium, nec libenter crucem gestit, qui seepira captata & diademata aequum patitur. Parisienis,

hath
Ambition the pest of true Religion.

hath any thing caused more changes, toffings, and persecutions, in
the Church, than this forcing religious rectitudes, and the immutable rules of divine Truth, Order, and holy Institutions, to bend to,
and comply with, the crookedness of ambitious worldly interests. Infomuch, that very Reformation pretended, and by well meaning
men invented, have oftentimes degenerated to great deformities; through the immoderations, and transports of those, who cannot in
reason of State (as they pretend) subject themselves to, or continue to use those severer rules of righteousness; or follow those primitive examples of holy Discipline and Religious orders, which Christ and
his Church hath set before them; but they must so far wrest and innovate Religion, formerly established, and remove the ancient Landmarks, which their forefathers observed, as they finde, or fancy necessary to the interest of that party or power, which they have undertaken.

Hence inevitably follows by those unreasonable. * Reasons of State, (which, not the Word of God, nor his providence, nor any true prudence, but only some mens fancies, passions, lufts, and fol-
lies, make necessary,) That the antient established Ministry, and
true Ministers, be they never so able, worthy, useful, and nece-
sary, must either be quite removed, and changed; or else, by degrees drawn to new Modellings and Conformities; which can never be done, without great shames to many, injuries to others, and discouragement to all, that have any thing in them of Religious seduedness; whole pious and judicious constancy in their holy way and profesi-
on, chusing rather to serve the Lord, than the varying humans of
any men and times, shall be judged pertinacy, faction, and the next step to Rebellion; how useful, peaceable, and commendable forever their gifts, and minds, and manners be, in the Church of Christ.

To this Tarpeian rock, and precipice, by Gods permission, and
the English worlds variation in Civil and Ecclesiastical affairs, doth seem to be brought (as to some mens designs and purposes) the whole frame and being of the Reformed Religion in this Church of Eng-
land, as to its formerly established Doctrine, Discipline, Government, and true Ministry: Not, but that I know, the Lord Jesus Christ can withdraw this his Church and Ministers (as he did himself) from their malice, who sought to cast him down headlong from the browe of that Hill, on which their City flood: I know he is as willing, able, and careful to save his faithful servants, as himself. And who knows, how far God may be pleased to use (as he did the rela-
tion of the * captive maid, in order to his mercy, both for healing and converting Naaman) this humble Intercession and Apology of

* Sermonem ancillae sequitur heri sanctas:

per servumturn captivam liberavit depopos Dominus: De parta momento pendente, res magis momentae z ve nel minima Desesperemur. August.
Sympathy with Ministers sufferings.

the meanest of his servants? who owns all he is, hath, or can do, to his bounty and mercy. God oft hangs great weights on small wires, and sets great wheels on work by little springs. We know, that words spoken in due season, before the * decree be gone forth, may be acceptable and powerful, even with God himself; how much more should they be as * Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver, to sober and religious men; and in the behalf of those, who (at least) have deserted to be heard, before they be condemned and destroyed?

I have read of Sabbacu, a King of Ethiopia, who being by * Herodot dreams admonished, that he could not possess himself of the Kingdom of Egypt, otherways than by Sacrilege, and the slaying of the * Serviliu de Priests; he chose rather to lay aside his claim, and advantages of War, which he had gotten, and to refer the Government of that Kingdom to twelve Wisemen; who erected to the memory of that Princes piety, one of the tallest Pyramids of Egypt, which yet remains: How much more will it become Christians in any way of Power and Magistracy, not to make their way upon the spoils, nor lay the foundations, or to carry on the fabrick of their greatness and dominion, upon the carkasses and ruins of such as are able, true, and faithful Ministers of the true God, and the Lord Jesus Christ?

However my own private comforts of life might other ways be, either secure, or satisfactory; yet how can I with silence, or as Nehemiah without sadness, behold the miseries of many my Brethren and Companions? For whole sakes, I cannot but have great compassion, even in worldly regards; well knowing, that many, if not far the most of them, have borne the heat and burden of the late days, or years rather, of great tribulation, beyond any sorts of men; to whom have been allowed some ways, either for reparation, or composition, or restitution, or oblivion: But not so to any Ministers; from some of whom hath been exacted the whole tale of bricks, as to the necessary labors of their Ministry, and charges, when the straw of maintenance hath, in great part, been, either denied to them, or some way exacted from them; nor was ever any publick ease, or relief granted to them in that regard.

But it becomes neither them, nor me, in this particular, to plead or complain, as to any private interests; pressures; or indignities, al-

*Vel in hoc uno

ready sustained. The Lord is righteous and holy, though we be waf-

*maxime inidono-

ed, impoverished, and exhausted; yea, though we be accounted, as

*quod ibi

the off-scouring of all things (1 Cor. 4. 13.) and as unsavoury salt fit

*non

to be cast on the dunghil. (Matt. 5. 13.) While there are so many Ministeres,

*et

hasty intruders, and confident undertakers of the work of the Jere-

Ministry,
The indigent sufferings of good Ministers.

Ministry, yet the best and ablest of us all, desire before the majesty of God, in all humility to confess, that we are less than the least of his mercies; that none of us are, as to God's exactness, or the weight of the work, sufficient for that sacred office and ministry.

Yet since this heavenly treasure hath been duly committed to such earthy vessels, who have wholly devoted, even from their youth, their studies, lives, and labors, to the service of Christ, and his church, in this work of the ministry; since the publick wages and rewards for that holy service, have by the order of humane laws, by the piety, bounty, and justice, of this Christian nation, been hitherto conferred upon them, and they rightly possessed of them; I cannot but present to the considerations of all men, that have piety, equity, or humanity in them. That there are no objects of pity and compassion, more pitifully calamitous and distressed, than those many learned and modest men, the godly and faithful ministers of this church of England, either are already, or are shortly like to be, if the malice of their adversaries, be permitted to run in its full scope and stream against them; which will be like that flood, which the old serpent, and great red dragon, cast out of his mouth after the woman, (the church) which would carry away both mother and child, old and young, the sons with the fathers, true piety with the whole profession; the present ministers with all future successions, as to any right authority, and lawful ordination or mission.

What I pray you (O excellent christians; all whose other excellencies are most excelled in your Christian piety and compassion) can be more deplorable, than to see so many perils of ingenious education, good learning, honest lives, diligent labors, (after so much time devoted chiefly to serve God, their country, and the church of Christ, and the souls of their brethren, with their studies, learning, and labors) to be turned, or wearied out, of their honest and holy employment; to be so cast out of their houses and homes, together with all their nearest relations; to be forced to begin some new methods of life, in some mean employment or dependance; and this in the declining and infirmer age of many, wherein they must either want their bread, or beg it; or, at best, with much contention, against the armed man. Poverty, in labor and sorrow, night and day, they must mingle their bread with ashes, and their drink with weeping; when they shall be deprived of all those publick rewards and settled encouragements, (which God knows, were neither very liberal in most places, nor much to be envied, if charity did not grow cold; and iniquity abounds) wherewith the whole labor of their lives, their

The cunning and cruelty of some against the ministry.

19.

Prov. 24. 24.

Math. 24.

Of true Ministers worth and use.

Learning, and chargeable studies, besides their industry, humility, and other virtues, were but meanly, yet, to them, contentedly recompened, by those Laws of publick piety and munificence; which invested Ministers in their places and livings, after the same tenure for life, and good behavior, that any man enjoys his free-hold in house or land; keeping himself within the compas of the Law.

*Ministers have the same Right to their Ecclesiastic estates by Magna Charta, as others have to their Temporalties. Concessimus quod Ecclesia Anglicana libera sit in perpetuum, & habeat omnia sua integra, & omnes libertates suas illas. Magna Charta, c. 1. See the Statue of 2. Edw. 6. and 19. fortreble damages in case of not paying Tithes, where due.

And that the barbarity, inpiety, and monstrosity of the injury; may seem the less with the common people, all these sufferings of poverty and necessity (which either have fallen upon some, or threaten others) true Ministers in this Church, must be attended with the black shadows of all evil speaking and reviling; such as was used to their great master and institution Jesus Christ; when he was to be thus crucified with contempt, left the Romans come and destroy the City (though there was nothing found in him, by his Judge, worthy of death.) That to the proud mockers of the Ministry, may Fay with scorn, Behold, these men of God; these that pretended to preach salvation to others, let them now come down, and face themselves from that Jesuitick, Socinian, and mechanick Cross, to which they are with all cruel petulancy, either now, or shortly (as their malicious enemies hope and boast) to be fixed.

O what would the enemies of this Reformed Church and State, whatever they are, have wished more to crown their envious desires, and consummate their malicious designs; than to see, that woful day, wherein this abomination (which threatens to make the Reformed Religion defolate, in this Church of England,) being set up, the whole Function and Succession of the true and lawful Ministry here, should be questioned, cassified, triumphed over, and trampled upon, by the foot of Ignorance, Error, Popery, Jesuitism, Atheism, Profaneness, and all sorts of disorderly minds and manners?

All which heretofore felt the powerful restraints, the mighty chains, the just terror and torments cast upon them, by the convincing Sermons, learned Writings, frequent Prayers, and holy examples of many excellent Ministers in England; before whom the devils of ignorance, error, profaneness, schism, and superstition, were wont to fall as lightning to the ground; from their Jesuitick Heavens.

Have all these Sons of Thunder and of Consolation too, (who were esteemed heretofore by all Reformed Christians in this Church, to be as Angels of God, Embassadors from Heaven, Friends of Christ; the Luke 10. 18. Vera fulgente luce fluidicatus fulguris coruscatio, terrore magis quam in mine conspiciua. Chryloft.
Ministers small temptations, and great pains.

the Bridegroom of their Souls; more precious than fine Gold; dearer, to humble and holy men, than their right eyes; the beauty of this Church, and blessing of this Nation.) Have they all been hitherto, but as Mahometan-Flogers, or Messengers of Satan, or Priests of Baal, or as the cheating Pontiffs of the Heathen gods and oracles? Have they all been found liyrs for God, and born false witness against the Truth, and Church of Christ? Have they arrogantly and falsely* taken too much upon them, in exalting themselves above their line and measure? Or magnifying their Office and Ministry, above the common degree or sort of Christians?

And why all this art, fraud, and improbity of labor in Ministers? (Sure, with the greater sin and shame learned and knowing men should weary themselves in their iniquity, when they had so little temptation to be, either false or wicked, in so high a nature.) Alas, For what hath been, and is, all this pompous pains, and hypocritical sweat of Ministers? Is it not for some poor living, for the most part, for a sorry subsistence, a dry morsel, a shred-bare coat, a cottagely condition? In comparison of that plenty, gallantry, superfluity, splendor, and honor, wherewith other callings (which require far less ability or pains) have invited and entertained their professors in this plentiful Land? Are not the gleanings of the grapes of Ephraim, better than the vintage of Abiezer? Are not the superfluities* of any ingenuous calling, beyond the necessaries of most Ministers? And all this, that after infinite studies, pale watchings, fervent prayers, frequent tears, daily cares, and endless pains, exhausting their Time, Spirit, Estates, and Health, they might, through many vulgar sightings, reproaches, and contempt, with much patience condemn themselves and their relations, first to poverty; which is no light burden, where a good conscience is wanting, or an evil one attending (as in this case malice doth suppose.)

And, now at last, (after more than one thousand five hundred years, and one Century and half since the Reformation) in all which time this Nation hath more or less enjoyed the ineffimable blessing (for to our pious Ancestors esteemed the lights of this World, the true Ministers of the Church, in their Prayers, Preaching, Writings, holy Offices, and Examples,) they should by some men be thought unworthy of any further publick favors or employment, and to have merited to be counted as sheep for the slaughter*, in their persons: And as to their Function or Calling (which was ever esteemed as sheep for the slaughter, and killed all the day long; Vanihna diaboli christii victimae. Leo. They are Christ's Lambs, whom the Devil delights most to butcher.
Ministers small temptations, and great pains.
ed sacred among true Christians) to be wholly laid aside and outed
with all disgraceful obloquies; as if they had been, but pious Im-
postors, devout Usurpers, and religious Monopolizers, of that holy
Ordination, divine Mission, Power, and Authority, which Christ
gave personally to the Apostles; and both by declared intent, and
clear command, to their due and rightful Successors, in that ordinary
Ministry which is necessary for the Churches good: Or at best they
must be reputed, but as superfluous, burdensome, and impertinent,
both in Church and State; chargeable to the publick purse; dan-
egrous to the publick peace; useless as to any peculiar power of holy
Administrations; which some think may be more cheaply, easily,
and safely, supplied by other forward pretenders; who think them-
selves ended with greater plenitude of the Spirit, with rarer gifts,
with diviner illuminations, more immediate teachings, and special
anointings; by which, without any pains or studies, they are suddenly
invented into the full office and power Ministerial: And as they are
themselves led, so they can infallibly lead all others, into all truth;
with such wonderful advantages of ease, and thrift, both for men's
pains and purses, that there will be no need to entertain that an-
tient form, and succession of ordained Ministers, as any peculiar call-
ing or function, amidst so gifted and inspired a Nation. So much more
sweet, and fruitful, do these self-plant ed Country Crabs, and Wild-
ings, now seem to many, than those Trees of Paradise, which, with
great care and art, have been grafted, pruned, and preserved by most
skilful hands; which these new sprouts look upon, and cry down, as
only full of Moses and Mistletoe.

In this case then, O you excellent Christians, such freedom, as I
now use, I hope may seem not only pardonable, but approvable,
and imitable to all good Christians, who fear God, and love the Lord
Jesus Christ; who have any care of their own souls, any charity to
the Reformed Churches, any pity to their Country, any tenderness
to the religious welfare of posterity: And in a matter of so great and
publick importance, it is hoped, and expected by all good men, That
none of you, either in your private places, or publick power and
influences, will by any inconsiderate, and mean compliance, gratifie
the evil minds of unreasonable men, in order to compass the Devils
most Antichristian designs; who seeks by such devices, first to de-
ceive you, next to destroy, and damn, both you and your posterity.
Your silence or deferredness, in such a cause, and at such a time, as
this, will be your sin; as it would have been mine: How much more:
if you use not your utmost endeavors, in all fair and Christian
ways, to stop this Stygian stream; but most of all, if you contribute
any thing of that power you have, whereby to carry on this poisonous
and soul-destroying torrent. Words are never more due, than in
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* Blasphemie proximum est
Christiani illimitati, ubi Christi causa agitur,
& negligentia quam siendo aque prodimus
ac Judas salutandi, aut Petrus abnegandi.
Jeron.
The general sense of good Christians.

Christ's behalf, who is the Incarnate Word; and for this Ministers, who are the Preachers of that Word.

Nor is this my private sense and horror alone, but I know you (O excellent Christians, who are truly men of pious and publick; not of proud, or pragmatick spirits;) cannot but daily perceive, That it is the general fear and grief of honest and truly reformed Christians, in this Nation; Who with one mouth are ready to say to those in place and power, as Abraham did to the King of Sodom, or Mephibosheth to David; Let those cunning, cruel, and covetous Zibas (who are treacherous practices, and ingratitude calumnies, seek to deprive us of our Homes, Goods, Lands, and Liberties,) let them take all, so as our David, the beloved of our souls, our Christ, our true Religion, our glory, our true Ministers and Ministry, may be safe; Let others take the spoils and booties of our labors, onely give us the souls of our selves, and our posterity, for a prey; which are like to perish for ever, unless you leave us those holy means, and that sacred Ministry, which the wisdom and authority of Christ onely could (as he hath) appoint; which the Churches of Christ have always enjoyed, and faithfully transmitted to us for the saving of our sinful souls. This request, the very Turks unasked, do ye grant, in some degree to the poor Christians, who live under their dominion.

And if it may seem to be our error and fondness, thus to prize our true and faithful Ministers, and that onely divine Authority, which is in their Ministry; yet vouchsafe to indulge us in the midst of so many epidemical errors, this one pious error, and grateful fondness; which not custom and tradition, but conscience and true judgement have fixed in us; since we esteem, next God, and our blessed Saviour, and the holy Scriptures, the true Ministry of the Church, as that holy necessary ordinance which the divine wisdom and mercy hath appointed, whereby to bring us to the saving knowledge of God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, by the Scriptures; That, as we owe to our parents, under God, our Natural and Sinful Being (whom yet we are bid to honor;) to our Christian, Mystical, and Spiritual Being, we owe to our true Ministers, as our holy and spiritual Fathers; by whose care we have been truly taught, and duly Baptized, with divine Authority, in the Name of the blessed Trinity; both instructed, and sacramentally confirmed in that faith, which is the only true way of eternal life.

By their study, pains, love, and diligence (when we would have been otherwise willingly ignorant, and wholly negligent of our souls' good) our darkness (by God's grace and blessing on their labors chiefly) hath been dispelled; our ignorance enlightened; our deadness enlivened; our enmity against God, and our Neighbor, removed; our hardness softened; our consciences purged; our lusts mortified; our
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comforts obtained ; out fouls railed and lealed to a blelfed hope of eternal Hfe, through the mercies of God, and the merits of our Redeemer ;
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terrors icattered

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we have no
and love unfeigned to God, than this, That we love and reverence thofe, and their
calling, as men who onely have authority 'mCan&s mm^ to admi-

whofe Embafpidors, our

true Minifters are

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greater fign, or lurer evidence of our faith in Chrirt,

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the better rob and Ipoil us,) pretend they are lb rarelygifted, that

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they will teach us the fame, or higher rruths ; and adminilier the * seduciint i'
fame holy things in a new and more excellent way, than ever the belt %iainc»utos
ordained Minilters of this Church have done Yet truly, (laving the ""Mtores, utfeconfident boalling of thefe new mafiers ) we could never, hitherto, ^"""^ kl'sfa:

any of them, either by their much ipeech, or writing (with miJrmsT'
which they may make a great found, and yet be very empty) any Greg.
{uch fajficiencies as they lilt every where fo much to boafl of Much- * John lo.l.
lefs have they ever produced any fhew of Scriptural power. Divine ^H '^^^ '^^'".'^
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in the Church; in which, every one that can Ipeak toHerably, we or Cluift; arc
cannot think is prelently fent of God , for a publick Minifter of theeves and
holy things

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no more than every well-l'poken Traveller, or

diligent '"hbers,

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b^pidor to ^^^i^°'^'
any Prince,ox State, or City ; although they may know their Trinces, ethaot by die
know it is not, door inco the
tJMafters, oxT^eighbors minde, in many things.
what waters men fancy, but what God appointeth, which will cure the ^^^I'^old, but

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blinde or leprous.
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other w:iy, is a
Verf. 7. I am the door of the flieep.
thief and a robber.
can neither come to be of the
fheep of Chrift, but by faich in him ; nor Aepherd', of thoie flicep, but by thitdoor of avithoriiy^
which Chrift hath fct open in the Church by Ordination. Bi/hop Downam Scrm. •

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which by his Church *''«"•
he hath ordained) do cojnmonly get no* more good by their fadlin'g, i Kings y.ii.
ox dipping in othcx fireams, (which they fancy better) than i<{^ta;i7an * Saaa myfta-Ja
would have done if he had gone to his fo much extolled Rivers of ^"y"'''.".'""'^''''*
Damafciis, and hadforfaken Jordan : They may a little wafliovcr, ddyu'mnltuand for a while feem to hide mens leprofies of Ignorance, Error, Pride, rali perficiunLevity Schifm, Licentioulhefs, and Apoftacy, but they cannot heal '">'• Auguft.
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Of Pretenders to the Ministry.

*Levit.10.1.*

They offered

*Strange fires*

before the

Lord.

V. 2. And

there went out

fire from the

Lord and de-

voured them.

*Rom.12.1.*

Let not evil

be your part

of life.

*2 Tim.4.3.*

They will not

endure sound

doctrine, but

after their

own lusts shall

they heap up

to themselves

Teachers, hav-

ing itching

ears.

*Matt.23.17.*

*Vita vinum*

musto longe de-

fascatus; *

& guest in lucubris,

& spiritus lenus, & estate mollis, & sanitate salubris, & cerebrum minus morum, & cor magis repulsit-

Greg.*

*Math 9.16.*

Ecclesia vestem (ordinum selectum & decorum politiam) & deformitate lac-

rant, & turbant lacrando magis deformant vocatores. Prideaux.
for durableness, comeliness, or comfort; being heavier in the Summer of prosperity, and colder in the Winter of adversity. So that they are rather a shame, an oppression, and deformity to us, to our reformed Christian Religion, and to our Church, and Nation; as if we had chose, rather to be clothed with a ridiculous pybal'd fools'coat, or a beggars cloak, chequered with infinite rents and patches, than with that holy and comly Garment, of order and unity, which Christ left to his Church and Ministers (like his own) without any rent or seam: That is, An uniform, compleat, constant way, and order of holy Ministerial power, derived in a right and successive Ordination:

These new short jumps of unordained Teachers, are to the Churches and Religion's proportions, like the coats of David's Messengers, 2 Sam. 10.4. when they had been shamefully and spightfully treated by ungrateful Hanun; exposing indeed our Nation, and our Religion, to all reproach and scorn; when all round about us shall see such feeble and uncomly parts, as indeed these gifted men, for the most part, are, in the body of our Church, thus discovered, which were far better concealed and hidden.

Nihil enim impudentias, quam injustum munus, aut officio cuique sejus immittere. Gerard.

Yea, although they may (with truth) in somethings justly tax and reprove, some failings, or faults in some, yea, all our Ministers; yet we do not think prefently they are to intrude into their places, and Ministry; no more than Balaam's Ass might presume to become, presently, a Prophet; because it sometimes spake and reproved its masters madness. Nor do we see any reason, that men should wait upon the lips of such animals for Instruction, who cannot justify their speaking without a miracle; no more indeed, than these new Teachers can their chalenging the publick place, and constant office of Christ's Ministers, to which they have no ordinary Call or Mission.

Indeed we have rather cause, greatly to suspect these intruders, as for many other things, so for their boldness and forwardness: Since, such as have been ablest for that great service, have always been * modestly slow, and humbly reserved: That these men undereft promptitude is like that malicious readiness of Satan, who, uncall'd, presents himself among the sons of God *; to are the ministers of Satan most prone to transform themselves by their hypocrites, into angels of light; in order to advance hellish darkness, and damnable doctrines. And the times are much injured by reports, if it be not in some degree true. That many of these Mushroom Ministers, the most forward Teachers of this new race and mechanic extraction, are such superabat invidiam. Ep. ad Heliod. So Socrates of Ammonius, when he was sought to be made a Pastor of the Church. Lib. 6. 1. 30. * job i. 6. & 2. i. 2 Cor. ii. 13.

...persons,
persons in disguises of vulgar plainness, and simplicity, who have had both their learning and their errand from the vigilant Seminaries beyond Sea: Out of which Gallies can come little good to our Reformed Church and Nation. Satan is not less a Devil, when he will seem a Doctor; nor more a dangerous tempter, than when he would appear a zealous teacher. Whence soever they are, sure we are, That many of these, who are so suddenly started up into Pulpits, are not ashamed to vent by word and writing; such transcendent blasphemies; That they teach whatever they think or say, of the Majesty of God, of Christ, of the Holy Spirit, of the Divine Nature, though never so irreverent, profane, and ridiculous, yet it is no blasphemy, but sublimity; no profaneness, but getting above, and out of all forms; Whatever they contradict of the clear literal sense; and rational scope of the Scriptures, though it seem, and be never so gross a lie and error, in the common significance of the words, yet it is a truth in the spirit; Whatever they act, never so disorderly, brutish, horrid, obscene and abominable, yet it is no sin, but a liberty, which God, and Christ, and the Spirit exercise in them, who cannot sin.

Nor is this the least cause we have to suspect, beware of, and abhor these new Modellers and Levellers of the Ministry; That, how different soever their faces and actions are, one from another, (though they go one East, and the other West; whether they separate, or ram, or seek, or (hake;) yet still they meet in this one point, No Ordination, no Function, or peculiar Calling of the Ministry: The Serpents tail meets with his head, that he may surround truth with a circle of malice; As Herod and Pilate, they agree to crucifie Christ; as Samsons Foxes, though their wild-heads look several ways, yet their filthy tails carry common fire-brands; not onely to set on fire the sometime well-till’d and fruitful Field of this Church; but alfo to consume the very laborers and husbandmen. Their eyes and hands are generally bent against the best and ablest Ministers; and their spirits most bitterly inconsistent, with that holy Ministry, which Christ once delivered, by the Apostles, to the Church; and which, by the fidelity of his Church, hath been derived to us; of which, we and all the true Churches of Christ, have in all ages had so great, and good experience; which no malice of devils, or personal inimicities of men, have been hitherto able so to hinder, as wholly to interrupt; much less so to corrupt it, that it should be, either just, or any way necessary to abolish it, according to those tragical examples, and tyrannick purposes of some unworthy men, whose malice and cruelty, (as our modern Humans) doth hope, and daily with eagerness expect, when the whole Function and Calling (which is from God, though by man) of the ordained and authori-
The practive of Antiministerial Spirit: (which hath succeeded the Apostles to our days), shall be trussed up that fifty footed Gallows, which malicious and ungrateful envy, or sacrilegious covetousness, or vulgar ambition, or Jesuitick policy, hath erected for the whole Nation of the ancient and true Ministers; and all this, because (like Mordercat) they will not; nor in any Reason, Law, and Religion, can bow down, or pay any respect (such as the pride and vanity of some men expect) to those high and self-exalting gifts, whereunto their Antiministerial adversaries pretend; and which they seek to cry up in their meetings and scribes; with which they say, (and only say) They are divinely called, and more immediately inspired, not only above their fellows and brethren (who are still modestly exercised in their first mechanic occupations) but even above those, that are much their better every way; and, who merit to have been, (and possibly have been to many of them) as Fathers in Religion; by whose pains and care, with God's blessing, the true Christian Religion in all ages hath been planted, propagated, and preserved, or (where need was) reformed, and restored to its essential lustre and primitive dignity.

So that the cruel contrivances and desperate agitations, carried on by some men against the true Ministers and Ministry in this Church, (like the looks of the great red Dragon, upon the Woman of the Revelation) have a most dire and dreadful aspect; not only upon all good learning and civility, but also upon all true Religion both as Christian, and as Reformed. Threatening at once to devour the very life, soul, beauty, honor, joy, and blessing of this Nation; on which we may well write Iekeabob, the glory is departed from our Israel; so soon as the fury of these men hath broke the hearts and necks of our Eles, the Evangelical Priests of the Lord, the true Ministers of Christ, who are as the chariots and horsemen of our Israel.

Civil changes and secular oppressions have their limits, confined within the bounds of things mortal and momentary, with which, a wise and well settled Christian is neither much pleased nor displeased, because not much concerned, nor long: (For no wind from the four corners of the Earth, can blow so crooks to a good mans fails, but he knows how to steer a steady course to Heaven, according to the compass of a good Conscience.) But what relates to our souls eternal welfare, to the inestimable blessing of present times and posterity: What more concerns us in point of being true Christians, (that is rightly instructed, duly baptized, and confirmed in an holy way) than any thing of riches, peace, honor, liberty, or the very being men can do; (for without being true Christians, it had been good for us, we had never been men;) what evidently portends, and loudly proclaims Darkness.
Darkness, Error, Atheism, Barbarity, Profaneness, or all kinde of Antichristian tyrannies and superstitions, to come upon us and our children; instead of that saving truth, sweet order, and blessed peace; instead of those unspeakable comforts, and holy privileges, which we formerly enjoyed, from the excellency of the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, declared to us by the labors of our true and faithful Ministers: We hope it can offend no good Christians to see us, more piously passionate, and more commendably impatient against those who seek to deprive us of all those divine blessings, than Micah was against those, who stole away his gods, and his Priests; in as much as our true God, and true Saviour, and true Ministers, infinitely exceeded his Teraphims, his Ephod, his Vagrant, and idolatrous Levite, who yet was as a father to him: Who can wonder! If we, or any other, who have any bowels of true Christians, or tenderness of conscience for our Reformed Religion, do (as the true Mother did) passionately yern within themselves, and earnestly cry to others, left by the seeming liberty of every one exercising his gifts, in Preaching and Prophecying, their eyes should behold the true and living childe of Religion reformed, cruelly murdered and destroyed, under pretence of equable dividing it; to gratifie thereby the cunning designs of an impudent and cruel Harlot. It is the least, that we as true Protestants in this Church of England can do, earnestly by prayers to contend with God and man, for the faith once delivered to the Saints; that we may neither craftily be cheated, nor violently robbed, of that only heavenly treasure of our souls; nor of those earthen vessels, which the Lord hath chosen and appointed, both to preserve it, and dispence it to us; namely, the truly ordained and authoritative Ministers; the original of whose office and power, as of all Evangelical Institutions, is from our Lord Jesus Christ, and not from the will of man, in any wanton, arbitrary, and irreligious way.

Thus then may your Virtuous Excellencies easily perceive, That it is not as mine, or my Brethren, the Ministers, private sense alone, but it is as the publick echo of that united voice, which with sad complaint and doleful sound, is ready to come from all the holy hills of Zion; from every corner of the City of God in our Land; through the prayers and tears, sighs and groans; of those many thousands judicious and gracious Christians, who are as the remnant that yet hath escaped, the blasphemies, extravagancies, seductions, pollutions, and confusions of the present world; occasioned by those, who neither fearing God, nor reverencing man, seem to have set up the design and trade of mocking both: None bear the true Ministry with less patience than they, whose deeds will least endure the touchstone of God's Word: Whose violent projects against this Church and State, (being wholly inconsistent with any rules of righteouness and godliness)
The chiefest enemies to true Ministers.

lines) makes them most impatient to be any way cenfured, crooked, or restrained, by those precepts and patterns of justice and holines, which the true Ministers still hold forth out of God's Word, to their great reproach and regret; no more able to bear that freedom of truth, than the old world could bear Noah's, or Sodom Lot's preaching of righteouness. To these men's assistance comes in (by way of clamoring or petitioning, or writing scandalously against the Ministers, and Ministry of this Church) all those sorts of men, whose licentious indifferency, profane ignorance, and Atheistical malice, hath yet never tasted, and so never valued the blessings of the learned labors and holy lives of good Ministers; both these sorts are further seconded by that sordid and self-deceiving covetousnes, which is in the earthy and illiberal hearts of many seeming Protestants; who either ingrately grudg to impart any of their temporal good things to those of whole spirituals they partake; or else they are always sacrilegiously gaping to devour those remains of Bread and water, which are yet left, as a constant maintenance to sustain the Prophets of the Lord in the Land.

And lastly, not the least evil influence falls upon the Ministers and Ministry of this Reformed Church, by the cunning activity of those pragmatick Papists, and Jesuitical Politicians, (for all of the Roman Profession are not such) who make all possible advantages of our civil troubles, and study to fit us for their sumation, and a recovery to their party, by helping thus to cast us into a Chaos, and ruinous heaps, as to any setled Order and Religion: The most effectual way to which, they know is, To raise up rivals against, to bring vulgar scorn and factious contempt upon, to foment any scandalous petitions against Ministers, and the whole support of the Ministry, that so they may deprive that function, of all the constant maintenance, and those immunities, which it hath so long and peaceably enjoyed, by the Laws, (which are, or ought to be, as the results of free and publick consent, so the great prefervers of all estates in this Land.) Thus by starving, they doubt not, speedily to destroy the holy function, divine authority, and due succession of all true reformed Ministry in England; Solicitously inducing all such deformities, as are most destitute of all sober and true grounds, either of Law, Reason, Scripture, or Catholike practice in the Church of Christ; Thus shortly hoping, that from our Quails and Manna of the Learned and Reformed Ministry, and true Christian Religion, we may be brought back again to the Garlick and Onions of Egypt, to praying to Saints, to worshipping of God, in, or by, or through Images, to such implicit Faith and Devotion, to trust in Indulgences, to the use of burthened, or maimed Sacraments, to those Papal Errors, Superstitions, and Usurpations, which neither we, nor our Forefathers, of later ages
Religion most to be considered by Christian Rulers.

ages have tasted of; which, however somewhat better dressed and cooked (now), than they were in graver times; yet still they are thought (and most justly) both unshovry and unwholsome, to those serious and sounder Christians, who have more accurate palates, and more reformed stomachs: With whose judgements and consciences, nothing will relish, or down, as to doctrine, and rule of Faith, or Sacramental Administrations, and duties in Religion, which hath not Scripture for its ground; to which, no doubt, the primitive and purest Antiquity did consent. To whose holy rule and pattern, this Church of England in its restitution or reformation of Religion, did most exactly, and with greatest deliberation, seek to conform both its Ministry and holy Ministations, using liberties or latitudes of prudence, order, and decency, no further, than it thought might best tend to the edification, and well-governing of the Church, 1 Cor. 14.

Wherein it had (as all particular National Churches have) an allowance from God, both in Scripture, and in Reason.

27.

But, as if nothing had been reformed and settled with any wisdom, judgement, piety, or conscience in this Church, nor hitherto so carried on by any of the true and ordained Ministers of it; infinite calumnies, injuries, and indignities, are daily cast upon the whole Church, and the best Ministers of it: The cry whereof (no doubt) be considered as it hath filled the Land, so, it hath reached up to Heaven, and is by Christian come up to the ears of the most high God.

And therefore, I hope, it will not seem rude, unseasonable, or importunate to any excellent persons of what piety or power soever, if it now preseth into their presence; who ought to remember, that they are but as Bees in the same Hive; as Ants on the same Mole-hill; and as Worms in the same clods of Earth, with other poor inferior Christians, whom they have far surmounted in civil and secular respects. The swarms and crowds of worldly counsels and designs, we hope, have not (as they ought not) overlaid or smothered all thoughts, care, and conscience of preserving, restoring, and establishing, truth, good order, and peace, in matters of Religion: Which are never by those publick persons, who pretend to any thing of true Christianity, to be so far despised and neglected, that those above all other matters of publick concernment, should be left, like scattered sheaves, to the waftings and trampling upon, by the feet of the Beasts of the people; ungathered and unbound by any civil sanctimony, but by the high and power, agreeable to holy order, divine method, Christian charity and prudence. Possibly it had fared better with all estates in this Church and State, if they had learned and followed, that
Matters of Religion most considerable.

divine direction, and grand principle in Christian politics, First to
seek the Kingdom of Heaven, and the righteousness thereof, and all the
these things shall be added to you: The neglect of God's house, (the
Church) and its beauty, holy order, and ministry, hath been a great
cause of overthrowing so many sealed houses, which were covered
with Cedar, and decked with Vermilion and Gold:

Certainly no men employed in publick power or counsel, have
any business of so great concernment, or of so urging and crying
necessity as this, The preservation of the true Evangelical Ministry,
in its due power and authority; Upon which, without any dispute
among sober and truly-wife men, the very life, being, weight, honor,
and succession of our Religion doth depend, both as Christian, and
as reformed: For it is not to be expected, that the ignorant prating
and confident boasting of any other voluntiers, will ever soberly a-
dorn, or solidly maintain our Religion, which hath so many very elo-
quent, learned, and subtle enemies, besides the rude and profane
rabble, besieging it; both learned and unlearned oppose true Religi-
on, as the right and left-hand of the Devil; the one out of ignorance,
the other out of crookedness; the one as dark, the other as depraved;
the one cannot endure its light, nor the other its straitness. Against
neither of them can these afford help, any more than the confused
sackling of a company of Geese, could have defended the Roman
Capitol: Which noise is indeed, but an alarm to sober and good Pro-
testants, intimating the approach or assault of enemies; and should
excite the vigilance and valor of all worthy Magistrates, conscien-
tious Soldiers, and wise Christians of this Reformed Church, to re-
sist the invading danger; as by other fit means, so chiefly by esta-
BLishling and encouraging a succession of learned, godly, and faithful
Ministers.

Nor in any reason of State, or of Conscience, should those who
exercice Magistrateick power in this Church and State, so far neglect
him, who is Higher than the highest \*; by whom all power is dis-
penced; or so far gratifie the irreligious rudeness, the boisterous igno-
rance, and violent profaneness of any, (who are but God's executi-
oners, the instruments of his wrath, and ministers of his vengeance;)
as for their sakes, and at their importunity, to defpise and opprels
those who are by Christ and his Church appointed to be Ministers except it were
of God's grace, and conveyers of his mercy to men: The meanest of
whom, (that do indeed come in his name) the proudest mortal may
not safely injure or defpise; because not without sin and reproach
to Christ and God himself. For he that heareth you, heareth me;
and he that despiseth you, despiseth me, and him that sent me; is
signally and distinctly spoken in favor to true Ministers, and for
terror to those that are prone to offer insolency to their worldly
weakness,
weaknesses, and meannesses. Such as despise and oppose the Ministers of Christ, are more rebellious than the devils were; for of these, the seventy returning testify, Luke 10.17. Lord, even the devils are subject to us in thy Name.

If then we have immortal souls (which some mockers now question,) sure they are infinitely to be preferred before our carcasses; and the instruments which God hath appointed, as means to save them, are proportionably to be esteemed beyond any, that are off the destroyers, at best, but the preservers of mens bodies, and outward estates.

Who can dissemble, or deny, That the banks of equity, piety, modesty, and charity, yea, of common humanity, are already by some men much demolished, through the pride, presumption, insolence, sour-rility, and profaneness of some spirits, who are set against the Reformed Religion, the Ministers and Ministry of this Church? Who sees with honest and impartial eyes, and deplores not, to behold; how the deluge of Ignorance, Atheism, Profaneness, and Sottishness; also of damnable Errors, devilish Doctrines, and Popish Superstitions; together with Schismatical fury, and turbulent Factions, are much prevailed (of later years) both in Cities and Countrieys here in England:

And this, since men of Antiministerial tempers, have studied to act the Devils Comedy, and this Churches Tragedy; endeavoring to render, not only the able, godly, and painful Ministers, but the whole Ministry it self, and all holy Ministraions (rightly performed by its Authority) despised, invalid, decryed, and discomted: In many places affronting some, vexing and oppressing others, menacing all every where, with total extirpations: For, they who pretend to have any man a Minister—that lifts, intend to have none, such as should be; (As they that would have every man a Master or Magistrate, mean to have none, in a Family or State;) but one, by specious shadows of New Teachers and Prophets, they hope to deprive us of those substances, both of true reformed Religion, and the true Ministry; which we and our Forefathers have so long happily enjoyed, and which we owe to our posterity.

Nor is this a feigned calumny, or fictitious grief, and out-cry: Your piety (O excellent Christians) knows, That the spirits of too many men, are so desperately bent upon this design against the Function of the Ministry; that they not only breathe out threatenings against all of this way (the duty ordained Ministers;) but daily do (as much as in them lies) make havoc of them; and in them, of all good manners and reformed Religion; while so many people, and whole Parishes are void and desolate of any true Minister, residing among them: I leave it to the judgments and consciences of all good Christians to consider, how acceptable such projects and practices
practises will be to any sober and moralized professor; to any gracious and true Christian; to any reformed Church, or to Christ, (the Instrutor of an authoritative and successional Ministry) or, last of all, to God, whose mercy hath eminently blessed this Church and Nation, in this particular, of able and excellent Ministers; so that they have not been behind any Church under Heaven; That so exploded Speech then, Stupor mundi clerus Anglicanus, The Ministers of England were the admiration of the Reformed World, had not more in it of crack and boasting, than of sober Truth, if rightly considered; only it had better become (perhaps) any man's mouth, than a Ministers of this Church, to have said it; and any others, than believers of this Church, to have contradicted and slighted it: Since to the English Ministers eminency, in all kinds, so many foreign Churches, and Learned Men, have willingly subscribed; as to Preaching, Praying, Writing, Disputing, and Living.

On the other side, How welcome the disgrace of the Ministry will be to all the enemies of God's truth, of the Reformed Religion, and of all good order in this Church and State, it is easy to judge, by the great contentment, the ample flatterings, the unsignied gloryings, the large and serious triumphings, which all those that were hertofore professed enemies to this Church and our Reformed Religion, (either such as are factious and politick Fatlers for another Supremacy and Power; or such as carry deep brands of Schism and Heresie on their foreheads; or such as are professedly Atheists, profane, idle, and dissolute minds) discover, in this, That, they hope, they shall not be any more troubled by the prophecyng of these witnesses, the true and faithful Ministers of the Church of England; Than whom, none of that order, in any of the late Reformed Churches, and scarce any of the Antients, have given more ample, clear, and constant testimony, to the glory of God, and the truth and purity of the Gospel, by their Writing, Preaching, Praying, Sufferings, and holy Examples, Living, and Dying; which I again repeat, and justifie against those, who dwell with disdain, and are ready to burst with envy, against the real worth, and undeniable excellency of the Ministers of the Church of England.

All which makes me presume, That you (O excellent Christians) can neither be ignorant, nor unsatisfied in this point of the Evangelical Ministry, both as to this, and all other Churches use, benefit, and necessity; as also to the divine right of it, by Christ's institution, the Apostles derivation, and the Catholike Churches observation, in all times and places; as to the main substance of the duties, the power, and authority of the Function; however, there may be in the succession of so many ages, some Variation, in some Circumstantial: The peculiar office, and special power, were seldom, (as I have said)
Absurdities. 

if ever questioned, among any Christians, until of late; much less, so shaken, vilified, and traduced, as now it is by the ungrateful wantonness, and profane unworthines of some; who, not by force of reason, or arguments of truth, but by forcible sophistries, armed cavilings, violent calumnies, and arrogant intrusions, have (like so many wilde Bores) sought to lay waste the Lords Vineyard; Pretending, That their brutish confidence is beyond the best dressers skill; that their irregular rootings are better than the carefulst diggings; that their rude cropplings and tearings are beyond any orderly prunings, or wary weeding; that their fordid wallowings, and filthy confusions, are before any seasonable manurings; that there needs no skilful Husbandmen, or faithful Laborers of the Lords sending, the Churches ordaining, or the faithful peoples approving; where so many devout swine, and holy hogs, will take care to plant, water, dres, and propagate the Vine of the true Christian Reformed Religion; to which, the hearts of men are naturally no propitious soyl. Nor is the event, as to the happiness of this Church, and its Reformed Religion, to be expected other (without a miracle,) (if once those unordained, unclean, and unrut spirits, be suffered to possesse the Pulpits, and places of true and able Ministers,) than such, as betel those forenamed cattel, when once Christ permitted the devils to enter into them:

All truth, order, piety, peace, and purity of Religion, together with the Function of the Ministry, will be violently carried into, and choaked in the midst of the Sea, of most tempestuous errors, and bottomless confusions.

The impious absurdities, enormous babblings, and endless janglings, Absurdities whereby some men endeavor to dishonor, and destroy the whole Function of the reformed and established Ministry in this Church; and to surrogate in their places, either Romish Agitators, or a ragged Regiment of new and necelitious volunters, (whosoever lifts, not to Jeroboam made confecrate, but deccrate himself, by an execrable boldnes; or else is elected and misordained by that zealous simplicity, schismatical fury, and popular madness after any novelty, which is ever, in any meane rort of people.) These no doubt are sufficiently known to you, togethuer with those learned solutions, those sober, and to wise men, satisfactory answers, which have by many worthy Pens, both long since, and lately been made publick, both as to the calumnies of the V. 34. And this thing became sin to the house of Jeroboam, to cut it off and destroy it from the face of the earth.

adversaries,
adversaries, and the vindication of this Church, and its Ministry;
Which is conform, not only to our wise, excellent, and antient
Laws; but to all right reason; common rules of order and policy;
directions of humane nature; practice of all Nations: Also, to the
Precepts, Institutions, Patrons, and Customs of God, of Christ, of
the Apostles, and of all the Churches; and ever was so esteemed and
reverenced, until the four and unsavory drags of these perilous, last,
and worst times, came to be stirred and drawn forth: Wherein, under
pretences of (I know not what) special calling, gifts, and privileges,
(but really to advance other fruits, than those that use to grow from
the Spirit of truth, peace, holiness, and order,) some men are resolved
to ascend to that desperate height of impiety, which counts nothing
a sin, a shame, or a confusion.

I shall not so far distrust the knowledge, memory, or consciences,
of wise and worthy Christians; as to abuse their leisure, by a large,
ministers exact, and punctual disputing every one of those particular, arguments,
ments, and Scriptures, which have been well and learnedly handled
by others; who have put the heady rabble of their opponents, to so
great disorders; as from Arguments, to threaten Arms; from the news
of Reason, to fly to Passion; from sober Speaking, to bitter Railings,
Scornings, and Barkings at that Light, which they see is so much above
them.

Oney I cannot but suggest in general, to all good men, That it
seems, not to me only, but to many, much wiser and better than my
self, a very strange precipitancy, which no Christian wise Magistrates
will permit, (more like sumptuary rashness, and schismatical violence,
than either Christian zeal, or charitable calmness.) That the whole
Order and Function of the Ministry of the Gospel in this Reformed
Church, so long owned by all good men, both at home and abroad;
so long, and largely prospered here with the effects and seals of God's
grace upon it; so esteemed necessary to the very Being of any
Church, and Christianity it self, by all sober and serious Christians;
(For, there can be no true Church, where Christ is not; who promised
to be with his Ministers to the end of the World: So, that
where no true Ministry is, there can be no presence of Christ, as to
outward Ordinances, Matthew 28. 20. which is spoken to those that
were sent to Teach and Baptize, &c.) Lastly, This Calling so never
opposed by any, but erroneous, feditious, licentious, or fanatick
spirits of later times; That (I say) this antient, and holy Function,
should without any solemn publick conference, impartial hearing, or
fair consultation, even among Professors of Reformed Christianity, be
at noon day, thus vilified, routed, and sought to be wholly outed;
by persons, whose weavers beams, or rustick numbers, and clamorous
crowds; not their reason, learning, piety, or virtue, renders them,
either.
either formidable, or any way considerable; further, than to be objects of wiser, and better mens, pity, and charity, or fears, and restraints.

Is it that there are no Ministers of the true and good old way, worthy to be heard, or comparable to those plebeian pieces, who by a most imprudent apostacy, becoming haters and deserters of their former holy orders, and authority Ministerial, have taken a new Commission upon a popular account? Are none of the ancient Ministers fit to be advised with, or credited in this matter, which concerns not themselves so much, as the publick good, both of Church and State? Are they all such friends to their own private interests (some poor living, it may be) as to have no love to God, to Christ, to the Truth, or to the Souls of men? Have they no learning, judgement, modesty, or conscience, comparable to those, who being parties, and enemies against them, hope to be their onely judges, and to condemn them? Is wisdom wholly perished from the wile, and understanding hidden from the prudent? Is Religion lost among the Learned; and onely now found among simple ideots? Or rather, are not the Antiministerial adversaries, so conscious to the true Ministers learned piety, and their own impudent ignorance, that they are loth, and affained to bring the one or other, to a publick test and fair trial; resolving with the Circumcellions with more ease to drive them, than to dispute them out of the Church; aiming not to satisfy any by their reason, but to sacrifice all to their passion, if they can get power? Who doubts, but that if the learned and godly Ministers in this sometime so famous and flourishing Church of England, who seem now in the eyes of their enemies, (as if they had been taken by Pirates or Picarooms) onely fit to be so thrust under Hatches; not worthy to be spoken with, to appear, to be trusted or regarded, if they might have so much publick favor, (which they despair not of, and do humbly intreat) as by solemn trial and dispute, to assert their Station and Function, against their adversaries, (as some have in private ways done,) Who doubts, (I say) but by Gods assistance, (whole mercy hath not, will not, ever forfake them) they would make the haUing and ungrateful people of this Church, to see, whether the Lord or Baal be God? Whether (I say) the Primitive Order, and Divine Constitutions of Christ; (which have on them, the Seal of the Scripture, the Stamp of Authority, and carry with them all the beauties of holiness: For right reason, due order, decency, peaceableness, and proportionableness, to the great ends of Christian Religion; together with their real usefulness, confirmed by the happy experience of the Primitive times, the purest Saints, the best Christians, the constant Confessors, holy Martyrs; and most flourishing Churches;) Whether (I say) these should continue in their place and
and power, wherein God hath set them, and our pious Predecessors have maintained them in this Church and Nation; or these yesterdaysnovelties, the politick whimseys, and Jesuitick inventions of some heady, but heartlesmen, should usurp and prevail in this Church, after sixteen hundred years prescription against them; and which are already found to have in them (besides their novelty,) such emptiness, flattness, vanity, disorder, deformity, and unproportionableness to the great end of right ordering Christian societies, or saving of souls, by edifying them in truth and love; that they have been already productive of such dreadful effects, both in opinions and practices, that they make the Protestant and Reformed Churches stand amazed, to see any of their kinde bring forth such Monsters of Religion, as seem rather the fruit of some Incubus, some foul and filthy spirits, deluding and oppressing this Reformed Church, than of that blessed and promised Spirit, whose power, whose rule, whose servants, have always been the most exactly and constantly, holy, just, and pure. For any true Christians then, to allow and foster such prodigies of Protestant Religion, as some are bringing forth, seems no les preposterous, than if men should resolve, to put out their eyes, and to walk both blindfold and backwards; or to renewse the body by setting the feet above the head: Indeed it is putting the Reformed Religion to the Strapado, and crucifying Christ again, as they did Saint Peter, after a new posture, with his head downwards: As if in kindnes to any men, they should take away their souls, and make them move (like Puppets) by some little springs, wyrs, and gimmers; or by the Sorcery of some Demoniack polfession.

For want of the favor of such a publick trial and vindication of the Ministry, I have adventured to present to the view of all Excellent Christians in this Church, this Apology; By which I have endeavored to take off from the Jesphs and Jofedeks of this Church, those prisons and filthy garments, wherewith some men have sought to deform them; and to wash off from their grave contemnences, and angelike assestts, the chiefest of those scandals and aspersions, under which (for want of solid reason, or just imputations against their persons and calling) by some mens unwashed hands, and foul mouths (whose restles spirits cast out nothing but dirt and mire against them) they are now so much disfigured to the world; That 10, odious disguises (as of old to the Christians) may render them les regarded, and more abhorred by vulgar people: This art of evil tongues, and pens, serving to colour, excuse, or justify the injustice, and dirr. Tertul. Apolog. 2 Cor. 10. 10. His bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible; so the false apostles, the ministers of Satan, 2 Cor. 11. 13. The deceitfull workers reproached St. Paul behind his back.
cruelty, barbarity, unthankfulness, and irreligion of those, who seek first to bait them in the Theatre by all publick disgracings, and then to dispatch them. For against these Beasts (as Saint Paul sometime at Ephesus) whom no reason, learning, gravity, merit, parts, graces, or age doth same or mitigate, the true Ministers of the Gospel, even in this Reformed Church of England, have now to contend, for their Calling, Liberties, and Livelihood; yea, for their lives too, if the Lord, by the favor and justice of those that have wisdom, courage, and piety, anwerable to their places and power, do not rescue and protect them.

Seductorem & animorum deceptoem clamitabant; & ut lapsum occidentium; & tali facinus perpetuant remissionem peccatorum obvienurum. Posder, vit. August.

32. What If in any thing, as weak and sinful men, any of the true Ministers of this Church, are (indeed) liable to just reproaches, either of ignorance, or idleness, factiousness, sedition, any immorality, or scandalous living, (and what Church or Christ can hope to be absolutely clear, when even in Christ's family, and the Apostles' times, there was dross and chaff in the floor, by Judas, and Demas, Simon Magus, false Apostles, deceitful workers, Ministers of Satan, &c ?) I am so far from excusing, or pleading for them (as to their personal errors and disorders) that I should be a most severe advocate against them, (if after two or three admonitions, they should be found incorrigible.)

And this, upon the same ground, on which now I write this Apology; namely, in behalf of the honor of the Gospel, the dignity of the true Ministry, and the glory of the most sacred name of the Christians God, and Saviour; which, idle, evil, unable, and unfaithful Bishops, and Ministers, beyond all men, cause to be blasphemed; when they pull down more with the left hand of profaneness, than they build with the right hand of their preaching; betraying Christ with their kisses, and limiting the Christian Reformed Religion under the fift rib, when they seem with great respect to salute, and embrace it. Confuting what they lay, by what they do; and hardening mens hearts to an unbelief of that doctrine, which they contradict by the Solacism of their lives and manners; either rolling great stones upon the mouth of the Fountain; or poyloning the emanations of living waters; or perforating the mindes and consciences of their hearers, to such liberties and hypocrisies, that they retain no more of true Religion, and serious holines, than thieves can do of water: As pot. Nisi praestis good praedicis mendacium non Evangelium videoitur. Laet. Inf. lib. 3, cap. 16. Exemplum operis est verba vitios & efficacissimos. Bern. si fuenti cibum & non diversi pecororum est; ita docenti & non facienti, peccatum cf. 1d. Animadvertit est que falsis horribus Cado- vero sa, que verbo tantum maeretit. Leo. Mysticum Theologia non ut soli Philosophiae, barbarenum & palbo culturum; Sed doctrina sancta vitae sanctitare. Laet.

Salvian
Character of good Ministers.

Salvian, lib. 4. de Gub. sometimes complained of Preachers and Professors too in his time.

No, I beseech you to believe, That I am the most rigid exacter of all holy exactions from Ministers (of all degrees) beyond all other sorts of men; That they who are the Evangelical Priests to the Lord, should have no blemish from head to foot, Levit. 21. 17, 18, 19. Neither defective in intellectuals, nor deformed in morals; found in doctrine, sacred in deeds; the want of which, makes them, (as Eunuchs, Levit. 21. 20.) forbidden to serve before the Lord; as unfit for spiritual generation. That they bear on their breasts before God and all men, the Urin and Thummim, Light and Perfection, Truth and Charity; in both Integrity. That none of this holy Ministration, be either incurably blinder, or incorrigibly lame; that they may be worthy to stand before God, as to their sincerity; before men, as to their unblanableness; and between both, as to their unfeigned fervent love, both of God and man. For I well know, That not only gross offences in them, as in Eli's sons which made people to abhor the offerers of the Lord, 1 Sam. 1. 17. must be avoided, but the very flies of common frailties, must be kept off from their sacrifices (as Abraham did the fowls of the air from his oblations, Gen. 15. 11.) And as the Jews affirm, That natural flies were never seen on any sacrifices of the true God, or in his Temple; which infested all other Temples of the Beelzebuls, gods of flies. Ministers notes, as well as beams, must be kept out of the worlds eyes; which are prone to look with a more prying curiosity, and pitiful cenforiousness, on Ministers smaller infirmities, than on other mens grosser enormities: This being one of our happiness, That being compassed about with many sinful frailties, which easily beset us, we have as many severe censurers; which may help to keep us in a greater exactness, both before God and man: In whose account, drunkenness and riot, which in all men, is a sin; in Ministers, is as sacrilege: Rashi and vain oaths in them, are as so many perjuries: Any profane levity in them, is as the blasphemying that God, whose Word they Preach, whose Name they invoke, whose holy Mysteries they celebrate: Their illitteraceness, is barbarity and brutishness; their factiousness, and

Falsi & verba

Abm. de Bo.

Verba veritas in opea. Jeron. ad Paulinum.

Qua docuit

Christus praepitos, formavit exemplo.

Chrystoff.

Falsi offende te spolia docere. Chrystoff.

Caritatis in praedicando, hereticis in operando. Bern. Salvan. l. 4.

Gub. Sciebili nastra nihil aliud ess quam culpa; quod te libetermin corde nocens, libitine & de se cliente calcamus, & e.

Hieronim the Emperor is commended by Theodoret, for removing those from being Bishops and Presbyters, whose lives were not agreeable to the dignity of their calling, and exactness of their duty. Thed. 1. 5. c. 18.

Non laquamur magnam sed vivamus. Cyp. de Brut. Petien.

Honor (titulatur)

et vita de forma. Ambr. 'Aequis. e't veni e loet. e't veniret, Nis. de Petr. id est satis oportet

mihi e't puisse ecclio, nihilo e't pulchritudine. Si crat. in Plata. Phile. e'oi lieu n'estant e't bien考察

e't, la e't rapproche e't part de l'oi. Cl. Al. s. 215. Et quidem e're incitavisse, et valetudina confessionem faciuntur à faceretate Christiano existente. Bern. הילול יעה Mu'ce Dominus in Mord. Nebuchim. Rambam. Ambr. effic. 1. 2. c. 2. & c. 12. & 17. e'oi puisse ce monon e're regarder

e't, la e't puisse e't d'etat. 6 et. P. 1. 2. Who observes out of

Levit. 4. There is as great a sacrifice for the Priest, as for the whole people. Ebrietas in quorum vivium à faceretate sacrilegium. Chrysf. Præceptis Christi detrahit pondus faceretatum viventium. Lact. Luke 6. 46. Why call ye me Lord, and do not the things I say?

I 2 fury
2 Tim. 1. 15. Study to shew thy self a workman, that needs not to be ashamed. Nonimpressentem vel, ut non embe facet; sed diligentem ut non meretur verecundia. Amb. 1 Tim. 4. 15. Et deo Gra. Give thy self wholly to these things, that thy profiting may appear to all men; so 16. 1 Pet. 2. 13. Labond inspectus, et pecuniae aegtes. August.

fury in secular motions, is such a madness of pride, and vain-glory, as possessed him, who in all things else very obscure, set the Temple at Ephesus on fire; that he might be remembered for something; their laziiness and negligence in their studies and preaching; is supine slothfulness, and sinful slovenliness; while they content themselves with any raw and extemporary huddlings; in which, is nothing of holy reasonings, and Scripture demonstrations, mightily convincing; nor of right method, duly disposing; nor yet of any grave and pathetick oratory, sweetly converting, and lwaysively applying; but only a rudeness, and rambling next door to raving; which hath partly occasioned (indeed) so many new undertakers to preach; who, thinking some Ministers stocks of divinity quite broken and spent, by their so little trading and improving in any good learning, or solid preaching; have ventured to serve the Country credulity with their Pedlers packs, and small wares; not despairing to preach and pray, at that sorry rate, and affected length, which they hear from some that go for Ministers; resolving (at worst) to colour and cover over those real defects of parts or studies, to which they cannot but be conscious, by excessive confidences, loud noises, immoderate rivalries, and the trick shews of zealous activity; (even as Country Fidlers are wont to do, when they play most out of tune,) abusing the vulgar simplicity, with their bold, yet unharmonious melody.

What can be more full and intolerable, even to the worst, as well as the best of Christians, than to see Clergymen study more the gain and pomp, than the life and power of godliness? To content themselves, and delude others, with the bulk and shells of Religion? What more unreasonable, than for Shepherds to starve, or tear and worry the flocks? For Physicians to infect their patients, by not healing themselves? for Builders to pull down the holy Fabrick of Truth and Charity? or to build with the untempered mortar of Passion, Fancy, and Fashions? For Embassadors, either through idleness to neglect, or through baseness to corrupt, or through cowardise not to dare to declare and afflict the message and honor of their Sovereign sender? which should with all courage, fidelity, and constancy, be discharged, even to utmost perils; so as to be ready with St. Paul, not onely to be bound for Christ, but to lay down his life also. Acts 20.

I know that in Ministers any spot of pride, levity, affectation, unicuss recti in stas, lapidum per effe torius populi, et gielo. Chrys. Liciv. 3. 14. The sacrifice for the sin of the Priest, is as much as for the sin of the whole Congregation.
Worthy Ministers innocence pleaded.

is a foul deformity, a putrid futility, a pueril vanity, scarce a venial madness; so much the worse in them, by how much the contagion of their folly is prone to infect all that look upon them; for the plague and leprosy of a Ministers life, cannot be kept within his private walls. There is nothing more delicate and abhorring all sinful scords than the Ermine of Christian Religion, and its true Ministry, which sets forth the Lamb of God, without spot or blemish, who came to take away the sinful stains of mens souls, by the effusion of his precious blood. The care of all good Ministers, is so to live, as shall not need the impotent severities of thole Reformers, who joy as much to finde faults in others, as to mend none in themselves, and are always eloquent against their own sins in other men. Allow us onely to be, as Ministers of the Gospel for the Churches good, we desire no indulgences, farther than the duty and dignity of our Calling doth allow, and the strictest Conscience may bear: No men shall more welcome mens favours, than we shall do their just severities; nor do we desire greater testimonies of mens loves to us, than such, as we use for the greatest witness of ours to them; by never suffering them to sin, through our silence or flatteries. Let the righteous smite us, and it shall be a kindness; let them reprove us, and reform us, and it shall be a balm, which shall not break our heads; but our prayer shall ever be, That we may not taste of the new dainties of thole supercilious envious, and envious reformers of Ministers, who are their enemies, because they tell them the old truths; and make them offenders for a word, because they will not forbear to reprove their wickednes; who heretofore seemd to hear them gladly, till they touched their Herodias.

The less scandalous Ministers are, the more that Hypocrical generation (who have set themselves against them) are bent to destroy them: I intercede onely for such, whose greatest offence is, That they give left offence to any good Christians, and do most good to this Church; preferring still the purity and honor of their Calling, and the Reformed Religion, against the many policies of thole, who lie in wait to destroy it; who are honored with, and are an honor to the Function of the Ministry; who are whole, and (in some) excellent learning, and holy lives, makes them still appear like bright stars in a dark and stormy night, amidst the thick and broken clouds of envy and calumny, which rove far beneath them; however they are sometime darkned by their interposing.

If, as to these mens holy Function, Ordination, and Authority, I may be happy to give you (O excellent Christians) or any others, any satisfaction; as a Calling useful, and neceffary to the Church; as of Divine Institution, and Catholique practice in all settled Churches, I shall then leave it to any men of good conscience to infer, how: 3 barbarous
Ministers insirmities abrogate not their Authority.

barbarous and Antichristian a design it is; how bad and bitter consequences it must needs produce, by any arts and ways of humane power and policy, to destroy and exalt orate these men, and their Ministry; in whose lives and labors, the glory of God, the honor of Jesus Christ, and the good of mens souls are so bound up, that they cannot without daily miracles be separated, or severally preferred. And for the persons of the Ministers, which I plead for, I hope to make it appear, That for their calling thus into the fiery furnace of mechanick scorn, and fanatick fury; or into the Lyons den of publick odium and disfavor, there will be found, by impartial Readers of this Apology, no more cause, than was against Daniel, or the three children; no more than for beheading John Baptist, or stoning St. Stephen; for beating and imprisoning the Apostles, and charging them to speak no more in that Name of Jesus; or for the Galatians hating St. Paul, or the Beasts slaying the witnesses; or the Jews seeking to stone, and after crucifying the Lord Jesus Christ.

Not, but that the very best Ministers of this Church own themselves still to be but poor sinful men; and so not strangers to the common passions and infirmities of humane nature: Men must not be angry, that Ministers are not Angels, or such Seraphins and flaming fires, as admit no drops or defents, incident to sinful mortality: Though they oft fail, as men, yet have they not forfeited the Authority of their Calling as Ministers; though they have dispensed the Gospel in weaknels, as earthen vesseles, yet hath the Treasure of Heaven, and Power of God, been manifefted by them, and in them: Take them with all their personal failings, yet they will hardly be match'd, or exceeded by any order of men, or any Clergy in any Church under Heaven; for they have not been behinde the very chiefeft of true Ministers; and far beyond any of these new pretenders: Informuch, That I have oft been ashamed to see the necessity of this Apology, and such like Vindications of the Ministry, which ungrateful and impudent men extort from the Ministers of England; when indeed (as St. Paul pleads for himself; instead of thus being compelled to an unwelcome, yet just glorying) they ought rather to have been commanded and encouraged by others.

Truly, it is to me a great trouble to finde out by any of their confufed Pamphlets and obscure Papers, what these Modellers of a new Ministry would be, in any reason of piety or prudence, more to the advantage of this Church, or the Reformed Christian Religion, than hath been heretofore, and may still be effected and enjoyed, by the true and ancient Ministry: Would they have better Scholars in all kindes of good learning? Acuter Discantans in controversies? Clearer Interpreters in Commentaries upon the Sacred Texts? Better Linguists? More solid Preachers? More pathetick Orators? more fervent Pray-
Ministers infirmities abrogate not their Authority.

No, I finde their enemies envy, is more than their pity; For one century of scandalous Ministers, (which, I fear, was not so made up by exact slaving the pretension from the vile; but that it hudled up, and kicaded some finer flower with some bran;) How many hundreds were there then, and are still of unblamable, of commendable, of excellent, and most imitable Ministers in this Church? As weighty, as fair, and as fit every way, yea, far beyond what any new stamp is likely to be, for all holy admirations: But I finde, it is not any new Truth, or Gospel, or Sacraments; or Gifts, or Graces, or Virtues, or Morals, or Rational, or Reals, which these new Ministers require; or can with any forehead pretend: All is but an affectation (for the most part) to have the same things, in a new, and worse way; which because it is of their own invention, they so eagerly quarrel at the former order, manner of our Church and Ministry. Many would have the same meat (else they must starve, or feed upon the wind) only it must be new dressed, and dish'd up to the mode of Familistick hafhes, and Socinians (Quelques choies) Kecckshoes by more plain and popular hands, than those of the learned Ministers. They would have a generation of Teachers rise up unknown, out of the dust; whose father should be corruption, and whose sister, confusion: More vulgar, lubemis, precarious, facile, dependent, Preachers; who should more consider an act or ordinance of man, than a command of Scripture, or dictate, and stroke of Conscience; be more steered by the events and various successes of Providence, than by the constant precepts and oracles of Gods written Word: Whole common places of divinity must fit any Eutopian Commonwealth, what ever any power and policy shall form to their new fancies, and interests; whole Preaching and Praying, shall make Christ, and the Scriptures, and the Sacraments, all holy things, and the Ministry it self of the Church, meanly servile and compliant to any State design, and secular proieets; Just as the forry Almanack-makers do, who command the Sun, and Moon, and Stars, and the whole host of Heaven, to assist any party whom they lift to flatter, or hope to feed upon: Such planetary Preachers, all true Ministers abhor to be; and such their enemies deserve to have, or to be; who obseruing the winds of worldly and State variations, shall never bow the good seed of true Religion; nor ever serve the Lord, while they flavishly and sinfully serve the times: Not, but that all good Ministers know.
know, as wise and humble men, how to be content in what State forever they are; and to be subject to civil powers in all honest things, with gratitude and due respect; yet not so, as to prostrate God, to level Christ, to subject Conscience, to debale the glorious Gospel, its due Reformation, and its true Ministry, and divine Authority, to the boundless lusts, and endless designs of violent and restless minds.

Against all which, and chiefly against those plots and practices which aim to overthrow the Reformed Christian Religion of this Church, and its Ministry, I desire this Apology may be as a Pillar and Monument to posterity of my perfect abhorrence. That when I am dead (if it hath any spark in it of an immortal spirit, or living genius) it may testify for me, and my Brethren, the Ministers of my mind, in after ages; that, as Joseph of Arimathea, we neither gave counsel, nor consent to those wilde or wicked projects, which the ages will afterward see, attended with most fad and deplorable effects; either of Atheism, Profaneness, Ignorance, and Barbarity; or of Popish Superstitions, Heretical oppressions, and Schiunatical confusions, which will follow the alteration and rejection of the antient, true, and Catholike Ministry of this Reformed Church; which cannot but be attended with the subversion of many souls, as to all stability or soundness in true Religion; with the unsatisfaction of many, and with the unspeakable grief and scandal of all those good Christians, who love and wish the prosperity of this Church; which I shall now endeavor to prove to be of a most Christian and Evangelical constitution; chiefly by answering what is alleged by those, who look upon both Church and Ministry as reprobat; and would fain have power to damn them both, without redemption: And this they endeavor with as much justice and truth, as Satan accused Job, and would have provoked God to destroy him without a caule.
OBJECTION I.

That we have no true Ministry, because no true Church-way in England.

I finde there are many and great things objected, by the Antiministerial party, through ignorance, weakness, mistake, or malice; not onely against the Ministers, and the peculiar office of the Ministry; but also against the whole frame of our Religion, especially as to the extern social manner of our holy Administrations: Some of them deny us to be any true Ministers, because not in any way of a true Church; not having any true Religion owned or established, and exercised among us, in any right Church-way, as they call it. So that it is not onely the main pillars of Christianity, the learned and godly Ministry, which they would change: But the whole model of our Church, and frame of our Religion, is that, which these men would remove, either pulling it down by force, or undermining by fraud: Therefore, I have thought it necessary, in the first place, to countermine against these Moles, and to establish against these Shakers, and Subverters of the very foundations of our Church and Religion.

Here I must crave leave of you, to whose favor I have dedicated this work (whose highest excellency is your Christian Reformed Religion; who esteem it your greatest glory, with the Emperor Theodosius, That you are Members of this Reformed Church, and in this of the true Catholike Church,) to give these fanatich, and cavilling disputers against our Ministry, some account of that Religion, which we profess; and of that so much disputed, and by some despised Church-way, wherein we take our selves to be; as upon firuer grounds of divine truth, so with much more order and decency, as to antient patern and prudence, than themselves: That so, as good Christians may be comforted and confirmed in their holy Profession, so the world may see, That we are neither ignorant our selves, nor willingly deceivers of others, in so great a matter as Religion is, which we publicly have professed and preached in this Church, both with science and conscience, with judgment and integrity.

First then, We esteem True Religion to be the right performance of those duties, which we owe to the One only true God; or to any Creature for his sake: That is, upon such grounds, to such ends, and after such maner, as God requires them of us, in the several relations, wherein we stand obliged to him, or them.
This Religion is discharged by us: first, Internally; in the Receptions and Motions of an enlightened and sanctified Soul; to which none can immediately be conscious, but only God, and a man's own spirit: Herein, we conceive the very soul, life, and quintessence of true Religion doth consist, so far as it is to be considered apart, from all outward expressions, visible Form, Society, or Church Communication; only as having spiritual inward converse and fellowship with God and Christ, by the graces of the holy Spirit; although Christians should be in defarts, dungeons, prisons, solitudes, and sick beds; amidst all forced fordidnels, disorders, and dissolutions of any show and profession of Religion, as to the outward man. This sincerity wants nothing of extern fashion, or ornament to compleat its piety; but is satisfactory both to God, and a man's own conscience, by that integrity of a judicious, holy, and devout heart; which hath devoted all its powers and faculties, to the knowledge, meditation, adoration, imitation, love, and admiration of God; according as he was pleased in various times and manners to reveal himself to it: As, partly (yet, but darkly) by the light of reason, in rational and moral principles seconded with fears and strokes of Conscience, which is a beam and candle of the Lord in the soul of man; but more clearly by supernatural manifestations, in dreams and visions, in audible voices, prophetical revelations, or angelical missions: By all which, religious light was only occasional and traditional; but now most evidently, compleatly, and constantly, in that declaration of his will to mankind, which is contained in the lively oracles of his now written and perfect Word; the only infallible rule of a good Conscience, and foundation of true Religion: According to which, only, we measure it; both as to its internals, which are summarily comprehended, in the love of God; and its externals, which are compleated in that charity, which for God's sake, we bear, and really exercise toward all men; but chiefly to the household of faith, that is, the Church, or Society of those, who profess to believe in Jesus Christ, as the only Saviour of Sinners.

This well-grounded and well-guided Religion (as it is then an Internal, Judicious, and Sincere deposing of the whole soul to God, as the supreme good, offered us in Jesus Christ) We esteem the highest honor and beauty of the reasonable soul; the divinest stamp or character on man's nature; the noblest property and capacity of the immortal spirit in us; demonstrating, not only its common relation to the Creator (which all things have,) but the Creator peculiar favor, and indulgence to man; whom he teacheth to fear, enableth to serve, and encourageth to love him above all: As also man's capacity,
to attain that knowledge of the divine wisdom, and that fruition of the divine love, which only can make it truly, and eternally happy.

For true Religion, thus seated in the soul of man, is not barely a speculative knowledge of God, according to what his wisdom hath in his works, and word; As, that he is; what he is not, as to any defects; what he is, in all positive excellencies in himself, (which yet is a great and divine light, shining upon man's understanding, but is not, to any defect; what he is, in all positive excellencies in himself, (which yet is a great and divine light, shining upon man's

duties, but understanding from experience, and from the historic parts of the Scripture.) But further, it also show us, what God is to us, in natural, true, Grace, Law, Gospel, Works, Word, Creation, and Christ's Incarnation; what we are to God in Christ, for duty and dependance; what all things are to us, as they are in God, (that is, in his wisdom, will, power, providence, &c. either making, or preserving, or disposing of them for his good and his glory.)

According to which light, we come to desire, to love, to enjoy God in all things, and all things in him; that is, within those bounds of honor, order, and those lesser ends, which he hath set in reference to the great ends of our good, and his glory, which are as a lesser circle in a greater; having both the same centres. At length God becomes the joy, life, beauty, exaltation, and happiness of the believing soul; by its often contemplations of him, and sincere devotions to him; whence we come to have an humble sight, ingenuous shame, penitential sorrow; and just abhorrence of our sinfulness, vanity, deformity, vileness, and nothingness, compared to God, and apart from him.

After this our wills come to be enclined to him (as the most excellent good and perfecting Beauty) drawn after him, and duly affected with him; to fear him for his power and justice; to venerate him for his excellent majesty and glory; to admire him for incomprehensible perfection; to love him for his goodness in himself, in all things, and in Christ above all; (in whom his love, grace, and bounty is most clearly discovered, and freely conveyed to us;) We come to believe him for his veracity or infallible truth in his Law and Gospel, to be guided by his unerring wisdom, and directions, which are set forth in the mandates of his Word to us, and agreeable motions of his Spirit in us (which are always conform to each other:) We come also to obey him in all things for his sovereign Empire and Authority; to trust in him at all times for his faithfulness and immutability; to hope in him, and to wait patiently for the consummation of his rich and precious promises, 2 Pet. 1.4. both in grace and glory. All which we believe upon the divine testimony of the written Word; however we cannot by bare humane reason, comprehend or demonstrate them; distribi possunt quum calor solis a matuto lume: Quum à Spiritu est veritas, ut in veritate sit Spiritus necessitie est. August.
Oftentimes praying to God, as all sufficient, omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent: supplicating for that, from his grace, power, and bounty, which we have not, deserve not, nor can attain otherwise, in this lapsed, corrupted, and cursed estate of our nature.

Which owes all its reparations onely to the free grace of God, manifesting himself in his works and words; also in those secret inward operations of the Spirit upon the conscience, and whole soul, by illuminations, restraints, terror, convictions, conversions; sweet, yet powerful, attractions; victorious, yet delectable prevailing; agreeable to the nature of the soul, and the liberty of the will; which then recovers its true liberty, when by the cords of God's love, its unwillingness is bound up; and its chains of violent lusts are taken off: Whence such great impressions, and real changes, are made upon every rational faculty in the soul; as those from darkness to light, from captivity to freedom, from death to life; according to the several representations of God's excellencies in nature, in morals, and in mysteries; wherein, the exceeding great riches of his free-grace, and love to us in Christ, Ephes. 1. 9. & 2. 7. hath the most softening, melting, and transforming influence; which, fully received upon the soul, the whole-man, in mind and spirit, in fancy, understanding, judgement, memory, will, appetite, affections, passions, and conscience, becomes partaker, through grace, of a divine nature, 2 Pet. 1. 4. (compared to what he was) and becomes a new creature, not as to its essence; but as to all ends, principles, motions, and actions; which are begun and continued, designed and ended in holiness; that is, in humble and unseigned regards to the glory of God, and exact purpoises of conformity to the will of God, in his written Word. New creatures by a newness of grace; in which, we remain what we were, Men; but are made, what we were not, Saints.

To which Word of God in the Scriptures, we being guided and directed by the constant and most credible testimony of the Church of true Religion.

3. Scripture the only rule of Christ, (that pillar and ground of Truth) so as to receive, and regard them. They at length, by God's grace on the heart, demonstrate themselves (by their native and divine light) to be the very Word of God; those lovely oracles, which set forth most divine precepts, patterns, prophecies, histories and mysteries; provokers also and promises of such good things, as the soul would most desire, most wants, and only can truly delight in living and dying; and to eternity.

Beyond these Scriptures, which we justly call The Word of God, understood in their true tense and meaning; we do not own any thing for a ground, rule, or duty in Religion: Nor are we at all moved, by those bold triflings, and endless janglings about Religion, Grace,


Fanatick pretences to Religion, are ease and empty.

Grace, Spirit, and Inspirations, which weak and vain men, (looking to their own foolish fancies, and not to the divine Oracles) do scatter too and fro, as chaff, to blinde the eyes of simple and credulous people; which would make Religion, a matter of novelty and curiosity; of cavilling merrily and contending, of cenfuring and condemning others of self-confidence and intolerable boilings, of scurruloueness and feminine softness, of custom onely and paternal example, or of ease and idlenes; where, out of a lazy temper, neglecting all ordinary means, Ministry, and duties, some men expect by special inspirations and dictates, to have their defect of pains and industry supplied: Or else they place their Religion, in the adhering to some party and faction; in popular and specious infinuations, and pretensions; or in admiration of mens persons, and gifts; or in the prevalencies of power and worldly successes; or in unjust gain and sacrilegious thrift; or in great zealotries for some new form and way of constituting, disciplining, and governing Churches; or in boldness to affirm, to deny, and to do any thing; or in meer verbal assurances, and loose confidences of being elected and predestinated to happiness, of being called to be Saints, and Teachers, and Prophets, in a new and extraordinary way; to advance such opinions and pratiises, as no holy men of old, ever knew, acted, or owned for Religious; or lastly, in railing upon, despising, and seeking to destroy all those, that approve not, or follow not those self-conceited confidences and violent extravagancies, which some men affect in their rude and unwarrantable undertakings. Such were the fanatick, mad, and at last, mad, Religion of those Circum-censions of old, and those Anabaptists, and other later Sects in Germany*, who wanted nothing but constant successes and continued power to have made all men, as wilde and wicked as themselves, or else to have destroyed them.

Alas, who fees not, how far different and much easier to sinful flesh and blood, to vain ambition, and proud hypocrite, these pretty soft fallacies, thefe froths, and fumes; these great swelling words, and titles of vanity, That God is their Father, that they are Saints, and spiritual, inspired Prophets, sent of God to call the World to repentance; to reign with Christ, Those rotten Sensualities of Religion (as some blasphemously call it) those licentious excesses; those lying prophecies, &c. How much easier (I say) these are, than those humble, sober, exact, and constant eyes of Conscience, and duties of

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* Sal. de Gub. l. 9. Tertull. "Nos tantum Scripturam sacras habemus, plenas, inviolatas integras: sed vel in purissimo fide, vel in vera translatione bibinis."

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2 Pet. 2. 18.
true Religion; by which holy men and women, in all ages, have
given all diligence to make their calling and election sure, to work
out their salvation with fear and trembling; by hearing, reading,
searching and meditating on the Scriptures; by repenting, fasting,
praying, watching, and weeping; by examining, trying, judging,
and condemning their sinful self, even in the most specious and suc-
cessful actions. Thus by mortification and self-denial, coming to the
Cross of Christ; taking it up; bearing it, and fastening themselves to
it, as to all just strictnesses, holy severities, and patient sufferings;
still endeavoring to abound in all exactness of justice, charity, meek-
ness, temperance, and innocency, before God and man. Thus going
with some holy agony, through many difficulties the narrow way;
true Christians (having done all) enter in at the strait-gate, which
leads to life, and are scarcely saved.

These were harder disciplines, and rougher severities of piety,
than our delicate novelties; our gentle Enthusiasts; our smiling
Seraphicks; our triumphant Libertines; our loftier Saints can en-
dure, which makes them so impatient (as Ahab to Elijah, and
Micah) to hear, and hear the words of faithful and true Ministers;
which seem as hard sayings; when they recommend and urge these
Scripturals and Morals of truth and holiness, justice, mercy, and humi-
licity, Micah 6. 8. to be the only reals of Religion: In which, the
duty, rule, end, comfort, and crown of true Religion do consist; whole
greatest and first enjoyment, is self-denial; bringing the lost soul to
find it self lost, and to seek after God; and having found him, to
follow him with all obediential love; with a pious, impatient, pain-
ing and thirsting after happiness in him, by the ways of holiness;
and having none in Heaven or Earth comparable to him; still earnestly
pressing toward him; as always, and one day wanting him, in the
fullest enjoyments of all things here; unsatiably satisfied with his
unlurketing-sweetness; ever filled with him, yet ever longing more to
partake of him: The soul in this its executive thirst, and spiri-
tual feaver, being confident, it can drink up that Jordan; that ocean of
divine fulness; which alone, it sees, can give it an happy satisfaction
to eternity.

The devout and pious Soul, thus intent to God, and content with
him, is not always sceptically wandering in endless mazes and laby-
rinths of Religion; either groping in obscurities, or guessing at un-
certaintyes, or grappling with intricate disputes, or perplexed with
various opinions, or shifting its parties, or doubting its profession,
or confounding its morals, or dazzling its intellectual eye, by looking
to prospects of immensity, and objects of eternity; (which are so re-
more
more from it, and far above it, that it onely sees this, That it can see nothing of that transcendent Good, which we call God. (Who is indeed, that superficient excellency, which we can least know as he is; and can no way comprehend in his ineffable essence, and most incomprehensible perfections.)

But, the Soul in its religious search after, and devout applications to, this supreme Good, which it esteems, as its God, stayes and solaces itself (as Miners do, who still follow and chiefly intend the richest Vain) with those lesser grains and sparks of divine goodness and beauty, which it finds everywhere scattered in its passage among the Creatures; which are as little essays, pledges, and tokens of that divine glory and excellency, which must needs be infinitely more admirable, and delectable in God himself.

The pious (which is the onely wise and well advised) Soul, so soon as ever it seriously searcheth after God, findes him in some kind or other, every where present; and in every thing lovely, yea, admirable, both within and without itself; yet still it conceives him to be infinitely above itself, and all things. Something of God it discovers, and accordingly admireth, adoreth, praifeth, loveth, and exalteth him, in the order, goodness, greatness, beauty, variety, and constancy of his works, which are every day visible; something it perceives of his sweetness and delectableness in the sober, moderate, and holy delectations, which our senses afford us, when they enjoy those objects, which are convenient, and fitted for them; something it observes of divine wisdom, power, benignity, and justice, in the experiences of Gods providence, bounty, and patience, which the histories of all times afford; something it differes of God, in those common beams and principles of reason, which shine in all mens minds, and are evidenced in the content of all Nations. Sometime also in the reflexions, terrors, or tranquillities of its own, and other mens conceptions; which, are as the first Heaven or Hell, rewarding the good, or punishing the bad intentions and actions of every man: More fully it sees God in the manifestations of the divine Word; in the excellency of the Moral Law; in the rules of justice given to all men; of which, their own reason and will is the measure and standard. Being commanded to do to other men, as we would have them do to us; Math. 7. 12. yea, and to do to God also; in the relations whereby we stand obliged to him, for duty, love, and gratitude, as we would have others do to us; when we are as fathers, or masters, or friends, or benefactors, or well-willers; against which, to offend, is by all men thought most barbarous, unjust, and wicked; how much more against God, who hath the highest merit upon us? Yet further, the Tampater, tam plus, tam beneficus now, Tert. de Deo.
come; which, from several hands, and at several times derived, have
yet punctually been fulfilled; chiefly in the coming of the Messiah,
theum, center, and consummation of all prophecies and promises;
which setting forth the nature, love, life, and death of Jesus Christ,
were all most exactly accomplished in him, and by him; on whom
were those notable signatures and characters of the divine wisdom
and power, that his glory appeared to men, as the glory of the only
begotten Son of God, full of grace, and truth.

The freeneß and fulness of this Evangelical grace and truth by
Jesus Christ, the faithful Soul further dicas: and in the sacred emblems
and seals of the holy Sacraments; by which the divine goodness is
represented and conveyed to us under the notions and efficacy of
those things, which are most necessary to our lives; either for Be-
ing, or Ornament; to nourish us, to cleanse us, and to cheer us.
Moreover, the pious Soul sees God in the exemplary patience of the
holy Martyrs; in the miraculous constancy of the heroick Confessors;
in the humility of true Penitents; in the purity and amendment of
real Converts; in the contentedness of true Believers; in the mer-
cifulness and charity of true Christians; in the mortifyings, and
self-denyings (as to this world) of all true Saints, which are follow-
ers of Christ; and lastly, in that holy ordination and succession of
the Evangelical Ministry; which as Christ instituted for the
Churches good, so he hath through all the vicissitudes of times, a-
midst all oppositions, preserved it to these days; and by it, the know-
ledge of God, and the faith of Christ in the World.

The devout Soul still guided and going on by the light of the
Ministry, discerns something of God; which is yet more retired,
secret, and ineffable, in the enlightenings, softnings, serenities, en-
largements, calmings, and comforts, which are made by a divine
power and supernatural influence upon itself; where it beholds the
brightest glimpses of divine glory, through the face of Jesus Christ,
and by the efficacies of his most sweet and holy Spirit, who is both
God and man; subject to our infirmities, sensible of them, and victo-
rious over them: Him the Soul answerably loves; as man, with a
love of union, and complacency; as God, with the love of admiration
and extasie; as both God and man, with a love of adherence and
satisfaction: As one, that hath undertaken, and is able to save it to
the uttermost; reconciling it with preparing it for, and uniting it to,
the supreme Good, God.

All these excellencies of Christ, it sees diffused and derived to
it by convenient means, instituted and continued in the Church;
which as pipes laid into the Oceans unexhaustible fulness, draw from
it, not to what measure it can give, but to what we want, and can
receive.
The Souls discoveries of God.

At length this devout Soul, by this daily confluence of many heavenly Meditations, holy Motions, and happy Experiments, flowing (like lesser rivulets) from all parts of the Creation, from Scripture, and from its own, with others experiences, to this stream of the knowledge of God: It finds itself by degrees advanced, like Ezekiel's waters, from vulgar and shallow conceptions, and answerable affections, to mighty and profound contemplations; which, gathering strength by their daily increasings, like an imperious, and irresistible torrent, carry away the devout Soul in its holy propensities, and impetuous frequencies toward God: Impatient of any stop or hinderance, till, at last, it comes (as all Rivers into the Ocean) to be wholly resigned, and happily resolved into its Alpha and Omega, its principle and perfection, its fountain, and its fulness, God.

So then, when the Soul in ways of true Religion comes to know, and love, and serve God, it is not conversant in vagrant fancies, in uncertain speculations, in insignificant notions; but it so far really enjoys him, as it loves him; and loves him, as it sees him: and sees him, as it seriously and deliberately observes him; (there being nothing of true Religion in volatile spirits, and transient glances;) which it doth most evidently, though not perfectly; darkly, yet truly, in those glasses of the Creatures; in the Scriptures, and in its own Confidence; in all ways of Goodness, Truth, and Holiness; in lights Natural, Moral, and Evangelical; by all which, the Soul, as the Eye, sees somewhat of the divine glory of that invisible Sun, in the descents, scatterings, and aptitudes of its beams; whose infinite, and entire brightness it cannot, without injury to it self, fully, and immediately, behold.

So that herein (we see) true and solid Religion, both by its light and holiness, its truth and practice, abundantly discovers, the fulness, levity, pride, vanity, fondness, and futility, of all those giddy opinions and pretensions, by which some men seek to amuse the world, and to abuse honest hearts: And also it shews its own real worth, beauty, dignity, fulness, usefulness, wisdom, and power; by all which it fits and fills the Souls various faculties and vast capacity: And in so doing it gives the devout Soul, the greatest evidences and surest demonstrations of its own immortality, beyond what any arguments drawn from ordinary reason and philosophy can do: All which the Atheistical impudence of some men easily e'ude, having no experimental knowledge of God; and living without God in the world, they are content to imagine an utter extinction of their souls.

Whereas the sanctified Soul concludes, and glories in its immortality, which it endeavors to improve to a blessed eternity; when it or, considers
considers seriously, and alone; whence can those high and holy enlargements, desires, and designs arise, so far above, and beyond all worldly objects and enjoyments? whence that unsatisfiedness, which carries the soul of man, with ambitious impieties, to this height of coveting after a blessed eternity, and the supreme Good, God blessed for ever? Whence this magnetick tendency and divine tradition of love to God, and to his infinite goodness; but only from the Father of our spirits, and Fountain of our souls, God? And why all these meditations, desires, and motions, planted in us by so good and wise a Creator, if never to be enjoyed by us, in those satisfactions, which only can flow from some divine and perfective object? Sure it is all one to omnipotent goodness, to fill us with the perfect good desired; as to endure with the desires of that good; which are but our torments and imperfections, if never to be in completion: Our very desires of Heaven, would else be our Hell; and our longings after happiness, our misery. Nor is it agreeable to the methods of divine wisdom and goodness, to plant fruitless and vain desires, or Tantalizing tendencies in mans nature, which he hath done in no other Creature; who attain whatever they naturally covet, or have innate propensities to. The same divine power having prepared the object, hath also implanted the desire. This unproportionableness of the Creators dealing with man, is left to be imagined, when we consider in the sacred story, That man had most of divine counsel and deliberation in his Creation; (not as needful to God, who can work by omniscient and omnipotent power, in an instant) but, implying to us, those most exact and accurate proportions observed by the great and all-wise Creator, in his formation of man: All other Creatures rising up, as bubbles on water, so soon as the formative Word of God, in its several commands, fell like distinct drops from Heaven, on the face of the great deep, the Chaos, or Abyss; But man, as a signet or seal, was graven by a special hand, and deliberate method of God, with the marks and characters of his own holy image, in spirituality, wisdom, righteousness, purity, liberty, eternity, and a proportionate capacity to enjoy whatever felicity he can understand and desire.

That, if we raise man to the highest glory and perfection, which he covets, and is capable of in this world of vanity and mortality; we shall see something in him of a little god, like the figure of a great monarch expressed in a small model or a signet: For, bring him from the fards of his nativity, from his infant infirmities, from his childish simplicities, from his youthful vanities; redeem him, by the politure of good education, from his rustic ignorance, his clownish confidences, his brutish dulness, his country solitude, his earthly pluddings, his beggarly indigences, or covetous necessities; rack him off further, and refine
Mans improvement, Mans excellency.

refine him from the leas of sensual and inordinate lusts, from swelling and surly pride, from base and mean designs, from immoderate affections, violent passions, unreasonable impulses, and depraved temptations, from within or without: Then furnish him with health, prudence, and beauty; fortify him with competent strength, both single and social; endue him with all wisdom, both divine and humane, which the minde of man is capable of; compass him with all fulnes and plenty; invest him with that public honor, which (as beams of the Sun, concentrated in a Burning-glass,) arising from the consent of many men, to unite the honor of their protection and subjection in one man, makes up the lustre of a majesty, something more than earthly and humane; coming nearest to the resemblance of what is divine and heavenly. Adde to these endowments of power, opportunity, and place to do good; those real and useful graces, those charitable and communicative virtues, which enlarge the nobler soul, to a love of the publick good, and a zeal for the common welfare of mankind, in works of humanity, gentleness, pity, patience, fortitude, justice, mercy, benignity, and munificence: What can more lively express to us a terrene visible Deity? whom we may (without Idolatry) own and reverence so far, as, without blasphemy, we may call such a man a God; while he wisely teacheth and instructeth others (a work worthy of a Parent, a Prince, a God;) or he powerfully pro
tests, or he bountifully rewards, or justly puniseth, or mercifully pardoneth, or graciously loveth others, and rejoiceeth in their well
doing and happiness, without any design or interest of his own. Yes, what do we ordinarily wish, and expect, or fancy more from God, than all these excellencies (of which, we see there are some sparks and beams, even now in mans nature) sublimated to infinite perfections, and extended to us, with eternal durations? is not this, that estate of full enjoyment, which we call Heaven? Wherein we hope never to want those divine and immediate communications, with the all
sufficient bounty, and unceasing benignity of God, is, as well able; io, no lefs, well pleased, to impart to the soul, than its necessities do require, and its desires ambitiously, and unlastingly covet to be supplied by them: Not one' y in order to this natural and politick Being, which as men we have with men, for a moment (which is daily presid
ced upon with the fatal and inevitable necessity of dying, which is a ceasing to enjoy God, by the mediation of the Creatures, in this visible world,) but also, in reference to that rational, religious, spiritual, gracious, perfect, and unchangeable Being, whereto we naturally aspire; (for, who would not be ever happy?) by enjoying himself, in the wisdom, strength, beauty, fulnes, love, and sweetness, flowing for ever from the excellencies of the Creator: The fruition of whom, is onely able to exclude all defects, and fears; to satisfie all desires, to
Internal Religion instates in the Church.

reward all duties, to requite all sufferings, to compleat all happiness, to crown and perfect all true Religion; which in Heaven shall be no other, than what we desire it to be here on Earth; that is, a right knowledge, and a willing performance of that duty, which the reasonable creature (Man) owes for ever to God: First, as his Creator, Consenor, and Redeemer, by Jesus Christ.

This then we look upon, as the Religious frame and temper of a reasonable Soul, in its internal dispositions and private devotions toward God, itself, and others. By which it is daily preparing for a glorious and blessed immortality; of which holy frame, it itself only can be conscious, with God; and the greatest evidence is, That sincerity of heart, which hath no other rule, but God's Word; no other end, but God's glory; and no other comfort, but in the constancy of this disposition; which is the fruit of God's holy Spirit in it. Certainly, such a Soul cannot, but be in, and of the true, invisible Church of God; so far as it hath a mystical, spiritual, and invisible life; which consists in the union to Christ, as the head, by faith, love, and all other obediential graces of his Spirit, which are common to every true believer. Out of this Church, its most true, there is no revealed salvation, possibly to be had for any that live to be masters of their own reason, will, and actions.

Yea further, such a religious soul, hath a capacity of, and right unto that external, visible, politick, and social communion with the Church of Christ, where ever Christians enjoy outward fellowship, with one another, in publick profession: Which communion, however such a soul solitary it may be, and sequestred from all Christian company, may not actually enjoy; being forcibly denied that happiness (of which, many do wilfully and peevishly deprive themselves by proud or peevish, and uncharitable separations,) through banishment, prison, captivity, sickness, &c. Yet, that Christian belief, love, and charity, which such an one bears to Christ, and to the Catholic Church of Christ, scattered in many places, and different in many ceremonial rites, and observations; These (I say) do infallibly invest this solitary Christian, in communion and holy fellowship with the whole Church of Christ, in all the World; as brethren and sisters are related as near kinsed, when they are never so far a funder in place; which owns the same God, believes the same common salvation by the same Lord Jesus; ueth the same seals of the blessed Sacraments; professeth the same ground of faith, and rule of holiness, the written Word of God; and bears the like gracious and charitable temper to others, as sanctified by same Spirit of Christ, which really unites every charitable and true believer to Christ, and to every Member of true Church; however it may want opportunities to express this communion in actual, and visible conversation, either civil or sacred; by enjoying that society,
Extern Profession of Religion.

society, as men, or that ordinary ministry, as Christians, which is by Christ appointed in the Church; as well for its outward profession, distinction, and mutual assistance; as for its inward comfort, and communion with himself.

The willing neglect of all such extern communion, and the causeless separation from all Church-fellowship in Word, Sacraments, Prayer, Order, and charitable Offices, must needs be inconsistent with any comfort; because, against charity, and so far against true Religion, and the hopes of salvation: For, those inward graces, wherein the life and soul of Religion do consist, are not ordinarily attained or maintained, but by those outward means and ministrations, which the wisdom of God in Christ hath appointed for the Churches social good, and edification together: In the right enjoyment of which consists that extern and joint celebration or profession of Christian Religion, which gives Being, name, and distinction to that society, which we call The Church of Christ on Earth. And this indeed is that Church properly, which is called out of the World; which as men, we may discern; and of which, both in elder and later times, so many disputes have been raised, which we may describe to be,

An holy company or fraternity of Christians, who being called by the Ministry of the Gospel, to the knowledge of God in Christ, do publickly profess in all holy ways and orderly institutions, that inward sense of duty and devotion, which they owe to God, by believing and obeying his Word: All that charity, which they owe to all men, especially to those that profess to be Christ's Disciples, and hold communion with his Body, the Catholike Church.

Herein I conceive, That the social outward profession of Religion, as it is held forth in the Word of God, in its Truths, Seals, Duties, Of the and Ministry, makes a true Church among men: And the true Church as a Church as Catholike, yea, any part or branch of this true Catholike visible society-Church, ( whose Head, Foundation, Rites, Seals, Duties, and ey of Pro-Ministry, are for the main of the same kind, in all times and places,) cannot but make a right profession of true Religion; as to living in the main essence and fundamentals; which consists in truth, holiness, Christ, and charity: However there may be many variations, differences, Eclesiastical and deformities in superstructures, both of opinion and practice: For however particular Churches, which have their limits of time, and place, and persons, (circumstances which necessarily circumscribe all things in this world) are still, as distinct arms and branches of a great Tree, issuing from one and the same, root Jesus Christ; &c.

Vin. Lyrin. Eph. 2. 9. As Fellow-Citizens of the Saints, and of the household of God: Ye are built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone stone, &c.
and have the same sap of truth and life conveyed in some measure to them, by the same way of the right Ministry of the Word, Sacraments, and Spirit, (so that in these respects, they are all of one and the same Catholic body, communion, descent and derivation;) yet, as these have their external distinctions and severings in time, place, persons, and manners; or any outward rites of profession, and worship; so they usually have distinct denominations, and are subject to different accidents, as well as proportions: Some branches of the same Tree may be withering, mossy, cankered, peeled, broken, and barren, yea, almost dead; yet old, and great, and true: Others, may be more flourishing, fruitful, clean, and entire, though of a latter shooting for time, and of a lesser extension for number and place; yet still of the same Tree; so far, as they have really, or only seemingly, and in the judgement of charity, communion with, relation to, and dependance on the Root and bulk; being neither quite broken off, and dead, by Heretical Apostacies, denying the Lord that bought them, or damnable errors, which overthrow the Faith; nor yet silvered and rent, by Schismatical uncharitableness, proud, or peevish rents and divisions: Which last, although they do not wholly kill, and crop off from all communion with the Church of Christ; yet they so far weaken and wither Religion, in the fruits and comforts of it; as each Schism pares off from its seed and fation, that R ind e and Bank (as it were) of Christian love, and mutual charity, through which (Chiefly) the sap; and joyce of true Religion, with the graces and comforts of it, are happily and most thrivingly conveyed to every living branch of the Catholic Church; so as to make it live, at least, and bring forth some good fruit, however it be not so strong, fair, and ample, as others may be: As the Church of Sardis, which had a name to live, and was dead in some part and proportion; yet is bid to watch, and strengthen the things that remain; which are ready to die, &c.

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, my Father taketh away. 2 Per. 21. 2 Tim. 2.18. 1 Cor. 12. 25. That there should be no schism in the body. 2 Joh. 9. Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God: He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, hath the Father and the Son. Rev. 3.1.

In this point then, Touching the true Church of Christ, in regard of outward profession, and visible communion (to the touch of which part, my design thus leads me) I purpose not so far to gratifie the endles, and needless jangling of any adversaries of this Church of England; as to plunge my self, or the Reader, into the wide and troubled Sea of controversy, concerning the Church: Considering, that many good Christians have been, and still are, in the true Catholic Church, by profession of that true faith, and holy obedience, which unite
unite to the **Head, Jesus Christ**; and by **charity**, which combines the **members** of his **Body** together; although they never heard the dispute, or determination of this to driven a **controversie**; As many are in health, and sound, who never were under **Physicians** hands, or heard any **Lecture of Anatomy**: Yea, although they may be cut off, and cut out of the particular **communion** of any **Church**, by the **Anathemaes**, and **excommunicating sentences** of some injurious and **passionate Members** of that **Church**; yet may they continue still in **communion** with **Christ**, and consequently with his **Catholike Church**; that is, with all those, who either truly have, or profess to have **communion** with **Christ**.

My **purpose** is, only to give an account, as I have done of **true Religion** in the internal power of it; so also of the **true Church**, as to the external profession of Religion: That thereby I may **establish the faith**, and **comforts** of all sober and good **Christians**, in this **Church of England**: That they may not be shaken, corrupted, or rent off, by their own instability, and weakness; or by the **fraud** and **malice** of those, who glory more in the **professors** they gain to fanatick factions, by uncharitable renderings from this Church, than in any communion they might have in humble and charitable ways, with the **Catholike Church**; or any of the greater, and nobler parts of it; which they (most impertinently) deny to be any Churches, or capable of any order, power, joynt authority, larger government, or ampler communion.

For the **Catholike Church of Christ**, (that is, the universality of those, who profess to believe in the name of **Jesus Christ**, according to the **Scriptures**;) That this is primarily and properly called a **Church**, often in Scripture, there is no doubt: As the whole is called a **Body**, in its integrality or completeness of parts and organs; whose every limb and part is corporeal too, and of the **Body**, as to its **nature**, **kind**, or **essence**. This **Church**, which is called the **Spouse and Body of Christ**, is (as its **Head**) but one; in its integrality or comprehensive latitude; as the **Ark** containing all such, as profess the true faith of Christ: And to this are given (as all **powers** and **faculties** of nature to the whole man) primarily and eminently those powers, **privileges**, gifts, and **titles**, which are proper to the **Church** of **Christ**; however, they are orderly exercised by some particular **parts** or **members**, for the good of the **whole**. The essence, integrality, and unity, of this Catholike **Church** consists, not in any **local convention**, or **visible communion**, or **publick representation**, of every part of it; of truth. **Heb. 10. 23. The Church of the first born; Tot ac tantae ecclesiae un in est illa ab Apostolis prima, ex qua omnes.** Tertul. de præ, ad Hæ. c. 30. **Eph. 3. 10, 21. & c. 23. Christ the Head of the Church, and the Saviour of the Body. V. 32. Christ and the Church. Col. 1. 18. Christ the Head of the Body, the Church. 1** **Cor. 12. The Body is not one Member, but many, &c. vide.**
but in a mysterious and religious communion with the same God, by the same Mediator Jesus Christ; and to this Mediator Jesus Christ, by the same Word and Spirit, as to the internal part of Religion; also by profession of the same Truth and common Salvation, joined with obedience to the same Gospel, and holy Ministry, with charity, and common order, as to the external.

In this so clear an Article of our Faith, I need not bestow my pains, since it is lately handled very fully, learnedly, and calmly, by a godly Minister of this Church of England*, to whose Book I refer the Christian Reader.

This name of Church, being evidently given to the universality Of a Nation of those, who by the Ministry of the Gospel, are called out of the considerable Churches, or distinct and larger part of the Catholick.

9. The Spirit of God in the Scripture gives sufficient warrant to this rule, and language; calling that a Church (as of Rome, Ephesus, Corinth, Jerusalem, Antioch, &c.) which consist of many Congregations, and Presbyters in a City, and its Territory, or Province: So the Apostle Paul in his Epistles to several Churches, distinguish them by the civil and humane distinctions of place, and Magistracy; and the Spirit of Christ to the Asiatic Churches, calleth each a Church distinctly, which were in great associations, of many faithful, under many Presbyters: And these under some chief Presidents, Apostles, Angels, or Bishops, residing in the prime or Mother Cities; where Christianity was first planted, and from whence it spread to the Territories, or Provinces about.

One would think, besides common speech, among all Christians, (which is sufficient to justify, what word is used to express our meanings to others,) That this were enough to confute the simplicity or previsibleness of those, who, to carry on new projects, dare aver, That

Ecclesiam apud unam quacunque civitatem con.

diditum Apostolat, quibus traducerunt fidem & semina do-

Rev. 2. & 3. Ecclesiam apud unam quacunque

Ecclesiast in universum mundi
disseminata unam

Jude 2. jurist. i. c. 3.

Eph. 4. 4-5.


The Church of Antioch.:


Tit. 1. 5.


Ecclesiast apud unam.

unam quacunque

civitatem con.
diditum Apostolat, quibus traducerunt fidem & semina do.

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The Church of Antioch.:


Tit. 1. 5.


Ecclesiast apud unam quacunque

civitatem con.
diditum Apostolat, quibus traducerunt fidem & semina do.
they know no such thing as a National Church; and with much
covetous, disdain to own, or understand any relation of order, duty,
subordination, or charity, they have to any such Church: Of which,
they say they know no virtue, no use, no necessity, no conveniences,
as to any Christian and Religious ends. Which so wilful and affect-
ed ignorance, was never known, till these latter and perilous times
had found out the pleasure of Paradoxes; by which, men would
seem wiser, and more exact, both in their words and fancies, than
either pious antiquity, or the Scriptures: Hoping by such gosps and
unexpected absurdities; (which would fain appear very fine and
scrupulous in language) to colour over Shinmatical and Anarchical
designs; and under such fig-leaves to hide the shame and folly of their
factious agitations and humors; which makes them unwilling to be
governed by any in Church or State, without themselves have an oar
in the Boat, and a share in the Government. This poor concernment
of some mens small ambitions, makes them disown any Church, but
such a conventicle or parcel as some men fancy to collect and call;
which they infect with the same fancies of sole and full Churchship,
and separate Power. Whereas the Lord Jesus Christ always first
called men by his Ministers to his Church; and by Baptism admitted
them; and by meet Governors, whom he sent and ordained, ruled
them, as his flock, in greater, as well as lesser parties; as Jacob did Gen. 320
his distinct flocks in the hands of his sons.

By the same Cynical severity, these men may deny, they have re-
lation to any other men, being themselves compleat men; or at
most that they are to regard none, but their families where they
live; and so cast off all obedience to any greater Societies in Towns,
or Cities, or Commonweals; yea, and all sense of humanity to the
generality of mankind, whom they shall never see together, or be
acquainted with. Who doubts, notwithstanding this morose folly,
but that, as in all right reason, equity, and humanity, every man is
related by the common nature to all mankind; so also, to particular
polities and societies of men, greater or smaller; according to the
distinct combinations, into which Providence hath cast him with
them, either in Cities, or Countreys? With whom, to refuse com-
munion, and disown relation, is to sin against the common principles
of society, order, and government, which are in mans nature; which
God hath implanted, Reason suggests, and all wise men have ob-
served, for the obtaining of an higher and more common good, by
the publick and united influence of the counsel, strength, and author-
ity of many, than can be obtained, in scattered parcels, or small and
weaker fraternities.

In like manner, to be in and of the Church, is not onely to be a
ture believer (which gives internal and real union to Christ, and to
M all
all true Christians in the Church Catholike, of which, no man can judge, because he cannot discern it, save onely in the judgement of charity. But it implies also to have and to hold, that profession of Christian Religion, in such external polities, and visible communion with others, as the providence of God, both offers and requires of us; according to the time, place, and opportunities, wherein he sets us; so as we may most promote the common good: Which duty and duty we own in humanity, as men, and more in charity, as Christians to any Church, or Society of Christians; To whom our counsel and power, or our consent and submission, may adde a further authority, a more harmonious and efficacious influence, than can be from small or ununited parcels: So that a National Church, that is, such a Society of Christians, as are distinct by civil limits and relation, from other Nations, may not onely own, and accordingly act, as they are men related in things civil; but also as Christians, they may own and wisely establisht such a Church power, relation, and association in matters of Religion, as may best preserve themselves in true Doctrine, holy Order, Christian peace, and good manners, by joint counsel, and more vigorous power; The neeress which they have, affording greater opportunities to impart, and enjoy the benefit of mutual counsel and charity, and all other communicable abilities, to a nobler measure, and higher proportion, than can be had in lesser bodies or combinations. This joint, publick, and united authority of any Church, in any Nation or Kingdom, is so far from being slighted, as some capricious minds do, that it is the more to be veneratcd and regarded by all good Christians; who know, that duty enlarges with relations; and a greater charity is due from us to greater communities, both of men, and of Christians.

The greatest vexation of these new Modellers, is, That they have so little with truth, modesty, or charity, to say against this famous National Church of England, and its Ministry: For they daily see, notwithstanding all their specious pretensions, and undefeatable agitations; the more, as winds, they seek to shake and subvert well-rooted Christians; the more they are confirmed, and settled in that Christian communion, which they have upon good grounds, both of Reason and Religion, Polity and Charity, with this Church of England, as their Mother: Which blessing, all wise Christians, and well ordered Churches, ever owned and enjoyed among themselves, as parts of the Catholick, in their several distinctions and society.

In these points of the true Church, and true Religion (however I covet to be short) yet I shall be most serious, and as clear as may be; writing nothing to other mens Consciencces, which I do not first read in mine own; and of which, I know account must be given by me, at Christs tribunal. And truly, I am as loth to deceive others,
Charity necessary to a true Member of Christ's Church.

as to err in myself, in matters of so great concernment, as true Religion, and the true Church are: Both which, every Sect and Party of Christians challenge to themselves; and those, no doubt, with most right and truest comfort, who do it with most charity to any others, that have for the foundation of their faith, the Scriptures, and the Sacraments for the seals, and a true Ministry for the ordering and right dispensing of holy things; professing such latitudes of charity always, as exclude no such Christians from communion with them: (Notwithstanding, they have many and different superstructures in lesser things.) Without this Christian charity, it is evident, all ostentations of true Religion, of Churches purity, and of Reformation, though accompanied with tongues, miracles, and martyrdoms, are in vain, and profit men nothing.

As it is not enough to make men of the true Church, to say, They are the only true Church, and in the only Church-way; or to censure, condemn, and exclude all other Christians, who may be in the same path-way to Heaven, though the paving be different; of grass, or gravel, or stone; &c. So it is enough, to exclude any party, sect, or faction of seeming Christians, from being any sound part of the true Church, to say, in a Schismatical pride, and uncharitable severity, That they are the only true Church; (as the ring-leaders of the Novatians and Donatists did,) excommunicating by malicious, proud, and passionate principles; or in any other novelizing ways, vexing and disturbing the quiet of those Christians, and Churches, who have the true Means and Ministry; the true Grounds, and Seals of Faith; with other holy and orderly Ministrations, though with some different rites, yet professing holiness of life, and this, with Christian charity to all others; which is the very bond of perfection: The want of which, cannot consist with those other graces of true faith and love, repentance and humility, by which men pretend to be united to Christ. The ready way, not to be any part or true Member of the Catholike Church, is, To challenge to be the only true Church, and to separate from all others; both by non-communion with them, and a total condemning or abdicating of them: As the way for any branch to wither, and come to nothing, is, To break it self off by a rude Schism, or violent fraction from the Tree, that it may have the glory to grow by it self; and to say with a Pharisaick pride to all others, stand by, I am holier than you; Thus parting from that Root and Body, Christ and the Catholike Church; in the communion with which, by Truth and Charity, its Life and Beauty did consist.

... However then, the unholy love of novelty, proud curiosity, cold charity, and distempered zeal of some men, dare cast off, unchurch, and anathematize, not onely single person and private Congrega-
tions, but even greater associations of Christians; bound together, by
the bonds of civil, as well as Church societies, in Nations and King-
doms; yea, and to despise that Catholike form of all the Churches
in the World, of antient, as well as present times: Yet this vain-
glorying, through a verbal, ignorant, proud, and uncharitable con-
fidence of themselves, and contempt of all others, seems to have more
in it of Belial and Antichrist, than of Jesus Christ; more of Luci-
fer, than of the Father of Lights; who also is the Father of Love;
who hath therefore shined on men with the light of his grace, and
love of Christ, that he might lead them by this powerful pattern of
divine love, to love one another, as men and as Christians, with all
meekness and charity; with all good hope, forbearance and long-suffer-
ing; toward those, especially, that profess to be of the household of
faith; who hold the foundation, Christ crucified; though they may
have many additions of hay, straw, and stubble; since, Those may
save, though these suffer loss. God will easily discern between his gold,
and our dross, between the errors rising from simplicity, and the truths
joined with charity, and humility; He will easily distinguish be-
tween the humble ignorance of many upright-hearted Christians,
who are seduced to wanderings; and the subtility, pride, or malice, of
Arch-heretics and Schismatics, who seduce others for sinister
ends.

All wise, humble, and charitable Christians, should so order
their judgements, and censures, if at any time they are forced to de-
clare them, that they must above all things take heed, that they
nourish not, nor discover any uncharitable seeds, or distances, and
antipathies, against any Churches or Christians, after the rate of
those passions, which are the common source both of Schisms and He-
resies; whose ignorance and pride, like water and ice, mutually a-
rise from, and are resolved into each other: Therefore proud, because
ignorant; and the more ignorant, because so proud. Nor yet may
they follow those defiances and distances in Religion, which Rea-
sion of State, or the Interests of Princes, or Power of Civil Factions,
or the Popular fierceness of some Ministers, and eager Sticklers for
sides and parties, do nourish; and vulgarly commend, as high ex-
pressions of zeal, and the only ways of true Religion; Where there
is scarce one drop of charity in a sea of controversy, or one star of ne-
cessary truth in the whole clouded Heaven of their differing opinions
and ways; which set men as far from true Christian temper, as burn-
ing Feavers do from native heat, and health.

I know no point hath used more liberal and excellent Pens,
than this, concerning the true Church, as it is visible, or professional
before men; which is the proper subject of this discourse. Some mens
Pens flow with too much gall and bitterness; as the rigid Papists on
the
Of the Roman Church, and the Popes Supremacy.

the one side; and the keener Separatist on the other: Denying any to be in a right Church—may, have onely such, as are just in their particular mold and form: Either joyned in communion with the Roman profession, and being subject to its head, the Pope; pleading antiquity, unity, universality, visibility, &c. or else embodied with those new and smaller Incorporations, which count themselves the onely true, and properly so called Churches; pretending more absolute Church-power, more exact constitution, and more compleat Scripture-Reformation, than any ancient; National, dilated, and confederated Churches could, or ever did attain too.

Herein, there is a strong excels on both sides, both Papal and Popular: First, The Romanists extend the cords of their Churches power, and its head or chief Bishop so far, as it were properly Catholic-like, and Oecumenical; that is, by divine appointment invested with sovereign Authority, to extend and exercise Ecclesiastical polity and dominion over all other particular Churches, in all ages, and in all parts of the World: So that it is (say they) necessary to salvation to be under this Roman jurisdiction, &c. Whereas it is certain, That the Roman Church, antiently was, and still is (properly speaking) distinct from others in place, as well as name, and had antiently its limited power, and jurisdiction, extending to the Suburbanian Provinces; which were Ten, seven in Italy, and three in Sicily, Corsica, and Sardinia: According to those (like) bounds, which occasionally from civil titles, both named and distinguished all other Churches from one another; in both the Asides, in Africa, and in Europe; as the Gallican, German, Britifh, &c. Nor hath ever any thing, either of Reason, or Scripture, been produced by any (more than of true Antiquity) whereby to prove, That we are bound to any communion (that is, (in the true meaning of proud and politick Romanists) to that Subjection to the Pope, and his party; which may be most for his and their honor and profit) with the Church of Rome, further, than the rule of Christian charity obligeth every Christian, and every part of the Catholike Church, to communicate in truth and love, with all those, that in any judgement of charity, are to be counted true Christians, so far, as they appear to us, to be such.

Nor is it less evident, That many Churches and Christians have scarce ever known, much less owned, any claim of subjection upon them, by the Roman Church: Which, however they had antiently a priority of order and precedence, yielded to it, and its chief Bishop, for the eminency of the City, the honor of the Empire, and the excellency of the reputed Founders and Planters, Saint Peter, and Saint Paul; also for the renown of the faith, patience, and charity of that Church, which was famous in all the World; Yet all this Primary

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or Priority of Order, which was civilly by others granted, and might modestly be accepted by the chief Bishop in the Roman Province, as to matter of place and precedence, or Votes in publick Councils and Synods: This, I say, is very far from that *Anti-christian Supremacy of usurped power, tyrannick dominion, and arbitrary jurisdiction; the very suspicion and temptation to which, the holy and humble Bishops of Rome were ever jealous of, and avoided; especially Gregory the Great; who was in nothing more worthy of that title, than in this, That he so greatly detested, protested against, and refused the title of Universal Bishop, when it was offered to him by the Council of Chalcedon: Which both name and thing was in after times gained and challenged, by the pride, policy, covetousness, and ambition, of those Bishops of Rome, who by some of their own sides confession (as *Baronius, *Genebrard, and others) were sufficiently degenerated from that Primitive humility and sanctity, which were eminent in the first Bishops of Rome, in those purer and primitive times; who never thought of any one of those Three Crowns, which flatterers in after ages have fully hammered, and set on the heads of the Bishops of Rome; in a Supremacy, not of Order, but of Power, and plenary Jurisdiction, above all Christians, or Churches, or Councils in the Christian Word; which hath unjustly occasioned so many parts of the Catholike Church, in that regard, to make a necessary separation (not from anything that is Christian among them, but) from the usurpation, tyranny, and superstition of those Bishops of the Roman Church, and their Faction, who unjustly claim, and rigorously exercise dominion over the Consciences and Liberties of all other Churches, and Christians: With whom, the Roman pride now refuseth to hold such peaceable communion; as ought universally to be among Christians, (in respect of order and charity) unless they will all submit to that tyranny and usurpation, which hath nothing in it, but secular pride, vain pomp, and worldly dominion: Yet still those of the Roman Church know, That all the Reformed Churches, as well as we of England, ever did, and do hold, a Christian communion in charity with them, so far, as by the Word of God we conceive, they hold with the head or root of the Church, Christ Jesus, with the ground and rule of Faith, the Scriptures; and, with all those holy Priests, in the purest and primitive Churches; Of whole faith, lives, and deaths, having some Monuments left us, by the writings of eminent Bishops, and others; we judge, what was the tenor both of the Faith, Manners, and Charity of those purer times, which we highly venerate, and thievre to imitate. 

Possibly we might now subscribe to that Letter, which the Abbot and Monks of Bangor sent to Austin, (whom some report to be
Of infallibility in the Church.

be a proud and bloody Monk) when he came to this Nation, and required obedience of them, and all Christians here, to the Pope; (which Letter is thus translated out of Saxonick, by that grave and learned Gentleman, Sir Henry Spelman, a lover and adorer of this Church of England; by his life and learned Labors,) Be it known to you, without doubt, that every one of us are obedient, and subject to the Church of God; and to the Pope of Rome, and to every true godly Christian; to love every one in his degree, in perfect charity; and to help every one of them, by word and deed, to be the children of God; and other obedience, then this, we know not due to him, whom you call Pope; nor do we own him to be Father of Fathers. This is one of the obedience we are ever ready to give, and pay to him, and every Christian, continually: Beside we are under our own Bishop of Caerleon upon Usk, who is to oversee us under God, and to cause us to keep the way spiritual.

Nor will this benefit of the Popes pretended Infallibility, (for deciding controversies of Religion, and ending all Disputes of Faith, The pretended in the Church Catholique) countervail the injury of this his [infallible] Infallibility, and oppression: Considering, that nothing is more, by Scripture in the nature, Reason, and Experience, not so much disputable, as fully to be Pope or denied by any sober Christians, than that of the Popes Infallibility; Church of which, as the Church never ye enjoyed; so, nor doth any Church, Rome, or any Christian indeed want any such thing, as this Infallible Primatus suum non object Pe- trus, nec inerrabi- litatem, sed Paulo vitatis affecto; Documentum patiente & concordia, Cyp. ep. 71.

Certainly, in points of true Religion, to be believed, or duties to be prati- sed, as from divine command, every Christian is to be judge of that, which is propounded to him, and embraced by him; according to what he is rationally and morally able to know and attain; by those means which God hath given him, of Reason, Scripture, Ministry, and good examples: Of all which, the gifts or graces of God in him, have enabled him seriously and discreetly to consider. Nor is he to rest in, either implicit or explicit dictates, presumptions, and
True Ministry without Infallibility sufficient.

Magnus ingenium magna testatio. De Orig. & Cels. Vin. Lirin. 
1 Cor. 8. 7. Knowledge puffeth up. 2 Pet. 2. 19. 
Rom. 6. 17. Ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered to you. 
Eph. 4. 15. Adams or arr. 
2 Thes. 2. 10. Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

and Magisterial determinations of any frail, and sinful men, who may be as fallible, as himself: For, whereas they may exceed him in gifts of knowledge, they may also exceed him in passions, self-interests, pride, and policy; so that he may not safely trust them on their bare word, and assertion; but he must seek to build his faith on the more sure Word of God, which is acknowledged (by all sides) to be the surest director; what to believe, to do, and to hope in the way of Religion. Nor may any private Christians unletteredness, that cannot read; or his weaker intellect, that cannot reason and dispute; or his many incumbrances of life, that deny him leisure to read, study, compare, meditate, &c. These may not discourage him, as if he were a dry tree, and could neither bear, nor reap any fruit of Christian Religion, because he hath no infallible guide, or judge: Since the mercy of God accepts earnest endeavors, and an holy life, according to the power, capacity, and means a man hath; also he pardons unwilling errors, when there is an obedience from the heart, to the truths we know; and a love to all truth, joined with humility, and charity.

In order therefore to relieve the common defects of men, as to the generality of them, both in Cities and in Country Villages (where there is little learning by the Book, or Letter; and great dulness with heavy labor) the Lord of his wisdom and mercy hath appointed that constant holy order of the Ministry, to be always continued in the Church; that so learned, studious, and able men, being duly tried, approved, and ordained to be Teachers and Pastors; may by their light, knowledge, and plenty, supply the darkness, simplicity, and penury of common people: who must every man be fully persuaded in his own mind, Rom. 14. 5. in matters of conscience; and be able to give a reason of that faith and hope which is in him, beyond the credit of any meek man, or the opinion of his infallibility, 1 Pet. 3. 15.

However they may with comfort and confidence attend upon their lips, whom in an holy succession of Ministry, God hath given to them, as the ordinary and sufficient means of Faith; And however a plain-hearted and simple Christian may religiously wait upon, and rest satisfied with those holy means and mysteries, which are so dispenced to him by true Ministers, (who ought above all, to be both able and faithful; to know, and to make known the truth, as it is in Jesus;) Yet, may he not lavingly, or conscientiously rely, in matters of Faith, nor make his last resort upon the bare credit, or personal veracity of the Minister; but he must consider and believe every truth, nor because the Minister faith it, but because it is grounded on the Word of God; and from thence brought him by his Minister; which doctrine he judgment to be true, not upon the infallibility of any
True Ministry, without Infallibility, sufficient.

any Teachers; but upon that certainty which he believes to be in the Scripture; to which, all sorts of Christians do assent; And to which, the Grace and Spirit of God do draweth and enclineth the heart, as to close with those divine truths, to believe and obey them; not for the authority of the Minister, but of God the Revealer; whose excellent wisdom, truth, and love, it discerns in those things which are taught it by the Ministry of man. So that, till the simplest Christian doth satisfyingly believe, and conscientiously live, according to what himself judgeth, and is persuaded in his heart, to be the will of God, in his Word; and not after the dictates of any man: Which either written, or spoken, have no more authority to command or persuade belief, as to Religion, than they appear to the believer, (and not to the speaker only) grounded on the sure Word of God, and to be his mind and will to mankende.

And as it is not absolutely necessary to every Christian, in order to Faith and Salvation, to be able with his own eyes to read, and so to judge of the Letter of the Scripture; so it is the more necessary, that the reading and preaching of the Word should be committed to able and faithful men; not, who are infallible, but who may be apt to teach, and worthy to be believed: Of whom, the people may have great persuasion, both as to their abilities, and due authority, to teach and guide them in the ways of God. We read in Irenaeus, Irenæus, I.3. that in One hundred and fifty years after Christ, many Churches of Christians, toward the Caiffian Sea, and Eastward, were very found in the Faith, and fled against all Heretical or Schismatical insinuations; when yet they never had any Bibles or Scriptures among them; but only retained that Faith which they at first had learned, and were still taught by their Orthodox Bishops, and Ministers; which they never wanted in a due succession: Of whole piety, honesty, and charity, they were so assured, as diligently to attend their doctrine, and holy ministrations; with which the blessing of God (opening their hearts, as Lydia's) still went along; so as to keep them in true faith, love, and holy obedience.

Since then, no man or men can give to others, any such sure proofs, and good grounds of their personal infallibility, as the Scriptures have in themselves, both by that more than humane nature of divine truths in it; which set forth most excellent precepts, patents, and promises; excellent morals and mysteries; excellent rules, examples, and rewards, beyond any Book whatsoever: Also, from that general credit, regard, and reception, which they have, and ever had with all (and most with the best) Christians, in all ages; as the Oracles of God, delivered by holy and honest men; for a rule of faith, and holy life; also for a ground of eternal hope: Since that from hence onely, even the Pope, or any others, that pretend to any 

N infallibility,
True Ministry beyond pretended Infallibility, or Inspirations.

Infallibility, or inspirations, do first seek to ground the doctrine of pretensions, of which everyone that will be persuaded must first be judge of the reasons or grounds alleged to persuade him; it is necessary that the (a): infallibility of the Scriptures, must be first received, and believed by every Christian; in order to his being assured of any truth, which thence is urged upon him to believe, or do: Which great principle setting a believer on the certainty of infallibility of the Scriptures, as a divine rule of Faith and Life, is never to be gained upon any mens judgements and persuasion (be they either idioick or learned) unless there be such an authoritative Ministry, and such Ministers to preach, interpret, open, and apply the Scriptures by strong and convincing demonstrations, which may carry credit and power with them. The succession then of rightly ordained Ministers is more necessary to the Church, than any such papal infallibility; in as much, as it is more necessary to believe the Scriptures authority, than any mans testimony, which hath no credit but from the Scriptures: Which while the Pope, or others, do seek to wrest to their own secular advantages and ends, they bring men at length to regard nothing they say; nor at all to consider, what they endly wrangle, and groundlessly dispute about true Religion, or the true Church.

So absolutely necessary and sufficient in the way of ordinary means, is a right and duly ordained Ministry, which Christ hath appointed to continue, and propagate true Christian Religion; which ever builds true Faith, and the true Church upon the Scriptures; That, as there is no infallibility of the Pope, or other man, evident by any Reason, Scripture, or Experience, so there needs none, to carry on that great work of men's salvation; which will then fail in any Church and Nation, when the right Ministry fails, by force or fraud: If we can keep our true Christian Ministry, and holy Ministrations, we need not ask the Romanists, or any other arrogant Monopolizers of the Church, leave to own our selves true Christians, and a part of the true Catholike Church of Christ; which cannot be, but there, where there is a profession of the Christian Religion, as to the main of it; in its Truths, Sacraments, Holy Ministrations, and Ministry, rightly ordained; both for the ability of the ordained, and the authority of the ordinators; although all should be accompanied with some humane failings.

Where the now Roman Church then, doth (as we conceive) either in their doctrine or practice, vary from that Catholike received rule the Scriptures, which are the only infallible, certain, and clear guide in things fundamental; as to Faith, or manners; we are forced to far, justly and necessarily to leave them, and their infallible fallibility in both; yet charitably still, so as to pity their errors; to pray for their
their enlightening, their repentance and pardon, which we hope for: Where no malice or corrupt lusts makes the additional errors peni-
cious; and where the love of truth makes their pardonable, by
their conscientious obeying what they know, and desire to know,
what they are yet ignorant of. Yea, and wherein they are conform
to any Scriptures, doctrine, and practice; or right reason, good order,
and prudent policy; there, we willingly run parallel with, and agree-
able to them, both in opinion and practice. For we think we ought
not in a heady, and passionate way, wholly to separate from any
Church, or cast away any branch of it, that yet visibly professeth
Christian Religion; further, than it renders and breaks itself off from
the Word, Institution, and patron of Christ, in the Scriptures; and
so either separates itself from us, or casts us out from it, uncharitably
violating that Catholike communion of Christ's Church, which ought
to be preserved with all possible charity. The constancy and fidelity
of the Church of Christ is more remarkable in its true Ministry,
holding forth in an holy succession the most Catholike and credible
truth of the Scriptures; which at once shews both the innate di-
vine light in them; and the true Church also, which is built by
them, and upon them. The truth of which Scriptures, while we
with charity, believe and profess, both in word and deed, we take it
to be, the surest and sufficientest evidence to prove, That we are a
part of the true Church, against the cavils and calumnies of those
learneder Romanists; upon whose Anvils, others of far weaker
arms, have learned to forge the like fiery darts against this Church of
England.

For, on the other side, the new Models of Independent, or Con-
gregational Churches, (which seem like small Chapels of Ease, The contra-
let up to confront and rob the Mother Churches of Auditors, Com-
municants, Maintenance, and Ministry) wind up the cords, and
fold up the curtains of the true Church, too short, and too narrow: Churches to
Shrinking that Christian communion, and visible polity, or society small and
of the Church, to such small figures, such short and broken ends, of single Con-
obscure conventicles, and parties, that by their rigid separations, se-
gregations, some men scarce allow the whole company of true Christians in the world, to be so great, as would fill one Jewish Synagogue: Fancy-
ing, that no Church or Christian, is sufficiently reformed, till they
are most diametrically contrary in every use and custom to the Re-
man fashion; abhorring many things as Popish, and Superstit-
anous, because used by the Papists: When indeed, they are either
pious, or very prudential; yea, many count it a special mark of
their true Churchship, to separate from all, to cry down every thing,
to rail at, and despise (with as little charity, as much passion, and
no reason) all Churches and Christians, as Antichristian, and not

N 2
yet sufficiently reformed, which are not of their new Bodying, and Independent fashion.

Which novel practices seem nothing else, but the effects, either of secular policy, or prejudicating and preposterous zeal; by which, some men, for their interest, or their humor, seek to bring back the Churches of Christ, to that Egypt and Babylon of strife, schism, emulation, sedition, faction, and confusion, to which they were running very early, as the Apostle Paul tells us; and St. Clemens in his Epistle to the Corinthians: From the rocks of which inconveniences, Saint Jerom by express words, and all Churches, by their antient Catholike practices, do assure us, That the wisdom of the Apostles, and Apostolike-men in the Primitive times, even from St. Mark, in Alexandria, and St. James in Jerusalem, redeemed and brought the Church; by feding those large and publick combinations, by Episcopal Government; and in ways of augmented communion, and Catholike correspondencies (as much as might be) by Synods and General Councils; which might best keep particular Congregations, from scattering and crumbling themselves into such Faction and Schisms; which all wisdom foresaw, and experience fulfilled, would be the only means, First, to break the bond of Christian charity, and the Churches communion (which consisted much, as in the verity of the Faith, in those larger fraternities, holy confederacies, and orderly subjecctions,) and afterward to overthrow the very foundations of Faith and Truth: As those very where did, who at any time corrupted any part of the Church, affecting singularities, and choosing rather to fall, by standing alone in a separation of Opinion or Government, than to seem to have any support by the association with others, in a more publick way of common relation, unity, and subjection: Which undoubtedly carry the greatest strength and safety with them, both in Ecclesiastical, and Civil politics; twisting many smaller strings into one cord, and many cords into one cable; which will best preserve the Ship of the Church, as well as the State, from those storms and distresses, which are prone to fall upon it, in lesser bottoms. The good effects of which larger communion among men, and Christians, all reason and experience demonstrate to us in civil societies, which are the conservatories of mankind, by way of mutual assistance in publick combinations; while single persons, which alone are feeble, and exposed to injuries, grow strong by making one family, and many families grow into a Village, Town, or City: Many Villages, Towns, and Cities, arise to one potent Principality or Commonwealth; which as a threefold cord, is not easily broken.

It is in all Church Histories most evident, That, as soon as the Gospel spread from Cities, where it was generally first planted (there being the greatest conflux of people) and from thence derived to the Territories,
Territories, and Countreys adjacent, which were called the several (\textit{magistri or dominion}) Parishes or Dioceses: So, those Christians, which grew up in the Countreys and Territories about, to small Congregations, continued still in a fraternal subjection, and a filial submission, both Presbyters and People, to that Bishop and Presbytery, which were in the Mother City; who, there residing, (where the Apostles or Apostolike-men had placed them) took care to spread the Gospel to the Countreys about, as to preserve Religion once planted, in peace, unity, and order. Nor did those particular Congregations in Cities or Villages, turn presently Asepahists or Independents; nor set up any (\textit{autonomia}) heady or headless bodies, in every corner and meeting-place: For, however Christians in some places, might at first amount to but to small a number, as would make but one convenient Society, or Congregation, under one Bishop, or Presbyter, with the Deacons; and so might for a time continue in private bounds, not corresponding with, or depending on any other company of Christians, as to lesser concerns; which might easily be managed among them: Yet, where the number of believers increased, as in Antioch, Jerusalem, Ephesus, Corinth, Rome, &c. both in the Cities, and their Territories, all Histories of the Church aver; That, as by those dictates of religious Reason, which first guided the Apostles or Apostolike-men, to cast themselves and believers, into such lesser bodies, and distinct Societies, as might best serve for the convenience of meeting together in one place, according as neighborhood invited them: So still (as growing parts of the same body, and increasing branches of the same Tree) they preserved the first, great, and common relation, of descent and extraction, from the Mother City; So as to correspond with, to watch over each other; yea, and to be subject (in every particular Congregation, as well as families) to those, who were the original of their instruction and conversion; and who by a kind of paternal right, together with Apostolical appointment, and common content of Christians, had the chief power and authority for Inspection and Government over them, within such precincts and bounds; yea, all Christians were thus subjected, and united in greater and diffused Churches, not by any civil necessity, such as compels men by the sword and force; but by that necessity of gratitude, sense of priority, prudence and charity; which bound by love, humility, and wisdom, particular Christians first to one Society or Convention: And these particular Congregations to greater fraternities; and these to a more ample and Catholike communion; for the mutual peace, and good order of the whole Church of Christ; which fought to preserve itself, even in the eye of the world, as one entire body, under one head, Christ Jesus.

So that the imaginary pattern in the Mount, the primitive practice which 

\[1 \text{Cor. 12. 23, etc.}
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\[\text{Eph. 4. 4, etc.}
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\[\text{N \text{3}}
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which some men love to talk of (by which they would force all
large and ampiated Churches, (which have now received (as they
did at first ) distinctions and denominations by the Cities, Civil
Jurisdictions, Kingdoms, or Nations, wherein they are) to those
lesser Forms, wherein they fancy (and not unlikely) a single Con-
gregation of Christians, in any place, at first enjoyed themselves un-
der some Apostle, or one of Apostolike appointment, who was their
Bishop or Overseer over them,) This, I say, seems to be so childish a
fancy, so weak, and unreasonable an imagination, That it is all one,
as if they would needs reduce themselves to their infant coats, now
they are grown men.

And what I pray doth hinder, (save onely the novel opinions and
humors of these men,) that, Christian Religion (which satisfies
reason, to serve God and the Church, in all comely ways) may not
use thole principles and rules, for order, unity, peace, and mutual safe-
ty of Christians, in their multiplied numbers and societies, which
we are taught, and allowed to use in all civil associations. Yea, and
not onely allowed, but enjoyned to observe in Ecclesiastical polity
and Government, by that great and fundamental Canon of the Apo-
sle, Let all things be done decently, and in order; which must hold,
not onely in private and lesser parcels, but in the more large and in-
tegral parts of the Church of Christ.

But Reason then, and Religion sufficiently discover, the vanity
and imperfection of thole novel fancies, which are obstrued, as ne-
cessary for all private Congregations; when indeed they are, and
ever have been, and will be destructive to the more publick and gen-
eral good of the Church; whose tranquillity, honor, and safety, consis-
in such dependencies and subordinations, which may be further re-
move from thole frations and disfusions, which arise from that Church-
dividing and Charity-destroying principle of Independent Congre-
gations, which was never used in any times of the Church, further,
than the minority and infancy of the first planting; while either
Christians were not encreased much in number, or not enlarged in
place: But when the first small company of believers multiplied
from a Church in one Family, to a Church in many Congregations,
(which could not now with conveniency all meet together in one
place,) they yet as branches, still continued both united to the root,
Christ Jesus; and also to the main body and bulk of the visible
Church, by union to that part whence they descended, and to which
they related; and they were not as Colonies or Slips, to transplant-
ed and separated, to grow Independently of themselves, apart from
all others: Of which, there is no example in Scripture or Antiquity.

It follows then, That what was settled in this or other like
Christian Churches, was no whit blamable, as any thing of meer
humane
The Church of England, as National.

humane invention, or any superfluous and corrupt addition to any precept, pattern, or constitution, either of Christ's or the Apostles; who never prohibited the ordering of Churches in larger associations or Governments; extending to Cities, and their Territories, to great Dioceses, Provinces, and Nations; Since there is no precept or practice, limiting Churches power, and society, to private and single Congregations: Yea, there are such general directions, and examples in the Scripture, as command, or at least commend rather than condemn those analogous or proportionable applying of all orderly and prudential means for union and communion, according as the various state, and times of the Church may require; which still aim at the same end, the peace and welfare of the Church, both in the lesser and the larger extents; which are justly so carried on by the wise Governors and Protectors of the Church, according to the general principles and rules, or patterns of pious and charitable prudence, set down in the Scriptures; beyond which, in this case of the Churches outward order and polity, there neither is, nor needs, other directions; no more, than on what Text and Subject; or in what method and place; or how long time, and how often a Minister must pray, or preach; and people must hear Sermons, or attend holy duties.

That antient and excellent frame then, of this Church in England, which in a National union, by civil, religious, and sacred bonds, was so wisely built, and for many ages compacted together, and which hath been lately so undermined, so hackt and hewn, with passionate writings, and disputings, and slights, that it is become not only a tottering, but almost a quite demolished and overthrown frame; This Church, I say, hath suffered this hard fate, rather through the iniquities of times, malice of men, and just judgements of God on the Governors and governed, (who we may fear improved not so great advantages of union, order, power, peace, and protection, to the real good of the Church, and furtherance of the Gospel) rather, I say, by these personal failings, than for any, either mischief, deformity, defects, or Antichristian excess in the way and frame itself, as to its grounds and constitutions: Which were setted and long approved by very wise, holy, and learned men; carrying with them, (as much, as any Christian, or Reformed Church did) the lineaments, features, beauty and vigor, of those antient Primitive Churches; which in the midst of heresies and persecutions kept themselves safe, as to truth and charity, not by the breeds of Independent Bodies, but by the futures of Christian Associations; in Provincial, National, and Oecumenical enlargements: Such ample and noble platforms of religious reason, and sanctified wisdom, as not ambitious policy, but Christian charity, and prudent humility, embraced; which, as our new models and projections will never mend, so they much commend those antient happy
Seekers and Scepticks.

models, and paterns, by those multiplied mischiefs ensuing inevitably upon the presumptions of posterity; which have rashly adventured thus to remove and change the antient limits, marks, and orders of the Church, which Primitive Fathers and Apostles had recommended and settled.

15. Seekers thence.
The Eunuchian Hereticks refusing to subscribe the Catholike Faith, confirmed by the Council of Chalcedon, called themselves Antipapists, Amtbigents, Dubians; and after run out to all corrupt opinions. Aug. de Hare.

Nobis qui jam credimus aliud non querendum. Si enim semper querimus, non quaquam inventies, non quaquam credamus. Terr. de Praef. ad Ha. c. 10. Quemadmodum Athororum pars maxima, nam tamen credunt quam cupiant non esse Deum. M. N. F. L.

Non facile inveniet vir am ecclesiam, qui illi benter quaerat, Mlaneth.

Which temerity of thus mincing and crumbling, or tearing any Church National (being the issue of no Synod; or Council in the Church, but onely of private fancies, and most what mechanick adventures) hath, we see, made some poor souls turn Scepticks and Seekers after true Religion, and a true Church; being wholly unsatisfied, either with the abolition of the old way, or the various inventions of new ways. These profets, whether out of weakness, pure ignorance, passion, or policy (God knows,) That they are Christians no further, than to see, that all Christian Churches are now, and have been, ever since the Apostles times, adulterous, impure, deformed, and Antichristian; That, they are wholly to seek for any true ground, or way of Christian Religion, Church, and Ministry, even among so many Christians, Ministers, and Churches: That is, they cannot fee wood for trees, nor light for the Sun at noon-day. And this may easily be, either by reason of wilful blindness, or for want of that charity and humility, which keeps the hearts and eyes of Christians, open and clear; or from that darkness, and blare-eyedness, which prejudice and perverseness carry with them; hindring Christians from discerning even those objects, that are round about them; yea, it is to be feared, That some men, from Atheistical, profane, ranting, and licentious principles, seek for a true Church, as Hypocrites do for their sins, and cowards for their enemies, loth to finde them, and studying most to be hidden from them. They complain of this, and other Churches, as defective; as impure, as none; when indeed, it may be feared, they are sorry there are any such; and with there were none of those Christian societies, Ministers, or godly people, in the world; whose doctrine and examples are their restraints, reproaches, and torments; being most crost to their evil designs, and immoderate lusts. They complain they cannot finde a true Church, when they are unwilling to do; and satisfie themselves (as the Cynick in his Tub) morosely to censure, and Magisterially to finde fault with all Christians, that they may conform to none in an holy, humble, and peaceably way; but rather enjoy that fama stick, and lazy liberty of mocking God, and man; till they finde such a way of Church and Religion, as shall please them: Which they would not be long in finding, as to extern polity and profession, if they did but entertain that inward life, and power of Religion, which I formerly set down; which, by a principle of charity, as well as of truth, strongly flowing from belief of Gods love in Christ
Seraphick wanderers.

1 Cor. 14. 33. God is not the Author of confusion, but of peace, as in all Churches of the Saints. Heb. 12. 14. Follow peace with all men, and holiness. &c.

Rom. 12. 18. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

to mankinde, and specially to the Church; doth powerfully binde, and cheerfully encline every humble believer, to have peace and communion (as much as may be) with all Christians; as internal, in judgment and good will, to external and social; both private and public; amicissial and political, in regard of example, comfort, and encouragement; as also of Order, Subordination, and Government; so far, as we see they have any fellowship with Christ Jesus, in those holy mysteries and duties, which he hath appointed; whereby to gather and preserve his Church, in all Ages, and places, and Nations.

Thus we see some mens Pens serve onely to blot the face, even of the Catholike Church, and all parts of it in their visible order and communion; affecting to write such blinde and small Characters, in describing new Church ways, and forms of Religion, that no ordinary eyes can read their meaning, either in their shrinking and separating into small ruptures of Bodies; when they were related to, and combined with, Churches large and settled; or in their Seraphick ruptures, strange Enthusiasms, secret drawings, and extraordinary impulsions, which they pretend to have in their ways, above, and without; yea, in the negledt, and contempt of all ordinary means, and settled Ministry in any Church: Their many high imaginations, and fanatick fancies, are (no doubt) above their Authors own understandings, no less than above all wiser, and soberer mens capacities; twinkling much more like glowworms, under the hedges of private Conventicles, and Faltions; than shining with true and ancient light of the judgement or practife of any Churches. Therefore they need no further confutation from my Pen, having so little, yea, no confirmation from any grounds of Scripture, or arguments of common Reason, or custom of Christians; nothing indeed worthy of any rational, godly, and serious mans thoughts; who lift not to dance after the Jews-trump, or Oaten-pipe of every Country fancy, rather than listen to the best touched Lute, or Theorbo.

These Syrens, wise Christians may leave to sing to themselves, and their own melancholy, or musing thoughts; no sober man can understand them, further than they signify, that ignorance, illiterateness, idleness, pride, presumption, licentiousness, and vanity; which some like spiritual Canters affect. The rarities which they boast to enjoy, are without any discreet mans envy, that I know: However, they carry it with a kinde of scornful indignation against others; every where pitying (as they say) the simple diligence, and needless industry of those poor Christians, who are still attending on those thred-bare forms (as they call them) of old readings, and catechisms, and preachings, and praying, and Sacraments, &c. in the publick Liturgies, and orderly assemblies of Christians:

O Delphine
Despising as much the ancient and true way of Ministry and Duty, as they would the moldy bread, and torn bottles of the Gibeonites; abhorring to own any relation to other Christians, or Church, or Ministry, or Governors, in any Catholike bond of communion and subjection; nor can they endure any Christian subordination, or prudent, and necessary restraint of just Government.

Which makes them look very like the old Circumcelliones, a company of vagrant Hypocrites; of whom, Saint Jerom, and Isidore Hispalensis, make large and satyrical descriptions: The first fayes, they were impudent strangers, whose mouths were always full of barbarous and importune reproaches; The other tells us, that they every where wandered in their mercenary hypocrisy, fixed no where; feigning visions of what they never saw: Counting their opinions and dreams for divine; and protefting to have received those eminencies, which they have not: Impatient to be confined to any place, order, or way; but had rather like vagabonds continue in their beggarly liberty, than fix to a sober industry, and enjoy a settled competency.

These unstable spirits, who turn round, till they are giddy, and fall from all truth and charity, into all error and faction; who shut their eyes, that they may see, they grope in the dark; and complain of all mens blindnels, but their own; These (I lay) have of all others, least cause to blame the Religion, and Ministry of the Church of England; since they own themselves to be in no Church-way: Which, of all sides, is most blamed and condemned, and so need not to be confuted any more.

Some others there are, who flatter themselves to be left mad than these seeking fellows; who glory most in this, That they have broken all the former cords, and broken off all bonds, of any National Government, Order, and Discipline, whereby they were formerly restrained in this Church: Which, first, they deny to be any Church, purely, and properly so called; or in any way and frame of Christs institution; but only such an establishment as arises from mere civil polity, and humane constitution. Secondly, They charge us, that we fail in the matter of a Church, the faithful and holy. Thirdly, In the essential Form, an explicit Covenant, or Church agreement to serve the Lord in such a way. Fourthly and lastly, In our choosing, ordaining, and appointing Ministers, and other Church Officers: In whom (they say) Church power is onely executively, (as to the exercise or dispersion) but it is primarily and eminently in that Body of the people, never so small, which is so combined together:
Yeas, they complain, that we in England have neglected, and deprived the people of that glorious power and liberty, by which, every Christian is to shew himself, both King, and Priest, and Prophet.

Thus the Tabernacles of Edom, and the Ismailites; of Moab and the Hagarines; Gebal, and Ammon, and Amallock; the Philistims, and they of Tyre, Assur also, Men of our own Tribes, all-conspire against the true Religion, the antient orders, and holy Ministry of the Church of England: And finding this Church sorely torn, bruised, and wounded, they either leave it, and its Ministry, to die defolate, by separating wholly from them; or else they seek by their several instruments of death, wholly to dispatch it, as the Amalekites did King Saul; But blessed be God, though this Church, and its true Ministers, be thus afflicted and percuted, yet are they not quite forsaken of God, or of all good Christians; Though we be cast down, yet we are not quite destroyed. There want not many sons of Zion, to mourn with their Mother, and to comfort her, if they cannot contend for her, Although, the Lord is righteous, who hath smitten us, and to whom we will return, and wait till he be gracious to this Church: Yet these sons of Edom, our unnatural Brethren, are very injurious and uncharitable; who seek to enflame the wrath of God more against her; rejoicing in her calamities, and crying, now she is fail, let her rise up no more. But the Lord will remember his compassions of old, which have not failed, and will return to build her up; nor shall this furnace of affliction be, to consume this Reformed Church, but onely to purge her from that dross, which she had any way contracted.

As to these mens first quarrel, against the frame of our Church and Ministry, as setled and defended by Civil Laws and Politick of Religion Constitutions; They seem in this, rather offended at the clothes and as establishing, or the defence and guard, than at the body and substance of ed and polity of the Church: Possibly, they are angry that they had not power or tested by permission, sooner to deform and destroy that flourishing polity of this Church, which by the princely piety of nursing fathers and mothers, England, hath been so long preserved to the envy of enemies, and admiration of friends. We never thought, that any civil sanctions (which were in favor of our Reformed Church, Religion, and Ministry) ever constituted the Being of our Church; which is from Chrift, by the Ministry; but they onely established and preserved it, in its Ministry and polity, from those abuses and infencies, to which, we see them miserably exposed; if they should want Magistrates to be protecting fathers, and indulgent mothers to them: Every rude and unclean beast delights to break in, and waste the field of the Church; when they see the fence of civil protection is low.

But this defence and provision made for this Church and its Ministry,
The Matter of a Church, Church Covenant.

Ministry, by Humane Laws, doth no more lessen the strength and beauty of it; than the Laws for property and safety do diminish any man's wisdom, valor, or care to defend his own: Christians, as men, ought to be subject to Magistrates, as men; although they were Heathens, Heretics, or Persecutors; that so, in honest things, they might merit their civil protection: How much more (as Christians) ought they to be subject to Christian Magistrates, that are Patrons and Professors of true Religion: Whole civil protection and government is so far from being a blemish to it, that is the greatest temporal blessing, that God hath promised, or the Church can enjoy in this World; as it was in Constantine the Great's time, and some others after him.

And however, we see, that oft-times this sweet wine, of civil favor, is prone to fowre to the vinegar of factions, even among Christians; And the honey of peace, plenty, and prosperity, easily turns to pride, envy, anger, ambition, and contention, through the pravity of man's nature; who, (contrary to the temper of the most savage beasts) grows most fierce and offensive to God, when he is best treated by him; * as Eusebius, and Sulpius Severus, tell in their times: Yet we must not refuse or cast away all good things, because evil minds abuse them; much less may we mistake the Being of a Church, for its well-being: That cannot turn, in any reason, to this Churches reproach, which was the favor of good men, and Gods indulgence to this Church: Nor do we think these querulous Ob'eters, are therefore like to be, by so much the sooner, weary of their new ways, by how much they more enjoy connivance, protection, or countenance from any men; The obtaining of which, is the thing they so much court and solicit: Sure the shining of the warm Sun on men, need not make them therefore ashamed, or weary of Gods blessing.

2. As for the matter of a Church, which those Ob'eters say, must be only Saints in Truth, as well as skew: denying ours to be such; I answer, We wish all our people were such Saints, as are formerly described, in truth and power; we endeavor to make them such, as far as the pains, prayers, and examples of Ministers may work with the grace of God; But we do not think, that these severe censurers of this Church of England do believe, That all the Churches mentioned in Scripture (which were the best that ever were) consisted only of true Saints. That, in Christ's family, did not; nor that, to which Ananias, Saphira, and Simon Magus, were joyned in profession; nor all those in Corinb, Galatia, Lycia and, and the rest mentioned in the Epistles, and Revelation; who are commended, or blamed.
The Matter of a Church, Church Covenant.

blamed, not so much as to the internal temper of their graces, as to the external peaceableness, order, and purity of their profession in truth and unity. Neither is this real Saintship of every Member, necessary to the being of a visible Church; nor is it to be concluded really of all those, whom the judgment of charity calls or esteems Saints. We charitably hope well of all those, who though they may have personal errors and failings, by reason of frailties or temptations, yet they have not renounced their covenant with Christ in Baptism, and who make still some profession of Christianity; who attend the Ordinances of the Word preached, and prayer; who testify their faith by desiring to have their children baptized; which we do, as of duty to them, to whom Christ hath a federal right, and of whom we have a Christian hope; though we approve not their parents in all things: Much more do we esteem those as Members of the Church, who have competent knowledge, and lead an unblamable life, as many of ours do. If any be children, ignorant, or profane, yet we think them not presently to be excluded from all Church Fellowship; no more than such a few was to be cut off from God’s people; Since they have Gods mark, and seal still upon them, and are in outward relation and profession, distinguished from those that are not of the Israel of God; yet we do, not willingly, or knowingly allow every Ordinance to them, while they appear such; but only those, of which they have a capacity: In others, we forewarn and forbid them, when we actually know their unfitness or unpreparedness: Yet still in God’s name, not in our own; in a way of charity, or ministerial duty; not of private, or absolute authority; willing, that a more public way of joynt-power and authority were duly established (as in all reason it ought to be) in the Church; both for tryal and restraint, of those that have no right to holy Mysteries; yet still we endeavor to instruct even the worst in the Spirit of meekness, and to apply what remedies in prudence and charity we may: But if piety, purity, equity, charity, humility, peaceableness, &c. If these may denominate men to be Saints in any Church, sure, I believe, the Church of England can produce more of these, out of her orderly and antient Professors, than these new Modellers will easily do of their own forming; besides, many of these now gone from us, have not caused so much to boast of their beauty and faces shinning, since they left us; as to cover their faces, and with their own tears to wash away their black spots, with which they appear terribly dashed; which we are sure are not the spots of God’s holy people.

What is further, urged against our Parochial Congregations; (which are as parts and branches of this Church of England, standing in a joynct relation to the peace, policy, and welfare of the whole; and to that end, under Publick Order, and Authority) as to the use

and partaking of the Sacraments, (specially that of the Lords Supper;) That our Communions are so mixed, as to confound the precious with the vile; the ignorant with the knowing; the scandalous with the unblamable; the prepared with the unprepared; the washed Lamb with the polluted Swine; so that even this holy Ordinance, which is the touchstone, sieve, and siren of true Christians, and true Churches, is profaned and polluted among us; while Conferences are as lumps full of leaven; and no order taken to purge it out: That so the pure and faithful may eat the feast with comfort, and childrens bread not be given to dogs.

\textbf{Answ.} I answer, first in general; That, although Christians, as to their
Consciences, have no right to this Sacrament, or comfort in it, further than they have Sacramental graces, fitting and preparing them for it; yet as to men, in outward visible society, every Christian hath such a right to it, as he makes a Profession of the true Faith; and is in such an outward disposition, as by the orders of the Church, for age, and measure of knowledge, and conversation, is thought meet: In which, there are no precise limits in Scripture expressed; either what age, or how oft, or what measure of knowledge, and what preparation is required; but much is left to the wisdom, care, and charity of the Ministers, and Governors of the Church: And in this sense, though Judas the Traytor had no internal gracious right to the Sacrament of the Pasover, or Supper; yet he had a professional right, which our Saviour denied not to him, and which is all that mans judgment can reach to.

Secondly; As to some mens practice in the Church of England, we deny not, but that many and personal abuses may have been in that holy Mystery (which the antients justly called dreadful, venerable, adorable, most holy, admirable, divine, heavenly, &c.) through negligence both of some Ministers and people; much less do we justify them; we rather mourn for them, and pray heartily, they may be reformed every way; yet, as to the constitution, order, and designation of the Church of England, in the celebration of that holy Sacrament, we affirm,

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\item That the piety, wisdom, and charity of this Church, did take care, and by express order declared, That no such ignorant, profane, impious, or unprepared person (though not known to the Minister, or people to be so,) should come to the Sacrament; as in conscience he ought not: And, together with these (thus only conscious to themselves,) all others, if known and notorious, were by
\end{enumerate}

\textit{See the Exhortation before the Communion.}
Of Ministers duty to Communicants.

the Minister, publickly, and solemnly forbidden, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, not to presume to partake of those holy things.

Every Minister was commanded by preaching, catechizing, examining, and praying, to prepare (as much as in him lay) the Receivers: Which every good Minister, as he ought, did, in some sort endeavor; yea, and he might refuse any young or old, that offered to receive, if they had not some good assurance of their competent knowledge in the Mysteries; or, if he found them defective in those fundamentals which the wisdom of the Church thought necessary, and whereof it set forth a Summary in the publick Catechism. So that a Minister in England, both in the name of the Church, and in the name of Christ, and by the highest authority of God, did prohibit, denounce against, and, as it were, excommunicate (by that part of the power of the Keys, which is denunciative and declarative) both from the comfort, and grace of the Sacrament, and from the outward partaking of it, every one, that presumed (being unworthy in any kind) to offer himself to it: If after this, any one unworthy, did adventure to come, yet (sure) the Minister had done his private duty, as far as God, or man required it of him; having both vindicated the honor of the Sacrament, as to the divine Institution, and intent; also declared the care and order of the Church; and so freed both the Congregation, and his own soul, from stain or blame. Who so came after this prohibition unworthily, came at the peril of his own soul, and not at the sin of either Minister or people, that were worthy; whose work and duty is, not by force of arms, to thrust men out by head and shoulders; which is a military and mechanic power; but by the sword of Christ's mouth to limit them; and in his name to cast them out from any right to, or comfort in, the Sacrament; which is the power, properly ministerial, spiritual, and divine. Where either ignorance or scandal were gross, and notoriously known to the Minister, in any that offered to come, The Minister might, and oft did, not onely privately, but publickly, and personally admonish, reprove, forewarn: And in some cases, if the impudence of the offender obtruded himself, the Minister might refuse to give him the Sacrament; yet this not with passion and roughness, as by empire; but with meekness and discretion, as in charity: Which present denial, or abstention of such an one from receiving the holy Sacrament, might afterward be examined by publick and lawful authority (which was settled in this Church) in case that party had cause or confidence to complain, as of an injury.

Communion matters. 1 Cor. i. 29.

He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself; not to any other, who having examined himself, Verse 28.

And is bid to eat and drink. &c.

See the Rubrick before the Communion, concerning scandalous offenders.
Of Ministers duty to Communicants.

But where such authority is not settled, or not suffered to be exercised in any Church, which might and ought to judge in such cases best. The party denied, and the Minister thus denying, (upon pregnant, and to him notorious causes, not upon probabilities, suspicions, or general complaints from others only,) There, matters of publick debate requiring audience, and proofs, and witnesses, and judge; and all these, due authority; It cannot be expected from any private Minister, that he should do more than God hath commanded, and due authority empowered him; which is only to instruct, admonish, forbid, and in some cases to deny, &c. according to the duty of his place, and the authority he had, both from the Church, and from the Word of God: But he hath nothing to do, to assume the publick place of a Judge among his Neighbors; or to deny Communion to all those that are by any accused, as unworthy or scandalous: No Reason allowing, or Religion commanding every private Minister, or any private Christians to be Judges in those cases, wherein they may be parties; and through passion do injury, and by faction oppresses any man.

It were to be desired indeed, that such Authority were restored to the Church, as might judge and decide all cases of publick scandal; but while this is denied, we must not deny Ministers, or people, to do their duty, in celebrating the Lords Supper, according to the Institution, though there be defects in discipline, as to that particular. We must not forbear holy duties, when we may rightly enjoy them, in point of gracious disposition and claim; because they are not so affected and ordered in point of policy and external Discipline, as we could wish, and as it were convenient; but is not absolutely necessary, so as to exclude the Minister, or others from it, who desire and prepare for it, by examining themselves; whom no Reason or Religion can forbid to partake of their due comforts, because of others faults, whereof they cannot be guilty, because they are no way accessory; not failing in any private duty of charity, wherein they stand related to another; as teaching, admonishing, reproving, forewarning, &c. The same Apostle, who blames the unworthy receivers, for not examining themselves, and forbids them so to eat, &c. Commands others to examine themselves, and so to eat, &c. Without regard to any others unworthiness: The contagion of whose sin cannot have influence on another's grace; any more, than grace can make another's sin less. What sense can there be, That children should be starved, because there is not power sufficient to keep away all dogs, from the children's bread? Yet all men are not presently to be called or counted dogs, that are not ever in actual preparedness for the Sacrament; or, who may fall into gross sins, as Peter did, whose Faith did not fail, when he denied Christ after the Sacrament; and since they
they have still relation to the Church, and may be penitents.

I should be glad to see (which I heartily pray for) this Church so ordered by due order, power, and authority established in setting Church-Governors and Judges, in such cases, That none might be admitted to the Lord's Supper, but such as are both by the Minister, and chief of the Congregation, (who are in the Roll of Communicants) allowed and approved, for knowledge and conversation; yet so, as such allowance or denial may, if need be, have further hearing, and appeal, from this private Minister and Congregation; which is but just, to avoid the factions, injuries, partialities and oppressions, which may fall, and oft do, among those Neighbors and Rivals, who are seldom meet to be Judges of mutual scandals, being to oft parties; and besides their weak judgments, have strong passions, and are full of grudges and emulations against each other; which if not soberly taken up, by other able and indifferent Judges, (who have authority to do) it brings Congregations to those difficulties, which the Independent bodies finds, for want of this prudent and orderly remedy of grievances and offences; which, in a short time (as the pitch, and fat, and hair, which Daniel put into the Dragon) break them in pieces; one part rending from the other, as impatient to submit to their censure; and so they come to Non-Communion, and to make new Colonies of lesser Churches, and Bodies; till they break and shiver themselves to such useless shreds, such thin and small shavings, as have neither the staff of beauty, nor of bonds among them: Every one by the light of nature concluding, That there can be no power over others, where there is parity among them; nor can those have authority over each other, which are in an equality.

Nothing would be more welcome to good Ministers, and faithful people, than to see that just power settled in the Church, as might by the wisdom, gravity, and integrity of such, as are truly fit to govern, best repress all abuses and disorders in the Church, as to matters purely religious: Mean time, we think it better to bear with patience those defects, which we cannot hinder or amend; and to supply them (what we can) with private care, industry, and discretion, than either wholly to deny our selves the comfort of this Sacrament, which the Lord hath afforded us; or else to usurp to our selves an absolute power and jurisdiction over others, which neither the Lord hath given us, nor the Church; and which we see men do easily despise, as a matter of arbitrary usurpation, not of authoritative constitution: And which is subject as to many tyrannies and abuses, so to infinite private quarrels and divisions; which no Minister hath leisure to hear, if he had abilities to compose and judge them, being oft very sightful, tedious, and intricate; yea, and himself, possibly, a party, or witness, and sometimes the accused; who being (for the most part)
the ablest in a Country Congregation to judge of matters, must yet
himself be judged according to some mens weak Models of Church-
Government and Discipline, both as to his doctrine and maners, by
his High-shoe Neighbors, (which he counts his body,) nor may he
have any appeal from them in an Independent way.

To that grand Charter and Commission, which some plead; by
which every Saint is made a Judge in all things of this life, with-
in the pale of the Church, and is after to be judge of Angels; I
answer, The wise and holy Apostle doth not give to every one in
the Church any such power, nor to the majority of Christians in
any Congregation; but rather reproves their folly, that laid any
judicative works, on thole that were least esteemed in the Church,
Verl. 4. Whence arose that unsatisfaction as made their differences
greater, and drove them for remedy to go to Law before the Civil
Tribunals of unbelievers, V. 6. to the great scandal of Religion, and
shame of the Church of Corinb; where being many Christians, and
(no doubt) in many distinct Congregations, for convenience of
meeting, the Apostle wonders they could not be to wise for their
own credit and quiet, as to finde out some wise and able men, who
might be fit to judge and end their controversies; as having both real
abilities internal, and outward reputation in the Church, also a pub-
lick consent and orderly appointment to the work; all which makes a
compleat and valid Authority to judge others; which can never
be promiscuous, in whole bodies, or rabbles of simple and mean men,
without both contempt and confusion; which imprudent way a-
mong the Corinbians, the Apostle counts both a fault and a
shame.

Of Communicants to be admitted.
1 Cor. 5. 7.
2 Cor. 6. 15.
16.
Unumqueque
alienus peccatis
maculari, omnes
impie sediciosus
autosolam
causam separa-
tionis sibi affi-
ment: Contra
disputat. Cypr.
de unit. eeccl.
& August. ep.
48.
which is a matter of polity, power, and order in the Church, and not of private piety, or charity: Nor is it indeed of absolute necessity, to as to deprive good Christians of any holy ordinance, in case such power is obstructed, or hindered, or not established in the Church.

Neither Minister nor People then ought to refrain from doing their duty in the holy celebration of this Sacrament, upon any such defects of external polity, and power, for well-ordering of the Church; but rather, with the more exactness and diligence, exhort one another, and prepare by inward graces, for those holy Mysteries; whose institution hath no such restriction, either by Christ, or the blessed Apostle Paul; who enjoins Ministers and Believers to do this, holily and worthily, in point of personal preparation; but no word of either usurping a power to recall others, as they lift, which belongs not to them; or else, to abstain wholly from the duty, for want of having their will, as too many do, both People and Ministers; to the great grief of many good Christians, and to the exceeding flighting and disuse of that holy Ordinance in this Church, which was wont to be much frequented, which the words of Christ import, or enjoin to be done oftentimes in the Church.

For that new coined form, image and superscription of a Church, that Congregational Church-Covenant, which no Synod or Council, but only some private men have lately invented, and in formal words magisterially dictated (when yet they cry down all other prescribed forms of administrations, prayer, or devotion in the Church), By which, some men fancy they only can be rightly made up into one lump or Church-fellowship: This they accuse us in England for the want and neglect, when they have set us in every corner so many copies of it.

I answer, We have indeed in the Church of England, from its first Christianity, been wholly without this covenancing way; and I think, both happily and most willingly we had been so till, since there appears no more ground for it in Scripture precept, or Churches pattern; nor is there any more need of it, as to the peace and polity of the true Church of Christ, than there is of rents and patches in a fair and whole Garment. Who knows not, that like Jonah's gourd it is (filius notis) the production of yesterday; riven from the darkness and divisions of mens minds: The fruit of discontent, separation, and self-conceit, for the most part; though, it may be, nurst up by devout and well-meaning Christians; yet it looks very like those bastard brats which the Novatians and Donatisks of old began every where; which were like Ismaels to Isaac, mockers and contemners of the true Churches Communion, Order, and Peace.
We do not think this Covenant any more essential to the Being of a true Church, than John Baptist's Leathem girdle was to his being a Man, or a Prophet: It is an easy and specious novelty, therefore pleasing to common people, because within their grasp and reach; which its Proselytes, that forfake and abhor the English Churches Order and Communion, do wrap and hug themselves in as much, as any Papist doth in his adherence to the Roman party, or in his hopes to be buried in a Monks Cowl. Besides, it carries this great temptation with it, of gratifying the common professor with some shew of Power and Government, which he (once covenanted into that Church-way) shall solemnly exercise: But (in good earnest) to sober Christians, who have no secret by as of discontent or interest to sway them, this new fashion of their Church-Covenant, seems to have, as no command or example in Scripture, so no precedent in antiquity; nor is it recommended for any excellent effects of prudence or peace, which it produceth, either to private Christians, or the publick welfare of the Reformed Churches. Some look on it as a mark of Schismatical confederacy, which carries in its Bowels viprine principles, which are destructive to the quiet of States and Kingdoms, as well as of Churches.

If any finde any good or contentment in it, as a tye, or pledge of love, in private fraternities; yet they valily overvalue it, to cry it up, as a matter, no less necessary to the Being of a Church, or well-being of Christians, than the skin is to the Body; when, alas, it is but a cloak lately taken up, which never fell from Elias his shoulders; and serves rather to cover some mens infirmities and discontent against this Church of England, than much to keep them warm, or adorn them as Christians. We shall give a poor account of former Churches or Christians, if this covenanting invention should be of such concernment to Christianny. To which it seems to many wise and good men as superfluous, as it were to binde a man with strips of straw, when he is already bound with chains of gold; with more firm and pretious yses.

For, every true and conscientious Christian knows and owns himself to have upon his Conscience, far more strict and indissoluble ties, not only of nature and creation, but of the Law and Word of God; yea, and of Christian covenant, and profession, by his baptismal vow; besides, that of the other Sacrament; also his private vows, promises, and repentings, &c. All which strictly binde the conscience of all good Christians to all duties of piety and charity; according to the relations, (private or publick, civil or sacred) wherein they stand to God or man.

And further, we see by daily experience, That these sorry withs of mans invention, obtruded as divine and necessary upon Christians and
and Churches, binde not any of these new small bodies or bundles, so fast, but that they continually are breaking, separating, and scattering, into as many fractions and subdivisions, as they have heady minds, fancies, and humors among them. And this they do, without any sense of sin or shame; yea, for the most part, with an angry glorying, despising, and defying of one another; when, but lately, they boasted in how rare a way they were of Church-fellowship, and Saintly-communion; not, as Members of Christ's Body, the Catholike Church, grounded and grown up in truth and love; but onely as pieces of wood, finely glued together, by reciting a form of words, which they call a Church-Covenant, which a little spittle, or wet dissolves: Nor do they make any scruple to moulder and divide, if once they come to dispute and differ in the least kinde. So hard is it for any thing to hold long together, which is compacted of weak judgments and strong passions.

Last of all, It is evident in the experience of all wise Christians, That this narrow and short thong of private Bodying, Church-covenanting, cannot extend so far, as is necessary for the Churches general peace, order, and welfare, in reference to its more publick relations, and necessities; which oft require stronger and more effectual remedies: Yea, these small strings and cords binding each particular Congregations apart (as if it were a limb to be let blood) makes them at length grow vermilion, and lets sensible of that common spirit of love and charity, by which, each Member is knit to the larger parts, and so to the whole Body of the Church; to whose common good, they ought wisely and charitably to be more intent, than to their particular Congregations; which are, but as the Pettitoes or little Fingers of the Church, Which may not act, or be considered, otherwise, than as they are, and subsist; which is, not apart by themselves, nor onely in relation to an hand or foot, to which they are more immediately conjoin'd; but, as in a higher relation to the whole Body, of which, they are real parts, servient to the whole; and as much concerned in the common good and preservation of the whole (if not more) than of themselves, or any particular part or Member. A Christian must not deal out his charity, by retail and small parcels onely, as to private Fraternities, and Congregations; but also by whole-sale, to the ampler proportions of Christ's Church; according as he stands in large and publick relations; the due regard to the peace, order, and welfare of which, is not to be dispenced withal, nor shuffled off, by saying, I am of such a Congregational-Body, or Covenanting Church; no more, than the hand may say, I am not of the head, nor neer it; and so will have no care of it.

We are therefore so far from being admirers of the small talents and weak inventions of those men, in so great a matter, as the con
stituting and conserving of a true Church, by so poor and feeble an
engine, as this of private compacts and covenantings; (by which,
they threaten with severe pens, and tongues, and brows, to batter and
demolish the great and goodly Fabrick, and Communion, of this and
all other National Churches; which are cemented together by excel-
 lent Laws, and publick Constitutions, so as to hold an honorable
union with themselves, and the whole Catholike Church.) That we
rather wonder at the weakness and simplicity of those inventers and
abettors, who in common reason cannot be ignorant, that as in
civil respects, and policy, so in Ecclesiastical, no private fraternities,
in families, nor Corporations, (as in Towns and Cities) can vacate
those more publick and general relations, or those eyes of duty and
service, which each Member owes to the Publick, whereof it is
but a part; and it may be so inconsiderable an one, that for its fake,
the greater good of the publick, ought not in Reason or Religion, to be
prejudiced, or any way neglected: No more ought it to be in the
Churches larger concernsments, for Peace, Order, and Govern-
ment.

Nay, we dare appeal to the Consciences of any of those Body-
ing Christians, (whom charity may presume to be godly and judici-
ous;) Whether they finde in Scripture, or have cause to think, That
the blessed Apostles ever constituted such small Bodies of Covenanting
Churches; when there were great numbers, and many Congregations
of Christians in any City, Province, or Country; so as each one
should be thought absolute, Independent, and no way subordinate to
another? Whether ever the Apostles required of thole lesser handfuls
of Christians, (which might, and did, convene in one place) any
such explicate Forms, or Covenants; besides thole holy bonds, which
by believing, and professing of the Faith, by Baptism, and Eucharisti-
cal communion, were upon them? Or, Whether the blessed Apostles
would have questioned, or denied thole to be true Christians, and in
a true Church, or have separated from them, or cast them off, as not
ingrafted in Christ, or growing up in him, who, without any such
bodying in small parcels, had professed the Name of the Lord Jesus
Christ, in the due use of Word, Sacraments, and Ministry? who
endeavored to lead a holy, and orderly life, themselves, and sought
by all means, which charity, order, or authority allowed them, to re-
press the contrary in others? No doubt the Apostles wisdom and
charity, was far enough from the wantonness and uncharitableness
of some of these mens spirits; who do not only mock our Church,
and its Ministers, as the children did Elisa, the Prophet; but they
seek to destroy them, as the be-bears did the children. Sure enough,
the Apostles, instead of such severe censures, peevish disputes, and
rigorous separations, would have joyed with, and rejoiced in the
Faith,
Church of England, a true Church.

Faith, Order, and Unity of such Churches, such Christians, and such Ministers, where-ever they had met with them, in all the World, without any such Scruple, or Scandal, for their not being first broken into Independent Bodies, and then bound up by private covenan-tings; which are indeed no other, than the racking, distorting, and dislocations of parts, to the weakening and deforming of the whole.

We covet not a better or truer constituted Church, than such, as we are most confident, the wisdom and charity of the Apostles would have approved in the main; however in some lesser things, they might gently reprove, and reform them, as they did divers famous and flourishing Churches. And such a Church, we have enjoyed in England, (by Gods mercy) before ever we knew those mens unhappy novelties, or cruelties, who seek now to divide, and utterly destroy us, unless we conform to their deforming principles and practices. And however, we have not been wholly without the spots of humane infirmities; yet we have professed Jesus Christ, in that Truth, Order, Purity, and sincerity, which gives us comfort and courage, to claim the (Justice) privilege of being true Christians, and a true Church; that is, a very considerable, famous, and flourishing part, branch, or Member of that Catholike Church, which professeth visibly, or believe savingly, in the Name of Jesus Christ, the Head of the whole Body, and of every part; to whom we are united, by the fame common Faith, and by Charity, to one another. Certainly, the best Churches and Christians, were antiently like the goodly bunches of Grapes, which the Spies brought between them (as an emblem of Christ crucified) hanging on a staff; so fair, so full, so great and united clusters: From which, no small slips did ever willingly divide, or rend to Schism, but presently they became, not as the fruit of Canaan, but as sour Grapes, fit only to let mens teeth on edge; whetting them to bite; and devour one another.

For the manner of each particular holy Administration in our Church, to answer all the small cavils, which men lift to make, is to encourage too much their petulancy; and to make them too much masters of sober mens time and leisure: Onely this great and faithful shield, * Learned men heretofore have, and we do still, hold forth, to repel all their darts and arrows, That both in the Ordination of our Ministers, and in their celebration of holy things, and in its Government, Order, and Harmony, the Church of England hath followed the clearest rules in Scripture, and the best patterns of the antient Churches; onely enjoying those Christian liberties of prudence, order, and decency, which we see the gracious wisdom of Christ hath allowed his Church; and which particular Churches have always used and enjoyed in their extern rites and customs, with variety, yet without blemish, as to the Institutions of Christ, or to the

Col. 2:5. Joying and be-holding the order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.


*See those Re-verend and Learned Wri-ters, Bisho-p Biflon, Bisho-p Cam-pher, Dottor Field, Master Richard Hooker, Master Mafon, and others.
the soundness in the Faith, or to any breach of Charity, or any prejudice and scandal to each others liberties in those things. 

So that those busy flies upon the Wheels of this Chariot, the Reformed Church of England, (in which the Gospel of Jesus Christ hath hitherto been carried among us, for many years, with great triumph and success) have stirred up very little dust; so as might blind any eyes (that are not full of moths and beams, or blood-stot-ted) from seeing clearly, and evidently, a true Christian Church, a true Ministry, and truly religious Administrations among us. Blessed be God, though these sour Momufes finde or make some faults and flaws in lesser matters, the mending of which they most oppose and hinder; yet their strength cannot shake the foundations of our Jerusalem, which are of precious pearls, and solid stones; nor can their malice overthrow our grand and goodly pillars; the true and able Ministers, and their holy Ministrations, of Word and Sacraments, among Professors of the Faith; who do, as unquestionably constitute a true Church, as a reasonable soul and body make a true man.

Essentials of a true Church in England. 

It is well, some of their charity, is such that they allow us (for they cannot shift it;) thus much: First, That we have the only true ground, and sure rule of Religion, the written Word of God; that, beyond this, we hold nothing as a matter of faith, or Christian duty: Secondly, That we celebrate the holy Sacraments according to the sure and substance of the divine Institution; Thirdly, That our conversation aims to be such, as becomes the Gospel in all manner of holiness, to the saving of our own, and others souls. What can these Aristarchusses carp at in the ground of our faith, the Scriptures; the Seals of our Faith, the Sacraments; the life of our Faith, holy conversation; and the end of our faith, the salvation of our souls? Is it not strange, That all these sweet and fair flowers of Christ's planting and watering, should grow so well in that; which some call Babylon? in Antichrist's Garden? or on the Devils dung-hill? That, it should be no true Church of Christ, which owns nothing for Religious, but what is according to the truth of Jesus; either commanding or permitting, instituting or indulging; of pious necessity, or of prudent liberty.

We should put these rigid Cares too much to the blush, for their unnatural ingratitude to the Ministers, and Church of England, if we should ask them: Whence they had this privilege, by which they own themselves to be Christians? whence this power to cast, or call themselves into Bodies or Churches, as Believers? (which is by them presupposed;) whence they had (till of late years) their instruction (for the most part) in the knowledge of Jesus Christ? Sure these holy leaves or fruits grow not, but in the Pale and Garden
Of Pretenders to be above any Ministry.

of the Church of Christ; not in our own rude minde and untill'd
natures; not among desolate Indians, obstinate Jews, or barbarous
Turks; and not often in private closets and corners; which nourish
a neglect and contempt of Publick Ordinances. But if these men
were self-taught and converted, yet sure, not self-baptized too; nor
their Teachers, self-ordained too: If they had nothing of their Chri-
stianity from the Ministry of the Church of England; It is no
wonder they prove such Scholars, such Christians, and such Preach-
ers, as some of them seem to be; having been their own Masters,
Ministers, and Baptizers: They are indeed, onely worthy of them-
selves, and of wiser mens pity.

For that (νομομορια) the retreat, or reserve of some men (by
which, as Eagles they would seem to soar out of sight, and to build Of pretensi-
their Nest on a Rock, that is higher than our ordinary Reason, Re-
ons to be a-
ligion, and Experience can reach;) as if they were immediately in-
borne any
spirited, specially called, and taught of God, baptized by his Spirit, Ministry, as
without any Minister, or outward Ministry, they must give us leave, taught of
not to believe them upon their bare word, (which hath not always God imme-
been so sure,) till they demonstrate, and prove it better, by Gods Word, diately,
and their better manners; For which, we will give them time enough.
Mean while, we are sure, the best Christians among them, were made
such, by the ordinary Ministers of this Church; and these made
Ministers by no other means but that Ordination, derived from, and
ascending up to the blessed Apostles; whom Christ first chose to be
Disciples, and after ordained and sent them as Publick Ministers;
not onely, as to personal discharge, but as to successional descent.
These were Eagles indeed, who flew high in their knowledge and
piety, yet stooped low in their humility and charity: Those others
of a new brood, are more like young Cockees, which devour the Bird, in
whose nest; and by whose fostering, they were hatched. Some of
them have knowledge; I would they had more humility and charity,
they would not disdain to own the parents that begat and educated
them; even this (now) so poor, desolate, beaten, torn, and wafted
Church of England, and its (Antichristian) Ministers, as they please
to call them.

Be it so; some mens tongue is no slander: If we neither adde
the, nor detract from the Scriptures, as Jews, Papists, and Euthu-
stats do; If we erre in no fundamentals of faith, or manners; if
we refuse no duty divinely required; if we allow no error in our
selves, or others; if we drive on no worldly designs injuriously, or
hypocratically; but study to approve ourselves in all godliness and
honesty, with meekness of wisdom to all men; we need no more fear
the drops of peevish tongues, or dashes of malicious pens, (as to the
honor and comfort of being a part of the true Church of Christ)
than a cloth dyed in grain, need to fear stains by the aspersions of
dirt, cast on it by unclean and envious hands.

25. But it is objected against us in England, That neither Church
Of the power, nor Minister of England, did, or do own that high and mighty prin-
of the People, ciple of all Church power, which some call, The People.
in Church

Answ. True indeed: Although we highly love and esteem as
Brethren, the faithful and humble people, for whom Christ hath
died; yet we are not of so sanguine and popular a softness, as to own
any part, or Congregation, or Body of People, to be the original,
or conduits of any Spiritual or Church power; which no learned and
wise men ever esteemed to be Popular or Democratical, but rather an
excellent Aristocracy; where many able men were in Counsel, and
some one eminent in order and authority among them. We do not
dig, or descend to these low valleys, for these holy waters; nor do we
seek for the flowings of it through such crazy and crooked pipes;
nor do we hope to draw it forth out of such broken Cisterns, which
can hold no such waters: We have them from higher fountains, and
drive them in straighter channels, and conserve them in fitter vessels,
than the vulgarity of even honest Christians can be presumed to be:
That is, from the ordinary Power, and constant Commission, which
from Christ was derived to the Apostles, and from them to their
Successors in their ordinary Ministry, and Church power, in after
ages; who had this peculiar power of the keys of Heaven, to binde or
remit; to gather, to guide, to lead, and to govern the several parts
of the Church in Christ's stead, and name, orderly committed to them.

People may rudely wrest these keys out of true Bishops and
Ministers' hands, but it is evident, they were never committed to
them, by the great Master of the House, Jesus Christ; nor do they
know how to use them, unless it be to break their heads with them,
whom Christ hath set as stewards in his house: These rustick
and rash undertakers to reform, and controul all, are only probable
to shipwreck themselves, and many others, and the whole Ship of
this Church, by driving the skilful Pilots, (the true Bishops and
Ministers') from the Helm, and putting in their places every bold
Boatswain, and simple Swobber.

Yet are the populace flattered by some, to this dangerous in-
solency and error; who putting fire to this thatch, instead of the
Chimney, do but provoke the poor people to their own hurt; to
forsake their own mercies; and to injure both their own, and others
souls: Mean time, sober and wise Christians cannot but smile, with
shame, sorrow, and indignation; to see, how some Plebeian Preach-
ers, who are new risen, as from the Stone of the earth, (in whom no
Prometheus hath breathed any spark of heavenly fire; of spiritual,
divine,
Peoples power in Church affairs.

divine, and truly ministerial power;) to see (I say) how these Teachers have brought themselves by a voluntary humility, to depend on peoples suffrages and charity; not only for maintenance, but for their very Ministry; being now sunk so low, as to flatter their good Masters, with this paradox or strange principle, That they (as the people, or body, be they never so few and mean) have a reciprocal power, to beget those, who are to be their Spiritual Fathers; that by a more than Pythagorean Metemphyseis, the Power, Spirit, and Authority of Jesus Christ, who was sent by his Father, and so sent his Apostles, and they others, in the same Spirit, to be Fathers, Pastors, Rulers, Stewards, &c. That at length, this Spirit and Authority, should transmigrate (we know not how, nor when) into the very mass and bulk of common people, if they be but Christians of the lowest form; animating them in the whole, and in every part, or parcel of them, with such plenitude of Church power, as enables them to be all Kings and Priests, Pastors and Teachers, Prophets and Apostles, if need be; and if they lift; and if they have leisure; or, if not to act so in their own persons (having more profitable employments,) yet they have virtually, and eminently in them, as much power, as Christ had, and used, or left to any men; whereby to consecrate and ordain true Ministers; to try and teach those that are to teach them; to rule their Rulers; to discipline their Shepherds; to govern their Governors; to turn, not only Religion out of doors, but even all Reason, Order, and Civility, upside down, rather than not exercise this imaginary power, especially, if it serve to secular advantages: And all this, because they are told, they are the Church; and so may erect all Church power, as in them, and from them. This fancy is able to make a plain Country-Christian stand on his Tiptoes; and to bring all his family to see him and his other-like members, making up this glorious Body, which he calls his Church; that they may be witnesses, with how much folly, and simplicity, and clamor, and confidence, he with his Neighbors, examines, approves or reproves, resuseth or chooseth, and ordains all officers, and some new fashioned Minister or Pastor: Who (poor-man) must neither Preach nor Pray, not eat, nor look otherways, than pleaseth these sad and silly, yet very supercilious pieces of popular pride, and itching arrogancy; nor can such an hungry and timorous Pastor ever be feited, or safe in this Pastoral Authority, unless he have the trick of Faction; which is still to ingratiate with the major Common part of this his flock; who will (otherways) as easily push and beat people not fit him out of this fold, or break all to pieces; as ever they admitted him to manage by a profane easiness, and popular insolency.

26. But I must with less flattery, and more honesty, tell this Gene-power in ration of perverse Usurpers, this truth, (which is not unwelcome to chief.)
Peoples incapacity to manage power.

sober spirited Christians, ) That the weight of Christianity doth not at all hang on this popular pin; which is no where to be found, but in their light heads, and heavy hands; neither Reason, nor Religion, (since men were redeemed from the barbarity of Acorns, Nakedness, and Dens,) ever thought the plebs, or common people ought to be all in all, if any thing at all; either in conferring or managing, either Civil or Church power; but leaft of all, that part of Church power which is proper for the making of a Minister, in the way of due Ordination, (of which I shall after give a fuller account;) For this is that, to which they generally have least proportion, either of knowledge, learning, holiness, or discretion: Besides, it would thence follow, that, so soon as any Sect or Faction of people can get but numbers, and courage, they may do what they list, in this plentitude of power, without the leave of Magistrates or Ministers, in Church or State. These are pestilent principles, which are not only pernicious to the Church, but to any civil Societies; threatening not our faith onely, but our purses and throats.

Nor did ever any wise men (what ever is pretended, at any time, to amufe the people, and to serve an occasion) intend, or suffer the community, or vulgar people (with their massie bodies and numerous hands) really to attain, ufe, or enjoy, any such supreme power in civil administrations: If once sovereign power be gotten, though by the means of such credulous assistants; yet, whatever the populace may flatter themselves with, it never is, nor can wisely and happily be managed by them, but rather without them, above them, and many times against them.

Power precarious, that is such as depends upon a popular principle, or plebeian account, such as sometime was among the Grecian State, and Romans, is, for the most part, but an Empire of beggary, or flattery, or falsity; Where (at best) wise and valiant men may oft be forced to prostrate themſeves to the arbitrement of the vulgar; who are injurious esteeomers and ungrateful requirers even of the most publick merits. But (oftentimes) the peoples pretended power, and interest, is made ufe of in fpecious terms, and cunning agitations, onely to serve the turn of turbulent, ambitious, and folicitous spirits in Church and State; whose envy or ambition easily teacheth the credulous community to esteem the over-meriting of the best men, and Magistrates, to be their greatest oppression, and most deserving (Oppujition) banishment, or disgrace.

The Life of Government, and Soul of Dominion, is, that real power, and resolution, which is in the hand of one or more wise and potent men; who are always intent to defend well of the people, yet always able to curb and repress their insolency and inconstancy. Without this authentick power of the Sword, (which is not to be born
of power in the people.

in vain, and against which there is no rising up) Government of Em. Pro. 30. 31. 
pire, is a meer carkess without a soul; like deadbeef, or evaporated wine, or a rotten post, which every one deplieth. It is indeed one point of wisdom and true honor, to deserve well of the people, to as to gain their love; but the highest and safest principle of policy is to command them by power to just fear: For their love is no longer to be trusted, if once they cease to fear, and revere their Governors. The goodness and gentleness of Magistrates must not flaken or moth-eat their power; nor their power oppress and wire-draw their good-nels: Princes and Governors are lost, if they presume common people at any time to be such Saints, and so good natured, that they need not power effectual and sovereign to command and restrain them, as Beasts; to let banks and boundaries to them, as to great waters; whole force is not seen, but in their eruptions and disorders; and they are then bent and most useful, when kept and directed in such a course and chanel, as restrains them from shewing how great a propensity and fury they have to do mischief, if once they get liberty; which soon turns the flattering smoothness of it former smiles, to threatening tortuosities, and dreadful over-whelmings.

And to on the other side, Governors are not safe, if they so apply and use rigid force and severer dominion; as if they forgot that they ruled men (and not beasts) who are sensible of gentleness, and may be obliged to quietness by humanity. Rehoboam might have continued the heavy yoke of his wise Fathers taxes and burthens, if he had but so lined it with soft words, and courtly blandishments, as it should not much have galled their necks; which custom will harden, and kindness make unsensible of what they bear. It is not imaginary, how much common people will bear, if they see they must; nor how little they will bear, if they see they may rebel; their complaints, or tumultuary petitionings, are menings; when they declare, that they cannot longer undergo legal burdens, their meaning is, they will not; and onely want power to act. Necessity and force makes the vulgar tame, with their strength, and patient, as Asses; but wanton and presumptuous fancies makes them, as the Unicorn, impatient of the most honest subjection: No condition of Government ever pleased all that were Subjects; and most are prone to be unsatisfied with the present; whatever it is, they fancy and hope change may be better for their interest. Therefore, the calmeft tempers of people must not be trusted; no more than the Smiles of Halcion Seas. Wife Pilots know, there is no point of the Compass, whence a tempest may not come; nor is there any commotion, or inclination to troubles, whose impression the vulgar will not easlily receive and raise to a Storm: They are like a weighty body kept up with engines, on the top of a hill; if once it be free, it falls;
and falling downward, it drives itself; Motion adding an impetu to its weight; the (many) many, or multitude, are always the more dangerous, by how much less suspected: Necessity of obeying, is in most men but the cover of hypocrisy; except in some few, whom conscience makes subject; and who upon Christian principles, chuse rather with patience to suffer under any lawful Magistrates, than to contest with them, although they were sure to conquer: Fearing no oppression or tyranny so much, as that of sin; as no sin so much, as that of rebellion, either against God, or those that are in God's stead, and authority over them. Factions spirits, which poffefs most men

The true temperament is, where just and indisputable power, is so wisely managed, as renders Governors, rather august than dreadful; rather venerable as Parents, than formidable as Masters; though the Body Politick seem never so fairly filled with love, and skinned over with kindness, yet there is neither strength nor safety in it, unless the sinews and bones of majesty, real and effectual power, be maintained. It is enough, and as much as is safe for common people, to have the fancy and imagination of that power and liberty, which their deputies, representatives, or Tribunes tongues may take in publick Conventions and Parliaments: But it is dangerous for themselves, as well as for their Magistrates, ever to let them tamper at the lock of majesty and sovereignty, with the Key of Power; for if they cannot fairly and easily open that door, through fury and impatience they will break it open by violence; if they be not overawed. There is no (Arcanum) Mystery or Secret of Empire, like to that of keeping such power, as evil men may fear, and good men will love; because they know it is for the publick good; and though it should lie heavy on subjects, yet it is not so terrible, as to be ground between two millstones of civil dissensions.

No wise Magistrate therefore, either in policy or conscience, that is once invested in due authority sovereign, will ask the people leave, either to have it; or to use it: The sober formalities sometime used to ask the peoples consent, (not in their bulk and heard) but in their proxies and deputies, is but a complement; and where prevalent power asks, it is never denied; nor is it ever asked, but where conquering or hereditary power knows men dare not refuse it. No personal title or pretension to sovereignty is so unjust, which people will not confirm by their consent: In which, their worldly wisdom looks more to their own safety, and the publick peace, than to any particular man's right and interest; as they are wasted and ruined by contesting
Of Church power in the people.

contesting with those, that are too strong for them; so they would soon be too hard for themselves, and most their own enemies, if they should be left to arrogate, or exercise power according to their own various fancies, brutishly motions, and preposterous appetites.

Therefore, God who is (osxáoxtéw) a lover of mankind, hath so ordered in his providence: that, where any people are blest, some one or few men, who are wiser than the people, become also stronger, by an orderly and well-united strength; thereby preserving themselves, and the publick, from those impetuous furies, to which this Leviathan, the people, is as naturally subject, as the Sea is to waves and forms, both in Civil and Ecclesiastical affairs; for they are no whit calmer in matters of Religion, than in those of secular regards; every man in Church matters, being confident of his skill, or at least his will and zeal, thinks it a shame to seem ignorant, or if he be conscious to his ignorance, seeks to cover it over, and set it off with forwardness.

Therefore the wisdom of the Lord Christ, upon whose shoulders the Government of his Church is laid, hath set bounds to man's activity and unquietness, by another way of Church power; which is settled in, and derived by fewer indeed, but yet, wiser and abler persons, than the community of Christians can be presumed to be; who in all affairs of Church or State, have ever given such experiments of their follies, madnesses, and confusions; where-ever they arrogate power, or have much to do, beyond ciphers in a sum; that all wise men conclude, That people are then happiest, when they have least to do in any thing that is called Government: Nor is it to be believed, that Jesus Christ hath ordered any thing in his Churches polity, that is contrary to the principles of true wisdom; which in man is but a beam of that Sun, which is in God.

--- But the Bodying men say, They must and ought to have a Church, not only visible in the profession of Faith, but palpable and maniable; so as they may at once grasp it, and upon every occasion convince it, or the major part of it, into one place; that so they may complain of what they think amiss, and remedy by the power of that small fraternity, what ever faults any of them lift to finde in one another, as Fellow Members and Brethren; yea, and in those too, whom they have made to be their Pastors, Rulers, and Fathers.

That the best Men and best Ministers may err, and offend in religious respects, by error and scandal, we make no doubt: Nor is it denied, but they may and ought both by private charity, be admonished, and by publick authority, be reproved and censured. Where
this Authority is (as it ought to be) in the hands of those, whom the Lord Christ hath appointed, as wise, able, and authorised by the Church, to judge of Doctrine, Manners, and Differences, incident among Christians, as such. But I appeal to all sober and judicious Christians, whether they can finde or fancy almost, that venerable Consistory, that judicious Senate, that grave and dreadful Tribunal (which the antients speak of among Christians of those first and best times) which is necessary for the honor, and good order of Religion, and peace of Christians; Whether, I say, there be any face or form of it, among those dwarf Bodies, those petty Church lets, those narrow Conventicles, whose Head and Members, Pastors and Flock are for the most part not above the Plebeian size; of a meager mechanic mould; either ignorant, or heady, or wilful, or fierce, under words and semblances of zeal, gravity, and an affected severity.

I make no quære, Whether these sorts of men be fit persons, to whom all appeals in matters of Religion must be made; and by whom they must be finally determined; to whose judgments, prudence, and conscience, all matters of doctrine and scandal must be referred: By whom Religious concernsments must be ordered and reformed; by whom Ministers must be examined, tryed, and ordained, first; afterward, judged and deposed. Whether it be fit, that those, who are guilty of so little learning, or experience in divine matters, should solely agitate these great things of God, which so much concern his truth, his glory, and Christians good, every way: which matters both as to Doctrine and Discipline, are able to exercise and fully imploy the most learned, able, and holy men.

Who dreads not to think, that all saving truths stand at such mens mercy; the honor of Christ, and the good of mens souls too; while all degrees of excommunication, and censures, are irrepealably translated by them; Among whom its hard to finde two wise men; and scarce any ten of them (if they be twenty) of one minde, while they boast they are of one Body?

Again, who will not sadly laugh to see, that, when they differ (as they oft do) and break in pieces; yet like quantitave substances, they are always divisible; like water and other homogeneous bodies, they fall drop and divide into as many new Churches and Bodies, as they are dissenting or separating parties? The miracle is, that when like Hypolitus his Limbs, they are rent and scattered by Schisms into Factions, yet full every leg, or arm, or hand, forms presently into a new distinct, compleat Body, and subdivided Church: Each of which conceives such an integrality of parts, and plentitude of power, that it puts forth head, and eyes, and hands; all Church Officers, Pastors, Elders, Deacons, by an innate principle of Church power, which they fancy to be in any two or three godly people. At this
Tell it to the Church.

this rate, and on this ridiculous presumption, they run on as water on
a dry ground, till it hath wafted it self; till they are in small chips
and silver, making up Bodies at six and sevens; and Churches of
two or three Believers: These are long looking one another in the
midst of some new opinion, some sharp subtlety, or some angry curi-
osity (which they cannot reach,) then, and not before, this meteor or
blazing Star of a popular, Independent, absolute, self-sufficient Church
power in the people, which threatened Heaven and Earth, and strived
to out-shine the Sun, and Moon, and Stars, of all ancient com-
bined Churches, Order, and Government, for want of matter, quite
vanishes and disappears, by its Members separating from, and ex-
communicating, or unchurching of each other; Then the solitary reli-
ests turn Seekers, whose unhappy fortune is never to find the folly
of their new errors, nor the ancient true Church way; which they
proudly, or passionately, or ignorantly lost, when they so easily
forsook communion with the Catholike Church, and with that part
of it, to which they were peaceably, orderly, and comically united;
as was here in England: Whose way of serving the true God, was
privately with knowledge, faith, love, and sincerity; publickly,
with peace, order, humility, and charity: Which might still with
honor and happiness to this Nation, be continued, if the proud hearts,
and wanton heads, and rude hands of some novel pretenders, had not
ought to make the very name of Christian Religion, the Reformed
Church, and Ministry of England, a mere sport, and may-game, to
the Poppish, profane and looter world; by first stripping us of all
those Primitive Ornaments of gravity, order, decency, charity, good
government, unanimity; and then dressing us up, and impluming
us with the feathers of popular, and passionate fancies, which delight
more in things gay and new, than good and old.

... But, how shall we do (say these Bodying-men,) to fulfil that
command Did Ecleficé, for such a Church as may receive complaints, Of Church
hear causes of scandal, speedily reform abuses, restore defects, exe-
acute all power of the Keys, in the right way of Discipline? without whom the
which, there is no true, at least, no compleat and perfect Church; Power.
for these men think, Christians can hardly get to Heaven, unless they
have power among them, to cast one another into Hell; to give
men over to Satan, to excommunicate, as they see cause; to open
and shut Heaven and Hell gates, as they think fit: Must all things
that concern our Church (say they) lie at six and sevens, till we get
such Bishops and Presbyters, such Synods and Councils, such Repre-
sentatives of Learned men, as are hardly obtained; and as hard to
be rightly ordered, or well used, when they are met together? They
had rather make quicker dispatches in Church work; as if they
thought it better for every family to hang and draw within it self;
Tell it to the Church.

That much as and to where when fay, from which and thereto better, become and for as their

\textit{Answ.} Truly, good Christians in this Church (at present) are in a sad and bad case too, as well as their Ministers, if they could make no work of Religion, till they were happy to see all things of extern order and government duly settled: Yet sure we may go to Church, and to Heaven too in our worst clothes, if we can get no better; nor may we therefore wholly stay at home, and neglect religious duties, because we cannot be so fine as we would be. Both Ministers and people must do the best they can in their private affairs, and particular Congregations, to which they are related, whereby to preserve themselves, and one another, as Brethren in Christ, from such deformities and abuses, as are destructive to the power of godliness, the peace of conscience, and the honor of the Reformed Religion; until the Lord be pleased to restore to this Church, that holy Order, ancient Government, and Discipline, which is necessary, not to the being of a Christian, or a true Church, as its form or matter (which true Believers constitute by their internal union to Christ by Faith, and to all Christians by Charity;) but only, as to the external form and polity, for the peace, order, and well-being of a Church; as it is a visible society, or holy nation, and fraternity of men, professing the truth of Jesus Christ. Yea, and Christians may better want (that is, with less detriment or deformity to Religion,) that Discipline (which some men so exceedingly magnifie, as the very Throne, Scepter, and Kingdom of Christ,) under Christian Magistracy, (as they may the office of Deacons, where the law by Overseers takes care for the poor,) where good laws by civil power punifh publick offences, and repress all disorders in Religion, as well as trespasses in secular affairs; Better, I say, than they could have been without it in primitive times; when Christians had no other means, to repress any disorders, that might arise in their societies; either scandalous to their profession, or contrary to their principles; of which, no Heathen Magistrate, or Humane Laws, took then any cognizance, or applied any remedy to them.

Not, but that I do highly approve, and earnestly pray for such good Order, comely Government, and exact Discipline, in every Church, both as to the lesser Congregations, and the greater Associations, (to which, all reasons of safety, and grounds of peace, invite Christian Societies in their Church relations, as well as in those of Civil,) which were antiently used in all settled, and flourishing Churches; Much after that pattern, which was used among the Jews, both in their Synagogues, which they had frequent, both in their own Land, and among Strangers in their dispersions; and also in their great Sanhedrim, which was as a constant supreme Council, for ordering
ordering affairs, chiefly of Religion; to one or both, which (no doubt) our Saviour then referred the believing Jews, in that of, Tell it to the Church; that is, after private monition, tell it to the lesser Convention or Consistory in the Synagogues; which might decide matters of a lesser nature; or to the higher Sanedrin, in things of more publick concernment; both which were properly enough called שומא, קぬס בוגיגראתב, inaudito, a Church, פֵּּלֵּל, אוֹוָּוָּו. Beyond this sense, none could be made of Christ's words, by his then Auditors, to whom he speaks, not by way of new direction, and institution of a Sovereign Court, or Consistory, in every Congregation of Christians to come; but by way of referring to a well known use, and daily practice, then among the Jews; which was the onely and best means wherein a Brother might have such satisfaction, in point of any offence, which charity would best bear, without flying to the Civil Magistrate, which was now a forein power. When Jews turned Christians, its very certain, they altered not their Discipline, and order (as Christians) in Church society, from what they used before in their Synagogues. Proportionably, no doubt; in Christian Churches, of narrower, or larger extenstions, and communion, among the Gentiles, the wisdom of Christ directs, and allows such judicatories and jurisdictions, to prevent or remove all scandals and offences among Christians, to preserve peace and order, as may have left of private or pedantic, imperiousness, and vulgar trifling of men, unable and unfit to be in, or to exercise any such holy and divine authority over others; (who are easily trampled upon, and fall into reproach, and the snare of the Devil, by reason of divers lusts, passions, weaknesses, and temptations;) but rather Christ commands such grave Conferences, Solemn Synods, and venerable Councils, as consisting of wise, and able, and worthy men, may have most, as of the Apostolical wisdom, eminency, gravity; so of Christ's Spirit, Power, and Authority among them: Such, as no Christian with any modesty, reason, conscience, or ingenuity can despise, or refuse to submit to the integrity of their censure; when it is carried on, not with those heats, peevishnesses, and emulations, which are usually among men of less improved parts; or ripened years; especially, if Apol. Neighbors. Such a way, wisely settled in the Church, might indeed bind upon all things that concern Religion, in private or more publick respects, to all good behavior, in the bonds of truth, peace, and good order, by a due and decent Authority; which, for every two, or three, or seven Christians in their small Bodyings, and Independent refere; i.e. Churches (exclusively of all others) to usurp and eslay to do, is, as if, of every chip of Noah's Ark, or of every rafter of a great Ship, quiwm judicia & conventus seniores moderabantur, lanquam presider. Grot. in Chryf. they
they would endeavor to make up a very fit vessel to sail in any Sea and any weather.

But take the true and wholesome Discipline of the Church, in those true proportions, which pious antiquity setted and used; and which, with an easy hand, by a little condescending, and moderation, on all sides, might have been long ago, and still may be happily setted in England: Nothing is more detestable, commendable, and beneficial to the Church or Christ; As a strong case to preserve a Lute or Instrument in; that so the Church may not be broken, disordered, or put out of tune by every rash and rude hand, either in its truth, or purity, or harmony; either in Doctrine, or Manners, or Order. But this is a blessing, as not to be deserved by us, so hardly to be hoped, or expected, amidst the pride, and passions, and fractions of our times: Nor will it be done, till Civil powers make as much confidence to be good, as great; and to advance Christian Religion, no les, than to enlarge, or establish Temporal Dominion.

When such Magistrates have a minde, first to know, and then to set up a right Church polity, power, and holy order, in every part and proportion of it: They need not advise with such as creep into corners; or seek new models out of little and obscure conventicles; nor yet ought they to confine themselves to those feeble proportions, which are seen in the little Bodyings of these times; which begin like Mushrooms, to grow up every where, and to boast of their beauties, and rare figures; when nothing is more indigested, and ill compacted, as to the general order, and public peace, of this or any other noble and ample branch of the Catholick Church. Pious and learned Men, who reverence antiquity, and know not yet how to mock either their Mother the Church, or their Fathers, the true Bishops, Elders, and Ministers of it, can soon demonstrate, how to draw forth that little chain of gold, (that charity, communion, and orderly subordination among Christians) which at first (possibly) might only adorn one single congregation of a few Christians, in the primitive paucity and newer plantations; to such a largeness, amplitude, and extension, as by the widom of Christian charity, and humility, shall extend to, and comprehend in its compas, by way of peaceable union, and harmony, or comply subjection, even the largest combinations, and furthest spreadings of any branch of the Catholick Church: Both as to its greater and lesser conventions; in several places and times; as the matters of Religion, and occasion of the Churches shall require; according to its several dispersions, and distinctions by place, or civil polity.

Matt. 18. 39. Which greater, yet orderly conventions, must needs be as properly a Church; and may meet, as much in Christ's Name; and hope for his presence and assistance in the midst of them, as any of those
True methods of Church Discipline.

thole Churches could among the Jews: to which Christ properly refers in that place: Yea, they must needs be far beyond any thing imaginable in the narrow confines of Independent Bodies.

Such Churches then, of most elect, wife, and able Christians, (who have the content and Representation of many lesser Congregations,) must needs do all things with more wisdom, advice, impartiality, authority, reputation, majesty, and general satisfaction; than any of those limited Bodies of Congregational Churches, can possibly do; yea, in all right reason they are as much beyond and above them, as the power of a full Parliament, is beyond any Country Committee.

Those may with comly order, and due authority, (which ariseth from the consent of many men, much esteeming the known worth of others,) give audience, receive complaints, consider of, examine, reprove, reform, excommunicate, and restore, where there is cause, and as the matters of the Church, more private or publick, require in the several divisions; extending its wings as an Eagle, more or less, as there is cause; with infinite more benefit to the community of Christians, than those Pullets, the short winged, and little bodied Birds of the Independent feather, can do; Where without any warrant (that I know) from God or Man; Religion or right Reason; Law or Gospel, Prudence or Charity, a few Christians, by clucking themselves into a conventicle, shall presently seem a compleat body to themselves, and presume to separate and exempt themselves from all the world of Christians, as to any duty, subject, order, or obedience; and pitching their Tents, where they think best, within the verge of any other, never so we'll, and wisely set forth Church, presently they shall raise themselves up some small brisk works of absolute Authority, which they fancy both parts from, and defends against all Churches in the World; planting their Wooden or Leathern Guns of imaginary Independent power; and casting forth their Granadoes, or Squibs rather, of passionate censures, angry abdications, and severe divorces against all Christians, but thole of their own way and party: Afterward they turn them, it may be, against their own body and bowels, when once they begin to be at leisure to wrangle and divide; As if (alas) there were the dreadful thunder-bolts of excommunication, antiently used with great solemnity, caution, deliberation, and publick consent: The great forerunner of Gods terrible, just judgment, exercised with unsheigned pity, fervent prayers, and many tears, by thole, who had due eminency and authority, as presidents in chief, or seconds and assistants, to judge and act in weighty cases and matters. In which transactions and censures, Churches Synodical, Provincial, and National, were interested, and accordingly being duly convened, they solemnly acted in Christ's Name, as the offence, error, or matter, required remedy; either for judicium est, errors sequia deli-
errors, or publike disorders and scandals; which it concerned all
Christians and Churches to see repressed, or amended.

Of Excommunication and censures.  The wise and excellent Discipline of the Church, and the pow-
er of using and applying of it, which so many now either vainly
arrogate, or ambitiously Court, was not of old as a bodkin put into
every machinicks hands; or as a sword committed to every brawny
arm; nor yet, was it such a (brutum fulmen) a thunder-bolt which the
confident hand of every factionist might take to himself and Grap,
or use to his private revenge, or to the advantage of his party and
design: But Discipline, together with Government, in the Church,
was only committed and concorded, after the example of the A-
postolicall times, by the wisdom, humility, content, and subjection
of all good Christians in their severall stations, either as Princes or
Subjects, to those learned, grave, and godly men, Bishops and Pres-
byters, who were ablest for gifts, eminentest for their labours, and
highest in place and Ministeriall authority in the Churches of Christ;
whose assemblies or convenings, were greater or smaller, and their
influence accordingly obliging valid and effectuall, for the good
of those Churches over which they were; ascending from the first
and leaft Country Congregations (as the smallcst yet considerable
branches of a visible Church,) till it arose, like Ezekiels waters,
from the Anckles, to the Knees, and Loyns, and Head, to such large,
plenary, and powerfull an Authority, as represented many famous
Churches; and sometimes the greatest and convertible parts of the
Catholic Church throughout the whole world; as in generall
Councils called Oecumenicall.

Of Synods and Councils. Out of which Synods and Councils however disorders and in-
conveniences (as Nazianzene and others complain) cannot be who-
ly kept out (they still consisting of sinfull, and so frail men,) yet they
were subject to far less evils, and Errataes, than attend the small
scattered and separate bodies of these later decimo sexto editions:

Cyp. Nazi.

Hift 1. i.c.19. & 18. In can
ciers, orat. 19. Ruffin
Athenaei.
Procl. 11. 14. Nor may we cast away, those goodly large Robes, which
the prudence and piety of the antients made, because they are sub-
ject to be toyled, or rent, by the hands of folly. It is better for the
Church to enjoy the gleanings of the antients Integrit, Wildom,
and Charity; in ordering of the Church, than to have the whole harvest of later mens lowings: which have large straw of promises and shews, but little grain of solid benefit; yea much cockle too, and many thistles of most choking and offensive consequences. The very rags of true antiquity, doe better cover the nakedness, and more adorne thee body of any Church; than any of those cobweb-garments of later making; which are torn in pieces, while they are putting on, and fitting to these new bodies of odd shapen Churches. All reason and experience teacheth, that those grand communicative ways of Christian Churches in the joynt Counsels of grave, learned, and Godly men, drawing all into union, harmony, and peace, for the publike and generall good, were far more probable (though (perhaps) not absolutely necessary means) to preserve both the doctrine of Faith and good manners unblameable among Christians, than any of those small and broken Potsheds of private Independency can be; which carry little ability, and a little authority or venue with them: appearing like the Serpents teeth; sown by Cadmus; every where rising up in armed parties, divided against, and destroying one another; till they have cleared the Field, as of all such new, and angry productions; so of all those antient and excellent constitutions of Christian Churches; which were bound up as Bibles in greater, or leffer volumes.

It being so natural to all men, to affect, what they call liberty and power; if once mean men can by any arts obtain any shadow of them, they are (out of the shew of much zeal and conscience) most pragmaticall; And first begin to think no Church well reformed, unless they bring them to their models; Then their model must be new; lest their Authors should seem to have been idle; being always more concerned for the reformation of any men, than of themselves; God grant that while temerity and confidence pretends to plant none but new and rare flowers, and to root up all old ones as ill weeds, in the Church, that themselves and their odd inventions, with their rash abolitions, prove not at last the most noxious plants that ever pestered the Garden of this Church.

...To what some men urge (by abusing that text against the good Orders, Canons, and Constitutions or Customs of the Church.) Of prudence. That every plant, which the Father hath not planted, shall be pulled up; therefore say they, nothing of humane prudence is tolerable in the Church the ordering of any Church; I answer; first, none of those that quarreled at the Church of England's Motes, but are thought by many learned and Godly men to have beams in their own eyes; if Scripture, right reason, and antiquity may judge: for nothing is alleged as more different from any of these amongst us; than what may be found among the new Modellers; who as they were in number...
number and quality much inferior, so they were never thought
more wise, or learned: nor so calm and composed: nor so publike
and unpassionate in their Counsels and determinations: as those
many excellent men and Churches were, both antient and modern;
to whole examples, agreeable to the Canon of the Scriptures, the
Church of England was conformed.

Furthermore, The great Moter of some mens passion, zeal,
and activity against this Reformed Church, was, that one Error,
against the judgement, liberty, and practice of all antiquity, which
is fundamental, as to the Churches polity and extern Peace; namely,
That nothing may be used in the Church as to externals,
which is not expressly and precifely commanded in the word;
Which yet themselves obserue not, when they come to have pow-
er either to form and act; some things they take in upon prudential
account, as their Church-Covenant, of the form and words
of which they are not yet agreed, which they urge: so their
requiring each Member to give an account, not of the historical
belief of the truth, but, of the work of grace, and conversion, which
no Scripture requires, or Church ever practis'd: That of St. Au-
stin hath been often inculcated by many learned, quiet, and godly
men in this Church of England, and elsewhere, as a most certain
truth; That however the Faith, Doctrine, Sacraments, and Mi-

nistry of the Church, are precisely of divine Institution; rising from
a divine Spring, and conveyed in a like sacred Current, which
ows nothing to the wisdom, policy, power, or authority of man;
yet the extern dispensation of this Faith, Sacraments, and divine
Ministrations, together with the fence and hedge of them, the ne-
cessary Government, Order, and Discipline of the Church, in its
parts and in the whole, these doe fall much under the managing
of right reason, rules of good order, and common prudence, all which
attends true Religion: So that they neither have, nor needed, nor
indeed were easily capable of such positive, precise and particular
precepts or commands, as these men fancy; and by this pertinaci-
ous fancy they have cast great snares on the consciences of many;
great scandals on the Churches, both antient and modern; and
great restrains on that liberty, which Jesus Christ left to his
Churches in these things; according, as various occasions and times
might require.

None but foolish and fanatick men can think, that when men
turned Christians, they ceased to be men; or being Christian men,
they needed not still to be governed, both as Christians, and as men;
by reason joyned to Religion; which will very well agree, car-
rying on Religious ends, by such prudent and proportionate means,
and in such good order, as is agreeable to right reason; and the ge-
nerall
ral directions of Religion; which never abandoned, or taught any Christian to start at, and abhor, what is taught by the very light of nature, and those common principles of reason, and order, or policy, which teach the way of all Government and subjection; either of younger to the elder (whence is the very ground of all Presbyterian) or of weaker to the stronger; or of the foolish to the wiser, or of the ignorant to the learned; or of many to some few, for the good of all: None of which methods can cross Religion; nor being observed in some due measure, can be blamed; nor ought factiously to be altered, by the members of any settled Church; in which there is, neither Apostacy from the Faith, nor recession from the Scriptures, nor alteration of the substance of Christ's holy Institution; which this Church of England not being guilty of, but apparently professing, and fully adhering to the Scriptures, as the ground, rule, and limit of Faith, and holy Mysteries; We doubt not, but, however it used the wisdom of learned, wise, and holy men; and followed the warrant of the Primitive Churches, in the external manner and methods of holy Administrations, Government, and Discipline; yet it may, and ought still, as it doth, lay claim to the right and honor of an eminent part of the true Catholic Church of Christ, having a true Ministry, and true Ministraions: In which, I believe, all the Apostles, and Primitive Martyrs, and Confessors in all Ages, would most willingly have owned and approved; yea, the Great God from Heaven hath attested it, and still doth to the confidences of thousands of excellent Christians, which have had their birth and growths to Religion, in this Church of England.

So that the out-cryes, abhorrencies, and extirpations, carried on so eagerly against the main constitution, frame, and Ministry of this Church, by many, (who now appear to be men of little charity, and strong passions, and very weak reason,) as if we were all-over Popish, Superstitious, Antichristian, altogether polluted, intolerable, &c. Those calumnies and clamors, wanted both that truth, that caution, and that charity, which should be used, in any thing, tending to disturb, or discourage any true Christian, or Church of Christ; whose differences in some small external things from us, in judgment or practice, we ought to bear upon the account of those many great things, in which we agree with them, as Christians: Nor ought poor men, of private parts and place in Church and State, to so swell, at any time, with the thought of any Liberty and Power in common, given them from Christ (to reign with him, or to reform, &c.) as to drive, like silly Mariners, those rightful Pilots from the Helm; or to break their cord, and compact, of ancient design, draught, and form, by which they steered as they ought, or as they could, in the distress of times. And this only, That these new under-
Want of Charity.

Take not, how they can delineate new carts, or maps; and how soon they can over-whelm, or over-set, to fair, rich, and goody a Vessel, as this Church of England once was in the eye of all the World, but our own. This Island was not more nobly eminent, than the Church was great in Britain: The leaks, clinks, and decayes, which befal all things in time, might easily have been stopped, calked, and trimmed, by skilful and well-advised hands; when once it was fairly and orderly brought upon the Publick stocks, and into a Parliament Dock; which good men hoped, of all places, would not prove either a quick-sand, or a rock to the Reformed Church, or the Learned Ministry of England.

But the Lord is just, though we should be confounded in our confidences of men; though neither mountains, nor hills, nor valleys can help, yet will we trust in God, who is our God in Christ; who (we doubt not, but) in mercy will own us, with all our frailties and defects, as his true Church, and true Ministers: And if in any thing we have failed, as men; yet we are assured, the merciful eye of Heaven will look more favorably on our failings, to pardon them, than some Baslicks do on our labors, to accept them; who seek to destroy this Church, and discourage all its true Christians and Ministers, if they could, with their dreadful aspects, and frightful looks; if they had not, the defensive of God's protection, joined to their own innocency; and the favor of many excellent Christians; whom I have endeavored to settle and satisfie, as briefly and clearly, as in so short a time I could, in these many, and to me very tedious, and almost superfluous objections, against this true Reformed Church of England; these first and lesser calumnies, which lay in the way of my main design, I thought it my duty to remove. *Jer. 1:3. Be not afraid of their faces, for I am with thee, to deliver thee, saith the Lord. V. 18. I have made thee an hideance City, a brasen Wall, and an iron Pillar, &c. Ezek. 2:6. Be not afraid of their words, though thou dost dwell among scorpions; be not dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house.

Where, I see, in all our disputes and differences, so cruelly carried on, the greatest ingredient is Uncharitableness; which knows not how to excuse small faults, to supply lesser defects, to interpret well what is good, to allow others their true Christian Liberty, and to enjoy its own modestly; to keep communion amidst some ease differences, and union with harmless varieties. We have had on all sides truth enough to have saved any men; and uncharitableness enough to have damned any angels. Nor is it merely a privation, or want of charity, but an abounding of envy, malice, strife, wrath, bitterness, faction, fury, cruelty, and whatever is most contrary to the excellency of Christians, which was the excellency of Christ; for in the fullness of time, he sent forth his Son, made under the law to redeem them who were under the law, that the word might be fulfilled, that through the strength of the Christ and the excellency of the Church, the word was fulfilled. So after, they send (Acts 4:30) Orators for unity and peace; without which, say they, Christian Religion cannot

love
love and charity. The want of which, I cannot but here deplore in a pathetick digression; craving the Readers pardon, since I cannot go further in answer of uncharitable objections, till I have first sought for our lost charity: The recovery of which one grace would end all the differences, and heal all the distempers, not of England only, but of all the Christian World. You, O excellent Christians, will, if I know, joyn with me in searching after charity, as they did after Christ, sorrowing, Luke 2.48. In mourning for, as some of the devout ancients did, the sad distances, and wasts of Christian charity, among all sorts of Christian Churches, and Professors. Alas, we glory, and swell, and are puffed up one against another, in the forms of being called Churches and Reformed; when we lose the very power of godliness, the soul of religion, and the peculiar glory of Christianity, which is charity. Joh. 13.35. By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, &c.

O sweet, divine, and heavenly beauty of Christ, and all true Christians (Charity;) Whither art thou fled, from Christians breasts, Pathetick lives, hearts, and Churches? In which was wont to be thy Nest, for Charity, thy Palace, and thy Temple: Where thou wert received, welcomed, and entertained, by wise and humble Christians, either as the Spouse of Christ, in thy purity; or as the Queen of graces, in thy beauty; or as the Goddess of Heaven, in thy majesty. O whither art thou gone? where art thou retired? Art thou to be found in the cells of Hermits, in the Cloysters of Monks, in the solitudes of Anchorites? (Probably, there may be most of thee, where is least of the world; which like full diet, begets most of cholerick and foul humors;) Doft thou reside among the pompous Papists? The grave Lutherans? the preciser Calvinists? the severer Separatists? or, the moderater English Christians? May we finde thee at Rome, or Wittremburg, or Geneva, or Amsterdam, or London? Doft thou dwell in the old Palaces, and Councils of venerable Bishops? or in the newer Clases of bolder Presbyterists? or in the narrower corners of subtle Independents? Alas, I fear these very colours and names, which are as ensigns and alarms to factions, found ill in the ears of Charity, and are unpleasing to its sight; which onely loves the first common title and honor of Disciples, to be called Christians. These faces and forms, seem as if they were divided, and let one against another; and when they want a common adversary, each party is ready
Pathetick for Charity.

to subdivide, and seeks to destroy it self; the hand of every faction in Religion, is as Izaac's against his Brother, or it self. Smiting oft with the fist of violence, as Factions; where they should give the right hand of fellowship, as Christians; and strangling each other, instead of embracing.

Or are all these divisions, but the disguises of Charity? and under visors of factions, a meet pageantry is acted of zealous ignorance, or proud and profserous knowledge; both carried on with holy partialities, fraternal Schisms, zealous cruelties, sacred conspiracies; so far only, as to destroy all other Christians. That each sect alone may remain, as the onely Church; which then fancy themselves sufficiently built, polished, and reformed, when they are but as heaps of rubbish, in their several ruptures; as unpoffished lumps in their uncharitable fodings; so far weak and deformed limbs, as they are passionaty and violently broken from the intirenefs and goodly fabric of the well compacted Catholic Church, of which they were sometime a comly and commendable part: Onely then in beauty, safety, and symmetry, while in order to, and in unity with the whole; which is as the Body and Temple of the Lord, in its various parts, making, but one goodly structure, which was aniently the joy, and glory of the whole Earth. Now, nothing seems beft, but deformed ruines, and defolate parcels, of battered, broken, and almost demolished Churches, like Hospitals, in which, are most-what wounded, and maimed, and halting Christians; when of old, the Foundation of one, and all Churches, was Scripture Truth, the cement Charity, the Beauty Unity, and the Strength, orderly and social Government.


O thou fairest of ten thousands (Christian Charity) which wert the wonder of the World in the Primitive times! Which didst so spread thy wings over all the Earth, like the Spirit of God, on the face of the great deep, the ocean of mankind; that every man might, and evry Christian did enjoy, the vital heat, and diviner influence of thy fostering on their souls; So far, that what weaker Christians came short of in believing, or failed in understanding, or were defective in doing, they made up in loving of Christ, and for his sake one another: Yea, what the very enemies and persecutors of Christians wanted, of that humanity, (which is as the morn, and dawn- ing of Christian Charity,) true Christians sought to relieve them by their prayers, and to cover their horrid cruelties with their own kindness to them, while killed by them; and devotions for them, while they were dying under them, as the blessed Martyr Stephen did, and the Crown of Martyrs, Christ Jesus. They forgot not to pray for those that persecuted them; which made Christians in their utmost dispersions, greatest distances, and grievousest sufferings, still admired by
of true Christian Charity.

by all men, though hated by them; still endeared, well acquainted, and united in love to each other, before they had seen, or were personally known to each other.

O thou potent flame of celestial fire, which the love of Christ, stronger than death, had kindled in the souls of the first and best Christians! No Sea, no solitudes, no poverty, no pains, no sufferings, no torments, no offences, no injuries, were able to damp, or quench thee of old; but still thou didst gloe to so fresh an heat, that it warmed and melted the hardest Rocks of Heathen persecutors and tormentors: Who before they believed the Gospel, or love of God in Christ, coveted to be of that Christian society, where they saw men love one another so dearly, so purely, so constantly, as to be ready to die with, and for each other. Alas, now every small drop of fancy, every novelty of fashion in Religion, every atome of Invention, every dust of Opinion, every mote of Ceremony, every shadow of Reformation, every difference of Practice, damps, takes up, buries, puts out thy sacred sparks and embers, in Christians hearts; yea, and kindles those unholy, cruel, and dreadful fires of comityearity, jealousies, scorn, hatred, enmity, revenge, impatience of union, and zeal for separation; to so great heights of all-devouring flames, that nothing but the flesh of Christians will serve for fuel to maintain them; and nothing but the blood of Believers to extinguish them: So that no Christians now love further than they confpire and contend to destroy and conquer all, but their own party and faction.

Thus the want of this holy grace of charity, waftes us by the fires of unchristian feuds; and even presages the approaching of those last dreadful conflagrations, which shall consume the world; and those eternal flames, which shall revenge this sin of sins among Christians, the want of charity; which sins against the love of God, the blood of Christ, the Churches peace, and our own souls: How shall we uncharitable wretches, not dread the coming of our Judge? or how can we love his appearance in flaming fire, who have thus singed and burnt that livery of Christ's love, wherewith we were clothed? which was dipped and died in his own blood; that so it might stanch the further effusions of blood among Christians; and cover the styns of that blood, which had been passionately shed among them? How can we hope our souls should be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus, when we spend our days in damming and destroying each other? and scarce suffer any to posseth their souls in patience, or in any degree of charity, amidst the wafts and troubles of this conflicting and tottering Church; Which, like a great tree, whose roots are loosed round, and almost cut through, stagger too and fro; threatening to fall on every side; being nothing now,
now, but 

weakness over-laden with weight; and labouring with the burthen of it itself, is ready to destroy both itself and others by the suddenness and violence of its fall: O you excellent Christians, 

hasten, as Lot should have done out of Sodom, to withdraw your selves from the interests, designs, zeal, devotion and Religion of this uncharitable and self destroying world; wrap your selves in the mantle of charity, peaceableness and patience, hasten to hide your selves in the holes of this rock, the love of Christ your Redeemer, till he come, who is at the door and will not tarry.

O precious and inestimable grace of Charity, the only Jewel of our lives; the viaticum for our Deaths; the greatest ornament of a Christian profession; the sweetness of our bitterness, the Antidote of our poisons, the Cordiall in our infirmities, the comforter under our dejections, the supplier of our defects, the joy in our forrows, the witness of our sincerity, the Crown of our graces, the Seal of our hopes, the Stay and Pillar of our Souls, amidst the tears, toilings, fears and conflicts of our mortal Pilgrimage; In which we then only joy, when we either love, or are loved by others; but then we have most cause of pious joy, when being hated, and cursed, and perjured by others, we can yet love them, and pray for them, and bless them for Christ's sake. Thou that madest Martyrs, and Confessors, and all true Christians, more than Conquerors, of death, and enemies, men, and Devils; O how have we lost thee? how have we banished thee? how have we not injured thee? yea, how have we grieved thee more in this, that we are loth to find thee? But most in this, that we seek thee among Heresies, Schisms, Apostacies, seditions, sires, perjuries, tyrannies, superstitions, sacrileges, causeless disputes, endless janglings; yea cruel murthers of bodies, and Anathemaes of souls? But the highest indifference, and greater than the greatest insolency offerst thee, is, That we boast, and proclaim we have found thee, in what we have most lost thee; that we have raised thee, by what we have ruined thee; that we are most Churches, when we are least Christians; or most Christians, when we have least of a Church; in our prophane enthusiasms, our licentious liberties, our injurious indulgences, our irrationall, and irreligious confusions; our cruel tolerantings of any thing, rather than sober abiding, growing, and flourishing in truth, which is thy root; in humility, which is thy flower; and in meekness, which is thy fruit.

Thou wert wont to come to us Christians, and by us to others, in the cool of the day, in a still voice, in meek treating, in gentle
Of true Christian Charity.

tle beseechings, like the sweet dew on herbs, or soft rain on the
tender Gras's; so that, however Christians might be exceeded by
other men, in strength, beauty, learning, eloquence, and policy,
yet none equalled them in Charity; which hath the greatest cou-
rage joyned with the greatest kindness; and only knows how to
crucify it self, that it may spare others; to deny it self, that it may
gratify others: Haft thou now chosen to come in Earth-phares,
in Whirl-winds, in Thunders, and Lightnings, and Fires, in tumults,
in hideous clamors and Wars? dost thou delight to wrap thy self
in the Garments of Christians rowled in blood? to belmear thy fair
and orient face with the gore and dust of fratricides and patricides?
Is it thy pleasure to hide thy self in the thick clouds and darkness of
Religious plots, reforming pretensions, and then to break forth
with lightnings and hot thunderbolts, with Hailstones and Coals
of fire? As if the inseparable twins of the love of God and our neigh-
bours were now parted, or had slain and devoured one the other: Are
all thy sweet perfumes, thy fragrant Oyntments, (which were wont
to be diffused from the head of our Aaron Christ Jesus, to the skirts
of his Garments, the lowest and meanest Christians) are they now all
distilled and sublimated by our hotter brains and Chimical fires,
into this one drop of self preservation? Haft thou loft those Char-
acters, which the blest Apostile sometime gave thee, for long
suffering, for kindness; for not envying, not wanting, not being
puffed up; for not behaiving thy self uneemly, not seeking thine
own; not easly provoked, thinking no evil, rejoicing not in ini-
quity, but in the truth; Bearing all things, believing all things, ho-
ping all things, enduring all things? Is thy purity embas'd with
the love of the world, of mony, of honour, of pleasure, of applause,
of victory, through self-love? Thou that wert wont to be that pure
Christalline and celestiall love of God, and of man for Gods sake;
atthou now degenerared to fardid, sensual, and momentary lufts?
Thou that didst feed among the Lillies, on the mountains of Spices,
in the Garden of God, on the tree of life, the love of God in Christ,
with eyes and hands intent to Heaven, praying God for his love
to thee, and praying for the like love to others; art thou now
condemned to the Serpents curse, to goe on thy Belly, to feed on
the dust; to make gain thy godlinefs, and to turn even piety it self
into the poison of meer self-preservation, in worldly interestes? How
is thy voice changed from that of a Lamb, to the roaring of a Lion? thy
hands from Jacob's smoothnes, to Esau's roughnes?

Or is this rather none of thy voice, which we daily hear? Are
these none of thy hands, O most unchangeable Charity, who art
alwaies the same in thy self, and to others? Are they not the voice
and hands of thy disguifed enemies, tempting us with the Serpents
subtilty
Of true Christian Charity.

fubtrily; beguiling us with the fallacy of ravening Wolves, covered in Sheep's clothing, and bleating instead of howling, yet with no less purpose to devour? whose bowels are of brass, their hearts of Adam-ant, their Fore-heads of Flint, their Teeth and Claws of Iron; there Feet are swift to shed blood, yea they are dipped in the blood of Christians! Thou that wert wont to have but one Head, the Lord Jesus Christ; and but two Hands, the right Hand of affiance, leaning on God; the left of pity, supporting the weak Brother; art thou now grown monstrous like Hydra, with many Heads, and as many things? like Briareus, with many Hands, and as many Swords? mutually fighting, though seeming to branch from, and adhere to the same body of Christianity? Is thy God now to be appeased with humane sacrifices, or will he drink the blood of Christians, who would not accept a gift at the altar, till the offerer had first reconciled himself to his Brother? will he now accept the heads of those that are slain by us, who would not crown Martyrdom itself, if the Garland of Charity had not first adorned it on earth, and so fitted it for suffering, and by patient suffering, for glory in the Heavens?

...O let not the Christian world thus mistake thee; rather let them never speak or think of thee, than thus injure thee, while they pretend to advance thee; we know, O blessed Charity, that thou art wholly made up of the love and free grace of God, by the merits of Jesus Christ, and the liberall effusions of the holy Spirit; having in thee as no ingredients of humane merits, so less of humane passions, secular ends, and partiall interests; O shew thy self in thy own innocens sweetness, in thy pious simplicities, in thy lovely lineaments, with thy harmless hands, with thy beautifull feet, which carry the message of good tydings, the Gospel of Peace, which have the marks of the Lord Jesus on them; which are wholly made up of softness and sweetness; warming us by the light of the Truth, and melting us by the warmth of Christ's love; set forth thy self in thy sober smiles, thy modest eyes, thy soft and silken words, thy silent tears, thy clean hands, thy tender feet; How can we love thee, unless we fee thee, like thy self? How can we not love thee, if once we be happy to see thee, as thou art! O hide not thy self from us, though we have abused thee and mocked thee, and scourged thee, and crowned thee with thorns, and clothed thee with Purple rayment, died in the blood of Christians; though we have pierced thy heart, and almost destroyed thee, so that thou art forced to fly from us naked and wounded; Though we have not only forsaken thee, but driven thee from us; not only lost thee, but are lost to find thee, and joy in thy loss, and are afraid of thy return: yet since thou art Charity, that is, all divine sweetness, kind-
ness and goodness, doe not utterly forlack us, the scattered and torn remnant of surviving Christians; Are our distances more unreconcileable, than those were between God and Sinners? yet these thou hast composed, by that blood of atonement, which Christ the Son and love of God shed for us, to redeem us out of all Nations tongues and people; who hath given us this badge of his Disciples, to love one another; not with private and Schismaticke factiousness, but with publike and Catholick affections, which reach as far as the Name of Christ is owned: Thou art not only an Angel ascending up to Heaven in the love of God, but also descending down to men, chiefly to the fraternities of Christians; Nor is the stream of thy sweetness, which flows with Milk and Honey, only diffused upon the Church triumphant, the blessed Angels, and Souls of just men made perfect, who are ever bathed in an Ocean of thy Nectar, which is infinite love; but thou hast also received gifts for men; and hast effusions of love to soften our hard hearts, to supple our brawny hands, to clear our polluted consciences, and to cheer up our Carnish countenances.

Better we had been among the slain, that are gone down to the Pit, and covered in darkness, with the dust of death, than, to live without thee; whose presence makes our moment here to be Heaven, and thy absence makes our after eternity to be Hell; O let not the cruel, factious, profane, and Atheisticall world say, That thou, the Charity of Christians, were never beyond a fable, a meteor in their fancies, a morning dew falling from their lips; or a melancholy softness, a pusillanimous pitty, a devout cowardise; As if Christians were kind no longer, than they wanted power to be cruel; and humbly obeyd no longer, than they wanted opportunity to be proudly rebellious against those, whom they feared more as slaves, than loved as Christians.

Is there nothing in thy ingenious wisdom (which delightest to doe best, and most, where men merit least) by which to bring back thofe (Theriandri, Anthropophagi, or Lycambrapi) thofe men, that are become savage of civil; thofe Christians, that are turned Tygers, and Lions, and Bears, and Wolves, degenerated far from the pristine shape and forms which they had, of meek Lambs and Sheep? O bring forth thofe excellent eye salves,by which thou didst of old open the eyes of the blind, and barbarous Heathens. Shew to the deformed Christians of this metamorphosed age, thy primitive beauties; the attractive of thy meekness, the charms of thy gentleness; the trophies of thy patience, forbearances, and brotherly kindness; bring forth the Magazines of thy mercies, bowels of pitty, tenderness, tears; use thy honest frauds, thy pious crafts, thy Dove-like arts, thy Saint-like policies, of self denyall, courtely, modestly, giving
giving and forgiving; by which means Christians ever flourished in grace, abounded in comforts, and though they were destroyed and perfected, yet still they were emulated and renowned; (O
remove the paints, and veils, and masks, and shadows, the deceits and dawblings, which are upon the face of Christian Religion;
which is indeed nothing without thee; a meer mockery of graces,
a pageantry of virtue; a phantasm of courage, a delusion of zeal,
a shadow of reformation; fitted only to deceive, if it were possible,
even the very elect.) If thy torments and blood-sheds, and deaths of old, will not serve to move and enlarge the dried and contracted
bowels of modern Christians, to mollify their hearts, to calm their spirits, and to sweeten their looks to one another; O shew them
thy later soul scratches, thy fresh wounds, thy grievous reproaches,
thy many bleedings, thy deep stigmatizings; thy prisons, thy piercings, thy dyings, thy crucifyings, all which thou hast received in
the house of thy friends, by the hands of thy friends, even such as
are called Christians, but can hardly be counted, charitable: which
have brought thee and us to these fears, and tremblings, and pale-
ness, and despair; as if God, and Christ, and Gospell, and Ministry,
and Heaven, and salvation, and true Religion, were all departing with thee, which are thy insepable companions.

If these will not move Christians to look after thee, or at least
to pity thee, and to pray for thee (or rather for themselves in thee:)
yet haft thou one holy Relique of infinite merit, incomparable worth,
and ineffable value; set forth this to the blood-shotten eyes of
the Christian world; even Jesus Christ crucified for them, and
professed by them to be their common Saviour: Possibly his precious
blood sprinkled on their consciences, may (as water on lime) flake,
and dissolve, that fiery Spirit, and flaming Heart, which is among
them; Nothing can work such miracles, as this age wants, but
only the cross, and wounds, and agony, and sweat, and tears, and death of Jesus Christ; whose love iled the malice and
cruelty of his enemies, for an instrument to kill him, that he, being
slain by them, might merit life for them; that by this act of high-
eff uncharitableness in man, to kill his Saviour, Christ might set
forth his other-ways unexpressible Charity toward men, by sa-
viving his destroyers; his love being stronger than death; and giving
us hereby a pattern, how we should be disposed to one another, not
only when friends, but also when enemies; Rather to dye for them
in away of charity, which is a beam of divine mercy; than to kill
them, even in a way of equity, which is but a stroke of humane jus-
tice; but least of all should we destroy our Brother, in away of po-
licy, passion, and malice, which is devillish cruelty; Since to
hate our Brother, is murther, as he is a man, sure not only to hate,
**Christian Charity.**

but even for Religion fake to kill our brother, a Christian, must be a crucifying afresh the Lord of Life; who died for his Church: So then, uncharitable destroyers of Christians, are rather Deicides, than Homicides.

If all this move not those, that are called Christians, to lay down their malice, factions, and arms, against each other; for whom Charity and Christ bids them lay down their lives; O let it move all excellent Christians, (and me, who am less than the leaf) that truly love thee, and long for thee, to mourn to see the generality of Christians so little moved by thee, or to thee: Let our heads and eyes, be as Fountains and Rivers of Waters, running with tears night and day, for those thousands, whom justice; and those ten thousands, whom uncharitableness, febism, and superstition, have slain among Christians, even in these Nations and Churches. O let our humble hearts be thy retirement; our sighs, and prayers, and tears, thy refreshment, in the heat and fury of these times; and be thou to us, as the shadow of that great Rock in a weary Land.

O blessed Blessing of all other blessings, Charity; what words, what tears, what prayers, what sighs, what Sermons, what Writings, can recover thee, or recall thee, or persuade thee to look back, and return to thee, and others pitifully broken, wasted, forlorn, and divided Churches? But alas, our words are sharp swords, daily whetting, and clashing against each other; our tears are, as the drops of revengeful and impatient spirits, which cannot have their wills; our prayers are the bitter effusions of hearts troubled and disquieted, not with sin, but with cholera and unkindness; so far from praying for our enemies, that we pray nothing but enmity; and are impatient that any should pray for their friends, if we esteem them our enemies; our sighs are but bellows, to excite the languishing flames of declining factions, against their opposers; our Sermons oftimes are as fire brands tossed up and down by incendiaries; and the breath of our Pulpits, are like the Eruptions of Etna, Vesuvius or Hecla, scattering coals of fire, and blasting all things near them with sulphurous exhalations: So that many Preachers are, indeed, as voices crying in the wilderness; sounding alarms to Religious War; and preparing a way for zealous desolations, both in Church and State; And for our Writings, they are in great part but Pamphlets, which serve as Paper to wrap up quibs, or to kindle to quicker flames, those smoaking jealousies and secret discontents, which are smothered in our brevets: That even we Christians, and reformed too, speak, and act, and pray, and Preach, and Print, in great part, so; as if we had not one God, and one Lord Jesus, one Spirit, one Faith, and one Baptism, &c.

But, as if we had no God, no Faith, no Word, no Sacrament, no common relation to one Saviour, no common salvation in One; and by

T 2 One;
Christian Charity.

One; as if we were Christians, only to be crosses, and to crucifie one another: As if we were all turned Canaanites, scourges in the sides, and thorns in the eyes of one another.

O thou flower and fragrancy of all graces and virtues; which hast little of a Man, nothing of a Devil, and most of God, of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit in thee; which carriest all sweetness, serenity, and tranquillity with thee: If thou abhorrest the crowds of Christians, and such as glory so much in their being gathered into Churches after new and uncouth ways; If thou darest not trust their smiles and kisses, their favours and reforms, who have so oft, under the sections pretences of Religion, sheathed their swords in thy bowels; If thou art afraid, not only of religious rabbles, and zealous tumults, but even of sacred Synods, and Armies lifted for holy Wars, whose faith hath often failed thee and them too; who while they thought to contend earnestly for the truth, have crushed thee, O Charity, almost to nothing, by their violeces, and divisions; each novel fiction seeming to strive for thee, pull and tear thee in pieces, ready by violent baulings of thee to their sides Seats, utterly to destroy thee;

O yet prepare a place for thyself among some humble and honest hearts, some meek and quiet spirits here in England; that so thou maist retire and hide thyself, from thy friendly enemies, from their cruel courtesies, their dangerous importunities, their deep agitations, and designs. O disdain not the broken hearts and contrite spirits, of that remnant of truly Reformed, Catholicks, and charitable Christians, which yet have clapped in this Church. These value thee, thee long for thee, thee are sick of love to thee, and weary of life without thee. To thy honor and restoration, to their comfort and establishment, these lines are chiefly consecrated: O do thou cover them, and this thy suppliant Oswin, under the shadow of thy wings, (till this calamity be overpast) hide us from the fierce of tongues, which are set on fire with the fire of hell; which burn moist, when

James 3.6.
Psal. 120.7. I am for peace, but when I speak, they are for war.

One; as if we were Christians, only to be crosses, and to crucifie one another: As if we were all turned Canaanites, scourges in the sides, and thorns in the eyes of one another.

O Sempiternal Grace, which art fitted for immortal souls; let us Charity never be (as Ruth to Naomi) inseparable from thee, while we are on Earth; as thou art the only remaining grace in Heaven; being the crown and consummation of all other gifts and graces; which, like flames, then disappear, and are willingly swallowed up, when thy lustre,
like the Sun, is risen to its full strength, and shines in an eternal Noon, making the soul at once infinitely happy, while it sees an object infinitely lovely, and loves it with an infinite love. Rather than we should fail of thee in this life (O thou beloved of our souls) carry us with thee, from Cities, to solitudes; from company, to deserts; from the unsociable societies, and uncharitable Churches, to creeping cottages, to weeping solitudes, and howling wildernesses; where we may enjoy thee in our own self sighing, and smitten breasts, rather than dwell in Palaces, and Cities, and Temples, and where we see thee daily despoiled, profaned, and mangled; tormented, torn, and trampled under the feet of Christians, in Villages, in Towns, in Cities, in Senates, in Armies, in Seats of Justice, and in Pulpits. Give us the wings of a Dove, even thy wings (O holy Charity) by which thou ascendedst at once to God in love, and descendedst for God's sake in love to man; that we may make haste and flee away, and be at rest forever; that we may ascend from this valley of our confusions, to the mountain of thy felicities; Which is the glorious vision of thy self in the great mirror or glass of God's perfections; who is in himself, and to us perfect light, that we may see him to be perfect love, and is perfect love, that we may enjoy his perfect light. O Father of Lights, and Fountain of Love, whole immensity and eternity are filled with truth and peace, verity and charity; whole love hath sprinkled our souls with the blood of thy beloved Son, the promised Messiah, our blessed Jesus! O let our moment here, be sincere love to thy self, perfect charity to thy Church, and holy humanity to all men; that our eternity may be blessed with thine, and our Saviours, and our Fellow Saints love forever.

You, O excellent Christians (whose excellency is chiefly in this, that above all things you have put on charity, which is the bond of perfection) you will not only excuse, but (it may be) kindly accept this little digression; wherein I say, like Jeremiah, hath shed some few drops of lamentation, mingling tears with the blood of Christians, which hath been so profusely shed in these self-deflating Churches; mourning for the loss of charity, the extirpations of unity, and the ruins of harmonious order, which are forced to yield to contention, cruelty, and confusions. Nature teacheth you to lament the loss, or forced absence, of what you love; and Christian Religion teacheth you, to love all graces in charity, and this one above all: You have learned to suffer with patience, (and in some cases, with joy) the spoiling of your goods, the sequestration of your revenues, the imprisonment of your persons, the scattering of your nearest relations, the withdrawals of your many friends, and the great alterations of civil powers, and secular affairs; These are but scenes and parts of the same Tragedy, which hath always been act-
Christian Charity.

ing on the Worlds Theatre; in which, it is safer to be Spectators, and Sufferers, than Actors; nor may your sufferings in secular matters disorder your charity; onely, the plunderings of your true Christian Religion, which some men aim at; the sequestering of this Church of England, from its glory and reformation; the dividing, and so destroying of it; the restraining you from enjoying the great seal of charity, the Sacrament of Christian Communion; the scattering of your able faithful Ministers into corners; the changing and contemning of your ancient and excellent Ministry; the underminings of your comforts, and the hazards of your consciences; the many confusions and miseries threatening your posterity in matters of salvation, if the malice of some men may be suffered to abuse your charity, and impose upon this credulity.

These, your zeal (mixed with charity) teacheth you, to endure with an impatient patience: Therefore patient in some degree, because you yet hope better things from God, and all good men; therefore piously impatient, because you earnestly with better for God's glory, and the good of your Countrey. Your humble zeal hath taught you to be discreetly charitable; as to your own souls, so to all others; but specially to this Church of England, and the true Ministers of it; to whom, you cannot but willingly bear that tender respect and love, which pious children are wont to do to their distressed, yet well-deserving parents; from the care and support of whom, no Corbans, no imaginary Dedications and Devotions of your selves to any new Church ways, and forms of Religion, may justly alienate your affections; nor dispence with that respect, justice, gratitude, and charity, which you in conscience ow to those, to whom in some sense you ow your own selves, and the best of your selves, your souls: Whole divine Authority, and holy Calling, I shall now further endeavor to prove, having thus first established the truth of our Religion, and of our Church; whose greatest waste and want, is that of charity; whose dying embers, and almost extinguished sparks, I have (by the way) endeavoured to revive in the hearts of true Christians; that so they may without passion or prejudice, embrace that truth which I chiefly design to vindicate in this Apology: Namely, The holy Calling, divine Institution, and Function of the Ministry of this Church of England; which will best be done by answering the chief Objections, Calumnies, and Cavils, brought against both the Ministers and their Ministry, by their many-minded Adversaries.
OBJECTION II.

Against the peculiar Office and Calling of Evangelical Ministers.

Suppose we grant (say they) true Religion, and a true Church in England, with some defects; yet these may be without any distinct office, or peculiar calling of Ministers, which you challenge, as of divine appointment: Where as, we conceive, every Christian may and ought to dispense, in an orderly way, all such gifts of knowledge, as he hath received in the Mysteries of Religion, to the Churches good. So that the restraining of holy Administrations to some persons, as a peculiar Office and Function, seems but the fruit of arrogance and usurpation in some, of credulity and easiness in others, and is not rightly grounded upon the Scriptures.

Answ. Not that, I believe, your well-grounded and well-guided piety, (O excellent Christians) (who know, whom, and by whom, Of Catholic you have believed,) needs other satisfaction in this, or the other following Objections, touching the peculiar, divinely-instituted Function and practise of the Ministry, than what your own solid judgments, and exacte rest upon consciences, and clearer experiences, sealing your comforts, and our Ministry, afford you; who are no novices in matters of Religion, either as to the outward form and order, or the inward power; But only to let you see, that neither I, nor my Brethren the Ministers, do plead for that, in a precarious way of mere favor and indulgence, for which, we have not good grounds, clear proofs, and mighty demonstrations, both divine and humane, from Scripture, pious Antiquity, and right Reason, I shall more largely and fully answer this first grand Objection, which strikes at the very Root and Foundation, both of the Ministry, and all holy Administrations.

1. I may first blunt the edge of this weapon (which strikes against the peculiarity of the Ministerial Function) by the clear and constant acknowledgment (both as to judgment and practise) of all excellent Christians, and all famous Churches, in all Ages, from the very first birth and infancy of Christianity, and any Churches, to our times: Of which, no sober or learned Christian, can with any plausible shew, make any doubt; so far as God in his providence hath continued to us any Monuments or Witnesses of the Churches estate, succession, and transactions in former times. In all which, we finde there ever was a peculiar Office of the holy Ministry, and a peculiar Order of Persons, both ordaining, and ordained to be Ministers; and
Catholiclike Testimony and Custom of the Church.

and both so used and so esteemed, by all good Christians, in all settled Churches. Clemens, in Saint Paul's time, after him, writing from Rome to the Corinthians, where faction was kindled, exhorting people and Presbyters to peace, tells them, That the Apostles appointed some in all Countreys (as in the Corinthians Church, and thereafter in all Churches, trying and approving them by the Spirit, to be Bishops and Deacons, for those that after should believe, Pag. 54. Edit. Pat. Jun.

Which Catholic like practife and judgment, as it is a great satisfaction to all sober Christians, who itch not after novelles; so it must needs be a vehement prejudice, with any wifemen, against those yesterday novelles, raile by some few men of great passions and pre- sumptions, but of no great reputation (that ever I could learn) for either such learning, piety, or impartiality, as may be put into the ballance against the clear and concurrent Testimonies of all the Antients, and the universal practife of all Churches, which all Histories, all Fathers, all Councils, all Learned and Godly men, both Antient and Modern, do with one Spirit, and one Mouth abundantly testified; agreeable to that of Saint Jerom, St. Augustine, Isidore Hispal, and many others: Who, speaking of the Calling of Ministers, (from those words, Called to be an Apostle of Jesus Christ) reckon up four forts;

First, Some, that are sent immediately from God, and not by men; as Moses, many Prophets, the Twelve Apostles, and Saint Paul.

Secondly, Some by Gods appointment, yet by Mans hand, and Ordination; as Aaron, Joshua, Elisha, Timothy.

Thirdly, Others in the ordinary way, and succession of the Church, (as it is appointed by Jesus Christ) are by men onely ordained Ministers, either according to real merit, partial favor, and vulgar affection.

Fourthly, There be some whom neither God, nor man sends, but they run of themselves.

Such (faith St. Jerom) were, and are false Prophets, and false Apostles, deceitful workers; Ministers of Satan, transforming themselves into Angels of light; who say, Thus faith the Lord, when the Lord hath not spoken to them, or sent them. To this fitle Saint Jerom, St. Augustine, and accordingly all the Antients, before and after them, as they have occasion to speak of the office, duty, and dignity of Ministers in the Church: Which Catholic like Testimony, and Tradition, or Custom of the Church, for any Christian to contradict, without shew of reason, is intolerable impudence; and not to believe it, is most inhuman, and unchristian uncharitableness; to dis- parage, and causely to derogate from it, can be no other, but profane
profane and perverse insolence; unless there can be produced such
clear testimonies from immediate divine revelations, confirmed by
miracles, or from the received Written Word of God, to the contrary;
as will easily, and ought justly to outweigh all after inventions or
institutions, which are built merely upon humane customs and au-
thority; as that was of giving the Lords Supper to Infants, and to
the dead sometimes.

and supreme pleasure, hath appointed. *Every soul & of the dead, being put to rest in peace.* O Lord,
didst thou not know, that all men are vile? The Faition or Schism began in Saint Paul's time, then
renewed, or had continued, which Clemens shews, citing the Apostle Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians,
and telling them, That the Apostles setled approved Ministers, Bishops, and Deacons after them,
and ordered for the succession to follow, when those were dead, whom they ordained immediately,


Which counterbalancing of Custom by Reason or Scripture, is
not yet in the least kind done, by these men, that are the opposers
of the Ministry of England; Who, by the same proud or peevish
incredulity, by which they oppose the Catholike consent, and practi-
cal Testimony of the Church in this great point of the holy Ministry,
do overthrow, by a sceptical folly, and disputative madness, the very
foundation, and all possible means of Historical belief or faith among
men; For which, the wisdom and providence of the Creator, hath
afforded to mankind, no other ordinary ground or inducement, but
only that, of a charitable and rational persuasion, which we have,
That neither the most, nor, to be sure, the best ablest, and worthiest
men, in all Ages, and these in several places, would confine in a
lie, or give testimony to a falshead; contrary to their own conscience,
and the evidence of things, as to matter of fact; whereof themselves, and their forefathers, were eye-witnesses, beyond any possibility of ignorance, or mistake: Nor can any thing be alleged, or supposed, as matter of self-interest, or partiality; there being in the first Three hundred years, no temptation of secular profit, or honor, to blinde, or corrupt their judgment and testimony; whereby they should not either fully and clearly see, what was judged, and acted in the Church; or that any thing should so bribe their tongues and pens, as not to give a true record, and faithful report to posterity: Since many of them sealed their love to the truth, and charity to mankind, by their blood in Martyrdom.

At the same rate, of obstinate disbeliefing, and supercilious denying, whatever is delivered by writing or tradition to after Ages, men may foolishly, and madly question the works of every Author: the facts and records of all former times, left us in History: Christians may doubt of their Baptism in their Infancy; yea, and question their own Natural Fathers and Mothers, refusing to own, or pay any duty and obedience to them: since of these they can have no other assurance, than what is told them by others; as also of all their forefathers and predecessors; from whom the Sceptical Infidels are certainly descended, although they never saw them; and (possibly) they enjoy the benefit of their forefathers labor and estates to this day, which from those is derived in an orderly succession, to these their ungrateful successors: Nor is indeed the Series and Genealogy of Natural Parents, more necessary and certain in reason, that they have been, and are gone before us (however their several names and successions may be unknown) from Noah, or from Adam; than is the constant and uninterrupted succession of Spiritual Fathers, and Predecessors in the Ministry of the Church; derived by the holy Apostles from Jesus Christ, the second Adam; the everlasting Father of a better Generation: Of which, there are (besides the apparent, present succession in this Church of England, and all other Churches-Christian, now in all the World, which lately had or still have a peculiar order of Bishops and Presbyters, and holy Ministers in the Church) so clear, and constant, and undeniable Histories, from those that were (agreement) of all men or writers, the most worthy to be believed, for their love to God, their zeal for the truth, their charity to all men; but especially, for their care of the household of Faith, the Church of Christ.

Wherein, however it be most true, that a bare descent, or succession of persons, following each other in time and place, be not sufficient to carry on the being and honor of a true Church Christian, (which title is not entailed to any place, or any race of people,) unless, withal, there be a succession in Christian Doctrine and Institutions,
tions, according to the Scripture; yet it is as true, that the custody and tradition of the Scriptures, the succession of true doctrine believed in the Church, and divine Institutions celebrated, never have been, nor ever can possibly be in Christ's ordinary way to his Church carried on to after generations, but only by such a personal succession of Bishops, Pastors, and Ministers in the Church; such as were in the beginning of the Gospel appointed by Christ, and ever since hath been orderly and constantly derived from one to another, agreeable to the divine constitution; Nor are Christians to expect or presume of daily miracles, speciall revelations, or Angelick missions, to carry on Christian Religion; but humbly to content themselves with that once founded Ministry and holy order, which God by Jesus Christ hath given to the Church, after which example some are still duly tried, ordained, set apart, and sanctified to this office, the dispensation of the Gospel, and those mysteries which goe with it.

Indeed I cannot but esteem, as all good, wise, and humble Christians do, and ever did, the constant, clear, and concurrent (which is the truly Catholic) testimony of the Church (in which so much to be had of the truth, Spirit, and grace of God, hath always appeared amidst the many cloudings of humane infirmities) to be far beyond any meer humane record, or authority; in point of establishing a Christians judgement or confidence, in any thing, that is not contrary Church, to the evident command of the written word of God: However some mens ignorance and self, conceited confidence (like bags and quagmires) are so loose and falte, that no piles never so long, well driven, and strongly compacted, by the consent and harmonious testimonies of the most learned writers in the Church, can reach any bottom, or firm ground in them, whereon to lay a foundation of humane belief, or erect a firm bank and defense against the invasion of daily novelties; which blow up all, and break in upon the ancient and most venerable orders, practices and constitutions of the Church, where ever they are yet continued: which being evidently set forth to me, by witnesses of so great credit, for their piety, diligence, fidelity, harmony, integrity, constancy and charity, I know not how with any face of humanity or Christianity to question, disbelieve, or contradict.

Cum Episcopo

Catholicorum successor Christifnum veritatis sanctum accepit. Iren. l.4. c.43.

Catholicorum successor, se cum Ecclesias doctores resippiens, non cum Doctibus Ecclesiae fidem defervire debeo. Vincent. Lyr. c.23.

Hæretici sunt posteriores Episcopos quibus Apophthegmata tradierunt Ecclesiae. Iren. l.5. Audivi à quodam Presbytero qui audierat ab his qui Apostolos viderant. Iren. l.4. c.45. Eph. 4.11. 1 Cor. 12.28.

...
Under which cloud of unexceptioned witnesses, I confess, I cannot but much acquiesce, and rest satisfied in those things, which others endlessly dispute, because they have not so literal and preceptive a ground in Scripture; however they have a very rational, exemplary, analogical and consequential authority from thence, which is made most clear, as to the minde of God, by that senie, which the Primitive Doctors and Christians, who lived with, or next to the Apostles, had of them; and by their practice accordingly, in the ways of Religion: Thus the Canonical Books of the Scripture, especially those of the New Testament (which no where are enumerated in any one Book, nor, as from divine oracle, any where commanded to be believed or received, as the writings of such holy authors, guided by the dictates or directions of God's Spirit) we own and receive, as they were after some time, with judgment and discretion (rejecting many other pretended Gospels, and Epistles) antiently received by the Catholike Church, and to this day are continued. So also, in point of the Church Government: How, in right Reason, Order, and Religion, the Churches of Christ, either in single Congregations and Parishes, or in larger Associations and Fraternities ought to be governed; in which thing, we see that sudden variations from the Churches constant pattern in all ages and places, hath lately cost the expence, not onely of much Ink, but of much blood, and have both cast and left us in great scandals, deformities, and confusions, unbecoming Christian Religion. The like confirmation I have for Christians observing the Lord's day, as their holy Rest, or Sabbath to the Lord, and their varying herein (upon the occasion of Christ's Resurrection) from the Seventh day or Jewish Sabbath, which is not so much commanded by Precept, as confirmed by Practice in the Church; so in the baptism of the Infants of Christian Parents, who profess to believe in Jesus Christ onely for the means of salvation, to them and their children, which, after Saint Cyprian, Saint Jerom and Augustine affirm to have been the custom of the Catholike Church, in, and before their days; so as no Bishop, or Council, or Synod began it. Cyp. ep. ad Fidum. Aug.
And no less, in this, of the peculiar distinct calling, order, of
office, and succession, of the Ministry Evangelical,

In all which, if the Letter and Analogy of Scripture were less
clear than it is, so that the doctrines of those particulars (which are
among Christians counted divine) were (like Vines, and Honey-
suckles) less able to bear up themselves in full authority, by that
strength and virtue which they receive from the Scripture Precept,
(where undoubtedly their root is; and from whence they have grown,
shoote out so far, and flourished in all Churches;) yet the constant
judgment and practice of the Church of Christ (which is called the
pillar and ground of truth,) are stayes and firm supports to such sweet
and useful plants, which have so long flourished in the Church of
Christ, whose custom may silence perverse disputes of corrupt and
contentious minds: And indeed both fully satisfy and confirm
both my believe, and my religious observation of those particu-
larly, as sacred and unalterable.

Nor hath any of these things, more clear evidence from Scrip-
ture or Catholic practice, than this of the calling and succession of
the Ministry of the Gospel hath, wherein some men, after due tryall
and examination of their gifts and lives, made by those who are of
the same function, and are in the Church indued with a derivable
Commission and Authority, to ordain an holy succession of men in
the Ministry for the Churches use, are by fasting, prayer, and solemn
imposition of hands in the presence of the faithfull people, pub-
licly and peculiarly ordained, consecrated, set apart, sent and au-
thorized in the power and name of Christ, to preach the Gospel to
all men, to administer the holy Sacraments, and respectively to dis-
pense all those holy duties, and mysteries belonging to Christian
Religion, among Christian people, that is, such as profels to be-
lieve, that Jesus Christ is the only Saviour of Sinners.

that sentence, which the Emperours Father had wrote touching judicatories and Judges in
Church matters. In causa fidei vel Ecclesiasticorum munera sunt judicare debere, qui nec munere impar, nec
jure diffinitis, constanter adsero.

Which holy and most necessary custom of ordaining some fit
men, by others of the same function, to be Ministers in the Church,
hath not only the unanimous consent and practice of the Orthodox
Christians, and purest Churches in all ages, from the Apostles times;
But, no Heretics or Schismatics, who owned any relation to
the Gospel of Jesus Christ, did ever so much as dispute, or question
the power and succession ministerial, as to its calling peculiar, and
divinely appropriated, to some men in the Church, Till of later
dayes in Germany, and some otherwheres the pride of some mens
parts
Credit due to the Churches Testimony

Confessores glorie Christi. An. 1543. When they after proved to be Pelas-

vicides, Viliains which conspired to destroy all the Ministers of the Gospel in Germany, hanging and drowning many of them, casting them into Wells, An. 1562. cf. Sanctus de temp. deceps. Iren. 1. 4.

c. 43. Qui absunt a principali sucessioni (Episcoporum & Presbyterorum ab Apostolico) quosque loco etiam juris susceptas habeó opercit, vel hereticos, vel sectantes, vel blastos & fos placatam. Omnes bi decidunt a veritate. Sophista uxor bonae magis esse voluit, quam discipuli veritatis, Iren. lib. 3, c. 40.

What can it be then, but an exceeding want of common understanding, or a superficiality of malice, or a transport of passion, or some secular lust, either to deny credit to the Testimony of the best Christians, and pure Churches in all times, or to go quite contrary to their judgment and practice, by seeking to discredit and destroy the Authority and peculiar Function of the ancient Catholic Christian Ministry, in thele or other Churches? And since in primitive times, it could be no matter of either profit or honor in the world, to be a Bishop or Presbyter in the Church (who were the first men to be persecuted or sacrificed;) What motive could there be then, but only Religion, Duty, and Conscience, to undertake and persevere in that holy and dangerous Calling, that the Gospel might be continued? And since, now in England, it can be no great temptation of covetousness or ambition (unless it be in very poor and necessitous men) to be a Preacher of the Gospel, upon the new account of the peoples, or self-ordaining (which is as none;) what can it be that provokes so many in a new and pitiful way, either of egregious ignorance, and popular simplicity, to undertake to be Præc...
For the peculiar Calling of the Ministry.

ers? Or in a more refined way of devilish malice and deep design, to seek to level, cast down, and trample under foot all Ministerial power whatsoever, (which is none, if it be common, and not peculiar to some men by divine sanctity:) Certainly, this can arise from no other aim, but either that of destroying us, as a Reformed Church; or delating us, quite from being a Church, or Christians: Which our policy will easily eafe to be, as to the very form (as many at present are, as to any power and conscience of Religion) if once they cease to have, or begin to think they have not had, any true Ministers in this, or any Church: So that all Preaching of the Gospel, all Sacraments, all the Faith of so many Christians, Professors, Confessours, and Martyrs in all Ages, together with the fruits of their Faith, in Patience, Charity, and good Works, must be in vain. Alas, these poor revenues and encouragements which are yet left to the Ministers here, (considered with their burdens of business, duties, taxes, and envy) are scarce worth the having or coveting, even by vulgar and mechanick spirits; who may make a better shift to live in any way almost than now in the Ministry.

The design then of levelling the Ministry, must needs be from greater motives, such as seek to have the whole honor and authority of the Reformed Religion here in England, utterly abolished; or else, taken up upon some such odde, novel, and fanatick grounds, which will hold no water, bear no weight, or fires; being built upon the sands of numerous novelty, not on the rock of holy antiquity, and divine verity: That so this whole Church may, by the adversities of it, be brought to be a mere shadow of deformed and confused Religion; or else, be onely able to plead its Christianity, upon meer Familistic, or Anabaptistic, or Enthusiastic, or Socinian, or Fanatick Principles; Upon which must depend all our Christian Privileges, Truths, Sacraments, Ministries, Duties, and Comorts, Living and Dying; all which will easily be proved, and appear, to a confiderate soul, as profane and null, when he shall see they are performed, or administred by those, who can produce no Precept, Scripture, or Practice from Antiquity, for their ways, either of Christianity, or of Ministry, but onely their own, or other mens vile fantasies, and extravagant furies; nor can they have better excuses for their errors, in forsaking the right and Catholic way, but onely a popular levity, credulity, and madness after novelties.

So that, as to this first part of my answer, touching The peculiar Function of the Ministry, I do aver upon my Conscience, so far as I have read, or can learn, That there is no Council of the Church, or Synod; no Father or Historian; no other Writer, that mentions the affairs of the Church; no one of them gives the least cause to doubt, but wholly confirms this assertion, That no part of the Catholic Church

ألسيت أورا دير إس أبولوروم دوسترينا، أنتيجهس إكلسية بيلات، أنتيفرسفو موندو، أكاريتير كوربيس كريستي، سكوندانم سكسيستمس إفسكويررم فيرورم كوييلتام، نه إس إم مونوؤك سير إكسكشيرام، تراديمرن.

Isc I.4. 6. 99
The peculiar Calling of the Ministry.

Church of Christ, in any age, or place, was ever settled or flourished without a constant peculiar Order, and Ordination of Ministers; who were consecrated to the receiving and exercised of that power in the Church, as from Christ, although by man, which have continued to this day.

There are indeed three or four examples (in cases extraordinary) of some private unordained Christians in the Primitive times, who occasionally trading to Heathens, were means first to teach them the Mysteries of Christ, so as they desired to be baptized, which was after done by such Bishops and Ordained Ministers, as were sent upon them their request, from other Churches. To produce particular testimonies out of each Author, Father, Council, and Historian, in every age, to prove the constant succession, the high veneration, and the unfeigned love, which was every where conferred upon the Bishops and Ministers of the Church; also, to shew forth that devout care and religious regard, which the ordainers, the faithful people, and those to be ordained to the office, had, in their several relations and duties, when Ministers were to be ordained and consecrated, such allegations were case, being very many and obvious; but I hold the pains needfuls, considering, that to learned men they are so well known; and all ingenuous Christians will believe my solemn affirmation, that, as in the presence of God, what I write, is Truth: As for those weak or wilful men, who are in this my only opposers, I know, they consider not any heaps of authorities, which they account only as humane; which they cannot examine, nor do they value them, when convinced of the certainty, and harmony of them; were there never so sweet, and many flowers gathered from the testimony of Antiquity and Authority of the Fathers, these supercilious novellers will not vouchsafe to smell to them: It is well, if I can make them favor any thing well out of the Scriptures, which favors the Function of the Ministry.

2. So then, in the next place, This Defence of the Churches, and various Barbarities committed in them, against the open attack of the Papists, is of a piece with the former; and as the generality of the Papists live in the Church of Christ, so they have the power of the Church, and its constant Ministry; from the slender power and feeble and weak state, which may be said of the Protestant Churches, it is to be expected that the Papists will ever endeavor and strive to bring them to the state they had in the primitive Church, and to obtain those things, which they have lost, or are almost lost; and then they will be in a fair way to possess it, and all the rights and properties belonging to them.

4. Catholike custom confirmed by Scripture, as to the Office of the Ministry (as in any other) becomes a brazen wall, an impregnable bulwark, able to break in pieces, or to retort all engines and batteries made against it; when it appears to be exactly drawn, according to the scale, line, and measure, set down in the holy Scriptures of the Ministry; which are therefore much slighted by some, who despite the Ministry; because, like well-planted Canons, they defend the Church, and its constant Ministry; as on the other side, the Churches fidelity and constancy, are the ground-work and platforms, on which the Scriptures are planted; The Church of Christ bearing up as the ground, and holding forth as a pillar, that divine Truth, Power, and Authority, which, from God, they have in them; of which, the Church
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Church is the Herald or Publisher, but not the Author or Inditer; Conferring nothing to their internal Truth, which is from their revealer and inspirer, God; but much to their external credit, and historic reception, which we have tendered to us daily; not as immediately from God, or Angels, or inspired Prophets, but by the veracity and fidelity of the Church, chiefly in its publick Ministry; which in this point of so necessary, constant, and universal practice, for the good of all faithful people, in all Ages and Churches, cannot be thought in any reason, either to have had no rule divinely appointed; or that all Churches have been wholly ignorant of it, or knowingly have so wholly swerved from it, that never any Church, either in its Teachers and Pastors, or in its people and believers were followers of the Scripture-Precept, and Pattern, till these last and worst days; whereas, the clear and pregnant light of the Scripture, is, in this point of a settled Ministry, so agreeing with the use and practice of the Catholic Church; that, as no error can be suspected in the one, so no obscurity can be pretended in the other, by any Christians, who will allow the divine Authority, and infallible Truth of those Scriptures, which we call the New Testament.

In all which, nothing is more evident, and self-demonstrating Christ sent beyond any cavil or contradiction, than, That our Lord Jesus Christ, of the Father promised Messias, the beloved Son of God, the Angel of the new covenant, as a and better Covenant, the Minister of Righteousness, the great Apostle, the chief Bishop and Father of our souls, the Author and Finisher Righteous of our Faith, the supreme Lord and King, the eternal and compassionate High Priest, the unerring Prophet of his Church, whose voice we are only to hear and obey in all things he commands us; That, I say, this Lord Jesus Christ, was sent by the Father, to a personal accomplishment of all Prophecies; fulfilling of all righteousness; his visible Ministration of holy things for the Churches good; That he came not in his own Name, as a man, to be Mediator and Teacher; nor did he as a man take this honor of Prophet, Priest, or King of his Church upon him; but had his mission or appointment from his Father, God; who gave evident testimonies from Heaven of him, not only before, and at his birth, but afterward, in his solemn and publick inauguration by Baptism, into the Work of his Ministry, where a voice from Heaven was heard, and a visible representation of the Holy Spirit was seen, testifying him to be the beloved Son of God; the anointed, with the gifts of the Spirit, above all, as Head of the Church: These, after, were followed with infallible signs and wonders, while Jesus went about doing good; teaching the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven; instituting holy rites, for the distinguishing of his Church from the world, and for the comforting of the faithful in the world; by those seals, pledges, and memorials

X
of his love, in dying for the Church, and shedding both water and blood upon the Cross.

Christ having thus personally finished the suffering and merito-
rious part of his Ministry; after his Resurrection, being now no
more to converse in a visible humane way of presence, with his
Church on Earth, but ascending (as was meet) to that glory of the
Father, which, as God, he had ever with him; as man, he had
merited of him, by suffering on the Cross, and enduring the shame, for
his Churches salvation; yet he left not his Disciples comfortless, but,
as he promised, sent his Spirit publickly and eminently upon the
Twelve principal Apostles, whom he had formerly chosen, and ap-
pointed, in his, and his Fathers Name, to Preach the Gospel; to
whom he gave the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, as to the
Stewards and chief Deputies, or Ministers of his household in his ab-
sence; instructing them, what to do; on what foundation of faith in
him, to build his Church; by what Sacramental Seals to confirm
believers; giving them full power and commission, to go into all the
world, by Teaching and Baptizing to make Disciples; confirming this
power to them, by breaking on them, and conferring farther Minister-
ial gifts of the Spirit upon them; promising also to be with them
to the end of the world, which could not be meant of their persons,
whosoever died, but of their successors in that Office and Ministry;
that the same power, authority, and assistance, should be with them,
in that holy way, to which he thus ordained and set them, by a di-
vine charter, and durable commission. After all this, for further pub-
lication of this great Authority and Ministerial power, given to the
Apostles, and their Successors; and for the confirmation of it, both
to their own consciences, and to all the world, the holy Spirit, as
was promised, came upon them in the shape of fiery cloven tongues,
filling them with miraculous gifts, and all Ministerial power, both
extraordinary in their persons, and ordinary, derivable to their Suc-
cessors; such, as the wisdom of Christ thought most fit, both for the
first planting of the Church with miraculous gifts, attending the Mi-
nistry of the Gospel; and the after propagating of it, by the same Mini-
nistry, confirmed by the constancy of the Martyrs and Confessors,
which were in stead of daily miracles.

This whole frame, policy, and divine constitution, of the order,
power, and Ministry, that should succeed Christ Jesus in his Church,
was no other, than the proper effects of Christ's prophetick power,
and wisdom, for the instructing his Church; an act or ordinance of
his Kingly power, for the governing of it; and a fruit of his Priestly
power, and care, for a right Liturgy, or officiating, to be continued in
his Church; thus furnishing it with an holy Succession of Evangelical
Priests and Ministers, in his name and authority, who might always
always teach, guide, and govern; also supplicate for, consecrate and offer holy things with the faithful, and for them, namely, the sacrifices of prayers, thanksgiving, and praises; especially, that Eucharistical memorial of that one great oblation of himself once made, on the Altar of the Cross, for the Redemption of the World; which is the great accomplishment of the Jewish Prophecies, the abolishing of their Types and Ceremonies, the main foundation of the Christian Religion, and the chief subject of that Evangelical Ministry, which Jesus Christ himself hath thus evidently instituted and sealed in his Church: For whose sake, he hath given those Ministerial gifts, with a distinct power and authority; making some (not all) either Apostles, or Prophets, or Evangelists, or Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ, &c. And this, by as manifest a distinction, both for gifts, and place, and use, as is in the parts of the body, between the eyes and the hands, the head and the feet; So that all are not Apostles, nor Prophets, nor Teachers, that are Believers, and Members of the Body of Christ his Church; no more than every part is an eye in the natural body; however it partake of the same Soul, as Believers do of the same Spirit, yet in different manifestations; of which difference of gifts and office, those only are to judge, whom the Spirit of Christ hath enabled with gifts, and induced successively in the Church, with power from Christ to judge of them, and accordingly to invest them, by solemn and holy ordination, into the orderly power of exercising those gifts, which they are judged to have received from the Spirit of Christ, for the good of the Church, both for Instruction, and for Government of it. Without which divinely-constituted Order and Office of Ministrs began in Christ, by him derived to the Apostles, and by them, and their successors constantly and duly observed to these days, the Church of Christ had long ere this been a monster made up of confused excrescencies; a very heap and huddle of Ignorants, Heretics, Schismatics, in all manner of erroneous blindness, and extravagant madness; like those mishapen prodiges, which we may often see among those, who having cast off the lawful succession, the sacred and ancient order of the Ministry, do in their varieties exceed, even the mixtures and productions of Africa.

After Christ's Ascension, we have no less evidence of Scripture, for the undoubted practise of the blessed Apostles, when they The Apostles had by a divine lot, first filled up that place and part of the Ministry, files ordain from which Judas had fallen, Acts 1. 25. For having received power and commission immediately from Christ, they did, duly, conscientiously, mand other orderly, and effectually fulfil their own Ministry; and also took care to ordain others that might do so too, both in their times, and after Ministers.
Apostolical Succession in the Office Ministerial. 

During these Primitive times of the Apostles Ministry of the Gospel, before they had finished their mortal pilgrimage, we read, them careful to ordain Presbyters in every City and Church, to give them charge of their Ministry, to fulfil it; of their flocks to feed and guide them, in Christ's way, both for truth and orders; over whom the Lord had made them overseers by the Apostles appointment; who, not only thus ordained others to succeed them immediately; but gave command, as from the Lord, to these (as namely to Timothy and Titus) to take great care for an holy succession of Ministers; such as should be apt to teach; able, and faithful men; to whom they should commit the Ministry of the Word of life, so as the Word, or Institution of Christ, might be kept unblamable, till the coming of Jesus Christ. 1 Tim. 6. 14. by an holy order and office of Ministers, duly ordained, with the solemn imposition of hands; as a visible token to men of the peculiar designation of them, and no others but those, to this Office and Function; who must attend on the Ministry, give an account of their charge, and care of souls to God, &c.

Thus we finde, beyond all dispute, for Three Generations after Christ, (First, in the Apostles; secondly, from them to others (by name to Timothy and Titus; ) thirdly, from them to others; by them to be ordained Bishops and Deacons;) the holy Ministry instituted by Christ, is carried on in an orderly succession, in the same Name, with the same Authority, to the same holy ends and offices; as far as the History of the New Testament extends, which is not above thirty

Gal. 2. 7. 
1 Cor. 5. 20. As Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did teach you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be reconciled to God. 
2 Cor. 3. 6. 
Eph. 7. 8. 
Ac. 14. 23. 
Acts 20. 28. Take heed to your selves, and to all the flock, over which the holy Ghost hath made you Bishops, or overseers, to feed the Church of God, &c. 
Pauls speech to the Presbyters of the Church of Ephesus. V. 17. 
1 Tim. 3. 
& 5. 22. Lay hands on thereby way of ordination to the Ministry. 2 Tim. 2. 2. The things thou hast heard of me, commit thou to faithful men; who shall be able to teach others also. 
Tit. 1. 5. I left thee in Creo, that thou shouldest ordain Elders in every City, as I had appointed thee. 
Rom. 16. 1. I beseech thee, sed propter suos, et suam salutem, et suae ecclesiae, ordinationem sustinere. Ambr. in 
3 Tim. 6.
Distinct Characters of the Ministry.

thirty years after Christ's Ascension: And, we have, after all these, the next Succession, testifying the minde of the Lord, and the Apostles. Clemens, the Scholar of Saint Paul, mentioned Phil. 4. 3. who in his divine Epistle testifies, That the Apostles ordained every where the first-fruits, or prime Believers, for Bishops and Deacons, Pag. 57. And pag. 57. the Apostles appointed (τοίχημα) distinct Offices, at present, (τοιχημα) That when these slept with the Lord, others, tried and approved men, should succeed and execute their (ταυτης) holy Ministry; than which testimony, nothing can be more evident: After that, he blames the Corinthians for raising sedition, for one or two mens sake, against all the Presbytery, Pag. 62. And exhorts at last, Let the flock of Christ be at peace, with the Presbytery ordained to be over it, (μετά των προσημοτητων αρχιτρειτων.) So after, Be subject to the Presbyters, &c.

Thus the excellent methods of Christ's grace, and wisdom toward his Church appear, as to this peculiar Office, and constant Function of the Evangelical Ministry, commanding men to work the work of God, that they may have eternal life, John 5. 29. which is to believe in him, whom the Father hath sent, sealed, and anointed with full power, to suffer, to satisfy, to merit, to fulfill all Righteousness; Also to declare and confirm this to his Church; constantly teaching, guiding, and sanctifying it: He hath (for this end) taken care, that faithful, able, and credible men, should be ordained in an holy, constant succession, to bear witness or record of him to all posterity; that so others might, by hearing, believe; without which, ordinarily they cannot, Rom. 10. 14, 15. Nor can they hear with regard, or in prudence give credit, and honor to the speaker; or obey with confidence the things spoken, unless the Preacher be such an one, as entereth in by the door, John 10. 1. into the sheepfold; such as is sent by God, either immediately as the Apostles, or mediate as their Successors, from them and after them; who could never have preached and suffered with that confidence, confidence, and authority; unless they had been conscious, that they were rightly sent of God, and Christ: At whose Word one only this great company of Preachers were sent into the world; who so mightily in a short time prevailed, as to persuade men, everywhere to believe, a report so strange, so incredible, so ridiculous, so foolish to flesh and blood, and to the wisdom of the world.

Thus far then the tenor of the whole New Testament, (and that Apostolike Writer Clemens) witnesseth, that as Jesus Christ, the great Prophet, and chief Shepherd, 1 Pet. 5. 4. was sent, and impowered with all power from the Father, to carry on the great work of saving sinners, by gathering them out of the world, into the fold and bottom of his Church; So he did this, and will ever be doing it, till
that calling them, being given to them by the Lord to be exhorters, deacons, and teachers; and calling them by peculiar names, and distinct titles, as light of the world, Salt of the earth, Mat. 5.13. Fishers of men, Mat. 4.19. Stars in his right hand, Rev. 2.1. Angels of the Churches: Requiring of them peculiar duties, as to preach the word in season and out of season; to feed his Lambs and Sheep; to fulfill the work of their Ministry; to take care of the flock; against grievous wolves, false teachers; to stop their mouths, Tit. 1.11. to exhort, command and rebuke with all authority, Tit. 2.15. to do their work, as workmen that need not to be ashamed, 2 Tim. 2.15. as those that must give an account of their Ministry, and the souls committed to their care and charge by God and the Church. Adorns them also with peculiar privileges; promises and special assistances; takes care for peculiar maintenance, 1 Cor. 9.9, 19. and double honour to be given them, by all true Christians, 1 Tim. 5.17. and encourageth them in a work of so great pains, exact care, and conscientious diligence, which must expect to meet always (as now it doth) with much opposition, and contradiction of sinners; promising to them special degrees of glory, and more ponderous Crowns of eternal rewards in Heaven.

By all which, and many others which might be added, the Demonstration is clear, as the Sun at Noon day, to all that are not wilfully blind, That some, and not all, in the Church; and these, not arbitrary and occasional, but chosen and ordained persons, are sent in a succession from Christ, in his name, and by virtue of this divine mission, special authority, and ordination, to the care, service, and work of the Ministry; they are bound in the highest bonds of conscience, to the glory of God, and the salvation of their own, and others' souls, under a dreadful woe and curse of being guilty of their souls damnation, who perish by their neglect, to attend diligently, to discharge faithfully, and courageously, as in the name and authority of Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, this great and dreadful employment of the Ministry, which Angels would not undertake
Ministers and peoples bounds.

dertake, without they were sent; nor if sent, without some horror: To which no earthen vessels are of themselves sufficient; but through the grace of God, they are made able and faithful, 1 Tim. 1.12. and being such are both successfull, and accepted; while they give themselves wholly to this work, not entangling themselves with other incomberances, but devoting the whole latitude of time, parts, studies, gifts, to this business of saving souls; and this, not in popular and precarious ways, or only upon grounds of charity; but with all just confidence of having that authority with them, as well as necessity upon them, which makes them bold in the Lord; that they cannot but speak the things for which they have received power and comission from Christ, by the Ordination and appointment of the Governours and guides of the Church, who formerly had received the same power; To which none can, without high impiudence, blasphemy, and imperti pretend, who are conscious to themselves, to have received no such authority from Christ; either immediately, or in that one mediate way of successfull ordination, by which he hath appointed it to be derived to posterity: which, I have already proved, cannot by any shew of Scripture, no more than in any way of reason and order, becomming Religion, be found to have any other way, than by those that are in orders as Ministers: neither is it intrusted with the community of people among Christians, nor left to every private mans pleasure.

power by way of tryal, imposition of hands, prayer, &c. 7. As then some men are duly invested with power ministerial, both to act in this power, and to confer it to others after them; None can be and these only are commanded by the rule of Christ; by their duty true Minister, or office, and by all bonds of conscience, to make a right use of stirs, but this peculiar and divine power, for the Churches good. So are all such as are other men whatsoever, not thus duly ordered, and impowered, rightly or (though never so well gifted in themselves) forbidden, under the sins deigned, of lying, falsity, disorderly walking, proud usurpation, and arrogant intrusion of themselves into an holy office, uncalled, and unent, either to take this office and Ministry of holy things on themselves, or to confer the power, which they never received, on others; which neither Melchisedec, nor Moses, nor Aaron, nor Samuel, nor any of the Prophets; nor the Lord Jesus Christ, nor the blessed Apostles, nor any Evangelist; or any true Bishop or Presbyter, nor any holy men, succeding them, did ever take to themselves, either as to the whole, or any part of that power and Ministry, nor so much as to be a Deacon, but still attended the Heavenly call, and mission, pertaining to God, &c. 4. No man taketh this honour to himselves, but he that is called of God as was Aaron, &c. 5. Christ also glorified not himself to be made an high Priest, &c.
Ministers and Peoples bounds.

Luke 12. 42. Who then is a faithful and wise Steward, whom the Lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion in due season? 43. Blessed, &c. 1 Tim. 3.15.

If I tarry long, that thou mayst know how thou oughtest to behave thy self in the house of God, &c.

People's duty. Quod modo valeat? bibi homo secularis facereditur magisterium administratorius, cujus? nec officium remittit, nec disciplina relinquat? Irid. Hiph. off. 1.2. c. 5. & nunc ardor pater larum? 

The Lay man is bound up by Lay commands to keep his rank and order. Ch. 12. pag. 53. Nor can faith be cast out or degraded without a great sin. Pag. 57. quam hic ipsum habui curam. Exors. officii, exors. folati, & præmi. H. Hiph. Mat. 16. 18. Eph. 2. 20. Heb 6. 2.

either immediately, (which was confirmed by miracles, and special revelations or predictions,) or mediately, in such an order and method of succession, as the Lord of the Church, who is not a God of confusion, hath appointed, and to this day preserved: who other-ways would have left his Church short of that blessing, of orderly Government, and Officers appointed for holy ministrations, which is necessary in every society, and which no wise man, that is Matter of any Family, doth omit to appoint and settle; especially in his personall absence; where he governs by a visible derived and delegated authority given to others; as Christ now doth his Church, as to the extern order and dispensation of holy things.

The duty of all faithful people (in which bounds their comforts are contained) are no less distinct and evidently confined, in the order of Christ's Church: which are, diligently to attend, humbly to obey, Heb. 13. 17. thankfully to own, respect, love, esteem and honor, 1 Cor. 9. 11. 1 Thes. 5. 12, 13; liberally to require the doctrine and labors of the true and faithful Ministers, 1 Tim. 5.17. who are thus over them in the Lord, in a right way and succession if Ministeriall Office divinely instituted, and constantly derived authority. In the perpetuating of which, to so many centuries of years, since Christ's Ascension, by lawfull and uninterrupted succession in his Church, the power and providence of God is not less remarkably seen, than in the preservation of the Scriptures, amidst all perjuries, confusions, and variations of humane affairs. Also the love and care of Christ to his Church, the fidelity of his promise is evident: being no less made true to the Ministry; than to the whole Church, to be with them to the end of the world: and by the Ministry that is made good to the whole Church, that the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against the foundations of the Church; which are laid upon the writings, and by the labours of the Prophets and Apostles; and after them still layed and prefered by able, faithful, and ordained Ministers; The consecrating or ordaining of whom by the imposition or laying on of hands in a continued succession for the good of the Church, is reckoned by the holy Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews among the principles and foundations of Christian Religion; joyned with doctrines of Faith, Repentance, Baptism, Resurrection, and eternal judgement; for other meaning of the imposition of hands, I find not by Scripture practice, or the Church afterward, so clear and constant as this in Ordination to an holy Ministry. Nor can Confirmation be rightly done to the Baptized and Catechized, but by those who are ordained. That
That to deny the Ordination and line Succession of Ministers, by which to carry on the work of Christ in his Church; or to seek to overthrow it in any Church, is all one, as if men should deny those grand and fundamental points of Faith, Repentance, Resurrection, and judgment, to have been taught by Christ; or Baptism to have been instituted; that to overthrow and abolish the constant Ministry and Office in the Church, can be the design of none, but those, who care not to turn Infidels; and to live in all Atheistical profanities.

If then, there be any force or authority from Scriptures as the Oracles of God, to prove by precept, institution, or example, the religious necessity of any peculiar duties, or holy Offices, and divine ministrations, by which men are made Christians, and distinguished as the Church of Christ from the world; if the Preaching the word of life, the teaching of the histories, the opening of the mysteries, the urging the precepts, the denouncing of the terrors, the offering the promises, the celebrating the Sacraments; the binding to wrath, and shutting up to condemnation, all unbelievers and impenitents; the loosing of penitents and opening Heaven to them, by the knowledge of Law or Gospel; if these or any other holy ministrations be necessary, not to the well-being only, but the very being of a Church Christian; Sure there there is (as I have shewed) no less strength, pregnancy, and concurrent Scripture clearness, to convince, and confirm, the peculiar office, divine power and function of the Evangelical Ministry; Without which all those ministrations must needs have ceased long ago, as to any notion or conscience among men, of holy, divine and Christian; that is the appointments, institutions, messages, or orders of Jesus Christ; which could never carry any such marks of divine credit and authority, meerly from vulgar credulity and forwardness of reception; or from generall common talk and tradition among men, if there had been no peculiar men appointed by God, in his name and by his Commission, to hold forth to the world this great salvation; to convince, or convert, or leave men without excuse; As there can be no valid message, authoritative Embassie, credible assignment or conveyance, of truth, promise, command, duty, comfort, bounty, or love to others, where there is only a general fame and unauthorised report; without any speciall Messenger, Embassador, Assigner, and Conveyer; to the authority of whole speech, and actions, or conveyances, not any mans own forwardness, nor others easiness, and credulity doth suffice; but some peculiar characters, Seals and evidences, by letters of credence, or other sure and known tokens of a truly assigned and really derived authority, do give ground to believe, or power to validate, what any man do performeth, not in his own name, or for his own interests, but to other others; who principally employs him; and who only
can make good, what he so far promiseth, or declareth, or sealeth, as he hath commission and authority from another so to do: No man that speaks or negotiates in another's name, especially in matters of great consequence, of as high a nature, as life and death, can expect to be believed by wise and serious men; and that they should accordingly order both their affections, and all their affairs; unless they saw the marks of infallible authority; far beyond the confidence of a trivial talker, and a bad orator. In this point then of a peculiar office and function of the Ministry Evangelical, which is divinely instituted, in which, some men are solemnly invested; by which, all Religion is confirmed and preferred to the Church; We have, not only full measure from Christ himself, and heaped up by Aposto-

clical precept and example, evidently set forth in the Scriptures, and pressed down by after Histories of the Church, in a constant success-
fion; but it is also running over by those necessary accumulations, which all right reason, order, and prudence, do liberally suggest, both in the Theory, and the Practick.

For, first, no man by any natural capacity, or acquired ability as a reasonable Creature, is bound in conscience, to be a Minister of the Gospel, and holy Mysteries to others; for then, all men and wo-
ten too ought to be such, or else they sin.

Secondly, Nor yet by any civil and politick capacity, as living in any Society, or City, can any man be obliged to direct, and guide others in the things of God; since, that relation invests no man in any civil power, office, or authority, until the supreme fountain of civil power calls him to the place, and endues him with such power; much less, can it put any into an authority, which is divine, spir-
tual, and supernatural; to act, as in Gods and Christs name, and to higher ends, than humane.

3. Nor thirdly, doth any religious common capacity, as a be-
liever, or a Christian, or as endued with gifts and graces, furnish any one with Ministerial power, and lay that duty on him; for then every Christian, great and small, yong and old, man and wo-
man, ought to minister holy things to others; to challenge the Keys of Heaven to themselves; to be as in Christs stead, to rule and over-
see his house; which cannot avoide as the Apostle proves, abominable absurdities, and detestable confusions; no way becomimg the wisdom of Christ, the majesty of Christian Religion, or that order and decency which ought to be in Church-Assemblies; being as contrary to rea-
sion, as if every servant in an house should challenge the power of the Keys, and the Stewards place; or every member, the office of the eyes, tongue, and hands, by vertue of that common relation it hath, (as well as these parts) to the same body, the same soul and

head.

As
Calling of the Ministry confirmed by right Reason.

As then right reason tells us, beyond all reply, That neither natural, nor civil, nor religious, common gifts, endowments, or abilities inflate any person in the office of Magistrate, Judge, Ambassador, Herald, Notary, or publick Sealer, (which places require, not only personal sufficiencies for the office; but an orderly designation and induction to it, from the fountain of civil power, either mediately or immediately:) The same right reason (which is most agreeable and servient to true Christian Religion) requires a right derivation, or conveyance, of all supernatural, Ministerial, Church power (which is in, and from Jesus Christ, as the sole supreme head, and divine origin of it) either immediately, as they and none others had, to whom Christ first confign'd it, and both by miraculous gifts and works confirmed it to be in them; or mediately, as those Bishops and Presbyters had it, who without force, fraud, or any sinister way of usurpation, or bold intrusion, received this power from the Apostles, by prayer and benediction, with imposition of their hands, in the name of Christ; and from them, their successors have lawfully derived it (without interruption) to the true Ministers of the Gospel, even to this day (as I have proved;) which not only the Scriptures, of undilputable verity, but even those other, very credible Histories of the Church, and other Records of learned and holy Men in all ages to these times, which the providence of God hath afforded us, do abundantly declare; all which to deny, with a morose perseverance, or rustical indifferency, is, as if a Hog should answer all arguments with granting. And to act contrary to so strong a stream of concurrent Authorities, both as to the judgment and prafife of the Church in all ages, is a work only fit for Ranters, and Seekers, and Fanatics; or for Jews, Turks, and Heathen Insidels, but not for any sober Christian that owns in the least kinde, the Name of Jesus Christ; or desires to be a member of any true Christian Church: In which, as all true and humble Chriftians have always enjoyed, and with thankfulness owned the rightfull succession and authority of their ordained Ministers, Pastors, and Teachers; to the Lord from Heaven, in all ages, hath witnessed to them; by his blessings of truth and peace, on the hearts of his people, and by their means chiefly continuing the light of the Gospel, to these days, amidst those Heathenish persecutions, Heretical confusions, and Schismatical fractions, which have sought to overthrow, the Being, or the Purity, or the Order and Unity of the true Church.

To this judgment and testimony of Scriptures, and ancient Writers (both in right and fact) I might add a cloud of witnesses, managed by confident praters, but by authoritative Preachers. March. 7. 28. As Christ Jesus, to his true Ministers reach and administer holy things, as men having authority, and not as the Scribes.
from later reformed Divines, which were very learned and very holy
men, far above the vulgar spirits, both in other Churches, and in
this of England, all agreeing with our excellent Bishop Jewel,
That no may may intrude himself into the Ministry by his own
will and pleasure; or by any others, who are not of that Order and
Calling; but he ought to be lawfully called, and duly ordained by
those, in whom the lawful succession of ordinative power, ever hath
been, and still is rightly placed and continued. Agreeable to which,
there is a whole Jury of eminent Modern Divines, alleged by a late
indultrious and ingenuous * Author, who hath spared me that
pains.

4. I may add by way of confirmation of that common equity,
and rules of order, which must be among men in all things; and
most necessarily in things truly religious, The inviolable Function,
and peculiar Office or Order of the Priests and Levites; which were
the Ministers of the Lord, in his ancient Church of the Jews; which
is a most convincing instance, to prove not the sameness and succession
of that Order, but the equity, comliness, and exemplariness of a peculiar
Ministry, for holy things, among Christians under the Gospel; for
since that Levitical Ministry was not more holy, or honorable, nor
more distinguished in power, and authority, and office from the people,
than this in the Christian Church; which is more immediately
derived from Christ, as clearly instituted and ordained by him, and
more fully exhibitive of him, both in the Historical Truths, and in
the Mystical gifts and graces of his Spirit; Yet we see, who so despised or violated that Order and Ministry among the Jews, under
pretence of a common holiness in God's people, (who were in a spirituall sense indeed called an holy Nation and a royal Priesthood) so as to
confound the Functions and Offices, divinely distinguished, either
the earth from beneath devoured them, or some other remarkable
judgement fell upon them, as on King Uzzah; So long, as Gods
love to the Jews was seconded with his jealousy for their good.
When (indeed) their Apostacies and Rebellions had alienated Gods
love from them, he then suffered those sad and unsanctified levellings
to come among them, concurring the meanest of the people, and
who ever would relieve his worldly necessities, by being a Priest to
those Talismanick Calves; under which new modes and figurations,
the Israelites were for some wicked reason of State, persuaded by
Jeroboam to worship their God. So Hezod when he had got the
Kingdom over the Jews, (ex ima & insima plebe constituit sacer-
Which severe indulgence of God to them, in suffering them to have
such sorry and un Sanctified Priests, was no other, but a fearful pre-
saging of those depositions, which soon after befel that people of
Israel for the sins of Jeroboam; who by his policy of new fashion-
ed Priests, and levelled, that is, abolished, and profaned Religion, is
for ever branded with that mark of making Israel to sin, and was the
occasion of cutting off his name, and destroying his posterity from
off the face of the earth. Certainly, in times, when the Jews feared
God, if all the Priests and Levites, whom God had appointed to
minister before him, had failed by death, or defection, the Ark in the
Wilderness must have stood still, or the service of the Temple have
ceased, till by some new Commision or Authority, the Lord had
signified his pleasure to his Church and people: Nor would the de-
vout and zealous Jews have thought presently, every Stout Porter, or
Lufty Butcher, would well enough supply the room of the Priests
and Levites; much less would they have beat and crowded the
ture Priests yet living, and serving in their offices and courses, out of
their places, onely because those others had naturally shoulders,
which could bear the Ark and the holy Vessels: or hands, which had
skill to play a beast, and dress a sacrifice. I see no reason, why the
Evangelical Ministry should be less sacred or inviolable, since it hath
as much of reason, order, usefulness, and necessity; also no less express
authority from Christ, and divine Institution; together with many
hundreds of years holy and constant succession in all Churches.
That to invade this, or violate and abrogate it, seems no less to any
ture Christian, than to crow Christ out of his throne; to juffle him
out of his Priestsly, Prophetick, and Kingly Offices: It is like Julian
the Apollate, loudly to blaspheme, or proudly to resist, and insolently
to do despight too that holy Spirit of truth, power, and order; by
which, thele (Sacraments) gifts of power, and authority Ministerial,
have always been, and are still given and dispenced to his Church, in
the way which Christ appointed; which the holy Apostles practised,
and the Christian Churches have always imitated.

5: I might yet adde the common notions and universal dictates
of all mankind; who, by the light of nature, and that innate veneration
of some Deity, which they esteemed the inventor and institutor of their
Religion, agreed always in this; That, whatever Gods or Hea-
ligions they owned, their holy Rites and Mysteries were always pub-
licly taught, celebrated, and maintained, by such as were solemnly invested with, and reverenced under the peculiar name and honor of sanct Deorum
that sacred Office, and sacred Function, which they held divine,
as Herodus tells us; which (so it appears) none not initiated, or not
consecrated by the wonted Ceremonies, might profanely usurp; or Theopompus,
Plutarch.

1 King.13:34.
Plutarch tells us, both among Romans and Greeks, they generally in all Cities paid great honor and respect to their Priests and holy men: because those obtained of the gods good things, not only for themselves, and their families, but for the whole Cities where they lived. Tacitus tells us, That the chief Priests were also, by the Divine Munificence esteemed the chiefest of men, least subject to anger, envy, or other mean affections from any men: So Ann. Gellius lets down at large the solemnities and honors for vestments and other regards, which among the Romans was used toward the Flamines Diales, or chief Priests; whom they esteemed next their gods, whose word was always to be taken without any oath; they thought all holy things profaned, if any men unfacered presumed to meddle with them, or partake of them; much more, if such an one officiated in them.

It cannot be any thing of true Christian piety or holiness, which makes any men in the Church of Christ degenerate from the very principles of nature; whose light is never despoiled by any, but tho' that are without natural affections, among other their black Characters, which are proper to those, who have a firm of godliness, but deny the power of it; The strangest prodigies that ever were indeed, of so profane a wantonness, under pretences of enlarged piety; striving to remove all bounds of duty, and respect to God or man; nor did ever sober men think themselves absolved from that honor and respect, which is due to God and his holy Service or Ministry, because of the personal infirmities which may be seen in those that are his Ministers to us: We shall neither as men nor Christians, have any to serve God or man in the way of true Christian Religion, if we will allow none with their failings: The Divine is to be distinguished from the Man; there may be the power of God with the weakness of man, as in Saint Paul; Nor need we be more choise and curious, than God himself is.

Nor is there a greater benefit and convenience to the Church, than A peculiar Office of the Ministry: For we may not in this trust to the good natures and good wills of Christians in common, (if personal abilities and willingness necessary for nes would make a Minister of Christ, which they will not:) Certainly, no men are so good natured of themselves, (without hopes of gain or some benefit) as of their own good will, to undertake, and constantly to persevere in so hard and hazardous (besides so holy) a service,
vice, as this, of holding forth to a vain, proud, carnal, hypocritical, persecuting, and devilish world, so deprecable and ridiculous a doctrine, as this of a crucified Saviour at first was, and still seems to the natural, or only (\textit{\&c.}) rational man; unless there were by the wisdom and authority of Christ, such ties of duty and calling laid upon some mens consciences, as, onely the mission and mandate of God can lay upon men; who are not naturally more disposed to go on God's errand, than Moses, or Jeremy, or Jonah were: And however, now the peace, warmth, and serenity of times, hath made the Ministry of the Gospel, a matter of covetousness, or popular ambition, or curiosity, or wantonness, to many of these new Preachers, who with rashness, levity, and a kind of frivolousness, undertake that work, which the best men and Angels themselves, would not without much weeping (as Saint Austin that day when he was ordained a Presbyter) or with fear and trembling undertake; yet the rigor and storms of primitive times (it is very probable) would have quenched the now to forward heats and flashes of these mens spirits: When to Preach the Gospel, and to preside, as a Bishop or Presbyter, in the Church, was to expost a mans self to the front of persecution; to stand in the gap against the violent incursions of malicious men, and cruel devils; To be a Minister of Jesus Christ, was presently to for lake all, and to take up the Cross and follow Christ; to adopt, with holy orders, famine and nakedness, banishment, prisons, beasts, rack, fires, tormentors, many deaths in one; so that, unless there had been divine authority enjoying, power enabling, and special grace assisting, the Ordainers in the Name of Christ lending, and so in conscience binding; together with gracious promises of a reward in Heaven, encouraging the ordained; doubtless, the glorious Gospel of man's salvation, had ere this been buried in oblivion; none had believed that report, nor heard of it, if none had dared to preach it; and none would of his own good will, have been so hardy, or prodigal of all worldly interests, honor, liberty, safety, estate, and life, as to adventure all needlessly, Else Christ and his Religion welcome, so offensive to the ears and hearts of men, unless he had been conscious to a special duty laid upon him, by divine authority; failed, which was always derived in that holy and solemn Ordination, which was the inauguration of Ministers to that great and sacred Work.

This indeed gave so great confirmation and courage to the true and ordained Ministers of the Gospel, that, believing, what they preached of a crucified Saviour; and knowing whole work it was, in whose Name they were ordained, by whose power they were sent, per Spiritum in cordibus suas, to rectum traditionem diligenter custodiientes, quam Apostoli tradiderunt in quibus commissa sunt ecclesiae, cui ordinationis attestant multa gentes, Iren. I. 4. c. 4.
to how great ends their labors were designed, even to save souls; they willingly bare the Cross of Christ, and counted it a crown and
honorable addition to their Ministry, to be thought worthy to suffer for
the Name of Christ; that what any of them wanted in the power
of miracles, was made up in the wonder of their patience; when no
Armies, no State, favored them, and both opposed them; when
they had no temptations of getting a better living by preaching, than
any other way; but rather losing of what they had; when they ex-
pected few applauders of their boldness and forwardness; many perfe-
cutors and opposers of their conscientious endeavors to do the duty, which
Christ, by the Church, had laid on them; when they might not
grow restive and lazy, and knock off when they pleased; but a ve
and a necessity, and an heavy account, to be given to the great Pastor
of the Church, Christ Jesus, always founded in their ears, and beat
upon their minds: These put them upon those Heroick resolutions,
to endure all things for Christ's sake, and the Churches sake, and the
good of those souls committed to their charge. Nor did they remit
their care, or slacken the conscience of their duty, in preaching dili-
gently the Gospel, because of the forwardness and seeming zeal of
those, that were false Brethren and false Apostles; who out of envy,
or fright, or for filthy lucre, or any vain-glory among Christians, set
up the trade of preaching, upon their own stock of boldness; without
any mission from Christ, or those, to whom he had delegated that
power to ordain fit and able men: Their seeming good will, and
readiness to preach, did not free them from the brand of false Ap-
stles, and deceitful workers; Satan's ministers, and messengers sent
to buffer, not to build the Church; Wolves in sheeps clothing, ser-
ving their bellies, and not the Lord Christ, or the Churches good;
whose order and authority they despise: Nor can they be faithful
to God's work, unleas they keep to his word; both, as to the truths
delivered, and the order prescribed, and the duties enjoined, and the
authority established: Christ doth not only provide food for his
family; but, stewards also, and dispensers of it, who may, and must
see to give every one their portion in due season, rightly dividing the
Word of truth; There is not onely plenty, but order and government
in Christ's house; nothing les becomes the servants of Christ, than
this sharking and scrambling way of these new men, who will snatch
and carve for themselves, and dispence to others, what, when, and
how they list. It is justly to be feared, they are thieves, and come
but to steal and destroy, who like not to come in at Christ's door, but
are thus clambrin every where over the wall; and (confident of their
numbers) dare to do it, not in the darkness of their Night Con-
venticles, but (as Absalom's incestuous rapes) at the noon-day, and in
the eyes of this whole Church; to its great grief and shame, and to its
no little danger; These intruders appearing more like plunderers of the reformed Religion, than any way like to be humble able and faithful Preachers; Nothing can portend good to the Church of Christ, that carries besides gro's defects such a face of disorder, violence, insolency and confutation; which, if these ways of some men do not, many wife and godly Christians have lost their eyes.

7. Furthermore, One great mistake of our Antiministerial Levellers is, from that mean and ordinary esteem, they have of the work, duty, and undertaking of a Minister; this makes them have so flight and indifferent thoughts of it, both as to the ability and authority; requiring very small measure of true abilities, and none at all of due authority; further, than any presumers of his gifts, will challenge to himself.

When as indeed, all reason, Religion, and holy examples, do teach us; That the work of a Minister of the Gospel is not merely a matter of lip labour, of voluble speech; of confident countenance; making a show, and flourish to others of that knowledge, reading, memory and eloquence, which any man may have upon an ordinary account: There goes more to make a work-man, than to have good materials and tools amassed together; To heap up these, or lay them forth to others view is not to build. To be arbitrarily, or occasionally, or impertinently, or charitably busie in exercising mens private gifts, as to Christian knowledge, is not prelently, to do that great and good work, which the Apostle commends, which Christ enjoyns his Ministers, and which the Church needs. Every one that can handle the Hod, or the Mattock, or the Trowel, is not instantly an Architect, or may vye with Vitruvius. Nor can every knowing Christian, discharge that part of a thoroughly furnished work-man, who needs not to be ashamed: as having materials, and Tools, and skill, and command.

There is a great difference between that plausible cunning, which draws Disciples after mens selves; and that Ministerial cunning which makes Disciples to Christ; between the setting up among the many popular Masters, who love to hear themselves speak, and the being sent as Embassadors, to speak in the name of Christ; which is, not to get a petty Magistracy and name among men; but to make known, as they ought, the holy name and mysteries of Jesus Christ: Nor is this, only to walk in the cool of the day; in the midit of an Independent Parish (which other Ministers labours have planted, (where some elderly, better instructed, and wealthier Christians fancy they want nothing to compleat.

See Sr. Chry.

12. The weight of the work of the Ministry requires peculiar and appropriated workmen to it.

2 Tim. 2. 15.
them, but the contentment of an imaginary Reign and Empire; and
are content to allow liberally to any Minister, that will assume
them into a participation of Church power, that they may but think
themselves to rule.) But it requires such an humble diligence, as is
willing to bear the heat and burden of the day; to contend with
younger ignorance, and elder obstinacy, and aged vernalnes: not
disdaining, nor nauseating the crumb of catechizing, to which
principles few of the new modelling Preachers will desist: as
loath to abate of those high-faring notions, and spurious specu-
lations, in which they please themselves, more, than any of their
hearers; who seek to profit our souls, rather than vainly to applaud
their vainer teacher; who thus new dressed and set up greatly delpi-
feth his poor neighbour Ministers pains, serving only to breed up,
as in a nursery, such plants, as he is to transplant to his congrega-
tional Garden, and so to gather in due time the fruits of them to
himself.

No, the work of a worthy Minister is such, as must fit him, as
well to stoop to lay the lowest foundations, in the youngest Cathe-
chists; as to set up the Crown and Corner Stone of the highest
Pinnacle in the most advanced Christians: He must know how to
treat, both the weak and the strong, the idiot and the learned, the
babes and simple, as well as the men grown and well-instructed;
that scorn not the meanest, nor fears to do his duty to the greatest
in the world; To which work there ought to be such an ademption,
as to do every thing becomming so high and heavenly a Master; so
holy and great a work, wherein the Apostle requires as to the doctrine
and manners too uncorruption, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that
cannot be condemned, &c. So that the Office and work of a Mi-

nister requires, not only communicative abilities for knowledge
and utterance, but imports also duty, conscience, care, solicitousness,
skill, fidelity, diligence, intentiveness, zeal, exactness, prudence and
highest discretion, as in a most weighty matter, of infinite concern-
ment; wherein the glory of God, the honour of our Saviour, and the
good of mens souls is highly engaged: So that it is, not a sponta-
aneous curiosité, or a pleasant variety, or a plausible novelty, or a pro-
fitable art, and trade or mystery of living; but a serious custody
committed, a precious charge deposited, and a strict account to be
returned, of the Ministeriall negotiation and function.

What is re-
quisite in a
Minister.

So that a Minister had need to have the eye and illumination
of an Angel, the heart and compassion of a Father, the tenderness
and indulgence of a Mother, the caution and courage of a Comman-
der
The great work of the Ministry.

For a true Minister who is enabled by God, approved by man, and so duly sent and ordained by both, to the service of Christ in the Church, hath upon him, not only something of the honour and authority, but of the duty and care of Parents; and that right of primogeniture, which from Christ is derived to them; as from the elder among many brethren; which is to teach, instruct, provide for, direct and govern in the things of God, the younger succession of the family of Christ: Yea more, every true Minister hath part of the work of God assigned to him, having a Deputation, or Lieutenancy from Christ to fulfill what he hath gloriously undertaken, (not as to meritorious satisfaction (which Christ alone hath perfected, but) as to Ministerial instruction and pastorall government; teaching mankind, to know the will of God, how he is to be served; and how they may be saved, yea, and ruling them that are Chrifts with his scepter; Furnished as the Ark with the Law, with Manna, and with Aaron’s rod, to convince men of sin, to comfort them with promises, and to keep them in holy bounds by just authority and Christian Discipline.

hath reconciled us to himself by Christ Jesus; and hath given to us the Ministry of reconciliation. V. 20. As though God did beseech you by us.

So that true Ministers stand as in Parents, so in Gods and Chrift’s stead, as to the visible means and outward work of divine institution; which the Lord hath chosen to dispence by such earthly vessels; that, as they have some reflexions and marks of divine authority, and honour more than humane, upon them in their work and Commission, so they may have as they had need more than ordinary divine assistance, to carry them through the discharge of this work, as it ought to be done: In reference to which great and sacred employment, the Lord Chrift, fasted, and prayed a whole night in a mountain, the day before he chose, ordained and sent his twelve Apostles to the work of publike Ministry among the Jews; yea and after they had enjoyed his holy society, and instruction for some years, yet before they were to go forth to the Gentiles conversion, (knowing
taking what difficulties they should encounter; what beasts, and men, and devils they were to contend with; besides, how strange and incredible a message they went withal, to convert a proud, vain, luxuriar, covetous, and cruel word, he would not have them go from Jerusalem, till they were endued with power from on high by the holy Spirit, their teacher and comforter.

8. And according to this fo iemn both institution and preparation of the first Ministers of the Gospel, which Christ sent (in whose power, and after whose pattern, as near as may be, all others ought to succeed in the Church) all holy, wise, able and humble Christians have always looked, not without horror, trembling, and amazement, upon the Office and work of the Ministry, untill the pride and presumption of these times; Antiently the worthy Bishops and Ministers were, both before and after their Ordination to this Office, still asking this question, in their souls, who is sufficient for these things; and what shall I do (being a Minister) to be saved: still jealous, lest while they Preach to others, themselves prove castaways. However now youthful confidences or rusticall boldness, or vain-glorying mancontinued, or ambitious importunities, or covetous projects, or secular interests, or friends importunities, or fortunes necessities, and stimulating defpairs, to live any other way; these (God knows) are too often the main motives, which put many men upon the work of the Ministry: Yet, These grand and eminent men of old, whose gifts and graces far exceeded our modern tenurities, came not to this holy Ordination, nor undertook this service of God to the Church, either as Bishops or Presbyters, without infinite reluctance, grief, dread and astonishment; They had a constant horror of the worth and danger of mens souls; which only Christ could redeem with a valuable price; the losse of which, a whole world cannot counterpoise: also of the terrors of the Lord to slothfull and unfaithfull servants in that work; also of the strictness of accounts to be given at Christs tribunal: They had before their eyes, that boundless Ocean of busines into which a Minister, once ordained laicsh forth, and is engaged; to study, to preach, to pray, to fast, to weep, to compassionat, to watch-over, to visit, to rep ove, to exhort, to comfort, to contend, with evill and unreasonable men, devils and powers of darkness: to take care of young and old, to temper himself to novices, catechumens; to confirmed, to lapsed, to obfinate, to penitent, to ignorant and erroneous, to heretical surlyness, to schismaticall perverseness, to become all things to all men to gain some.

Naz. Or. 29. Reproves that
preachers have Callings & taking tongues, that know neither how to speak, nor to be silent:
Such Preachers he calls basely hands, idiottes, stultus stutterent.
After he shows how much care is to be used before and after the undertaking that holy Office. P. 48. 7. c. Eph. 6. 12. 1 Cor. 9. 22. inton-
The work indeed requires faith. St. Crysostom, a most ample
and enlarged soul, left any under our charge be ignorant, by our
neglect; be misled by our errors, justly condemmed by us, and
hardened against us; left any saving truth be wasted or concealed,
any soul wounded, any conscience or faith shipwrecked; left any
weaker faith faint, any stronger fall; left any be tempted and sedu-
ced by Satan, or his Factors: In fine, left any poor soul should be
damned by our default, which is by Christ committed to our charge,
as Ministers of, and for Jesus Christ; whose work is to see, that the
sufferings of Christ be not in vain, that the sovereign selves and blemishes
of his blood, may be duly applied, to the benumbed, to the tender, to
the wounded consciences, to the broken, and bleeding, to the stony
and hardened, to the fleshly and flinty hearts.

This so prodigious a work, and more than humane undertaking,
to be a Minister of the Gospel, either as a Bishop, or Presbyter, (for
neither the difference, nor the distance, was great in point of the
main work, either of teaching or governing, only, the higher place,
had the greater care, and the more honor drew with it the greater
burden of duty) made those holy men of old, so loth and unwilling to
yield themselves to the desires, importunities, and even violences of
those Christians, who looked upon them, as fit for so great a work
in the Church: they said, Non Episcopari, in good earnest. Saint
Ambrose was for his learning, integrity, piety, and eloquence, so
esteemed in his secular employment, as a judge; that the faithful
people of Millan (otherways divided by the Arrian faction) thought
none more fit to be their Bishop, and chief Pastor: to guide, by
teaching and governing them, in matters of Religion. They in a
maner forced him, from the Tribunal, to the Throne, or Cathedral,
with pious compulsions, which to avoid, he fled by night, and after
a nights wandering, found himself next morn at Millan: He put on
the face of cruelty and bloodines, invited loose and leud people to
haunt his house; that he might seem unworthy of that dignity, and
deter them from the choice. Which (he tells us) he suffered not with-
out an holy impatience, complaining of the injury done him; and
he would not have yielded, if he had not been persuaded, that the
imperfection and motion of the people, so refulgent, so zealouz, and so un-
animous, was from God; whose pleasure was thereby signified to him;
That leaving secular affairs, he had work for him, to do in his Church;
which he discharged with great diligence, courage, and fidelity, after
he was baptized, duly ordained a Presbyter, and consecrated to be a
Bishop; To whose learned and holy eloquence, the Church oweth,
besides other excellent fruits, the happy conversion of Saint Augustine.

In like sort Saint Jerome tells us of Nepotian, That when his
holy learning and life had so recommended him, that he was gen-

rally
Nepotianus so rally defied to be made a Minister of the Church; he first hid himself; When he was found, they brought him to Ordination, as it were to execution, weeping, deprecating, and deploring with unfeigned earnestness; protesting how unfit, how unworthy he was, for that great work; whom nothing could have made more fit and worthy, than so great humility, with so great holiness and ability: Some (as Ammonius) did maim and deform themselves to avoid this great undertaking. Saint Austin, a man of incomparable abilities, professeth, That he esteems nothing more difficult, laborious and dangerous in this world, than the office of a Bishop, or Presbyter; though nothing be more glorious and accepted before God, if the work be discharged fo, as we have in charge from our chief commander and Bishop, the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence (faith he) were those tears, which he could not forbear to shed plentifully on the day of his Ordination; which others wondered at then; and he after gives the world an account of them: O humble, holy, happy, well-placed tears, which watered on that occasion, one of the most devout, diligent and fruitful souls, that ever the Church of Christ enjoyed.

Saint Chrysostome also (a great and glorious star of the first magnitude in the Firmament of the Church; who filled the Orb in which he was placed, and equalled by his eloquent worth, the eminency of the City (Constantinople) where he sat as Bishop) passionately bemoans his condition, and all of his order, as Bishops, and Ministers of the Church; professing, That he thinks the work, the danger, and the difficulties so great, that a Bishop and Minister had need have an hundred hands, and as many eyes to avoid scandals, and to dispatch the employment: So that he protesteth, That he cannot see, how many Bishops or Ministers can be saved; yea, and believes far more are damned, than saved. Synesius also protesteth, Had he been aware of the vastness of the work, and charge of souls, he would have chosen many deaths, rather than have been a Bishop, or Presbyter in the Church; as he was, and a very worthy one too, from an eloquent and learned Philosopher. Thus, and to this tune, generally
all those antient Bishops, and most eminent Ministers of the Church; and this, not out of restiveness, cowardise, or want of zeal, piety, and charity, but meerly out of unfeigned humility; (as Moses, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and others,) abasing themselves, out of the high esteem they had of the glory of Christ, the honor of his Religion, the dignity of his Ministry, and the pretiousness of souls, for which, he had shed his sacred blood.

9. Nor is the work (God knows) le's or easier now, on our hands; nor the burden lighter; nor are our arms and shoulders The Work stronger in these days, than in former times; that any mens con- not now eas-
idence in undertaking, or forwardnels in obtruding on that calling, er, than it should be now fo great; when, indeed, we have (now) not onely was, requires down-right ignorance, and blunter rusticy, or heathenish simplicity, as able Mi-
or barbarous unbelief to contend with; but also schismatical curio-
nists, fanatical novelties, heretical subtilties, superstitious vanities, cruel hypocristes, political profaneness, spiritual wickednesses to en-
counter. We are to deal, as Ministers even here in England, not with raw Novices, and callow Christians, or meer strangers to Re-
ligious Mysteries; but with such, as by much handling matters of Religion, are grown callous men, of brawny hands, gross humors, of rough hearts; such as think themselves fat, and so full fed with Re-
ligious Notions, that they are grown purley, almost surfted, and cast their appetite; longing like glutted and pampered Jews, for any novelties, though it be for Garlick, and Leek, and Onyons, amind their superfluities of Quails and Manna: Nothing pleaseth their plugged stomacks, that is old, though never so true; nothing comes amils, if it be but drest up with novelty; old Christianity set on the new block of faction: O how welcome to many is a new Church way, a new fashioned Ministry, new ordered Sacraments, new inter-
preted Scriptures? With theel wanton, proud, idle, lazy, coy, and scornful tempers, have we Ministers now to contest; with such Sophisters, as are ignorant, yet proud of their knowledge; need teach-
ing, yet affect to be teachers; such as cast off all true Ministry, and Church Orders, and Government, when they moft want them (as Feaverish men do clothes to make them sweat, when they kick them off.)

It is harder to deal with such mens arrogant, extravagant hu-
mors; with their various, subtil, and sublime fancies in Religion, (which are like the running Gout, every where painful, no where of the Mini-
permanent, very offensive, though very unfixed) than with those pry.

plainer simplicities, and that down-right profaneness, which are in Heathens, and meer ignorant ones, who never took any tincture of Christian
Christian Religion: whole ruder and open perfections, were not more pejulient to the true Christian Ministry and Religion, than these craftier underminings are.

Nor do the Ministers of England so flatter themselves, that secular powers are so propitious to them, as not to finde more than ordinary cause to keep up the dignity and authrity of their Calling, by all internal sufficiencies, and external industry, rather than truit to the favors and benignities of men, either great or small, few or many. Gregory Thaumaturgus when he was a Bishop of Nece- sarea in Pontus, bleffeth God, That when he came first to his charge, he found not above seventeen Christians; and when he departed from them, he left not in all his Diocets, fo many unbaptized, or unbelievers: But the sad rack of many excellent Ministers now is, after many years labors, to work upon the mof rugged and ingrateful Christians, in many places, that ever were: Many grave men after many years pains, having merited, and expecting from their people, that Christian usage for love, and respect, which becomes both sides; the more they preach, and the better they live, and the more they love their people, the more peevish and froward they finde them: Like hot iron, they fly in the face of thofe that have heated them, and are daily forging them, both to solidity and beauty in Religion; these like croft-grained pieces, run with splinters into the hands and eyes of thofe that feeck to polish them; they affect a petulant piety, and are taught by none, That much of their Religion consists in de-flipping and separating from those Ministers, who have baptized and instructed them, and to whom the care of their souls is orderly committed.

Nor is it onely, hence, that the dignity of the Ministry is wounded, and the difficulties of the work encreased, but even from our selves also, who profefs to be Ministers here in England; The Lord of the harvest pardon our over hafty intrusions, our importune forwardnefs, our unfitness for the work; our idlenefs in it, our vaporings of it, our finifter aims, our crooked motions, our improving both our selves and others, more to private Factions, than to the Catholike Faith, or Publick Peace; to popularity, rather than to piety; to pleasing, rather than profiting of people; by which ways, it must be confefled, many of us, Ministers, have miserably pro- ftrated the honor of this sacred Function; increased the difficulties of our work, laid blocks and bars in our ways; helped to level the dignity of the Function to vulgar insolencies; either containing or invading it.

As in all times, so especially in these, Ministers of the Gospel had need to be more than men; above the pitch of mortals, little lower than the Angels; who are to counter work, deep and deceitful workers;
Discouragements in the Ministry.

...Nothing hath more debased this holy calling, and discouraged able men from it, than the necessity, here in England, in many places, Discouragement - to admit some men's tenure and meanness into the Ministry and means from Livings; who had no other motive, but to obtain a morsel of bread, the tenancy and scarce found that for their pains; for which necessity a relief of maintenance was long ago hoped for, and expected, if not promised, from the piety, and nobleness of the Parliaments of England, who could not, but see, that in many, if not most parts, either the Ministers abilities and pains exceeded the Benefice; or the starving tenuity of the Benefice, like an hungry and barren soil, eat up and consumed the Ministers gifts and parts; which at first were florid, and very hopeful, and so would have thrived, had they not been planted in a soil that was rather a dry nurse, than a kind mother.

Nor was there then, or is there now, any way to avoid the mischief of admitting such minute offerers of their selves to the Ministry in places of so minute maintenance, unless the entertainment were enlarged; as is requisite in many Livings, where the whole salary is not so much, as the interest of the money, bestowed in breeding of a Scholar would amount to, which an able Minister cannot live upon,
What Ministers necessary, and how to be had.

upon, so as to do his duty; yet this fault of ordaining and instituting weak Ministers (which arose from the hardness of Laymen's hearts) was better committed, than omitted by the Ordainers; for it was better, that such small timber (if as straight and sound, as can be had) be put in the wall, than the house in that place lie quite open, and decayed; Better the poor people be taught in some measure, the Mysteries and Truth of Religion, than left wholly wilde and ignorant. I know, that as in a building it is not necessary that all pieces should be great and massive timber, lest will serve in their place and proportion; yet the principal parts ought to be so substantial, that they might relieve the weaker ends and rafters of the burden; so that no danger might be to the whole fabric from their feebleness, so assisted: The state of the Church ought indeed to be so ordered, that there should be a competency for all, and a competency in all, Ministers; but in some there ought to be an omitting, as in employment, so in entertainment; upon whom the greatest revenue of Churches may be laid; whole learning, courage, gravity, tongue, and pen, may be able to sustain the weight of Religion, in all controversies and oppositions; which assertions and vindications require, not only good will and courage, but great strength and dexterity. The ablest Minister, if he well ponders what he hath to do, hath no cause to be very forward, nor should the meanest, that is honest and congruous, have cause to despond, or be discouraged in his good endeavors.

Great care ought to be had for Ordination of able Ministers, and for augmentation of their Means to competency, its true honor, there should be greatest care had in the matter of ordination, before which, antiently the Church had solemn fasting, prayer, and humiliation; but in vain (as to many places, which all need able Ministers) will this care be, unless there be also some necessary augmentation of Ministers maintenance; As the ablest men should be invited to the work, so none unfit should be admitted; and none, once admitted, should have cause by the incompetency of their condition to be ashamed; and by their poverty, constant inabilities; as Trees grow massive, and unfruitful in barren soyle. Nor would this pious munificence be thought much by any Christian Nation, to which God hath been so liberal in his earthly bounty; if they did indeed value his heavenly dispensations, and the necessity, work, or worth, either of true Ministers, or of poor means soyle; whom itinerant Preachers cannot feed sufficiently, with a bit and a way; but they require constant and resident Ministers to make them thrifty and well-looking. I conclude this Paragraph, touching the great work of the Ministry, with that Character of an able Minister, which St. Bernard hath admirably set forth to Eugenius, the then Bishop of Rome, by which we may see, what sense was in those days (Four hundred and fifty years ago) of the duty of Ministers, and what kinde
The Calling of the Ministry, consistent with Christians Liberty.

kinds of ones, holy men then required in the Church; from whom, our succession, without any disparagement from men's personal faults, is derived.

Such (faith Saint Bernard) are to be chosen, and ordained for Tales legends Ministers of the Church, who are composed for their manners; approved for their sanctimony; ready to obey their Superiors; subject to Discipline; strict in their Censures; Catholic for their Faith; faithful in their Preaching; conform to the peace and unity of the Church; who to Kings, may be as John Baptist; to Egyptians, as Moses; to Parnicators, as Phineas; to Idolaters, as Elias; to Covenants, as Elisha; to Lyars, as Peter; to Blasphemers, as Paul; to Sycoveniats and Sacrilegious Trafigies in the Church, as Christ to the Buyers and Sellers in the Temple. Such, as may not burden, or depress the poor, but nourish and instruct them; not flatter, and fawn on the rich, but rather renew and affright their proud security; not terrified by threats of Princes, but living and acting above them; not exhausting men's purses, but comforting their consciences, and filling their hungry souls with good things; who in every duty may trust more to their Prayers, than their Studies; to God's grace, than their own gifts and industry. O (faith he) that I might in my days see the Church of Christ, set, and built on such Pillars! O that I might see the pure Spouse of Christ, committed to the care of such pure and faithful Guardians! Nothing would make me so securely happy.

blaspheimantibus, Christum negari animibus. Quis calunias non fereant sed docent, non gravent sed solvant. Minas principum non possunt sed committunt, qui maruia non exhauriant sed corda reficiant. De omnis resorationibus finit aut quem industria sua. O videam in vita mel Ecclesiam talibus nixam columnas. O Domini spesam crearem tanta commissam sibi, tanta crediam puritati, quid me beatem, quidque secvumq. Bem. 1. t. ad Eugenium.

Thus, this devout and holy man in his times, to whose pious and carnent desire, I could heartily say Amen, if I did but hope that ever the request might be heard, and granted in my time; but though all men be liers, yet we have a true God to trust in.

As for that Liberty which some Christians plead, (not upon a Socinian or fanatick account, as against any peculiar office, and Private Legal power Ministerial, but) only in a fair and orderly way of Christian liberty of gifts charity, and useful conversation; wherein private believers soberly and publickly and wisely communicate of those gifts of knowledge they have at the Ministry, to the subversion of faith and peace in the Church or in Consciences, but to the further confirmation of them; This, as it is fit.

no way envied or denied by any good Ministers, so far as God hath granted it, or the charity and zeal of any modest and humble Christian desires it; So there is no ground, either in Reason or Religion to be urged against.
Ministers as necessary in a Church, as Commanders in an Army.

against the peculiar Calling and Function of the Ministry, from this Christian Liberty of Charity; any more, than there is cause to pull down any man's dwelling house, because there are some sheds and pent-houses leaning to it; which have their uses and conveniences in their kind, and proportion, but not comparably to the main mansion; which hath far more strength, order, beauty, and usefulness: I shall afterward give a fuller account of that Christian Liberty in Preaching and Prophecying, which is by some arrogantly urged against the Authoritative Ministry, as any peculiar office and appointment of Christ.

Only at present, I would endeavor to satisfy the sober and humble Christian, That the Calling of the Ministry, which is and ought in all Religious Reason, to be peculiar to some men, both in abilities and ordination, as well as in exercise of a divine authority, and special power, this (I say) doth no whit quench or reprefs, but rather regulate and preserve that true Liberty, which consists in private Christians conferring, admonishing, informing, and strengthening, one another in every good word and work; without any neglect, or undervaluing of the Publick Ministry, where it may be had. To which, as commonly all well-taught Christians owe (under God) the light, and soundness they have in Religion, so they know, That all gifts are bounded by the Word of God, which is the measure and touchstone of grace; that nothing is further from grace, than unruly living, and disorderly walking; that the gravity of Religion abhors all uncomly motions, and rude extravagancies; which are so far from being piety or zeal, as mad-pranks and raving are from being heights or excesses of reason. Private presumptions (be mens abilities never so great) may not proudly and uncharitably usurp against publick order, peace, and authority in the Civil State; much less against that divine polity, which Christ hath established in his holy Family, the Church.

of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw your selves from every brother, who walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received from us. Tit. 1. 10, 11. There are many unruly and vain-talkers, &c. whose mouths must be stopped.

Ministers

What wise Magistrate will allow it in a Subject? what discreet Commander (as Clement writing to the Factious Corinthians observes) will countenance that private and heady confidence in any Church, than a Soldier, under pretence of valor, or hatred of the enemy, or zeal for Commanders the Generals honor, and Armies good, without any Order, Commission, are for an or Command, to engage himself upon fighting the enemy, or commanding any part of the Army; to the violating of those just and

1 Thes. 5, 14. Warn them that are unruly, disorderly, out of their ranks and places, where God hath set them in his church. 2 Thes. 3. 6. We command you Brethren in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw your selves from every brother, who walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received from us. Tit. 1. 10, 11. There are many unruly and vain-talkers, &c. whose mouths must be stopped.

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necessary Rules of Discipline; in the exact observation whereof, the safety, strength, and honor of an Army, infinitely more consists, than in the Thrasonianick forwardness, and fool-hardiness of any person in it, be he never so able or willing; which, Manlius Torquatus expressed, by that severity of putting his own son to death, for fighting without order from him his Genera! altho' he fought successfully: For wise men consider, 'tis not so necessary to fight, or to preach, as to do both decently, and in order; nor shall any man be commended or crowned for either, unless he do them lawfully: Rashness is no part of any man's fortune, much less of his Religion; nor is confidence any sign of true valor; nor boasting of courage; neither is confusion any ingredient in Christian charity; nor Faction any support of the Faith; nor disorderly walking any feal of those holy flames, which dwell in the humble breasts of true Christians, and fill them with commendable zeal.

except he strive lawfully. Secundum leges Atheniensiae: &c. •

The Church of Christ is compared to a City that is at unity in itself, and to an Army with Banners: These holy allusions are so far not expel argumentative, by way of right reason, and religious proportions, as to Order out of confusion. That neither the strength nor beauty of this holy City, can be preferred, unless the conline of order, and exactness, of those gemmeous foundations and walls, which Christ, and his holy Apostles have laid, and set up in doctrine, holy institutions, and peculiar Ministry, be observed and kept; which are not onely guides and fences for the Churches safety, and direction; but also limits and boundaries to all men's extravagancy in Religion: Nor yet can the majesty of this Heavenly Host, the Sacred Militia of Christs Church on Earth, continue, either, as to its safety in itself, or its terror to its enemies round about, unless the Standard-bearers, the Ministers, whose office is to hold up the Banner of Christs Cross, against the wisdom, power, and malice of men and devils, be supported and maintained; for these are appointed by Christ, the Captain-General of our Salvation, to be the directors of the Churches motions; and as the centers of its peace, and order, in its several bands and companies; which are the several Congregations: Who, without Ministers, duly placed with authority among them, will soon be as sheep without a shepherd; or, as soldiers, are when the Standard-bearer faileth, easily scattered and destroyed. And indeed, nothing seems more to reprove and confute, the perverse disputings of some men against the settled order and calling of the Ministry, (who pretend to Military Discipline and Orders) than this consideration: For they cannot, but in reason be self-condemned; since, if they have any grains of Salt in them,
Order as necessary in Church, as in a State.

they cannot, but daily see, a necessity of exact order, and distinct power, which must be observed among themselves as soldiers; without which, Armies will be but heaps upon heaps; confused crowds and noises of men; if anyone, who fancies his own, or an others sufficiencies, shall presently usurp the power, and intrude into the office of Captain and Commander; whole work is not only to use a few good words now and than, but to fight valiantly, and yet to keep both himself, and others in good order.

No less is order necessary to the Church in its Societies; over which able and fit Ministers duly placed, have, not onely the work of Preaching, lying on their Conciences, which requires more than ordinary and vulgar abilities; but, they have many other great, and weighty affairs, which they are to discharge, both publickly and privately; as workmen that need not to be ashamed; as those, that are meet instruments, and workers together with God and Christ, in the great work of saving souls; to which, if onely memory, and a voluble tongue, and an oratorious confidence, wou'd have served, there needed not so great preparations, and power of the Spirit from on high, to come on the Apostles; which not onely furnished them with Matter what to say, and Languages wherein, but, with just and full authority to preach Christ's Gospel in Christ's Name; and to settle, a like constant Authority, Order, and Power Ministerial in all Churches, for holy Administrations; putting upon their Successors, whom they ordained in every place (as the Spirit of Moses was put on the seventy Elders) of that Spirit; that is, of that same power Ministerial, which they had immediately from Christ. Nor was any one not rightly ordained, amicantly esteemed, as any Minister of the Church, nor any thing he did valid; nor were any that adhered to such disorderly walkers and impostors, ever reckoned among good Christians, or as sound Members in the Church; As Saint Cyprian, most eloquently and zealously, writes concerning Novatians, who usurped the office of a Bishop and Pastor, among some credulous and weak people; despising the Ordination of the Church. How can he be counted a Bishop or Minister in the Church, who thus like a Musk-room grows up from himself? How can he have any office in the Church, who is not placed there by the officers in the Church; which hath ever had in it true Pastors, who by a Successive Ordination, have received power to preside in the Church? For he that sets up of his own new score, and succeeds none formerly ordained, is both an alien to, and an enemy of the peace and truth divine: Nor can that keep them; they cannot, but daily see, a necessity of exact order, and distinct power, which must be observed among themselves as soldiers; without which, Armies will be but heaps upon heaps; confused crowds and noises of men; if anyone, who fancies his own, or an others sufficiencies, shall presently usurp the power, and intrude into the office of Captain and Commander; whole work is not only to use a few good words now and than, but to fight valiantly, and yet to keep both himself, and others in good order.
be recknowled, as one of Christ's flock, who doth not follow a lawfully ordained Pastor. Thus Saint Cyprian, a learned holy Bishop, and after a Martyr for Christ, testifies the tenure of the Church, and all true Christians in his time, who flourished in the third Century after Christ.

I will only add one place more out of Tertullian, who lived before Saint Cyprian, in the end of the second Century, whom Cyprian usually called his Master, for the learning, warmth, force, and eloquence, which were in his works, till his defection. Let these few Masters (faith he) and their Disciples, set forth to us the Original of their Churches, the Catalogue and Succession of their Bishops and Ministers; shewing upward without interruption, that it may appear their first Bishop or Presbyter had some Apostle; or some that persevered with the Apostle, for their predecessor and ordainer! For thus the true and Apostolically planted Churches do ever make their reckonings; as the Church of Smyrna had their first Bishop (Polycarpus) placed among them by St. John the Apostle: So the Church of Rome and Antioch had their Pastors, or Bishops, settled by the Apostle Peter. Thus Tertullian, and with him Irenæus, and all the antients; who sought to keep the unity of the Spirit, and the bond of peace, Eph. 4.3. The purity of doctrine, and power of holy Discipline, in the Church of Christ. These holy men never dreamed of Self-ordainers, or of gifted, yet unordered Ministers; nor did they own any Christians in Church Society, or Ecclesiastick Order, and holy Communion, where there was not an evident, distinct, and personal-ly demonstrable Succession of Bishops, Pastors, and Teachers, in Ministerial Authority, so constituted by holy Ordination; lineally descended, and rightly derived, from the Apostolical Stem, and the Root, Jesus Christ.

Johanne Collocaturn, refert; Sicul Romanorum Clementem, a Peto Ordinatum, &c. Traditionem uaque Apostolaram in toto mundo manifestatam in Ecclesiam adei per speciere omnibus qui vere velint audire. Et habemus eum, qui ab Apostolis instituti sunt Episcopi in Ecclesiis; & successores eorum usque ad nos. Quibus etiam ut Ecclesias revitamur, suum ipsum locum Magistrii tradentes. Qui nihil tale cognoverunt uaque docuerunt, quae ab his derivatur. Irenæus, lib. 3. cap. 3. De in quae decedunt obo Apostolica Successione.

Nor is this, so divine an Institution, so solemn an Ordination, so sacred a Mission, and so clear and constant a Succession of Ministers, Peculiar Of (whole office it is to bear witness of the Name of Christ, in his love, ficers as and sufferings, and merits, to the end of the World, till the number Ministers, of Saints be perfected, till the work of the Ministry is finished, and most necessary the Body of Christ, his Church, fully edified, Eph. 4.12.) This, I say for the say, is not of more concernment to the glory of God, (whose infinite common per and inestimable mercy is hereby set forth to mankind, ) or more ples good, as conducing to the honor of Christ, in his wisdom, love, and care, for to Religion. his
The Calling of the Ministry, necessary for people.

1 Cor. 2. 1, 2.

Princes in presidia, princes in perpetuando.

Mark 6. 24.

Prov. 29. 18.

Ezek. 3. 17.

Heb. 13. 17.

his Church, than it is every way most necessary for the common good of those, whom the Lord is pleased to call to be his people at any time, in any Nation, whatsoever; whose interest and benefit the Lord Jesus Christ far more considered (and so should all good Ministers do in their work,) than any particular ends, or advantages of their own. (Alas; the divinest advancement of true Ministers in this World, is their faithful labor; their honor must be their cares, and studies, and fears; their crowns, their sufferings and torments, persecutions, and perils, contempt, crofes, and deaths for Christ's sake, and the Churches welfare:) But the peculiar benefit and advantage of the Christian flock, the faithful people of all forts, is that which is most to be regarded; over whom the Lord hath made Ministers overseers; not only at the first plantation of the Gospel, as the Socinians say; but also in a constant and clear succession of Publick Ministerial Authority,) for this very purpose. That poor people may never be left as sheep without a shepherd; that they may not either wander up and down in the wilderness, or mountains of their own fancies; or be led away by others' seductions; or be beguiled by the devils wiles, and temptations; That they may hear, and believe, and persevere steadfast in the Faith; that they may neither be ignorant, nor erroneous, nor scattered and divided; that they may be preserved from rustic simplicity, hypocritical formality, heretical pravity, and schismatical novelty in matters of Religion; that they may not perish (or be left naked, separated, scattered, idle, and rebellious) for want of vision; thereby finning against God, and their own souls. The pregnant significance of that one word, which Solomon's wisdom useth, hath these swarms or havings of several senses: All which variety shews, That the state of common people is never more desperate, than when their Seers fail; when their Teachers are removed into corners; when God sends them no Preachers, or Prophets, after his own heart; when people are not only without light, but put it out, quenching the Lamps of the Sanctuary, and loving darkness more than light; when they are given up to their own delusions, and others seductions; who blindly follow the visions of their own hearts, and the Prophets of their own rising, or the Ministers of their own or- daining; whom they shall have no cause to credit, esteem, love, or obey, as finding no competent gifts Ministerial in them, no Chararsters of divine Authority, or holy Succession, upon them.

People will easily be surprized when they have no watchmen to foresee, give warning, prevent, and encounter any dangers, of sins, errors, and temptations, which easily surprize the generality even of Christians; who are for the most part so busied, and incumbered, or so pleased and ensnared, or so burthened and oppressed with the secular and sensible things of this world, that they can hardly watch
As all the people of Englands temper, one hour with Christ; no not in his agony; if they had not some Ministers divinely appointed, to put them in remembrance; to stir up their affections, to provoke them to piety, to prepare them for eternity, both instructing them in the Faith, and praying for them that their Faith may not fail. Nothing indeed is more deplorable and desperate, than the condition of mankind, yea, and of any part of the Church of Christ would be, if the Lord had not commanded, and by a special providence continued an holy constant succession of the Ministers of the Word and Sacraments; who may be always, either planting, or watering, or pruning; and so, according to the several proportions of Christians, still preserving the truth, life, and power of Religion, so as it may descend to after ages. For there is no doubt, but without this holy and happy Succession of Ministers, either people would ever perish in their original ignorance, and heathenish sloth; or, although once planted with piety, yet they will soon relapse to barbarity, Atheism, and unbelief; or at best, content themselves with idle formalities, spiritless superstitions, empty notions, mouldy traditions, lying legends, plausible fancies, novel inventions, vain imaginations, or most desperate errors, and damnable doctrines; which is evident by the experience, as of former, so of these times; where few of those, that have cast off, and despised the lawful, and true Ministry of this Church, but either give over all Religion; or else think themselves capable, every night to dream a new and better way of serving God, and saving mens souls, than ever yet was used.

This natural tendency to Apostatize from truth, to relapse to profaneness, to rest in hypocrisy, to run out to extravagancies, or to persist in errors, no people under Heaven are more subject to, than those of this Nation, England; whom, as God hath blessed with a land flowing with milk and honey; so they have much of the iron and Apostasy, and stiffneckedness of the Jews; for being full fed, they are also full of high and quick spirits, various and vehement fancies, finding more than out and running after many fashions and inventions. Don. Guinormer, here in England, who had much studied the English temper, and knew how their pulse beat, both in Church and State, was wont to say, He despaired not of these violent changes here in England; which in no other Nation could be expected; who are generally content with their customs; and constant to their principles; whereas the English are always given to change, to admire novelties, and with most inconsiderate violence to pursue them: So that no Nation or Church under Heaven have more need then, of constant, learned, able, and honest Ministers; who may shew them, guide, and keep them in the good, right, and safe way of true Religion; From which, none are more easily seduced, than those that have either a sequacious softness, and credulity.

As all Christian situated in a country are subject to various changes, and therefore need constant and faithful leadership. The absence of such leadership can lead to apostasy, where people may become ensnared by superficial beliefs and novelties, rather than remain faithful to the established religion. The English, being blessed with a fertile land, have a natural tendency to change and adopt new ideas quickly, which can undermine deep-seated faith if not managed carefully. Hence, the need for steady and learned religious leaders who can guide and keep the faithful on the right path, free from seductive novelties and superstitions. William Bateson, a contemporary scholar, highlighted the importance of such leaders in maintaining true religion amidst the many fashions and inventions that surround people.
lity toward other men, as divers of us have; or an high conceit and confidence of themselves; which people, much at ease, rich and high fed, (as many in England) are most subject to; Infomuch, that we see the greatest disease, as to Religion, now is, among us, not so much a famine, as a surfeit of the Word; and knowledge, which hath here been as the waters of the Sea, disdains those shores of order, office, and duty, which the Lord hath set for its bars and bounds in his Church: Christians in many places, having had great fulness, are come to great wantonness; and the enemies of the Ministry, and Reformed Religion in this Church, are not such, as have been kept meager, and tame with emptiness, and ignorance; but such as have been pricked with provender, high fed, by an able and constant Ministry. These are grown to such ferocious spirits, like pampered horses, whom no ground will hold; daily neighing after novelties; rushing upon any adventures; and impatient to bear those Ministers any longer, by whose bounty they have been so liberally nourished, with all means of knowledge, preaching, conferring, and writing; These now affect high racks, and empty mangers; subtleties rather than solidities, and novelties more than nourishment; yea, they are become the rivals of their Ministers, and undertake like Balaam's Beast to teach their Masters; not only speaking with them, but against them; yea, seeking to cast them quite off, lifting up their heel against them, and trampling their feeders under their feet: Thus having either got the bride between their teeth, or having cast quite off their neck the reigns of Order, Government, and Discipline in Religion, they are become like Horse and Mule without understanding; without gratitude, civility, and common humanity; so far they are from sober piety. Running furiously without their guides, wantonly fruizing up the wind, and proudly lifting up themselves in their high created opinions and presumptuous fancies of notions, gifts, prophecyings, and inspirations; Glorying in this riuious liberty and mad frolicks of Religion; which all wise, humble, and holy Christians know, are not more unworthy of, and uncomfortable to, all good Ministers (who taught them better) than they will be most dangerous, destructive, and damnable to those men themselves, who proudly affect those ruder and dangerous follies in the Church of Christ; who cannot (either they, or their posterity) be ever so safe, as in Christ's way, at his finding, and under his custody; where, with holy and just restraints (becoming Reason, Order, and Religion) there are also the most ingenuous liberties, and the most liberal fruitions: Wandering prodigals in Religion, who forsake the order and regularity of their Fathers house, which is full of bread, will soon be reduced to a morsel of bread.

And we see already, such as have in their pride and disdain most forsaken
English temper in Religion.

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the true Ministry, are come by their riotous courses, to feed on husks; and from the harlotry of their wanton, and fine opinions, to consort with swine; having hired out, and enslaved them to all rude, unjust, and profane designs, or else wallowing in filthy and sensual lusts, which makes them sin against Heaven and Earth, and be no more worthy to be called the sons of God, or the children of this Christian Reformed Church. So that we evidently see, That those men fight against God, against Christ Jesus, against the Reformed and Christian Religion; against the Word of God, which is the standard of Religion; against the Unity, Order, and Catholic conformity of the Church of the Christ in all ages; against the future Succession of Religion; against their own souls; against their posterity; against the common good of all mankind; and all such, as may want and enjoy the inestimable blessing of the Gospel, who ever fight against the holy office, divine authority, necessary duty, sacred dignity, and constant succession, of the Evangelical Ministers, and Ministry; without which the Church of Christ, like a Field or Garden, without diligent and daily Husbandmen and Gardeners, would, long ago, have run to waste; and been over-run with all manner of evil weeds, (which grow apace, even in the best Plantations;) if God in his wisdom and mercy, to mankind, and to his Church, had not appointed some men, as his Ministers, to take care from time to time, that the field of the Church be tilled in every place; that the Garden be weeded, and the vineyard fenced; and this especially for their sakes, who are the (women) most of men, whose cares and burdens of life, or whose dulness and incapacity, or whose wants and weakness, or whose lusts and passions, would never, either move them to, or continue them in any way, worthy the name of true Religion, if God had not sent and ordained (appears) Cryers, Heralds, and Ambassadors, to summon, invite, and by pious impor- tunity, even compel men to come into the ways of true piety, and happiness; which, being not only far above sinful flesh and blood, but quite contrary to them, had need have a Ministry, whose authority, for its rise, assistance, and succession, should be beyond what is of humane original and derivation; which who so seek to oppose, destroy, or alter, will certainly bring upon themselves, not only the guilt of so high an insolence against Christ, and injury against this Church; but also, will stand accountable to God's justice, for those many soules damnation, whom their vanity and novelty have perverted and destroyed, both in the present age and after generations, for want of true Ministers.

These first weapons then, which the Adversaries of the peculiar Calling of the Ministry, hoped to finde in the Armony of Scripture, or Right Reason, whereby to defend their own intrusion, and to
offend that holy Function, and divinely instituted Succession, are found (I think) to have, as little force in them to hurt the Ministry, or to help the enemy; as Goliath's Shield, Helmet, Sword, and Spear had, either to injure David, or secure himself; yea, (we see) those smooth stones, those pregnant and piercing Authorities of many clear and concurrent Texts of Scripture, both for precept and example, which I have produced, according to right reasoning, from Jesus Christ, and the blessed Apostles; To which, the Catholike practice, and custom of all Churches in after times, is as a sling directing them, more forcibly and firmly against the brazen foreheads of those Anakims, that oppose the Ministry; All these together, are sufficient to prostrate to the ground, their proud height, and to put to flight that uncircumcised party, who have defiled, and seek to destroy, the holy Ordination of Evangelical Ministers; whole poor and oppressed estate, although it may now seem, but as little David, with his Sceptre and Staff, in the eyes of self-exalting adversaries, who despise and curse them in their hearts; yet these may finde them to come in the Name and Power of the Lord; sent by God's mission, furnished with Christ's commission, and appointed by the Churches due Ordination, to be Leaders, Rulers, and chief Officers in the Church Militant, under His Excellency the Lord Jesus Christ; who is the Generalissimo, chief Captain, and Prince of our Salvation; who having in former times delivered his Servants, the true and faithful Ministers, from the paws of the Lions and the Bears, (Heathenish force, and Heretical furies) will also deliver them out of the hands of these uncircumcised Philistims; who, having received from their Ministry, what ever honor and privilege, they can pretend to as Christians, yet now carry themselves, as if they were aliens from the Israel of God; and had never had relation to, or blessing from, this or any other true Church; where hath been a constant Ministry, not more famous for Learning and Industry, than blessed with all Evangelical excellencies, and happy successes: To which now, the Lord is pleased to add this crown of patience; under great tribulations, and of perseverance in suffering much evil discouragement, where it hath deserved so well.
CAVIL III.

Or Objection about Christian gifts, and exercising in common as Preachers or Prophets.

All impartial spectators may hitherto behold the salvation of God; how the insolent opposers of the Ministeriall function, the men of Gath, are in their first encounter so deeply smitten and wound, that they by groveling on the ground: The remaining motions which they may seem to have, are but the inordinate strokes of hands and heels, the last batteries, and weak struglings, which attend impotent revenge and exspiring malice; It will be no hard matter, to set my foot upon their prophane power; and to sever their Heads from their Shoulders (that they rise up no more) by the means of that two edged and unparallelled Sword of the Scriptures; rightly appliied; which hath both sharpness, weight, and brightness; the clearest reason, potentest conviction, and divinest Authority; with which they thought to arm themselves against the peculiar Office of the Ministry.

Yet there are some seconds and recruiters (who seem to have left fury and malice against the Ministry) who seeing the chief Champion of the Antiministeriall faction, thus Levelled, come in, either as to the spoyl, or rescue, (as Ajax to Ulysses) holding before them the shield of manifold Scriptures; Alleging, That notwithstanding there may be granted some peculiar Office and Institution of the public like Ministry; yet, as to the power of preaching, or liberty of prophecying, the promise is common to all believers, for the pouring out of the Spirit upon all flesh, in the later days: for the Anointing from above, which shall lead every believer into all Truth; so that they shall not need any man should teach them: being all taught of God. That the manifestation and gifts of the Spirit are given to every one for the good of the Church; in teaching, exhorting, prophecying, &c. Which every one is to cover, and may communicate to others, for their conversion, or confirmation; as Aquila and Priscilla did to Apollos, and other Christians in Primitive disgressions; exercising and employing their talents received, if not as Ministers in Office, and ordered, yet as Prophets and gifted Brethren; if not as Pastors, yet as Teachers; In like fort Christians, now, find their gifts of knowledge and utterance so great and good, that they cannot smother them, nor suffer them to be restrained and oppressed by the Ministers encroachment and Monopoly. Thus they, who would seem to be somewhat more civil and equanimous to the calling and Office of the Ministry.
Answ. 1. Gifts in o- small shot, which Infidels, * Socinus, * Osterodius, * Smalzius, Radeccius, * Nicolaides, and others of the revived Arians have afforded; these Semianti-ministerial adversaries, have been oft discharged, and received, without any hurt, as to the divinely established Office of the Ministry; nor warrant to any mean publiclike arrogancy.

* Socinus lib. de Eccl.
* Osterod. Inst. c. 42.
* Smalzius de Ord. Eccl.
* Radeccius de Eccl.

Acts 14:23. When they had ordained them elders in every Church.
Acts 13:2. Separate to me Paul and Barnabas.
1 Tim. 4:14. &c.
Heb. 14:17. 2 Tim. 2:4. 1 Thes. 5:12.
1 Tim. 5:17. 1 Cor. 14:18, &c.
1 Cor. 14:32.
V. 33. & 40.
Rom. 16:17. 2 Thes. 3:6. 2 Tim. 4:3.

Primitive prophesying, what.
1 Pet. 1:19.
Prophets Scripture interprets.

Peoples gifts no prejudice to the calling of the Ministers.

My answ. first in generall is: That all these and the like gifts in o- small shot, which Infidels, * Socinus, * Osterodius, * Smalzius, Radeccius, * Nicolaides, and others of the revived Arians have afforded; these Semianti-ministerial adversaries, have been oft discharged, and received, without any hurt, as to the divinely established Office of the Ministry; Having been either satisfied with all ingenuous concessions, as far as order, modesty, and charity will carry them; or refuted with just refpies, against all vanity, arrogancy and confusion, by those learned men, who formerly or lately have given very sober, solid, and liberal satisfaction to any pleas urged, or scruples alleged out of Scripture; which will in no sort maintain idleness, vanity, pride, and confusion in the Church; under the specious names of liberty, gifts and prophesying; There are indeed many places exciting Christians to labour, to abound in every good gift and work; but yet as many to keep them within due order and holy bounds, becoming the honour of Religion.

All those (κελευθομ) gifts were never more eminent and common in the Church of Christ, than in those times, when the Ministerial power was by peculiar marks, ceremonies, and duties, distinctly and undoubtedly conferred on some peculiar persons; as, the Apostles, and 70. Disciples; on Timothy, Titus, and others, who were separated, and ordained, by fasting, praying, examination and imposition of hands, to be Bishops or Presbyters in the respective Churches, as they came to be capable of settled order and Ministry. And notwithstanding the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, which were then conferred upon many, not yet ordained Ministers, we see, the Office and honour of the Ministry was never more clearly asserred, as divine (being set over the flock by the Lord) to be owned and esteemed, as distinct from secular intertanglements, as an retire and compleat employment, even for the best and ablest men, to which they should once ordained wholly give themselves, and attend on it. Never was order, and peace, and proportion in the Church more enjoyed, and duly observed; never were disorderly and unruly walkers, false Apostles, self-obsenders, house-wipers, heaps of teachers, who caused divisions; more severely repressed, than in those Primitive times, when believers, enjoyed most eminent gifts and graces for some ends: either in miracles, or tonungs, or prophesying, (which was not that eminentest sense of prophesying (that is, foretelling things to come;) but the opening and applying the places of the Prophets, in the old Testament (which was then the only Scriptures the Church had; which St. Peter calls the more sure word of Prophecy) by which it might appear to the Church more clearly, that the crucified Jesus was the Christ, the promised, prefigured, and prophesied Messias; so establishing the
Of interpreting Scriptures.

the tradition and history of the new Testament (which concerned the Nativity, life, miracles, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, &c. of Christ,) by the places of the old; wherein oft times an Auditor among them might have that further light revealed to him, as to the fuller sense of any place, which another was handling; and this, but occasionally, not as a constant habit; only at present, it was beyond his natural abilities, or endowments acquired by studies, &c. Nor was this (then an extraordinary gift, for the confirming and eestablishing of the new planted Church, or Christians in the faith) ever used, as it ought, but with great order, all gravity, charity, humility and peace among those, that were truly so enabled: And when any vain pretenders came up to abuse it; the Apostle requires, that there be a due trystall, and subjecting of these spirits of the Prophets to the Prophets, who might wisely discern between true and false, between holy, wise, and excellent inspirations, (which were pertinent interpretations, or apt clearings of Scriptures,) and those weak, impudent, and impertinent ostentations, which were either very false and foolish, or vulgar and ordinary.

Which, Secondly, is the root, that our Antiministerial adversaries, who affect the name of Prophets, commonly amount too; Of right while they handle the Scriptures (most what) with very unawaken interpreting hands; so brokenly, corruptly, rudely, rashly and perversely, as and applying makes them not any way extraordinary Prophets, but ordinary Scriptures, proclamers of their own ignorance, shame, and impudence: who think they may take liberty in nothing more, than in abusing and wresting the holy Scriptures, which are sufficient to make any man of God perfect, both in gifts and graces, in abilities and in humility: And which should not be handled either privately, or publikely, but with great humility, care, diligence, exactness and conscience; Since, as they were not of private and humane invention, so nor are they of private interpretation, after every man's sudden, unstable, and unlearned fancy; Who rashly singes out texts of Scripture here and there (as they do a Deer out of a herd,) and runs them down, till they fall at the foot of his fancy or opinion; twisting and racking the places till they speak to his mind, and temper: Thus often times the Church of Christ hath seen men of proud and corrupt minds (as they lay Toads of good Eggs hatch Cockarices) from some places of Scripture ravished from their fellows, and wrested from the main scope and context, bring forth most heretical and monstrous sects; operantibus produciones; contrary to those truths, which are most clearly set forth in the whole tenor or Analogy of the Scriptures, as their great design and main intent: Such those of old were, against the divinity and humanity of Christ; Against the holy Trinity; Against the grace of God; and of late against the Law, the Souls Immortal.
Of interpreting Scriptures.

De Donatistis Retract. 1.21. 
Falsa interpretatione Scripturarum est necrus San
tanici regni. 
Hilaron.

mortality, good works, both the Sacraments, all holy duties as forms; 
Against any resurrection and judgment to come, against the very 
being of any Catholick Church, against the Scriptures themselves; 
And so now against any succession or peculiar order of ordained au-
thoritative Ministers, to hold forth the Gospell of Christ, and true 
Religion to the world: So the Maniches from Eph. 2.2. By nature 
you are the Children of wrath, argued Nature of man to be Evill, 
And from a principle of darkness and sin, coeternall with the good 
God. 

That Christ had not two distinct natures, but only one, the flesh turned into God. So Arrius against the 
Divinity, Nestorius against the Unity of the person of Christ. The 
Anthropomorphites urged Scripture for those humane shapes, which 
they grossly imagined to be in God, as in Man; because God speaking 
to Man, speaks as man, not as he is in himself, but as he is most con-
ceivable by us. In none of all which errors, those Patrons of them, 
any more than these (for liberty of opining and of prophesying as 
they lift) will seem to want either reason or Scripture; which some-
time they will call a dead letter; yea and killing too; Affirming 
that both it and the Ministry too are needless; that all are taught of 
God, by a quickning Spirit and a Speciall instruction, &c.

The same men can prophesy too if you let them alone, against 
all civill property and common equity and honesty, out of that place, 
All things are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's; A-
gainst borrowing, or at least paying any pecuniary debts; by Ow 
no man any thing, but love; Against all honest labour and diligence, 
by Labour not for the meat that perisheth, Take no thought for to mor-
row; Against all modesty and decency in cloaths; by that, not of 
putting on of apparell; Against all restraints of Laws and bounds of 
holines in any thing, by that, to the pure all things are pure; All 
things are lawful for me, 1 Cor. 6.12. Against all duty to Parents, 
subjection to Masters and Magistrates, by call no man Father, or 
Lord: be not ye the servants of men, 1 Cor. 7.23. by being Gods 
freemen; for, you are a royall Priest-hood, ergo, no peculiar Mini-
istry; whereas that was said, to the Jews first, who had a peculiar 
Priest-hood, by which the whole Nation was blessed and honoured of 
God. Thus the devil, and his seducing instruments, never want 
their lectures, quotations, and common places, out of the Scriptures; 
When pride, poverty and liberty, once meet together to prophecy as 
they lift, what mad work do they make, with Scriptures, Religion, 
confidence, and all order and Laws of Church or civill societies? 
As those false Prophets in Germany, not long ago did, and others 
after in England designed to have done, making the holy Scripture, 
which is the pure fountain of life, the very flunk and receptacle of 
all heady opinions and fordid practices.

Where
Of interpreting Scriptures.

When as the Holy Scriptures, which are the oracles of God and hold forth his mind to the world in matters of Religion, are to be understood and interpreted (not by minds leavened with heretical pride, or Schismaticall peevishness, or captious and critical morsel-ness, or Scepticall-exultings and jangling) which commonly drive some other secular and sinister end, rather than any thing of true faith, good manners, and an holy life:) but, with all pious and cautious consideration, all humble diligence, and ingenious candor; Which first regards, the sym Analogy, the concurrent tenor; and that clear proportion, or rule of faith and holy life, in doctrine, both for mysteries, and moralities, which are evidently shining from many places, that are Indispensable; either for the clear Instructi-ons in morals; or Institution in mysteries; or Imitation in Illu-rious and commended examples for order and policy: All which are enough to make a man of God, and any Church of Christ, per-fect to salvation.

Impugnation, Tert. Nulla vax divina adae disfutata est & diffusa, ut verba tamen defendantur, & quin verborum non confutatur, Tertul. de praef. ad Har. Rom. 12.6. 2 Tim. 3.17.

And in such light, from the clear proportion, and concurrent har-mony, or constant tenour of Scriptures old and new hath this point of the peculiar function of the Ministry Evangelical; both from the practice and precept of Christ, and his Apostles, and others after them; to which the use and judgement of all Churches do fully attest: In that tryall, approbation, benediction, imposition of hands, Ordination and solemn mission of some men in the Church to the Office and work of the Ministry, which is set forth in the New Te-stament: Against all which, so full clear proofs, and so constant a light, what ever can be urged, by single texts, or solitary and occa-sionall examples, out of Scripture, must needs be by these objecters either weakly, or wilfully mistaken in the phrase and manner of speaking; or else is wrested as St Peter tells us by ignorant and un-fit able minds from the scope and design of the Spirit of God in that place, (which is the measure of all right Interpretation:) Or else it only relates to something done by the rule of occasionall prudence; or speaks of some practice, which was only temporary not binding; or miraculous, and extraordinary; which cease, when the gift and occasion eases; or it may be in some cases of urgent necessity, which might befall an Infant, planting, incompelat, incompletall Church; either not fully formed and settled in the due order, or suddeainly pressed and scattered with vehement perfection, and so forced from that order and exactness in outward Ministrations of the Church, Namms agriof- care ex loca S. S. per quæ ve-sincantur his nitaturum qua ex falsa composu- crum, & que de ambiguitate cepernant, Tert- ul. de praef. 2 Pet. 2.16. Tantum verita-ti obstinit a-dulter sensus quantum & corrupor Sti-lus. Tert. de praef. ad Har. c. 17. Cnt. laevs trin. scribatur tis: iniquit. Epist.h. 75. Acts 8.4. They that were scattered abroad were every where Preaching the word.
which regard a social, public, and common, more than a solitary, and private profession of Religion, and which, in the Churches settled condition, they otherwise duly and conscientiously observed, as the will of God. All which extraordinary cases are, in all wise mens judgment, very far different and distant from that of this Church of England, unless it may seem under some persecution, by flanderous tongues, by false Brethren, and deceitfull workers, and disorderly walkers, the trouble of our Israel; whom the Apostle Pauls charity to this reformed Church, would (no doubt) have wished, that either their mouths might be stopped, or they might be cut off, and delivered with Hymenaeus, Philetus, and Alexander the Copper-Smith, to Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme the Scriptures, and the true Ministry, and this true Church, and in all these, the Gospel and name, with the Spirit and grace of Christ, all which have been manifested among us by the Ministers of this Church.

Truly I do not think that the so oft repeaters of their Socinian

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Wresting of Scriptures.

So that no wise and gracious Christian in reason can, or in conscience ought to sheath these or other Scriptures in Ministers bowels, which are rather for their defence and assistance, Shewing indeed the great use of a constant peculiar Ministry, to prevent the Churches defolations and such necessities of meaner supplyes: So far are they, from affording any ground, either wholly to give a bill of divorce to the settled Ministry (which by so many clear and pregnant texts is plain to be divinely Instituted;) or to encourage any Christians to entertain those proud and spitefull Penitanns of pretenders to be gifted men; thereby to grieve and vex the Souls of the true and faithful Ministers (as the did Hannahs devout meekness, with her malipert insolency.) It is no argument to pervert the Church therefore to cast out of Christ family the Stewards and dispensers of holy mysteries, which he hath appointed, because Christians have sometime in their enforced wandrings, been relieved by some strangers, or private and mutuell Charity; which may in such cases be great, though their gifts and provision be but moderate. However it were madness for Christians now where no necessity or disorder preseth, and when neither gifts are so good, nor Charity so great in any of these now men, to venture themselves upon their powers for supplyes; who (like the foolish Virgins) have too little for themselves, however they boast of their full Lamps and Oyl to spare.

Such small and feeble oppositions then, which (as Tertullian tells us) either Hereticks or Schismatichs are wont to bring from broken and abused Scriptures, for their novell opinions, their proud and pragmatick confusions, against the antient and Catholick tenet, which the Church hath alwaies held forth by its practice, agreeable to the many clear and unquestionable places, do no more weaken the divine authority of those things which the Catholick Church upon lively grounds oblieth (as it alwaies hath this of a constant ordeined Ministry) no more I say, than if Dalilah should have plucked two or three of Samuelsons hairs, instead of cutting off his goodly locks and prodigious tresses. Nor may these false and flattering Dalilahs of our times, (who by cauponating Religion and handling the Scriptures deceitfully, seek to betray the strength, honour, and order of this reformed Church in England, under pretences of great kindness) think, that by twitching thus one or two hairs, the Ministers strength will fail them; or that the Anti-ministerial Philistins shall presently be upon them, so as easily to prevail against the whole function of the settled Ministry; which being divinely instituted, and derived, will ever be divinely assisted: No, Mat. 18, 26, we find yet, (through the might of Gods grace, and the testimony of good consciences,) to great a strength and holy courage, in all
true and faithfull Ministers, as is abundantly able to assert themselves, their function, and the reformed Religion of this Church of England, against all these Apollyons and Abdaddons: We are not so dispirited, nor disquieted, but that we can still rowe up our selves in the strength of God, and in the Spirit of Jesus Christ, and in the authority of our holy function; so, as easily to break in funder all such withs and cords, by which the enemies, not so much of our persons, as of our calling and Religion, hope to affect us; so that these uncircumcised in hearts and lips, shall not safely touch us, or mock us. Only, as Sampson did of the men of Judah, we humbly crave of the secular powers, which are now over us, that their hands may not be against us, to fall upon us themselves, however they expose us, thus to contend with those men of Ad ird. alone: Who came about us first like Bees with their impertinent flings, their vexatious disputings; But now they threaten to come upon us like fat bulls of Bashan on every side, with their horns lifted up on high to destroy us; But the Lord will be on our side, so that we shall not need greatly to fear what these beasts of the people (these unreasonable men) can do unto us; Who will soon be extinguished, as fire among the thorns, when once the Lord shall arise to plead his own cause, not only by the zeal, and patience, and constancy of his servants the true Ministers; but also, by stirring up the spirit of wisdom in the hearts of all true Christians; who will soon be ashamed of that levity, contempt and confusion, which these men vanity, or impiety, and hypocritely, would fain bring upon them, and their pestility, in this great concernment of the set ed Ministry, and the true reformed Religion.

There are (no doubt) who of a long time have endeavoured and fought opportunity, when they might bring with (wits and high shoes, by the illiterate rudeness of the seduced calver, the Ash of our Reformed Church and Religion, into the house of their market Dagon, which hath upper parts like a man, but the lower as a Fish, the head adorned with Christian Religion, but the tayl deformed with superstition. They soffly and pretty pretend livery and improvement, with mens feecs and womens hair as the Lawes which rule out of the bottomles pit) but they will end in the Scorpion tayl of licentiousness, superstition, and profaneness; Such Reformation will soon prove deformity. They speak of bread, but it will prove stones, and Serpents instead of Fishes. Such manifestations of private gifts in wanton and presumptuous Spirits, will soon turn to the quenching and resisting of the true light and heat of Gods Spirit, whose purer flames are only fed with that holy Oxl which flows from the golden vessel of the Scriptures, divinely infused into them, and diffused into the humble hearts of all good Christians by thole
those pipes of the Ministry, which Christ hath appointed for that service: This Anti-ministerial Liberty, which some seek thus to dress up, by an adulterous and wanton bravery, against the calling of the Ministry, is like the woman which sits in the midst of the Ephrah of wickedness; upon the mouth of which God will (ere long) cast such a talent of lead, as shall cover and stop it up, by the just indignation and abhorrence of all good Christians, to see themselves, this Church, the Ministers of it, and the Reformed Religion so much wasted and abused, by such prodigies of profaness as some of them are: who speak nothing, but 

proud, and perverse things; full of bold blasphemies, and Anti-christian confusions; under the colour of gifts and Liberties of prophecy; whereo as the wisdom and holy order let forth in Scripture give me countenance; so, in the next place, neither do these mens gifts, which they so boast and vapour of give any encouragement.

For first no wise man doubts of these mens emptiness, which their great noise and sounding sets forth every where; shewing they are very full of themselves; puffed up with their own leaven; applauded also by some others, and blown up by people of their own size; who are as prone to flatter confident talkers, and undertakers, as Children are to fill empty bladders with wind; Pint-pots will cry up one anothers capacity and fulness, till they are set near or compared and emptied into quart or gallon vessels; Twill then appear, though they were soon full and ran over, yet they held but little, and are soon exhausted. These Behemothick Preachers, Spagyrick-Illuminates, Familistick Prophets, and Scrapbigick Teachers, who pretend to such strange Prerogatives of gifts, and new Lights, above all other Christians, yea and beyond the ablest Ministers; like frantick men alwayes betting of their riches, strength, treasure, beauty, &c. amidst their forrid necessities; If a wise man come near them, he shall find, that as to any true light of good learning, or sound Religion, they are as dark and dusky, as if they had been begotten in the Eclips of the Sun, and born in the last quarter of the Moon.

In good earnest, I wish I could find any just cause, by their speech, or Pamphlets, to let my hand to those ample testimonials, which thee gifted men every where give of themselves and their party; I have no envy at their parts, nor ill will against any of their persons, nor have I suffered (or at least am not sensible of) any particular
particular injury from any of them: So that I can without any passion or partiality profess, that I never yet perceived any such sparks of eminent gifts, either in reason, or Religion, as renders them, either enviable or any way considerable in comparison of those Ministers whom they lift to cry down, and disparage: Poor men, they are indeed admirable (but not Invincible) for a kind of chemical Divinity; which after much pains and puffing, vapours into smoke. They are rare for odd expressions and phantastick phrases, instead of the ancient Scripture forms of wholesome words; Nothing is more wonderfull (as monsters are) than their affected raptures, wild speculations, and strange expresssions: imagining that none sees their folly, because they shat their own eyes, and fear above the common mans capacity in spicuous nonentities: and calling those glorious Truths, which are foolish vanities, or shameful lies: What honest hearted Christian can bear the filthy and saucy expressions, of some of these Anti-ministerial Ranters, Shakers, and Seekers? their metaphysicall mixings of Blasphemy; their riddings of Religion; their curiosious confounding of the Incomprehensible excellencies of God, of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Blessed Spirit, with the nature of any creature never so mean and servile, that to them its no wonder, if the Egyptian found so many Gods in his Garden, as he had Leeks and Onionses; Frogs and Toads; Thus amusing their poor and silly auditors with high blasphemies, and most obscure extravagancies. Such of old were the rare speculations, inventions, and expressions of the Valentiniars. Their Bushi, Aones, Syzigiai, Pseudovanthels, Pleromata, conceptio spiritualis, umbra omnium. And a thousand such blaspheious whittyses, which Irenaeus tells of in his times. So that their Dungeon-like Divinity and Mid-night Doctrines, instead of far explications of Truth by Scripture reasoning and the demonstration of the Spirit therein, are rather like Hedge-hogs, when they are handled, they wrap themselves up into such prickly intricacies; as makes them not only useless, ugly and untractable; but hurtful and scandalous to sober Christians and all true Religion; which these fellows dress up with their foul fingers, as Black-Smiths would do fine Ladys, fully ing all they touch, while they seem to adorn.

Certainly, If spiritual gifts, and prophecy of old, had been such ordinary stuff, such raw and rude conceptions, such short shrumps, and broken ends of Divinity, such ridiculous and incoherent dreams, such senseless and sorry confusions, as some of these Familistical fancies usually bring forth, either extempore, or premeditated; I do not believe the wisdom of the Apostle would have bid Christians either cover it, or not despise it. Both which precepts import, that such prophecysings as were of old, and are only fit to be used in
The arrogancy of false and weak Prophets.

in the Church, had and ought to have such tokens of excellency and
worth in it, for the edifying of Christians, as may induce wise and
good Christians both to esteem it, and desire it; of which I think
these presumptuous Propheciers find but a few, either to follow them
or desire them, which is not the least cause of their great envy and
indignation against those excellent Ministers, who so much stand in
their light, as for out-shining them in all real abilities, gifts and
graces, they still retain the best and wilest of the people in some fair
degree of order and discretion, which forbids them to choose the first
of these new Enthusiasts, which are very bad, before those of their
antient Ministers, which are very good; between whom (indeed)
nothing but extreme ignorance, or ranting prophane, can make any
comparision; Nor will their loud (Euphæs) boastings of rare discoveries,
admirable inventions, and singular manifestations, false their credit,
or long serve their turn: For what are their rarities and novelties, but
either old Truths in new reins, purposely translated by such brokers
of religion, out of the old forms of sound words? or else some purrid
corrrs long ago buried, which these (τηθεικαι) searchers of the
graves of old heretiques newly light upon, and take for some rare
hidden treasures. Their splendid fancies like chips of rotten wood
may shine for a while, and serve to amuse, or scare those silly souls
who are still in the dark, ever learning, and never coming, (by the
means of these Teachers) to the knowledge of the Truth; but they
will never be esteemed as beams or sparks of divine light, until all
wise Christians have lost their eyes.

I have many times been even astonished to hear, and read of
the rudenes and incivilities of these Anti-ministeriall boasters: their The arro-
blustering and crowding into Ministers Pulpits; their voluble and ratic-
gancy and ling tongues; their no foreheads, their lowd elemors: their active impudence
hends, their indefatigable agitations. I never wanted or wished any of some pre-
thing more in them, to make them compleat Prophets, and Prea-
tenders to chers, but only solidity, gravity, modesty, charity, some favour of gifts a-
learning joyned with humility, and zeal with humanity; some me-
against the thods of intelligible reason, and profitable Scripture-Divinity.

true Min-
sters.

Sunt qui viétam quæsatam non sponde cultus sed impudentia suntis. Eras de Monchis. Vintofa & enim ipsa loquaxitas Religionis modcstiam velut pestilent (quodam sizere asf. nec veritatem by-
sam minus quia num sobriorem illam eloquentiam, rudes sacris, & efficitis divinis debitam & decoran cor-
rumpit. Verul.

Of all which they having so little, as amounts to nothing, yet I
find they are always more than Conquerors in all their adventures;
If they do but affront a grave, sober, learned, and godly Minister,

(who
Petulant Boastings and Triumphs.

(who is fit to be their father in Instruction, and possibly hath been so, before they thus degenerated) if they dare (as what dare they not, when they go sometimés like wolves in heaps, from place to place, seeking what flocks, yea what Shepherds they may devour, seduce, or scatter?) If I lay they dare oppóse him in his own place with their impudent cavils, frivolous queries, or scrupulous objections: If they can but interrupt him in his holy ministrations, or give him some astonishment to see such unwonted evil spirits appear in the Church: If at length they can by barbarous and intolerable infolacies, both of words and actions, disorder and hinder him in his holy offices, or at least sufficiently shew the rest of the amased people, how safely they can contemn, and interrupt the publick service of God (which kind of religious riot, never was tolerated in any civil Nation under Heaven, or among any the most barbarous, that owned any publick worship of their God.) If the Miníster (good man) blush, and be ashamed, or something disordered by them, and for them; If he in wisdom think fit to confute them with silence, not answer-ing such fools according to their folly; as Hezekiah advis’d his servants to entertain the petulancy of rayling &c. &c. Or if he so far gratifies their importunities, and bears with their raflical manners, and confused arglungs, as to dispute with them, and by feuer managing good arguments, without any passion, to drive them to apparent bal-pusses, to all manner of confusions and contradictions; to a thousand absurdities, against all common principles of reason, against all fundamentals of Religion; against all Scripture evidences; against all Maximes, Logickall, Morall, Historickall and Theologicall; If his sorrowful opponents, impatient to be so soberly baffled, are forced to quit all clear reason and Scripture proofs, retreating in vain, to their new lights, fond interpretations, and falce glosses; to their Seraphick whimsies, and Enthusiasticall dreams, (which can have them, no more now from flame, than Bazil could his self-wounding and vainly (Liborous priests) so that at length they fly to down-right rayling and threatening to scare the good man with the next troopers which they can get to appear with them; if at last, like Wifes, they are forced (by the godly Minísters learned gravity and constancy) to quit the place, and only leave their dings of reproaches behind them, being full of infinite malice, regret and despite for their contifien;

Yet presently, after this great Achievement, the Trumpets (or rams horns rather) must every where where found among the Anti-ministerial party; The (Libœs) Triumphant songs must be sung; Every where it must ring; that the Walls of Jericho are fall; Babylon is form’d, Antichrist is plundered; The Pulpit guards are romed. The victor is cried up; The Triumph must be adorned with colourable Narratives, bitter Invectives, lying Orations, and Philippick decla-
declamations: signifying, what glorious successes these doubtful Champions had. Lastly, the poor Minister, without any regard to his age, learning, worth, or credit, together with his whole tribe and function, must in a fanatical pageantry be led captive; In their black coats, and mourning habits, they must sadly follow the Chariot of these invincible Heroes; who like Caesar, do but come, and see, and conquer any true Minister whatsoever, be he never so fortified with learning, prudence, experience, good credit and conscience; all these are but flinble to that fiery spirit, which is in these holy Incendiaries, who, like Don Quixotes, or Knights Errants, have so many Romances of religion in their heads, strange fancies and enchanting opinions, that they never want Windmills and Giants to encounter; yea, and they never make adventures without glorious successes, and unimaginable Miracles; doing more wonderful feats with a Dwarf, or a Squire, and an Enchantment, than ever the most fortunate General did, with the best disciplin'd Army of horse and foot. And in the heat of these Rodomontadoes of that credulous and cruel Faction, their disdain of Ministers Author too high, that they meditate nothing less, than to sacrifice them all to their just wrath and indignation; as Elias did Baals priests (for so they call the best of our Ministers) as if all the English world had lately been convinced, by these gifted men, of their former errors, and converted by Miracles and fire from heaven at the word of these rare Teachers, from listening to, or regarding any more, their true Ministers.

Thus is their ordinary overvaluing of themselves; thus their scorn of all others; thus their implacable anger against all able and good Ministers, which is therefore the more black and desperate, because it arises from Envy, and amounteth to despair, while they cruelly suspect, and sometimes smartly find, and sensibly feel the real abilities of Ministers, both publickly appearing, and generally esteemed by all wise and good Christians, far beyond their Phantasms, their frothy noises, and mere shews of being (as Symon Magus coveted to be esteemed) some great one; when he bewitched the people of Samaria, both great and small, so far as to think him the power of the great God. This makes them so touchy and impatient of fair disputes, of calm and sober Conferences, contenting themselves to be blustering Scorners, and tumultuary opposers of those excellent Ministers, whom to compare to such Zany's, Dwarfs and Pignies, (as to any true worth of men, or excellency of Christians, or abilities and gifts for the Ministry) were to honour them, and to disparage those too much.

eminuentiam aeqvique aut emulavi negavit. Laet. /'hov ivat tvx thito nipay. O67@r ovi fumurms /r s7 i tyn. Act. 8.9.
The Anti-ministerials Insufficiency.

For what, I beseech you, (O wise and excellent Christians ( for to you still I must appeal ) are in good earnest those great gifts, and rare abilities which these later Donatists so much boast of against the true and Ordeined Ministers of this Church? Are they those grave, learned, and well digested-collections; or those judicious, sweet, and whollome Conclusions; or those cordiall and spiritfull distillations, of divine and saving truths, diligently gathered ( as Industrious Bees do their Honey ) from various readings, by assiduous studies, frequent prayers, serious meditations, and well-made observations? Are they from search and understanding of the Sacred Originals of the Divine Oracles, or from much converse in elaborate Commentaries upon the Scriptures; from diligent reading of secular and Ecclesiastical Histories; from good in-fight into all commendable Authors and Sciences? All which the studies and labours of holy and learned Ministers have competently or plentifully afforded them; and they have brought forth to the Churches of Christ, in all ages; and in no age or Church more liberally, than in this last age, and in this Church of England. By which Methods of wisdom attending daily at her Posts and Gates, true and able Ministers have filled, and are daily filling the treasures of their minds, with excellent and well-digested matters, both old and new, fitting themselves for every good word and work. All which digestions of holy studies, they seasonably, orderly, and discreetly bring forth with all the advantages ( for the peoples profiting ) of grave, clear, Methodical and lively Eloquence, both in Praying and Preaching. These indeed have been, and still are, by Gods blessing, the real Ministerial sufficiencies, which the true Ministers of England have been, and still are best withall; which these pretenders envy, despair of, despite, and would destroy.

Because they know indeed ( and so do the most and best of men ) that their short teddar will by no artifice of clamour, rayling, and Popular flatteries ever stretch near to that proportion which true Ministers have, no more, than the Toad in the fable, could swell itself to the emulated Ox. Alas, all the frippery of these Brakes and besters, ( who have nothing but a Long-lane, or second-hand divinity, which they so much hang out at their shop windows ) extends to no more than a plagiar way of pilching and stealing whole discourses, or taking some Sermon notes, from some able Ministers preaching, or writing. This good matter they miserably trephane and deface, with their evil prefaces, odd patchings, ragged mangings of it, and wild digressions from it, the better to conceal their theft; yet is this laziness and the very best of their shifts; and among the most venial arts, which are used by these Wesp's and Drones, which now begin to grow Hornets, and hope to drive the true Ministers, as the
The Anti-ministerials Insufficiency.

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the old Cananites, out of this good Land, that they may inherit it; Joz. 14:12.
They have no other slaves and crutches to lean their lameness upon, but only such as they have gathered out of the Ministers own woods, and now (like ungracious children) they bear with them both their own Parents, and the Planters.

For, if at any time these brazen orators adventure to entertain their leaders, Auditors (who like Callow birds gape wide, and are greedy to swallow any thing which is brought them,) with stuff of their own proper mal-invention, un-preparation, and ill-compound;
Nothing is commonly more weak, and flabby, (like whites of Eggs without salt,) Nothing more loose, spungy, insinnewie, and unsubstantial, than what aritheth from no higher source than their own brains; their sudden and shallow fancies, which like Rheum easily swins out of their lips, yea worfe, many times nothing is more pestilential, erroneous, and more fanatically confused: Even most unwholesome, and (to well-tafting Christians) most unfavoury medleys of filthy falsehoods, desperate and damnable doctrines, tempered (as the Rar-bane of old Hereticks, which Tertullian tells of,) was worn with some mixtures of Scripture Texts, some light insiprations of Truth, to make them more appetitious and passable with their (at first it may be,) some what squeamish disciples, who by little and little, as Mithridates, wanting themselves to nibble and sip off poisons, come to that confidence, that they venture to quaff up any draughts, into which their bolder Moutnebankks evidently squeeze, and infufe the venom of most loathsome Creatures; such as have spit out their poiyson, like the Racovian Catechism, and such like primers of the Devil, against Christ, and the holy Spirit, against the grace of God, the Law, the Scriptures; against the glorious Essence, goodness, and wisdom of God; against the Sabbath and Sacraments; against all duties, all distinctions of order, or office in the Church; against all restraints of humane laws, against all holiness, Morality, and modesty in mens lives; The only Antidote which their wretched hearers have against all these, or the like poiysons of souls, is no other, but their custom of drinking such horrid and abominable liquors, whose venom hath so stupefied their consciences, that they are past all feeling and sense, of either sin, shame, or sorrow. Nor is there ever any of these new Rabbies, who can content himself with either the orders of this Church, or the Articles of Sound doctrines, or Catechisticall foundations and principles which it hath embraced and propounded, upon very grave and good advise, as most safe and necessary for Christians; They must ever have some new fangle, either of opinion, or practise, to make them remarkable.


Dd 2 But,
Gifts alone make not a Minister.

But, if I should yield (which I cannot do with truth) or only suppose some of these men to have even ordinary Apostolical gifts, (as they vainly and falsely pretend) yet even these would not make them beyond, or better than false Apostles, unless they had the call, mission and authority, which true Apostles had immediately from Christ, and which false Apostles untruly pretended to, who, though they taught the truth, yet with falsity pretended, they had seen the Lord Jesus, and were sent as other Apostles by him; Nor will those common gifts make them ordinary Prophets or Ministers in the Church, unless they have the ordinary call and mission, which Christ hath set in the Church; A Serpent of gold, would not have brought those healing effects, which the brazen did, at God’s appointment. Gifts of knowledge and utterance alone, are not qualifications sufficient for men to challenge the right of Ordination to publick Ministry; for the morals and practices of men, as well as their intellectual, are much to be considered; the Priest might be able, and the Levite lusty for service, when they were unclean, and so unfit for the Temple. The levity, haughtiness, rudeness, boastings, and inconstancies observable in some men’s looks, gesture, habit, and carriage (as St. Ambrose guessed at the mine and garb of two Presbyters, who afterward proved stark naught), makes them less fit to be ordained Ministers in the Church, than many, who have weaker gifts, but discover more prudence, gravity, meekness, humility, and diligence.

A stock, and gifts, and parts, either natural or acquired, though never so thrifty and spreading, is of itself, but as a crabstock, and can of itself bear no other than sour fruits, of factions, Schisms, Emulations, and carnal confusions in the Church, till it is grafted with holy ordination, by that due ministerial power, which is in the Church: As there are formally, or truly, no true Sacraments, where the same Elements and words materially are used, unless there be also a right Minister of holy things, who acts and consecrates not in any natural or civil capacity as from his own mind, or other men’s will, but by delegation and appointment from Christ; nor can there be a right Minister, or Officer from Christ (as I formerly proved) where there is not a right patent, divine power and commission given in his Name by due ordination; as it is but treason and rebellion, for the above States-man or Lawyer, to undertake and act the part of an Ambassador or Judge, until he be made such, by those, in reference to whose will and work, such power and employment only can be conferred; That cannot be done in another’s name, which is not done by his consent, and according to his declared will. Men of the greatest gifts, if they are disorderly in the Church, are but as wens in the body, the greater the worser, the more they swell beyond the modell and true proportion of the bodies features, the more deor-
deformity and inconvenience they bring to the whole body, nor hath any man any cause to boast of them; for it is not the greatness, but fitness of parts, which makes them handsome or useful to the whole; who knows not that great sins and parts are oft-times great temptations? as was said of Origen, whole frequent Preaching in the Church of Alexandria, before he was Ordeined Presbyter, gave great offence to grave and godly men, imputing his errors and fall to his too great forwardness and presumption. The Serpent, which was subtler than other beasts, is chosen by the Devill, as a fit organ for to convey his temptations: Proud and presumptuous gifts in men, are no better than those inordinate excrescencies, which exceed men's notes, or blind their eyes, or sometimes swell bigger than their heads; nor will their fate be better at last, than that of the Giants was, who presuming of his vast limbs, and the extraordinary number of his fingers and toes, (which were twenty four in all) yet there wanted not of David's worthies, who flew him, when he defied the Church of God: If men be left to measure themselves only by themselves, (as most of these overwise-men do) which of them but is prone to think very highly of himself? and like the Apes in the fable, fancy they can build as brave Houses, and Cities, and Churches, as the ablest man, but when they come to the Wood, they have not so much as Saws, or Axes, or any tools to begin the work withall?

But these over-forward men usually reply with great sadness and severity against Ministers Monopolizing of the duty and office of Preaching the Gospell, That Paul rejoiced if any preached Christ; though of envy and evill will, though not Ordeined, &c. I answer, first, It doth not appear, but those men might have due Ministeriall power, to preach the Gospell; and yet through passion or faction they abused this power, seeking their own things, and not the things of Christ. Or secondly, It may be their preaching was, but privat, domestique, and charititative Instruction or confirming of others, repeating as the Bereans, what they had learned of St.Paul, or other Apostles, which is not denied to any sober Christians, but only required to be kept within thole bounds of Order and humility, so as it neither becomes rival to, or opposer of, nor yet a despiser, and at last an aboller of the office of the publique Ministry, which is the design of the presumptuous, and pretenders against the Ministers. Thirdly, If those whom the Apostle speaks of, were not Preachers by office, but only by their own little motives of applause or profit, or Envy and the like, they were moved to preach the Gospell of Christ, yet they did not like our modern Intruders and Usurers, boast of Extraordinary gifts and call; nor did they deny, or seek to overthrow in others the ordinary power and office of that Ministry, which Christ
That Christ was any way Preached.

and the Apostles had setled in the Church, and to which they pretended to have a zeal. Fourthly, at the worst, what ever they were, or did, regularly or irregularly, as to the point of Preaching Christ crucified, the Apostle so far rejoiced, not, as they were passionate, or peevish, curious, disorderly, &c. but so far, as God restrained them in any moderate bounds of truth-speaking. It was some joy to see a leis degree of mischief, and scandal arise from their pervertinels and spite; That they did not blaspheme that Name, and preach another Gospel; or corrupt this in points of doctrine, with Jewish or Heretical leaven; no leas than they did with those tinctures of passions, envy, and defects of Charity: A good Christian may rejoice at any preparation of men to receive the Gospel, as in the Indies, tho' they be first taught it, in much weakness and superstition; It is so far happy, in the worst of times and things, that there is no simple or sincere evil, which hath not some mixture of good in it, which it abufeth, else it could not be at all; and some extraction of good may be from it by the omnipotent wisdome of God, causing all things to work together for the good of his Church.

In omnino male est aliqua boni mixtura; Simpliciter enim absque malum esse non potest; Neque enim est malum purum, sed de-bitis boni privatis, neque est cognoscibilis nisi per bonum. Tho. Aqu. q. 14. n. 14. Non humanae est imbecillitatis plena indagine cognoscere quae ratione Deus mala fieri patiatur, quae non inest in se fed consilio permittuntur. Salv. lib. 1. cap. 1. God's permissions not to be urged against his Precepts and Institutions? The rule in the Word is still right, constant, and divine, though in the water of events, providence may seem crooked and irregular. Gods toleration of evill, of disorders, or heresies in the Church, doth not justify them in the least kind against his Word, which forbids them. The Apostle was glad (and so may we be in evil times) that things were no worse, but he allows them not to be so bad; nor would he approve the doing of evil, or the envy and spightfulness in preaching, that good might come thereby;

He only considered it in the event, as to God's disposing, not in the agent or fact, as to man's perverting; A sober and wise man may make a good use of others madnefs and folly, as God doth of mans and devills malice. One may rejoice, that there are some poisons, creaturcs, by which to make Theriacas and Antidotes; Many venomous beasts have the cure in them against their own stings and poisons.

But what sober Christian will urge Gods permissions against his Precepts and Institutions? The rule in the Word is still right, constant, and divine, though in the water of events, providence may seem crooked and irregular. Gods toleration of evil, or disorders, or heresies in the Church, doth not justify them in the least kind against his Word, which forbids them. The Apostle was glad (and so may we be in evil times) that things were no worse, but he allows them not to be so bad; nor would he approve the doing of evil, or the envy and spightfulness in preaching, that good might come thereby; He only considered it in the event, as to God's disposing, not in the agent or fact, as to man's perverting; A sober and wise man may make a good use of others madn ess and folly, as God doth of mans and devills malice. One may rejoice, that there are some poisons, creatures, by which to make Theriacas and Antidotes; Many venomous beasts have the cure in them against their own stings and poisons.

The
The same Apostle might rejoice in the supposed (not decreed and absolute) necessity of heresies (there must be heresies;) that (as in these times) the constancy of judicious and sincere Christians may be made manifest. It is some safe that impostures break, whereby corrupt humors are let out and spent: possibly the Apostle might in some lente or notion have rejoiced in the storms he suffered, and the shipwreck, so far as it discovered Gods extraordinary protection to him, and for his sake, to those with him. And so may all his faithfull Servants and Ministers, have cause at last to rejoice, when the Lord hath brought them and this Church to the fair haven, after this foul weather, which seeks to overwhelm them. But Christ is in the ship, and they have a good Pilot God, whose Spirit, with their own, bids them be of good chear. The Lord can and will have his that be godly, from so great a death. But such joyes are the serious and sincere raptures of very godly and wise men, far enough seperated from the flahes of the world; which hardly ever discern in events, what is of God, from what is of man; Good events, in which Gods over-powring is seen, are oft consequential, not intentionall, as to the second agents, and flow not from their will or vertrue, but follow their work through Gods sovereign over-ruling; who, as St. Austin layes, would not permit any evil of sin to have been in, and from the creatures pravity of free will, and infirmity of power, if his infinite both power and goodnes, had not known how to extract the good of his glory, out of the greatest evil.

And truly this good, we hope, through the mercy of God, both The good all true Ministers, and all true Christians in this Church of England, which may will reap, by this envy, contention, spiritfull, unsincere and uncivill come from dealing of these Anti-ministeriall Adversaries, (who cry up their this evil to new preaching, and prophesying wayses, thereby thinking to add affitt true Ministration to those bonds and distresses which are upon Ministers in these sters. dangerous and difficult times;) That this will make all true Min. sters more study to be able for to walk worthy of, and always to adorn that holy profession, and divine Ministration which they have upon them, that so they may stop the mouths of gainstayers, who lyce in wait for their halting, and rejoice at their fallings; Afo it will breed in all others that are serious, sound, and good Christians, a greater abhorrence of these insolent and disorderly ways in the Church, the root and fruits of which are carnall, not spirituall, pride, faction, strife, bitternes, confusion, form of religion, corruption of all true doctrine and holy manners, negleé and dispuse of holy duties; prophanes and disposition to all superstitions, licentiousness, flatteries, and lukeness, as to the power of the true reformed Religion; As it is most evident in those places, where these New-pretenders have most intrud'd themselves, and extruded the true and able Ministers.
Contempt of Sad experience will shortly teach all such as love this Church and the Reformed religion, how much it concerned them to have endeavoured, by the great vindications, and by civil Sanctions of the honour of the pub-Gospel, paves like Ministry; That there may be exact care in the right authority and strowes for ordination, and true antient succession, which confers the Divine power and office; as also good encouragements, and assistance in the due execution of it, that it may not be exposed to so many affronts, all impiety, reproaches; and disgraces, of vile men, and insolent manners, who fear not, openly to contemn such a reformed Church, and its so famous Ministry, together with the whole Nation, and the Laws of it, even in so high a nature and measure as this is, to vilifie their publike Religion, and to seek to extirpate the true Ministry of it.

As good Laws oft rise by the occasion of evil manners, like Antidotes from Poylsions; so advantages may at last accrue to the Reformed religion, and to the true Ministry of it, by these oppositions. Nothing makes the lustre of truth to shine more clear and welcome, than those clowdings and blasphemies, under which it may, for a time, be hidden and Ecclipsed; Nothing will make able Physicians more necessary and valued, than the swarms of such ignorant Quacks, as are of no value, who are more dangerous than any Plague or Epidemical disease; Nor is the estate of any Church, as to Religion, more safe, by the multitudes of preaching Mowstebanks, in stead of True and able Ministers. In stead of Propating the Gospel, they will every where so corrupt it with errors, so abase it with prejudices and scandals, so harden men against the power of it, by the rottenness and hypocrisie of their ways, that there will be more need of able and true Ministers to recover and settle the honour of the true Christian religion in this Nation, than if it were now first to be converted from Paganism; For the Devils strongest holds are those, which are fashioned after the platforms of religion, and pretend to more than ordinary piety.

So that when I consider the temper and form of this. Anti-ministerial faction in England, I find, that their heads by a sickly kind of religion, are grown too heavy for their weak and overburthened limbs; Their self-conceit of their extraordinary gifts and abilities, presuming themselves to be able to do, what ever they fancy, makes them more than ordinarily disabled, as to any good word or work; Like Narcissi, they are so deluded with the flattering Echoes of their silly admirers; and so taken with their own fashion, in such false glassesthat they are like to die till they die, and starve themselves, as to all real sufficiencies, by the fond imagination of how great gifts they have, and their ignorance of how much (indeed) they want. Nothing more hinders real abilites, than too hasty presumptions of them: If any of these glorious have any competent:

\[ \text{Musa praecipue} \]
Anti-Ministerials incompetency of gifts.

Competent gifts of knowledge, as to some things of Religion, yet (like the Chickens hatchet by the force of Ovens in the heat of Camels-Dung, as at Aleppo, Damascus, and other places in the East) they have commonly something in them, monstros, odd, extravagant; either defective or superfluous in opinions, or practice; in intellectuals, or morals, or prudentials; Either vain or morose; light or tetrarch; rude or proud; popular or affected; Impatient of nothing so much as the bounds of that honest calling, in which God, and the Laws have placed them; Unsatisfied and ever quarrelling with that sober, peaceable, settled way of judicious and humble piety; which becomes good Christians, admits the Gospel, and keeps up the honour of the Reformed Religion, and of this Church of England; which, these mens late violent extravagancies, and disorderly walkings, beyond and contrary to all holy rules of Religion, all modest bounds, of reason, Law, and common order among men and Christians, seek to make weary, sick, and ashamed of it self; when it shall see it self robbed and spoyle of all its able Ministers, Reverend Bishops, learned Presbyters, and orderly Professors, and only guarded by ariotous and incomposed rabble of such, whole ignorance, weakness and confusions will only serve to betray and destroy, the Reformed Religion; but never to defend it, against those many, malicious, crafty and well armed adversaries; who do but ly in wait for opportunities, to weaken, dishonour, disorder, and quite overthrow, both this and all other Reformed Churches.

Alas, these gifted men, who spread so large sayls, hang out such fair streamers, and seek to make so goodly a show to the vulgar simplicity, as if they were strong built, well rigid, and richly laden vessels, fit to endure those rough Seas and storms, to which both the Truth and Ministry of the Gospel are frequently exposed; are easily judged by all wise and truly learned Christians, to be but light keels, and flat bottomed Boats; by their soaring so loftily; by their running so boldly over any shelves and rocks of opinion; by their putting into every small creek of controversy; which sheers, they draw very little water; that they have not the due ballast of weighty knowledge and sound judgement; the want of which makes them so fool dely, so apt to be tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine; so prone to grow leaky and foul, either letting in underwater, cunningly and secretly, corrupt and brackish opinions, or shipping in above deck, openly and boldly, whole Seas of any sinister ends, and worldly interests, that are abroad in the storms and waves and confusions of civil affairs; from which the best


Alas, the gifted men, who spread so large sayls, hang out such fair streamers, and seek to make so goodly a show to the vulgar simplicity, as if they were strong built, well rigid, and richly laden vessels, fit to endure those rough Seas and storms, to which both the Truth and Ministry of the Gospel are frequently exposed; are easily judged by all wise and truly learned Christians, to be but light keels, and flat bottomed Boats; by their soaring so loftily; by their running so boldly over any shelves and rocks of opinion; by their putting into every small creek of controversy; which sheers, they draw very little water; that they have not the due ballast of weighty knowledge and sound judgement; the want of which makes them so fool dely, so apt to be tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine; so prone to grow leaky and foul, either letting in underwater, cunningly and secretly, corrupt and brackish opinions, or shipping in above deck, openly and boldly, whole Seas of any sinister ends, and worldly interests, that are abroad in the storms and waves and confusions of civil affairs; from which the best

Arist. de Virt. & vit.


Christians study alwaies to keep themselves most free and unspotted.

The large Philacteries of pretended preaching gifts, which some men to Pharisaically set forth to the vulgar view (who as St. Jerome faith, easily admire what they hardy yet understand) do not presently make them such Rabbies, and teachers in Israel, as they fancy and affect to be counted, where there is or may be had far better supplies of such able, and right ordained Ministers, as the Church of England hath brought up. There are graces and gifts of the Spirit to be shewed in mens silence, as well as in their speaking: (as he that knew how to hold his peace put in his name among the famous Orators;) Yea if the case of this Church were so desolate as some pretend, and destitute of able and faithful Ministers, (which blessed be God it yet is not) yet few of these forward intruders of themselves have such sober gifts, and well-grounded knowledge in the mysteries of Christian, and in the ordinary controversies of the Reformed Religion, as might supply the Church in its cases of necessity; wherein any Christians or Churches may possibly crave and have some relief, as to the teaching, confirming, or comforting part of the Ministry, from the larger and golden rule of Charity; Where Christian communion makes believers useful to each other, not out of Office and speciall duty, but out of love, and that generall relation they have to each other; Which necessity thanks be to God is not yet the Case of this Church, nor shall ever need to be (by Gods blessing) if Magistrates and true Ministers would do the duties, which become them in their places: Though the Harvest be great, yet the Labourers are not few, which are of the Lords sending, if they may be suffered to do the Lords work: And if those sturdy gleaners and pirlers (who thrust themselves into others mens fields and labours) did not every where disturb and hinder them by their quarrelling and strambling.

Who doubts, or denies, but in cases of reall, not feigned, affected, or imaginary necessity, when Christians are forcibly deprived of their true Pastors and Ministers, the Lord Jesus Christ, who hath speciall care of his Church, by the assistance of his Spirit, can turn the water of some Lay-mens weaker gifts, into wine, for the Instruction, confirmation, and consolation of scattered and desolate Christians; Although these teachers are not every way exactly prepared, nor fitted for every work of the Sanctuary? Rather than poor Christians, that hunger for the food of Heaven, should wholly want refreshing, Ravens shall feed them, as they did wildred and banished Elia: A lay mans barrell of meall and cruze of Oyl, that is, his good skill and found understanding in the main fundamentals of

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**Mat. 23.5.**

Confirmatu hypostasis Pharisaee quando ampliantur Philacterias. Chryl.

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**Mat. 9.37.**

The Churches supplies in cases of necessity, When true Ministers cannot be enjoyed. John 2. Laudate salutam de necessitate virtutem; sed plus illam qui elegit liberias non indicit necessitas. Ber. Ep. 113. 1 Kings 17. 6. 1 Kings 17.
Christian Liberty in use of gifts.

of faith, and holy practice; Also in those gracious promises which God hath made to upright hearts; these may have miraculous augmentations and effusions to sustain a widowed Church and Orphan Christians in time of dearth: But we must not therefore suffer these Acephalists, these circulators and beggars to pervert us, that we are famished in our fathers house (where we see servants are wanton with fulness of Bread) meerly that they may best, how they have made us to eat of their mouldy scraps, and drink of their musty bottles.

In the confusion of a family, where violence overbears settled order, (removing both chief and inferior Officers;) those supplies are commendable, which the charity and discretion of any servants can afford one the other, yet without usurping any place and authority, which they have not, over others: But in a settled and orderly family, where there are Stewards and Officers appointed, it is a preposterous charity for every Servant to undertake to give to the Children, or Servants of the family, their portions. Precedents of extraordinary sustentation with Bread, Wine, and Oyl, either by miracle or Charity, are no warrant for any mens presumptions, rashnesses, and disorder, in ordinary cases, any more, than those forenamed examples should justify any man from madness, who presuming of extraordinary supplies, would cut up all Vines, or plant no Olives, or tille no tillage and Husbandry, which are the ways of Gods ordinary providence, both to exercise and reward mens honest and orderly industry: In like manner, where the Churches or societies of Christians greater or smaller are blessed with the enjoyment of those institutions and gifts which Christ hath appointed and bestowed for the joynt and publike good of his Church, in planting, preserving, and propagating true Religion with good order: (which ever was, and is to be carried on by the right Ministration of the word and Sacraments, and other holy Offices properly belonging to duly ordered and authorised Ministers) there, no pretended liberty, or affected and self-made necessity, no right of commonage or levelling zeal, may violate the bounds, which Christ hath set, and the Churches ever observed; He that breaks the hedges of Religious order in the Church, the Serpent of an evil conscience shall bite him.


All true Christian Liberties, that is, such as are * comely, or Of Christi- derly and useful, are by all godly and learned Ministers, allowed, ans Liberty and encouraged, in all faithful people, of whatsoever calling, qua- lity, and condition; Masters in their families; Magistrates on their gifts.

Benches; Commanders amidst their Souldiers; Princes among their * Libertas ut

Ee 2

De Acephaliz.

hos neque inter laicos n'que inter clericos Religion detentac divina: mixtum genus ex pro- toque bisarmis.

Off. Hilp. de

c. 3.
Christian Liberty in use of gifts.

subjects, cannot appear, more to their honour and advantage within their places and callings, than, when, like Solomon, they shine with that wisdom, piety, and devotion, which becomes all true Christians, on all occasions; and may make them merit the honour of Princes and Preachers too in Jerusalem; which liberties and abilities, the humble piety of wife and modest Christians knows, how soberly and discreetly to use as to any occasion of private charity, or publice edification in their places; yet not insolently and unfeazonably to abuse it: so, as to disparage, neglect, and usurp upon the publice ordained Ministry. Every one may read and recite, and tell others of an Act or Proclamation, and help them to understand it; but only an Herald or Officer may publike proclame it, in the name of him that grants it. Children or servants in any family may impart of their Provifion and Bread to one another in charity and love: but this they do, not as Stewards and Officers, whose place is to give to every one their portion in due season. We read the Bereans were industrious: More noble: Not for undertaking to Preach, but for industrious searching the certainty of the truth, duly Preached to them by the Apostles. Nothing is more generous and noble than orderly and Religious Industry. It were happy for all good Ministers, if there were every where more of thole noble, generous and industrious Christians among their hearers, who like the Bereans, by often meditating, searching, repeating, mutually conferring, applying, and (if need be) by further explaining, as they are able and have experience, of the word, duly Preached to them, would as it were break the elods, and Harrow in the good Seed, after the Ministers Plowing and Sowing: Yet still there is a large difference, between a true Ministers Preaching in Gods name to the Judges at Assizes, and the Judges reciting or applying some points of the Sermon, with wisdom and piety; so far as suits with the charge he gives; not as a Minister but as a Christian Magistrate; whose Commission is only civil, to do civil Justice according to Law, and power given by man, between man and man; the other as a Minister is sacred; to reveal the righteousness of God in Christ, to men, for the eternall salvation of their souls.

But why any Christian should affect in peaceable times, and in a plentiful loy, to have either any man that lift to employ himself, or no Husbandmen or Labourers at all in Gods Field and Vineyard, who by speciall care, skill, and authority should look to its right ordering and improvement most to the encrease of Gods glory, and the Churches benefit, I can yet see no reason; save only those depths and devices of Satan; which are hid under the arbitrary speciousness and wantonness of some poor gifts, the better to cover
cover those designs, which the pride, malice, hypocrisy, and profanities of some men's hearts aim at; which are not hard to be discerned in many men, by that extreme leasiness, and tenderness, which those tumors, and inflamed swellings of their gifts, and self conceited sufficiencies have, to be tried or touched, by the laying on of hands; that is in a due, exact, and orderly way of examination, approbation and Ordination; The fear is, lest if such pitiful Prophets Spirits should be subject to the Prophets, they should be found to have more need to be taught the mysteries, and principles of Religion, than any way fit to teach others, by a most preposterous presumption; whose foolish haste makes but the more wast, both of Peace and order, truth and charity in the Church.

The greatest abilities of private Christians, being orderly and humbly exercised, are no way inconsistent with the function of the Ministry; they may be easily and wisely reconciled, however some men (whose interest lies in our discords and divisions), would fain set them at variance; That Ministers should be jealous of their ablest hearers, and those emulous of their faithfulllest Ministers. No hearers are more welcome to able Ministers, than such are, in some kind, fit to teach, reprove, admonish, and comfort others: Nor are any men more humbly willing to be taught and guided in the things of God, by their true Ministers, than those who know how to use the gifts of knowledge, they attain, without despising the chiefest means by which they and others do attain it; which is, by the publick Ministry of the Church: This enables them to benefit others, in charity; but not to boast of their gifts in a factious vanity; or to give any grief, or disorder to the Ministers of the Church; who besides their labours in the Pulpit, have so furnished the Church with their writings from the Press, that, such Christians as can content themselves with safe and easy humility, rather than laborious and dangerous pride, may, upon all occasions, (I think) full as well, and for the most part, far better, make use, in their families, of those excellent English Treatises, Sermons, and The use of Commentaries, which are judiciously set forth in all kinds of Divinity, than any way pride and please themselves in that small stock Books of Divinity, of their own gifts, either ex tempore or premeditated; which serious vanity Prin reading of those learned and holy Ministers works would do every reader in English way as well, and far better than this, which weak men call prophesying, that is, reciting (it may be by rote) some raw and jejune notions, and disorderly meditations of their own; which must needs mens come far short of reading distinctly, and considering seriously those speeches, excellent discourses, which learned and wise men have plentifully furnished them with, both with less pains, and more profit to themselves,
themselves, and others; I am sure with less hazard, of error, froth, and vanity, than what is incident to those self Ostentations of gifts, which have more of the tongue, than heart or head; and oft-times resemble more the Player, than the Preacher.

So that the late published Patron of the Peoples privilege and duty as to the matter of prophecy, needed not to have added to his Book the odious title of the Pulpits and Preachers encroachment: For, if that Author will undertake to regulate the tryal and exercise of those gifts of Lay people, which he finds orancies in them, within such bounds of real and approved abilities, of humble, useful, and seasonable exercising of them, without any Enter feering with, or diminution of the function, and authority of the true, and ordered Ministry, which is the aim he seems to propound, I will undertake that no able and good Minister shall forbid the Banes, which he hath so publickly asked; Finding indeed no cause, why these two may not be lawfully joyned together, in a Christian and comfortable union, the publick gifts of Ministers, in a publick way of divine Authority; and private gifts of the faithfull, in a way of private Christian Charity: Nor ever did the Godly Fathers and Ministers of the Church encroach upon, put away, or give any bill of Divorce to the humble and usefully gifted Christians Liberty; Only, finding by experience, that (like Dinah) it is prone to gad abroad, run out through wantonness, pride, or weaknefs, so much disorder, vanity, and confusion (besides foolish and corrupt opinions,) and of late, to a pertinacity, contempt, and emulating of the publick Ordinance of the Ministry, the wildom of the Church, in all ages (for ought I can see) did think fit to keep it, within those safe and private bounds of families, or at most within such friendly meetings, as are short of publick Solemn Church assemblies: Nor was the modesty of any humble Christian ever grieved, that his abilities should be so wisely restrained; While yet, it had all private freedom and due encouragements; And in publick far better and more orderly supplies from Gods rich treasury, than from its own purse and penury.

As for the publick use of that Liberty and gifts of prophecy, which that Gentleman so much crys up and magnifies; I do not think him so much a puny in discretion, but that he must needs see, it will be incumberd with many and hardly evitable inconveniences, so that it will be easy for a wise man to see the Quare impenit. For first, most good Christians are commonly well satisfied with those Solemn publick exercises, and duties, upon the Lords-Day, as praying oft; reading oft; expounding the Scriptures; Catechising many times; and twice Preaching alwaies; besides the celebrating of one, or
or both Sacraments: All which are the blessings, which the bounty of God hath plentifully provided for Christian people, and powreth on them every Lords Day by the Labours of their faithfull and able Ministers; whom Christ and the order of the Church, have undoubtedly set over them in the way of Divine Authority; And to whom all serious Christians attend, as of duty and conscience; affording means sufficient, by Gods blessing on their devout attentions, judicious understandings, retentive memories, fervent affections, and suitable conversations, to save their souls; For whom it were infinitely better, to have every where such a Minister duly settled, and competently maintained, by those Revenues, which are in all Law both divine and humane, due, as given for this service of God and the Church; than for Christians to be fobbed off, with new projects of Prophets, gifted Brethren, and modern Itinerant inconstant and Mendicant Preachers; which will amount to nothing but mischief; however they may make a shew for a while, as if there needed no constant resident Ministers, or other settled and ordained Ministry: That so a way may be made to ignorance, superstition, Atheism and profanels, Firth; And in time, that sacred Revenew which is given to God, for the maintenance of his publike service and Ministry, may be turned to some secular uses, and come into private purses. It is most evident, that what prophecying exercise is by any gifted Brethren added (in publike) on the Lords Day to this sufficiency of the Ministry, will (for the most part) come very short of that weight, worth, and Authority, which usually is in the Ministers learned pains; So that, it will seem, but as a Churl upon the Gentleman; as tedious and nauseating, as small Beer and Water, after men have drank well of the best Wine; Or as the scraps of coarse and plain Country fare, after men have been filled with a feast of marrow and fat things.

Besides, this exercise of prophecying, which that Gentleman so pleads for, will hardly find any convenient time, or temper in Christians minds, on the Lords Day, either among or after the publike duties of the Ministry; It must needs seem, as unseasoneable, flat, and tedious, as all superfluities and excesses in matter of Religion easily do, when they border never so little upon the Nimiety or too much: It is great wisdom to keep people short from a surfeit of ho-
cunda vita maxime in sa-
cris, ne sit fa-
tietas; Ne mi-
mum devo-
yando, falsidida

superfluitate, or curiosity; when indeed men do scarce with clearfulness and intention bear the holy duties of clear divine use, and most absolute necessity; In all which, common people, by this super-
addition of a prophecying exercise on the Lords Day, will be but

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Of Peoples prophessing publicly.

hindred from that profitable Meditation, and careful remembrance, of what they have already plentifully heard from the Minister, whose lips ought to preserve knowledge, and on which the people ought to wait, as those that must give account of their souls.

It will then be neither convenient nor useful (as it is not necessary,) to bring up Prophesying thus in the rear of preaching, as to the common peoples capacities or occasions; yea, rather it will be to the injury and hindrance both of Minister, and godly people, on the Lords day, unless you be sure to provide the people seldom any Minister; and none constantly resident; or else such weak and short-winded Preachers, that they may be sure to give time and room enough to these eager Prophets, and to be only as foys to set off their fresh and more glistening gifts; or, as an antepast of coarser meats, to whet on the appetite for that more delicate fare, which these prophets will pretend to bring forth; we see already many of them fickle for the Pulpits, and are smart rivals against the Ablest Ministers, whom either small maintenance, or some factious and ingratiating people have almost quite dil-spirited; Upon whom the Cry- ers up, and admirers of these new prophetick gifts look, but as the forlorn hope, which is to make way all this while for the main body of those gifted prophets; Many of whom have so great an activity and confidence joyned with their weakness, that they had need be very well-disciplined, and kept carefully in their due ranks and posts, or else they will soon rout all order, and honour of Religion in this or any Church; Notwithstanding all the good hopes, all the short being spoken of esteem, and gentle infinuations for their acceptance for made by that Charitable writer, who hath so largely pleaded ce, them, at the common peoples bar; And who merited indeed, to have bestowed his pains so publiquely, upon a subject that had a better title in the Scripture, and the Church, than this of peoples prophesying seems to have.

Besides this, (which I have alleged for inconvenient, superfluous, and so far hurtfull, as it is inconsistent with the ministers and peoples duty on the Lords day;) That Gentleman cannot but consider, how many childish triflings in discourses, how many trivall skirmishes in disputes, how many captious bickerings in words, how many uncomly thwartings are prone to arise (as in Country cudgell-playing,) among the vulgar, be they never so godly; if you put them one pin above their pitch, they either crack or sound like strings over-strained, harshly and out of tune; although they may have good gifts.
yet as Arelius a Painter in Julius Cæsar's time, who had good
skill, in this corrupted his art, that when he was to paint any
Goddes, he always made them like some of his Mistresses; so
these are prone to adorn by their gifts, some error or odd opini-
on, and set it forth as a divine truth, and rare doctrine.
Nor can you avoid (besides erroneous and fond opinions)
envious, evill surmisings, jealousies, unsatisfaction, and fa-
cious bandings among the people, whole minds will soon be
divided; some liking, others disliking; some admiring, others
despising; some attending, others abainting from this unwonted un-
couth exercise of Prophesying, which thus confused and abased
will soon appear to judicious and sober Christians, a tedious and
useless busines (like Fiddlers always tuning, and never playing
any good lesson) and no way fit for a Sabbath-days sanctifica-
tion; when once the Country gaping, or the glos and novelty of it
is faded.

So then, if the Guardian of the peoples Liberty, and privilege
in Prophesying, can find any other time on the week-days, wherein
to set up this exercise of Lay-mens prophesying, (that to people may
not at all times come short of that, which he calls their duty;) He
must be sure to provide Prophets of some competent gifts, besides
their discretion, else he will have much ado to perswade people, that
it is their duty to neglect their weekly occasions, and to lose both
their time and labour in attending ruffcall impertinencies, and igno-
rant triflings in religion, which (of all things) should by wise men
be avoyd among the vulgar, whose affections like the poor wo-

1 Cor. 11.15.) of such prophetick gifts, as are worthy, to be esteemed and
encouraged by sober and judicious Christians, I shall promise him that
I more willingly, and more constantly will be their auditor, (at con-
venient times and places,) when I hear them do, what becomes wise,
humble, serious and modest Christians, than most of these pretenders
to be such gifted men, and to have such prophetick spirits, are hearers
of the true Ministers of this Church, be they never so able, either on
the Lords day, or on any week-day Lecture; For, the first way,
that many make to bring in their Lay-prophets, and gifts, is with
their feet, trampling, as it were, upon the best Ministers, and their
faithfullest pains, while they scorn to step out of dores to hear
them, either Praying or Preaching, which pride and negligence,
are not the least of those vertues, which recommend those Prophets.
To be plain, the truth is, so much bran, filth, and dross of pride, popularity, schism, malipertness, and contempt of all men, that differ in any way form or opinion from them, and (of all Ministers above all) do hitherto generally appear in the face and manners of many of those (who more affect the name of gifted men and Prophets, than ever the Pharisees did the title & name of Rabbi,) that most sober and wise Christians suspect, they will hardly ever make such leaves, as may be fit for Shew-bread, to be set up in any publiques place of Gods house and Sanctuary: If that Gentlemans piety, which seems tempered with much ingenuity, can sift or boult out any good meal, or finer flour, that so they may be decent for Gods service, and the Churches use in any publiques way, I know no man will hinder him from baking, making, and distributing his bread: But let them take heed, lest the Corn being ground in such a new beaten mill, it prove not full of grit and gravel; which hath more offence, than either profit or pleasure in eating of it.

For the private Exercise of his Prophets gifts (which will now serve the turn,) no man ever spake against it, further than it frequently carried it self uneasily, by neglect, separation, boasting against, contempt and opposition of far-able gifts in the publiques Ministry, of undermining and shaking those truths, that order, and holy way of life, wherein the peace of the Church, and the honour of true Religion consists; And even in this I conceive I have shewed to humble Christians a more excellent way; Namely, in using the learned helps of other mens labours; which are in every kind well composed; rather than to pleasc themselves merely in the barrenness and rawness of their own inventions, which yet they may add too, if need be, that so they may not seem to say nothing of themselves, or be forced to break for want of vent: If these so cryed up gifted men, be found meet to be made publiques teachers in the Church, under the name of Prophets; why may they not be ordained Ministers, in a just and due way? There is like to be want enough of men of any competent parts, in the great decay and discouragement of such as are very learned and most able: If they are not fit for all offices of the Ministry, I wonder how they can have confidence enough to be publiques Teachers in any kind; which work requires greater abilities and equal authority to any other holy Office: if they have any thing in them of modest and humble Christians, sure they would be more swift to hear, and slow to teach, as St. James adviseth.

As for those Histrionick Players, and vaporing Preachers (who with a Theatrical impudence in many places, seek to fill the world, with meer noise and clamor; crying down all the ancient Ministry, as Antichristian, and the Ministers as no way called, sent, or authorised by God or the Church, turning all either into spiritual, or new prophetick gifts,
Primitve Prophecying.

gifts, to which they highly pretend) certainly, their vanity can move diendo gelusip-... But "Sfct... the primitive is... their rags, fords and beggary, sufficiently confutes Philosopher's stone, which will turn baser metals into gold, while yet... out privileges... evidet after... Churches..."...and some...mad...what...how...vou...doth...of the publique of hcers...the exercise...Church...true sense of the Scriptures, Church...as to the great mysteries of Jesus Christ the Messias: God forbid such...shou'd not have a primitive use, and esteem in the Church: But let us not be abused with such triflers, as shall either darken what others have well explained, or shall only produce old prostitute and stolen notions of other men's works, as if there were the rare and new fruits of their own private prophetick gifts; Possibly (with this Gentleman's good leave) the Church of Christ, neither hath now, nor needs, any such prophetick gifts, as were primitive, and may truly be so called; No more than it doth tongues, miracles, and healings, which it had, and wanted too in those first times and dispensations, when the Gospel of Christ was strange and new to the world, and to the Churches which were but newly planted or in planting; which now it is not, specially in England, after the Church hath enjoyed those plentiful diffusions of Evangelicall light from Christ and the Stars in his right hand, for many hundred of years; so that knowledge hath abounded, as the waters of the Sea. It is very probable the Churches in ages succeeding the Apostles, gave over the form of the exercise of prophesying, when once they law the (σέλενα) or speciall gift ceased; I remember no mention of this Prophecying among the publique officers duties or privileges of the Church; No Council, no Father, that I find, regulates it, or reckons upon it; nor doth this Gentleman produce any one testimony for it, out of the Churches after-practice in Ecclesiastick Histories and antient Records, which may best distinguish for us, what things were of temporary, what of perpetuall use in the Church. It is evident that all things that were primitive and occasional, are not therefore to be made perpetuall, or after long ceasation, to be restored; many things used in the infancy and minority of some, or all Churches, have soon...
after been disposed, as the collections on the first day. 1 Cor. 16. So the ́Agape, the Agape, or love feasts, were by divers Counciils forbidden, when they degenerated from the Primitive simplicity and purity; Jude 12. Spots in your feasts, feeding themselves without fear. So the Holy Kisses, or saluting, Rom. 16.16. 1 Thes. 5.26. The common stock, of goods, Acts 4.32. publiquely dedicated to the relief of the Church; in which the poorest believer had as much interest in what was given, though they contributed nothing, as he that gave most of his estate. So the anointing of the sick, Jn. 5.14. So the Celebration of the Lords Supper every Lords day. The peoples Amen, 1 Cor. 14.16. which Jerom says was in his time, as a Clap of Thunder, such content, loudness and alacrity was in that voice of Christian Assemblies. The observation of the Jewish Sabbath, with the first day of the week; The abstinence from blood and things strangled, and the like.

Nothing is more ridiculous in Religion than (as some fond or fraudulent Papists do their exorcizings and shew of daily Miracles) to continue the ordinary use of all those things in the Church, which we read were practised in Primitive times, upon some extraordinary account, either of necessity or charity, or special gifts, then only conferred; Which, when they were at the highest tide among profeflors, yet were never went to overflow the constant banks of the divinely established calling of the Ministry, but still were kept within those modest, holy, and humble bounds, which became the Christian stocks, toward those Guides, and Pastors, which were to be constantly over them in the Lord, with whom Christ promised to be, as by his Authority and blessing, so by his Spirit and assisting gifts, to the end of the world.

As for this Gentleman, whose devotion and charity hath raised him to so good hope and expectation, of finding or making fit Prophets among the common people; truly, if he can bring forth any Gentlemen, either Lawyers or others, of so pregnant parts, so ready in Scriptures, and of so good utterance, as in him appears; together with so much gravity, candor, and equanimity, as (for the most part) he expresseth to the Ministry, as a peculiar Calling, and divinely instituted office, such Prophets will be so far welcome, as they shall be useful to the Church. Both Ministers and others would be glad to see the Inns of Court or Chancery come in (like Zilpah and Bilhad) to supply the feared barrenness and decays of Rachel and Leah, the two Universitities, which were wont to be the fruitful Mothers, and carefull Nurses of the true Prophets and Ministers; nor would it be a less acceptable wonder to aU true Christians and Ministers, to see such Zenasses, devout Lawyers, run cross to Demas his steps, and
forsaking this present world, to follow after St. Paul, than once it was to see Saul also among the Prophets. Men that can write & (I presume) speak too, after so serious and Spiritual a way, as that Author en-
devours, may merit as much freedom, and publique encouragement, as others vainly affect, and insolently usurp, under the pretence of their prophesying gifts; when indeed they are for the most part but mere prating, very weeds and trash, the foyst and load, which may rend this Gentlemans net; but they are not those good fish, which he seeks to catch, not so much (it seems) for the Churches necessities, (which the constant Miniftry may well, as it ought to supply (as he confesses),) but for its Lenten dainties and varieties, which blest be God are not hitherto much wanted in any Church, and least of all in this, which hath hitherto enjoyed those Manna and Quails, which the Lord hath from heaven plentifully poured round about its tents, by the care and pains of the able, orderly and duly Ordained Ministers; If some places in this Church have wanted of that large provision, yet others have gathered so abundantly, and fed so excessively, that, while they murmur, they surfeit; while they com-
plain, their food comes out of their nostrils, as sometimes theirs did among the ingratitude and wanton Jews.

These concessions then, of all able and true Ministers, being so liberal and friendly to all private uses, and to all gifts which are really fit to be publike, I cannot tell what that great and dangerous pertinacy is, with which that Gentleman (towards the end of his book) p.78. charges so gravely, and threatens so severely the Pre-
chers in England; as it all the fire of Gods and mans wrath, which hath fallen on them, in these times, hath not made them so much, as cast upon the Ministers in that book as fish, as their right hands, and right eyes.

A very sad reflexion, if true, upon All us that are, and must ever own our selves Christ's Ministers; And wherein this Gentleman had done more worthy of himself, if he had given clear and particular instances, than such general and obscure intimations; which without sufficient proof, will seem no better, than those odious alpersions, and vulgar calumnies, with the Anti-ministeriall Levellers, to hide their own deformities, are wont to cast upon Mi-
isters, and all men, that differ from them, and oppose their folly, out of principles of higher reason, and sounder religion, than that sort of people use to be acquainted withall; From the faults and saylings, it may be, of some Ministers, but chiefly from the hatred and malice of those men, against all true Ministers, it's probable this author may without any great spirit of prophesying foresee, and thus solemnly (as he doth from the Tripos) foretell, the great sufferings, which

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Ministers
Ministers of learning, constancy, and honesty, are like to undergo, if God did not as well know how to restrain the pride and power of these men, as he doth behold the rage and bitterness of them, against all true Ministers; Not, because they will not come out of Babylon, as he pharseth it; but, because they will not so easily return (as many unwary souls do) to folly, and the principles of all confusion, to the oppression of all that truth and order, which the wisdom of our pious Progenitors hath observed for 1600 years, and transmitted to us, from the hands of the blessed Apostles, according to the rules of Scripture, and all religious reason.

But what I beseech you is this sinful full obstinacy of the Ministers of England, for which this Gentleman hath such a Sybiline rapture, and more than a prophetick horror? Is it because their judgement is constant to the approbation of that due obedience and legal conformity, to which they formerly with good conscience subjected, as in matters of external right and decency in this Church, wherein they had a liberty common with all Christians, (so far as they opposed not either found doctrine in faith or holiness, and morality in manners) to conform themselves then in the use of them, as now they have liberty not to use them, while by force and terror they are hindered; They being not of that nature of things sacred, for which a Christian is bound to kindle the fires of Martyrdom, nor of private contention against publique Prohibition.

Is he angry, that Preachers do not all suddenly shipwreck their judgements, learning, and consciences upon every rock of vulgar fury, or fancy? that they are not presently melted with every popular gloing heat of seeming piety? and that they run not into every mould, which any faction hath formed for the advantages perhaps of secular interests? Is he displeased that they are not taken with, admire or adore every Idoll of fanatick novelty? that they seriously try the modern spirits, whether they be of God or no, and receive not every spirit? Is he grieved, that men of learned and sober piety, will not subject the gravity of the Fathers; the wisdom of the Councils; the acuteness of the Schoolmen; the fidelity of the Ecclesialick Historians, together with the excellent learning and accurate judgments of the best modern Writers and Divines in all reformed Churches; yea, and
and the authority of the Scriptures themselves, in their most clear light and concurrent strength; that they will not prostrat all or any of these, to a company of wretched Pamphlets, fitter for Cooks and Chandlers shops, than for the reading of judicious and fervious Christi-ans, who have cause to look upon thoes putrefactions of Pens and wits, only as Marks and Vermin every where creeping up and down, and hoping (like Ants) only by their numbers to devour all ancient Authors, and all good literature, that so they alone may survive, and satisfy the greater palats of those who never relished any book so much as a Ballad or a Play, or a Romance, or some Seraphick raptures and pious nonfence? Is he scandalized, that we count not the diseases of Christians, health; their putrefactions, perfections; their distractions, raptures; their raving, reason; their dreams, oracles; basefnes, liberty; their Chaos, comlins? Is he jealous of us, because we rather study and profess solid truths, sober piety, good manners, and orderly government, which only become all true Chris- tians, and Ministers above all? Is it our fault, that we endeavour to Pray, Preach, Write, what we and others may understand; that we covet not to be admired, by not being understood; that we aim to do all things as becomes Men, Christians, and Ministers of the true Church of Christ, not after the manner of plausible, and caiie fond- nels; which is afraid to offend, where there is power to hurt; that counts greatnes as a badge of goodnes, and succels a sign of Sancti- ty; but rather with all just zeal, courage, and constancy, becomming the demonstrations of the truth and Spirit of God, which never need- ed more to be asferted as to its divine power, and eternall honour, than in this pufillanimous and frothy generation of vapours, who are the greatest enemies to; and betrayers of our Religion, as Chris- tian, and as Reformed; whether they be Gogs or Magogs, open or secret; the one, or the many Antichrists; Papall or popular delusion- s? We hope this Gentleman is so good natured, that with all other excellent Christians he will forgive us those wrongs, by which we have been, and ever shall be pioulsly injurious, and faithfully of- fensive, as aiming not to please men, but God.

Wherein then are the Preachers of the good old way (One and all) merites of such fatal terrors, as those words import, which like Apocalypticke Revelations are dark, but dreadful; portending God knows what sufferings upon them all? If there be no men more single-hearted, none more open, candid, and ingenious, than all good Ministers pray to be, who are no Statists or Politicians, but able and honest Preachers of the name of the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent, to shew Sinners the way of eternal life; If there be nothing more necessary, more useful, less offensive, or burdensome, to any wife, sober, and godly minds, than their lives and labours are;
If no men are more modest and moderate, in all their desires and designs, than learned, humble and diligent, (which are the unpragmatick) Ministers; what is the grief? why this complaint, lamentation and burthen, which this Gentleman takes up so prophetically against them, both as to their sin, and their suffering? unless men be vexed, that any worthy men are duly made Ministers, or that Ministers are but men; unless it offend, that they have food and raiment, which most of them dearly earn, and hardly get; unless they are impatient, as the Wolf was with the Lamb, that we breath in the same common air, or see the same Sun, or tread on the same Earth, or drink of the same stream, the troubling of which, is by the troublest of it unjustly imputed to their innocency; who must therefore be accused, because violence hath a mind to destroy them; What is the error? what the heresie? what the superstition? what the Popish opinion or practice, which any of us Ministers so resolutely maintain?

Sure this Gentleman is not to be thought of to low a form of foundlings, and novices, who suspect and dread every thing as Popish, which we hold, or act in common with the Pope or Papists; wholly to recede from any thing common with them, must divest us, not only of the main truths, duties, virtues, and grounds of our Religion as Christian; but we must cast off all, or most part of that, which denominates us either rational or humane, both as to the nature and society of men: But, if we obstinately retain any thing, either for opinion or practice, which may truly be branded with the mark of the Beast, as either erroneous or superstitious, beyond the bounds of Christian truth, or liberty, or decency: If either any generall Council, or any Synod of this Church, since it were reformed; or any Parliament, and civil Convention of the Estates of this Nation have condemned what we teach, or practice, or opine; If any wise and learned man, not apparently engaged in faction or schisme, against the publique Constitution both in Church and State, did ever so much as accuse or convict us of any such crimes; In Gods name let us suffer what God thinks fit. If we have deferred it from men, it will be a mercy to be punished, and amended by them; If we have not, it will be an honour and crown to us, above all men, to suffer for the testimony of Jesus Christ, the honour of our function, and this Church, from unreasonable, and ungratefull men, who use Ministers as their Oxen, (but not in the Apostles, or Gods sense,) first exhausting and tyring them at hard labour, and then they destroy and devour them.

The appeal But to all excellent and impartial Christianians, we may, and do of all true as in the presence of God, appeal; Is not this in some mens sense and and faithfull censure, the sin of the ablest and best Preachers (both for learning, Ministers, piety and constancy,) that they do not so easliy yield to, or applaud as to their
a Military or Mechanick religion? that they are sorry to see so good integrity, far by a part of the Catholike Church, so lately a pillar of Gods house, from this as the Church of England lately was, so every day hewing in pieces, superstition and mouldring to nothing, for want of due order and government, or charged on reasonable and fit repairings? Is not this the Crime, that no learned them, and worthy Minister can own either the swords Sovereignty, or the peoples Liberty, to be the grand Arbitrators of piety, the dispoers of mens conceivnces, the Dictators of all Christianity, the interpreters of all Scriptures, the Determiners of all Controversies; and this to absolute, as admits no Conference with, nor endeavouring to convince, either Ministers or others, who are of different judgements? Is it not their trespass, that true Ministers know too much? that they see too clearly? that they examine things too strictly? that they admit no latitudes of Civill interests, or State policies, and sinfull necessities, as dispensations of Gods Morall Law, and the rules of both common honesty and true piety? That they stand valiantly (many of them) and as becomes them, in the gap, against the insinuations and invasions of those infamous herefies, those received errors, those vile and putrid novelties, those perfect madmesses, those apparent blasphemies, confusion, and dissolute Liberties, which threaten this re-formed Church, with a more sure inundation, than the Sea doth the Low-Countriss, if the banks and dams be not preserved? Is not this with some men the unpardonable sin of the best Ministers, that they do not crouch and flatter, and fawn on every plausible error, on every powerfull novelty, every proud fancy, and high imagination? that they lick not the sores of any mens conceivences, or the pollutions of any mens hands with servile and adulterate tongues? That they do not cry-up, or in any kind own for the gifts of the Spirit, those passionate, or melancholy, or cunning and affected motions and extravagancies, which some men strongly fancy to themselves, and weakly demonstrate to others; as to any thing like to found reason, or Scripture religion? That they oppose thele Bells and Dragons of fanatick Divinity, which the Authors of them will never be able to advance to any publike veneration, or reception, as spirituall, heavenly, and divine, among sober Christians in England, while such wise Daniels live; who have neither leasure, nor boldness so to mock God, and to play with religion; nor untill as Ptolomy did to magnifie the Image of Diana, to be (insane) falk from heaven, so they deal with able Ministers; when the best Statuaries had formed an Image of Diana to rare perfection, the King at one supper destroyed them all by the ruine of the house where they were, and after produced the Statue as falk from heaven. Or as Herod the Idumean or mungrill Jew did with the antient Records and Genealogies of the Stems of the Kings, and sucession of the Priests, among the Jews, that so he might by...
abolishing them, the better bring on his own title; So must these Antiministeriall adveraries, first destroy and cancel both common reason in mens souls, and the whole Canon of the Scriptures, which are the durable oracles of God, for the Churches directions, and all learned interpreters of them: Torches of private Spirits are ridiculous too be lighted up, while the Sun shines; unlesse it be for those who (having some mask or play to act) reproof the Noon-day Sun of to much splendor, and make to themselves and others an artificiall Night, which will better serve their turns: When all light of true reason, and Scriptures are extinguished in this Church and Nation or much Eclipsed; then, and not before, will honest-hearted Christians believe, that they have no need of true Ministers; or that those, they have hitherto had, have not been worthy the name of reformed; or have pertinaciously retained any such Popish opinions, or superstitions, as are inconsistent with true piety.

And in this thing let the Lord deal with us, according to the clearnes of our hands, and the uprightness of our hearts in his sight, either to deliver us into, or redeem us out of the hands of violent and unreasonable men; whole very mercies have proved cruel to poor Ministers; whole pious constancy is the greatest thorn in some mens sides. But if our ways please God he can make our very enemies at peace with us. Prov. 16.7.

Wholy to remove the antient Ministry, as some men aym, under pretence of bringing up a new nursey of gifted brethren, and Prophets (which like under-woods are not so likely to thrive, while Ministers, like goodly Timber trees grow to high above them and over drop them,) will be a work, fully compleating those sad effects, which disorderly, unordained, unsent, and unabled Teachers and false Prophets, have already begun to bring forth in this Church; And how can it ever be thought or hoped, that they will bring forth better fruits, either for the truth, honour, or power of the Reformed Religion; either for the Peace of Church; or State, unleas there be a speciall committee appointed, for the regulating of Prophets and tryall of their gifts? in which none may be fitter (for learning, piety, and moderation) to be Chayr-man, than that Author and zealous asserter of the peoples Liberty and Privilege; who says he is not so much a friend to these new Prophets, as to be an utter enemy to the function of the old Ministers; though he would have Prophets planted, yet not Ministers pulled up root and branch; but only pruned from that, which he calls superstition; wherein his Charity to Ministers may perhaps make his censorious severity veniall. He that so much studies the Reformation of Ministers, we hope will not bring in such Esopick and deformed Prophets, as most of those, who have yet appeared, rather to scare men from, than to instruct good Christians in, true holyness and Religion.
It is evident enough, and too much, to all true reformed Christians, what wide gaps, that generation of pretended Prophets, and gifted Brethren, have already made, for the easy inroads of what is truly Popery, superstition, or mere formality; All sorts also of corrupt opinions and Heresies; together with Idleness, barrenness, barbarity, Ubertatness, Ignorance, Atheism, and contempt of all true Reformed Religion, both in the power, and extern form order and profession of it: Many men (being prone) have learned easily to make little conscience of hearing, reverencing, or obeying the word of God, Even from any true Ministers, never to able and worthy; since they have learned to scorn, make sport of, and laugh at these novell and pittifull pretenders to Preaching and prophesying, of whose insufficiency and non-authority to Preach, and administer any holy mysteries in Christ's name, common people being fully satisfied; they are ready to dispute, and neglect, even that divine Authority, which is in the calling of true Ministers.

What little or no good effects the usurpers against, and opposers of the Ministry of this Church can boast off, with truth, either as to speaking judiciously, or writing solildly, or walking exactly, so as tends any way to the advantages of piety, truth, charity, or peace in the Reformed Churches; or to the honour and happiness of this Nation, either converting, or establishing any in truth or holiness, I leave to the judgement of all considerate and wise Christians, whole prayers, sighs, tears, complaints, griefs and fears of future darkness, are in nothing more exercised, than in the present deplored aspect and almost desperate State of the Reformed Religion, in many places of Christendom, and in none more, than what is threatened in this Church of England: Fearing left the shadows Jer. 6.4, of the evening being increased; and those day stars, which formerly shined in a learned successive and Authoritative Ministry, being darkned and Eclipsed; the evening Wolves should also encrease; and the Beasts of the Forest multiply upon us; every one seeking for their prey; whom they may deceive and devour. Such as loathed Manna, were justly stung soon after with fiery Serpents. Numb. 21.6.

On the other side ask the looser and profaner Spirits, what restraining power or converting influence, they feel from the charming of these new-gifted exorcists, who undertake in the name of Christ (but indeed in their own name, and after their own fancies) to call over, and cast out the devils of ignorance, Atheism, unbelief, profanities, and hypocrisy, which are in mens hearts or lives; You may hear them with one voyce anfwerling, as they did; Jesus we know, and Paul we know; the learned and duly ordained Ministers, in a successive power from Christ, and his holy Apostles, we know.
but who are you; self flatterers, self lovers, self senders, self seekers, self ordainers; nor is it to be expected, but that at last thee Sons of Sheva will find those evil Spirits in mens hearts, of pride, unbelief, Atheism, enmity against God, and all true holiness, any whit milder or better natured than those were; who contemning the barefound of the Name Jeus, when disstinate of the Authority from Jesus; and mocking at the presumption of those cen juris; flew upon them, wounded, and expelled them: So unsafe, and in the end to thankless and comfortless an undertaking it is, to attempt this good work even of casting out devils from men; where there is nothing but a mock-power, and no real divine Authority to do it. The devils, which felt torment at Christ's presence, and were subject to the Apostles, whom Christ sent, falling down like lightning, had the pleasure to beat and baffle those, who would chain them up, or cast them out, without divine Authority. And no wonder if these E-strick Birds, who set forth their soft and gay feathers, having but little bodies and less brains, by wandering from their Nest (their shops, and looms, and playls, and mills, (the honest stations, and no way despicable callings, wherein God and man have set them; and from which they have no sufficient call either from God or man to moove them) no wonder (I say) if they fall themselves, and lead others into many snares and divers temptations; which they can hardly avoyd, being (in good earneft,) most of them very blind lead-ers of the blind. Imagining as the Turks do of blind and mad men, that they have speciall visions, because they want their eyes; and extraordinary revelations, because they are destitute of common rea-son. Indeed it is feared that most of these mens Prophecyng and Preaching, is either design to bring all confusion on these Reformed Churches; or else meerly out of wantonness, in jest; as a kind of recreation and diversion; but not as any busines or matter of duty and conscience; In one thing they are in good earneft and most serious, that is to carry on their perfect contempt and malice against all true Ministers.

Who sees not, what weakness it is for sober Christians, after so great light of truth hath shined so long among them, to imagine, ness and sin that such a disorderly Company of people, who for the most part of Chris-tians to follow by secret stimulations of pride, vain glory, envy, covetousness, or some worse Spirit; no less, than by apparent over-meanings of their delusions and small, and at best but very moderate gifts; not tried or approved, forsake rea-lities. by any wise men; but only blown up by the pitifull, applause of some silly men and women, who have with levity and unthank-
fulness forsook their true guides and Pastors; and not enduring sound doctrine, and holy order, deserve for their itching ears to be condemned, to follow such heaps of Teachers, ever learning, and never coming to a sound and settled knowledge of the Truth? who sees not (I say) what sin it is, to follow countenance or encourage such dangerous and disorderly seducers, and what weakness and meek folly it is, to imagin, that such, as neither have skill to handle trowell or sword, should either build or defend our Jerusalem? When they dayly pull down better work; than they can erect; And, what they seem to build, is of such unpolished rubbish, such rude, and rough-heaven stuff, with such untempered mortar, that it is as sand without lime; undigested, unprepared, uneven: neither for matter nor manner considerable; without rule, plumbline or level; neither according to Scripture precept, nor the holy example, and Catholick practice of the Churches of Christ: So that the gapings, flaws, swellings, lowness, hollowness, unevenness, crookedness and weakness, (together with the dayly mouldings of their Childish structures) they, what wise builders they are; and how fit to be made publick Architectts, or Master-builders in this Church. Over whose Walls the crafty malice of Jesuitick Foxes, and any other enemies, will easily go, and break them down, when ever they pass: which makes many men suspect, that these Lay Preachers, are but the left hand of Babels builders; fit instruments to divide, confound and destroy the Reformed Religion in these British Churches, and all those who study to preserve it. Which they only can, with anyshew of reason, effectually do (by Gods blessing) who are workmen, that for their Authority and approved skill, as well as their good will and readiness to build, need not to be ashamed. Of whole real sufficiencies, these new bunglers are most impatient hearers and perfect haters; because from thence Ministers exactness, these mens bungling receives the severest reproaches and justest oppositions.

A man may as well hope, that hogs by their rooting, and moles by their castings, will Plow and till his ground, as that such Arbitrary, Causal, and contingent forwardness; or such inordinate activities of poor, but proudly gifted men, will any way help on the great work of Christian Religion, the propagating of the Gospell, or the Reformation of hearts or Churches; which require indeed the greatest competency and compleatness, both for gifts, learning, and due Authority, that can be had, both for the Majesty of Religion, and for the defence of the truth; as also for the binding to diligence and exactness the conscience of the Ministers; no less, than for the satisfaction of other mens consciences, in point of the validity of Sacraments, and other holy Ministrations; which have not any
any Physical or natural virtue, but a mystical and Religious only, which depends upon the relation they have to the word and Spirit of the holy Instititor and Commander Jesus Christ. So that it is indeed a very strange bewitchedness, and depravedness in many mens appetites, that they should so cry up those mafs-room Prophets and Teachers; who need more fauce to make them safe or savory, than their bodies are worth; (who are self-planted, soon started up in one night;) as if they were beyond all those former Goodly plants, for beauty, sweetnels and wholesomeness; which much study, care, learning, pains and prayers have planted in the Church: Or that Christians should so far flatter themselves that the soil here in England, since it was watered with civill blood, is so well natur-ed and fruitfull, that there need no such care and culture as was antiently used in the Garden of God, either in setting, watering, preparing, or transplanting those trees of the Ministry, which should be full of life; whose leaves should be for the healing, as well as their fruits for the nourishing of mens souls. So confident the devil seems to be of the giddines, folly, negligence, and simplicity of these times, that he stirs up the very thistles (the most useless and most offensive burthens of the earth, which the foot of every vile beast is ready to cruh and trample upon) to challenge and contemn the Cedars of Lebanon; And he would fain periwade reformed Christians, to cut down and fub up those goodly trees of the Lord, which are tall, straight, and full of lap, as cumbrsing the ground; that those sharp and sorry shrubs, those dry and fapless kexes, may have the more room, and thrive the better; pretending that they will at ease rates and with less pains supply all the Churches occasions; when the Lord knows, and all excellent Christians see, by fad experience, that they are so far from that length, strength and ftrait-nefs required in the beams and pillars of the Temple; that their crooked and knotty shortnes, will scarce afford a pin, on which to hang the leauf vesell of the Sanctuary.

Excellent Christians, I protest before the Lord, that I write not thus, out of any desire to grieve, quench, or exafterate any mans Spirit, in whom the wife and fancrifying graces, or useful gifts of Gods Spirit do dwell in the leafe measure, with truth and humanity; but only in the way of tryning the gifts and Spirits, whether they be of God or no; if they be found, by the word of God, to be proud, foolish, evil, uncleane, unruly; refusing to be bound with any bonds of good order and government, (such, as seems to have posfessed some in this Church, who seek to bewitch others and to trouble all,) God forbid we should not all of us strive, by faiung, prayer, preaching, writing, and all juft reuukes of them, to caft them out, notwithstanding their cryings, tearings, and foamings.
The Spirit of God not to be grieved in any.

It is far (I hope) from my Soul by any envy or underwaking of any good Christians to damp the Spirit of Christ in them; I would have every one study to improve the talents he hath; and to be employed according to his real improvement; of which no man being naturally proud and self flatterers is fit to be judge himself, but ought to be subject to the tryall and judgement of others; both as to that light and heat, knowledge and zeal, gifts and graces which any may pretend to, and wherein they may be really usefull to the publike, or any community of Christians; whose edifying in faith and love we have all caufe, both in conscience and prudence daily to nourish and increase in God's way; which is an orderly, peaceable, and blessed way; wherein only either private Christians or Church Societies can hope to thrive and flourish: I wish with Moses all the Lords people were Prophets; Both able to give an account of their knowledge in the mysteries of Christ, and also to help on, in an orderly way, (as every wheel or pin doth in the motions of a watch) the great and weighty work of saving souls, which is the main end of the Ministers calling and pains. Better we Ministers be despited, than the Spirit of Christ in any gracious heart be justly grieved; or any good work of God in the Church hindered.

But we are well assured, by good experience, that none would be less despisers, or more encouragers, lovers, and zealous preservers of the true Evangelicall Ministry, and its divine Authority, than such men who have graces, with their gifts, and are both able and humble; none are more slow to speak to others in the name of Christ, than they, who cannot hear others Preaching with due abilities and authority, without fear and trembling, as reverencing God, and the Lord Jesus Christ in their Ministers. There is no danger of able parts, where there are humble and honest hearts; no more, than we need fear the strength of any part in the body, will hurt, or offend the whole body, or disorder and violate any other Member, which is above it in place, in honour and in operation or function. Reason teacheth us, that the ability or strength of any part, in its place and proportion, doth not make it usurp the place, or execute the Office of any other nobler part: The measure of every part is the beauty and safety of the whole; which cannot in natural, and ought not in Religious Bodies (which are Churches) be fitly disposed, but only in such a way, as God hath appointed for the daily forming, building and well-ordering of his Church, by such wisdom and Authority, as Christ established in it; Of which the Apostles and the Churches after them give us most evident testimony.

But to avoid destructions and flashes, or his transfigurations and disguises; We must not...
Christians must not believe every Spirit.

1 Cor. 11.14. 
Satan, when he is transformed into an Angel of light, 
You take or stop up God's fountains of living waters, by digging the devils' ditches, and wells, which hold no water; nor may we not wash our hands at the Devils' Cistern, to fill them for God's service; nor, may we take water from his troubled, muddy and poyluous streams, to water the plants of Christ's Church; we may not take strange fire from Satan's altar to kindle the sacrifices of God; what need we cut off dogs' necks, and offer swine's blood, when we have so many clean beasts, which are appointed for acceptable services? that we shall not need any such vain oblations, which are but the sacrifices of fools, who consider not that they do evil, nor look to their feet, when they go to the house of God; being as ready to stumble and fall, and discover their nakedness and shame, as they are forward to ascend to the altar of the Lord, upon the steps of pride and presumption, which were forbidden to be made; the humble heart being always most welcome to God; while others in vain arrogate to themselves power to perform those things which are not required at their hands. God hath said, he will be sanctified of all those, who come nigh to him in his public service; which is done not only by that inward sanctification of the heart, by faith, fear, and reverence toward God, but also by that exact observation of such rules of order, power and Authority, which he hath set (who alone could do it) in the public way of his worship and service before the Sons of men.

We must not be such Children in understanding, as to allow all to be gold which glisters, when it will not endure the Touch-stone of God's word, or the probation of the Churches judgment: we may not easily think, that God's Spirit, in any private men, runs counter to that holy order and clear Institution, which the undoubted Spirit of God hath clearly set forth in the Scriptures, and which the Church in all ages hath observed in the way of an ordained authoritative Ministry: All other, or later inventions may well be suspected to be but Satan's stratagems, and devices. There may be so many vermin crawling in a dead body, as may make it seem to live and move, when yet there is no true Spirit of life, or Soul in it; so it is no wonder, if the various impulses, wherewith men's secret and corrupt lufts stir them, make some shew, as if diviner gifts and endowments agitated them, when indeed they have no other ayms or interests, than such, as Judas Iscariot, or Simon Magus might have; or those after Heretics the Gnosticks, Maniches, and Montanists, &c. Who almost, that had any shew of gifts or parts, ever did mischief in the Church, without great prefacings of holy and good intentions, and pretentious of gifts and the Spirit of God? There may be gifted Hypocrites, devoun devils, angelized Satans. Be mens gifts never so
so commendable, if they want humility in themselves, and charity to others, which are the beauties of all endowments; if they are pub- up, seek themselves, walk disorderly, run unexamined, unappointed, unordained, in scandalous and undue ways, they are nothing, stumpertunt, ne meteores scipios religiis pra- sumplereunt, I. rena. 1. c. 35. de Cynitis, Ophitis, Judxivitis.

If any of these Prophets or gifted men be indeed so able, for the work of the Ministry, that religion may suffer no detriment by them, and people may have just cause to esteem them highly for their work sake, God forbid they should not have the right hand of fellowship, all encouragement from my self, and all that desire to walk as becomes the Gospel; when they are found, upon just trial, fit to be solemnly ordained, set apart, and sent forth with due authority to that holy service, in God's name let them be sent forth with good speed. If they disdain this method of Ministeriall office and power, which hath been seted by Christ, and continued to this day in his Church (which no wise, humble, and truly able Christian, can with reason, modesty, or with conscience jullly do) but they will needs obtrude themselves upon the Church, and crowd in against the true Ministers, they may indeed be, as sounding Brass and tinkling Cimballs, fit rattle for Children, or for the labouring. Moon, or for a Country Morice-dance and May-pol, but they will never be as Aarons Pomegranates and golden Bells; usefull Ornaments to God's Sanctuary in words or works; or any way becoming the Church of Jesus Christ; which is as the woman clothed with the Sun, the light of Truth, and the lustre of holy Order; And hath the Moon under her feet; not only all wordly vanities, and unjust interests, but also all humane inventions and novelties, which have their continual variations, wainings, disorders, darknesses and deformities; whereas Divine Institutions are always glorious by the clear beams of Scripture-precept, and the constant course of the Churches example: Both which have held their Truth and Authority, in the blackest nights of persecution, wherein no unriied and unordained intruder, was ever owned for a true Minister of holy things in any settled and incorrupt Church of Christ: No more than any man shall be accounted an Officer, or Soldier in an Army, who hath not either lifted himself, or received his Commission. Order is that wholsomest ayr in which Religion lives best. There is no less necessity both in Piety and Policy, to preserve the Laws of holy order and discipline in the Church of Christ on Earth; which have the warrant and seal of his authority upon them, and are for the preservation of truth, peace, and honour in the Church; Since
we find by all experience of times, and most in our own, That the pride and presumption of mens gifts and private spirits, are no less wantonly active in matters of Religion, than in Civill and Military affairs.

Now, why any men of piety, or in power, professing the reformed Religion, should incline either to connive at, or to countenance any courses, which evidently tend to the shame, contempt, confusion, and extirpation of all true Religion, (as it stood in the profession of the Church of England, opposite to the gross errors, superstitions and profanities of any, that are known and declared enemies to it ) I can see no cause, unless it be a supine negligence in some, who, as they grow greater, so they are like Galliotes, more careless in matters of Religion, wholly intent to State interests; as if States-men had no souls to save, or no God to judge them; and were to give no account of that power and advantage they have, as well as that charge and care which lies upon them to do all good they can to mens souls under their power; or else, there is some other interest secretly contrived, and cunningly carried on here, (as by open hostility in other parts,) amidst the dust of our civill Commotions and troubles, by those sons of Edom, and daughters of Babylon, who have evil will at our Sion, and say of our Jerusalem, Down with it, down with it, raze it even to the foundations.

As it was for no good will, that the Devil contended with Michael the Archangel, about the body of Moses, minding rather to have it Idolized than Embalmed; No more is it from any honest zeal, or pious principle, that some men now so earnestly stickle about (and indeed) against the settled office, and peculiar function of the Ministry; either to have it in common, or none at all, with any divine authority and commission; whose first Anti-ministeriall batteries, which seemed to carry some shew of Scripture-strength I have hitherto resisted and repelled, not dashing or opposing Scripture against Scripture, but clearing its obcuring meaning in some few places, by that most evident and concurrent Sense which is manifestly held forth in many plain passages, and hath been constantly followed in the Churches of Christ, from the first feeling of Christianitie in the world to this day; As the Spirit of God in the Word cannot contradict it self in the main scope and design; so where any variation or difference in the letter may seem to be, It must be wisely reconciled, by discerning the different occasion, reason, or ground of things; sure we are, the pretended gifts; or dictates of privat spirits may in no sort be set up any way to contradict those testimonies and demonstrations of the Spirit, which are so evidently shining from the Scripture, as they are in none more than this of a peculiar function and holy-ordination of the Evangelical Ministry.

And
The Plot of pretended Gifts.

... And here I might forbear to add trouble to you: O Excellent Christians, or any readers, by any further enlarging of this Apology, Conclusion, whereby to vindicate the honour of the divinely Instituted, and Ecclesiastically derived Ministry of this Church: Since the holy Scripture, is (as I have shewed) so wholly, fully, and punctually, for its peculiar Institution, and its constant succession to the end of the world, (where to it is not denied, but private gifts may come in with such assistance, as is humble, orderly, and edifying, but not as proud, invective and abolishing; as Hagar they may do service in Christ's family, but they must not grow insolent and malipert against Sarah.) Whatever can be produced, in a matter of so high and religious a nature, as the Ministeriall office and authority is, beyond what the Scriptures (the only infallible rule) and the Churches constant practice (the most credible witnesses) do assure us, is for the most part but as childish skirmishings with Reeds and Bulrushes, after combats with Pikes and Guns; And I find indeed, that all after-Cavills of the Anti-ministeriall faction, arise, not much beyond womanish janglings, presumptuous boastings, and uncomly bickerings, for the most part; where, not religious reasonings, but peevish Cavils, and pertinacious Calumniations, like black and ragged regiments (impatient to see themselves so routed by the Scriptures potent convictions, and the Churches constant custome) do but rally themselves, as in a case Perdue, to see what can be done by volleys of raging Rhetorick, and virulent Calumniations against the Ministers of the Gospell in this Church; whose greatest fault is that which the devil finds with the best of men, that they are as Job, upright; not that there is any just fault to be found with their holy Calling, which hath nothing in it irreligious, or unreasonable; nothing iminornal, or imprudent: nothing, but what is fully agreeing to all order, policy, decency, as following the best and holiest Examples, ules and customs of the Church, together with the rules of Divine Institution, and the ends of all true Religion, the glory of God, and the good of Mankind, both for souls and bodies, for temporal and eternall welfare, for internal peace of conscience, and externall tranquillity in Civill and Church Societies, both as men and Christians; All which the Ministeriall calling regards, and carries on as its holy design and work, which no other Calling doth: Not Magistrates, or Lawyers, or Physicians, or Traders, or Souldiers, who do not think themselves to stand charged in Christ's Name, with the care of mens souls, so as to make it their business to instruct, direct, and watch over them in the ways of salvation.

And for Ministers persons, such as are truly worthy to be counted such, their failings will not be found beyond what is incident to common infirmities, and daily incursions of frailties, inseparable from the best of men in this mortal pilgrimage; All which, the charity...
of humble Christians easily conceals, and willingly excuses, or pardons, when they consider how free and full a pardon of all sins, is from God by the Ministry, offered to every penitent and believing sinner : The grief and impotent despite, which the prophane, politick, and pragmatick enemies of the Ministry of this and all reformed Churches are transported with, ariseth from the like ground, as was in the hearts of Tobias and Sanballat, and that scornfull cruel, against the Jews, that by their means this Church of God, as the Temple, is built, repayered, cleanced, reformed ; That by their valiant courage, learned skill, and vigilant Industry, the truth, faith, holy Ordinances, and good manners of this Reformed Church are affected, vindicated, preserved, and restored from those ruines, rubbige, fords, and demolifings, by which erroneous, ambitious, covetous, and licentious minds seek to waste, infest and quite abolish the Reformed Religion, both in England and every where else.

In order to which grand design, the Anti-ministerial Adversaries are not wanting, to bring all manner of railing accusations, and indign Calumnies against both the Ministers and Ministry of this Church: Some of which, I think it a shame for me, by reciting of them, to pollute, either my Pen, or the purer eyes of those readers, who excell in Civility, as much as those evill Speakers do, in insolvency and scorribility, both for carriage and language against the best Ministers in England. But it is no wonder if they give us the gall and vinegar of bitter reproaches to drink, when they intend shortly to crucifie us. All is les than was sayd, and done to Christ himself. It is part of our honour and blessing, to have men speak all manner of evill of us, if we can but make it appear to be, most falsly and injuriously, as well as most indignly and ungratefully: Such manner of speaking becomes no mens mouths, but those,whole hearts abound with so much malice against the best Ministers; who ought to be the best of men, and generally are the best of speakers; In honour to whose many real and excellent gifts (becoming the dignity of their holy place and function) as also in charity to all others, chiefly those, who most despise and hate the Ministers of this Church, I shall endeavour to let all men see in the following part of this Apoloogy, the malice, futility, and falsity of those evill speakings, wherewith some men please themselves the more, because they think they please some others, whom they fancy to have a very evill eye, and an heavy hand toward such Ministers as most study to please God, and to preserve the Reformed religion in this Church of Christ.
CAVIL or CALUMNY IV.

Against the Ministry of England as Papal and Anti-Christian.

The fourth Cavil or Calumny then wherewith the office and function of the Ministers of England is battered and defamed, among the credulous, weak, and vulgar minds, is this; That if there be such a peculiar order and office of the Ministry established in Scripture by a Divine Institution, and so continued in the Church by a right Ordination, for some times of Primitive purity, to a holy succession; yet the present Station, Calling, and Authority of the Ministers of England is apparently Antichristian, as derived from Episcopal Ordination, and that descended from the Papal or Roman authority, which was but of late years abolished, as that of Episcopie they think now is, neither of them seeming to them to be of Christs appointment, or according to Scripture-rule and pattern; So that if it be necessary to have peculiar Ministers by office, it is also necessary to cast off the former order and standing which is degenerated, and to begin upon some new account, which shall appear to be nearest to the pattern of Divine Institution, and primitive practice, how ever it may fail of a constant succession, for above these 1600 years from Christ; during all which time, it is evident indeed, that Bishops have had a chief place and influence in the Ordination of Ministers, and for 1000, the Pope hath challenged something of Supremacy and Jurisdiction in these Western Churches, over all the Clergy, both Bishops and Presbyters; None of which are fit to serve in Gods house as Ministers, while they are not cleansed from that leprous, which they have contracted from the Pope and Prelates.

Answ. I will first endeavour to take off from the face of our Ministry, this scandalous vilard of the Papall authority, which fears some people so very much, that they are afraid to medle with any thing that ever passed the Popes fingers, except only the lands and no prejudice of the Clergy; Having removed this veil or covering, which was sometime over these Western Churches, we shall easily see the true Ministry no less than of other Christian Institutions in the world, restored, without any Disfigurement or Essential change, by any land, more such mask as might sometimes be upon it, through the policy and folly than to all of many.

It were a very weak and injurious Concession, no less prejudicial, than pleasing to all the Romish party, if the whole

Pope
Pope could perwade us Protectors, and other Christians, to cast quite away, and utterly abhor what ever the Papall usurpation hath abused, or the Romish devotion hath used in matter of Christian religion: Sure then, we must seek for other Apostles and Saints, other Scriptures and Sacraments, another Gospel and Messias, than Jesus Christ, no less than other Bishops and Ministers: For over all these, the Popes of Rome have spread the skirts of their usurped authority: their impure mixtures, their corrupt doctrines, and superstitious manners; Who as far as they are Antichristian, that is, go in any ways contrary to the holy rule, and humble pattern of Jesus Christ, yet might, yea and ought to sit in the Temple of God, as all Antichristian spirits indeed do, who cannot properly be, but where there is a Profession of Christianny: yet it doth not follow, that the Catholique Church, ( against which the gates of hell shall not prevail, so as to extinguish the name of Christ ) was either wholly ruined by Antichristian superstructures; or that the whole fabric of it must be pulled down by us, and all parts of it made Nehustan, in stead of cleansing, repaying, and reforming, which is not a novelty of invention, but a sober restitution of all things in Religion, to the primitive mode and pattern, which is authorized and ordained by Christ; Who did no more himself as to the outward restoring of Religion and worship of God; Challenging Gods right to his own House of prayer, when covetousness had made it a den of thieves. The priesthood of old failed not by reason of the immoralities of the Priests among the Jews; nor did the Didascallical or Teaching authority cease from Moses his Chair and succession, because the Scribes and Pharisees (who were men of corrupt doctrine, and hypocritical manners) sate therein, and taught the Traditions and inventions of men mixt with the commands of God; No more did, or doth the Evangelical Ministry and Sacraments cease, by reason of any Papall arrogations, or other human additions.

Therefore the wisdom and piety of the learned and godly Reformers of these Western Churches, especially here in England, contented themselves with casting out what ever corrupt doctrines, impure mixtures, vain customes, and superluous fancies, the Papall vanity and novelty had built upon those divine and ancient foundations of Christian religion, which were laid by the Apostles, and Primitive master-builders; all over the world; Whole Canon the Scriptures, together with sound Doctrine, holy Ministry, comely Government, Sacramental seals, and other Christian duties of prayer, fasting,
Of separation from the Church of Rome.

...they restored with all gravity, moderation and exactness, with due regard both to the clear sense of Scriptures, and the Catholic practice of Churches, Conforming of all things, either to the express Precepts and Institutions of the word of God, or to those generall directions, which allow liberty of Prudence, and difference in matters Circumstantial; in all which the Primitive Church had gone before them. Herein they were not so weak and heady, as to be scandalized with, and insolently to reject all things, that the Papall or Romish party had both received and retained in religious uses from former and better times, either as Christians, or Bishops, or prudent men; for so they had very fililly deprived themselves, and all the Reformed Churches, of all those Scriptures, Sacraments, holy duties, Order, rites, and good customs, which the Pope and Romish party had so long used, not as Popes, by any Antichristian policy, power and pride, but as they were Christians, having received them in a due succession at first, (though after much depraved) from those holy Predecessors, which had been Martyrs and Confessors in that famous antient Roman Church.


...No judicious Protestant or truly reformed Christian, whose conscience is guided by Science, and his reforming zeal tempered with How far true charity, either doth, or ought to recede farther from Communion necessary with the Roman Church, than he sees that hath receded from the and safe to rule of Christ, and the Apostolical Precepts, or binding examples, be separated expressed in the Scriptures, so far as concerns the true faith, in its from the Re-Dogtrines, Seals, and fruits of good works. In matters of external and manists. prudential order, every Church hath the same liberty which the Roman had, to use or refuse such ceremonialls, as they thought fit, and to these every good Christian may conform. In many things we necessity have communion with the Pope and Papists, as in the nature and reason of men; In some things we safely may, as in rules and practices, politic, civil, just, and charitable, as Governors, either Secular or Ecclesiastical; In many things we ought in conscience and religion to have communion with them, so far as they profess the truths of Christian religion, and hold any fundamentals of faith; And however they do by mis-interpretation of Scriptures, or any Antichristian additions of false doctrines, of impious or superstitious practices, seem to us rather to overthrow, or bury the good foundations, than rightly and orderly to build upon them. (for which superstructures and fallacious consequences we recede from them, and dispute with them;) yet we do not renounce all they hold, or do in common with us as Christians.

...of Ordination as a Minister, but that which he had, as he was made a Presbyter in the Romish communion. Gerard de Mi- nifterio pag. 70, ab Episcopo suo ordinatus Lutherius. anno 1507. Nec aliam qusitv ordinationem, Gerard. 147. Muitum differt inter eunam & culpam, inter stagnum & excessum. Text. quod præcepsit.
For instance (it being not now a place to dispute them) We cannot own, as the Cathlick sense of Christ, of the Scriptures, or the Primitive fathers, that sense which they in later times have given of the words in the Sacramental Confection of the Lords Supper, by which they raise that strange doctrine of Transubstantiation, unknown to the first Fathers: And which seems to us 1. contrary to the way of God's providence, both in natural, and in religious things, which changeth not the substances and natures of things, but the relation and use of them, from natural and common, to mystical and holy; 2. Contrary also to the usiul sense of all Scripture phrases, and expressions of the like nature, where things are mystically related by religious institution, and so mutually denominated without essentia1 changes; 3. Contrary to the common principles of right reason, &c. 4. And contrary to the testimony of four senses, sight, taste, smelling, and hearing, which are the proper organs, by whose experience and verdict of things sensible, we judge in reason, what their nature is; 5. Contrary also to the way and end that Christ proposed, to strengthen a Christian receivers faith; which is not done, by what is more obscure and harder to be believed than the whole mystery of the Gospel, as recorded to us in the Scripture: There being nothing less imaginable, than that Christ gave his Disciples his own very body, each man to eat him whole and entire, and so ever after, when he was then at table with them, and is now by an Article of faith believed to be as man in heaven; The 2. and the like strange fancies of men, which draw after them many great absurdities and contradictions, both in sense and reason, and the nature of things; being no way advantageous to the religious use, end, and comfort of the Sacrament, we reject, together with the consequent Idolatry of worshipping the bread: Also the sacrilege of detaining the Cup of the Lord from the people, we cannot allow, as being contrary both to the primitive practice of the Church, and to the express command of Christ in the Institution, which was after also revealed to St. Paul by Christ himself. Yet still we use and observe the Sacramentall Elements, with the same high estimation and veneration, which purest and purest antiquity ever did bear to that Sacred mysterie; how ever we forbear to use some of their expressions, whose Oratory occasioned in part the after error, which mistook that, as spoken of the Bread in its nature, which magnified it only in the Sacramentall use and mysterie, which is indeed very high; retaining both the Elements, words, and holy form, which Christ instituted, and Christians always used, not so much disputing and determining the manner of Sacramentall union, as endeavouring after those graces, which may make us worthy Communicants, and reall partakers of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, when we do receive that dreadfull, yet most
most desirable seal of our Faith, which consigns fuller to us, and confirms in us, those comforts, which as sinners we want, and may have most really and only from Christ; not by eating his flesh in a bodily and gross way with our mouths; but by receiving him by a true and lively faith into our souls, as he is set forth to us in the Scriptures to be God incarnate; the only Saviour of the world; of whose merit, death, passion, body and blood, we are by the same faith, (though in less degrees of strength,) really partakers, and nourished to eternal life, before we receive him in that Sacrament of the Lords Supper; yea though we never should have opportunity to receive him; which is but the same object received by the same faith, to the same end, though in a different manner, and with different degrees.

So for Baptism; we retain the substance of that holy Sacrament; as we find it in the Scriptures, rejecting only those superfluous dressings (of Salt, Spittle, Oyl, Infufflation, and the like) which cumber and deform that duty and Ordinance, but they do not destroy it, nor do ever any Protestants, that are of any name or honour for Religion, re-baptize those who were baptized in the Roman Church;

The Apocryphal additions of the Romish Church to the Canon of the Scriptures, we reject from being rules of faith (however we approve their excellent morals) And this we do upon the same grounds, that the Jewish Church of old, and the Primitive Christians for the most part ever did; yet we retain those books as oracles of God which we have received with and from the Romish Church, as of divine inspiration; according to that testimony which both the Jewish and Christian Churches fidelity, have given us of them.

In somethings we hold nothing common with them, either in opinion or practice; as in the profitable fancy of purgatory; the popular fashion of worshipping Images or adoring God in and by Images; of oblations and prayers for the dead; of praying to Saints and Angels; of Auricular confession; of dispensing by Indulgences the merits, or supererogating righteounes of some Christians to others; Since in these and the like matters, which I only touch, it

The LXX., dull, spiritless, and formall devotions, Liturgies and prayers used by the Romanists, in any tongue unknown to the most, and with so many vain repetitions, we refuse; yet still we retain the holy custom of Christians assembling in publick, and worshipping God by publick Liturgies, prayers and praises.

In somethings we hold nothing common with them, either in opinion or practice; as in the profitable fancy of purgatory; the popular fashion of worshipping Images or adoring God in and by Images; of oblations and prayers for the dead; of praying to Saints and Angels; of Auricular confession; of dispensing by Indulgences the merits, or supererogating righteounes of some Christians to others; Since in these and the like matters, which I only touch, it

Prayers in a language not vulgar.

Nis. de Placilla orat. Funeb. Delinquens soli Deo cognitum de reatum sinave aude homines recunua consciens non cognitum. Ser. 34. Chrysol. Sol Ber. 42. Non expedat omnibus omniumnotocereque semen de nobis. in Can.
being not my work now to handle those controversies which have been so fully discussed by many learned men of this Church of England, whose works praise them; We find no Scripture ground, either for precept or permission.

So likewise in the ambitious claim of the Popes Infallible judgement; His universal jurisdiction, and Supreme Authority over all Churches and Councils; We deny it, as an usurpation gotten by indulgences of some times and Princes; also by the flatteries, frauds, cruelties, and policies of several Popes in their successions; but not grounded on any Law, or right, either humane or divine; neither by the Institution of God, nor by the consent of all Churches: Yet we deny not to the Pope such a primacy of place, or priority of order and precedence as is reasonable and just either in the Roman Dioceses as a Bishop; or in a Council, as Bishop of that famous City.

In like manner for the sacred order and function of the Ministry; we reject what ever imaginary power or will-worship is annexed to the office by humane superstition; but we approve the ancient form of Commission, and Divine Authority derived by them to Presbyters and Bishops, for Preaching the word, celebrating the Sacraments, reconciling penitents, use of the Keys in doctrine, or jurisdiction and Government; Also of the continued power of Ordination, for a succession of Ministers in the Church. In all these and the like what ever we find to be spurious issues, of meer humane invention; of Scripture-less opinions; of groundless traditions, obtruded, as matters of Religion, upon the confidences of Christians, we use that just severity, which we think the Apostles and Primitive fathers would have done, to dash these Babylonish brats against the stones: yet still we redeem and preserve alive the legitimate succession, the Sons of Sion; the Israel of God; and justify the Children of true wisdom and of the Heavenly Jerusalem, that is, the divine and truly religious Institutions, upon Scripture grounds, although we find them to have been led Captive, and a long time detained Prisoners by any unrighteousness, policy, superstition, tyranny, covetousness or ambition, in the Walls and Suburbs of Babylon. Though tares were sown among the good Seed in the Field of the Church, while men slept, yet we must not be such wasters, as to destroy the Corn with the weeds; or to refuse both, because we like not one; Though our Fathers ate four grapes and our teeth were an edge, we must not therefore pull all our teeth out of our heads.

In the Roman Pontificall, The Bishop to be consecrated is charged after many Ceremonies and pompous modes, with this, as his office and duty, To Judge, to interpret, to consecrate, to confer holy orders, to offer, to baptize, and to confirm; after that the Consecrators laying the Bible on his shoulder, and their hands on his head, say these words, Receive the holy Spirit: i.e. the gifts and power to be a Bishop, or chief Pastor: to teach and rule in the Church. So the Presbyter is by the Bishop ordaining and others with him imposing their hands on the head, enjoyned, To offer, to bless, to govern, to Preach and to Baptize, as becomes his place and Office. Matt. 13.25.

Divine
Divine institutions are incorruptible; nor can any corruption of men's minds or matters eate on them, any more than putrefaction on the Sun beams, when it shines on a Carka's or Dunghill: We may be corrupted, but holy Ordinances are like God always the same, when restored to their Primitive Institution, which is their State of Integrity. Riches and honour are not unwelcome, though they descend to men from unworthy Ancestors; Nor should Religion so far as its title is good by the word of God, either in strictt precept and institution, or in prudence joined with piety and decency. Good pictures will recover the beauty, when the foil is washed off.

In a word, we retain the truth, faith, holy mysteries, Catholic orders, constant Ministry, and commendable manners, which the latter Romanists have derived and continued from the first famous Church in that place; nor do we think it either conscience or prudence to deprive ourselves of any thing Divine, though delivered to us by the less pure hands of men; or to cast away the provision which God lends us, though it be by Ravens; or to Anathematize all the Romish Church holds of saving Truths, because it hath in the Council of Trent Anathematized some Truths.

The Bishops of Rome were always more cunning, than to abrogate, or cast away those essentials, the main foundations and pillars of true Christian Religion, as the word, the Sacraments, the Ministry, and Government of the Church, on which they knew the vast moles, and overgrown superstructure of the Pontifical pomp, profit, pride, reputation, policy and power, (through the credulity of people, and blind devotion of most men, in these Western Churches) was built and sustained: Nor can any thing more contribute to the Popes depraved content, or repair his particular interest, in this Western world, than to see, any so heady, rash, and mad Reformers, as shall resolve to quarrell with, and to cast quite away, all those things of Christian Religion, which ever passed through the hands of the Romish Church; or any other never to erroneous and superfluous; He well knows, how meager a Skeleton, how miserable a shadow Christian Religion must needs remain to those furious and fanatical Reformers; Being as much reduced to poverty and meer nothing in the very essentials of Christianitie (both for Doctrine, Duties, Sacraments, Scriptures, order, and manners) as it would be in the matter of maintenance and Church Revenues; (where some men's covetous and cruel Reformation is resolved, if they may have their will, to leave nothing to maintain Religion, or its Ministry, but the meer scraps of arbitrary and grudging contributions;) Such will our Religion be, if we reject all, that was used by those, who abused many things; and we must after only adhere to the beg-
True Reformation not Schismatrical.

Of Church Reformations, with moderation and charity. 
CHED. 5. 21. Plato. n'\mu-

"We are not \mu\nu\nu\nu\nu\nu\nu's to sw-

m\nu\nu\nu\nu\nu\nu's, moderation is the
medium between the ex-
cess and defect: Neither
taking nor refusing all, but
trying all, and holding
the good.

Oh Re-
formations free from
Schism.
Schismatics, as the Novatians and Donatists of old, were; who so challenged the title of the Church to their factions, as to exclude all others, and refine the offers and means of accord. As Cyprian Ep. 95. and Aust. Ep. 164. tell us.

To which brands of Schism we are then liable only, when we recede, or separate from visible communion with any Church, without just and weighty cause shewn out of the word; or when we go further from them than there is just cause, and that too without charity; refusing the good which they have, while we withdraw from the evil we suspect: Which would be the case of the Church of England in this point of immoderate Reformation; if we should (as some would have us) therefore separate from all Scriptures, Sacraments, Ministry, Primitive Government, and order, because all these were retained, used, and after abused much; by the Roman Church and Papall party: we are bid to come out of Babylon, Rev. 18.4. but not to run out of our wits; to act, as Gods people, with meekness, moderation, and Charity, nor with that fierceness, passion and cruelty which makes us as Sons of Belial, inordinately run from one Antichrist to another.

Many Christians in the Roman Church may have in them much of Antichrist in some kinds, and so (God knows) many others, in other kinds; either in Doctrine or manners; in endless innovations, and unlettered confusions; or in rigor and uncharitableness; All which may betray us, to what we seem most to abhor in Antichrist; for if nothing have more of Christ, than Charity, nothing can have more of Antichrist, than that uncharitableness, which many men nourish for zeal; mistaking a Cockatrice for a Dove; and a fiery Serpent for a Phoenix. Which may be, as Anti-Christian in popular furies, as in papall tyrannies; in confusions as in oppressions. It is strange how some men cry out against the cruelty of some Papists (which indeed hath been very great) when yet, Qui Christi non they have the same Spirit of destruction in their own breast both a- est Antichristi est against the Papists and others: longing for such a Kingdom of Christ Je on. Ep. 57. (as they call it) and such a downfall of Antichrist, which shall consist in War, and Blood, and Massacres against, and among all Christians, which are not of their mind and side. We think, that in charity we ought not to impute the faults and errors of every Pope, or Doctor of the Roman side, to all those of that profession; nor ought we take those learned men among them, always at their worst; finding there is great difference between what they may hold in the heat of publick disputes, and what they opine and practise in a private way; nor are their deathbed tenets always the same, with those of their Chayrs and Papists. Besides, many of the more devout and learned men among them, are now both in opin-
Of Anti-Christ among Christians erronious or uncharitable.

ons and lives, much more medeif holy and Reformed, than some were heretofore, whose Reformation in judgement or manners, in verity, purity, and charity we do really congratulate and joy in.

And, for the Body of the common people among the Romanists, many are ignorant of those disputes, wherein the mistaking is most dangerous; which if they do hold, yet it is under the per- suation and love of truth; retaining still the foundation of Christ Crucified, and hoping for salvation only by his merits; (as many now profess to do) and living in no known sin; but striving to lead an holy and charitable life in all things; Charity commands us rethink, that in such, the mercy of God (accepting their sincere love to the truth, and their unfeigned obedience to what they know,) pardons particular errors which they know not to be such, & wherein no lust of pride, or covetousness, &c. either obstructs, or diverts them from the way of Truth; Though the superstructures may be many of straw and bubble, which shall perish, yet holding the foundation Christ crucified in a pure con- Science, they shall be saved in the day of the Lord; Though the ves- sel be leaky in many places; yet by great care in steering, and fre- quent pumping (that is true faith and repentance) it may keep the soul from Shipwreck and drowning in perdition, which is embam- ked in the bottom of Christian Religion, and which steers always by the compass of conscience, setting all the points of conscience, by the Chart or rules of Scripture; as near as he can attain by his teachers, or his own industry.

We are sorry for our necessary differences from the Romanists or others; which yet our consciences so far command us, as we think our selves enlighted by the word of God; contrary to which we cannot, and ought not to be forced actually to conform, or to comply with any men in things Religious: Yet have we no lust of faction, no delight in separation, no bloody principles, or tenets, against any Christians of any particular Church; desiring the same charity from them to us; which may; in lesser differences from each other, yet unite us to Christ, and to the Catholic Church, as true parts of it, though infirm, or diseased: This temper we should not despair of in the devout and humbler Romanists; if they were not daily enflamed, by politic Spirits and violent Bigots among them, who will endure no Religion as Christian, which doth not kiss the Popes Pantofle, or hold his stirrup, or submit to that pride, flattery and tyranny, which some of them have affected; when in- deed it ill becomes those, that challenge a chief place in Christ's Church, to be so vastly different from the example of the crucified Saviour of Christians.

Such talents then as have been once divinely delivered to the Roman (as to all other Christian Churches,) we have all right to as beleivers
believers in private, and as Christians or Churches in publick communion and profession; nor can these Jewels be so embezled, by being buried, or abused, but that we may safely take them up clear, and use them; together with those other which we have obtained, through the grace and bounty of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ.

In whole name and right, we (as a part of his Catholic Church) received them first, and enjoy them now, only Reformed, according to what we first received of them; without any prejudice or diminution to their true and intrinsic call worth (which is divine) by reason of our fellow servants former, or present idle, imperious, impure or injurious use of them: We accept and use the holy vessels, which belong to the temple, and the Lord of the Church, without scruple, when they are graciously restored out of the pretane hands of revelling Balsabazars; The remaining silver crowns are holy, though the hand and fire were unholy which were applied to them.

... Our Ministry then may be, and certainly is, very good, holy, and divine, as well as the Scriptures, and Sacraments, or other holy Our Ministry, and duties are, when duly restored to their primitive stry not from purity, order, and authority; which go along with their right suc- nor of the cession; notwithstanding they are derived to us through or by the Pope. Romish Church, or the Pope's dispensation; yet do they not therefore descend from them, but only from Christ, the first institor of his Church, and of this Ministry, with a perpetuall power of succession;

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the gracious Spouse of the Church, as of every Soul, that truly believes and obeys (though with much unbelief and frailty:) disdains not to own his relation to any Church or Christians, though they are not so faithfull to him; though they lose their first love; yet they may be still his, by what still remains of soundness and outward profession; Yea and Christ will vouchsafe to admit us again to the communion and covenant of his love, even after long wanderings, and unkind absences, when ever we wash our selves, and return to him, from our disloyall adulteries and pollutions. He doth not utterly divorce any Church, when the substance and essentials of Religion (which are but in a few things) do remain, notwithstanding the many meretricious paints, and disguisings, which the wantoness of humane inventions may have put upon it; thereby disfiguring its Primitive beauty and simplicity. Mans vanity and arrogancy against God or men, doth no whit ab-rogate, either the right which Christ, or any Church and Christian posterity hath to the purity and power of his gifts and institutions, in the right way of his Ministry: All which may remain, with a blessing.
True Reformation is but a return to God's way.

Blessings in the root and Seed; though they be much deftroyed, over-dropped, choked, and almost starved by humane additions, which keep them for some time from their full glory, vigor and extension.

Therefore the learned and godly Reformers of this Christian Church in England, did not dig any new fountain of Ordination, or ministerial power; as some Romanists calumniated at first, and were afterward convinced of the contrary, by Master Malms learned defence of the Ministry of England, as to its right succession; but they only cleared that, which they saw was divine in the first broaching or Institution by Christ, and as in the purest derivation by the Apostles; however in time it became foul by humane faculencies and dregs as it passed, rightly (though not purely) through the hands of some Bishops and Presbyters) even to their days; Nor was ever any thing required by the best Reformed Churches, further to confirm and validate the Authority or power Ministerial, which any had received, when he was first ordained Presbyter in the Romish Church, but only this, to renounce, not his Baptism, but his errors and former superstitions; to profess the Reformed Truths of the Gospell, and accordingly to exercise that Ministerial power, which he had received, truly, as to the substance, and duly, as to the succession; both as to the Office conferred, and the persons conferring it. Howsoever the sword of the Ministry had through the neglect of those, to whom it was committed, been suffered to contract the rust of superstitions, and to lose much of its beauty and sharpness; yet it was still that true and same two-edged sword, which came out of the mouth of Jesus Christ, Rev. 2. 12, the first ordeiner of a peculiar settled Ministry in his Church; Nor may it be broken or cast away, when it hath been rightly delivered; but only, cleared, whetted and furbished, from its rust, bluntness and dulness: That Pen, which now writes blottingly, might be well made at first, and will write fairly again, if once the hairs or blurs, which its web hath contracted, be but cleared from it: It is still God's Field and Husbandry with good Wheat in it, though the enemy hath, while men slept, sown many tares; Bishops and Ministers reformed may be God's true labourers and appointed Husbandmen, though they have some time littered; as the Disciples were Christs, when their eyes were to heavy to sleep, that they could not watch with him that one hour of his most horrid agony.

It were then but a passionate scuffling with mad men, a most impertinent disputing with unreasonable minds, further to argue about the Popes usurped or abused Authority in any kind over Churches or Bishops, or holy Ordinances and Ministry: For which he had as little grounds of Scripture or reason, as these Anti-Ministerial Objectors have now, against this Church of England, and the
the function of the Ministry in it; against which, these cunning cavilers have not so much pretence to argue from the Popes usurpation, that our Ministry and Religion are all Antichristian; as they have both Scripture, Reason, and Experience, (besides the content of all Reformed Churches) to conclude them to be truly Christian; if anger or envy, or covetousness had not blinded their blood-shotted eyes, they might easily see some of those mighty works, which have been wrought on men's souls, by the Ministry of England, since the Reformation; and without this efficacious Ministry, I believe, neither these Calumniators had been so much Christian, as they pretend, nor able sightfully to contend, with shewes of Piety, and popular fallacies against the true Ministry of this Church, and the best Ministers, with whole Heifer they have plowed.

We know well, that not only the reformed Churches, but even the Gallican and Venetian (which keep communion with the Romish Church, and Papall party) besides the Greek, Asian, and African Churches, do generally oppose, and vehemently deny the Popes Supremacy abusive usurpations, both in things Ecclesiastical and Secular: And in England, this upon most pregnant grounds; not only from Scripture, (whence nothing was ever fairly and pertinently urged, as some places are]
Nor had the Pope then for the first six hundred years any authority, scarce any name in these British Churches, which were undoubtedly converted by some Apostles or Apostolical men; who left after King Lucius his time a famous and flourishing succession of Bishops, Presbyters, and Christians, long before any pretensions of the Pope over these British Churches: To which the British Bishops in Wales were strangers; nor would they own at that time, when Austin the Monk came from Gregory the Great; who sent hither more out of Christian charity than any Authority to convert the Saxons, who had by war and barbarity quite extinguished Christianity with all Bishops and Ministers out of England, and had forced the former holy Bishops and Ministers to fly into Wales, Ireland, and Scotland; from whence afterwards in a grateful vicissitude the English (replanted) Churches received (for the most part) both their Conversion and establishment by a Succession of rightly Ordained Bishops and Presbyters; for Austin the Monks Plantation and preaching extended not beyond Kent, Surrey, and the adjacent places; as Venerable Bede tells us; and our learned Countrman, Sir Henry Spelman.

The ambitious Usurpation and Antichristian Tyranny then of the Papall power and supremacy afterward, over Bishops and Ministers here in England, to which the title of Christ, St. Peter, or the Catholic Churches establishment, is poorly begged, and falsely pretended, we the Ministers of the Church of England ever did, and do, as much abhor, as any of these men can, who are so against the now Reformed and established Ministry, which we have vindicated from Papal and superfluous additaments, and asserted, or restored to it Primitive and Scriptural dignity, and divine authority, which it never lost; but only, not so clearly discovered, during the times of darkness and oppression. Our jealouie now is, left the malice and activity of those, that now dispute, and act against our thus reformed and prospered Ministry, should prove ere long the Popes best Engines, and factors, that ever he had in this Church since the Reformation; if they can (as they have begun, and go on apace) but so far prepare the way for the reintroduction of the Papall power, and Romish party, as to cashier all the learned, reformed, and duly Ordained Ministers in England, both as to their order, authority, and government: will not this Church in a few more years of confusion, and neglect, become, as a fallow and unfenced field, fit for the Papall subtilty and Romish activity, which he will plow with an Ox and an Ass together, the learned
ned Jesuit, joined to the fanatick Donatist; The Seminary Priests with the gifted brethren; Friars predican with Prophets mendicant? So that no wise man, that loves the Reformed religion and the Church, can think others than that the hand of Job is in this matter. Achitophel is in Counsell with Abi lament. The Conclave of Rome is wanting to its interest, if it conspirers strongly with this Antiministerial faction; I should be glad to be as Hushai the Archite, a means to discover, b'ft, and bring to nought all those desperate counsells and machinations, which are laid by any against this reformed Church, and its true Ministry; The happy and reasonable defeat of which, by God's blessing to this Church and Nation, I do yet hope may be such, as shall make all Apostatizing and ungratefull Politicians, rather repent of their Apostacies, and ice their folly, than follow the fate of that disloyall renegado, a traitor at once to Hor. his friend and sovereign.

I confess I am not for such Reformations, as too much subject the prudence, or vitiates the piety of our forefathers, thereby to extoll Reformation some mens after zeal and skill. The errors and defects of the An-tients joined with their charity and sincerity, I believe were far more pardonable with God, than the late furies and cruelties of some men, pretending to mend those errors, and supply those defects. Not that it is safe for us to return to what we now see by the word of God to be an error; But we may in charity excuse their ignorance in some things of old; while yet we commend and imitate that wisdom, honesty, order, and gravity of religious profession which was in them, far beyond the Modern transports of some men's giddiness and levity, which rots them from superstition abusing, to superstition utterly refusing all those things which are not only convenient in Prudence, but necessary in Piety; as being stamped and established by divine Institution; such as this of the Evangelicall Ministry hath been proved to be. Reformations may bend so much from the Pope, on the right hand, till they meet him again on the left, forsaking that rectitude, uprightness, and stability of the Mean, in which only the truth and honour of Religion doth consist.

Antichrist which some are taught more to fear in the name and in others, than to abhor in the thing and in themselves, is at both ends or extremes of Religion; as well that of prophanes, confusion, and defect on the one side, as that of superstition and excess on the other. We must love and entertain what ever we find of Christ's true Jewels, and the Churches ornaments, amidst the Counterfeits, and rags of Antichrist; we must not flay any of Christ's sheep, because it was gone astray, and is now found, but rather take it up, and bring it home, and rejoice to have found it. Nor may we rend Christ's garment in pieces, because it may be spotted, and foyled by men
mens hands, but rather rinse and restore it to its primitive purity. As Christ redeemed our souls, so must we redeem his holy Institutions and ordinances, (as much as in us lies) from the vain Conversation of the world; And then we may serve him in the holy ways he hath appointed us without fear of sin, Antichrist, or Superstition, from which both our minds, and our devotions are happily freed.

Every man hath cause to suspect Antichrist in his own bosom; As the kingdom of Christ, so the kingdom of Antichrist is within us chiefly. Certainly, it is far better for the Church and Christians to retain what is Christ's, though in common with any Antichrists; than passionately to cast away all that is Christ's, under pretence of detesting Antichrist; men may fall into sacrilege, while they seem to abhor Idols; robbing the Church of what Gifts and dowry Christ hath given her; (among which, this of a Constant and successive Ministry, is a chief one in St. Paul's account) and this while blind and preposterous zeal thinks to strip the whore of Babylon, who dwells where ever division and confusion nestle in the Church, and to rifle Antichrist (who may roost in other places as well as Rome.) It is safer to be in Christ's way, though it be rugged, and may have some inconveniences through many infirmities, than to be in any other, which may seem fairer and smoother to us. As the unclean spirit of grosse Idolatry and Superstition, may be cast out for a fit, so he may return to his house swept, and garnished with flowers, and flaeves of piety, bringing seven worse devils of Atheism, Pride, Prophanery, and uncharitableness with him. It is the same evil spirit, which tears the Church by cruel Schifms, with that which casts it into the fire of persecution, and water of Superstition; There is always hopes and means of salvation, when there is a true Ministry though with many faults, yet of Christ's sending, and the Churches Ordaining; but men may as justly despair of long enjoying the Gospels light, without a due and serious Ministry, as they may to have day long after the Sun is set, or Harvest in Winter. As graces and gifts internall, so the means and Ministry externall, are part of the wings of that Sun of righteousness, who shines no where in the world among Christians, without some healing and laying vertue, severally manifested, as to the inward laying power, but always in the same way, as to the constant outward Ministration, by which it is ordinarily dispensed: Papall darknings, or humane Echings, are no warrant to abolish or exclude, that light of the Ministry, which Christ hath set up; Nor can we do the Devil, or any of his instruments, a greater greater pleasure, than quite to extinguish the lights of this Church, in stead of smuffing and clearing them: Better to have dim Lamps, than none at all shining in the house of God.

But indeed the fault of the English Ministry, with some men is,
not that they lighted their Lamps at the Popes taper; but that they have, and do still shine so bright, as to offend both his, and all others eyes, who could not bear the splendor of the English Churches both Ministry and Reformation, wherein Zeal according to knowledge, and wisdom with sobriety, bad at once purged away what was vile, and preserved what was precious, with great moderation; distinguishing between what was of humane mixture, superstition, or infirmity, and what was of divine Institution, holy succession, and authority. The same piety rejected the one, and retained the other.

... I conclude then, that the Papall encroachment, or Romish corruption, whatever it were, is no argument against the Divine authority, and constant office of the Reformed, and restored Ministry in this Church: It were a mad cruelty to knock our Fathers on the head, or to cut their throats, because they were diseased; and as they might, so they ought in all piety to be healed; How much more of perfect madness is it, for Christians to destroy their Fathers, who are now perfectly recovered, and in good health, only because they were sometime sick, or descended from inform Progenitors?

It is easy for well-affect Chriftians to be over-scrupulous, and over-righteous, so to over-act in matters of Religion, as to destroy themselves before their time; like rude and unwar Combatants, who overthrow themselves, by over-reaching and overstriking others beyond the measure of well-regulated and proportioned strength, which always keeps it self strong enough to rule or command, and to preserve it self. There is a secret tide of self-interest, prejudice, or passion, which imperceptibly carries men another way, (much beside, or backward, or beyond what should be) when they think they steer with a sure course, and full gale to the port of Reformation, in which not only sincerity is required, but also great discretion, judgment, and moderation: Therefore Reformation is the work of learned, wise, grave, well tempered, and well experienced, as well as of godly and well-affect Chriftians; Reformers ought to be as skillful, and sober Physicians, capable to distinguish between the strength of the diseased, and the strength of nature; to preserve and foment the vital spirits, though they quench the feverish flames, and evacuate the vicious humours.

Vulgar spirits are rude and riotous Reformers, which come only with their Axes and Hammers, without any Chiffels, or finer tools; they are all for battering down, and breaking in pieces, nothing for polishing and cleansing. Hence it is, that they do no more than pull down Croffes, and set up Weathercocks on Churches, dispersing Religion to perpetually vicesitudes and inconstancies, which are most contrary to its nature. Like weighty Pendants once violently...
Holy use of Musick.

lently layed beyond the perpendicular line and poysse, they are a long time before they recover the point of fixation and confidency: Such are popular, heady, and tumultuating Reformations, usually carrying things at the first impetus, as much beyond the medium or centre of true Religion, as they were formerly, either really or imaginarily deviated; Plebeian Constitutions, are as subject to be Paralick, as Apoplectic, to be ever trembling and troubling Religion in their jealous fieries, as to be otherwise stupid and supine, in their superstitious follyes; But once in motion, and thoroughly scared (as the youth of Leeds with Souldiers) with those Pariick,terrors, of superstition, irreligion, popery, heresie Antichrist, and the like; they hardly keep, or recover themselves to any bounds, becoming sober men and good Christians.

Thence it is (as in many other excesses, and transports) that some men seek to pull down all local Churches, because they may have been sometimes superstitiously abused; Possibly at the same rate, not one place of their Conventicle meetings should stand. So they would have all Church-windows either broken to let in the cold and weather, or quite stopped up, so as the light should be wholly shut out, because the Glass was sometime painted. Such immoderation is just as if Country-men should not esteem, or use, their fertile Meadows, because they are sometime squallid with inundations; or, as if they would suffer none to sing again, because some have sung out of tune; and break all Instruments of Musick, because they may be set to wanton ayres, and dittyes: Whereas (no doubt) in this, as in other excellencies, to which the ingenuous industry of Christians as men may attain, for singing, and use of Musick, either Orall or Organickall, in Comfort or Solitary (which the lad severity and moroser humor of some men would utterly banish from all devout and pious uses, as if all Musick and Musical Instruments had been prophaned ever since the Dedication of Nabuchadnezars golden Image) even in this (I say) of Musick or melody, the great Creator may be glorified, both in privat and publick, either by the skilfull, or the attentive Christians, who have with David harmonious souls joyned to devout and gracious hearts, which like a good stomach digests all in Natures and Arts excellency to Piety. Like a modest Matron making a vertuous use of those ornaments and jewels, which either vice or vanity are prone to usurp and abuse.

It is true, the most blessed God (whose transcendent perfections of wildome, power, justice, mercy, love, &c. as to many strings, of infinite extension and accord, make up that Holy harmony, which is his own eternal delection, as also the ravissant happiness of the blessed Angels, and souls of just men made perfect;) This God, I say, is not immediately, and for it self delighted with any
any singing or melody of sense, any more than with other expressions of a reasonable soul, in Eloquence, Praying or Preaching; yet since the use of Harmonious sounds is a gift, which the Creator hath given to Man above all Creatures, and wherewith Man may be pleased and exercised in the use of it, as thereby to be better disposed, and more affected, even to serve the Creator, either in more spiritual, holy, humble, calm affections, or in more flaming Devotions, and sweet Meditations, (which are the usual effects of good and grave Musick, on sober and devout souls:) who, though they do not dwell and stay on this ladder of sensible melody, yet they may be still ascending and descending by the steps of it in fervency, charity, and humility to God, others, and themselves; I conceive no true Religion, but such as is flattered with vulgar fears, can forbid Christians, to make the best (which is a religious use) even of Musick; referring it, as all honest and comly things, to the highest end, God's glory; and this, not only in reading or hearing such Psalms and Hymns, and spiritual songs, in which the divine truth of the matter, affects the enlightened judgement, and the quieted confidence with the nearest conformity to the holy minds and spirits of those sacred Writers, who have left us the matter so ended, though we have lost the antient tunes of their holy Psalmodies; but also in that audible singing, and melodious declension, which is sensible in good Musick; and which hath a secret, sweet, and heavenly virtue to allay the passions of the soul, and to raffle up our spirits to Angelical exaltations, by which we may more glorify and praise God, which is a part of our worship of him; and wherein the Spirit of God in David, and other holy men of the antient Church hath set us allowable, commendable, and imitable examples; Wherein the immusical rusticity of some men of more ferine spirits, which no Harp can calm, or cause to depart from them, as Sauls did, must not prejudice the use, and liberty of those Christians, who are of more sweet and harmonious tempers, even in this particular gift and excellency of Musick; than which nothing hath a more sensible, and nothing a less sensible declension; So that if there be not Musick in Heaven, sure there is a kind of heaven in Musick; yet even in this so sweet and harmless a thing, we see that the immoderation and violence of Christians (which hath in it a vein of the old Picts and Sythian barbarity,) is an enemy even to Humanity, as well as to Divinity, while it seeks to deprive men and Christians of one of the divinest Ornaments, most harmless contentments and indulgences, which in this world they can enjoy? I the rather insist in this most innocent particular of singing and Musick, because no instance can shew more those rude and unreasonable transports to which men are subject in what they call religious Reformations; If they do not carry all things

Holy use of Musick.
things with very wise hearts, and many hands; that so the leaven of unnecessary rigors and severities may not make the Mass or lump of religion more low and heavy, than God in his Word hath required; who cannot be an enemy to the right and sanctified use of melody or Musick; since he commands *singing to his praises*, and loves a cheerful temper in his service. Certainly Musick is of all sensible humane beauty the most harmless and divine; Nor did I ever see any reason, why it should be thought to deformus Christians, or be wholly excluded from making a part in the beauty of holiness.

All wise and excellent Christians know this for certain. That mens usurpation is no prejudice to Gods dominion; nor do humane traditions vacate divine Commands, nor Antichrists superstitions cancel Christ's Institutions; Vain superstructures of mens addition, neither demolish nor raze Gods foundations; men do not quit their rights to estates for another unjust intrusion; The heady invasions of one, or few, or many, upon the Churches rights and liberties, are no cause to make Christians remove the ancients Land-marks, and boundaries of true Ministry, due order, and prudent government, which we find fixed by Christ, continued by the Apostles, and observed by the Churches obedience in all ages, although not without mutilations and blemishes of humane Infirmities. They are sad Physicians, and of no value, who know not how to let their Patients blood, unless they stab them to the heart; Such are those unhappy leeches, who in head of eating off, with six Corosives, the dead flesh of any part, do lop off whole arms and legs. Some men are too heavy for themselves; and while they aim to go down the Hill of reformation, they suddenly conceive such an impetuous motion, as cannot stop it self, till it hath carried all before it, and at length drawer it self in pieces. Much more folly it is quite to abolish the use of holy things, than to tolerate some abuses with it; True reforming is not a starting quite out of the way, as shy and skittish horses are wont to do, (when they boggle at what scares them, more than it can hurt them) with danger to themselves, and their riders too; but a flying to new modes, and exotick fashions of religion, and Churches and Ministers: but it is a sober and staid restoration of the ancient and venerable forms, which pious Antiquity in the Church of Christ, and the ancient of days, in his more sure word, hath expressed to us. 'Tis easier to pare off what one great Antichrist, or the many leas have added; and to supply what they have by force or fraud distracted from that only complete figure of Extern professional religion, which Christ and his Apostles by him to have fashioned and delignum divitix & imperatrix omnium virtutum. Aurea & ordinatrix affectuum, Bert Cent. Tolabane & virtus culturnit. Nec obligurinda sunt mala cum bonis, nec omnianda bona cum malis. Veul. Pagi esse ficti falsi sunt reverum simulatores.
Divine Institutions incorruptible.

vered; which is never well handled, no not by Reformers; unless Christians have honest hearts, good heads, clear eyes, and pure hands; when all these meet in any undertakers to reform the Church, I shall then hope they will seriously, sincerely and successfully do Christ's and the Churches work, as generally men are prone and intent to do their own.

This then I may conclude, against all precipitant and blind zeal, which by popular arts seeks to bring an odium on all Ministers, and the Ministry of this Church, merely by using the Name of the Pope, without giving any account to reason or religion of their Calumny; That there is no cause in reason, or religion, for any Christians to cast off the Ministry of England, as it stands Reformed, and so restored to its primitive Power and Authority, because of any Succession from, relation to, or communion with the Order and Clergy of the Roman Church and Bishop; no more cause, I say, than for these Anti-ministerial Cavillers to pull out their eyes, because Papists do see with theirs; or to destroy themselves, because naturally descended from such parents as were in subjection to the Bishop of Rome, and in communion with that Church; we may as well refuse all leagues and treaties of humanity in common with Papists, as all Christianity; and all Christianity, as all antient lawfull Ministry; an holy Succession may descend, and God's elect be derived from such as were true men, how ever vitioues.
I have done with the first part of this Cavil or Calumny, which seeks to bandy the Ministry of the Church of England, against the Papall and Romish wall; that they may make it either rebound to a popular and Independent side; or else fall into the hazard of having no true Christian Ministry at all; from both which I shall in like fort endeavour to rescue this our holy Function and Succession.

A second stroke therefore which I am to take, is made with great Artifice and popular cunning against the Ministry of this Church, as it was derived and continued by the hands of Bishops, who were as Presidents, or chief Fathers in the work of Ordination among their Brethren; or Ministers within their several Diocesses; These Prelates or Bishops, the Objectors protest highly against, as being not Plants of Christ's planting; whose Authority being lately pulled up by power, so that they seem to have no more place or influence in this Church or Nation, the Presbyterie also, and whole order of the former Ministry (they say) must necessarily also fail and wither, which were but branches, and slips derived from the stem or root of Episcopall Ordination.

Thus we see in these years, the Anti-ministeriall fury is cudgelling, even Presbyters themselves, with that staff which some of them put into vulgar hands, purposely to beat their Fathers, the grave and antient Bishops, and utterly to banish that Venerable and Catholick Order, or Eminent Authority of Episcopacy out of the Church; what the Dove-like innocency of those fierce and rigid Ministers hearts might be, as to their godly intentions, I know not; but I am sure they wanted that wisdome of the Serpent, which seeks above all to preserve its head; whence life, health, motion, and orderly direction, descending to other parts, do easily repair and heal, what ever lesser hurt or bruise may befall them.

It must needs be confessed, that as the Events have been very sad, so the advantages have been great, which the Anti-ministeriall party have gained, by the preposterous zeal of some Anti-Episcopall spirits, which transported them, not only beyond and against all bounds, or rules of Reason, Order, Scripture, Ecclesiastical Custome, and Laws here in England, but even contrary to their own former, and some of their present judgements, touching Episcopall Presidency, which they never did, nor do yet hold to be unlawful in the Church, how
Of Ordination by Bishops.

how ever it might be attended with some inconveniencies and mis-
chiefs too, not arising from the nature of that Order, and power,
which is good, but from the corruption of those men that might ma-
nage it amils. This makes many of these Ministers have now so much work, to take off that leprosie from their own heads, which
they told the people had so much infected the Bishops hands; by the
Imposition of which, they yet own their Ministeriall power, and ho-
ly Orders to have been rightly derived to them, in that Ordination
by Bishops, which was used here in the Church of England, as in all
antient Churches.

It is never too late to rectifie, and repent of, any mistakes and
miescarriages incident to us, as poor sinfull mortails. Although Primi-
tive Episcopacy, (which ever was as a grand pillar of the Churches
Ministry, Order and Government,) hath been much shaken and
thrust aside by mans power, or passion, to the great weakening and in-
dangering of the whole Fabrick and Function of the Ministry, toge-
ther with the peace and politie of this Church; yet wise men may
possible see, after these thick clouds and dust of dispute, what is of God
in true Episcopacy; yea, and they may be persuaded to preserve and
restore, what is necessary and comly in it, however they pare off what
is deformed, superfluous and Compersome; (in the behalf of which
I am neither a pleader, nor an approver.)

It is now no time in England either to flatter, or fear the face of
Episcopacy, or sinisterly to accept the persons of Bishops. There is
nothing now can be suspected to move me to touch with respect those
goodly ruines (from which the glory of riches and honour are now so
far removed;) but only matter of conscience, and the integrity of
my judgement; And therefore I here crave leave without offence to
any, that are truly godly (either Ministers or others) who may dif-
fer from me in this point,) freely, yet as briefly as I can, to discover
my judgement, touching this so controverted point of Episcopacy, in
which from words men have fallen to blows, and from waitting of
ink, to the shedding of blood. I see that other men of different
sense, daily take their freedom to vent themselves against all Bishops,
and all Episcopacy; some of them so rudely and unfavorily, as if
they hoped by their evil breath, to render that venerable name, and
order, ever abhorred, and execerable to Christian minds; which to
learned and sober Christians ever was, and still is, as a sweet Ojp-
ment poured forth; nor doth it lose of its divine and antient fra-
grancy by the fractures of these times, which have broken (it may be)
not with devotion and love, so much as with hatred, and passion, that
Alabaster-box of civil protection and Sanction, in which it was
here, for many hundreds of years, happily preserved from vulgar in-
tolency, and Schismaticall contempt. Why may not I presume to

I. I 2 enjoy
enjoy my freedom too, yet bounded with all modesty and sobriety, without any prejudice or reproach, reflecting upon the Counsels, or actions of any men my superiors, whose power and practice, as to secular mutations, neither can, nor ought to have any influence on mens opinions, and consciences, further than way is made for them by the Harbingers of Reason and Religion, which are best set forth and discerned, in innate principles of Order and Polity; also in Scripture precepts and precedents; and lastly by the Catholick Custom, and practice of the Church of Christ.

Ans. In my answer therefore to this Cavill or Calumny, touching Bishops (which many Ministers are as afraid to name, or own with honour, as they are to call any holy man, either Apostle, Evangelist, Father or Martyr, by the title of Saints) my intent is not, largely to handle that late, severe, and unkind Dispute in England about Episcopacy or Prelacie; for this having been learnedly and fully done by others, would be, as superfluous, so extremely tedious both to the Reader and my self; Nor is it my purpose to justifie all that might be done or omitted by some Bishops in their government; But my design chiefly is, 1. to remove that popular odium, to allay that Plebeian passion, to rectifie those unlearned prejudices, and to take away those unjust jealousies, which are by some weak, and possibly well-meaning Christians, taken up, and daily urged against all Bishops, in a Presbyteriall eminencie among Presbyters, or above other Ministers. 2. My next is, to justifie that holy Ordination and Ministeriall authority, which by the imposition of their hands chiefly was, with probation, prayer, and meet Consecration, duly conferred upon the Ministers of this Church, according to Scripture rule, and Ecclesiasticall custome in all feder Churches.

But before I handle the first thing proposed, I must seek to remove that prejudice which sticks deep in some ordinary minds against Bishops and their Authority, meerly arising from the darkness, and sufferings of late so plentifully cast upon them; if arguments and words could not, yet Arms and Swords have (they say) convinced Bishops, and subdued them, notwithstanding all their learning, their gravity, their piety, their protection, which they pleaded from the Churches Catholick custome, and the Lawes of this Church: The vulgar are prone to think those wicked, who are unprosperous, and accursed, who are punished.

Yet in true judgement of things, those great and many impressions of worldly diminution, and supposed Miseries made upon Bishops, are more just arguments against the innocency of their persons, place, and lawfull power, than jobs afflictions were, which the Devil never urged against his integrity, but sought thereby to overthrow it, as God did prove and exercise it.
Of Ordination by Bishops.

I believe there are too many that would be content there should be neither Bishops nor Presbyters, but such as are great sufferers; Nor yet any Word, or Sacrament, or holy Ministraions, nor any marks of Christianity in this, or any other Reformed Church: But the measures of religious matters, are never to be taken from the passions or prevalencies of men, nor from any secular decrees, or human acts, and civil sanctions, Godly and famous Bishops in eminency among, and above the Presbyters, were many ages before any civil power protected them, and so they may continue, if God will, in his true Church, even then when (as of old) most persecuted, and fought to be destroyed: Worldly Counsells and forces, which commonly are levelled to mens secular ends, and civil interests, signifies little or nothing indeed to a true Christians judgement or conscience in the things of Christ and true Religion; which must never be either refuted, or accepted, according as they may be suffered in, or crowded out by Civil Authority. Christ doth not stear his Church by such Compa$t.

Things the more divine and excellent, the more probable to be rejected by men of this world. At the same rate of worldly frowns and disfavours, Christians long ere this time, should have had nothing left them of Scriptures, Sacraments, sound doctrine, or holy Ministrations; All had been turned into Heathenish barbarity, Heretical errors, or Schismatical confusions, if conscience to God, and love to Christ and his Church, had not preserved by the constancy and patience of Christian Bishops and Ministers, those holy things, which the wicked, wanton, and vain world, was never well pleased withal, and often persecuted, seeking to destroy both root and branch of Christianity: We are to regard not what is done by the few, or the many, the great or the small, but what in right reason, and due order, after the precepts and patterns of true Religion ought to be done in the Church.

As for the Government of Bishops, so far as it referred to the chief power and office of Ordaining Ministers in a right succession for due supplies to this Church of England; Truly I am so far from condemning that Episcopall authority and practice, as unlawfull and Antichristian, after the rate of popular clamor, ignorance, passion and prejudice, That contrarily very learned, wise, and godly men have taught me to think and declare; That as the faults and presumptions of any Bishops, through any pride, ambition, and tyranny, or other personal immoralties, are very Antichristian, because most diametrally contrary to the Precept and pattern of our holy and humble Saviour Jesus Christ, whose place Bishops have always as chief Pastors and Fathers among the Presbyters, since the Apostles times, eminently supplied, in the external order and Polity of the Church, So that above all men they ought to be most exactly conform

Episcopal power not Antichristian.
Of Episcopal government in the Church.

Episcopates assign to the holy rule and example of Jesus Christ, both in doctrine and manners; so withall, they have taught me to esteem the Antient and Catholic government of godly Bishops, (as moderators and Presidents among the Presbyters in any Diocess or Prinicipals) in its just measure and constitution for power Paternall, duly exercised, such as was in the Petering purest and Primitive times) to be as much, if not more Christian, than any other form and fashion of government can be; yea, far beyond any that hath not the charity, to endure Catholic primitive and right Episcopacy, which truly I think to be most agreeable to right reason, and those principles of due order and polity among men, also no less suitable to the Scripture wisdome, both in its rules and patterns; to which was conform the Catholic and Primitive way of all Christian Churches, throughout all ages, and in all places of the world.

Blondel. Apol.

Which things very learned men, and friends to Presbytery joyned with Episcopacy have confessed both lately (as Salmaetius, Boborius, and Blondellius) and also formerly, as Calvin, Beza, Moulin, with many others: so far was ever any learned and unpassionate man from thinking Episcopacy unlawfull in the Church.

Indeed after all the hot Cavasings, and bloody contentions, which have weared, and almost quite wafted the Estates, spirits, and lives of many learned men in this Church of England, as to the point of true Episcopacy, I freely profefs that I cannot yet see, but that that antient and univerfall form of government in due conjunction with Presbytery, and with due regard to the faithfull people, is as much beyond all other new invented fashions, as the Sun's light glory, and influence, is beyond that of the mutable and many-faced Moon, or any other Jutmos of Stars and Planets, however cast into strange figureations, or new Schemes and Conjunctions, by the various fancies of some Diviners and Astrologers.

Which free owning of my judgement, in this point, may serve to blot out that Character (etiam is Resbyterianus) added to my name, by the learned Pen of Becharius. For although I own with all honour and love order'y Presbytery, and humble Presbyters, in the sense of the Scriptures, and in the use of all pious Antiquity, for sacred and divine, in their office and function (as the lesser Episcopacy
Of Episcopal government of the Church.

pacy, or inspectors over lesser flocks in the Church, yet not to, as abhorring and extirpating all order and presidency of Bishops amon them, as if it were Antichristian, wicked, and intolerable; Nor do I think that an headless, or many headed Presbytery ought to be set up in the Church, as of necessity, and divine right; in this sense that learned writer himself, is no Presbyterian, nor ever had cause to judge me to be of that mind.

I confess, after the example of the best times, and judgement of 2. the most learned in all Churches, I always wished such moderation Reasons for on all sides, that a Primitive Episcopacy (which import, the An- Episcopacy thory of one grave and worthy person, chosen by the consent, and rather than assisted by the presence, counsel, and suffrages of many Presbyters) other God might have been restored, or preserved in this Church; and this not vernment, out of any facious design, but for these weighty reasons, which prevail with me:

feed the flock, till God shews who shall be their Bishop or Ruler. He salutes Onisimus the Bishop of Ephesus. Ep. ad Ephes. cited by Euseb. l. 3.c.35. Hist. is Eum cunlun quias: hiun y byspring Stir in. Flat. Chil.

1. For the Reverence due from posterity, to the Venerable piety of Ab Apollinis in Episcopatum constituens, Apo- 

solicitius feminis traduces Epis- 

copi. Terr. de 

Praf.c.32.an- 

no 300. 

Cornelius Bis- 

hop of Rome 

sages, the 

Church, com- 

mitted to his 

charge had 46 

Presbyters, and fought to have but one

Bishop. Euseb. hist. l. 6. c. 22. Vidimus nos Policarpum in prima nostra statuATIO, qui ab Apollonis non solum eodo, sed & ab Apollinis in Apa, in ea que fii Smynis Ecclesiae institutus fuit Episcopus. Irenaeus, l. 3.c.3. So in many places he testifies. Lib. 4. ca. 43. & 45. Omnes haretici posteriori sunt Epis- copos Apollinis tradierunt Ecclesias. l. 5.c.10. Cyprian. Ep. 67. Adulteram Cathedram collocare, aut illum Episcopum facere, contra Apostolica instituta non tantum, nec fases est nec licet. The Generall Council of Chalcedon reckons 27. Bishops in Ephesus from Timothy. CaL 11. inquiunt in oppo- ritum epistula iesu iesualdi 55. Con Chalced. Diotrephes a facious Presbyter is branded by Saint John, for not enduring the preheminence of that Apostle. 3 John. 2. Quod universtatis tenet. Eccles, nec Concilii institutum, sed sempiternum est non nisi Authoritate Apostolica traditur Ecclesiae creditur. Aust. de Bapst. L. 4. c. 24. None among the Antients was against the Order and Presidency of Bishops, but Arius, who was wholly an Arian; and upon envy and hatred against Eustathius, who was preferred before him in the Episcopal place which he sought, he urged Purity against Prelacy, contrary to the good order and peace of the Church. See St. Augustine, l. c. 59. Epist. 69 in
in matters of externall polity and Church society to the pattern of Primitive times; which could not follow so soon, and so universally any way, but from Apostolical precept or direction; from which the Catholick Church could not suddainly err in all places, being so far in thole times from any passion or temptation either of covetousnes or ambition, which had then no fewell from the favour of Princes, and as little sparks of ambition in the hearts of thole holy men; who were in all the great and Mother Churches both ever owned and reverenced in antiquity, as Bishops, in a priority of place and presidency of authority, both by the humble Presbyters, and all the rest of the faithfull people. It is not among the things comely or praise worthy, Phil.4.8. Either in charity, modesty, humility, or equity, for us in after and worse times, to cast upon all thole holy Primitive Christians and famous Churches, either the sufpiration of a general Apostacy, by a wilfull negelect, or universally falling away from that Apostolical way; or a running cross to it: Neither may we think that all Churches did lightly and imprudently abuse that occasionall liberty, which might be left them in prudence; whereby further to establish what might seem the best for order and peace, as to the matter of Government: wherein if the Churches were freely to choose, it is strange, they all agreed in this one way of Episcopall Government, All over the Christian world, till these later times. It becomes us, rather to be jealous of our own weak and wanton passions, and to return rather from our later transports & popular wanderings, to the neere conformities with thole first and best times; who universally had Bishops, either because they were so divinely commanded; or in holy wisdom they chose that way, as best; so far as there was left a Christian liberty of prudence, to those who were by the Apostles, set, as Pastors and Rulers over the severall Churches: and however the name at first was common to all Church Ministers, Apostles, and Presbyters, to be called Bishops; yet afterward, when the Apostles were deceas'd, their successors in the eminency of place, among the Presbyters, were called peculiarly Bishops.

Secondly,
Secondly, For the avoiding of Scandal giving to so many Christian Churches, remaining in all the world; who, for the far major part, are still governed by Bishops, in some respect deficient from and eminent above the Presbyters: It is not the work of Christian prudence or charity, to widen differences, between us and other Churches, Greek, Eastern, African, or Western; yea, we owe this Charity to the Romanists, and to our selves rather, who seem to have gained this great advantage against us, by the offence given them in utter abolishing the Antient and Cathlick order and succession of Episcopacy; that they will let us esteem us Christians; or to be in any true Church; since they will not allow us any right and compleat Ordination of Ministers, and so no Sacraments, and no Christianity as to extern profession and administration without Bishops; yea, the best reformed Churches must needs be offended who approve such a Presidency of Bishops among Presbyters, where it is continued with the doctrinal Reformation; many enjoy Bishops till as we did; No learned and godly men ever thought it caufe enough to separate from any Church because it had Bishops. Such as have them not in a constant Presidency, yet count this no part of their Reformation; but rather deplore it, as a defect involuntary, pleading the Law of necessity, or some grand inconveniences and difficulty to excuse thereby their inconformity, so far, to other Churches and to all Antiquity; yea the most learned and wise among their Presbyterians abroad, oft wish they had the honour and happines of reformed and reformation-Bishops. Nor ever did heretofore the most learned and godly people in England, Ministers or others, any more than the Princes, Nobility, and Gentry, generally desire the abolition of right Episcopacy; however now at last, they had not either opportunity to plead for it, or such power and influence as to preferre it, against those inundations which God hath been pleased to suffer to overflow in this Church; but rocks are not presently removed, when over-flew in; what is of God will stand, and cut-live the deluge. So the Angli-Catholic Confession, So Luther off, Camerarius in vita Philippisp. Maximè opiniatur, de fuscit. t Epifcopiurit mag- na jutia autoritas, Melanthon Epi- pit. ad Lud- berum & ad Bel- laium Ep. Pae. Bucer. de anim. marium curis. A temporibus Apostoloris Epis- copus a Pres- byteris eletus nihilque imposi- tur quaemadmodum Jacobus Hierofoly- tanus; Eo de disciplina clericalis, Epifcopa- lem poteflatem relinquendum op- tate, Calvin Ins. 1. 4. 4. S. 2. Calvin. Epip. ad Sado- feum. & In- fin. 1. 14. 4. S. 2. Calv. de necefe ref. Ecc. Nullo non Ana- themate dignus falar, & qui erunt qui non re- venturus sumunt, obedientia observante Hierarchiam in qua fuperintendit Episcopius Christi (abfide non recu- fant, ab illa tautam unico capaci pendent, adiipiam referuant; ejus eccitiate coligatis fratremCharisatum colent, Beza in Apoc. 2. 7. Apol. 1. ex præceptis, quot minimæ opus inimici de his rebus admoneret, ac per eum căterum collegerit, tanquam adeo Ecclesiæ Pet. Mar. lect. comm. Zanchius, Hoc minime improbari poße judicium, nisi unus inter multos Presbyteros prefert Epifcopi, conf. c.5. 1.vertedos notis in Ign. Ex adh. & Epifopis Apostolici atque ex Ecc. hie locis coligatis, ipfos Apol. & eorum factibus hunc ritum obser- vante, ut unus quasi nominem Presbyteri Ministro, Hostias elufos ab Ecclesia eleemos a manibus impositionem & preces publicas ordinaret. Gerard. de min. p. 372. Grotius inter proprii dicas Apollo, traditionemesse affert Episcopalem. episcopum, & lexmin. vol. prop. Pater du Moulin Epif. ad Epif. Wint. Decontate in Epifilo to the late Assembly. Primi & beatissimi temporum polutea Ecclesiae admirabiliter Arifocratia mixta Epif. Presbyteri &i tua gratia attribut. Alfed. de min. So Gratius pag. 232. Reintroduit Episcopalem ordinem affert. Propper 8. rationes. 1. Verò dixit de Dei. 2. Exempla Apostolica; & Prin- cipatum Ecc. iuxta l. 3 præter iurisprudiam & iuris Ecclesiæ. 4. Nature congratuum ill. ovo, & ratione in omnibus. 5. Alii concordiam, 6. simplici evan. & arvoretiam. 7. Nulli gracia ubi sit eleccione, & f 5. Suffragia Presbyterorum peragat officium. 8. Tollit? Aepoli. Sebula & Seditiones. Thirdly,
Of Episcopall Governments.

Corpsos forbidden to ordain without the Bishops licence, by the Council of Ampfia, which was before the Nicene, and confirms the ancient custom.

So Concil. Arelat. c. 19.
So Concil. Laod. c. 56.


Thirdly, I prefer a Primitive Episcopacy, as the best way of union, and happy satisfaction, to all learned, wise, and good men; especially in that it shaken and disputed a point of Ordination, for the right succession and conferring of power Ministerial: which the most learned and sober Presbyterians confess, not to be weakened by Episcopall Presidency; And very many, no less considerable men, for number, learning, and piety (as Da. Blondell among others) do think, the right Ordination of Ministers to be much more strengthened, adorned and compleated, where it passeth through the hands of the Episcopall power and order; if for no other reason, yet for this, that it was the Apostolicall, Primitive, and universal way, used in the Church, and by which the Authority and Office of the Ministry hath ever been, together with Christianity, derived to us from the Apostles times. Its evident, that the sudden and violent receding of many men from their former judgement and practice in this point, hath occasioned many great scandals, scruples and schisms, troubles and confusions, in matters both of Church and State; giving great advantages to all that lift to cavil at, question, and despise, the Ordination, and Ministry of even those Presbyters (yee, their very Christianity, as to the outward form, order, and profession,) who so easily renounced, and eagerly cast quite away, that order and power, as unlawfull and un-Christian.

Fourthly, A right Episcopacy seems yet never to have had so free, full, and fair an hearing, as it is requisite in so great a matter, so as to have been evicted to be against the Scriptures, as some pretend.

1. When as tis most evident, in most learned and godly mens judgements antient and modern, that it hath the nearest resemblance to that antient Patern at leaft, which God setled, the Government of his Church among the Jews; who had the heads of their Fathers, as Bishops; and rulers over their brethren, the Priest and Levites, Numb. 3. 24. Now tis manifest that our Lord Christ and the Apostles, had great regard to the Judaick customs, in Christian Institutions; As in the Baptising with water; In the use of the Bread, and Wine in the Lords Supper; In the Sabbatizing on the Lords Day; and in the giving the power of the Keys to the Pastors and Teachers of the Church, to open and shut, to bind and loose; expressing thereby Ministerial Authority: In all which there
there was some like or parallel precedents among the Jews, in making their Rabbins, and in celebrating holy mysteries, and governing those of that Church and Religion.

2. For, the new Testament, nothing either of precept or example seems against a right Episcopacy, commanding a parity, or forbidding order and subjection among Presbyters as well as other men: what Christ forbids his Apostles of exercising dominion after the manner of Princes of the world, excludes indeed, First from the twelve (who were (pares in Apostolatu) equally Apostles, and were not long to live in one society; but to lay the foundations of Religion in all the world, by a parity of power; coordinate, but not subordinate to any but Christ, who chose them) and proportionably, forbids all Bishops and Church-men, the secular methods of gaining or using any Ecclesiastical power and eminency in the Church, as by ambition, force, usurpation, tyranny; by the sword, and severities, penal, inflicted on the Bodies, Estates, Liberties and lives of men: which was the way, of the world, but not of Christ, or his Ministers; yet these tyrannies which attend mens lusts and passions, as men, are as incident (besides factions and emulations) to the Presbyterian way, where some are always heady and leaders, as to that of a right and regular Episcopacy, whereby Presbyters are joined. The plain meaning of our Lord Jesus (who owned himself, as chief among his Apostles, yet condescended to serve them,) is; That, what ever excellency any Christian Minister or other had above others, in age, estate, parts, place, power, gifts, graces, or civil honors (for what hinders a Prince or Nobleman to be a Minister of the Gospell, and yet retain both his honour and estate temporal?) all these should be used and enjoyed without the leaven of pride, insolency, or oppression, and only be turned to greater advantages of serving Christ, and the Church, with all humble Industry; As Christ himself did; And after him the Apostles, who had undoubtedly some order and precedence among themselves in the equality of their Apostolical power; to also priority both of place, superiority of Church jurisdiction, and authority and power over all other Disciples and believers; And this not from any personall gifts temporary, and privileges so much, as from that wisdom and peaceable order, which Christ would have observed always in Calvin. Inst. 1. 4. c. 4. Sext. 3. 8. Saith, Episcopall eminency is the best way to prevent Schisms, and to keep peace in the Church. Luke 22. 26. But ye shall not be so: But he that is greatest among you let him be as the youngest; and he that is chief as he that doth serve.

Mac. 3. 4. There may be a wife servant whom the Lord may set over his house. Timothy is taught how to behave himself in the Church as a Governour, no less than a Minister, or Teacher. 1 Tim. 3. 15. Remis non servet in gubernat Episcopi: de finum in aryrra rot.: of f ws eic pe d ABP, ina Bp. 627. Tim. 6. the atw a-w o n a- zon neus an-i: zu apw a a- tribute vocat. If. pell. 1. 2. not fruge or Episcopi as Liban to Basil says Bishops were, &c. Basi. Ep. 154.
his Church, after the Apostolical example; By some of whom, as
the antients tell us, Some Ministers were clearly constituted as Bi-
shops, with an eminency of personall power over others, to ordain,
censure, rebuke, silence, even Presbyters and Deacons.

This is undeniably evident by Scripture in Timothy and Titus;
The validity and authority of which examples were esteemed by
Antiquity, and followed, as warrantable divine precedents, and ob-
ligatory examples to after ages; (in the like fates at least) for imi-
tation; By preserving such an ordinary succession of power in Bish-
ops among and above Presbyters; both in ordination and juris-
diction. Nor is this clear instance to be any way in reason, avoyded, by
saying, that Timothy and Titus were Evangelists; (what ever that
Office were in the Church (either temporary and personall; or com-
mon to other chief Ministers; and perpetually to succeed) for it
makes nothing against a personall superiority of power, and
authority in them over their respective Churches; which was to
succeed to others in all reason, as well as their Ministry did; both
these being always necessary for the Church; and indeed their
ordinary power as to Government, had no dependance on their
being Evangelists; no more, than their Preaching, and other
Ministeriall acts had; which we may not argue from these two
persons, to be incompatible to any Ministers now; Unless they be
Evangelists: For then, no Presbyters that are not Evangelists in
their office might study or Preach, in season, and out of season, re-
buke, exhort, &c. or shew themselves Workmen that need not to
be ashamed &c. Now if these acts and Offices of Ministry are de-
rivable to other single persons in a Ministeriall way; why not alfo
that Gubernative power too; which was from the Apostle signally
committed to Timothy and Titus, and no where so expressly to any
fraternity of Ministers, or Presbytery in common?

After that rate of arguing, we may conclude, that none, but the
very chief Apostles, might feed the Lambs and Sheep of Christ;
because, that command was thrice given to Peter; who was reck-
noned among the chiefest of the Apostles; which Conclusions were as
abfurd, and ridiculous; (being by all the practice and sense of the
Primitive Churches confuted,) as this; that the power of proving and ordeyning Presbyters, by laying on of hands, of receiving ac-
cusations against them, of rebuking, censoring, excommunicating,
silencing and restoring; (all Acts gubernative) may not be emi-
ently in any single person; unless they be Apostles or Evangel-
lsts; when as not only the use of such order and power is in all
reason necessary for Church societies (no less, than for civill;) but
the succession of it, in such sort as it began in them, to all times
after, seems clearly intimated, by that vehement charge layd on
Timothy
Of Episcopacy Primitive.

Timothy, to keep those things unpartially and unblazondly until the comming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Which Timothy in his infirm per- son could not do; but, in his care to transmit the holy pattern to posterity, and to his successors; he might, as he was enjoyed, be laid to do: For what is once well done in a regular publike way, is not ever after done, as to the permanency of that vertue, which is in a divine estate divine.

What other Churches did observe after the Apostles times, as to the manner of their Government, when they grew numerous, and spread to many Congregations and Presbyteries, we may easily be resolved both by the testimony and practice of all Antiquity: Fathers, Councils, Historians, who have registred the uninterrupted succession of Bishops, from the Apostles, both in the seven Asiatick Churches mentioned in the Revelation; whose Angels were generally taken for their Presidents or Bishops; and some of Apostles then living; when as Archippus, Euodius, and Onesimus, and Polycrates were Bishops, &c. What after times observed, is evident to this day among all Christians; even those of the Eastern and Abyssinie Church have still their Bishops: so the Greek and Muscovitish Churches; so the furthest Asiaticks, which are thought to have been first converted by St. Thomas, (who furfeft from believing, did the penance of travelling furfeft, to Preach the Gospel in India) And I observe the Fratres Bohemi in their perjured state and poverty, for a long time, still retained a very happy and comly order of Episco-pall Government.


Truly, I never found so much light of Scripture pattern and precept, enjoying any one, or more Presbyters to do all those works of power and jurisdiction; Nor ever did they without the presence of an Apostle, or some Apostolicall successor and Bishop, regularly ordain, excommunicate, silence, &c. So far as I can yet learn. There are but two texts that mention the Presbytery, (and but one which can be pretended for ruling Lay-Elders;) which yet these are not preceptive.
preceptive or institutive, but meerly narrative and touching, without expressing any joynct power, Office, or Authority of Presbyters, with any President or Bishop: much les, without them and against them. Yea I read in St. Jude's Epiftles v. 8. foul marks put upon those in the Church, that despise dominions, and speak evil of dignities; Against whose proud and seditious praftifes, awoe is denounced, as against men, cruel like Cain, covetous like Balaam, ambitious as Korah, faticus disturbers of that order, which God hath set in his Church, (as well as in civill societys) after the mutinous example of Korah and his company, who rose against both Moses and Aaron; parallel to whole evil manners and disorderly praftifes, thefe men had not been, against whom St. Jude here, and St. Peter in his second Epiftle fo sharply inveighs (as presumptuous, self-willed, despizers of dignities, &c.) unlefs there had been some eminencies in the Church Christian, as well as was among the Jews, which thefe men were most bold to oppose and contemn;

As for the civill powers, that then were in the world, humble Christians made conscience as God commanded them, to submit to them in all honest things. And thofe hyperitites, were no doubt too many, to adventure any thing against them, whose power was terrible by the sword; But the Orders, Governments, Dignities and Dominions in the Church, were expofed by their weakness, to the scorn and affronts of any fuch proud and tumultuating Spirits; which covered themfelves under the veil of Christian Religion, yea and pretentions of the Spirit too; the better to fet off their Schifms, and separations from that authority, power, and order, which God had by the Aposhtles fettled in the Church, even in thofe times.

If there were not thus much of Scripture pattern, and precept pleading fairly for a right Epifcopacy; yet since there is nothing againft it, in Scripture, or Reason, in Religion, or morals, yea and so much for it in common reason, true polity, and almost necessitie in Church societys, no lefs than in either families, Cities, armies, or any fraternities, and Corporations of men: No doubt the Lord of his Church hath not deprived or denied that liberty, and benefit of good order, and rational Government to his Church, which in all civill societies, may lawfully be used, according to wisdom and discretion; Truly, we may as well think it unlawful, for one Minifter to excell another, or many others, in age, parts, learning, prudence, gravity, and gubernative faculties: which if they may lawfully be had, and are found in one by the especiall gift of God, to fo great differences from, and excellencies above, others; what Reason or Religion can forbid them to be accordingly used, and publiquely employed in answerable differences of place and power for the Churches good? only Christ requires humility in priority, Miniftry in their major-
Vulgar prejudices against Episcopacy.

tersity, and service in their superiority, proportioned to their gifts and endowments, which God never gave in vain. Nor doth there ever want indeed a plebs and vulgarity, among many Presbyters, though honest and able men, some of whom are still young, and prone to be passionate, impiudent, factious and schismatical, wholly folly is not yet decocted, nor youthfull heats abated, &c. For the good ordering of whom, beyond a contemptible and heady parity, a right Episcopal presidency may be as useful, lawfull, and necessary; as a little Wine was for Timothy, in regard of his frequent infirmities.  

1 Tim. 5. 23. which St. Jerom every where owns, as the ground of the first constitution of Bishops after the Apostles. Nor can such a paternall presidency be injurious to others, If rightly ordered, in the due choosing and preferring of a worthy and tried person; who cannot be said to be imperious, or to exercise any forbidden dominion over those, by whole suffrages and consent he is worthily placed in that power and place for the good of them all; which priority and eminency ought to be kept, within those bounds of Christian authority, which may consist with Charity and Humility. And after all this, we see by woffull experience, that the want of that right Episcopal Government, hath occasioned so many and great mischiefs, in this and other Churches; as do sufficiently shew the use and worth of it; which was alwaies the greatest conservator of the Churches peace and purity in the beft and Primitive times.

Epift. ad Eva-

griminum & ad-

veritus Lucife-
rionos.  

sacerdotes.  

Propter Ecclesia homen, quo salvo salus pax est. Tectul. de Bap. Presbyteris & diacon

jus babem Baptifandinon tam ex fine Epifcopi autoreitate, &c. Jeron. Aliqui de Presbyteris, nec Evan-
gelii nec loci sui memorum, neque futurum Dei Judicium, neque numi fobi propositum Epifcopum cognitum, 
quod nuncnam omnino fub neccefforibus factum est, cum contumelia & contemptui praebitis fui tumum fibi; vindicant, guorem immoderata & abrupta presumptione temeritate sua, & honorem matrum, & confiflorum

pudorem, & universis plebis tranquillitatem turbare constant. Thus Cyprian complains in his time, who was one of the mekest and humbleft Bishops that ever were, of the Arrogancy of Presbyters acting without their Bishop, Cyp. Ep. 67. Mutua at fede fibi praebet orationis patrocini orar
tium multitudo. Cecil. in M. F. Deput qui ad vulgi normam fats, Sen. utroque partis nunc occult

disputat Cl. Al. quin. quinque tractantur atque adficiat ad subieétas, vel quasam literam Naz. or. 24.

contra Arianos qui facile numeris gaudebant.

If any Object the vulgar prejudices and disaffections in many mens minds, against any thing that is called Prelacy or like to Answer to Episcopacy, I answer, 1. The beft observation to be made, as from vulgar en-

the vote and fene of the ( multitude most men, is this, what they moft fatisfaction dislike and oppose, is moft by wise men to be defred and approved; against E-

Its no rule for good men to walk by, in matters of Religion, above piocon

all. 2. I believe the generality of sober Christians in this Nation do so much fee the milery of change, and the want of right Church 

would not have this inconveni. Infor navis tempesíatibus salutae est Epifcopi anima: navis proximae


Governm
Vulgar prejudices against Episcopacy.

Government, that they are (both the most and best of them) rather destructive of a restored and regulated Episcopacy, than any other way, which hath been tried in vain. 3. Neither headlets Presbytery, nor scattered Independence are without many great dislikes already in the minds of many good Christians; who finding these remedies worse than the disease are prejudiced against them both. 1. For their novelty; being unheard of in the Christian world, for 1500 years, and the last of not above ten years standing in England; both brought in but abruptly, as rising from private mens interests, passions and policies; with which Episcopall Government did not well agree; Neither of them ever having had either the vote of any general council, or the praise of any considerable part of the Catholic Church. 2. Suspected they are by many, for their prevailing upon this Church, by a kind of force; against the consent of the supreme Magistrate, and this in broken and bleeding times; Planted not by Preaching and patience, but by the Sword, and watered with civil blood; Each driving their Chariot (as Tullia the wife of Tarquinius Superbus did) over their Fathers: As if they brought in (Armatum Evangelium) Christian Religion in compleat armor; and Christ marching, like Alexander, Hannibal, or Cæsar; when as Episcopacy was (toto orbe decretum) with wisdom, charity and peace, by consent of all Churches in all the world approved (as St. Jerom tells us,) and established even in those times, when persecution kept the Church most in purity, and unity with itself, and when prayers and tears were the only arms used in the Church, to set up any part of the Kingdom of Christ; either in Doctrine or Discipline. 3. Because neither of these new ways, ever yet had such plenary and peaceable approbation (after due debate,) from the publick reason, prudence and piety of this nation, comparable to what the Government by Bishops, always had, in all Parliaments and Synods for many hundreds of years, since we had any Princes or Parliaments Christian. 4. Neither of them, carry yet any promising face of more truth, peace, order and honour to the Christian reformed Religion, to this Church or Nation; nor yet of more moral splendours and holiness in mens lives; nor of more grace in mens hearts; nor of more love and union as to mens affections; yet in no degree so much as Episcopacy did, in the Primitive and best times; yet, and in these last times too, since the Reformation; for although it might have some sharp prickles with it; yet it bare sweeter and fairer Roses, than these last have done or are like to do, and with far less offence. 5. The same or worse inconveniences, which are by any objected against Episcopacy in its age and decays, discover themselves in the very bud and infancy of these new ways; As much pride, ambition, tyranny, vanity, incharitableness; more profanels,
Prophanes, Atheilms, Hereticks, Blasphemy, Licentiousness, far more faction, bitterness, vulgarity, deformity and confusion; besides the needful offence and scandal given to most Christian Churches in all the world, who retain the government by Bishops, being as antient as their being Christians, and descended from the same origin, the Apostles, and Apostolical men. 6. Neither of the new modes ever produced, either Precept or holy example, or any divine direction for them in any degree, so clearly, and so fully, as Episcopacy hath always done; nor yet have they produced any promise from God, that they shall be freed from those inconveniences, which were real, or odiously objected against Episcopacy; and which may be incident in time to all things that are managed by men.

This government then by a fatherly president or chief Bishop among Presbyters, seeming to have not equall, but far supeirour grounds, from Scripture, both as to the Divine wisdom, so ordering tages of the form of his antient Church among the Jews; also by the example, precept and direction evident from Christ Jesus, and the holy gainst any Apostles in the New Testament; No wonder that many, yea far the other, most of godly and learned upright men, do rather approve a Primitive and right Episcopacy, than any other new fashion, which is rather conform to secular interest, than to any thing of the Churches, or true religions advantages; especially when it is evident, that Episcopacy hath the great and preponderating addition of the Antient sole, and Universal government, approved, and used by all the Churches of Christ, in the purest and most impartial times; To which neither of the other, can with any face pretend for themselves; nor with any truth contradict; it being avouched by all Antiquity, in the behalf of right and regular Episcopacy, which never failed to succeed the Apostles authority and eminency, either by their own immediate appointment in many places, even while they yet lived; or by the election and votes of the Colleges and Fraternities of Presbyters, after the Apostles decease, who still chose one man eminent, for his faith, piety, zeal, and holy gravity, to be duly consecrated in power and place above them; as a Father among sons; or an elder Brother among brethren; or as a Master or Provoft in a College; or as a General in an Army; as St. Jerome himself tells us.

If any man ask me then what kind of Bishop I would have; \( \text{Vid. Synec.} \)
\[ \text{I answer, Such an one for Age, as may be a Father; for wisdom a Senator, for gravity a Stoick, for light an Angel, for innocency a Saint, for industry a Labourer, for constancy a Confessor, for zeal a Martyr.} \]

\( \text{Nn} \)
The Character of an excellent Bishop.


I would have him venerable for those several excellencies, which are most remarkable in the ancient and most imitable Bishops; The devotion of St. Gregory; the indefatigableness of St. Austin; the courage of St. Ambrose; the learning of Nazianzen; the generosity of Basil; the Eloquence of Chrysostom; the gentleness of Cyprian; the holy flames of Ignatius; the invincible constancy of Polycarp; That so he may come nearer to the Apostolicall pattern, and resemble the most of any Christian, or Minister, the grace and Glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. I would have him (yet not I, but the vote of all pious Antiquity requires a Bishop) to be among men the most morall; among Christians the most faithful; among Preachers the most painful; among Orators the most persuasive; among Governours the most moderate; among Devotions the most fervent; among Professors the most forward; among Preachers the most exact; among sufferers the most patient; among perseverants the most constant: He should be as the Holy of holies was both to the inward court of those that are truly sanctified and converted; and to the outward court of those that are called Christians, only in visible profession; I would have nothing in Him, that is justly to be blamed, or sinisterly suspected; And all things that are most deservedly commended by wise and sober Christians; I would have a Bishop of all men the most compleat, as having on him the greatest care, namely that of the Church, and of fouls; And this in a more publice and eminent inspection; as one daily remembering the strictness of God's account, and expecting either a most glorious Crown, or a most grievous Curse to all Eternity.

I would have him most deserve, and most able to use well, but yet least esteeming, coveting, or ambitionating the riches, pomp, glory, and honour of the world. One that knows how to own himself in Persecution, as well as in Prosperity, and dares to do his duty as a Bishop in both estates; I do not much consider the secular Paradise and Equipoynge, further than as publice encouragements of Merit, as excitation to excell, as noble rewards of Learning, and as extern decencies or solemnities which do much set off, and Embroider Authority in the sight of the vulgar; I wish him duly chosen with judgement, accepting with modesty, esteemed with honour, reverenced with love; Overseeing with vigilance, ruling with joynt-Counsel, not levelled with younger Preachers and novices, nor too much exalted above the graver, and elder Presbyteries; neither despised of the one,
The Character of an excellent Bishop.

one, nor despising of the other; I wish him an honourable compe-
tency (if it may be had) with his eminency; that he may have
wherewith to exercise a large heart, and a liberal hand, which eve-
ry where carry respect and conciliate love; If this cannot be had, yet
I wish him that in true worth, which is denied him in wealth. That
his vertue and piety may still preserve the authority of his place;
and, this in the Order, Peace, and Dignity of the Church; That he
may be the Touchstone of Truth, the Loadstone of Love, the Stan-
dard of Faith, the Pattern of holines; the Pillar of stability, and the
Center of Unity in the Church.

Nor are these to be esteemed, as Characters of an Eutopian Pre-
late, only to be had in the abstract of fancy and speculation; Many
such Bishops have been antiently in the Church, and not a few, here
in England, some still are such in their merits amidst their ruins and
obscuring, and more might constantly and easily be supplied to the
Churches good order, peace and honour; If Reason and not Passion,
Religion and not Superstition, Judgement and not Prejudice, Calm-
ness and not fierceness, Learning and not Idiomism, Gravity and not
Giddiness, Wildome and not Vulgarit, Prudence and not Precipi-
tancy; impartially Antiquity, and not interested novelty may be the
judge of true Episcopacy.

I think nothing further from a true Bishop, than Idleness set off
with pomp, than Ignorance decked with solemnity, than Pride blazo-
ned with power, than Covetousness guilded with Empire, than Sor-
didness smothered with state, than Vanity drest up with great for-
nalities. Bishops should not be like blazing Comets in their Dio-
ce, having more of distance, terror, and pernicious influence, than
of light or Celestial vertue; But rather, as fixed Stars of the prime
magnitude, shining most usefully and remarkably in the Church,
during this night of Christ's absence, who is the only Sun for his
light, and Spouse for his love to the Church; yet hath he appointed
some proxies to woo for him, and Messengers to convey love tokens
from him; among whom the holy Bishops of the Church were ever
accounted as the chiefest Fathers next the Apostles, when they were
indeed such as evil men most feared, good men most loved, Schism-
ticks most envied, and Hereticks most hated: Right Episcopacy is to
great an advantage to the Churches happiness, and so unblamable
in its due constitution and exercise, that it is no small blemish to any
godly mans judgement, not to approve it, and nothing (as to im-
prudence) is I think more blame-worthy, than not to desire, esteem,
love and honour it. Since such Prelature is as lawfull, as it is use-
full; and it is as useful, as other Reason or Religion; polity or pie-
ty can propound in any thing of that nature, which if not absolute-
ly necessary, yet certainly most convenient for the Church, and com-

N n 2
The Character of an excellent Bishop.

mendable in the Church (so far as it stands in a visible Polity and society,) being no way, either sinfull in it self, or contrary to any positive Law of God, any more than it is for Christians in civil government, to have Maiors in their Cities, Colonels in their Armies, Masters in their Colleges, Wardens in their Fraternities, Captains or Pilots in their Ships, or Fathers in their Families.

Nor is indeed the venerable face of true Episcopacy so deformed by some mens late ridiculous dresse and disguises; but that wise and learned men still see the many reverend and excellent lineaments of it, not only of pious and prime antiquity, but of beauty, order, symmetry, and benefit; such as flow from both humane and divine wisdom; if popular contempt and prejudices in some of the vulgar be any measure of things, or any argument against any thing in Religion, or in the Church of Christ; it will serve as well to vilifie and nullifie all Presbytery, and all Ministry, as all Episcopacy. Indeed neither of them can preserve their honor, use, and compleiines, if they exceed their proportions, and either dash against, or incroach upon each other; contrary to those bounds and methods, which primitive wisdom observed between power and counsell, Order and Authority, Community and Unity. It is very probable, that a few years experience of the want of good Bishops, will so reconcile the minds of sober and impartial Christians to them, that few will be against them, save only such, who think the best security for some of their estates to be the utter exploding, and perpetuall extirpation of Episcopacy; a thing which one of the wisest of mortalls so much abhorred, and for which he was able to give so good an account in Reason, Piety, and true Polity; that it appears to have been not pertinacy and interest, but judgement and conscience, that so long sustained that unhappy Controversie, which I have no mind to revive, but only (if possible) to reconcile, which is no hard matter where clear truths meet with moderate affections, and peaceable inclinations. For I find by the proportion of all Polity and Order; that if Episcopal eminency be not the main weight, and carriage of Ecclesiasticall government, yet it is as the Axis or wheel which puts the whole frame of Church society and communion into a fit order and aptitude for motion; especially in greater associations of Christians, which make the most firm and best constituted Churches.

This being then the true figure of a learned, grave, godly and industrious Bishop, there need not more be faid to redeem Episcopacy from prejudices; or to affer it against those trivial objections, which are not without truth and judgement, so much as with spight and partiality made against it.

Those light touches which are by some men produced from the antient Writers in the Church, for the countenancing of the power of
of Presbyteries without any Bishop and President, or for the Independence of power in Congregations, are indeed but as the dust of the balance, or drops of a full bucket, compared to those full and weighty testimonies, which they every where give, for the use of Episcopacy, unless men be allowed the confidence and liberty to base upon the works of the Fathers as they list, and by a new purgatorial Index to antiquate all Records after 1500 years legitimation, by the consent of all Churches; as one lately hath endeavoured to do, (a person indeed of great reading and learning, but in this not of equal candor and impartiality,) who endeavouring to find some foundation, wherein to build his Presbytery, seeks to cast away as rubbish and trash, all the Epistolary writings of holy Ignatius, who if he had wrote nothing, yet the fame of his piety, and sufferings made him sufficiently renowned in those Primitive times and after ages, both for a Bishop and a Martyr; his feat Episcopall being at Antioch, and his grave at Rome; But his writings being never so far questioned by Antiquity, as to reject those Epistles which we urge in this point of Episcopacy for genuine: and which are oft mentioned with honour, (and in part the very words,) which we now read; so that it seems a passion and boldness too servile to the cause, which that learned man undertook; so to endeavour at once to expunge those testimonies, and remains of Ignatius, which indeed are very weighty, and many, for the distinction of Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons, even in the first century after Christ; which our learned and industrious Country-man Dr. Hammond hath lately, as (μεταταξια) a valiant vindicator defended; not more to the honour of Ignatius, than of himself, whom providence hath chosen, and so enabled to be a Patron to so glorious a Martyr, and in so just a cause, as to redeem one of the first Fathers from that Presbyterian Limbo.

How uncomely, and petulant some other men's carriages have been, and are daily toward the ancient Fathers of the Church, I need not tell, when 'tis too evident, how they put them oft on the rack, to make them speak, fomthing in favour for either an Headlese Presbyterie, or a confused Independency. Indeed, it is a shame to see young men and novices, so to make those antient, holy, and learned Writers to scratch or blot their own faces, with their own Pens, and to put out their Eyes with their own files; wounding, as it were their noses, till they bleed a drop or two for those new Modes and exotick forms of Church-Government, which neither they, nor their forefathers even up to the Apostles times, ever saw or knew; And this tyranny of quotations must be exercised upon the works of the Fathers, though never so much against the clear judgement and practice of those holy men, who were themselves, either eminent Bishops, as most of the Antients were, whose Works are extant, or

humble
Of Episcopacy Reformed.

5. Regulation of Episcopacy.

Omnimix ad me peritato placuit contrabili presbyterium. Cornel. ep. Rom. ad Cyp. Epist. 46.

In the absence, sickness, or death of the Bishop, the Presbyters sometimes governed the Church. So in Cyprians absence. Epst. 16. 30. 31.

So Tertull. l. 4. 5. 22 when the Orthodox Bishop banished the Presbyters, Flavia- mus and Diocletius, &c. guided the Church.

So anno 1194. When the Turks prevailed over the

humble and peaceable Presbyters, who univerally owned and submitted to the authority of their Bishops; yea, some men have the forehead to urge a few obscure passages in a few them against clear places, which are a hundred to one, wherein they express their own judgements, or the whole Churches practice in their times, to be without any dispute for Episcopacy, and Bishops with Presbyters as succeeding the Apostolical eminencie in the ordinary power of Ordination and Church-government: Indeed, I have oft wondred, how men of learning and piety, had the confidence to cite testimonies even out of Ignatius, Tertullian, Irenaeus, Origen, Cyprian, Clemens of Alexandria, Ambrose, Austin, and others in favour of a Presbytery, without and against a Bishop or President, when all of them, as all others of the Fathers are most clear, both in their own judgements, and as to the Churches Catholick practice (yea, and so is St. Jerom too) for the right use of regular Episcopacy, such as all sober men plead for and approve.

What ever the Fathers are brought in, as speaking for the Ministers rights in a joynt Presbytery, or the peoples as for Independency, amount to no more, but either to repreis the arrogancy, ambition, and tyranny of some Bishops, who in more favourable times usurped, or used their power against, or with neglect of the Counsell and assistance of Presbyters (which in all reason ought, and in Antiquity were ever joyned with the Bishop in weighty matters) or else when the insolence and scorn of some Ecclesiastick governours arose to the oppression of the faithful people; To whom in Primitive times great regard was had, both by Bishops and Presbyters, in all publick transactions, which concerned their, and the Churches good government, that so all things might be done, with charity, good liking, and approbation of all Christians. This was not only very comely and convenient, but almost necessary in point of Christian prudence in those times, when Christians of all degrees were full of humility and Charity, kept short and low by perfection, and much depended upon the love and union between Pastor and people. Afterward indeed in times of peace and plenty, there oft appeared so much of levity, fury, and faction in the common people, that it was the wisdom of Governours to withdraw much of that liberty and indulgence, which formerly people enjoyed, but afterward abused to Sedition, Fury and Murthers in their tumultuary motions, and clausorous Elections, This is all that ever I observed from the Antients, in favour of the Presbyters power in common with Bishops, or of the faithful people; Namely, that they would have (after the pattern of the Apostolike love, wildome, and humility) all things of publike concernment, in the Church, to be so managed by the chief Governours or Bishops, as neither Presbyters, nor People, should think themselves
Of Regulated Episcopacy.

It were endless and needless, to answer or excus Excess.. Bishops pertorrs in Bishops, or those common inconveniences, which are prone to fonal errors, attend all Power and superiority among men; For those are the fruits no argument of Power perverted, of Authority degenerating, of Governors ill go-but of envy turning themselves, through personall errors and passions, or the cor- and malefic ructions and indulgences of times; but they are not by any wise against the and impartial man to be reckoned, as the genuine and proper effects, office, of that order, government, and proportion, which is in right Episcopacy (and which all reason, as well as Religion, allows to all sorts of men and Christians) no more than sickness is, to be imputed, as a fault to health; or deformity to comelines: since both are incident in humane nature to the greatest strength or beauty. Yea, "tis most certain, that there is nothing usefull, or commendable in any other way of governing the Church, in small parcels, or in greater bodies, which is not inclusively, eminently, and consummatively in a well-ordered Episcopacy; such as was not only in primitive times, but in our dayes: As all Oeconomick vertues are in a good Father or Master, and all politick excellencies are in an excellent Prince or Magistrate, which cannot be found in any other sort of, and inferior to those eminent relations; All other lower and incompleater forms are, as defective in point of advancing a common and publike good, as they come short of that main end, for with Episcopacy, as the Crown and perfectest degree of order was by Apoftolicall and primitive wisdome, and piety, settled in the Church, which was to avoid Schisms; to preserve the Unity of the faith, and peace of the Churches; to keep good correspondencies by Synods and Councills; which could not be done by multitudinous meetings, which no place could hold, nor wise men manage to any order and decency; but all was easily effected by the conventions of the chief heads and Fathers of the Churches, the Bishops and Presbyteres in any Province, Patriarchate, ye, and in all the world, which had commerce with the Roman Empire; where the chief overseers of the Flock, and representatives of the Clergy met, and so were best able to give an account of the state of the Church, past and present, or to advise for the future welfare of it.

So that many wise men think it may be sayd of Episcopall go- Platina, in government in its right constitution and use, as Pius the second said via bon.
of the marriages of Clergy-men; He saw some reason why Marriage should be denied to them, (as, to the honour of their Order, and the redemption of them from secular cares, &c.) But he saw much more reason to allow them that liberty, which not only Nature, Reason, and Religion gives them, as well as any men, but even the honor of the Church required, to avoid the mischiefs and enormities, which followed the contrary. And beyond all dispute, it appears after long dispute, that if it be not necessary by Divine precept and direction to have such Bishops among the Clergy; yet there is no necessity made to appear against them, either in Reason or Scripture, Nor doth either Presbytery or Independency shew any so good title to divine right as Episcopacy doth, which includes the good of both thofe, and superads some thing of Order, Unity, and Excellency beyond them both, for the good of Presbyters and people too. Yea, I have known some Ministers of good repute for Learning and Piety, who were sometime great sticklers for the parity of Presbytery; yet they have, since the mischiefs ensuing the change have confuted and quenched those former vain hopes, and excessive heats, confessed to me, That they fee nothing in an Episcopall priority or Presidency unlawful, as against Scripture or Religion, only it was thought by many godly men inconvenient; It may be so, but thofe men did not foresee the after inconveniences which grow greater by many degrees; So that I perceived that this long, hot, and bloody dispute, which seemed to hold forth the question and title of Divine right for Presbytery without a Bishop, was now referable to the judgement of Prudence, rather than of Conscience; a matter of policie rather than piety.

Answer to ... This calmnes at last abates much of that rigor, which some men superstitiously urge, and impose, from the Covenant, against Episcopacy in any kind or form; as if when Scripture and Reason, and Covenant against Episcopacy, Antiquity, and Catholique custome, are all for a right Episcopacy, it were of any force to be battered and Abolished by the Covenant; the sense of which, was sometime declared, to be only against the Tyran- nical, abusive, and corrupt government of Bishops, or thofe inconve- niences which were conceived to be in the present Constitution, exercise, or here in England, which one that had great influence in composing the Covenant, assured others was the meaning of the Composers; and the Covenanters intent, was only to remove what was decayed in that antient Fabrick, and to preserve what was found and good in it: The only lawful and honest sense of this Covenant is sufficiently kept, if the former Constitution of Episcopacy in Eng- land be so reformed, as it easily may be, and in reason ought to be in what ever it needed alteration or amendment. However that Cove- nant being no infallible Oracle, dictated from heaven; but a politique Engine
Engine, continued and carried on by a company of poor, sinnfull, and
fallible men (upon whose heads we have lived to see that arrow fall,
which they thought to shoot, only against the face of Episcopacy),
all its words and sentences are certainly to be brought to the rules of
every mans place and calling, of a good conscience, of right reason,
and of Scriptures: Nor may these, with all Antiquity, and the Fa-
thers, be forced to bow their sheaves, and to do homage to that one Sheaf
of humane Combination, and novell Erection, which holds forth, as
nothing for a headless Presbytery or Independency; So, nothing of
Reason, Scripture, or Conscience against a right and primitive Epis-
copacy; Against which to make a Covenant of extirpation, must needs
be so much a sin, as it is against all reason and religion, to abjure the
use of any thing which is lawful, good and useful; And if it be not
necessary, as of Apostolike and divine Institution, if there be not
Precept divine commanding, yet there is clear practive directing the
Church that way of Episcopall government as best; which some men
well knowing, to have bin antiently approved and constantly followed
by the Catholike Church; they used in the Covenant, that art against
Episcopacy, to suffer Popery and Prelacy together, thereby to bring the
greater odium on Episcopacy, implying that they were both intoller-
able and inseparable; whereas in truth, there is nothing more ridicu-
lously fallac and absurd, than to think the Pope to be the Father or
Fountain of Episcopacy, or to affirm Prelacy to be Popery, as now
the word is commonly understood to signifie Error joyned with pride,
and superstition with tyranny. There were many godly Bishops,
and holy Prelates in the primitive Churches, which were equal, or pre-
ceeding, in time (as at Antioch, Jerusalem, Alexandria, &c.) to any Bi-
shop or Pope of Rome; Many afterwards were equal to him in author-
ity, as to their several Provinces; Independent also, as to any de-

divation of power from the Bishop of Rome; As there are now many
in the Christian world, and were in the English Church, both long
before, and ever since the Reformation. Nor is the Pope by any wise
men called Antichristian in any sense, as he is a Bishop, or Prelate of
one Diocese or Province; Nor was he ever thought to be so by any
judicious Protestant; for then all Bishops in all the world, as Bis-


Episcopatus w-


Prelacy no


Prelacy no


Prelacy no


Prelacy no


Prelacy no


Prelacy no


Prelacy no


Prelacy no


Prelacy no
True Episcopacy may consist without secular & civil advantages.

earth, given to Christ for his possession, in the way of an Evangelical kingdom and Ministry, where truth and righteousness, charity and order, are his Throne and Scepter, all had been exposed to Antichrist's invasion, that he might rule and reign in Christ's stead.

It is upon other accounts than this, of being a Bishop or Prelate in a part of the Church, that the Pope is by many charged with the odious character of Antichristian, namely in reference to that ambition, pride, and usurpation, which by fraud and force the Bishops of Rome have obtained, and challenge or exercise over all the world, and specially over these Western Bishops and Churches in later times; namely, since Gregory the great days (who was an humble, devout, and holy Bishop; and had many pious martyrs, his Predecessors, as Popes or Fathers in that See of Rome, who abhorred the name of Universal Bishops, affirming they were Antichrist who ever arrogated that name of Universal Bishop;) Also for those gross abuses, errors, tyrannies, superstitions, and persecutions, which many Popes have made in the Churches of Christ, contrary to the word and example of Christ, and the Canons of general Councils; From all which, we had a Church and Ministry happily reformed, even by the care and constancy of many holy and learned men, who were Bishops and Martyrs in this Church of England. As then we do not abhor to be men, or Christians, because the Pope is a man, and professeth to be a Christian; So neither may we dislike Bishops, because the Pope is one; nor Presbyters and Deacons, because there be many of that title and office in the Church of Rome.

But in the last place, if primitive Episcopacy, and Apostolical Bishops, now poor, and dejected of all secular power, and ornaments of honour and estate, (and in this conform to their Predecessors in primitive and persecuting times) may not in reason of state with publick honour be restored, and established in this Church of England, yet it may be hoped, that the Indulgence, and liberty of times will give so much tolleration, That those whose judgements and consciences bind them either to be so ordered Ministers, or to receive the comfort of divine Ministrations only from such as are in holy orders by the safe and antient way of Episcopall Ordination, may have and enjoy that liberty (without perturbing the publick peace) which both Presbyterians and Independents doe enjoy in their new ways: For nothing will favour more of an imperious and impotent spirit (whose faith and charity are slaves to secular advantages, and interests) than for those who have obtained liberty for their novelties, to deny the like freedom to others Antiquity, which hath the Ecclesiastical practice and precedence of 1600. years; besides, the preponderancy of much reason, Scripture, and holy examples; All which
which to force godly, grave, and learned men, Ministers or people, to renounce; or to comply with other ways against their judgements; or else to deprive them of all holy orders, employments and ministrations in the Church, as Christians, cannot but be a most crying and self-condemning sin, in those men, who lately approved that antient and Catholick way, and after dissenting, at first desired, but a modest toleration.

Since then the Pope, as a Bishop, is not Antichristian, as I have proved; neither can it be affirmed with any sense or truth, that either Episcopacy it self, or Bishops, Pastors and Governours in the Church are Antichristian; It will easily appear to sober Christians, how poor, popular, and passionate a calumny that is, which some weak minds please themselves to object against the Ministry of the Church of England, as if it were Antichristian, because the Ministers received their Ordination and Induction, both to the office and exercise of their Ministry, by the hands, and authority of Bishops, with those Presbyters assistant who were present, which was the Universal practice of all Churches antiently in Ordaining Presbyters, and is at this day of most. This false and odious reproach of Antichristian Ministry, many Presbyters preposterously seek to wipe off from the face of their Ministry, as they are Presbyters, while yet with the same hand they make no scruple to delinear the faces of Bishops and Episcopacy; Not considering, that while they poorly gratifie the vulgar malice of some men against all Bishops, they still sharpen their spitefull objections against themselves as Presbyters.

As then this solemn and holy Ordination of Ministers by Bishops here in England, by prayer, fasting, and imposition of hands, was Bishops in Antient and Catholick, no way against Reason or Scripture; yea, England most conform to both, in order to God's glory, and the Churches ordaining welfare (which I have already demonstrated;) So, I am sure in so Presbyters, doing, Bishops did no more, than what their place, office, and duty required of them, here in England; according to the Law c duty, accorded, both in Church and State; which had the content of the ding to law, whole Church and Nation, both Presbyters and people, as well as Prince and Peers: No wise man may blame that act, or exercise of government and authority in an other, which he was invested with, did enjoy, and acted in by publick consent, declared in the Laws, wherein each man's particular will is comprehended; nor may that Reg. jur. be layd to be a private fault, which is done in obedience to a publick Law; Bishops then, duly ordaining Ministers in the Church of England, had the approbation of this Church and State, no less than of all Antiquity, and of all the Modern forien Churches, even those that have not Bishops, who yet ever commended and applauded that Venerable Order, here in England; As for Scripture which some pretend
Primitive Customs how far alterable in the Churches Polity.

I am vehemently for the (in a particular) ancient and holy customs of the Catholic Church, so far as they may be fitted to the state, and nature of any Christian societies; Not that I think all things of external Polity, discipline, and government, (by which Christians stand tied in relations public to one another) were at first so at once prescribed or perfected by Christ, or the B. Apostles, as might not admit after addition, variations, or completions in any Church, or Congregation Christian, according to those dictates of reason, and general rules of Prudence, which are left to the liberty of Churches; by which so to preserve particular Churches, as not to offend the general rules of order and charity, which bind them by conformity in the main, to take care of the Catholic Communion. We are not (I think) tied so strictly to all the precise patterns of primitive and

Can. 6 Concil. Niceni.

8.

Primitiva

Customs,

how far alterable in the Churches Polity.

Constitucion

major non est

vestitare aut ratione. Cyp.

Ep. 73.

Valeat confuciae.


Apostolicall
Apostolical practice; which might well vary in the severall states, conditions, and dimensions of the Church. I read no command for Presbyters to choose a Bishop, or President among them, and in so not doing, they are defective, not as to the Precepts of Scripture; but to the rules of right reason; and the imitation of useful example in primitive times; Nor do I find any Precept to one or more Presbyters to ordain others after them, who yet ought to take care both of their own being rightly Ordained, and of after succession, according to that pattern, Analogy, and proportion of holy order and government, which was at first widely observed by the Apostles, and the after Ministers of the Church, either as Bishops or Presbyters. The same Coat would not serve Christ, a man grown, which did fit him, a Child or Youth; Only it is neither safe, comely, nor comfortable for any Christians, wantonly, and without great and urgent reasons (next dole to necessity) to recede from, or to cast off the ancient and most imitable Catholic customs of the Church: which truly is seldom done upon conscientious and real necessities pressing, but most what upon factious humours, and for secular designs carried on under the colour of Church alterations. For how ever the alteration may at present please some mens activity and humour, whose turn it serves, yet it cannot but infinitely scandalize, grieve, and oppress, far more, and better Christians, who are of the old, yet good way.

Hence many wee see are at a loss now in England, how to justify their past religion, shaken by changes, as if they had had no true Ministry, nor holy Ministrations and Sacraments hitherto; while some mens zeal without knowledge cries down Bishops, and that whole government with the Ministry for Antichristian; others are extremely unsatisfied and solicitous for the future succession, Not seeing any ground, for any Presbyters in this Church, to so challenge to themselves a sole divine power of Ordination and Jurisdiction, without any President Bishops: which was the antient way in England, ever since we were Christians, (as in all other Churches) And it is most sure, that neither power of Ordination, nor Jurisdiction was ever conferred by Bishops on any Presbyters here, either verbally or intentionally, as without and against Bishops; Nor did the Laws or Canons ever so mean, or speak; Nor was it (I believe) in any of the Presbyter own thoughts, that they received any such power as to Ordain other Presbyters without a Bishop, when they were Ordained Ministers. And sure, though acts of State, and civil Magistracy may regulate the exercise, yet they cannot confer the holy power, and order of a Presbyter or Bishop, on any man, which flows from a spiritual head, even Jesus Christ (as I have proved) and not from any temporall Authority; Ordinances of Parliament can hardly with justice or honour, batter or dismount the Canons of generall Councils,
Episcopacy and Presbytery reconciled.

Councils, the Catholick laws, or constant customs of the Church. If it be supposed, that the two Houses of Parliament lately did but restore, and the Presbyters resume that power of Ordination, which was only due to them as such, and detained by Bishops usurpation from them; it is very strange, they should never here, nor elsewhere have made claim to it, for 1600 years, in no ages past, till these last, broken, factious, tumultuary, and military times; if it were their right, only in common with, and subordinate to Bishops, they needed not then to complain, for they did, or might have enjoyed, as much joyful power, as was for their convenience, and the Churches peace; the eminent power (at least for order sake) was (even by their consents) lawfully placed in, and exercised by the Bishops; the levity and ambition of ingrossing all to themselves without and against Bishops hath almost loft all power both of Bishops and Presbyters too; since Presbytery alone, is but as Pipe-staves, full of cracks, warpings, and unevenness, which will not easily hold the strong liquor of power and government, unless they be well hooped about, and handomly kept in order by venerable and fatherly Episcopacy, which carried a greater face of majesty, and had thoseampler and more august proportions which ought to be in government, beyond what can be hoped for, or in reason expected from the parsimony, and puerility of Presbyters in common; many of whom have more need to be governed, than they are any way fit to bear any great weight of government on their shoulders, however they may discharge some works of the Ministry very well.

As it hath never yet been shewn any where; so it is least to be hoped for now in England, that any better fruits should arise from Presbyterie (thus beheaded, cropped, and curtail'd of its crown Episcopacy) which it might not still have (as formerly it hath brought forth; if the honour and order of the highest branch, the Episcopall eminency, had been preserved with it: Not so as to over-drop and oppress all other boughs and branches, which are of the same root; but so, as to adorn them all; and to be most eminent in Christian graces, and Ministerial gifts, no les than in priority of place, superiority of power, and amplitude of honour and estate: As many Excellent Bishops, both antient and modern were, against whole incomparable worth, while some young and petty Presbyters do scornfully declame, and disgracefully insult, they appear like so many Jackdaws perching on the top of Paul's steeple, or like living Dogs snarling at, and trampling upon dead Lions. Nor do indeed such impotent tongues, and miserable partialities of some men tuned to the most vulgar ears and humours, against all, even good Bishops; and against a right or regulated Episcopacy (such as was for the main and substance here in England) they do not in any sort become men that pretend to any true piety, learning, gravity, or civility.
I neither approve, nor excuse the personal faults of any particular Bishops, as to the exercise of their power and authority, which ought not in weighty matters to be managed without the presence, counsell, and suffrages of Presbyters, such as are fit for that assistance; The neglect of this St. Ambrose, and St. Jerom, and all sober men justly reprove, as unsafe for the Bishops, the Presbyters, and the whole Church. For in multitude of counsell is safety and honour too. Rom. x. 14. I am sure much good they might all have done, as many of them did, whom these touchy times were not worthy of; No wonder if the very best of them displeased some mens humours, who were impatient to be kept any longer in order; but, like waters, long pent up, they swelled to such discontents, as didaining to pass the allowed bounds and floodgates of publick laws, they resolved to blow up and bear away the whole head and flue of Government. Bishops had three Enemies to contend with, some Presbyters ambition, some Laymens covetousness, and their own Infirmities; And it may be Bishops faults had been left in some mens eyes, if their estates and honours had not been so great.

I write not thus to reproach any of my Fathers or Brethren the Ministers, who begin many of them no doubt to be of my mind for moderate Episcopacy, if they have not always been so; finding that the fruit of the Summer, doth not always answer the blossoms of the Spring: cruel frost may nip and blast those pregnant hopes of bettering, which men are prone secretly to nourish, whereby to excite or justify their desires of change and novelty. In which truly I never saw any thing of right reason or religion, produced for the extirpation of primitive Episcopacy. The main things that pressed upon it, were Forein power, domestic pride, the failings of some Bishops, the envious anger of some Presbyters, and the wanted inconstancy of the vulgar.

If any men, Ministers or others, are, as loth to see and correct their excuses and errors, as they were forward to run into them, but still resolve to keep that partial bias on their judgement, which shall sway all their learning, and other excellent Ministerial gifts against their own true interests, and this Church, with all reformed Religion, which consisted in due moderation and peace; I shall yet with my pity of their wilfulness orweakness, always love and reverence what I see in them of Christ, and only with that temper and moderation from them, which may most contribute in common to the vindication of the Order and Function of learned, grave, and peaceable ministers. This they may at last easily see, That every soft gratification of vulgar ignorance, envy, and inconstancy; set forth with the forms of zeal, and reformation, is usually returned with vilifying and diminutions of their betters; who did vouchsafe to flatter

Of Episcopal and Presbyterian moderation.

I am far from reproaching any mens defects or Calamities, wherein the justice of divine vengeance is seen retaliating; I am glad if the occasioners of our common shipwreck, may have any fair planks, or rafters to save themselves, and the honour of their Ministry, either by recanting the errors of their judgments, or repenting the transports of their manners: If they retain their Antiepiscopal opinion with modesty and charity, yet I am not disposed to fly in any godly mans face, because he is not exactly like me, or to pull out his eyes, because they are not just of the colour of mine. I pray to be of that Christian temper for moderation and charity which can allow many latitudes of Prudence in extern things of religion, where no evident sins for their immoralties, nor evident errors against the fundamentals of Christianity, nor evident confusions of that charity and order which is necessary for the Churches peace, do appear. I wish that while Ministers or other Christians, differ in things of exter mode and order, they may all find and walk in that holy way, by which we may with one shoulder of truth and charity, carry on that great work of saving Souls, both our own, and those that hear us; that while we dispense saving truths to others, we may not for want of humility and charity, be cast-aways our selves. More of those calming and moderating graces; on all sides, had no doubt preserved both Bishops and Presbyters in their due place regard and honour; so that they should not have been put thus to plead for their Ordination and Ministry, or to play this after game, much to the hazard of their very Function, and succession of Ministerial authority; The despicable or abolishing of which threatens the annihilating of the very being of this reformed Church: in which the right Ministry, is
as the Ark in Israel, a visible token of God's presence among the Israelites; And though the Philistines may, for the sins of this Church, take it captive, and detain it for a while, yet I believe, the Lord will bring it back again, with shame to his enemies, and joy to all true Israelites.

In the mean time this trouble and terror may be a means to mend the personal faults both of Bishops and Presbyters; which formerly might viciate, but they could not totally vacate, the Religion, reverence, and conscience, which is to be had of Christ's institution, as to the Ministry; nor yet could they make void the honour of Religion, nor the authority, vertue, and efficacy of holy Ministra: Where the persons duly ordained did administer, and the holy things themselves were according to Scripture rightly administered, which always remain holy, whatever is objected against means persons administering; as sickness, lameness, or deformity deprive no man of the privileges of humane nature, nor his actions of reason nor his civil interest, of the benefit of the Laws. Ely's scandalous sons, unworthy indeed of, but yet rightly invested into the Priest's office, did not take away the necessity, and sanctity of the services and sacrifices, much less of the Priestly function; which depended not on the morality of the persons administering, but on the authority of the Lord commanding; and the right investiture into the office. The miscarriages of Bishops or Ministers may take away the beauty, but not the being of Religious duties, or of that holy power, which they duly received; no more than lapses after Baptism, damnabili: any Christian. No Christian thinks the series of Christ's genealogy broken or blemished, corrupted or interrupted, layned or maymed, by the names of Tamar, Rahab, and Bathsheba, which are links in that holy chain; which hath its verity in the history, but its sanctity from Christ, to whom it relates, as to the holy seed: So in the succession of Ministerial order and authority, we dispute not by what personal vertue it was continued; but we are sure it hath been continued successively from Christ, and tends to him, as to the compleating of his second incarnation, in his body the Catholick visible Church; In which Christ is daily begotten and formed by the means of a right Ministry, and duly ordained Ministers.

Whether Bishops ordained Presbyters, as Prelates, in a superior vriority of divine power and peculiar order, as succeeding the Apostolicall eminency (which antiquity for the most part thought,) looking on Episcopacy in ordination, confirmation, and jurisdiction, may be had, Ordination cannot regularly be had without them. Where Bishops are Orthodox and may be had, Ordination cannot regularly be had without them. *ubi Episcopi defunt nec haberi possint, Orthodoxi Presbyteri in necessitate ordinare possunt. Sarat. de grad. Mi. So Bishop Downham Con. in Apocal. Or by the Bishops authority delegated, as to the Chorapresbyteri, who were but Presbyters, *Id. Hippa. de Ecc. off.*
Ordination by Bishops and Presbyters.

Ego vero à Presbyteris solis administrata
Ecclesiasticis regulis, & ad
Ecclesiasticis regularibus amissim factam non
dixerim; Aut
in ea institutum
ab Ecclesia post
Apostolorum
transitum ordinem per omnia
fere, non comperit, Gron.
del. test. Hier.
com. pag. 299.
St. Paul's Epistle to Tim. and Tit.

Ignat. Ep. ad Ephes.

These were the antient pipes and conduits of Ministeriall Ecclesiasticall power, which were first layd in the head and fountain Christ Jesus; after branched to all places by a continual order and derivation of Ministeriall authority; Where the pipe is once broken, there the stream of living waters must needs fail: If any foulness flows, or obstructions have befaln these pipes of due ordination (as all that passeth through earthen vessels is prone to do, in time,) which Christ and his Apostles have layd to serve his Church with the living waters of grace and truth, and which have flowed these
sixteen hundred years to the refreshing of infinite souls; yet we must not cut them off, nor quite stop them, or turn the waters another way; (as choosing, rather Independent wells, and broken Buckets,) but we ought to cleanse those pipes, and repayr those conduits, which only can hold, and convey that holy water (as the vessels of the Temple) restoring them to their Primitive life and integrity: Which, by God's help is easily done, where pride, passion, policy, and worldly interests are really separated from those of Christ, his Church, and men's souls. Nothing were more happy, than to see this sincerely done; so that Christians would rather deny themselves, in profit and worldly advantages, than any way benefit or gain, by Church Reformations; than which, nothing is more odious and more to be abhorred: contrary to the holy liberality of all good Christians in all times. If Ananias and Saphira were limited for dissembling, how much more accursed are they who act all with a sacrilegious Spirit and hand, stripping and robbing the Church, instead of Reforming? I shall ever pray for just and liberal Reformations, while I live; mean time I rest satisfied in my conscience, That the ordination of Ministers, as it was in England, by a Bishop and Presbyters, as it hath the greatest regularity, so it hath the greatest validity, and admits the least dispute, as to the right order and succession of Ministeriall power.

As for the Presbytery and Presbyters, I think their Ministry very valid, and their authority very venerable, to all true Christians, especially in conjunction with their Bishop: Like Tortoises they were safest, while they keep under that shell which some Presbyters having scornfully cast off as a burden, stripped themselves of their shield and defence, so that they are become very naked, feeble, and contemned creatures, whom the foot of pride and rufcicacy is prone to crush and trample upon every side: That they have now no refuge or protection left, but God, and a good conscience; which are enough, if they do indeed enjoy them, though with poverty, and contempt from men.

Thus I have, as well as I had leisure, vindicated the Ordination of Ministers, and that power which they have to administer holy things, in Christ's name to this Church, to be no way blameable, but right and commendable, as derived by, and with the hands of Bishops and Presbyters; which is the holy and Catholick way, wherein it is ordinarly to be obtained; if any men lift to be contentious for other ways, my answer with St. Paul is again and again, neither we nor the Churches of Christ ever had any other custom, and with St. Austin, so Catholick a custom, so agreeable to reason and Scripture, could have no beginning but Christ and his holy Apostles.

There is yet one Calumny more against the Ordination of our publick power in Ministers in the Church of England; which pretends the neglect Ordination among of Ministers
Of Peoples power in Ordination.

among us of what is by some thought most essential in making a Minister; that is, of the peoples right both in choosing and ordaining men to that office; the want of which, they say, makes our Ministry invalid.

Answ. For this pretended right of the people no argument is alleged, so strong, as that of liberty, which some have taken in these times, to separate themselves from the ordinary Ministry of this Church, and by a mutuall call of one an other to jugg themselves, like Partridges, into small coveys; which they call bodies or Churches, even before they have any Minister; which they resolve not to have, but of their own choosing, and ordaining; that they may be sure, (being a creature of their own) to have him after their own humour: flattering themselves, that they have a plenary Church power to all Offices and ends whatsoever. Although I have formerly given some general account of the folly of this imagination in the vulgar; yet because it is a Gangrene, not easily cured, without shaking and opening, and hath far prevailed upon some peoples minds, who feed this opinion, with the venomous and vulgar humours of pride, self-loving, self-seeking, self-pleasing, self-flattering, and self-admiring; It is not a miss to give another stroke at this high imagination, which exalts itself against Christ, and the holy order of his Church; that the obstinacy of its arrogance and folly being pulld down, it may be levelled to that obedience, which becomes all Christian people.

People have no power Ministerial.

First, then, I must profess, that I never saw or heard any thing by any man, with any shew of Scripture, or reason, urged to prove this power of conferring the holy order and authority of a Minister of Christ, to be in the people, Either eminently, as an executioners power is in the supreme Judge; or virtually, as life is in the Sun beams; or formally and cauallly, as heat is in the fire; or ordainatively, preceptively, and derivatively, as the supreme Magistrates power is to some ends, and actions, in the meanest Constable, or publike Officer; So that it can be in them no other way, than, as power may be in rebels hands; or as Korah and his complices, if they had not been by God repressed, would have had liberty and authority, from their own usurpation, to make Priests and Rulers in stead of Moses and Aaron, whom the Lord had appointed.

For Scripture, First it is evident in that (Θορεξία) divine pattern of polity and extern order of Religion in the Church of the Jews, we find that the wisdom of God leaves nothing of holy concernments, for Priests or Ministry, no nor the least sacrifice, offering, or ceremony, to the peoples, either ordering, or choosing; Nor is it likely, or any where appears, that the unchangeable wisdom of God in Christ, altering only the manner externall, and not the order, beauty, holi-
holiness, or the main end of the service and Ministry Christian (which his glory and his Churches good,) should so much vary from the former exactness and wariness, as to venture the order, beauty, and honour of Religion upon the rock of vulgar rudeness, ignorance, rashness, headyness, stiff-neckedness; which formerly he so much avoied, and which, not only the tenderness of Christian Religion, which having many enemies, admits least blemishes, and studies most, what things are comely, as well as holy) but even common reason, and experience teacheth, all wise men to avoid, as much as possible; Namely those inconveniences and mifchifes attending the weak heads and strong hands of the vulgar, as in all things, so chiefly in those which concern Religion. Who, that is wise, can be ignorant, that the common people, even among believers and professors, are seldom or never qualified with those gifts of knowledge, wisdom, temper and discretion, which are necessary for all publike, and most, for religious administrations; where, not only the credit, but the conscience of the Church is engaged, and ought to be very much considered, in order to the honour of Christ, and of his Church? It were a very blaspemous reproach, I think, to the wisdom of Christ, for any to imagine, that he had delegated the highest power of his Church to men incompetent, and generally incapable, without daily miracles.

Besides this, if they were supposable to have these gifts, which were fit to try and judge right'y of a Ministers sufficiency; yet they cannot have power to authorize or ordain a Minister of Jesus Christ; no more than every judicious man hath power to send an Embassador in his Princes name; or to make such arbitrators and Judges, as he thinks fit in other mens business: This is a power only to be used and enjoyed by those, to whom it is given, from him, who is supreme, as in the Church Jesus Christ is: in whom the grand power of Ordination, which confers on man authority to dispense holy mysteries in Christs name is originally seate, and from him derived and granted as a grand Charter or Commission to his Apostles, first; and by them afterward exemplified and delivered to others, who being found fit for it, were assumed into, and invested with, the same delegated authority, as from Christ, and never given to the community of the people, at any time, or derivable from him in any degree of power Ministerial, be their gifts and graces never so good; Since this is a fruit of Christs wisdom, munificence, and power toward his Church: an appointment full of holy order, and divine polity; depending on no private mens gifts or graces, but upon the good will, pleasure, and power of Jesus Christ himself, as he stands in the relations of King, Priest, and Prophet to his Church.
Now to whom Christ committed this great and sacred power, of ordaining a constant succession of Ministers in his name, and in what manner it was by them derived to others, I have already cleared (I hope) and other late writers have done it too by Scripture, reason, and Ecclesiasticall Catholick Custom; In all which, it is evident, That the so much urged _suffragata and suffragium_ (which properly indeed signifies peoples suffragating by stretching forth of hands in publike and popular elections) is not to be urged by a _criticall severity, from the Ethnisk sense of the word, to the Churches injury and confusion_; Since the same word in sacred and Ecclesiasticall writings, as well as in others, is oft used in a sense which signifies nothing else but an appointment or designation made by any one or more to some specill work and service, to which God, or Christ Jesus, or the Apostles, joyntly, or severally, or their successors the Bishops and Pastors of the Church in their severall precincts, are said, to ordain, or appoint, apart from any such suffrage, or authoritative influence of the people; Further than their sometimes nominating and recommending fit men to be ordained, as _Acts 6_. 5. or else their comprobation and acceptance of those, who were by the Apostles, Elders, and Rulers of the Church ordained, as Ministers over them; and this in Christs name; by a _divine authority_; which is for the peoples good, but not from them, as _a fountain_; nor by them, as any fit Pipes or Conduit, through which this _holy stream_ of the Ministr, or the _pure waters_ of the _Sanctuary_ are to flow: So that I cannot look upon this late arrogant claim of the power of ordaining Ministers, as primarily belonging to the common people, or to other _Laymen_, as other than a fashion or opinion only basting, and extremely resembling, those giddy, proud, and _preposterous fancies_, to which vulgar minds are subject (as Tertullian tells us) when once the reigns of Church Discipline are let loose; or some head-strong Schismaticks, get the bridle between their teeth; yea and it daily corrupts it self; while the Authors and followers of it, are continually dividing and self confounding: So inconsistent is _error_, not only with _Truth_ but with itself; easilly mouldring with its own weight and weaknes. And no wonder if the Lord prosper not projects arising from popular pride and presumption, and tending to the flame and confusion of true Religion: which no right reason, or order; no Scripture precept or pattern; no Ecclesiasticall custom, or learned, and godly mans judgement, did ever allow: or can with any reason: as carrying with it all manner of _rusticall, unreasonable, and irreligious absurdities_; which are never wanting, where vulgar passions dwell; as infallibly they do, in the meaner forts of men, pretend they to what _sanity_ they will; It will soon appear in how many and great defects they come short of that wisdom, gra
vity, unpassionateness and impartiality, which is necessary to manage and order publick holy actions; and to confer a solemn religious power, to any in Christ's name, to do Christ's work, and in some sense to be in Christ's stead.

... Wife, humble, and truly gracious Christians, are of all men most remote from such bold and unsuitable undertakings; whereas having no call, from God, or the Church, they can never expect blessing on their adventures and rash endeavours: It satisfies them, that they have, as much influence in the ordaining and choosing of Ministers, as they are capable of, and is best for them and the Church; Yet, if it will please these Christians to fancy that they have some degree of power even in making their Ministers here in this Church, they may consider, that neither Bishops nor Presbyters in England made any Ministers without the people's general consent; expressed by those Laws and civil sanctions, which confirmed here; that divine order and constitution, which they saw Christ had setled, and the Church always followed in ordaining lawful Ministers, by that wisdom and authority which from the Apostles was derived in a constant succession of Bishops and Presbyters; who were for gifts of knowledge and judgement best able; and for lawful power only able, by examination, benediction, and imposition of hands to consecrate any man a Minister, and confer the power of Holy Orders on him; who yet did, and doe this, as Delegates for the Church, but from Christ.

If the power of choosing and ordaining Ministers were wholly left in Lay-men's hands, what a sorry choice (for the most part) would they make of the Man or Minister? how weakly would they examine his sufficiencies? how wildly would they Institute and Ordain him? what fad and slovenly hands would they impose on him? how soon would they reject and disdain those Blocks they had so hewen to be their Mercenaries? and the Idols they had set up for their See and Shepheard, which many times can neither see, nor hear, nor rightly understand the Mysteries of Religion, nor the Duties of the Ministerial Function? who sees not that common people are rather taken with a familiar Rusticacy in a Minister, than with the best learned abilities; preferring, oft-times, a confident Mechanick, to be their Teacher, before the complestest Divine in a Country? They judge not what is worthiest, but what is fittest to their humours: rejoicing more in the knack, which they fancy, of Church-Power and Liberty, (though it be to their prejudice) than in what may really advance their souls good, with just Authority; receiving more willingly one that comes in his own name, as gifted, or in their name, as chosen and ordained by them, than if he comes in Christ's name, and by that right Ordination, which hath alwayes been in the Church of Christ.

Certainly, common people may as well be their own Preachers, and...
and Baptizers in course one after another; as ordain of themselves any one to be their Preacher; what hinders they may not all exercise that power, as Ministers, which they presume to give to another? which they cannot do, if they have not that power in themselves: and if they have all this power of the Keys as Stewards and Ministers of holy things, then 'tis not true that Christ hath given (not only some, but others all) to be Apostles, Pastors and Teachers.

So that every part in the body may challenge to be an eye, and to have visual power: which piece of profane confusion, was never acted, or allowed in the Church, by any, that were worthy to be lifted among sober Christians, or well-ordered Churches: who owned in all ages their calling to be Christians, and their gathering to the body of the Catholic Church (as parts and members) not to their own good nature, or preventive forwardness, making to themselves a Minister for Christ; but to those true Ministers pre-ordained by the Church, and sent by Christ to them, while they sought not after him. These were in time, and order of nature, before the people, as spiritual Parents: by whose Ministry they were taught, Baptized, and made Christians; formed, guided, and governed in the things of God: so that the power of a Minister must needs flow from an higher fountain, Jesus Christ, and be conveyed by another conduit to the people, than by the people, Who can originally no more confer the power of Ordination to Ministers, than Children can give a parental power, and authority to their Parents; or the vessels formed, can give a formative power and skill to the Potter.

The people calling to themselves, and electing a Minister, that is rightly ordained; or accepting such an one, who is according to Laws both Civill and Ecclesiasticall sent among them, to be their Minister; is but a matter of humane prudence and civill compact, as to that particular place and people. An owning and acknowledging of that power, which he hath from Christ, by the hands of Church Rulers, to officiate, as a Minister of Christ for their good: It is not an inducing with power, but meerly an appropriating of the exercise of his power Ministeriall to such a place, and such a people, for order and distinction sake; to avoid rambling, and confusion in the Church; It is not any conferring of the Office, function or habitude of a Minister to any person, who is a Minister ordained for the service of the Catholic Church, over all the world, wherever the Gospell may be Preached, the Sacraments administered, and other holy offices performed in a right and orderly way: Which vast power and authority, extending to all Nations, and every creature under Heaven, capable of the Gospell, far exceeds any proportion of power, that can be imaginable, in any handful of private Christians in one place, and can only be from the Catholic
Catholick power of Christ, and that grand Commission, first given from Christ (to whom the ends of the Earth belong) to the Order Ministeriall, and by those of that Order preserved to this day, and never claimed in common, but by the irregularity, ignorance, or impudence of some few men, of these last and perilous times.

For how ever the faithfull people, in some places during the times of primitive persecution (which kept all hides more humble and holy) did oft-times express by their presence, their love and respect to their Bishops and Presbyters, by a cheerfull concurrence with them in matters tending to the publick order and peace, and good government of the Church, so far as their discretion and modesty thought decent, and acceptable to their Governors and Pastors (In the Election of whom, they had something of approbative suffrages, consent, or nomination) yet did they never presume to challenge any Power of Ordination, to be in, or of themselves, but requested and obtained it, for those (whom they thus chose or approved) from the hands of such rulers in the Church, in whom the power Ministeriall was deposited, and always conserved. It was enough for the faithfull flock to be quietely present at Ordination, to join in prayer and fasting with the Ordeiners, to attest the merit of those whom the Bishop with the Presbyters declared to be Candidates, or Probationers, and Expectants of the holy power of Ministrity; which to confer, the common people have as much to do, as Saul or Uzziah had to offer Sacrifice or Incense.

What may be don in cases extraordinary, and of absolute necessity, or destitution, where Christians already baptiz'd, and believing, cannot have a Minister in a regular way, I leave to Gods direction, and his special dispensation, who in cases extraordinary, may extra-ordinarily manifest his pleasure. I am sure in the hottest Persecution, which worried and scattered the flock of Christ, when it was most innocent; the sheep neither chose, nor followed any other Shepherds, than those, which St. Austin calls most necessary for the Church, without which it cannot subsist, of whose Ordination and due authority they had assurance by constant Succession and according to the true pattern in the Mount; but they chose rather to supply the necessitated absences of their true Ministers, Bishops, and Presbyters, by prayer, fasting, meditation, reading, Christian conference, and mutual exhortation, than to set up among themselves any Minister, by their own power, of popular Ordination; Yea (as the Jews would have done in the defect of holy and Consecrated fire) Christians

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Christians rather contented themselves with the Vote and desire, or purpose of Sacraments, without the actual perception of them, (or any other fruits proper to the Ministerial function and power,) rather than offer with strange and unholy fire, where they could not have those Ministers, whose lips had been touched with a coal from God's altar, that is ordained by a right Consecration; which holy fire hath never yet been quite put out in the Church of Christ; nor ever will be, however some mens petulance and presumption seek to spit, or piss it out, by their irreligious, ingratitude, and contemptuous carriages against the office and due Succession of the Ministry.

Humble and wise Christians willingly look back to the Rock whence they were hewn; and the pit whence they were digged:

There they discern, That it was not the people, who made to themselves Ministers, but Ministers sent by Christ and the Apostles, every where made people Christians; They that once in darkness had light brought to them, and were found of God by his messengers, as Shepherds sent to the lost sheep, who sought not after God; That the holy succession of Ministerial and Church power, is indeed for the peoples good, and ought in some cases be carried with the peoples approbation, but it is not at all from the peoples pleasure, will, or vertue. That Jesus Christ, the Apostles, and all after Churches ever carried this Ministerial and Church power in another way, distinct and apart from the people, yet most convenient for them, and most agreeable both to right reason, and to the order and honour of true Christian religion; which requires, that holy things be done with all beautys of holiness, by able and wise, and worthy men; to choose and appoint, or ordain whom, supposes as able at least, if not abler than they are, to judge of them; yet more abilities as I have shewed will not serve neither, to give to others any commissio as Ministers of holy things, unless the givers have first a grand Commission, or power of so doing, committed by others to them, which carries the strength of an original divine Authority ascending to Christ.

Which power, especially as to Ordering of fit Ministers, being thus severed from the people for 1600 years, without any complaint made by the faithfull, or claim of right by reason or religion; there is no cause Christians should now listen to that fury, folly and faction, which would lay all in common: since nothing is brought by these Commoners to repeal the first divine enclosure of it, by the Institution of Christ, or to take away the prejudice of so many Centuries peaceable possession, as a peculiar to the Church Officers; those of the Ministerial Function, In which there hath never been any cessation.
Of Peoples power as to their Ministers.

cancellation or interruption, as to legitimate succession, and constant Ordination.

... Not that we deny (for any thing shall be granted to faithful Christian, which is for their good) but that Christians of a particular parish or Congregation, may (if they have not otherways make or ordain themselves, and restrained things by Laws, with are the public dein a Minister, and to the Peoples confent; (as here for the most part in England it was) they may orderly choose, and define such a man to be made a Minister or Bishop, and to be over them in the Lord, (as the people of Milan did St. Ambrose, yet a Lay-man and Magistrate;) Yet this is only so far, as first to recommend him to those, who have power to ordain him a Minister of the Catholick Church of Christ; next, to acknowledge that power and office Ministerial to be rightly in him, as conferred to him by just hands. They may choose him, thus Orained, to exercise his Ministry and Office by particular care, mutuall relation, and joynt consent among them; But still this is as far from any such respect, as some interpret it, as amounts to peoples giving Ministerial power or Orders, as it is from Souls giving a Commision, when they only present by way of Denunciation and Petition a worthy person to the Generall, or Commision officers to be made their Captain, which neither his worth, nor their willingness makes him to be without express Commission from the Generall under his hand and Seal. Nor is this any thing to the diminution of peoples rational or religious liberties as Christians or men (which regulations and restraints they may not grudge to suffer, if Christ will have it so; as in this his will and command is most clear) but it is a fruit of Christ's wisdom, and care for the faithful peoples good, to afoyd infinite inconveniences and confusions, which constantly and unavoidably attend all things, that are transacted or touched almost by the common peoples hands and heads; who, though they mean and begin well, (as the Sea by modest lickerings and slidings over the banks, which afterward its fury overbears with horrible inundations) yet are they never to be trusted with any thing, which a wife and good man would have well done.

As then we see no Church power, especially as to Ordination and Ministry, is naturally in Christian people, who must be considere red after their Ministers in time, and that order of nature which is between Effects and Causes, Children and Fathers, being first made Christians by Ministers whom they never Orained, nor so much as dreamt of or desired: So, nor can it in any reason be thought, by Christ afterward committed to them; least of all may they arrogate it to themselves, or involve it in any inferior kind of civil and sociall power, which they may in some cases have; Since this power of

In causis fidei vel Ecclesiastici munetis cum judicare debere qui nec munere impar est, nec jure diffimilis, constantur afo

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seding
Of People's power to make a Minister.

 Sending and Ordeining Ministers to teach and rule the Church, is as far divided from that of peoples choosing, approving, recommending, or accepting one rightly ordained, as the waters above the firmament, are from those beneath, in the Sea or Earth; what faithfull people may prudently do in private Church-matters, within their sphere, is rather a power subjective, obedientiall, and conformative (as that of the matter to the form) than Mandatory, Operating, and Authoritative; what they do discreetly, as to advise, chuse or agree with any Minister, is rather a common act of reason and politie as men, than proper to them as Christians in piety, and is so far commendable as they advise, chuse or agree in things of external use, for their own good, yet no way troubling the Churches common welfare, order, and peace, nor arrogating that spiritual and internall power Ministeriall, either to make, or act as Ministers: which is from an higher principle, than Nature, Reason, or the will of man: People having no more power to Ordein, fend, and Consecrate true Ministers, or Invest them in that Authority, than they had to Anoint, or appoint the Messias; and they may as well set up a new Christ, and new Gospell, as a new Ministry, and new Ordination; which Christ only hath once done, for all places and times, to the end of the world (at least as to ordinary cases, when right succession of power Ministerial may be had) and this without troubling, or interesting the common people in the busines, to whom Ministers dispene the peoples own, but the grace of Christ; of which among other gifts and graces as means, this is one: To give Apostles, &c. Pastors and Teachers to the Church; How can people primarily give power, to celebrate Mysteries, to Consecrate Elements, to confer Graces; which are so much above their thoughts, desires and merits? And who have no other way to order, regulate, and manage any of their Elections, undertakings, and affairs civill and secular, in what ever they pretend to have power, (which I think best, when it is least) but only that, of the major part, of number of voices, or by the Pole; If this doth not suffice to decide their affairs, then the more hands and stronger party (which is oft the worst) carries it, against the other fewer and weaker, which may be, and most what are the best and wisest; Neither of which ways of decisions (which are oft worse than that of blind Lots and Chance, (which many wise men rather chole, than otherwise to determine matters by the uncertain and dangerous way of popular suffrages) can seem so Infallible and divine, as to induce a wise man to acquiesce in them, as God's appointment; when very oft they come far short of those rationall and moral proportions, which a good man would require in judging of, and preferring always, the best and most deserving men: sober men would never have matters of Consequence left to the most voices of the vulgar,
or to their Counter-scurfing and brutifh contentions, which oft fhew
that there is little of God in their hearts and crowds, and clamors,
more than may be in storms and tempests.

How unlikely is it, that Jesus Christ should intrust these Plebs
or people every where with power to chufe and ordain Ministers of
his Church, in order to save souls? when the community have no
other way in this Sacred concernment of mens souls, but such as
they use in their most trivial transactions of humane affairs; As if
it were all one power, which enables them to make a Minister of
Chrift’s Church, with that which makes a Major, a Bayliff, or a Con-
trable, in a Corporation. In those few experiments which the wis-
dome of this Church, or the Jenity of some Patrons hath thought fit
to give men of Popular Elections of their Minister, I have known,
where a Parish rejecting a very able man offered them, have with
great earnestness desired, and with as much greediness as the Whale
did inwallow Jonah, received a Minister of far lefs worth, who was
of their own choice, yet within two or three years they have cast
him out on dry land, and with scorn reproached and rejected him,
who was so lately their delight and darling.

The greatest enemy of the Gospel of Chrift, and of the reformed
Religion would with no greater advantages againft true Religion,
than to have the Ordination, choyce and appointment of Ministers
left to the Common people in every place, which will soon be filled
with as much ignorance, fury, faction, error and confusion, as either
Devills or Antichrifts would desire, whereby to make Bethel Betha-
ven, and to set up Babylon in the midst of Jerusalem; Yea, the peo-
ples very bare Election of one rightly Ordained to be their Minister,
oft occasioneth very great thoughts of heart, and uncomfortable di-
visions, between both the people in their parties, and the Minister so
chosen by fome, but not by others; To prevent which inconveniences,
and sometime mischiefs, the wisdome both of Church and State, had
by consent of all estates, People, Peers, and Prince, felled that in a
far quieter and safer way of Presentation, to the content of Patrons,
Ministers, and all sober Christians.

I may then conclude, that as Bishops and Presbyters joyntly
ordining others to that holy Office, whereto themselves were former-
ly Consecrated, did as much, and no more than was their duty to
Chrift and the Church; So neither the Pope of old, had beyond his
Diocefs, nor the People now, have any thing to do with this Ordi-
native power which duly is in the Ministeriall order of the Church;
by which an holy succession of able, true, and faithfull Ministers,
Bishops and Presbyters, had been continued in all Churches, and as
yet is in this Church; What ever the Papall pride and usurpation
as any way eminently Antichriftian, in former or later times; or Schis-
matick.
Of Papal and Popular usurpations.

mattick and unruly people now, as the many Antichrists, in the Diametral distances of their errors, (being the two poles of Church pride, but not the axis of Church power,) have or do pretend, as if all Church power were in them, or from them; it was and is all nothing else but vain shadows, and mere mistakes arising from the ignorance, darkness, connivence, licentiousness and superstitious of times, and is no more prejudicial to the true power of Ordeining Ministers, (which is from Christ only committed to the order and fraternity of Pastors and Govenours in every Church, as hath been proved) than if some one or more, cunning fellows, should pervertte credulous and silly people, whom they find or lead into the dark, or else blind them; that they were indeed stark blind, and had no power of themselves to see, or open their eyes, but must wholly be led by their guidance, without having any light, or benefit of the Sun: These poor seduced men, have no more to do in point of relieving themselves, and confuting so gross Impostors, but only to open their eyes freely, and to use the light of that Sun, which they easily and clearly see shining over all the world; which is not more evident than sense, than this Truth is to judicious Christians, That the power of Ordeining Ministers hath alwayes, and only been in the Pastors, Bishops, and Guides of the Church, who both ruled well, and also laboured diligently in the Word and doctrine.

And since true Christians in this Reformed Church of England, both Ministers and people, have been so happy in this Church, as to be delivered from the Romish superstitions, and Papal usurpations; they have now no cause to be less cautious, or more patient to be gull'd, and deluded by popular seductions, lest the second error be worse than the first; Inasmuch, as the furies and confusions of the vulgar are more dangerous than any errors of Popes, or Bishops, or Presbyters, are like to be; as Earthquakes are more dreadfull and pernicious than Eclipses, or the Cloudings of the lights of Heaven. The lights of the Church may recover their lucre and vigour in due time; nor do they ever shine too dark, but they afford a competent light, to shew the way to Heaven; But popular precipitancies, and licentious extravagancies of the vulgar, are like to overthrow all religion; and bury all Christianitie by Gothick and Mahumetan methods, in Atheism, Illiterateinfs, Confusion, and Barbarity; For, as they have least skill in them, and no authority given them, to order and rule Church affairs; so they have most passion, and unwielded violence in them: least able to distinguish between the abuse and use of things; between gold and dross; between what is of God, or of Man; when once they have got power, and let that they know not what is become of their Moises, their divinely appointed guides, their duly ordered Bishops and Ministers; the first thing they
they do, is to make themselves molten Images, and contribute both their Earrings and their Ears, their hearts and hands to those Calves, which they set us for Tamuzzes, or Images of jealousy and abomination, whereby to provoke the God of heaven to wrath; to reproach the honour of Christ, to affront the true Ministers, and to make the Reformed religion and this Church to become an hissing and astonishment to all round about. A wise man of Spain said, It is better in Church, as well as in places of Civill power and Judicature, to prefer corrupt men, than weak and foolish; The one is as a thief in a Vineyard, who will only take ripe grapes till he is satisfied; the other as an Ass which eats ripe and green, crops the Vines, treads down much with his heels, and when his belly is full, tumbles among them.

But our Antiministerial Adversaries are still ready with scorn and laughter to demand, What can Ministers, either as Bishops or The vertue Presbyters, confer more than other Christians, in the point of Ordination? What vertue or charm is there in the imposing of their dition, hands, or in their prayers; by which to add to any mans ministerial gifts and graces; or to invest any man in a way of Church power, more than is in any other Christians? whose gifts and graces may be equall, or exceeding, their Infirmities far les than many Ministers are? What power can they have to give the holy Ghost, as they express in the form of Ordination? yea, whence do they challenge, as of right the Name of Clergy-men, as peculiar to their tribe and Calling; where as all the Lords people are his lot, and his inheritance, and God is theirs? Nor ought they contemnuously, as by way of diminution to be called Lay-men, or the Laity, Since they are all spiritually anointed, and chosen of God, to be Kings, Priests, and Prophets?

I Answer to this last scruple first, as least, being not so much a beam, as a mote in some mens tender eyes, which like Leabs, are easily offended: As for the names then of Clergy and Laity, in which the Nasiter Critics of this age, sent something of pride in the Ecclesiastics or Ministers, and of defciency toward the faithfull people, (who are to be animated, and flattered any way against the Ministry of the Church;) They may know that this distinction between the Clergy and Laity, hath been used in the Church, from the very first Primitive times, as the antient Fathers, Councils, and the Histories of the Churches both Greek and Latin do testify; nor was the one ever intended or upbraided for a badge of vanity to the Ministry; nor the other imputed for a brand of scorn to the people; The piety and charity of those times were not at leisure, thus to (hoisekaxix) to stumble at straws. I am sure as they antiently were, so they still are usual notes of difference in point of office and duty between Ministers.
Prefbyter qui

ferat Latis.

Laecis Sacerdo-
talia munera

injunqunt. De

præ. ad hær.

c. 42. &

fæpe alibi,

St. Cyprian of-

ten.

So Clemens of

Alexand.

Differéntiam in-
ter ordinem &

polemiam confiti-
ti Ecclesie au-

toritatis, & ho-

nost, per ordinis

confessurum san-

cßificatur à

Dio. Tertul. de

exh. ad Caít. t.

Vid. Dr. Prí-

dæux Praeff.

Conjunctæ cer-

tissima locándi

magnifæ, inten-

dum, plazè

fermone ut

número cas publicæst forma. Quinquir. Instr. I. c. 6. Sermo conftat ratione, vetustate, autoritati,

confuetudine. Id. Vetus verba magisteris & religio quaedam commendant. Id.

De verbis con-
tendere non est

curate quomodo

t error veritate

vincatur sed

quomodo una

distincto alterius

distinctioni pref-

varatur. Auft. de

doct. Christ. I.

l. 4. c. 28.

Quid est con-
tentiofius quam

ubi confiat de

nisters and people, not only in our ordinary Language; yea, in

the exacter title of our Laws, (which give both real and nominal
distinctions with the greatest authority;) Nor are they at all against

the Scripture sense and meaning (if they be not just to its words,) since the word of Christ hath evidently placed as limits of office, to

Marks and names of distinction between the one and the other,
as Pastor and Flock, Doctor and Disciple, Ruler and ruled; &c. Yea,
and we may easily gather from the Scripture dialect, that as the faithfull people are in general ('Clerus, Ecclesia') the lot or portion
and heritage of the Lord; So the Ministers are Clerus Ecclesia. A lot.

heritage and portion given by the Lord to the Church, and let apart,
or Conferred from the Church to the Lords especiall service; &c.

Acts 13. to serve the Lord, and the Church, in holy publick mini-

trations, as the Apostles first did; into whole order Mathias was

by Lot chosen to supply the place of Judas Iscarior, Acts 1.

To which end Ministers in a holy Succession have ever been placed

over the people in the name of Christ, by the power of his Holy Spi-

rit; yet Good Ministers did not to be reckoned among Gods

People, as children of the same Spirituall Father, and brethren in the

same Family or houshold of Faith; nor will any humble Christians,

(being not in holy orders,) affect to be called Clergy men, by a con-

fusion of language; or did not to be called Gods commons, or Lay-

men, which hath a sober, Christian, and charitable sense, in the dia-

lecf of thole Christians, who know how to call and account their

true Bishops and Ministers, as Fathers, InstruEters, Overseers, and

Guides of the Church, &c. These names then, or distinctive titles do

but fairly follow (according to the use and nature of words) and
decently express those things, which the mind of Christ in the Scrip-
ture, and all Custum or use of the Church have distinguished for

order fake.

The same supercriticall men will boggle at the words, Trinity,

Three Persons, and Sacraments; which are not in the letter, but in

the sense, and truth of the Scripture; And certainly no religion for-
bids us to adopt convenient and compendious words, to the Churches
use, since we do safely translate the whole original Scriptures to any

ordinary languages, in which most Christians may best use them, not in the literal words, but in the Intellectual sense or mind of

God. A strife about words, and syllabicall scruples, fits only women

or children, or peevish passionate men: As the Arians of old, who
caviled much at the words ('in E&cbes., and Êinuv') whose syllables were

new, but their sense old, orthodox and found, expressing the fame

divine
Of Clergy and Laity.

divine Nature in Christ the Son, with the Father; and that our E. re, et<are de manus, who was born of the virgin Mary, was both God and Man.
But this quarrel about names and words, is a very tedious impertinent<ty to those Christians, whose serious piety studies only this, by apt and usual words, to comprehend and express, the truths and orders of Religion; who are ready always so to give to each other the right hand of Charity and Unity, as members of the same body, whose head is Christ; as yet to preserve that order and authority in the Church, which is divinely Instituted, and is as necessary for the Church, as it is for the body to have head, eyes, and mouth, distinct from other parts of less honour, yet not less useful in their place.
As for this pretended grievance then of these words, Clergy and Laity; We desire not to quarrel farther with our Adversaries, and we shall not need to dispute with others that are wise and humble, only we pity the simplicity of people, who are thus easily cheated, and scared, by some sophistry, when they are told by their great scrupulosity, and cenoflior gravity, that words are as bad as Spels, that what ever terms or Names, are not in the Scriptures, (as they have them translated) are not the speech of Canaan, but the language of the beast: Thus their severe Momuscles; Thus the Antiministeriall factors for error, ignorance, and confusion. There are among the other small artifices used by these miserable Robbes, who to ingratiate with the vulgar, and lead disciples after them, are content to take away the ancient marks of bounds, and known distinction of names, between Minister and People, that so people may take the greater confidence to cast quite away both the name and thing, the holy Ordination with all distinction of Office and function Ministeriall in the Church; which if I can solidly maintain against these under-miners of Religion, despisers of Ordination, and vaflators of all true ministry, I doubt not, but I and others may still use these Names of Clergy and Laity without sin or scandal to any sober and good c.6. Christians.
To the main therefore of the Objection which is made against the virtue and efficacy of Ordination, by the Catholick and Antient Prophane minds prone That at the same rate of prophane, and Atheisticall reasonings, to cavil at they may as well dispute (as Julian would have done, and those all holy Scoffers daily do (which are foretold should be in the later darkes) steries, and what virtue is there in the water of Baptism, more than any other, is the Or- by which to regenerate a sinner, to wash away sins, to seal comforts, to confer grace, to represent the blood of Christ, of which a man may meditate every time he sees any water, or washeth his hands? A Pet. 3. 19. Hence the mean esteem, and contempt indeed, with proud and presumptuous Catabaptists have against that holy Mystere of Baptism, which
Right judgement of Christian Mysteries.

which all Churches, in all ages, have used with reverence and comfort, according to Christ's Institution, and the Apostolical custom. So also the spiritual pride of those profane Cavillers will argue, what efficacy can there be in the Bread and Wine, at the Lords Supper, more than in other of the same Elements at our ordinary Tables, and in every Tavern? What doth the form of Consecration, by the words of Christ and prayers add to them, or alter them? Nay, (since the blasphemous boldness of proud and wicked men, will count nothing of outward form sacred) no wonder if by the same convivial spirit, they quarrel at not only the Humanity of flesh, but also the Majesty, and divinity of our Saviour Jesus Christ; and seeing the outward meannesses, poverty, and ingloriousness of his life and death, many of them scarce own him for a Saviour, or for the true Messiah; And no further than is agreeable to their Scraplick fancies; by which they labour (after the like fondness of some in ancient times) to turn all the solidity of Truth, the certainty of History, and the Sacredness of the mystery of Jesus Christ, (God manifested in the flesh) into nothing but Familiificl whimsies, empty notions, and lumblicity of nonsense; As if there were more light of Religion in their modern Meteors and gross illuminations, than in the Sun, Moon and Stars, in Scripture, Ministers, and Christians of old; whereas the same holy and humble faith, by which true Christians do believe Jesus to be the promised Messiah, the Son of God, and only Saviour of the world, (notwithstanding all that blind Jews, or proud Gentiles object against him,) doth also teach them, to receive with all humble thankfulness, and religious reverence, all those holy orders, duties, and Institutions, (in their plainness, poverty, and simplicity,) which Christ hath set forth in his Church, and which the Church hath continued according to his word in all humble fidelity. Nor doth the meaness of outward appearance, or any natural and civil disproportions which appear to humane sense or reasonings, any way prejudice, or weaken the faith, devotion, duty and obedience of those, who live by faith, and look with the eye of faith, and act with the hand of faith, in all those holy offices and Ministerials, which are grounded on the word of Christ.

To judge of Christian Mysteries or Ministries, by common sense, or carnal reasonings, as Sarah did of the Promise, is to make Christian Religion most ridiculous, mean and insignificant; whose virtue and efficacy, as the faith of Abraham, depends not upon any natural, moral, or politique powers, faculties, habits, abilities or actions, that are in, or flow from, the persons acting in them, and dispensing of them; nor the Elementary sensible natures of the things used in them; But meerly upon that divine virtue, and power of Christ Instituting such holy things, as duties to be done, to such religious
Right judgement of Christian Mysteries.

...and all this in his Name; that is, meerly as an Institution of his divine power and wisdom, and whence they have their efficiency, and also authority; not indeed among affected Novelist, curious speculatists, proud hypocites, or contentious worldlings, but among humble, devout, and true believers, who are also doers of the will of God in all things, holy, just and morall, who knowing what belongs to the life and obedience of Faith, disdain not to submit themselves to any way and order, seem it never so weak and simple, that Christ hath appointed, to them and his Church, who alone can make weak, foolish, and contemptible things to be powerfull and effectual, through the concurrance of his Spirit and grace, to those great and holy ends, for which they are by him Instituted in his Church.

So that it is not only Magick charm, or Enchantment, as these prophane minds fearfully devise, which makes the common elements to become Sacraments, by that solemn Consecration, which is rightly performed by one, that is from Christ appointed as a minister of holy things. No more is it any fantastick and imaginary power, which of a common man, makes a Minister of the Gospel, by due Ordination; which is a setting apart of some fit and worthy men from the ordinary capacities, common relations, and humane affairs of the world, either as natural, or civil, and Consecrating them by prayer, and imposition of hands, and power of the Spirit, to the peculiar service of Christ, and his Church, in the holy Ministry; And this not to be done by any one, that pleads themselves to be at once both aware, and hypocrites in religion, to act a part, and make a Stage-play of holy Ordination, by a popular presumption; but only by such as Christ hath fitted with gifts, and enabled with power of his Spirit, to Consecrate and Ordeine a succession of Ministers to the service of the Church, being themselves formerly ordained, and so invested with that great and holy power of order. So that it is the powerfull Word and Spirit of Christ, as in ordinations, the King and Prophet of his Church, which commandeth the duty, establiseth the Order, and gives the blessing, as in other, so in this of Ordination. In obedience to which, true and excellent Christians, willingly captivate all their high imaginations, and subdue every thought, which exalts it self against the rule of faith, the word of Christ, pulling down all the strong holds of proud and humane reasonings; Submitting to every holy Ministration, and true Minister in his office, for Christ’s sake; from whole grace, Spirit, and promise, they expect, and find that blessing, comfort, and inward peace, which is rable, only to be had in Christ’s way; which depends meerly on his divine...
The Efficacy of right Ordination.

will and power, which changeth not the nature of things, but their relation, and use, to an higher and spiritual end; requiring faith, humility, reverence, obedience, and thankfulness in every believer or worshippers.

So that although Ordination of a Minister to the peculiar service of Christ and the Church, by such as have the right and power by uninterrupted succession duly derived to them, and to be derived orderly from them in all ages, do not add to the Natural, Moral, or Spiritual gifts and endowments of men, as they are personal and inherent, any more than the office of Embassador, or Judge, or Commander doth, in Civil, or Military employments, confer any thing to the inward abilities of the man; yet, that honour and authority rightly derived to any one, invests him with a relative, yet real power, qualification, and capacity of doing, or declaring the will of another, to the same validity, as if the principal himself did it; by whole authority alone any other is sent, and enabled to effect thole things which none other can presume to perform without vanity, sin, and presumption, who hath not that gift, power, or authority configned to him.

The right Ordination then of Ministers, in the way of an holy succession in the Church of Christ, hath in Religion, and among true Christians, these holy uses, and clear advantages peculiar to it.

1. First, as to the main end, the Glory of God, and the saving of mens souls, (by their believing and obeying this testimony of all true Ministers, that Jesus Christ is the only Saviour of the world;) Nothing gives a more clear and credible testimony to the glory and honour of Jesus Christ, and to truth of the Gospel, than this uniform and constant succession of Ministers, by a peculiar Ordination and authority even from Christ himself in person, who at first began this Ministry, and sent some speciall men as his messengers to bear witness of him in all the world; that so men might believe, not only what is written in the word before it was, or as it is now written; but also as that glorious truth hath been thus testified everywhere, and in every age, by chosen and peculiar men, as a cloud of most credible witnesses, whom thousands at first did, and to this day, do hear preaching, and see them celebrating the holy mysteries of Christs Gospel, who never had or used any written word, nor ever read it, and for the most part believed, before ever they saw any part of the Bible (which the constant Ministry of the Church, hath under God, hitherto preferred) chiefly upon the testimony, and tradition, or record of those, that were ever thought (and always ought to be) most able and faithfull men, specially appointed, by Christ in his Church, as a perpetual order; and succession of Witnesses, to testify of him, and to minister in his Name to the end of the world; This walking Gospel, and visible.
ble Ministry, consisting, as it ought, of wise, and worthy men, (who have good reputation, for their piety, learning, and fidelity,) running on to all generations, is as a continued stream from the blessed Apostles, who were the first witnesses immediately appointed by Christ to hold forth his name and Gospel to the world. Acts 1.8, which, though never so far off in the decurrence of time from the fountain, yet still testifies and assures all wise men, that there is certainly a divine fountain of this ministeriall power, and so of Evangelicall mysteries and truth; which rose first from Christ, and which hath constantly run, as may appear by the enumeration, or induction of particular deficient in all ages, in this Channel of the Apostles, and their successors, the Bishops and Presbyters of the Church, for the better planting, confirming, and propagating of the Gospel to all Nations and times; As a duty, charge, or office, injoined by divine command to some men, and lying ever as a calling on their consciences; Hereby evidently declaring the divine wisdom, and Fatherly care of Christ, for the good instruction, and order of his Church, in his personal absence; In that he hath not left the Ministry of the Gospel, and his holy Institutions (which he would have alwaies continued for the gathering & edifying of his Church,) to a loose and arbitrary way, among the rabble and promifcuous heards of men; (which would soon have made Evangelicall truths seem but as vagrant fables, and generall, uncertain rumors; which run without any known and sure authority in the common chat, and arbitrary report of the vulgar; by which in a short time both the order, beauty, honour, purity and credit of Truth is easily lost among men;) This holy and successional ordination of the Evangelicall Ministry gives great proof, and demonstration, as of Christ's personal presence as chief Bishop and Minister of his Church; so of the fulfilling of Christ's word, and the veracity of his promise, after his departure to be with them that were sent and went in his name, to the end of the world; That the gates of hell neither yet have, nor ever shall prevail against the Church; While it carefully preserves a right succession, holy order, and authority of true Ministers, the devill depairs of ever overthrowing Christian Religion in its reformed profession in any Country. Down with the order, and sacred power, and succession of the Ministry, and all will in a short time be his own.

2. It is also a notable evidence of the Churches care and fidelity in all ages; not only in the preservation of the oracles of the Evidenceth word, which it hath done, but also of a constant holy Ministry to teach and explain them; Also to celebrate those holy mysteries care, which are divinely annexed to the word, as seals to confirm the faith of Christians; And lastly, to exercise that wholesome discipline which for doctrine & an-
Efficacy of right Ordination.

...for terror or comfort, the power of which is chiefly in the Pastors and Rulers of the Church. As it is then for the honour of the will-tax of Christ in the original, to have instituted such holy mysteries and such a Ministry, so it is for the honour of the Church, in the succession of all ages to have thus preferred them and it self, in that order which becomes the family of Christ; which had come far short of any well ordered family, if the Father and Master of it, Jesus Christ, had left every servant to guess at his duty; and all of them to scramble what part they lift of employment, aliment, and enjoyment; but the Lord Christ, (as every wise Master doth) hath appointed, and his Church hath preserved to this day constant Stewards, and diptiputers of holy things in his house-hold; whose duty is to be faithful to their Masters profit, and credit; to do their duty, and to maintain that place and authority, in which the Lord hath set them; nor is it any thing of a pious easiness, but an impious balance, in them as Bishops and Ministers voluntarily to desert their station, and to suffer every one to usurp upon them, and to do what they list: Nor is any thing more intolerable, than the rude-ness, riot, and impudence of those inferior servants, who pretending Christian liberty, and not incurring tho\'s officers and Ministers whom the Master hath orderly placed over them; neither will they long induce the Lord or Master himself to rule over them; we read, Mat. 21. 38, They kill the Son, who first beat and shamefully intreated the servants which were sent.

...But thirdly, as to the persons duly ordained; This holy Ordination gives a real divine power, which is necessarily to be delegated and derived from Christ, (since no man hath it, in, and of himself, or of any will of men) by which he is enabled to perform those duties, which Christ only hath enjoined in his word to be done, and to be thus done, by such men, and in such a manner; and no other, 1 Tim. 5. 22. Lay hands suddenly on no man, (i.e.) by way of Ordination: Ergo, no man is of that office, or hath that authority and power till ordained, be his parts and gifts never so great and good. So 2 Tim. 2. 2. These things commit to faithful men (who may be able to teach others) Ergo, some peculiar Commission must be given to thes, and to no other, to perform Ministerial duties with authority. Such are those of making Disciples, by Preaching the Gospel; by distinguishing from others; and also confirming, and uniting together among themselves in holy Communion, those Disciples, with the holy seals of Baptism and the Lords Supper;
Supper; To edify, confirm, and preserve them by teaching, reproving, praying for them, comforting, guiding, governing, binding and loosing, by the use of that power of the Keys, which is committed only to them, both in doctrine and discipline; doing all things toward penitents and impenitents, believers and unbelievers, not magisterially but ministerially, as from Christ, and for the Churches good; yet not precariously, and arbitrarily, or depending on man's pleasure, but authoritatively and conscientiously, as doing the work of the Lord: knowing the power they have received of the Lord; the duties enjoyned them; the care required in them, the account to be exacted of them, as to the Stewardship of the souls solemnly committed to their care: which is done by that x\textsuperscript{\textregistered} or ministerial gift of the holy Ghost, which Christ gave to the Apostles. John 20.22. and by their hands, (as by St. Pauls to Timothy, 2 Tim. 1. 6.14) to others, and so to a perpetuall succession.

For without this gift or power of the holy Spirit of Truth; whose property it is to lead the faithfull into all truth, no man is truly The holy a Minister of holy things in the Church; So that it is a pittifull Spirit given piece of ignorance, or putid scurvility, and profaneness, for any that in right Or- profes Christianty, much more for those that pretend to be Mini- sters in the Church, to slight, and expose to vulgar scorn, that fad- ow. lage used, as of ancient times in all Churches, so in the Church of Englids manner of ordaining Ministers; Receive ye the holy SPI- rit: As if this were a meer mockery, and insignificant in point of any sanctity conferred; When it is express'd to be meant (as it ever was in the Church understood) not of sanctifying graces, infused qualities, or habits of inward holiness, (which are immediately from God, and not by man to be conferred; nor from man to be communicated to another; nor do they invest any one, that hath them, in any Church office or publik power over others (for then every holy man and woman should have this power:) but it is only meant of those peculiar gifts, or powers of the holy Spirit, which are properly ministerial and officiative; as from Christ, and in his name: not by internall infusion, but by externall separation or sanction; not enduing with grace, but investing in a new relation and authority, distinct from the common Christians, duty, place, and officers of charity, \\&c. which are as parchment, wax, and writing, usefull in their kind; but not valid, as to any conveyance, till sealed, subseribed, delivered and witnessed, as the act and deed of the conveyer; who lawfully hereby confers to another his right and power of acting, possesing, or enjoying, \\&c. So by a form of such Commission

\textit{Tir.2.15.}\textit{Iren.1.4.43.}\textit{Episcopatus successionis ab Apostolis habentes Charisma veritatis constanter acceptum. ibi charismata dominii posita sunt ibi dicere opor- tent veritatem.}\textit{\textsuperscript{1}Tm.4.14.}
Commission or delegation, as Christ instituted, that power and ministerial gift of the holy Spirit is continued, which was first committed to the Apostles by Christ; who only would do it: Nor can this power be understood so much for extraordinary miracles, (which were to cease;) as for that ordinary Ministry, which was to continue, as necessary for the Church in all ages: This power or gift of the Holy Ghost, as ministerial and officiating in Christ's name, as that of miracles, may be where there is no sanctifying grace; as was in Judas, and probably in Demas, and others; who might be sheep, as to their profession, and sheepeards, as to their office, or Episcopacy (of which Judas had a part and fell from it) and yet wolves, as to the inward habits and graces. When the Spirit of Paul was joy ned with the Corinthian Ministers and believers in excommunicating the incestuous persons; it was not the sanctifying Spirit or grace of the Apostle; but that ministerial power, which he had eminently in and joyntly with the Church: The power and Spirit of Christ as it is given, so received in right Ordination, by every true Minister, that is worthily promoted; not as to grace, and inward virtue, of which man judgeth not; but as to office and relative power from Christ, in the publike service or Ministry to his Church. As every officer civil, or military that hath commission, acts, in the Spirit, name, and power of those, by whom authority is primarily derived to them. In this sense and to this use the Spirit of Moses was put on the 70. Elders; Num. 11. 25. and Elias on Elisha, 2 Kings 11. 9.

3. Yea further, I doubt not, but the solemn and right manner of Ordination by fasting, prayer, and imposition of hands; (wherein the Spirit of the ordeiners, and the Christians present, with the ordained, joyn together in his behalf to God,) is a very great and effectual means, to induce the ordained, in some sense, with an other Spirit; not only, as to power, but as to the increase of ministeriall gifts, which fit him to receive, and use that authority; yea, and for the strengthening, exciting, and enlarging those sanctifying graces, by which he is more fitted for, and prospered in, the work of the Ministry, than he was before; or any other can ordinarily be without this due Ordination; whereby his wisdom, humility, charity, zeal, devotion, industry, purity, exactness and constancy are increased so as are most requisite for the great work and office of a Minister.

4. It binds the conscience of the ordained, more strictly to the duty and office, as to discharge it, so to endeavour, by all means, of study, prayer, conference, meditation, &c. to preserve, use, and augment those gifts, faculties, or graces, natural, acquired, or infused, for the right discharge and fulfilling of his Ministry, to the glory
The benefit of right Ordination.

5. Due Ordination gives comfort, convenience, and divinencourage to true Ministers, as the anointing did to the Prophets of old, and the solemn mission of Christ did to the holy Apostles, to Preach; not as popular Scribes, and precarious Pharisees, but as St. John the Divine having authority from Christ; whole Ministry (like John Baptists) is not from men on earth, (however transmitted by men) but from God in Heaven: In this confidence they can rebuke with all authority; With this confidence they cannot but speak in the name of the Lord; They do not fear the face of men, or devils, in Christs way: They forake not, as hirpling, the flock, when the Wolf comes, as having no relation, or tie to the flock, which is not committed to those self intruders, but usurped by force, or invaded by wealth; True Pastors in time of generall (not personall persecution) dare not leave their flock destitute; but choose to be examples to them of suffering cheerfully for Christ; expecting Christs promise, and assistence in his way. The righteous Minister is as bold as a Lion; for he that walks uprightly in the Spirit and power, and way of Christ, walks seemly: But all usurpers are cowards, and are ready to infiltrate, and crouch to all ways of mean and vulgar compliances; giving the Befry leave to swallow up the Church and Chancel too; False ly and vilely flattering the people, as if ministeriall power were in them and from them; And this some do purely for filthy lucre; where there is a miserable dependance for maintenance upon peoples good will; and chiefly to prevent any question, or scrutiny, which may be made by some nimbler sophisters touching their precarious, usurped, and beggarly authority as Ministers, which is truly none; This keeps them justly so in awe, that those popular Preachers dare not use that just rigor, and severity, in cases of most apparent crying sins in people, which a true Minister having good conscience and good authority knows how seasonably, and discreetly, yet freely and effectually to use, not to his own pomp, Empire, or advantage; but to Christs glory, the Churches good, and the honour of Religion; though it be to his own detriment and danger, as St. Chrysostom, St. Basil, Naz. and other holy Bishops and Presbyters oft did.

off such as they found Idoneous for their learning and gifts. As common placing is in Colleges.
Ministers and peoples benefit by due Ordination.

6. Right Ordination preserves Order and Decorum in the Church and holy administrations; also it fortifies the function of a Minister with due respect and decent regard, even before men; so that neither the persons nor function and office of Ministers are easily to be despised, when publike Ordination is duly performed, with that solemnity, and holy manner, as was of old, in this and all true Churches, and which ought to be so still: It likewise conciliates in Christ's name, and for his sake, much love, reverence, esteem, patience, and obedience, toward Ministers, in their places, and duty, from all true Christians; yea it raiseth a just veneration to duties, thus rightly celebrated among the faithfull, by those, of whom Christ says, He that receiveth you, receiveth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me, and him that sent me.

This makes them received in the name of Prophets; as Apostles or Angels sent from God; valued by true Christians, as their right eyes; This makes Christ sensible of their injuries as his, and the very durt of their feet becomes a dreadful witness against wicked and proud reectors of them; who thinking them to be Ministers but of course civility, cannot regard them with conscience and duty; But imagine that they may, at the pleasure of any passion, lust, or secular design, be mocked, despised, degraded, cast off, and quite abolished: That to their liberty may prefer a heap of teachers of their own making and making, before any of Christ's sending, and the Churches ordering; Such being most fit for their sinister ends, who come in the people's name, and have not higher or nobler Spirit; acting all things in their Levelled Ministry, by the same irreverent, irregular, inconstant, rude, insolent, and uncomely Spirit of popularity; which is most prevalent in those, that are most enemies to and afraid of the true ministerial power and due ordination; Those again, or among creations of the people, when men lift, are easily rejected, cast off with scorn, yet without any sin and shame: yea they cannot be regarded, or followed, without neglect and affront of the true Ministry, and this not without a great sin; The devil is never pleased better, than with such pragmatick Preachers, and false Prophets; who do Satans work under Christ's Livery; which is at once to invalidate, and overthrow as the true Ministry, so all conscience of true Religion; that so having by these Nimrods hunted out, and destroyed all the race of the ancient holy order and succession, he may set up the Babell of his Kingdom. No Symptom of lapsing unto Atheifin so great, as the despicable of the Ministry; which Eusbeius observes before the destruction of the Jews.

7. It gives great satisfaction to the conscience of all true believers and serious Christians, in point of duty discharged and comfort obtained by holy ministrations; of whose validity and efficacy they have then least scruples, when they are most assured of the authority
rity of the Minister performing them as in Christ's way, so in his Name, wherein blessing is to be sought and only to be found; Hence also they expect the graces of the duty, when the Ministration is rightly done, by those, that are in Christ's stead, as to the outward form, and presence, which none can without a ly and hypo-crise pretend to, but only true Ordeigned Ministers; Others in their arrogant and impudent intrusions are, justly and easily despised, and all duties they do; which are first questioned, then denied, having no plea or pretence of authority from Scripture, reason, or from the custome and practice of the Church, whereby to persuade any sober man to regard them any more, than God did the Oblations of Cain, or Corah. Nothing is more abhorred to the God of order, than presumptions in piety, which disdain to serve God in his own way; Nor will their zeal cover their rudeness and disobedience, or excuse the ly, which pretends to speak, and go and run, and prophecy in God's name when the Lord sent them not. Jer. 23.31,32. Therefore the antient Greek Lysurgies prayed in their Ordination of Ministers, and Consecration of Bishops, that God would bestow on the Ordeigned such (in ordination) Ministerial gifts, that the holy Ministry might be unblemished, and unblamable, that thereby a reverence might be preserved to holy offices, and holy officers too, for the peoples stay, satisfaction and comfort.

And whereas the pleader for the peoples privilege, and duty to Prophecy, objects, that few people are ever assured of those Ministers being duly ordained, who daily preach among them, and administer holy things; It is true, every Minister doth not, every time he preacheth, shew the letters, or the Charter of his Ordination; Nor is it necessary, (but only at some times) If the discipline of the Church in this point were such, as it ought to be, in practice, and which was in our Constitution, viz. That none might presume to officiate ( properly ) as a Minister, in holy Administrations ( beyond probationall preaching ) but only such as were sufficiently known to be true Ministers rightly Ordeigned in publique, under sufficient testimoniall; The strict care of this, would be a great means both to restoring the lapsed honour of the Ministry, and to establish many shaken Christians in their faith.

As right Ordination of the Evangelical Ministry carrys with it the only acceptance from God, as a service and duty, for to others God will say, Who required these things at your hands? So it procures unspeakable blessings of God's graces and gifts upon the Churches of Christ, and the household of Faith; more truth and soundness in the faith, more Union, Peace, Charity, Order, Constancy, &c. The flourishing
Ministers and Peoples benefit by right Ordination.

flourishing of Aarons rod, Numb.17, both in blossomes and ripe
fruit, sufficiently testifies (against their envious murmers against
Ordination) whom the Lord hath chosen and ordain'd to serve
him, as Ministers of the Gospell, Rom.4.10. How shall they preach
unles they be sent? It's negative, They cannot rightly, lawfully,
acceptably, successfully, comfortably preach, unle's duly sent in Gods
way; nor can that place be meant only of the Apostles, as F.Soci-
nus interprets it, since as Preaching and Ministry, so authority in
them, and regard to them, is always necessary for the Churches
good. Never any Church or Christians were eminent for sound
knowledge, Orthodox profession, or for holiness of life, in all charity
and virtues, but only there, where true Ministry, and right Ordina-
tion was continued and encouraged. The more any Church or Chris-
tians are defective, or negligent, and loose in this, the more they
are presently overgrown with ignorance, or Errors, or Superstition,
or infinite Schimes, prophane novelties, and scandalous license-
ness; when every one that lifts makes himself or another, a Mini-
ster in new and Exotick ways; Such mock-Ministers are but as the
block, that fell among frogs, nine dayes wonder; but afterward the
Pageantry concludes in the prophane babblings, contempt, and con-
fusions, justly and necessarily following such meckeries and Im-po-
stures; nor are they attended with only contempt of those Pretend-
ders, but also with neglect and indifference in some men, as to all ho-
ly duties and ministry; which the miserable experience of many peo-
ple in this Church too much confirms at this day: No men and wo-
men being more dark, unfavoury, disorderly, wanton, wounded,
and scattered into factions and errors, than those deluded creatures,
whole first error makes way for all other, forlaking the true light,
and talt of the world, and of the Church; the teaching, order, and
guidance of their true and faithful Ministers; After this they are
easily abused with twinkling saussi, unfavoury salt, with Wolves and
thieves, who come in at the door, when it is fairly open, but
climb over, or creep under the wall of government, order, and disci-
pline: that they may steal, destroy, and disperse the flock. Out of you
shall arise men, speaking perverse things (i.e.) they rise of themselves
by popular forwardness, and disorderly presumption, not from Chris-
ts and the Churches ordination. Hence they prove so grievous and
mischievous to the Church, Acts 20.30. So that it is not only the
Calamity and misery of poor Christians to be thus abused; but it
draws them into many sinfull evils, and snares, while they forlake,
or cast out and despise their rightly Ordeined, and duly placed Mi-
isters, and either follow and encourage such seducers, as are very
defuctive, both to the Churches peace, and to mens souls, both in the
present and after ages, or else fall to a neglect, indifference, yea and
abhorrency of all Religion.

Non fortunat
Dens labores
et non
faut ordinat
et quaquem
salutaria qua-
dam affert
vamen non ed-
sificant. Luthcr.
tom.4. Gen. fol.2.

Joh.13.1.
The holy Power of due Ordination.

The Order, Power, and Authority then by which right Ordination is conferred on the true Ministers of the Gospel, as was here in Summary England, although they seem to proud scorners, to unstable minds, to ignorant and unbelievers, as trifling, as the Gospel seems foolishness; of the power yet to the humble eye of Faith, it appears as the wisdome, holy order, and efficacy and commission of God, for the continuall teaching, well guiding, of right Ordination and edifying of the Church of God, by truth, and peace to Salvation.

The blessed and great effects of which depend, as I have shewed, not upon any natural power, or vertue, transfused from the Ordainers to the Ordained, but upon the Word, Promise, and appointment of Christ, sending them in this method of the Churches triall, approbation, and ordination; in which by the judgement and conscience of those who are of the same function (and so best able to examine and judge of gifts and abilities) the examined and approved is publickly authorised and declared to be such a Minister, as the Lord hath chosen to be sent, such as the Spirit of Christ hath anointed and consecrated, by meet gifts and graces, for the service of Christ, and the Church, in that great work of the Ministry: One, who is thus ordained, the Church may (in any part of it) comfortably receive, and own in Christ's name; One, who is partaker duly of the comfort of that promise from Christ, to be with his true Ministers to the end of the world; which could not be verified, as interpreters observe of the persons of those then living, and first sent by Christ (who were long since at rest in the Lord;) but of their lawfull Successors, rightly following them in the same office and power; without which they are not truly their Successors in the Ministry, and authority from Christ: No more than they can be Embassadors, Deputies, and Messengers from or to anyone, from or to whom they have no assignment of any power, by letters, or other way of commission; which, when most legally and formally done by deeds and instruments of writing; yet these receive no natural change of their qualities, nor is any inherent vertue conveyed to them, when they are made instruments to testify the Will, and convey the power of any to another; but they have such a change in relation to their appointed use and end, as alters them from what they were before in common and unlimited nature.

The like is, as to religious ends and uses, where some men are specially ordeigned to be Ministers, having all their efficacy and authority, as to that work, from the will of Jesus Christ, from whom alone such power is derivable, and that not in every way, which the vanity of men lift; but in such as the Church hath constantly used, according to the Scripture Canons and directions; which are clear to Timothy and Titus, which are the great patterns, and evident commissions for right Ordination, and Succession to the Ministry, besides.
Of Ordination misapplied.

Habemus cum suis conscientiis predictionem habent necesse est & conscientiam damnationis. Tertul, de Hare. auditoribus. Jo. 2. 8.

Yet meer form of Ordination, makes not an able Minister.

Not that every man that is ordained a Minister, as to the meer outward form, in a right and orderly way, is presently of the essence and truth of a Minister in Christ's esteem, or in the comfort of his own conscience; The ordained may be such hypocrites (as Simon Magus was, when baptised) as have neither real abilities, nor honest purposes, aiming at God's glory, or the Churches good; but meerly at their own worldly ends, and base advantages; The Ordiners also may be either deceived in the judgement of Charity, or corrupted by humane lufts and frailties, so as greatly to pervert and prophanke this holy Institution; No man hath further comfort of his being ordained a Minister, than he hath real gifts, and competent abilities, together with an holy and honest purpose of heart, to glorifie God, in the discharge of that holy office and power, to which he is by the Church appointed; Nor can on the other side, the Ordiners more highly offend in piety against God, and charity against the Church, than in a superficial and negligent way of ordaining Ministers; which antiently was not done, but with solemn publick fasting, prayer, and great devotion. Indeed nothing should be done in the Church of Christ with greater exactness, both for inward sincerity, and outward holy solemnity, than this weighty and fundamental work of carrying on the Ministeriall power and authority in a fit and holy Succession; Abuses here are prone to creep in, the Devill
Devill coveting nothing more, than to undermine, weaken, and but upon strict examination before they are ordained. Concil. Nic. x. and the Concil. Cath. i. c. 9. takes care that none be Ordained Presbyters without due examination.

For to abolish this order, or to usurp to undue hands, or to condemn this Sacred and right Ordination, which sends forth able Ministers in Christ's way, can be no other, but a most cruel and detestable sacrilege, far worse than that of robbing the Church of its maintenance for such Ministers, both as preaching and ruling well (which yet is a sin of so deep a dy, that no Niter can cleanse it, being seldom ever pardoned, because seldom repent of, so as to make a just restitution; without which, repentance is never true.)

Yea, for any Laymen, in a brutifh violence, and meerly by popular insolvency, to arrogate this power where it is not, or to abrogate it where truly it is, is a sin of a more heinous nature, than that of Simon Magus was, who had so much of civility, justice, and good manners, as to offer money for a part of the miraculous and Ministeriall power. It is indeed no other than a Cyclopick fury, and unwonted barbarity (ill becoming any sober or civilized Christians) thus to wrest the keys of God's house, out of the hands of those Stewards, with whom the great Master Christ hath specially intrusted them, for the right Oeconomy, and dispensing of all holy Mysteries and Institutions; And when such rude and unruly fellows have thus insolenced those Officers of the Church, and bound their hands; how
how comely will it be to see the keys of the kingdom of heaven, managed, or committed, as it were, to Boys, to Pages and Layes? to weak, mean, mechanick, ignorant, dissolute, and riotous wretches, who not conscious to any true Ministerial power, or just authority in the Church, can never make conscience of doing any holy Ministerial duty, to which they are most unfit; never caring how prodigall they are of the truth and honour of Religion; of their own, or other mens souls; it being a sport to such proud and spitefull fools, to do wickedly, to speak prophanely, and to live disorderly in the Church. And not content to commit a rape upon true Religion, and the holy orders of Christ's Church, (as Absalom did on the heuettop before the Sun, and all Israel,) they will further in time justify the flagitiousness of their villanies; as if the zeal they had for true Religion, provoked to such outrages these pestilent pandars for errors and all licentiousness, with their followers, who must presently all turn preachers, though never duly Ordeined, nor fit ever so to be; yea, their arrogancy makes them ordeiners too, of whom they please to set up to minister to their extravagant lusts and follies, which makes them many times much fitter for the flocks or cages, than for the pulpits. These will surely come at last as much short of the happy effects of true Ministers, as they are far from that holy power of right Ordination, which I have proved to be from Christ and the Blessed Apostles, rightly derived to us by the constant Custome of this and all Churches; and this not as a cypher, or meer formality; but, as of sacred Institution, so of reall and excellent efficacity, and divine vertue in the Church, where duly used and applied. Which was that I had to prove against the scurrilous objections of those, that seek to despise and destroy the whole Function, Ordination, and divine authority of the Ministry of this Church.

Reader, the Reason why the Follies of this Book do not follow, is because the Copy (for Expedition) was divided to two Printers.
Of special Gifts of the Spirit pretended beyond Ordinary Ministers.

Another great Calumny, urged by their Adversaries against the true Ministers of the Church of England, (whose due and right Ordination I have vindicated to be as Divine, so both Necessary, and Efficacious) is as a forked arrow, sharpened with Presumption and Prejudice; On the one side an high esteem and confidence which they have of themselves; and a very low deficiency of all Ordained Ministers; on the other side, even in that which is the highest honour of Man or Minister; while these Anti-ministeriall Adversaries pretend, That the Ordained Ministers have not the Spirit of Christ; nor can or ever doe Pray, Preach, and administer holy things by the Spirit: which these new Modellers challenge in such a plenary measure, and power to themselves; that they justify their want of ordinary abilities and endowments by their needing none: Excusing their not studying or preparing for what they utter, by their being specially Inspired. Colouring over their well known idleness, ignorance, illiteratenesse, and emptiness, by the Scears of special Illumination, sudden Inspirations, and Spirituall Enablements; Which they say they have far beyond any Ordained Ministers; And this by the Spirit of Christ, which is extraordinarily given to them; which suddenly leads them into all Truth, and enables them for all Duties and Ministeriall Offices: That this is their Call from God to Preach: and to usurp the places of all Ordained Ministers; whom they pretend, as far to exceed in Inspirations, as the Apostles did their former selves after once the power of that Spirit was come upon them.

To this Calumny and Ostentation my first reply shall be; in all humble tenderness to beheare God, to give me holy wisdom to rightly to conceive of, and graciously to express my self touching the Spirit of God; that I may not give any offence; or occasion any grief, and mistake to any excellent Christians. I know well that the Spirit of Christ is a thing of pious curiosity, and holy de-licacy; That in what way soever it manifests it self to the Church, 32.

* Delicata vesel Spiritus sanctus. Penn.
Flabat Spiritus
& fluens lentac-
y c. 9, 9; spiri-
pro ces. Bern.
Luk. 11, 13.
Ioh. 14, 17.

it is to be entertained in thoughts, words, and actions of Christians, with all cautious tenderness, and religious reverence; that so we may neither conceive nor speak any thing unbeseeming its majesty, and purity; nor damning, or afflicting to its holy influences, gifts, and breathings, on the spirits of any true Christians; whose highest honor, happiness, and communion with God, and Christ, and one another, is by the Spirit of Christ. I know that its motions and inspirations are, as most free, ( blowing where it listeth, (not where any man lift to boast and pretend) so they are not so easily discerned when they come, and whither they goe; save only by accurate watchings, and sober observation; where the surest discoveries are made by those holy fruits and effects, which are manifest in the habits of grace, or formations of Christ in the new man of our hearts, or in the works of our lives; which being done after a religious rule and way, are in the judgment of Charity to be esteemed as effects of God's Spirit.

Sunt quaedam Spiritus sancti circa nos diffensatoriae vicissitudines, quae nisi vigilanter et observantur, nec præsentem glorificant nec absentem desident.


I am far from doubting or denying, that the Spirit of Christ dwells in the hearts of true Believers, by special gifts of grace; beyond Nature's sphere; nor do I question, but that the Spirit of Christ doth furnish many men with special gifts (above others) for the service both of Churches and States, in the outward visible way of God's providence; as to Bezaleel and Saul: Nor yet do I deny but the Spirit of Christ may give extraordinary abilities (that is, beyond others, and beyond men's own selves, as to former common gifts and parts) for the good of the Church, in cases where ordinary means are defective: Nor do I dispute this holy Ber. 1. 32. An, and usual influence of Christ's Spirit on Christians, in enlightening, opening, hasting, softening, calming, composing, and specially comforting in particular cases; also, quickening to duties, inabling in duties; yea sometimes supporting with heroicall impulses and assistances in conflicts, temptations, and sufferings, from men and devils; also reviving in dejections, defections, darknesses, and exhaustings of our own spirits and common gifts: All this I willingly grant; and earnestly desire that I may have daily more experience of in my selfe, and from others: not only for private comfort, but for publicke good of the Church of Christ. I desire highly to prize the happy priviledge of those, that do truly enjoy these inspirations, and humbly use them. I wish all true Christians a blessed increase daily in this communion.
Pretentions to speciall gifts.

Communion with God, and one another by real gifts which are beyond the best improvements of meer Nature; I know no other heaven here or hereafter, but the real and full inhabitation of Christ's Spirit in our spirits: that, of Naturall, Rationall, and Humane, they may become Spirituall, Gracious, and Divine: All that I fear, is, wilful hypocrisy, and weak delusions, that which I most abhorre, is, false and proud ostentations; such as some men are prone to affect, and loudly to boast of among credulous and simple people; to which there can hardly be given so exact and punctual answers and confutations, as both Reason and Religion afford to sober and wise Christians in all other Disputes.

For such pretentions of God's Spirit, and of speciall Inspirations (with which the primitive Churches were pestered and abused, and by which the very Apostles were affronted and opposed) are as so the Gnometeors and comets, so exalting themselves in high notions, above the ordinary reach of Reason, that they are not easily calculated by common accounts; they are Raptures and Enthusiasmes, by which cunning men seek to lose the eyes of spectators in clouds of obscurities and uncertainties: Like some vain and lunatick Christians, who busie themselves more, how to interpret the Revelation, and to fulfill its mysterious prophesies, then to understand, believe, and obey the holy truths and clear precepts of the Gospell in all the other Scriptures: Holy, wise, sober, and humble Christians never boast, rarely tell of those secrets of the Lord, if ever they enjoy them: Vain, weak, and proud men doe often arrogate those special inspirations to themselves, as being least discernible or confutable by vulgar minds; who once dazzled with the glitterings and flashes of pretended Inspirations, think they may falsely regard, and not look so low as the Scripture oracles, and the plain manifestations of Christ by the Word, and his constant Ministry: Lead common people once into this maze; wilde their weak fancies in the Wood of those strange speculations, those unwonted notions, those prettie legerdenaines in Religion, which some men (as Juglers) study more, than any solid trade of Piety; they are hardly able to know (a long time) where they are, as to true Religion; or to find and owne any faire path of holy Truth, and Order, which might lead them out of that Fooles paradys, wherein some men take delight to lose themselves and others.

Quamum adeps vera Spiritus sancti gratia, tantum absorpt omnis vana gloriola. Ber.

When they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure, &c.

Aaa 2  The
The ordinary Sophisty and craft: when men want solid ground and true Principles of right Reason, Order, Law, and Justice, of Scripture Precept, and holy examples from Christ, or any truly gracious Christians, whereby to justify their opinions, or practices, their * retreat is, (as Foxes when eagerly hunted) to hide and earth themselves in this, The spirit hath taught and dictated these things to them; or impelled and driven them upon such and such ways; which are in congruous, uncomely, unwonted to, and inconsistent with, either the Catholick Ten 

* Transgressor of precepts Domini. 

sci spirutorum socii. 

& 

Damon, Bern. 


* The Fryers Mendicant pretended they had a fifth Gospel which they called the Eternum Evangelium; this they preached and defended, saying the old Gospels must be abolished and their received, *Mar. Patr. an. 1154. 

Manderm. an. 

1594. 

* Whole hypocritical sanctity. 

Gullielmus De Sancho amore (vit. & doctrina & piaestate illustris) opposed. 

* Pope Alex. 4. caused their blasphemous book to be burnt. 

*Platina. 

Vit. Al. 4. 

Joh. 4. 1. 

First discovery of Antichrist may pretend to the Spirit of Christ; we are commanded to try the Spirits, whether they be of God or no; we are told, that every spirit which confesseth not that Christ is come in the
Pretensions to speciall Gifts.

"flesh, is not of God, but is of that Spirit of Antichrist, which is to come into the world; as Christ foretold, many should come in his Name, and say, loe here is Christ, and there is Christ; But believe them not: Mat. 24. 23."

What I pray doth more deny the coming of Christ in the flesh; (that is, by a visible way of the Ministry to his Church in his person, and in his succession) then to say, he is gone away again, without taking any Order, or leaving any Command or Institution, for his Worship and Service to be continued in the Church? by which his first coming might be made known, in Preaching the Gospel; and confirmed by the Seals of the Sacraments, to his Church? To say that Christ is so come now in the Spirit, here and there, by speciall Inspirations, that he never came in that other old way of the outward, and Ordained Ministry, of Word, and Sacraments; hath so much of the spirit of Antichrist, as it is against the evident testimony of the Word of Christ; against the practice and the command of the Apostles; and against the Catholick custome of the Church of Christ; which hath always thus set forth and witnessed the first coming of Christ, and must ever doe so till his coming again: Which second coming onely shall put a period to the Word, Sacraments, and that true Evangelicall Ministry, which now is by Christ Ordained in the Church: As the first coming of Christ, did to the Leviticall Priesthood and Ministry by Sacrifices, &c.

We know, That, as the Illuminating Spirit of God guideth the humble, meek and industrious souls into all saving necessary Truths; so these Truths are confined to, and contained in the compasse of those, which are already once revealed to the Church by the Spirit in the Word of God; and which are by the Ministry of the Church dayly manifested, and in this way are sufficient to make the man of God perfect to salvation, 2 Tim. 3. 17. Which is that one anointing from Christ and the Father, which hath lead the Church into all truth by the sure Word which the Apostles taught and wrote: so that no Christians have need, that any man by any other spirit, or as from this Spirit, should teach them more or other as to salvation, 1 Job. 2. 27. They that gape to heaven for the Manna of speciall Revelations, when they are not in the Wilderness, but in the Canaan of Christ's true Church, may easily starve themselves, or feed on the wind and after of fancifull presumptions, while they neglect, and despise the ordinary provisions, God hath made in his Church. It is clear, that whatsoever is said or done, beyond or against this written Word of Christ, and surest rule of the Church, is to be accounted no other, then apocryphal lying vanities, and damnable hypocries. *No Spirit of Christ abstraitis any mans faith from the Word; or carries his practice against the Truth, Order, and holy c. 3.
Vanity of some mens Spirits.

By Institution, which Christ hath settled in his Church: For it is most sure by all experience that the holy Spirit teacheth those Scripture saving Truths, by the ordinary methods, and orderly means, which the Wisdom of the same Spirit in Christ, hath appointed to be used in the Ministry of the Church; which, who so proudly neglects, and so despiseth Christ in them, he may tempt, grieve, and resist the Spirit of God; but he will never find the comfort of the Spirit in his unwarranted extravagancies; which are but silly delusions and baby-like novelties, having nothing in them of Truth, Holiness, or religious Excellency, beyond what was better known, believed, and expressed before in words and deeds, by a far better way; Christians ought never to turn such children and fools, as to think Religion is never well unless it be in some new dress and fashion, of unwarranted expressions, and strange administrations: we think that the Spirit of God teacheth all humble, constant, and exact obedience to the Word of God, without any dispensation to any men, at any time, in things of Morall duty, and Divine Constitution, or Order, according to the several relations and religious capacities of Christians: no real sufficiency of gifts or graces doth justify any Christian in any disorderly and unruly course of acting, or exercising his supposed Inspirations in the Church; no more then they doe in the Civill Offices of State; Nor are these motions any thing of Gods speciall call in regard of the outward Order and Policy of the Church, where the ordinary way of Calling, Admitting, Ordaining, and sending forth right Ministers, may be had in the Church.

Be these impulses of the Spirit never so great, yet they put no good Christian upon idlenesse, or presumption, so as not to use the ordinary means of study, hearing, reading, meditating, confering, praying, and preparing, &c. Nor shall he either preserve, or increase, or profitably exercise any such gifts, without study, industry and preparatory pains; which are the means by which God blesseth men with that Wildome, Truth, Order, and Utterance, which are necessary for the Churches good: The liberal effusions of some mens tongues; their warm, and tragical expressions, (where there is something of Wit, Invention, Reading, Method, Memory, Elocution, &c. in the way of Naturall and acquired Endowments) alas these are no such rare gifts, and special manifestations of Gods Spirit, which these Anti-ministers call men have so much cause to boast of; There may be high mountains of such gifts ordinary, and extraordinary, as in Judas the Traitor; which have no dews of grace falling on their barrenness; Nor are these boasters of Inspirations manifested yet either as equall, or in any way comparable to most true Ministers in any fort
Vanity of some mens Spirits.

fort, by any shewes of such gifts; for the most of which they are beholding to Ministers labours and studies; with whose heifer these men make some shift to plough the crooked and unequall furrows of their Sermons and Pamphlets. A little goes a great way with these men, in their supposed Inspirations; and where they cannot goe far on, they goe round, in circling Tautologies, quarreled repetitions, intricate confusions, which are still but the same skains of thread, which other men have handsomely spun and wound up in better method and order; which these men have neither skill nor patience fairly to unfold; but pull out here a thread and there an end; which they break off abruptly, to the confounding of all true Methods of Divinity, and Order of found Knowledge.

The composedneffe and gravity of true Religion (in Publique especially) admits leaft of extravagancies and uncomelineffe; which dissolve the bonds, or exceed those bounds, by which Christ hath fitly composed the Church together, in a soeciall way; giving every part, by a certain order and allowance (established as the Standard in his Church,) that measure and proportion, which is best for the whole: This place and calling every Christian ought to own, and to attend; keeping within due bounds, till God enabling; and the Church to judging, and approving of his abilities, he be placed and employed in some way of Publique service, into which to crowd, and obtrude a mans selfe uncalled and unordained regularly by the Church, doth not argue such great motions of the Spirit,(which like strong liquor cannot be kept in any vessell) but only evidenceth the corrupt spirits, the violent lufts, and the proud conceits which are in mens Hearts.

Certainly all Gifts, Graces and Influences of Gods Spirit in truly gracious and humble hearts, are in all Motions, Habits and Operations, as conform to the Scripture (which are the Canon of Truth, Peace and Order in the Church) as any right line is to that rule by which it is drawn; or as figures cast in the same stamp and mould are exactly fitted to one another. The Truth of the Word, and Graces of Gods Spirit cannot be separeated, or opposed any more, than heat can be parted in the Sun from its light, or its beams crosse one another in crooked and oblique angles.

It is no better, than a proud and Satanicall delusion to fancy or boast, that the Holy Spirit of Christ dwells there, in speciall Influences and Revelations, where the Word of Christ doth not dwell richly. in all wisdome, Col.
False Pretensions of old to the Spirit.

Col.3.16. The lodgings of the Spirit are always and only furnished with the Tapisry of the Scriptures. Else all imaginary furniture of any private spirits, leaves the heart but swept and garnished with the new brooms of odd fancies, and fond opinions, to entertain with somewhat more trim and composed dress, the unclean spirit; who loves to dwell thus in the high places of mens souls; and hereby seems to make the latter end of those filthy or silly dreamers (in pride, vain-glory, hypocrisy, and lying against the Truth; blaspheming the true Spirit of Christ, concerning his holy and only true Ministry, and Ordinances, and in all other licentious Apollasies) worse than their beginning was, in ignorance, errors and terrors; or in plain dealing sensualities, and downright profaneness; For it is more tolerable to be without the Spirit of God, than to lie against it, and blaspheme it, or oppose, and resist it, after some knowledge of the Truth. It had been better for such men not to have known the way of Christ's Spirit in the Scriptures and the Church: It is far more veniall to err for want of the Spirits guidance, and light, than to shut our eyes against it, and to impute our Errors, Dreams, and Darkness to it; 'Tis better to have the heart wholly barren, than to lay our adulterous bastards to the Spirits charge; when they indeed are issues of nothing but Pride joined to ignorance.

4. Like pretentions of old, confdered, than for * vain and proud men to pretend to special Inspirations futed by mens and Motions of Gods Spirit on them; as many in the old times did; practises. who yet were sensuall, not having the Spirit: * So the Gnosticks called themselves *spiritual men, as well as knowing men; So the Marcionites and Montanists pretended, that their Master Montanus knew more than the Apostles; had more of the Comforter, was the Comforter it self, and told him, what Christ said, his Disciples could not then bear. Joh.16.12. The like lying fancies had the Valentinians, and Circumcelliones, and Marcinices, who being idle-headed, grew idle-headed too, not caring what they said, nor what they did; for they fathered all on the Spirit. So the Catharies, and Encratites, calling themselves Chaff and Pure, and (Apostolic) Apostollical, and above the Gospels: both of old, and in * St. Bernards time; time, and in later times too, both in Germany and other places; rising to ostentation of Prophecying; speciall Inspirations; strange
strange Revelations, shews of Miracles, and lying Wonders, fullfilling and interpreting of Prophecies, enthronings of Christ, &c. by which strong delusions they sought to deceive the very Elect, if it had been possible; but they could never persuade truly excellent, and choose Christians, to any belief of their forgederies and follies; since neither the temper of their spirits, nor their works, nor their words, were like the rules, marks, or fruits, of that holy and unchangeable Spirit of Jesus Christ, set forth in his Word, and owned in the Church; But rather the effects of that depraved spirit; which is most contrary to God, and most inconsistent in itself; which after all its fair glozings and prefacings of Purity, Gifts, and Inspirations, is still but * (Borborites) a swinish and unclean spirit, and differs as much from the Purity, Truth, Beauty, and Order of the true Spirit of Christ, which shines in the Word, as the most noisome Jakes and filthy sink doth from the most sweet and Crystal fountain of overflowing waters.

True Ministers find it hard, having done all, to obtain those competent Ministerial gifts and graces of the Spirit, which are True fruits of necessary to carry on that great work of their own and others Salvation to any decorum and comfort: which these Gnostics pretend as if they were bred and born to; or were suddenly, and at once endowed withall: few of these ever think they want the Spirit, if they have but confidence to undertake any Ministerial work and publique Office. Yea and the best Christians, no less than the ablest Ministers, find it hard in truth to obtain the sanctifying gracious influences of God's Spirit, by which Brevi mora, Sara hora, mira Substitute & Sea vitae divinus, against the flesh; and to rejoice in the victories and prevalencies of the Spirit. Whose publique donations for the common good of Christians, (edifying them in truth and charity) are chiefly manifested not only by his servants the true Ministers; but in the blessing of that very Order, Office, appointment, and function of

* Borborita, εἰς τοὺς, Canali, Tertul. and Austin call those hereicks the Gnostics, Catharists, and others: who called themselves Apostolici, Pneumatici, Angelici, pursuaries, &c.

Minus the Father of the Maniches called himself an Apostle of Christ, the Comforter and Spirit: chose twelve Disciples, defiled water Baptism, said the Body was none of God's work, but of some evil Genius; and his followers full of impure lusts and errors; yet said they were called Maniches from flowing with Manna, ( adv. gnost.). They said, the soul was the substance of God, to be purified; to that end they mixed the Eucharistical bread with their seed, in obscene pollutions and rapes; ut ipsi suae Dei substantia in homine purgeret. Aus. de Hæ.
of the Ministry, both as instituted and continued so long time, by
the wisdom and power of this Spirit of Christ. And by this
great Gift of gifts, as by the Sunne in the Firmament, all
others are ordinarily conveyed to private Christians, which
chiefly consists, and are manifested in true believers, not in quick
flushes of fancy, passionate raptures, strange allusions, and allegro-
cial interpretations, confused obscurings of Scriptures (which some
men (with Origen make so much of:) but in bringing men from
this childish vanity of Religion, to a manly seriousness; which sets
the heart soberly to attend, read, hear, study, and meditate on the Word of God; to prefer that Jewell before all
the hidden treasure of their own or others Fairy fancies: to assent
to the saving Truths both of Law and Gospel; zealously to love
them, strictly to obey them; by hearty repentance for sins against
God or man, ingenuous confessions of them, honest compensations for
them, sincere amendment of them; hence it brings to a quiescence,
and comfort in no way, but such, as is conform to the Word of
Christ; burning with an unsuffused charity toward all men; most fer-
vently to the Churches service and welfare: with an high esteem of the
excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, his Institutions, and Mi-
nistry, his Word, and Spirit, and Grace; with a grateful value,
and high respect of these, by whose Ministry they have been called,
baptized, taught, converted; and are still guided in the paths,
light and breathings of the Spirit, to the hopes of salvation;
the blessed expectation of which in Christ's way raiseth them up
many times to high, yet holy resolutions, to deny themselves, and suffer any thing for Christ's sake, and the testimony of the Truth.

These, and such like (I conceive) are the best fruits of God's
Spirit; which are not the lesse excellent, because they are com-
mon: Gods children are not oft entertained with novelties, and
never pleased with such new toys, and ratles, or hobby horses
in Religion which some men brag of. The wandering clouds,
which some men's fancies exhale, of Spirituall Motions and Ma-
ifestations; beyond plain and ordinary Christians, either for
private comfort, or for publique benefit; are for the most part with-
out water, they darken but moisten not the Church, or the soul,
they have so much of earthy or fiery exhalations in them,
that they have little of the dew of heaven with them; Nor
may they without great injury and high indignity be imputed
to the Spirit of Christ: Nor doe such sorry flowers (which
grow in every dung-hill) adorn the Garden of God, the Soul, or the
Church; nor justly crown any with the most honourable name of
holy or spiritual: Which titles vain men much affect and boldly
challenge;
challenge; sober and humble Christians do earnestly desire, and seriously endeavour to merit; Being an honour so farre above the natural capacity or infall mortality, that nothing but a Divine bounty and supernatural power can conferre the Truth of that Beauty, which is in holiness; and the right to that glory, which is in every True Saint; who are often hid, as orient Pearles, in rough shels, in great plainness, lowliness and simplicity; which makes such as are truly Saints and spiritual, as ashamed to challenge the name, as they are afraid to come short of the grace: Studying not applause and admiration from men, but the approbation of a sincere and good conscience; Him they look upon as the father of every good and perfect gift; the sender of the blessed Spirit, by the due Ministry of the Word, into mens hearts; The searche also of all hearts, and eye of the spirits of men; far beyond what is set out in prints and outward appearances of extraordinary gifts of the Spirit; under which mask and disguises Achatophil, and Jeshua, and Judas, and Simon Magus, and the sons of Sheva, and Demas, and the self-made Prophetess Jezebel; and Diotrephes, all false Christs, false Prophets, and false Apostles, all true Antichrists, and true Ministers of Satan, grievous Wolves; studied to appear; and did so for a while, till the Lord stirred up the Spirit of discerning in his true Ministers and true Saints.

Which Spirit of Wildome teacheth us to measure and judge of spiritual gifts, and true holiness, not by bare and barren forms, but by the power and prattise of godliness; not by, soft expressions, and gentle insinuations, or melancholy soreness, nor severer brows: not by Absbs sackcloth, or Jeshu triumphs; or Phariseeck frownes: Not by bold assertions, loud clamours, confident calumnies, precipitant zeal, audacious adventures, sucessefull inoflenacies: Not by heaps of Teachers, popular Sermonings, long Prayers, wrested Scriptures, crowds of Quotations, high Notions, Origenick Allegorizations: Not by admired Novellics vulgar satisfactions, splendid shews of Religion: empty noises of Reformation: Nor yet by arrogant boastings, uncharitable despisings, confident presumptions, haughty assurances, proud presumptions, pretended Revelations, fanatick confusions: All these, either in affected Liberties, or Monasticke rigours, oft bear up mens fancye of the Spirit, and (as oftentimes, like bladders) inwardly by their emptinesse: Nothing being more prone to dispose a vain mind, to fancy strongly, that it hath Gods Spirit, than the not having it indeed: * To make men presume, they are Saints, than

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2 Cor. 13. 12. 1 Tim. 1. 17. 6. Hebrews 4. 15. 2 Tim. 3. 5.
Specious pretences of the Spirit.

than the not serious considering what true holiness is, and the way of the Spirit of Christ is: In its infallible rule, the Scripture; in its noblest pattern, Jesus Christ; in its foundation, Humility; in its beauty, Order and Symmetry; in its perfection, Sincerity; in its glory, Love and Charity; in its transcendent excellency, the Divine Nature. The Devil's Piracies are made as much by the frauds and fallacies of hanging out God's colours, the flags of the Spirit, and shews of holiness, as by the open defiance of persecution, and batteries of profaneness; Delusions in Religion, as Delilahs charms on Samson, are oft stronger than the Philistines force against the Church; Else our blessed Saviour would not have so carefully forewarned and forearmed his little flock, against those grand Impostors; whose deceit is no less than this, * Lo! here is Christ! and there is Christ: As if he were no where in England, or in all the former Catholick Church, but only in the corners and Conventicles of new Donatists.

Lo! here is Christ! a most potent and plausible pretension indeed, able by its native force, and means credulous frailty to deceive even the very Elect; whom would it not move and tempt strongly to hear of a new Christ, in New lights, and new Gospels, new Church ways, new Manifestations, new Ministry, and new Ministers; Yea to hear of a Christ without means, above means, beyond the Scriptures deadness, the old Sacramentall forms, the Ministeriall Keys and Authority: Christ in the Spirit risen from the grave of dead duties; of expired Ordinances; and from the Carcasses of ancient Churches; A Christ, who is already come to judgement; with whom his Saints are now risen, and dayly rising; seeing him not as in a glasse of means darkly, but by immediate Visions, glorious Manifestations, special Inspirations, plenary Inhabitutions; thus sitting on Thrones and Reigning with Christ in his Kingdom.

Whom would not these Trumpets awake, and these alarms call forth? if we were not forewarned by Christ; and if we had not seen such follies formerly acted and manifested to all the Christian world; and sufficiently confuted in all ages; which never amounted to more than Religious Tragedies; for when the masks of perfonated Prophets, and necersified Saints, and hungry Enthusiasts, and idle Spectnecks, were taken off, (which they put on either by the power or presumptions they had among the Vulgar) presently there appeared the horns of the Beast, in pride, ambition, luxury, poylgamy, cruelty, tyranny, confusion; That those, who seemed to have come down from heaven in the shews of the Spirit, and pretensions of Sanctity, were but Satan's lightnings, falling down from heaven, and his most abominable eruptions out of the bottomless pit.
Specious pretences of the Spirit.

If we other poor Christians, who still remain on the other side of this Jordan, (which those Spirituoses pretend to have passed) if we, who creep on the ground, as worms and no men; who have dayly cause to abhor our selves in dust and ashes, who are forced dayly to strengthen our faith, to renew our repentance; to pour forth our souls oft in sighs, tears, prayers, with broken hearts and contrite spirits, contending with corruptions, wrestling with temptations; having enough to doe to fortifie our selves with the compleat armour of God's Word, in Precepts, and Promises; and of his Spirit, in gracious habits, excitations to, and assistances in duties: Thus giving all diligence to make our calling and election sure: not counting our selves to have comprehended, but pressing on to the mark of the price of the high calling in Christ Jesus: Glorifying in nothing but in the cross of Jesus Christ, by which we are crucified to the honours, riches, policies, successes, flatteries, and glories of this inglorious world; yet to the Liberties, Religions, Devotions, Sanctities, new Churches, new Reformations, and new Ministers of this world; who forsaking the ways of Christ, and the holy Apostles, and the ancient Churches, and the true succession of Ministers, and all Power; have turned grace into wantonness, liberty into licentiousness, godliness into gain; and very much embraced the present world; falling down before Mammon, and worshipping the false gods of this world.

If we, who when we have suffered much, and done something in our endeavours and purposes of holiness; yet find cause to cry out, Wretched men that we are, who shall deliver us from this body of death! if we could indeed believe, or find by experience, that the excitations, and Raptures of these new pretenders to the Spirit, were more comfortable, than the buffetings of these good old Christians; That their triumphs in the world, were beyond the others sufferings from the world, that there were more of Christ in their new Crowns of glory, which they boast of, than in the others Crosses, which they patiently bare; If we could discern a more self-deifying Spirit, a more Christ-enjoying Sanctity; That they were Saints, that is, Not crucifiers of the world, but crucified to the world: If we could see the wounds of Christ in these glorious apparitions; these Christ-like phantasms, (as Antony the Hermite required, when Satan appeared to him like Christ in glory.) If that Purity, Chastity, Justice, Honesty, Contentedness, Patience, Charity, Meekness, Humility, Peaceableness, Fidelity, Constancy and Orderliness, shined in them wherein those holy men and women of old, the Prophets, Confessors and Martyrs, not getting but looling Saints, imitated the holy Lord Jesus, and the most holy God, according to the lively characters of true holiness, set down in the Scriptures: If

2 Pet. 1. 10

Phil. 3. 14

Gal. 6. 14

Rom. 7. 24

Non credamus
Christum nisi
ultrix, a videm
auctoribus, in
via Anan.
we saw such fruits of real holiness in their words, pens, and actions, in their Doctrines and duties; in their self-denials and Mortifications, in their meetings and Fraternities, in their Church Orders and Ministrations, as might convince us, that these pretenders to the Spirit, and despisers of the Ministers, have indeed more of that light, life, and power of the holy Spirit of God, than either true Christians or godly Ministers formerly had, or now have in this, or any other true Church of Christ: How should we pity their blessedness with an holy emulation? How should we, as Saint John to the Angel (whom it may be he took for Jesus Christ) be even ready to fall at their feet; to kiss their footsteps, to attend their directions; to imitate their examples; to partake of their raptures; to pry into their third heavens; to rise, ascend, reign, and triumph, to enjoy the holy Spirit and Christ, and God with them, to all which they in word and fancy pretend?

But the triple Crown of meer titular and verbal holiness (which is, but copper gilded over) moves us not, further than to pity the sinner; and to scorn the pride: The Gnosticks, Montanists, Catholicists of old, the later rude, and cruel phanatics in Germany cried (as ye) holy, holy, holy to their parties and factions: As if there were holy ambitions, holy seditions, holy covetousnesses, holy sacrificial edges, holy obsequities, holy cruelties, holy confusions in the conversations of true Christians and spiritual men; Or holy ignorances, holy errors, holy darkneses, holy heresies, holy schisms, holy hypercrites in their hearts and spirits: As if no duties, no Scriptures, no Sacraments, no Ministry, or Ministers, no Government, or Governors of the Church were heretofore holy, which were primitively, and universally, and constantly owned, and observed in the Church of Christ, as derived from him; As if private fancies, and solitary dreams, and single imaginations of weak and silly men, or women, were now holier, or had more in them of the Spirit, than the public Oracles of the sure Word of God; which the Catholic Church hath received from God by the hands of holy men; and by a constant succession of holy Ministry hath delivered to us, with constancy and fidelity (as to the main:) however particular branches or members of this Church may have failed and withered. If these Antiministeriall Novellists have nothing whereby to set off their pretended gifts of the Spirit, and singular holinesse, but only novelty, fancy, and uncertain Inspirations, nothing to cry down all former holy ways of the Church; but this: that they are conform to all Antiquity and Scripture regulations; The least beam of whose glorious light alwayes either equalls, or far exceeds their new either superfluous, or dubious illuminations; Truly they
they must give all learned and godly Ministers together with all judicious and sober Christians leave, to passe by the Idol of their new dressed Spirituality and Sanctity, without any admiration, devotion or the least salutation: Nor can we at all consider private spirits, warped from, and bent against the publique Spirit of Christ, in the Scripture, in the practice of the Catholick Church, and in the most eminent Christians, both ancient and modern.

We shall content our selves with that plain and primitive holiness, and manifestations of the Spirit, which are expressed in the Word: deposited in the Church; preserved in an holy Ministry, exemplified in all true Christians: and most eminently in Jesus Christ and his Apostles, the great and famous Founders, Teachers and Establishers of holy Truths, holy Duties, holy Sacraments, holy Orders, and holy Ministry in the Church: And this with divine Power and Authority, not only personal, but successional; without which the instituted Service and Worship of Christ had ere this failed. These being ever since Christ's time in all the world, employed in Teaching, Gathering, Baptizing, Governing, Feeding, Preserving, and Perfecting the Body of Christ, which is his Church: We know not, and so we cannot desire, other holiness, than that, by which we beleived the Truths, obeyed the Commands, feared the Threatnings, observed the Duties, preserved the Institutions, continued the Orders, revered the Embassadors, joyed in the Graces, hoped in the Promises; and were led conformably to Christ by that Spirit, which Jesus Christ had given to his Church, long before these new corners had graven the stamps, or set up their Mints: We are glad, and bless God, when we attain unfeignedly to that Spirit of Holiness, which hears the Word of God with fear and trembling, from the mouth of those able and godly Ministers, which are the Messengers or Angels sent from Christ, by the Churches Ordination: Which teacheth us, to pray with understanding, constancy, fervently, and comelness; to receive the pledges of God's love in Christ from their hands (duly consecrating the holy mysteries) with reverence, preparedness, and thankfulness; That holiness, which loves with sincerity, gives with cheerfulness, rejoiceth in well doing, suffers with patience, lives by Faith, acts by Charity; is holy with order, contentedness and humility, without any fury, faction or confusion.

That holiness which, hath nothing in it novel or peculiar, scriptural; nothing fancifull, verbal, tumultuary, violent, schismaticall, disorderly, partial, pernicious, or injurious to any; which chooseth to be a Martyr for Charity and Unity, as well as Verity, in the Church: rather suffereth much than giving scandal or making a schism, according to the piotts and excellent counsell of...
of Dionysius to Novatian. That holiness which is old, as the Ancient Fathers, real, ratio
nal, demonstrative from the Word of God, and exemplified in the lives of former Saints: Which is meek, courteous, charitable, humble, just to all men, abounding with all righteousness, and the fruits of righteousness, peace, and establishment, both to private consciences, and public Churches. That holiness, which hath nothing in it supercilious, calumniating, defamatory, insolent, bitter or burthensome to any true Christians, true Churches, and true Ministers, which know how to reprove, what is amiss, without rejecting all that is well; to reform the crooked, without ruining what is right. That holiness, which, as the Sun-beams is always like itself; like the Father of spiritual light; uniform and constant in all true Saints, in all ages, and in all administrations Divine, either immediate, or mediates; as to its rule, the Will and Word of God; as to its end, the glory of God, in God's way; as to its Epitome, or sum, the love of God, and its neighbours; as to its happy fruits and effects, the good of mankinde, chiefly of the Church of Christ: These have ever been the same for kind, however differing in degrees, according to the measure which God hath given to his true Saints and servants, who never differed from God, or the Word, or one another, as they were holy and spiritual, however, as men and carnal in part, they had their crookedness, unevennesses, and dissentings.

These are the fruits of God's Spirit, this that true Holiness, for which we pray, of which we dare not boast: These are the Saints, whose shadows we count Sovereign; whose presence a blessing; whose ways unblameable; whose joys unspeakable; whose works most imitable; whose conversation most amiable, heavenly and divine; who chuse rather to suffer, than any way to act in cases dubious, as to secular pleasures, which have much of the Beast, somewhat of the Man, and little of the true Christian: The worth of these Pearls is infinitely beyond some mens counterfeit forgeries, whose lustre is chiefly from worldly glory, and secular advantages; who out of ashes are melted up to the shining and brilhness of glass, by the savour of some spirits; who think it enough to glory with novelties, and to boast of Inspirations; fancying all is reformed, which is but changed, though much to the worste; who are forced to set off themselves by the foil of seereenising others: Fearing nothing so much as a true light; and those discoveries which are made of them by serious and judicious Christians, who judge not by mens lips, and appearances, but by their lives and practises, compared to the Word of God: For which, true Ministers, most eminently and impar-
impartially holding forth to the discovery of all men's deformities, are of all men most abhorred by these pretenders; who at a true and full view will not only not appear to other such gifted men, and spiritual, as they pretend, but they will be ashamed of their arrogance, and despite against those good Christians, and those true Ministers whom they have so much vilified and contemned.

The common mistake of proud, weak, or fancifull men, whose tongues are one tipt with Sanctity, and the name of the Spirit, is this, That they know not indeed of what Spirit they are, as to Profession; Nor consider of what Spirit they ought to be, as to temper, if they will be truly Christ's Disciples: Contenting themselves with light and airy presumptions, in stead of serious and searching examinations of truth: comparing themselves with themselves, they fancy they grow holyer, as they grow holier in their opinions, or actions: Hence they are easily flattered into high Imaginations, and cheated with strong Presumptions; as if some common gifts of knowledge, some Sceptical quickness, some volubility of utterance, some Scripturall expressions, which they have attained beyond their former selves, or their equals, were rare, immediate, and speciall gifts of the Spirit. Then, because they shou'd seem no body, if they carry their small wares in an old pack, * they invent some new fashion of Religion; or some modell of a Church-way, which they strongly fancy; after they have once brought forth their fancy to any form and shape, they are strangely inamored with it, all old figures never so uniform, Catholick, and comely, seem deformed, ugly, Antichristian: Then follows those quick emotions and stirrings upon their spirits, which have the quicknings only of Self in them; these are presently cryed up for motions, and * manifestations, and excitations, and Impulses of Gods Spirit on them; then, they are easily moved to extraordinary heats, and irregular vehemencies, as counterfeit possessed are, by the looking on and applauses of others, whose fillineffe makes them gentle spectators, and obsequious admirers of any thing, that seems new to them, or is above them. Nothing troubles these pretenders so much, as if you look too neer and too narrowly on their practices. * Nothing angers them so much, as what they fear, may discover them: you must not ask them, where are their miracles, where their Empire over Devils; where their language; where their prophecies; either as predictions of things to come, or as interpretations of obscure Prophecies in the Scripture, referring to Jesus Christ? These questions (though they are but just to be put, where extraordinary Inspirations are pretended)
are too hard for them: these pose them, and afflict them, when they are thus urged by Ministers, or any sober Christians; who expect no satisfactory answer, in any of those particulars, (which are the proper effects and demonstrations of the Spirit, in its extraordinary motions,) when indeed they observe in these pretenders, so little of ordinary, found and saving knowledge; so nothing of that meekness of wisdom, which every true Christian, in whom the Spirit of Christ dwells, enjoyes in some measure; so utter desolation of any thing, that may argue any thing extraordinary and excellent, which may justly own the Spirit of Christ, for its special Author and inferrer. But quite contrary; grosse ignorance in many things; yet puffed up with intolerable pride, poysoned with errors, kindled with passions, sharpened with violence, delighting in furies, boasting in discords, schisms and confusions, either begun, or increafed, or continued by the restless agitation of their fierce and unquiet spirits: whose impetuous temper is impatient of nothing so much, as true Christian patience; of Peace, Order, and charitable harmony in any part of the Church of Christ; There is nothing they can leffe endure, than able, learned, godly and resolute Ministers, in whom dwells (indeed) a far more excellent Spirit of God; full of wisdom, of power, of courage, full of Christ; who can and dare detect the deceits and juglings of these vain minds: manifesting their folly, discovering their nakedneffe, emptiness, and nothingneffe in respect of any extraordinary Illuminations, or Inspirations of Gods holy Spirit in any way of Religion: After all the cry, and noise, and glorying of these mens inspirings, at the best, all amounts to no more, than the fame Gospell, the fame Duties, the fame Sacraments, the fame Jesus, the fame God, who was with far more knowledge, purity, peace, love, zeal and constancy owned; served and honoured in this and other Churches, in that ancient way and holy Ministry which the Church ever used; which Christ instituted, and with which God was so well pleased, that he blessed it, as the means, to preach the Gospell, to plant Religion, to settle and govern the Church in first and after times, amidst all the persecutions and heresies that opposed it. This is the best of their Inspirings; the setting, of some new glossie and fashion on Christian Religion, whose purity and simplicity like gold, cares not be thus painted over. But take these Inspired men in their degenerations, depravings and worlings of Religion, and you will easily see, how such equivocall generations and imperfect mixtures, and meer monsters of Religion, presently putrifie and pervert to error, faction, licentiousneffe, violence, rapine, civill oppressions, tyrannies, against all that applaud not, or approve not the rarity of their conceits and
and inventions, which first kindle with modest sparks, as if they 
would enlighten, warm, and refine the Church, Religion, and 
Ministry; but after they have got to them vulgar dewell, they 
arise to such dreadful flames and conflagrations, as threaten to 
consume all that was ever built before them: that for the 
goodly Palaces of ancient and true Religion being demolished, 
they may have a clearer ground, where on to set up the feeble 
cottages of their new framing and erecting. Poor men! thus 
one * puffed up with their tympanies of self conceitions, and getting 
into some warmer Sun, having once over-looked their first errors, 
they never after have leisure, patience, or humility to discern 
the grossest secret distempers, which are in their spirits; * the 
many distinctions, and disguises, and windings, by which worldly 
leasts, passions, and interests fly creep in, and concealyly worke 
in their hearts, even then most securely, (and so most dangeronfly) 
when under this blind of Gods Spirit; when the Lord shall be 
intitled to the whole plot and project of their follies and furies, 
both in its softer beginnings and its routher proceedings. 

Of these fallacies in point of speciall Inspirings and motions 
of Gods Spirit, there are no surer detections than these: 1. That 
these so moved and active spirits do always finde leas content, and 
pleasure in, have leas zeal and contention for the great things 
of God, (which are Faith, Righteousnesse, Peace, and Holinesse) 
than they doe for their little novelties and fancies: 2. They finde 
leas comfort and joy in themselves, to be kept within, and 
humbly to walk in those holy bounds of religious Truth and Or- 
der; (which the Word of God hath clearly set before them, and 
all holy Christians, and the purest Churches alwayes observd) 
than to be always busily disputing for, and acting over those petty 
parts of their scruples, novelties, and extravagancies; Which have 
nothing in them but a verminly nimbleness and subtlety, being 
bred out of the putrefactions of mens Brains, and the corruptions 
of the times, in matters of Religion; and are rather pernicious, than 
any way profitable, in comparison of the more sober strength, and 
usefulness of nobler creatures: Nor is it by gracious persons 
disputed, but that one serious Christian of the old stamp, one able 
and faithful Minister of the Church of England, whom these so con- 
temne and hate, hath heretofore done, and still doth more good, 
and gives greater demonstrations of the Spirit of Chrift dwelling 
in him, with wifdon, gravity, learning, humility, diligence, 
peaceableness and charity, (by which many have been restrained 
or converted from sin: or esbalifhed and confirmed in the ways of 
God) than whole heaps of these novell Teachers, and swarms of Inspi- 
red pretenders, who like drones do but seek to rob the hives and starve 

C c c 2
Discoveries of mistaken Inspirations.

the Bees: who serve (in some fits) to scratch itching ears, to some tune of pleasure, liberty, profit, novelty, or preference; but not to teach the ignorant, to settle the shaken, to compose the tossed, to heal the wounded, or to wound the ulcerated Consciences of any men to any soundness of mind, or true holiness of manners.

Their Proselytes are rather perverted, than converted; made theirs by a schismatical and factious adherence; rather than Christ's by a fiduciary obedience; or the Churches by a charitable and humble communion; Faction and confusion and every evil work are the fruits of pertinacious and pragmatick ignorance, as Union, Peace, and Charity, are the genuine effects of sound knowledge and humble wisdom; in which ways only true Christians have ever judged the highest gifts and graces of Christ's Spirit to be both derived and descerned. I am sure there is a vast difference between a wanton Fancy and a holy Spirit, between a glib Tongue and a gracious Heart. We may add to these discoveries of fallacious pretensions to the Spirit's special motions; that, both in the first broaching, and after drawings forth of their new projects and inventions, the authors of them more look to men, than to God; how it may suit with secular aimes, and politique interest, private or publick, than how it suits with God's Word, or the rule of Christ, or the Churches practice in purest times; or its present distresses; whose frame as to the main both in Doctrine, Ministry, and Government, hath always been the same, both in times of persecution and of peace; when favoured and disfavoured by men; and such it ever was in England, and possibly it will be if it out-live this storm; I am sure these Novelties so much opposing this Church, and true Ministers in it, would never have so quickned by any inward heat of Spirit, if they did not presume that the Sun did shine warm on them; which yet is no infallible sign of God's blessing; if these Antiministerial adversaries, these now so inspired men, (who join in their plots, and power, and activity, by which they either secretly undermine, by evil speaking and separating from the public Ministry; or openly invade and arrogate the Office; or wholly deride and oppose the Function;) if they expected nothing but Winter and persecution, and such measure as they mete; I believe it would damp their spirits very much: They would then think it a part of prudence in a Christian Spirit, to sleep in a whole skin; by keeping themselves in that station, wherein God, and the Lawes both of Church and State have set them: As they did very warily, in those times, when there was just power restraining them in those due bounds, which then they thought became them best; and they would no doubt have thought to still, (for all the fullness of their spirits and ebul-
Bullition of their rarer gifts:) if strange indulgences in matters of Religion, and Church Order, had not tempted them to safe extravagancies, and unpunished insolencies, chiefly against the Church, and Church men.

In other things, of civil affairs, where it is very likely their spirit prompts them, as much to be meddling (because more is got by those activities:) they know how to keep their spirits in very good order; being over-awed with evident danger, attending any factious, seditious or tumultuary motions; None of these small spirited men (who are seldom little in their own eyes) are powerfully moved to usurp any place in the Council of State; to arrogate the office and authority of an Embassador or publick Agent; to set himself in the Seat of Justice uncommission'd; or to intrude into any place Military, or Civil, without a Warrant from other, than their own forward spirits; though their pride and ambition (*like Absaloms) may fancy, they could better dispatch business, doe exacter Justice, and speedier, than any in Authority; yet here, the danger and penalty of intrusion comes their zeal, curbs their heady spirits, and cuts their combes: Nor are they often either so valiant, or so fool hardy, as to act by their pretended impulses in any way, but where they think there may be safety; which they now find (as from many men) in whatever they say, or doe, against the honour, order, and Ministry of this reformed Church of England: which they see hath not many soldiers to defend it; nor advocates to plead for it; nor Patrons to protect it. Wanton and petulant servants which were formerly but as the * dogs of the flock, will easily insult over the children of the family, when they see them Orphans, and exposed to injuries: either wanting true * Nursing Fathers and Mothers, or these wanting that tenderness toward them, which is hardly to be expected in step-mothers, and only titular parents.

It is no adventure for timorous beasts to goe over; where they find the fence trodden down, and the gap made wide; So, much more prevalent with vain and proud men are the impressions of fear from men, than those from God, whose commands and threatenings are attended with Omnipotent Justice, which is slow paced, but sure; Nor doe I doubt, but these subtle and insolent enemies against this Reformed Church and the Ministry of it, doe already * find the first strokes of Divine Vengeance in their own ingratefull breasts.

The further triall of these pretenders to the Spirit, I must leave to the impartiality of judicious Christians, in that experience which they have of the fruits which they bring forth. What truths of God have these Antiministeriall adversaries ever brought forth, or further cleared and illustrated, than was before?
Fruits of the Spirit in the true Ministers of England.

What weighty controversy or other question in Divinity, polemical or practical, have they learnedly and solidly stated? What part of obscure Scripture have they well interpreted? What body of Divinity have they blest this Age withall, beyond what it formerly enjoyed in great variety and plenty? What cases of Conscience have they more cleared or better decided? Is either Law or Gospell beholding to them? yea rather, how have some men studied to make void the Law by immorall licentiousnesse? and the Gospell too, by such not free but rather pro- tuse and prodigall grace, as excludes those holy conditions of repentance, and good worke, which the Gospell requires as necess- ary concommitants and fruits of true and lively Faith? What Scrip- ture have they handled which they have not tortured, mangled, and broken the very bones of it? What controversy have they not more studied to pester and entangle? What truth have they not darkened with their cloudy words and senseless notions, which they call glorious heights? What heresie have they not reviyed? What poysonous Error have they not tampered with? What sin and enormity have they not palliated, or excused, or applauded, as the effect, either of Christian liberty or necessity? How many simpler Christians Faith have they subverted? persuading them they never had Christ rightly preached to them; nor were in any saving Church-way, till these Inspired Teachers came to direct them, how to cast off and despise their Ministers and the whole Office of the Ministry.

Neither then the Word of God, nor right Reason, nor sober Sense will give testimony of any speciall gifts of the Spirit in these men, either in knowledge, or in wisdom, or in utterance, or in any grace or vertue; In all which they are nothing in regard of many Ministers and others, who as far excell them, as gold doth brasse, and silver lead; Nor are their fruits to the publique and to others, any way proportionable to their boasing against the Ministers: which is as far from truth, as it is from humility; if these may be measured and esteemed, not by proud swelling words of themselves; or by high scorns, and rude contempts of others; but by the exactinesse of holy walkings, and the fruitfulnesse of publique labours on the hearts or lives of others.

Herein no ignorance, or error, or calumny can be so wilfully or resolutely blind, (but onely in these men) as not to see and acknowledge, That God hath given witnesse from heaven, against the crooked and perverse generation of these detractors from, and de- stroyers of the honor of the Ministry of England; by the eminent Learning, Piery, Zeal, Industry, Fidelity, Charity, Patience, Constancy and vigilancy of many centuries, yea many thousands of able, and godly
godly Ministers, both in the restoration, and preservation of Truth, Purity, and Power of the Christian Reformed Religion in this Church; others have fought the goods of this Church, but these the good of it. I could here fill many Volumes (as many Ministers (both godly Bishops and Presbyters) in this Church, have done, by their acute, solid, devout, and most profitably pleasant writings) with the histories of many of their lives, (some of which are registered to posterity by commendable pens: others by tolerable ones, whose grateful design is good; but their historique faculty far short of those merits, which they seek to eternize. How eminent have they been, as Men, in all good learning? how indefatigable in their labours? how dear, useful, and desirable to all good and excellent Christians in their lives and deaths? What Trophies they have not gained over the adversaries of our Christian and reformed Religion; by their Prayers, Sermons, and most incomparable Writings? No lese have been their many and renowned Victories, which they have obtained over the very Devils; whom a long time they kept, as it were in awe and in a chain: How many Sinners have been redeemed from his snares, and converted from the evil and errours of their wayes by their powerfull Ministry? How many fiery darts of Satan have they quenched? How many weak hands and feeble knees have they strengthened? How many remorseless soules have they wounded; piercing between the scales of Leviathan by the two-edged sword of God in their mouths? How many wounded Consciences have they (like good Samaritans) healed with the balm of Gilead? How many doubting and despairing spirits have they revived and established? How many mouths of aliens have they stopt, by the unanswerable pregnancy of the truths, which they have cleared and mightily maintained? In fine; before ever the croaking Frogs of Egypt spread over the land, and filled every place with their importune and insignificant noises, against the Ministers and Ministry of this Church; (seeking by their muttering clamours to contend with the Nightingales; and to silence the sweet fingers of Israel;) how were the excellent Ministers of this Church, and the famous Ministry hereof, esteemed at home and abroad among the chiefest blessings, for use, and noblest beauties, for ornament, which this or any Nation and Church ever enjoyed? Being as the two goodly pillars of Solomons Temple, sustaining the burden, and adding to the beauty of Religion; being sacred Oracles for holy direction, and great examples for vertuous imitation.

In what part of good learning have not some of the Ministers of England excelled, and some of them in all? What divine or humane truth have they not handled, cleared, and asserted? What controversie in Religion have they not rightly stated, fully disputed

puted, and solidly determined? What part of practical piety, and
Devotion have they not illustrated, and adorned in their Writ-
ings, with most sweet, suave, and pathetick flowers of holy Or-
atory, mixed with truths, gathered out of the gardens of God,
the Scriptures, and their own pure Consciences? What Scripture
have they not commented upon, learnedly, methodically, clearly,
and succinctly? Yea what Text (almost) in the whole Bible, Old
or New, Law or Gospell, History or Prophetie, Psalmody, or
Epistolical, have not the Ministers of England preached and
printed upon with accuratenesse and judgement? So that
the quintessence of the Sermons, set forth by them in this
Church, would in the judgement of the learned Lord Ver-
lam make one of the most exact, and absolute Commentaries on
the Bible, that ever was. It were endless to enumerate the names,
the excellencies, the learned works, the holy fruits and blessed
successes, which have attended the Ministers of this Church;
whom one would have thought to have been set so above any
such envy, and malice, and sacrilege, never any Reformed Chri-
tians would ever have so malicious and despised, as to have sought
to destroy them and their function: Nor can I indeed in charity
think, any doe so that are truly such.

As for their bitter enemies and rivals, these Inspirators, on the
other side; I am ashamed to shame them so much, as I must needs
doe, if I should shew the world their emptiness, shallownesse, pen-
ury, meannesse, nothingness, as to Reason, Religion, Learning,
common Sense, pack-staffe Oratory; How grosse, confused, raw,
flat, insipid, affected they are in speaking or writing; how dark
in doctrine; how disorderly in disputes; how impotent in per-
vasion; how impertinent in reproof; how unauthorative in all
they say, and doe, as Teachers; What perfect Battologists they
are; what circles they make, and rounds they dance in their
Prayings and Sermonings; strong only in cavilling, and rayling,
and calumniating against true and able Ministers: And for their
writings, with which they have lately so crammed and abused
the world; how little have they set out to any other purpose,
save onely to waft a great deal of good paper; and to make the
world believe, they were richly laden, because they spread so large
sayles? How doe their pamphlets cheat the well meaning buyers
and readers with the decoy of some very specious and spiritual
title, as if all were Manna, and Aarons rod, which were in their
Arks; when there is nothing but such emblems, for the most
part, of Mice and Emrods, as the Philistines put into the Ark of
God, as memorials of their sin, their shame, and punishment? What
Reader may not tear their books, with turning the leaves to and

1 Sam, 6.4.
True Ministers far exceed Antiministeriall Pretenders.

fro, before ever he finds acutenesse, or solidity; learning, or piety; Truth, or Charity; Divinity, or Humanity; Spirituals, or Rationals; but only antick fancies and affected words, strangely deforming antient and true Theology, in its morals, mysteries and holy speculations: How much better had they wrote nothing, than so much, to so little good purpose; to so evil an intent, only to amuse the simple reader, with shews of rare notions; and by spiritless Prefacings, to lead on their rader teleticks and declaimings against the Orders, Government, Religion, Ministers, and Ministry of the Church of England; in which their scribblings they mixe so much copperas and gall with their ink, that they eat out all characters of Truth, Candor or Charity in their Papers, never affording them any word that may either favour of civility, as to ingenious men; or of Justice, as to men of good learning and some merit; but all is written to deform them, their calling and Ministry, to expose them to vulgar scorns, to fit them for publicke victims to the cruel malice of the enemies of the reformed Religion. Indeed against the Ministry and Ministers of England they chuse to write with Aqua fortis rather than any ink; and cover red ink rather than black, trusting more to their swords than their pens; nor doe they confide so much in their Brains, as their hands; their insolency being far beyond their inventions, which tempts them rather to pilloll Ministers by desperate Assafination, than to dispute with them in the Schooles or by the Preffe.

Nor is this any envious or injurious diminution of these men, (who owe most of the good feathers they have to the preaching and writings of the Ministers of England, and not to any Inspirations;) but it's a just representation of their ungratefull vanity; and the Ministers reall worth, who have excelled, wherein fore ever these pretenders are most defective: And defective they are in all things, wherein able and true Ministers have most excelled. If this froak of my pen seems any thing of uncomely boasting, they have compelled us to it, and so may the better excuse, and bear with this our folly; which is not yet such, by their provoking examples of vapouring and vanity, but that we know by Gods grace how to own, what ever is of God in any of them; and to ascribe what ever is good in Ministers, to the grace and bounty of God, who hath magnified his power in their weakness; And however wee, now living, be Nothing, yet our excellent Predecessors, by whom the honour of this holy function hath been right fully derived to us, have mericited from us, and all good men this acknowledgment to the praise of Gods grace.

Pro defensione
Defenso eft, non
arrogantia.
Amb.1.18.
That the godly, able and faithfull Ministers in this Church of England have by Gods blessing been the great restorers and conservators of good learning in this Nation; the liberall diffusers of ingenuous education; the valiant vindicators of the reformed Religion; the commendable examples of piety and vertue, in all kinds retraining, and reforming all sin, error, excess, profaneness, and superstition, by their good lives and doctrine; Teaching and encouraging all manner of holynesse, civility, candour, meekness, gravity, and charity, throughout the whole Nation; What noble, worshipfull, or ingenuous family hath not, or might not have, been bettered by them? (if they did not entertain them at illiberall rates, and ignoble distances: as too many used to doe, below the honour of their calling, and merit of their worth:)

What City, or Country Village hath not been beautified, and blessed by them? Where ever such Ministers lived, as became the dignity of their place, and profession; there hath always followed a good sense of piety, and a conily face both of Civility and Religion; And more might have been improved in every corner of the land, long ere this, if what hath been oft vapour'd and flourished, had been really performed; that is, the setting of a competent maintenance every where for a competent Minister. Scandalous livings have been no small cause of too many scandalous Ministers; whom necessity of compelled to things uncomely, both for their Society and support. Upon whose fores these flesh-flyer, the enemies of the Ministry, are always lighting and biting; loth to see, or hear of, those many incomparable Ministers, who have been in many places of this Church, as Saint Ambrose was said to be in Milan, both the ornament of the City and defence of Religion: In stead of whom, some new Jesuitick Modellers would fain bring a company of Locusts and Caterpillers upon the face of the land, a sort of illiterate and unordained Teachers, who like ambulatory Arabs, or wandering Scythians, must every week or month change their quarters, as fast, as they have devoured silly widows houses: These in a short time will not be much beyond Canterbury and Valgrants; like rowling stones, neither getting norosse themselves, nor raising any building of piety, or found knowledge in others; for the same small stock always serves their turn, in their several gifts and quarters: By this means (they hope) the Church and State in a short time will be spoiled of all those fair flowers of good Scholars and able constant Ministers, which were well rooted in learning, and plentifully watered with the dew of heaven, (the gifts and graces of Gods Spirit:) that so there may be room enough, for those rank and ill weeds to spread all over this English garden and field: under whose specious covert of spirituality all sort of venemous Serpents...
pents and hurtful beasts may be hidden, till they are multiplied, that through mutual jealousies and dissensions, they fall to tearing and devouring one another; for, however, like Serpents, wicked men may for a while twine together, yet their different heads will soon find, wherewith to exercise their stings and teeth against each other; Impious mens confederacies are not friendship but faction and conspiracy. Nothing being more inconstant than ignorance, error, and impiety, which having no principles of union or order in them, can have nothing of firmness or stability among them.

I doubt not, but there are, (notwithstanding so many bitter spirits, and rebellious children, have become ungratefull Apostates, The blessings against this Church and its worthy Ministry:) thousands of excellent Christians, who have not bowed the knee to these Baalims: Christians who have both cause and hearts to confess, that the feet of these owe to good messengers; the true Ministers of England, have brought light and Ministers, unpeace to their soules; That their pious and constant labors have der God, not been either for weak or unfruitfull, as might in any sort deserve, or justifie such hard recompenses; as these now are, with which a foolis and unthankfull generation seeks to requite the Lord, Deut. 32. 6.
and his faithfull servants, the true Ministers, whose names shall yet live among good Christians, with durable honour; and their memories shall be precious as sweet Ointments, when these dead (yet late) flies, who seek to corrupt them, shall rot as dung on the face of the earth: Their unsavoury stench is already come up, and hath greatly defiled many parts of this Church; being justly offensive to all wife, and good men in the present age; and for the future they will be memorable for nothing, but illiterate impudence, ungratefull malice, and confused madness, who like beasts were able to waife a fair field, and defolate a well reformed Church; but never to cultivate or plant any thing like it.

The field of this Church in many places, by the blessed labours of true and able husbandmen, was heretofore full of good corn; the valleys and hills did laugh and sing; poore and rich were happy in the great increas, with which the Lord of the harvest crowned the labours of his faithfull Ministers; before the enemy had such liberty to sow his tares, even at noon day; yea in many places to rout the true labourers, to leave many places defolate; and only to flatter that self-sowing corn, which is like to that which springs on the house top, whereas the Mower shall never fill his hand; nor he that bindeth up the sheaves his before; Who seeth not, that one handfull of that crop, which was formerly wont to be tilled by the skilfull and diligent hand of true and able Ministers; was, for its weighty foundness in knowledge, and modest fulness in humility, far more worth, than many sheaves and cartloads of those burnt...
burnt, and blasted ears; whose pride pretends in one night to grow

And twere well, if they were one ly such cockle, such trash

And none, to sow the immortal seed of the Word, or to dispence

And to come in the power of the same Spirit, which they

And those holy rules, both for truth and order, therein

It is little sign of Christ's Spirit in men, to sow those

And so much dispute with these men about the Spirit, to which

And to leave the decision to the Consciences of true, and
and refining; and who (if he hath not determined for the super-
fluity of wickedness, and ungrateful wontannes of this Nation,
to lay us quite waste and desolate) will in his due time (after these
days of trial) thoroughly purge his floor, and weed his field; even this, so
sadly harking and neglected Church; In which there are still some
fruit, that have a blessing in them; and which we hope he will not
defroy, who knows how to separate between the precious and the vile.

Mean time Gods husbandmen, the true and Ordained Ministers,
must have patience, (but not slacken their diligence) after the
holy example of those godly Bishops, and Presbyters of the Church
in the times of the Arrian, Novatian, Donatistic, and others preva-
lencies and persecutions; The fierce and fiery spirit in the old be-
reticks and schismaticks could least of all endure with temper and
moderation, those Bishops and Minifters which were foundest in
their judgements, faithfull left in their places, and holiness in their
lives; * So that, not only they destroyed and drove away most of
the orthodox Minifters, both Bishops and Presbyters, out of many
Provinces in Africa, and so in Asia, as in Europe; but they fought with
all fraud and force to destroy, that great Colosse of Christian Reli-
gion, the most renowned Bishop of Alexandria, * Athanasius, who was
the wonder and astonishment of all the world, for his learning,
piety, and constancy: standing like an unshaken rock of Truth a-
midst the troubled Sea of Arrian Errors.

If the hand of Secular power will not maintain the antient order of
the true Ministers of England, in their Ministry, liberties, and lives,
which we humbly crave and expect: * yet (we hope) the Spirit of
Christ, and the power of heaven, will preserve us with good
Consciences, amidst the trials, losses, contempt, and deaths, which
we may encounter: And however the * Tail of the Dragon, with
many windings and insinuations, hath drawn after him many stars
from the heaven of their formerly, (seemingly) sober, orderly, and
godly profession, to the Earth of temporary successe, worldly applauses, se-
cular compliances, and irregular motions, for vain glory, or for filthy
lucres sake, yet Christ will still preserve * in his right hand those stars,
which shine by his light, and are placed by his Name, Power,
and Authority in the Firmament of his Church; * Although this
may be the hour of temptation, which must come upon this Re-
formed Church, and the power of darkness, which may for a time
have leave, to deny, betray, set at naught, and crucifie afresh the
Lord of Glory, in his true Ministers, and faithfull servants; yet
good men may be confident, * that their bonds and scourges, their
severings, and cruel mockings, their being dorn asunder (between igno-
rance and error, schism and heresie, profaneness and hypocrisy,
suppression and licentiousnesse;). The very indignities, re-
straints
frains, injuries, and ruines of the godly Ministers, shall tend to the honour, propagation, and more glorious restauration of the Reformed Religion; which of later times hath wanted, nothing so much, whereby to set forth its primitive luftre and power, as the constancy and patience of the Ministers and Profeffours of it in the point of comely suffering for the Truth. In which way the brighteft beams of the Spirit of Glory are wont to appear: The base cowardly avoiding of sufferings, hath brought great reproaches upon many Ministers and other Christians; who (Protestants) by mean compliances, and palliations, suitting themselves to a disorderly and varying world, have much eclipsed and deformed the beauty and dignity of their holy Function, and Profession, both as Ministers, and as Christians.

As it is far harder to suffer persecution, and to bear the burning coales of mens displeasure in our bosoms, than to make long prayers, or to preach soft and smooth Sermons; and to bandy safe disputes in the Sun shine of Peace, plenty, favour and prosperity: so more glory will then redound to God, and more honour to the Reformed Religion, from those sparkling rays and effusions, of grace, which shall flow from excellent Ministers, when they are red hot in the forge of affliction, and hammered on the Anvil of the worlds malice, than ever did from those faint and weaker beams, by which they shined in the ease and ordinary formalities of Religion; Nor will any thing more affaire them, and the uncharitable world, that they have the Spirit of Christ in them of a Truth, than when they shall find they have holy and humble resolutions, to suffer with Christ, and his Church, rather than to reign with a wicked and irregular world; whose Jefuitick joys will then be fulfilled, and crowned with garlands, when they shall fee the learning, piety, order, government, and honour of that Miniftry, (which sometime flourishd to the great regret of all its enemies, in this reformed Church;) utterly profrated, vilified, impoverished and expulsed.

On the other side the spirituall joys of true and faithful Ministers, will be increased by their being beaten, and evill intreated, and cast out of their Synagogues; by their being reproached, scorned, and wounded unjustly; not onely from their professed enemies of the Romish party; but even from those who were of their own household; who seemed to be their familiar friends: It is happier to have the least measure of Christs Spirit in patience, truth, and power; than to make the greatest boasts, and to enjoy the loudest vulgar applauses, which those Chentantiaks seem to affect and aim at; who dare now to smite every where the true Prophets, the plain dealing Micahs, on the mouth; designing to feed at the true, able and faithful Ministers with the bread and water of affliction, because they will
will not comply with, or yeeld to that novel, lying, proud and disorderly spirit, with which their hearts and mouths are so filled with malice not onely against the Ministry, but against the prosperity of this and all other reformed Churches: which folly or fury they would have flyed and esteemed to be in them, the speciall gifts and inspirations of the Spirit of God.

Proud and presumptuous men do not consider, what is most true; * That the greatest blasphemies against Gods Spirit, and his Truth, are oft coloured over with greatest ostention of the Spirit; as is evidently shewed both in former and later times; Many have a name to * live by the Spirit, and cover to be called spirituall, who are dead in their liftis, and walk after the flees. * They seem pure in their own eyes, and yet are not washed from their filthinesse; Yet there is a generation, (O how lofty are their eyes!) yet are their teeth swords, and their jawteeth as knives; Nothing is more cruel, than supercilious hypocrite; * They were forward to crucifie Christ, who were shy of; being defiled by, entering into the Judgement Hall: They are most zealous to destroy the true Ministers, yea the very function and succession, who seem most devotet to be Teachers, Prophets, and Preachers of a new Spirit and form; Many seem rich in gifts and increased in spirituall endowments, thinking they need nothing of Christ's true Ministry, when they know not that they are poore, and naked, and blind, and miserable. There are (πονηροι προφανεις) spirituall wickednesse usurpant in the high places of mens foules, as well as (ωσαν ουαποτοι) more fordid and swinish spirits, that dwell in the lower region of mens lusts; It is expressly stigmatized on the foreheads of some pretenders to the Spirit, (which was the glory of those first and purest times) that they are sensuall not having the Spirit: Vain and proud ignorance (as we see in primitive times) is not onely content to be without the true, wise, humble and orderly Spirit of God, but they must also study to cover their follies, Disorders, and hypocrities with the shews of it: as if it were not enough to sin against its manifest rules and examples in the Word; which have always been observed in the Church; unlese they impute also to it, their simplicities, fondnesses, impudencies, filthy dreams, extravagancies, and confusions: Counting it no shame to ascribe these unreasonable and absurd motions, speeches and actions, to Gods most wise and holy Spirit; which any man of right reason and sober sense, or common ingenuity and modesty, would be ashamed to own.


Revel. 3. 17.

Ephes. 6. 12.

Iude 19.

Irenacus: I. 3. c. 1. of the Geslichicht, and Diu­lentians.

Glaiaenur se cæmoniarves cæ Apostolorum: perfectam cognitwnem non habuisse Apos­tolor. cap. 2.

Dicient se non tamum Presby­teris sed & Apo­stolis apiento­res, sine am in­venisse verita­

So the Circumcelliones, Quia non siderunt contingunt; opiniones sues habentes pro Dico: honores quos non habuerunt se habuisse protestantium, lsd, Hifp. de off. Eccl. 1. 3. c. 15.
Our humble prayer is, that these new modellers, and pretenders to the Spirit may learn not to blaspheme; not to grieve, resist, and doe despite to the Spirit of God; which hath been, and still is evidently manifest in the true Ministers of this Church; and our earnest study shall be, that we may be truly encased with such gifts, graces, and fruits of the Spirit of Christ, that we may both speak, and doe, and suffer, as becomes good Christians, and true Ministers, after the example of holy men, and of our great Master, Bishop, and Ordainer, Jesus Christ: That for the judicious Charity of those, that excell in vertue, wisdom, faith, and humility, may have cause to say the Lord hath sent us in the power, as well as in the order and office of the Ministry, to which we were rightly ordained: On the other side we fear, that the great earthquakes in the Church and darkness over the Reformed Religion, (which may follow the true Ministers being set at naught and crucified, by the malice and wantonness of men) may in after times, give too much cause to those, that now neglect us, or afflict us, to say, as the Centurion did of Christ, Doubtlesse these were the messengers of the most high God; the true Ministers of Jesus Christ, and of his Gospel to this Church.

While we have any liberty and leave to live as Ministers, it will become us, not to be so discouraged by the impotent malice of any enemies, as to desert this holy calling, whereto the Lord by a right ordination in this Church hath duly called us; Not to look back to the world having once put our hands to this plough; to consider our persecutors no further than to pity them, and pray for them: notwithstanding all the injuries, and blasphemies, not against us so much, as against God; while they fear not to ascribe the great and good effects, which the Lord hath vouchsafed to work by his Ministers upon the hearts of thousands in England, to Beelzebub, to the Spirit of Antichrist; or to any thing rather than to own the Spirit of Christ among us, which hee hath promised should ever be with his true and faithfull Ministers, in an holy succession of authority, and power, to the end of the world.

Indeed the greatest grief to the Souls of all godly Ministers; and which hath brought the greatest scandal and dehonnestation on their Ministry, (next to some of their own grosse failings) is this; when the world sees so many of those, who seemed to be baptized with water, and with the Spirit; to have been illuminated, and sanctified by their teaching; to have tasted of the heavenly gift, and the powers of the world to come (that is, of the authority and efficacy of the Evangelical Ministry, which was to come after the Levitical and Aaronical order) Many who seemed to have rejoiced for many years, in those burning and shining lights of this Churches
Scandals from peoples inconstancy.

Churches Ministers; to have (by their Ministry) been well instructed, reformed, washed, and escaped from the pollutions of this world, That (I say) some of these like Judæus, should thus lift up the heel, and thus kick against the Ministers and Ministry; like Demas, thus to forsake them; like Judæus thus to betray them, whom lately they kissed and followed as Disciples; like Swine that they should thus turn and revile those, that cast pearl before them; returning to the wallowing in the mire and dirt of unjust, covetous, ambitious, erroneous, seditious, licentious, perjurious, malicious, and sacrilegious courts: No more now ashamed of their luft, then those unclean beasts are of their filthiness in the midst of the fairest Sun-shine day; and when they are nearest to the most pure and Crystal streams: But the light which they will not see in this their day shining on them, and discovering the frauds and evil of their ways, they may after see in that darkness, to which they are hastening, and to which they seem even of God to be condemned.

But to conclude my answer in this particular, wherein the Antiministeriall adversaries pretend to such spiritual gifts and special calling, beyond the ordained and settled Ministry; if any excellent Christians, or any of those, that have either wisdom to discern, or power to dispose of things, to the advantage of this Church and State; if they doe in their judgements conceive, or in their upright consciences, laying aside all partialities, and obliquings to worldly interest, but meerly regarding the glory of God, the good of souls, and the honour of the reformed Religion, if they shall conclude that there is indeed more evidence, and power of Gods Spirit both in gifts Ministeriall, and in holy successe, in those men that file themselves inspired men, speciall Prophets, and new modelled Preachers: if they be found to have more of godly learning, of found wisdom, in the mysteries of Christ, of sincere piety, zeal and charity to the glory of God and mens soules good; if they are filled with divine endowments, for praying, preaching, duly exhibiting the holy Mysteries, for edifying the Church, for maintaining the truth of the reformed Religion, and the peace of this Church and Nation; if they have greater courage, constancy, industry, and conscience to carry on the great works of saving soules; if they have more authority, from the word of Christ, from the Apoollses practife, from the Catholicke precedents of the Church of Christ, in all ages and places; by which to clear their call to the work of the Ministry, beyond what is produced for the ancient, and ordained Ministry of this Church; Truly we do not desire to be further injurious or hinderances to any mens soules: God forbid the Ministers of the Church of England should
be so much lovers or valuers of themselves, or envious to other men's excellencies, or enemies to your and the Churches welfare, as not to be willing to be laid aside, that these new men's more immediate and greater sufficiencies, higher inspirations, and diviner authority, may do that work, to which we are found so unseasonable and unseemly.

But if these pretenders to more spiritual prophecy, preaching and living, be by wise and godly men (who love not to mock God, or dally with matters of salvation and eternity, (which is the end of Religion) weighed in the balance of the sanctuary; of the divine institution; of Christ's mission; of the Apostles' succession; of the primitive custom; and of the Catholic order in all ages and Churches; if the grounds of right reason, of good order, policy and government be duly considered, which require distinction in all societies, sacred and civil, and avoid confusion (most) in the things of God; if the judgement of the most learned, useful, and holy men in all ages be pondered; if these new men's spirits and gifts be thoroughly tried by the touchstone of God's Word; if their secular aims and warpings to the world be narrowly looked into; if the deformity of their words and works be considered; if their simple or scandalous writings be duly examined; if the successes of their endeavours, and essays hitherto in many places, be seriously thought of, (which are evidently proved to be very sad and bad: little promoting either truth or peace; holiness or comfort to any people's souls; nor any prosperity and advancement to this Church, or any Christian reformed Religion;) if they be found in ignorance and weakness, or in factional strife and insolencies, or in pride and avarice, or in erro-neousness, and licentiousness, so far too light, that they are not so much, as the dust of the balance, compared to the real excellencies of those true Ministers of this Church, which have been, and still are, and may be in this Church, (if men be not all given over to lusts and strong delusions) God forbid any excellent Christians should be tempted by fear, or flattery, or any fallacy of novelty, gain or liberty, to desire or endeavour, or approve a change; which will be so shamefully and desperately pernicious both to themselves, and to their posterity.
But these Antiminiisteriall adversaries, who would sain impose upon the credulous world, with the pretensions of some special gifts and Inspirations of Gods Spirit (which are as yet no way discovered by them, in word or deed, as I have shewed) being conscious to themselves, that indeed they come short of those common endowments, by which the minde of men, are oft much improved, through stude and good learning: they seek to oppose and decry that in all Christians, and especially in Ministers, which they despair of themselves: So that not a dumb spirit, but a sily, prating, and illiterate one possessest them; which cries out against all humane learning, and uselull Studies, as the devils did against Christ; What have we to doe with thee? Great calumnies and contempts are raised by these men, and their Disciples against all liberrall Arts and Sciences, all skill in the tongues and histories; against all Books but the Bible, (and some of them can hardly dispense with that too, since they take all books to be of the same nature with those conjuring Books which were burnt, Act. 19. 19.) against the Schoole of the Prophets, and all Universities, as heathens, Antichristian, marks of the Beast; as deformities, darknings, and impertinencies, where we have Scripture light; Also prejudicial to that more immediate divine teaching, or Institution to which they pretend, and by which they say, they learn, and teach all true Religion; which they tell us is so sufficiently furnished, and fortified, as the new Jerusalem, with its own walls, made of precious stones, (tho impregnable strength of truth, and the splendour of the Spirit's gifts) that it needs none of those mudwalls and bulwarks of earth, which men have cast up; Beautified enough with its own native innocency and glory, it desires not any of these rags, and additional tatters of humane learning; which (they say) hath so tossed and torn Religion with infinite, and intricate disputes, that the solidnesse and simplicity of true Divinity is almost quite lost, and confounded. Christ is almost oppreßed by the crowds, and thronges of such as are called Rabbies and learned men: who may well spare their pains in the Church of Christ; where the Lord hath promised that all shall be taught of God, that his Spirit shall teach them all things, and lead them into all truth.

Answ. I see the Devil is never more knave, than when he would seem to turn fool; How willing is he to have all men as ignorant, weak, and unlearned, as these Objectors are, that so none might discern his snares, and gins, of which these Ignar's are to be his fetters; sain would he have all Christians, yea, and Preachers too, such silly birds without heart; that they might easily be circumvented by his stratagens, and catched with his devices; The

\[4.\text{Calumny or Cavill.}\]

Against humane and secular learning in Ministers.

\[\text{Math.3.29:}\]


Answ. I. The craft and folly of this cavill against humane learning.
better to act those Tragedies which he intends against the Reformed Churches, he would have the windows shut up, and the light shut out; These are the Fauxes with dark lanthorns, to blow up all; and the Juddlers, who are guides to them, that are to take Christ, with swords and staves; O how sain would some men, that the Sun were fet, that their glowworms might shine; that the light of the house were extinguished; that so their sparks might appear, which they have kindled to themselves, in their shining corners, and upon their private earths.

Truly this calumny against good learning, hath as much surprized me and my brethren the Ministers of this Church, as the accusation of Fimbria did question Scavola; who was impeached by the other, for not receiving that poison deeper into his breast, whereby he stabbed him, and intended to have dispatched him; The learned, and godly Ministers in England, never thought this would be laid to their charge, as a fault, the want of which had been a foul shame, and a just reproach to them: As the enjoyment of it was a great honour and advantage, both to them and to the Reformed Religion; They little suspected, that among Christians, Apollos should be forced to excuse his eloquent and potent demonstrations; or S. Paul his sober and sanctified learning, in which he excelled, worthy of that famous City and University Tarsus, of which he had the honour, to be free, and pleaded it as a privilege, Act. 21. 39. Which learning made him not so mad, as those were who suspected, and accused him, that much learning had made him mad. And if humane learning be such old clouts and rotten rags, as these men of most beggarly elements pretend, (and wee confesse it is so, compared to, and destitute of, those soul-saving Truths, which are divinely revealed) yet there may be good use of them; if it be but to help the Jeremies, (the Prophets and Ministers of the Lord) out of those dungeons and mire, where otherwise their enemies would have them ever to be lodged, both for didly, and shamefully, and obscurely.

Nothing (O you excellent Christians) is less necessary, than to paint this Sun, or polish this pearl, to set forth to you the use and necessity of good learning: The benefit and blessing whereof in this Church yourselves are so much partakers, and whereof you are so great eftemers, and encouragers; And nothing shows good learning more necessary to the Church and true Religion, both as Christian and reformed, than this; That the Divine by vain and fallacious instruments often hath, and still seeks to deprive them of that weapon, and defense, which he hath used with great strength, and cunning, for his chiefest arms; both offensive against the truths of Religion; and defensive for his own most damnable doctrines and delusions.
of humane learning.

What bawock would he soon make of sound doctrine, as in former ages he endeavoured, by those learned, and subtill Sophisters, his instruments, and emissaries on every side, if there were none on the Truths side able to encounter him, and his agitators in that post of learning! No wonder if the Woof would have the Flock without Mafiers, or these without teeth: it were much for his, little for the Focks ease and advantage. Although the Divel (an old accuser) must needs be a cunning Orator too, and be furnished with all the swasive arts of insinuation, which he fits to the severall geniuses of men and times; yet he never till of late in Germany, and now in England had confidence to make use of this place of Oratory, to perswade Christians to burn all other Books, that they might better study and understand the Bible; yea and the Bible too, that they might better understand the minde of God: Which is all one, as if the Israelites should have beene perswaded to have rid themselves of the cumber of their swords, spears, and shields, that so they might better defend themselves; or that they should have neither file nor grindstone to sharpen the natural bluntneffe, or clear the rustiness of their weapons; while yet the Philistims were all wellarmed, and dayly preparing to battell: Against whom there was no such warrant of a speciall divine protection, as to make the people of God presume, to neglect the use of those armes which art had prepared, and use had taught, how to imply. We see that Jonathans heroick motion carries him not upon that successfull and great adventure, without his sword and armour-bearer. Nor did Davids confidence in Gods protection, of which he had former experiences, when he was without any arms, against the Lion and Bears; nor yet the assurance he had, of the goodness of his cause; or of the pride and profaneness of his enemy; none of these made him neglect to take, and use such armes, as he thought most convenient. The blinde and the lame (men of feeble and confused spirits; unlearned and unstable minds) which are hated of Davids soule; are ill assistants in Davids wars, against the Jebusites, who fludy to defend against him, or to surprize from him the City of David, or rather the City of God; which is the Metropolis where grace and truth do dwell.

It is certain, that next to the primitive gifts of miracles, the gifts of humane learning have flood the Church of Chrift in most stead. For ever since the Apostles and Ministers of Chrift, afflicted with extraordinary endowments of the Spirit, had by the foolishneffe of preaching, (as by Davids improbable weapons against Goliaths compleat armature) vanquished that old Idolatrous power.
Humane learning succeeded Miracles.

of heathenism, which prevailed in the world; and was long upheld by shews of learning, eloquence, and (in that way) vain philosophy; The Church of Christ hath, ever since the discovery of those Miraculous gifts, (which attended only the first conquests) made use of that very sword of that proftrated Gyant; good learning; both to dispatch him, and to defend it self; finding that both in humane and divine encounters, there is none like to that, if managed by a proportionate arm and strength.

For, hereby the mind, and all intellectual faculties of mens souls (which are the noblest and divinest) are more easily and fully instructed; more speedily improved in all the riches of wisdom and knowledge; which are part of the glory, and Image of God on mans nature. By this, which we call good learning, all Truths, both humane and divine, natural, political, moral and Theological, useful full either for speculation, or practice, are more clearly extricated, and unfolded out of the depths, darkness, and ambiguity of words (which are but the shadows of things) by the skill in Languages; which are the sheabards and shels, wherein wisdom is shut up. The inscription on Christs cross is in three languages, Hebrew, Greek & Latin, Luk. 23, 38. Intimating as the divulging of the Gospel to many tongues and Nations; so that the mystery of Christ crucified is not to be fully and exquisitely understood, without the keys of these three learned and principal languages; with which the Church hath flourished. Certainly it is not easy for unlearned men to consider how great use there is even of Grammar, which is the first and roughest file that good learning applyes to polish the minde with all; for much of the true feinte even of the holy Scriptures, as well as of other Records, depends upon the true writing or Orthography, the exact derivation or etymology, and the regular Syntaxis or conjoining of words: yea that Critical part of literature, which is the finest file or fearse of Truth (wherein some mens wit and curiosity only vapour, and soar high, like birds of large feathers, and small bodies) yet it is of excellent use, when by men of sober learning it is applied to the service of religion; Many times much Divinity depends on small particles, rightly understood, upon one letter; upon such a mood, or tense, or cafe, and the like; many errors are engendred and nourished by false translations, and mistakes of words or letters; many truths are restored and established, by the true meaning of them, asserted upon good grounds, and just observations; which hath been done with great accuratenesse, by men of incomparable excellency in this kind; these last hundred years; equall to, if not for the most part, beyond the exactnesse of the ancient Fathers or writers. Herein infinite observations of humane writers are happily made.
made, and usefully applied, as to the propriety of words and phrases used in the sacred originals of the Word of God, so as thereby to attain their genuine and emphatick sense: also for the clearing of many passages and allusions which are in the Scriptures: referring to things naturall and historical, in the manners, and customs of the nations. This once done, all Truths are by the methods and reasoning of Logick easily diisentangled, and fairly vindicated from the snarlings, sophisms, and fallacies, with which error, ignorance or calumniating malice seek to obscure or disguise them, or therein to wrap up and cover themselves; darkening wisdom by words without understanding. After this they are by the same art handsomely distributed, and methodically wound up in severall clws and bottomes according to those various Truths which that excellent art hath spun out; That thus digested, they may again be brought forth unfolded and presented to others in that order and beauty of eloquence which * Rhetorick teacheth: By which truths have both an edge and lustre set on them, doe most adorn them, and enforce to the quickest prevalencies on mens mindes, and the firmeft impressions on their passions and affections; that so their rationall vigour may hold out to mens actions; and extend to the ethicks or morality of civill conversation, which is the politure of mens hearts and hands; The softner and sweetner of violent passions, and rougher manners, to the candor and equity of polity and society: This civility was, and is the preface and forerunner of Religion, the great preparative to piety, the confines of Christianity, which never thrives untill barbarity be rooted up, and some learning with morality be sown and planted among men. Nor did Christian Religion ever extend its pavilion much further, than the tents of Learning and Civility had been pitched by the conquests and colonies of the Greeks and Romans.

Thus by this golden circle, and crystall medium of true learning, the short, dim, and weaker sight of our reason, (whose very light is become dark by sin, bleared with its own fancies, and almost put out by its groser lufts and passions) may (as by the help of perspectiva or optick glasses) be mightily strengthened and extended, while it fees, as with the united vigor of the many thousand visible rays and eyes of those, who saw before us: That so those few conjectures, those dark and ambiguous experiences, which any mans short sight and single life can afford him, may be amplified, cleared, and confirmed by those many testimonies and historical monuments, which others have left in their learned writings: which draw as it were, the lesser rivulets of various observations, from severall times, pens and places, to meet in one great and noble

Logick dispo-

* Rhetorick

communicates to others.

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noble current of true Religion, which is the wisest observer and devoutest admirer of what true learning most sets forth; the providence, justice, power, goodness, patience, and mercy of the wife, great, and holy God: the Creator, ruler, and preserver of all things, but chiefly the regarder of the sons of men.

God hath therefore blest his Church with good learning, that those small stocks, and portions of wisdom, which any man's private patrimony affords him, either by innate parts, or acquired experiments, (which, for the most part, would amount to no more, than the furnishing of a portable pedlar's pack, with small wares, toys, and trinkets; fit to please children, idiots, and country people) may be improved by a joint stock, and united commerce of prudent observations; that so men might drive a great and publique trade of wisdom, to the infinite improving, and adorning both of Church and State, both of Polity and Religion: These two being the great luminaries and excellencies of humane Nature; the one to rule the day wherein we stand related to God, in piety; the other to rule the night, wherein we are related to each other, by humanity, equity, charity, and bonds of civil society. Which innate virtues and properties of man's nature (Reason, and Religion) once neglected, and until'd, for want of that culture, which good learning, and that softening, which ingenious education brings to the mind and manners of men; who sees not, by miserable experience, how mankind runs out to weeds? whole nations degenerate to brutish barbarity: as among the Tartars, Negroes, and Indians?

Yea even among people, where some are civilized by literature and the profession of Christian religion, we finde, by daily experience, that the unlearned sort are either grosse, dull, and very incomprehensible; or else they are rough, impolite, and insolent, prone to a rustick impudence, and clownish untractableness; especiably when they imagine they have (or dare arrogate to themselves) a power and liberty of speaking, and doing what they list; Nothing is sacred, nothing is civil among those, that carry all by ignorant confidence and brutish strength; we see in those of the Antiministerial faction, that by want of learning (whereof they are generally guilty) men onely learn this Indian or Turkish quality, to hate, contemne and seek to destroy all good learning, which is nothing else, but the good husbandry and great improvement of the reasonable soul in itself to God and to others: Therefore the ambition of these Ignoramus, is like the magick cunning of Jannes and Jambres; chiefly vented, and exercised, by a most impotent pride, and malice, in despising, and resiling those Moses's, the true Ministers...
nifiers of the Church: the plainers, preservers, reformers, and vindicators and deliverers (under God) of true Religion, who have been, and are, (many of them) eminently learned: most of them, competently; so as at least to make a fair and ingenuous use of other men's more accurate and solid labours, who are their (οὐμενίζοντες) brethren of the same holy function and Ministry: who have generally been in all ages and places, the magazines, or storehouses of all good learning; which I may affirm without any envy, or diminution, to those many excellent Gentlemen of this or other Nations, who have added to the honour of their birth, and other accomplishments of breeding, this most eminent crown and beauty of all, Good learning.

It is a work then fit for Lucifer, (so to contradict his name by his deeds) to pretend light, and intend darkness; to cry up the spirit, which is easily done, that he may cry down learning, which is hardlyer attained, than the other is said: Who can wonder, if the Philistines would fam put out the eyes of our Samsons, (having once bound, and hampered them with poor and straightened conditions) that so they may less fear their strength, and safely mock them, and their reformed Religion: which never so thrived (after miraculous gifts were ceased) as when the forces and glory of the Gentiles came in to Christ; when Christianity was grafted on the old flock of heathen learning and philosophy; which now brings forth fruit, not after the old crabbed sownness, but after the sweetness of the new Olive-cion, with which it is headed; yea we see, when Christian Religion ran out to much barbarity, illiterate ignorance, and superstition, for many centuries, till the laff, (for want of the culture, and manuring of learning,) it brought forth little fair fruits; but much of Legendary fables, lying wonders, religious Romances, stories of Chivalry in holy Wars and Errantries in Religion: The best effects were the Schoolemens cloistered curiosities and intricate disputes; who rather hewed and cut the pillars of Christian Religion, into small chips and shavings; than added much to the polishing and establishing of them; so intangling Philosophy with Divinity, as confounded both; much advanced neither; all excellent things, worthy to be known, being wrapped up in obscenity; or set forth in such barbarous and fulsome Latin, that they were like fair Irish bodies in coarse, and ragged mantles. And this, for want of that method and texture of learning, which might so card and fever each matter from others, as might give both beauty and distinctness to them.

Which we see hath been done this last hundred years and more; The advantage of admirable learning and industry have by learning.
by the help of printing (with which the world is now rather surfeited than nourished) brought forth to their beauty, by an happy regeneration, so many of the ancient writers, both Christian and heathen; (which were formerly buried in obscure cloisters, and uselesse retirements, as in their graves; eaten with worms and covered with dust.) So that no Sanhedrin of the Jews; no Senate at Athens, or Rome; no Synod, or Council of Christians were ever so at once, complicated and furnished with excellent men in all kinds, as our Christian Libraries now every where are; In which there are attending on Christian Religion (which is as the Kings daughter, all glorious within) those virgins, which bee not her fellows so much, as her handmaids: who clothe her with garments, wrought with needle-work in divers colours; embowdered with the sublimity and gravity of Plato; with the method and acutenesse of Aristotle; with the morals and suavity of Seneca and Plutarch (who alone is a Library;) with the eloquence and oratory of Demosthenes, Tully, and Quintilian; with the florid language, and sober sense of Xenophont, Cesar, Livy, Tacitus, and other excellent historians; with the various observations of the most learned Varro (whose life was spared in civill diffensions for his incomparable learning;) so of Pliny, Ptolemy, and other searchers into all curiosities of Nature and Art: Besides these, the very goats hair, and badger skins too, are made to serve the Tabernacle of the Lord; the elegancies of Homer, Virgil, and other Poets; (who are magazines of fancy, and masters of wit,) are usefull: which way of expressing truth and religion in pathetick and poetick wayes of devotion the Spirit of God abhorreth not, as we see in some holy Poets who were writers of some part of the Scripture, as in Job, Psalms, Canticles, Lamentations, and other places: where piety and poetry, truth and elegancy, Divinity and sacred curiosity, (in meters and Acrostichs,) meet together: Teaching us, That God, who is full of infinite varieties, and yet but one perfect simplicity, is to be seen, served, and praised, in his several gifts, to any of which Christian Religion (which is of all religions the most absolute, perfect and comprehensive) can have, no abhorrency; since they all flow from God, and return to him, through any wise, and gracious heart; which as a limbeck or box still extracts somewhat spirituall out of every thing, of nature, art, experience, or history.

From these well storeed quivers of humane learning, in all kinds, Christian Religion hath so furnished her self with excellent, and sharp arrows of all sorts; that she easily makes ready her bow, and shoots against the face of any adversaries that dare provoke her; either in Languages, Arts, or Sciences; In Logick, Rhetorick, History.
Divels devises against Learning and Religion.

Divels devises against Learning and Religion.

story, Antiquity; in Philosophy, natural, morall, or politcall; In all which, by much conversing with, and contemplation of, those ancient goodly pieces, the Church of Christ hath, (as Jacobs Gen 30. 39. sheep did by looking upon the variegated rods) brought forth anfwerable parallels of incomparable learning, in all kinds: So that Pharaohs daughter, matcheth thus to Solomon, (the learning of the bea- tation and hu-)

thems joined to Christian Religion) may very well forget her fa-
ters houfe; in stead of which (since the King of the Church hath delighted in her beauty) she hath brought forth children, which shee may make Princes in all the Provinces of good learning; which are become tributary to Christ, and subject to his King-

dome of righteousness and Scepter of truth.

But Oh how different, many faced and coarse grained are the Devils en-

gines, methods and temptations! His first was to persuade by the Devils devises 
specious af, of increased and diviner wifdom, * to eat of that for-

against Religion forbidden fruit which the tree of knowledge of good and evil did bear; gion and 

This was a pleasant bait, but pernicious; a golden, but poifonous Learning, and deadly arrow; Now the duller devill out of his almost ex-

hausted quiver, produceth this iron headed, blunt, and rusty shaft; tempting Christians to abandon all good literature, and humane means of attaining knowledge both Divine and humane: And since he spied so well by this first temptation of proud cu-

riosity, to be like to Gods, in eating what was forbidden; he de-
faires not to make us now like beasts; by persuading us to ab-

tain from that tree of knowledge, which the Lord allowes us; and 

which his providence hath causd to flourish in the garden of his Church; and which doth not onely bear fair and excellent fruits, which are desirable to make one wise to salvation, but the 

very leaves of good learning, are for the healing of the Nations: 

Many defects are thereby supplied in humane societys; many inmoralities restrained; many diseases cured, as to the outward contagion, and covered as to the deformity; to all which, the na-
ture of man is other ways subject, and so exposed, that wee see 

in all ages, the barbarity of any people, either at first, or in the relapse, is chiefly imputable to the want of good literature; and that civility, which is as the flower and cream, always rising from learning; which onely supplies the roughmeffe, and brawny call-

lousmeffe, which grows by long ferity and rudeness on mens minds and manners; Learning, like the warmer beames of the approaching Sun, onely hath force to thaw, and melt that frozen rigour of mens natures; to adorn them with a sweet and florid beauty; to enrich them to a summers fertility: which without this, are 
ever squallid, and oppressed with a winters form, and horrid bar-
rennesse, ever accompanying mankinde in the absence and defi- 

F f f 2
tution of learning: which mightily prepares mens hearts and minds for the seed of the Gospel, and for the harvest of true religion, which affords the best fruits of wisdom and tranquillity to the souls of men.

There is no doubt but Satan hath found himselfe, for these last hundred and fifty yeares, (since the happy restauration of learning first, and then of Religion) much chained, hampered, and galled by those excellent gifts of all sorts of good learning (which are as the string to the bow, and as feathers to the arrows of Truth) wherewith God hath mightily fenced and adorned his Church, as he did in the 3, 4, 5, and 6 Centuries, after that miraculous gifts were quite ceased, or much abated; in which times the Lord stirred up mighty men of incomparable learning, to fight the battles of the Lord, of his Truth, and of his Church, against heathenish and heretical adversaries. Drive away good learning out of any Church and Nation by famine, starving it: or by military insolency, banishing it; the devill (no doubt) would be much more at his ease and liberty, as among Indians in barbarous idolatry; or Turks in ridiculous Mahometry; or among the sillier sort of Papists in papistical superstitions; or among the wilder generation of Enthusiasts in their various fancies and most incongruous dreams; all which grossly erre, and covet to infect others through ignorance even in the matters of right Reason as well as Religion; and are destroyed for want of sound and sober knowledge; which is scarce attainable even in Religion (without a miracle) where either people despise, or Teachers are void of that assistance, which good learning affords.

Which however thousands of good Christians, both men and women, have not had in the mass and bulk, yet they have enjoyed the spirits vertue and benefit of it (as it were more abstract and refined) by the studies, labours, instructions, and persuasions, which their learned Ministers have so prepared for them, and fitly derived to them; as they did in England both by preaching and by writing. The Devil would have leffe trouble to watch Christians in the Church, left they should fly from his camp to Gods tentes, if he could persuade them to put out their own eyes, and the eyes of their guides and Pastors too: or else, to shut up themselves into some blind corners; and confine the Christian reformed Religion to obscure cells, and silly conventicles; where, in stead of the Sunes fair light of true Reason, good Learning, and found Religion; men should like Owls and Bats, and Moons, only howle, and chatter, and scratch one another in the dark. We know there are such kind of animals, which are ready to curse the day: and cannot abide the light, because their eyes are weak,
weak, their workes are dark, and both mindes and manners are deformed.

The despiers of good learning are not onely spitefull enemies to the Christian reformed Religion (whose perfection didstaineth not to use those good gifts, which come from the Father of lights, (any more than a gracious soul doth its eyes, and other fentes of the body:) but they are also silly abusers and degraders even of humane nature; *whose divine excellencie, Reason, no man above the degree of brutifh stupidity, Bedlam madneffe, or divellifh envy, ever sought to deprave, or depreffe: No doubt such apes knowing their own uncomely want of tiales, would be glad, if they could bring it in fashion, for all beasts to have none: and perfwade them to cut off (as burthens, and deformities) those poftern ornaments and helms of the body, wherewith nature hath furnished the nobler, comelyer, and stronger creatures: But this mutilating of reason and defoming of Religion, by putting out the eyes, and cropping off the ears of Christians, and letting humanity it self into the flocks or pillory, is a greater undertaking (I think and hope) than ever such fheeble, though nimble animals, with all their apish tricks, and mimicall grimaces, will be able to perfwade, either all, or any beasts of the Forests, (unlesse it be the fify affer) to gratifie them withall.

The Lord of all the world, the munificent donor of all blessings, who gives liberally without envy or reproach, hath witheld no good thing from his Church and people; and not only allows, but requires us Christians, devoutly to confecrate all to his glory, so as thankfully to adorn, even his Tabernacle, and Temple, with those spoiles and tributes, which we have taken from the Egyptians, and nations round about us: as Moses, David, and Solomon did; all three eminent for learning and piety: The learning of the heathen is now become a circumsficed Proselytke to the Christian Religion; from a captive alien, it is with shaven hair, and pared nails, (the pomp and peevishneffe of it being laid aside) admitted with Hagar into the holy family of the Church; as a pregnant handmaid to wait on Religion; though not as a rivall to be courted, and esteemed equall with Sarah. The severall parts of good learning, the Arts, and Sciences are, as those * vailliant ones about Solomon's bed, vigilant guards, and potent defenders of true Christian Religion.

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* 1 Tim. 1. 5. 
* Ex tís philo-
* gíass kai to Sí-
* koum dí to y
* x fees éis
* to vúnd. C. L.
* Nostram que
* in Philosopho-
* rum scriptis
* praefant: Deo
* vindicanda est
* omnis veritas.
* Amb.de Bon.
* M.
* Decalvam
* illebras crini-
* um & orna-
* menta verbo-

rum own emetuis unguibus sect. Hieron. ad Tam. Spalit. Egyptians onusti & divitiis quamvis sumus, saecu-


21. Ut rofis collegiimm & spinis evitamus, &c. Ut illasones prævarant pannum, & tinctores, &c. Quisquis bonus verusque et Christianus, Domini sui esse intelligat ubiuni; inveniat veritatem. Aust. do. Christ. l. 2. c. 18 & cap. 39. Qua vero, quae fidei nostræ accommoda divinit phili-

sophi, non solam non formidanda sed ab eis tarnquam in his posse efforibus vindicanda. Id.
The excellent use of learned men in the Church.

However it be true, that the misdone of the world is folly; and all learning is barbarity, loss, and dung compared to, and separated from the excellency of the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; yet nothing hindereth, but that Christian Ministers may now (as Christ sometime did) ride upon this Aspholt to Jerusalem; Nothing is more comely than to see the wisest men offer their gold and frankincense and myrrh to Christ in his infancy. Mat. 2. We know, that, as an humble unbeliever cannot justly be counted either ignorant, or unlearned, if he be taught in all saving necessary truths; and so, no man, never so much improved in secular knowledge, merits the name of learned, if he be ignorant of the minde of God in the mysteries of Jesus Christ; yet, judicious believers, can never be unthankfull despisers of those gifts of good learning, in their Teachers, and Ministers, by whom they have received that benefit of instruction in true Religion; which, by their own private industry, and simplicity, they could hardly, if ever, have attained: Although the Mine of Scripture be rich; yet unlearned men (as the most part of Christians are, in point of humane literature) cannot search it; nor work it; nor try, and refine it; unlese they have the help of those, who have tooles and instruments, and vessels, and skill, fit for so rich and holy, yet hard and furious a work; wherein it is much easier for weake and unstable minde to fall into dark pits, and damnable errors; than of themselves, to attain and bring forth those saving truths, which onely can enrich the soul. Although the gifts of humane learning be not personallly given to every Christian, yet they are so far necessary for all, as they are given to serve for the benefit of all; as every one in the flock enjoyes the blessings of those pastoral gifts and abilities, which are in the Shepherd, and every member of the body that light, which is in the eye for the use of all.

6.

There needs not much learning to make a man in love with it, and covetous of more; It is a certain sign of very little, or none at all, where any man despiseth, or decryeth it in others. It never indeed, received opposition, but either by the Gothick barbarity of soldiers and oppressions of warre: or by the finer span malice of such, as Julian the Apostate was: who being both very learned, and very wicked, knew well, how great advantages learning afforded to the Christian religion, which he sometime professed.
professed; and afterward with most cunning cruelty persecuted; finding by experience; how potent, and irrefitible the weapons of Christian warfare were, when skilfully managed by men of parts and learning: Such as those Atlases of Christian Religion were before, and in, as also after his time; who equalled themost renowned heathens in all learning; (as well, as they exceeded them in true Religion) and in unspotted lives: Such among others were Justin, a Philosopher and Martyr, Tertullian, Irenæus, Cyri- an, Origen (learned to a Miracle) So Clement of Alexândria. Eusebius, Epiphanius; the three learned Gregorys, Naz. Niss. Thaumaturgus: both the Basils, Atbanasius, Cyril, Minutius Felix, Arnobius, Chrysifo-m, Jerome, Ambrose, Lactantius, St. Austin, Prosper, Hilarius, Prudentius, and others, famous Bishops and Presbyters of most eminent learning, piety, and courage; who undertook the defence of Chri- stian Religion, against the proud heathen, the pestilent heretics, and the inopportune schismatics of those days.


Which made Julian the Apostle, elder brother to this illiterate fraternity. (the defiers and destroyers of good learning) to be- come the Ramlilack, the Faux of his times, the prime Affa- nator, and grand coni spurator, who sought to stab and blow up all Christian Religion, by overthrowing all the mysteries of learning, and suppressing the Schoole of the Church: forbidding any Christians children to be educated in humane and ingenuous studies; which he few were become as the outworks to the ci- tadell of Christian Religion: (which sometime indeed needed not these humane guards and defences while the terrible and mi- raculous gifts of the Spirit were like a pillar of fire, and cloud, round about Christian Religion, during its wandering in the wildernesse of persecution, no more, than the *Israelites needed trenches for their camp, when the more immediate presence of God's salvation was among them, beyond all walls and bulwarks; or then *Elis wanted a troop of soldiery, when he was armed with fire from heaven, against the ruder Captaines and their fifties) Thofe extraordinary dispensations ceasing, when the Lord brought his Church to the land of Canaan; to a condition of worldly peace and tranquillity, through


* Exod. 13.11. * 2 King. 1.
through the Imperiall favour and secular protection, under which 
Halyon days, Christiains had liberty to attend those improvements 
which are to be attained by study and learning in all manner of 
ingenuous, as well as religious, education.

But when the Dragon saw he could not by open persecuting power 
destroy the *woman and her child; he then turned to other shifts; 
seeking by the flocks of corrupt doctrine, to poison those streams, which 
he could not stop: And so to furnish out his new modelled Mi-
litia, with the better train and ammunition, he stirred up learned 
adversaries against the Churches true and ancient faith; not only 
without, as *Celsus, Porphyry, Proclus, Symmachus, and others; but 
even from within, as Arius, Neftorius, Apollinaris, Macedonius, Euty-
cher, Pelagius, Donatus, and others, very many: This master-piece 
he carried on with most powerful suggestions, and successes 
sometimes, knowing well, what force Error hath, as well as Truth; 
when it is charged, and discharged with skill and learning. In 
so much, that he not only overthrew the Faith of many ordinary 
Christians; but robbed the true Church, in part, and turned at 
last upon the Orthodox party, those whole Canons, great and incom-
parable pieces of all learning both divine humane; Tertullian and 
*Origens, (the convertor of St. Ambrose) who formerly had by their 
accurate and learned labours, both in preaching and writing, 
bravely affered Christianity; both by demolishing the old remain-
ing forts of heathensh Idolatry, and prejudice; as also battering the 
new rising works of heresies and schisms.

So that our moderate, illiterate factors for an old crafty Demon, 
does not, or will not, consider; that there ever hath been, still 
are, and ever may be, learned adversaries opposing or Apostatizing 
from the true Christian Religion, both in its fundamentalls, and its 
reformations. There are very learned Jesuites, and other Papists, of 
all orders; there are learned Socinians; renewed Palagians; revived 
Arians, and others, who want not learning; against whom the 
learned Ministers of this and other reformed Churches, are often 
put upon necessary, though uncomfortable, and unhappy contests; 
Not for any malice, envy, or displeasure against any of their 
persons: (for learned men cannot but love and esteem, what-
ever is good and excellent in others) but only from that Con-
science of Truth, which the Ministers of this and other reformed 
Churches doe conceive, upon Scripture grounds, and by the con-
sent of the primitive and purest Churches of Christ, they ought in 
all duty to God, to their own and other souls, yet with charity 
to their Adversaries, to maintain; And, although the warre in 
Christian Religion ought to be managed by learned men on all 
sides, with all possible fairneffe, candor, and civility, such as the
the honour of the Christian name and profession requires; (for the more illiterate men are, the more rudely they bray and rail against one another) if it were a great sin to be supine and negligent in so great an engagement, which we think to be for God's cause, the truth of Christ, and the good of souls: for which we ought to be prudently vigilant and honorably valiant: It would ill become us while we see the adverse partie daily arming themselves, with all possible complements, in languages, arts, and sciences, in Fathers, counsels, and histories, for us to sit still in our lazy, and unlearned ignorance: expecting either miraculous illuminations and assistances, (as idle, vain, and proud minds do) or else, most inevitable ruine, and certain overthrow of that truth and reformed Religion, which we profess to maintain; which in honour and conscience, besides the bonds of nature, humanity, and charity, we are bound to transmit to posterity (if not much improved by our diligence and studies) yet, at least, not sottishly impaired, to a just impeachment of waste against us, in this age, from those, that in after times may succeed us, who will have no great honour or happiness by being heirs to our estates, lands, and dignities, if they be disinheritied of all good learning, and that true reformed Religion which we have received from our learned and pious predecessors.

And this infaullibly will be the sad event, and unhappy fate of the succeeding generations in England; if such witlesse, lack-latin Zelots can prevail in their absurd desires, and most fanatick eandeavours; who while they tell their silly disciples, (who are rather spectaators than hearers of these mens affected gesticulations, and ill acted Oratory.) That Latin and Greek are the languages of the Beast; that all books but the Bible, (and as much of that, as they take not to be for their turnes) are Antichristian and to be destroyed: Mean time the common people are not so much men and reasonable, as to consider the sad metamorphosis or change which already growes upon these Ignorant Masters, and their scholars; who like to Lycasun, Lo, or Alson, begin to thrust forth their horns and hoofs; and to shew their teeth, in their grosse errors, their rude, and savage manners; which are tokens evident and dreadful enough of their brutified soules: That if the wiser, learned, and powerfuller world among us in England, shoul, through baseness, cowardise, and negligence, suffer this illiterate and base faction to increase and multiply, they will soon finde, by their violence, craft and cruelty, that these Islands will be more pestered and infamous for wolves, than ever they were in ancient times.

And what is it that these mens brutish simplicity would have?

Namely
Learning necessary to the reformed Churches.

Namely this: That the purer Religion among the Protestant and Reformed Churches, should have no learned Champions, or able defenders; but only such silly Asinillos, or Maffinellus, who think it enough to trust to their rude and irrational confidences; to their hard heels, and basher brayings, for the defence of true Religion, when as the large and luculent ears of these animals do give so great advantage to any crafty error, or grosser heresy to get hold of them, that they will as easily be led to any damnable opinion, and desperate faction, as an Oxe is to the slaughter, and a fool to the stocks. For no men are more easily led into any temptation, than those, who presume to tempt God, by neglecting to use such due and proportionate means, as his wisdome in ordinary providence hath appointed, to attain those great and holy ends of true Religion.

Yet we may see, how all folly is ready to fall upon it self; to confute its own principles; By a rude unskillfulness it sometime bandies the ball of contention against its own face: For these great sticklers against all good learning in Ministers, doe sufficiently shew, they have fraud mixt with their folly; like Foxes, they love not the grapes, while they cannot reach them; Their despair of learning makes them despise it in others: Because it’s hardly possible to have any degree of true learning, and not to oppose them; But, O how doe they seriously triumph and superciliously rejoice, when any man, that is but a smatterer in learning, or finds a little of the pen and inkhorn, (for other than such novices, and dunces never will so far shame themselves) appears for them, or seemes to leane, and adhere to them! how much more if he begins to stickle for their party and faction, being deceived with their showes of zeal, and inspirations! O how doe they prick up their ears, and march them with greater courage and confidence, (as the Hares did, when they had got a Fox to lead them: in whom they thought was more strength, and cunning, than their own fearfull feebleness could be guilty of:) Even so these bunglers in reason, wresters of Scriptures, and hucksters of religion doe find fault with those Tools, which they have no skil to use; and, like cowards, they quarrell with those weapons, as unlawfull,which they most fear; and can least resist. Which yet, could they once get into their hands, and abufe to their advantages, none would more imperiously cruel and insolent: * For what would not these Illiterate Furies give to have indeed, such an Inspiration, as might in one night make them every way as learned and able in all points, as those Ministers and other men have been and still are, who dayly pare the ruder nails, and muzzle the bolder jaws of these degenerate and desperte men; who like horse and mule, being with-
Learning not injurious to true Religion.

without understanding, are ready to fall upon those, that are fit to be their Masters and rulers, both in Church and State; who in stead of sound and healthfull learning have only the three distempers which Sir *Francis Bacon observed to be in most men; Fantastickness, Contention, and Curiosity, by imagination, alteration, and affectation.

But the enemies of good learning tell us; That they discern so many spots and black patches in the face of this fair Lady, that they cannot, esteem her a modest Virgin, or a grave and sober Matron; or any way fit company for true Christian Religion; but rather some prostitute of Impudence, which is easily courted by every wanton spirit, and oft impregnated with grosse errors, which it either conceives and brings forth, or nourisheth and brings up; yea they have heard (for these men read but little, and understand lefe) that great heretics, and enemies to true Religion have beene great Scholars: And even in the boosome of the Church, these venomous of heresies and schisms, have crawled most, since she put on and adorned herself (as some thought) with this patcht and beggerly garment of humane learning, which she took up in the high way of the Gentiles: Arius and his crew wanted not learning; nor *Pelagius Sophistry; nor Donatus eloquence, as St. Austin tells us; Nor those others of former or later dayes, who made the Van, or bring up the Rear of those forces, which the devil hath murdered and trained up against the purity and simplicity of the Gospel: Which (impediment; rather than ornaments, as these men tell us, who presume to be better acquainted with the mind of religion, than any Ministers, or other able Christians; it doth now utterly abhor, and is ashamed of; yea and would fain quite cast away all these glassses, and wimples, and cramping pins and powders, and paints, and dressings, and curlings, and strange apparell, which she had borrowed of humane learning; even as the Jewifs women were weary of their toys and trinckets which they had from the heathen; by which they provoked God against their vanity, pride, and folly.

Thus are these men ready with their rude hands to undresse Divinity; who, being very blind and boisterous, are not able to distinguish yet the benefit between pulling off the patches, or wiping away those spots and of learning, paints, which a fair face needs not; and the shaving off that hair is mere, which is given to Religion for an ornament and covering. Or than the dunthe plucking out of those eyes indeed, which it needs, not onely got for beauty, but for direction. The learning of heretics and schismaticks doth not so much deform the Church, and true Religion, as the learning of Orthodox professors adorns, and reformes it: which, as fullers earth, is the best means to take out those spots.

Ps. 32. 9. *Sir Francis Bacon, in his advancement of learning.

8. Objection against learning as injurious to true Religion, the parent or nurse of errors.


151. 3.

Anst.
Iliterateness makes men barbarous.

Illumine; and nat. spirits, and foul mouths cast upon true Religion; There is the more need of wise and able Physicians to make wholesome Antidotes, and confections, by how much there are so many, whose malice is cunning (as the devils Empericks and empoissoners) to mixe pestilent drugs, and infusions with Religion.

1. Cor. 11. 19.

...There must be heresies, and hereticks too: not as necessary effects and consequents of learning, and religion, but rather from the defects of them in men's hearts and minds. When men are not, either able rightly to understand, or not accurately to divide, or not exactly to distinguish, or not rationally to conclude, from Scripture grounds, and principles of truth; Or else, when they are prone grossly to mistake, and easily to yield to any semblances of truth, and fallacies of error, which are incident to credulous incursions, unstable, and unlearned soules, or to proud passionatc and heady men, though never so learned. Hence follows their not only forsaking the right way, and resolute persisting in their dangerous and damnable mistakes (as sheep gone astray, seldome ever returning of themselves to the fold and unity of the Church) but they would also draw others after them, that they may not seeme to erre alone; and by numbers at least, and force at last, carry on the evil opinions, which always tend to evill practises; unlese the Lord had always furnished his Church with some learned and godly men, as able for reduction, as others were for seduction; as potent to cure, as others are to infect; whose learning defensive was more mighty than any offensive ever was: The flock of Christ was always happily furnished with Masters, whose teeth were as sharp, and strong, as the Wolves; With David's, whose valour was always as great; as the ravening strength of Bear or Lyon; whom nothing else would have curbed and overawed; nor have (without miracle) been able to have preserved the flock of Christ from dayly scatterings and tearings.

So then in all right reasons, either wholly remove these offensive enemies, and such weapons out of their heads and hands: or else give true Christian Religion leave to keep her defensive Arms, and those worthy men, who are able to use them; namely, the learned and godly professors, both Ministers and others of this, and other Churches; both Christian, and reformed: Whose learning, courage and honesty together, makes them impregnable: Whom other ways, even these pitiful pimaries, who now thus oppose them, would hope to be too hard for; if once matters of religion were reduced only to tongues, and hands: for Ignorance makes men violent, and for want of reason to flye to force. * Possibly these professors of ignorance, and rusticity, may be louder speakers, and bolder fighters, though
though they be weaker disputants, and flatter writers: yea we commonly see, that heretical pride, and schismaticall passion, (in men, that neither love the Truth, nor the peace of the Church) when worned by arguments, fly to Arms; as the Arians, and Donatists, and Novatians did; when refusing fair disputations, which the Orthodox Bishops and Presbyters desired: offering (ἐπιτοπίως καὶ ξορράτως τοῦ θεοῦ) orderly, and peaceable disputations, for the determining of differences, so that Christian union might follow; They presently ran furiously to mere brutish and tumultuary violences: Invading Churches by force; driving away the Orthodox and holy Bishops and Presbyters; who had not varied, nor would yeeld to change, that Faith, and holy order of Religion, and Ministry, which still remained in all the Christian Churches; as descended from the Apostles, and primitive Christians, and which had lately been confirmed, and declared by the first famous Councell of Nice, which consisted of 318 Bishops; besides other many learned assistants, holy Presbyters, and Deacons, together with some chief men of the laity; who were to all of a minde, that there were but 17 dissenters in the vote against Arius.

After the same riotous fashion also was that ignorant and abominable rabble (as it's called) of the Circumcellioners, (a subjection of the Donatists) who were wont to ramble idly up and down, like squibs with fire and force, among the plain, and pagane Christians in the country; till (after great ostentations of pitty, devotion, and zeal) for Martyrdom, calling themselves * (Duces Santorum) Captains of the Saints; and (ἀγαρίστες) contiders for the faith, they fell at length to pilfering, then to plundering, and wasting whole countreys, oppressing in an hostile manner the Vicegerents Pacelius and Macarius; till at length they were by the Emperour himself* (Honorius) represed and destroyed.

That many men abuse learning, to abet errors; and religion, to colour hypocritis; and the name of the Spirit, to indulge the flesh; and heaven, to carry on earthly designes, I make no question; nor will these objectors, I beleive; yet I doe not thinke their morosenesse is such, as presently to conclude; they must part with what they can well use, because they see others daily abuse good things, as health, beauty, strenght, riches, preterment, meat, drink, cloathing, &c. all which oft nourish vanity, lufts, excess; The aking of these mens heads, or teeth, makes them not willingly to lose them; no more may the abuse of learning take away the use of it; Wise men know, how to keep a meane between starving and surfeiting; between dramenesse and cutting up all vines; condemning all men to drink nothing, but such small stuffe, as the Antiministeriall Teachers intend to brew, whereby to keep all Christi-
ans as they pretend in a sober simplicity, which project is among their other weak and silly conceptions; For the fumes and ventoses, arising from ignorance, empytiness, and want of good sustenance, may more trouble the brain with giddy whimfeyes and diziness, than can ever be feared from competent repletions, unless men have very foul stomachs, or hot Livers: Wise men know to keep the mean between the riot, and the want of learning; There are, faith Plato, two diseases of the Soul of man (μάθημα και ἀπαθεία) madness and ignorance; Madness is from the abounding with pride and passion; Ignorance from the want of knowledge and instruction: Ignorance is but a tamer madness: mad men have lost their wits; and ignorant men never had them. Learning and Religion cure both. The highest and most incurable madness is, an ungracious hatred of learning, and an irreligious love of ignorance.

We see by sad experience, That true Religion is as subject to be drowned by inundations of barbarity, and deluges of unlettered people, (as to be followers of Gaths and Vandals; or lifted with Jack Cade, and Wat Tyler; or subjects to the titular King of Sion, John of Leyden) as it is to be scorched by the hotter beams of those Phaetons, who unskilfully manage the chariot of the Sun; that is, make an ill use of good learning: Which is as the light of the world; wherein Christian Religion is most honourably and most usefully enthroned, when it is guided aright: neither depressing reason too low, by fanatick novelties; nor exalting it too high, by intricate subtiles; but keeping the middle way, of the necessary, plain, and most demonstrable verities of Religion, which the Compasse of right Reason measures exactly by the scale of Scriptures.

But these Objectors tell us, That many holy and excellent Christians of the common, and unlettered sort of men have been Worshies in grace and godliness; who never found any want of Sauls armour, those *great incumbrances, great volumes, nor those perplexed studies, in pestred libraries; That the *poisons of opinions are seldom drunk, or pledged in these earthen vessels, than in those of gold or silver; That their simplicity was contented to enjoy, that one book necessary, The Scriptures: All other bookes they would have been contented, as these men now, to have them sacrificed to Vulcan, an heathen god, and meriting such heathenish oblations.

Answ. No doubt, but many very good Christians have been happily instructed, setled and preserved in faith and holiness, who never were learned in any book, but that of the Scripture. *S. Anfin tells that Antony the Hermite, who could not read, had all the
Scriptures by heart, and understood them well; yea many, who never read any word in the Bible, yet have been blest, by the Ministry of the Gospel, to believe and obey the truth of it; which is indeed the life of religion, and the quintessence of all learning. Yet it was the happiness of those honest Christians, that they never met with such pragmatic detravers of all good order, piety and learning, and Ministry; as these now are; for certainly they had never learned from such, as these detrivers of learning and Ministers are, either the letter, or the true sense of the Scriptures: which they attained by the learned labours of their Ministers, chiefly, both reading, translating, and interpreting and preaching the Scriptures to them. They were happily freed from such praters, whose pride and folly is heavier than any lead, or the sand of the Sea; whose ungrateful humour would have taught them first to have cast off all their true Ministers and Teachers; next, to despise them; and lastly, to destroy them, by a most pious madness and spiritual ingratitude. They are not only blind, but mad men, who wanting eyes themselves, would have all their guides see no more than they do; so all might fall into the ditch. Whereas the humility of all sober Christians was ever such, as equalled their piety, exceeded their knowledge, and compensated their illiteratencesse: so as to be farre enough from thinking themselves equal to, or above the first three, their lawfull Pastors and learned Ministers, by whose faithfull endeavours, and studies, those saving truths, and holy mysteries, were prepared for them, and set before them: So that however they did indeed eat clean food; the finest of the bread of life; yet they could not, but consider, whose plowing, and fowing, and gathering; whose threshing, and winnowing, and grinding; whose kneading, & baking had provided and prepared those savory and wholesome victualls for them, which their own blindness and feebleness, (like Isaac's) could never have provided, or catered for themselves: That they did always blest those Ministers, and that God, who sent such Joseph's to provide, and distribute the food of heaven to his other wayes distress, and famished Church, which always consisted for the most part of that plebs, or community of faithfull and poor Christians; who were always happy in this; that, although they had not provision of learning in their own storehouses and cisternes; yet still they might have recourse to, and make use of their Ministers fulness, and store: whose lips ought to preserve knowledge, and to dispense it without envy or grudging: who rejoiced most, when their fountains were most flowing forth to the refreshing of poor souls; The abilities of learned Ministers have always been, like Jacob and Moses his strength, a means to remove away the great stones, which lie on the mouth; (the Scriptures.)
Learning necessary in Ministers for the peoples good.

which are too heavy for ordinary shoulders, and to protect feebler Christians from insolent opposers. So that as the Eunuch asked, how he should understand, without an Interpreter to guide him. Ministers are therefore set by Christ in his Church for lights, that each might enjoy them, as much as if each had their sufficiency: As the meanest part of the body hath as much use of the eye, as if it were an eye itself. That as it was in the Israelites gathering Manna, so it is in the Church of Christ, when fed and flourishing; He that gathered much had no surplus, and hee that gathered little, had no lack. So those honest Ideots, and Lay-Christians, (who have little or no learning, beyond that faith and plain knowledge of the mysteries of Christ and the holy duties belonging to a Christian) yet have no want of learning; And learned Ministers who have attained most eminent skill in all sorts of good learning, by Gods blessing on their studies, have no more than is needfull for their place and the Churches edification, or safety and preservation.

And much, I think, is needfull, to give a right sense of Scripture, from the originall proprieties or emphasis of words: To open the many allusions referring to Judaic rites and Ethnick customes in severall ages: To clear and unfold the Scriptures by short paraphrases, or larger Commentaries: To analyse several passages so, as to reduce them to their proper place and order of reasoning wherein their force consists, (as the parts and joints of the body set in their due posture:) For the method of the reasoning, and the strength of the argument, or main scope in Scripture, is oft very different from the series, and order of the words in the Text; Many times the ambiguity of the words, the variety of fops, the incoherence and independence of the sense as to the letter, makes the method more obscure, and the meaning very intricate; yea the very text of Scriptures were in many copies of Bibles anciently (as in St. Jerome's time; and before him in Origens) much altered, by addition to, or detraction from the pure and authentick Scripture, untill those and other learned men, the Bishops and Ministers of the Church, with more accurate diligence reduced the Bible to its purity, and integrity; as much as is attainable by humane industry, or necessary to mans salvation; In these and the like cases I suppose, these objectors, who are very simple (but not with a dove-like simplicity) must needs confesse (unlesse they wholly truist to the reed of their Enthusiasms, which they have very little cause to doe) that there is a great need of learned Criticks: of good Linguists; of methodicall Analysts; judicious Commentators; accurate distinguishers; and harmonious reconcilers; that the truth, purity, and unity of the sacred Oracles may be preferred and vindicated, against
against Jews, Heathens, Atheists, Hereticks, and capricious Enthusiasts; who are ready to strike with contempt and passion, any part of Scripture, as useless, or corrupted; if it flow not as the rock with an easy sense and obvious interpretation to their weak and sudden capacities: They are instantly prone with an high disdain and choleric, to prefer their most impertinent imaginations, sudden fancies and addle raptures.

Or, if they be ashamed of those, being too weak, grosse, and impudent to be vended at noon day, and in so faithfull a light as yet shines in this Church; then they are crying up the book of the creatures; and God in them; or they applaud some easier morall heathens: And I should think nothing should fit their fancies so well, as the Turkish Alcoran, or Jewish Talmuds, and Cabals; for these (if any thing can) have already out done them in toyes and incredible fables; which may save them the labour of further inventions. Swine will prefer the filthieft puddle, before the fairest springs: So will wanton proud and vain men take any light exception against the Scripture; which they hate the more perfectly, by how much they see it is a most perfect rule, and fully contrary to their proud, unjust and unruly passions: And however the shell of those holy and unparrelled writings, the blessed Scriptures, be in many places rugged and hard, so that every one cannot handle or break it: yet (blessed be God) others can; nor is the kermell of saving Truth lesse sweet and smooth, because it is not easily explained, but by the help of other mens better gifts; whom the Lord raiseth up, and fitteth for this very end, with variety of gifts, even in humane learning: Who (for the most part) have been of the order of the Clergy: although, in these later times (especially,) divers others, both Nobility, Gentry, and Commoners, have been as excellent pioneers, who have by their private studies very cheerfully, and industriously assisted, and helped the Churches chiefest Champions, and Leaders, the Ministers; who have not indeed, every one, those sharp tools of steel, which can work at the hardest places of this rock, and holy Mine, the Scriptures; yet have they generally such skill, and leisure, beyond the Vulgar, as enables them to try the Ore, to gather and refine the grains, to cast them into fit wedges or ingots of Gold: Truths reduced to some body, method or common place of Divinity. Thus assisted by their own and other studies, method, and industry, they are well able to make plain, yet learned and judicious Sermons; with pathetick homilies, fitted to the common peoples capacity, memory, and disposition: whom neither leisure, nor necessities of life, and the hard labours under the Sun, nor abilities of minde, would suffer or serve (one of a thousand) to attain to any competent measure of religious knowledge.
People's use of learning in their Ministers.

ledge; if holy and learned men, (Ministers of the Church) were not enabled by God, approved by the Church, and ordained by both, to that constant service of the Ministry, for the good of the plainest Christians; who enjoy, in every point of true doctrine, or solid Divinity, (which is as a weighty piece of gold stamped with the clear testimony of the Scripture, (as people doe in every piece of current money,) the extract of the labour, and the result of the art of many men's heads and hands, who have thus fitted it for their ordinary use.

Besides this, when common people are once well stored, and enriched in their honest plainness, with competent and sound knowledge in Religion by the care and faithfulness of their able and honest Ministers; yet how easily would the cheats of Religion delude and impose on these poor Souls, (these plain and single hearted Christians) abating, or changing counterfeit, with truths; crost opinions, and round-heads tenets, for full weight of Christian doctrines: Still cogging with religious dice, and cheating with plausible fallacies, seemingly brought out of the Scripture; until those poor beleevers, like the *bewitched Galatians, had lost all, or their most part of their sound Religion; yea, some of these Impostors do not leave poor Christians, whom they have councened with fair shews of the Spirits revelations, and new Gospels, so much faith, as to beleive the main Articles of the Christian Faith; or the Scriptures to be the Word of God; or, that there is any true Church, or any order and authority of true Ministry: And whither would not this confusion and deceit of these hucksters proceed, even to overthrow whole houses, Parishes, and Churches, if there were not some learned and able Ministers in the Church; who are as Gods and the Churches publicke Officers, to detect these jugglers, to discover these deceitful workers, to set these cheats in the pillory of publicke infamy; that they may lose their Ears; that is, their *hearing well; that credit and fame of gifts which they cover and captate among the Vulgar; and which they would enjoy, by reason of their many wiles, and artifices, by which they *lay in wait to deceive with good words and fair speeches, (as the Divels setting Dogs) the well affected and plain hearted Christians, if they were not everywhere routed, and confounded by the Ministers of the Church, who are both abler and honefter men, and to whose charge the flock of Christ, in its several divisions and places is committed; that they may take care it suffer no detriment either in truth, or in peace; in faith, or manners; in Doctrine, or in holy order. Thus then, although the souls, and faith of the meanest true Christians be alike precious and dear to God, as the most learned men's, yet they are not pieces of the same weight for gifts; of the same extension.
for endowments, of the same polishings for studies; nor of the same stamp and authority for their calling and office; all which, as they are not to the essence of true grace, and religion; so they are much, to the lustre, power, beauty, order, usefulness and communicativeness of those gifts, which goe with true Religion; and are by the Lord's munificence bestowed on the Church and faithfull, for their well being, safety, and comfort, even in this world; besides their happiness in another, which ought to be the grand design of all true Christians, both Laymen and Churchmen, both learned and unlearned, both Governours and governed.

But these Illiterats further object with open mouth; That they are sure neither Christ nor his Apostles, had themselves, Objec. Christ or commanded to the Churches use humane learning.

Answ. My answer is; They needed none, as humane; that is files had no acquired by ordinary education, or industry; being far above it, humane by those glorious and miraculous endowments of the Spirit of wise Learning... (men of the meanest parts and grossest capacities.) So that those might as well dispense with the absence of all acquired humane learning, as he that hath the Sun's light, needs not the Moon or Stars, or Candles; or he that had Angels wings and swiftnesse, would not want the legge of man, or beast to carry him: or he that is near a living and inexhaustible spring, need not labour to dig wells, as Izaac did: and so must we too, in the barren and dry land, where we live, which none but inhumane Philipians would slop up. This therefore of Christ and his Apostles is not more peevishly, than impertinently alleged by these men, in these times, against the use of good learning in the Churches Ministers, unless the reall experiences of these men pretended Apostolicall gifts, extraordinary endowments, and immediate sufficiencies from the Spirit of God, could justify these allegations; either as fitted to them, as to the present dispensation of Christ to his Church; Although the Lord sometime gave his Church water out of a rock, and refreshed wearied Samson by a miraculous fountain, which suddenly sprung up in Lehi (not in the Jaw-bone, but in the place so called, from Lehi, (i.e.) the Jaw-bone, by which instrument he had obtained so great a victory, there where, it continued afterward:) yet, I believe, these men will think it no argument to expect every day such wonderfull emanations; and neglecting all ordinary means, to expect from the Jaw-bones of Asses water, or drink to quench their thirst: I am sure this Church hath not yet found any such flowings forth, or refreshing from the mouths of these Objecters; whose lips never yet dropped like. Herman, so much as a Dew of sweet and wholesome new-
knowledge upon any place; and how should they? whose tongues are for the most part set on fire; and breathe out, with much terour, nothing but ashes and cinders; like Vesuvius or Etna; whose eruptions are vastious to all near them.

As for our blessed Lord Christ; we know he was filled with all the treasures of wisdom, both divine and humane; for, being greater than Solomon, he could not come short of Solomons wisdom in any thing; who was in all his glory but a Type and shadow of Christ, and no way comparable to him: Our Saviours design, indeed, was, not as Plato, or Aristotle, to advance natural Philosophy, meer morality, humane learning, and eloquence; (the beams of which Sun, by common providence; God had already made to shine by other ways, on the bad, as well as the good; on the heathens as well as the Jews and Christians;) but Christs intent was, by word and deed, to set forth the beams of the Sunne of righteousness, the wisdom of the Father; the saving mysteries of his Cross, and sufferings in order to mans improvement; not by humane learning, but by divine grace: And however our Blessed Saviour hath crucified, as it were, the flesh, and pride of humane learning, (as well as of riches, honour, and all worldly excellencies; which are infinitely short of the knowledge and love of God in Christ;) yet he quickned and raised them all by the Spirit, which teacheth a sanctified and gracious use of them all to his Church, and true believers. Our Lord Jesus did not disdain to converse with the learned Doctors, and Rabbies of his time; among whom he was found after his parents had sought him sorrowing; because in vain, otherwhere; yet our wanderers and seekers are loth to seek; afraid to find, and disdain to own Jesus Christ, when they have found him among the learned men, and Ministers of this Church; left in so doing, they shou’d seem to confesse they had left Christ, and true Religion, in their illiterate Conventicles and ignorant presumptions.

As for the blessed Apostles, who were immediately taught of God, by conversing with the Son of God the Lord Jesus Christ, the Christian world well knowes their marvelous and extraordinary fulness of all gifts, and powers of the Spirit, both habitual and occasional; so that they wanted neither any language nor learning, which was then necessary, to carry on the great work of preaching, and planting the Gospel: And no leffe doth the wiser world know the emptiness and ridiculous penury of these (disputers against good learning) even as to the common gifts of sober reason, and judicious understanding; wherewith the blessing of heaven is now wont to crown only the prayers, and studies of those, that attend on Wisdoms gates with all humble industry: whose great proficiencies these poor men envying, (as they
Enemies to learning have no Apostolical gifts.

they have great cause] would gain perswade them to be as much sluggards, as themselves are; (who have neither hunted, nor caught any thing) by *not roasting what they have taken in hunting; that is, not to use those gifts of learning in all kindes, which Ministers have attained unto, by Gods blessing on their studies.

As for that Primitive gift of Tongues, by which the Apostles at once suddenly hardware, and brake that ice, which now locks and seals up to us the face of the great deep of Learning and Wisdome, so that they were instantly Masters, not onely to understand, but also to utter, the mysteries of Chrift, (whereof they had partly an acquired, by Christs teaching, but for the most part, an inspired knowledge: ) These pitiful praters, who would be counted Apostolical, are so far from any such gifts of wisdome, or utterance, that they are scatle masters of their own mother tongue, neither knowing, for the most part, what they say, nor whereof they affirm; nor able with modesty, gravity, humility, or charity, either to use, or bridge their tongues: (which is an Apostolical brand on them; shewing that their Religion is but vain: ) And how can it be otherways, where sober speech, sound reason, common sense, and ordinary ingenuity, are as much wanting; as pride, contempt of others, intractable fierceness, and indecible ignorance do abound? When their great art is, to set off to some popular sheu and acceptance, their gifts and persons, by proud swelling words: sometimes soaring in the height of raptures, and rare speculations, beyond sobriety: as if they were from sudden inspirations; when indeed they are nothing else but some odde ends of metaphysical questions, and devotional contemplations; which are every where found among the Schoolmen, and Monafsicks; or in the Platonists, Plutius, Pimander, and the like; to which Authours these men being strangers, yet drunk with their own fancies, sometimes they reel, and stumble upon such notions; which vainly puff them up in their fleshly minds; while they are still but clouds, without water, carried with the tempefts of passion, and high presumptions above the plain, practicall and ufcfull truchts of Religion; and indeed above the proportion and sphere of their own gifts and parts. Other whiles they feem as Wells without water, deep, but dark, and dry, in their profound follies and profane niceties: as the Manichees, Valentinians, and others of old; by which they seek to confound, God with the creaturer; good with evill; Nature with Grace; Vice with Verue; Law with the Gopell; Chrif with Diuels; By all which rarities, amazing their silly auditors, they are no other but cunning Agitators for ignorance, atheifm, profaneness, hypocrisy, and superstitition; that the life and power of the Chriftian reformed Religion may be wholly baffled, and despifed.
together with the Ministry of this Church: What can these wretched men expect, but the blackness of darkness for ever to be referred for them (without repentance), who study to cry downe all good studies and learning; that they may the better eclipse all true and reformed Religion?

Such Pharisees (for few of them are good Scribes) are like indeed to make excellent Teachers of the Kingdom of heaven, who are not able to bring forth any things, either old or new; having no Treasure of well digested knowledge, either divine or humane; but onely some of the rubbish of that learning, which they seek to destroy; pitiful repudies of such confused stuffe, as they have scraped together; which becomes none but babblers and pamphleters; Which, whoever considers seriously, how much they have been a shame and bane to true Religion, to the honour of this reformed Church, and to those holy manners which become sober, wise, and modest Christians, he would ever after love learning and learned Ministers the better, by how much he sees infinite cause to abhor the discord and shamefull effects of impudent ignorance; which loves to batten in its own joy; and refuseth to be cleansed: Such months full of errors, and foul with evil speakings, however the Timothies and Titusses of this Church cannot now stop, (as they ought to doe, if the exercise of that just power in the Church were not obstructed) yet they ought to rebuke them sharply, and with all authority.

And untill these Scrapbick despisers of true, useful, and sanctified learning can (not boast and clamour among their Disciples, who are now grown giddy with too high notions and airy speculations, but, till they can) evidently demonstrate to the wiser and soberer world, that they can indeed perform, what they pretend; that is, by immediate gifts, and unstudyed enabling they can solidly comprehend, soberly preach, methodically explain, clearly demonstrate, the sacred mysteries of our Religion: also resolve the difficulties, reconcile the differences, and determine the doubts, or controversies arising out of the Word of God, or the points of Religion; so, as in some measure may tend to satisfie mens judgements, together with the scruples, and cases of their consciences: Till I say, these men can doe these in some competent measure, equall at least, if not beyond, what the learned Ministers of this Church have done, and daily doe, by the blessing of God on their labors; they must give us leave still to follow our studies, with humble prayers and diligent pains; That so in stead of the trash, and chaff of these mens specious words, and popular insinuations, (fally deploring, and proudly despifing those excellent abilities, which are in true Ministers, far above them,) we may help to feed poor
Learning and Inspirations in holy men.

poor hungry souls; not with frothy vanity (wherewith these proud Masters send their scholars away, as puffed up and as empty as themselves) but with good corn, and that wholesome provision of sound knowledge and laying doctrine, wherewith the Lord is pleased to furnish us, in the honest, and ordinary way of his providence and blessing upon our industry: for we have now no Manna or Quails about our tents; which, while these men dream of, mean time exceeding lease is entred into their souls: And how can it otherwise be, than, that forming vanity, and visions of their own hearts, they should reap other, than wind; and be satisfied, as they are extremely (but most unhappily) with their own delusions?

We do not read that either Moses, or Solomon, or Daniel, or St. Paul, (first educated at *Tarsis a famous University; and after at the feet of Gamaliel) or Attick Luke, or eloquent Apollos ever despised, or decried, or diffused those acquired gifts of humaine learning; wherewith they were endued in the ordinary wayes of education; no not, when they were extraordinarily inspired: Their common gifts served them still in their ordinary Ministry; as to understanding, memory, utterance, or writing; by which they endeavoured to set forth, that Jesus was the Christ, the promised Messiah; So that in their arguments, disputes, reasonings, and allegations out of humane Authors, also in the style, phraze, and manner of their speaking, and writing, it might and may easily bee that the difference of Prophets, Evangelists, and Apostles naturally, acquired, or studied gifts, did still remain; when their extraordinary and infused might be equal; yet these did not equal them in their either more strict and Logical reasonings, or their more Orationeous expressions, or more elegant phrase and proper language; which appear very different in those holy Writers and Penmen of the Scriptures, which had the same Spirit directing or influencing, as to the matter revealed to them; but they used their own ordinary abilities to express them: by word, or pen, to others.

And certainly when the Apostle Paul bids Timothy (as a grand and lastly pattern for all Bishops and Ministers of the Church, to study, to meditate, to give himselfe wholly to those things, that his profiting may appear, to stir up the gift that is in him; 

Psal. 106. 15.

 Hos. 8. 7.

* * *

13. 0

Inspired holy men yet used their learned gifts.

*Tarsis celebris Cilicia Urbis, & Academia; ipsa Athenis, & Alexandria comparanda, Strabo. *

St. Jerome.

Learning and Inspirations joined.

Eph. 6:18.

full more fitting himself to the work of the Ministry, (notwithstanding he had some special and extraordinary gifts) Sure the same Apostle gave Timothy no example of idleness in himself; but both studied and prayed; yea desires the prayers of others for him, that he might (as an able Minister, and as a Master builder) finish the course of his Ministry with joy. This blessed Apostle needed not have been so solicitous for the parchments, which he left at Troas, if his memory had been always supplied with miraculous assistance; he needed not to have committed any thing to writing for his own use. It is very probable that those parchments were no deeds, for conveying any land or temporall estate, but rather some Scheme or draught of divine Truths and mysteries, methodically digested, which he had fitted for his own, and transferred to the use of others, as Apollos, or Timothy, or Titus. So little doth the special gifts of the Spirit, in the Apostles or other holy men, justify or plead for those odde and mistaken figures of those mens Divinity, whether discovered by their tongues or hands; of whose deformity, and unpoliteness, compared to the fashion of all learned mens judicious, methodical, and comely writings, and discourses, these crafty men being conscious, would have no Sun, or light of arts and learning shining among Christians, by which their ridiculous monstrous might appear.

The same Apostle, who bids us beware of vain Philosophy, and wisdom falsely so called (while it opposed the divine; or was preferred before the word and truth of God in Christ, which only can attaine the end of all true wisdom, to make a man happy to eternity,) yet he could be no enemy to any part of true and useful full Philosophy; which is but the knowledge of God in the creature, of which he gives seyeral touches, in his most divine writings; He commands us, no lesse, to beware of * false Teachers, of heaps of Teachers; of deceitfull workers; of unruly walkers; of unstable and unlearned spirits, who by vaine bablings, endless janglings, high presumptions, and private interpretations, wrest the Scriptures, corrupt both religious Doctrine, sound Speech, and Christian communication; Such who are * vainly puffed up in their skilfully minde; whose glory is to lead Disciples after them; deireous to be * Teachers, when they know not what they say, nor whereof they affirme; Comparing themselves with themselves; and abhorring all higher patterns, they can * never be wise, but in their own conceits, and there is * little hope of them.

* Col. 2.18. * 1 Tim. 1.7. * 1 Cor. 10.11. * Prov. 16.9.
But 0 you, that excell in learning or humility, or both; I should fear to write too much for good learning, if I did not consider, that I write to those chiefly who can never think too much said, or wrote for it; because they know the many beauties and excellencies of it; both in reference to the glory of God, and the good of mankind, both for souls and bodies, their religious and secular concerns, their temporall and eternall interest.

Indeed, no minde is able to conceive, but such as enjoy them, nor can any tongue express them, (since they exceed the greatest eloquence of those that most enjoy them) those bright, heavenly, and divine beams of Reason and Religion; which, with severall preparatory glories, shine from the daily reading of those excellent writings, and durable monuments of learned men, in former ages; as rays of light, falling from the Sun, on this inferior world; breaking in upon all the regions of the soul: dissipating its darkness; discovering its disorders, supplying its defects; filling it with the sweet and silent pleasure of daily knowing something more excellent in the creature, or the Creator, which before it knew not: This secret and unspeakable contentment is more welcome to the now improving soul, than the beauty of a fair morning, which shows a safe haven to one, that hath suffered the honour of blind and midnight tempests; more rejoicing the heart of a true man, than liberty and light doe him, that is redeemed from a dungeon.

I should but profane, if I should too much unfold the sacred and sweet mysteries of learning, to an age that begins to learn their letters backward; to love only the hatred, and despising of learning; that will not be able in the next generation to read their Neckverse, asloth to have the benefit of their Book or Clergy. I know it is lost labour to read Lectures (if they were as splendid for their eloquence, as their subject) upon Pearls or Precious Stones to Swine, who had rather finde out one corn on a dunghil, and mousse up one root out of the earth, than have the Gems of both the Indies. These have deferred to be condemned to that illiterate folly, which they have chosen; to the ragges and foules, which they affect to wear; to the blear eyes, which they so abhor to cure, that they rather covet to infect all others.

But to men of more liberal, ingenuous and noble spirits, I know it cannot be unwelcome, to tell them, what pure and refined contentment, what sweetness and honey there is to be gathered, from those fair and never fading flowers of learning, which God hath made to grow in the field or garden of his Church; what
life, what joys, what raptures, what noble and holy emulations are oft raised up in that soul which dayly and seriously converses with learned men either a live or dead? How when all other narrow Seas, Inland Meers, or Mechanick Lakes, (wherein the foules of many men weary themselves with rowing to and fro, tossing up and down; seeking in them riches, strength, beauty, horror, liberty, applause, victory, enlarged Empire, &c. all which have their envious bounds, and presently discover their dangerous shores; beset with losses, defeats, disgraces, poverty, weaknesses, deformities and a 1000 deaths:) Only this vast Ocean of learning and Sea of knowledge is unlimited; always discovering interminable extensions, abounding in varieties of knowledge; novelties of wiseome, infinites of inventions; multitudes of wise sayings and sentences, (morall, politick, and divine,) which like stars are every where scattered & shining in that Firmament: Besides many noble constellations of excellent examples, provoking patterns, every where set forth, to excite the soul to some impatience of emulation; as the history of Alexander the Great did Caesar; or the victories of Miltiades did Themistocles, which would not suffer him to sleep; All these, embellished with gallant resolutions, generous actions, rare events, sublime contemplations, sovereign comforts, and unflattering counsells; all which, are still enriching the unsatisfied soul with treasures and pleasures that never satiate, never perish: are ever out of envies, force, or fortunes reach; as unseparable from us, as we are from our selves; For there are in this Pacificke Sea of Learning no rocks, but those of error; no thieves, but those of ignorance; no quick sands, but those of our own fancies; no pirates, but those aboard us and within us; our own vicious lusts and passions; which onely do threaten us, and onely can wrack us, or rob and hurt us; yea, and these are onely upon the shores and keys of learning, where men first embarque; and where some lazy, or timorous, or proud, and sensual spirits stay all their lives; but they are not in the full Sea, and vast extension of Learnings boundlesse and bottomlesse Empire; In which the humble, devout, and industrious soul once fully engaged, is every day more removed, and out of sight of the world: far from those fears, hopes, hazards, disorders, and discontentes, which attend those, whose covetousness, or ambition, or passion, or lust still keepes them either on the shore of ignorance, or but on the borders of knowledge: who rather court Learning for a Mistress, than wed her for a Wife.

From all which dangerous remora's, and shallower coasts, those onely are removed, as it were to another world, which is intellectual, and divine, (having little common with beasts, nothing
with vain and wicked men) who being well advanced in all
good learning, both divine and humane, begin at length to find
themselves differ from, and exceed themselves, (and all others who
rest in their illiterate simplicity and fortdidnße) as much, as light doth dark-
ness; or the Stars in the Firmament do the clouds and molebills in their
fields: *Holy learning always carrying that improvement, and content-
ment, which loves, and admires, and imitates, and so enjoys, all
that virtuous prudence, and heavenly wisdom, which it sees to have
been in those its incomparable predecessors, the remains of whose
foules are still extant; which otherwise would have seemed to
have been of no nobler metall, than their bodies; and these but levell to the dust of beasts, unlefe their learned labours had
tel testify to the world, how they had lived as much above the
ordinary rate of men, as these doe above the beasts; which most
of men either serve; or, which is worse, love more, than their
own souls. To these Patrons and profefors of learning we owe
our ingenuity, our courtelie, our civility: (for morose and ru-
stick learning, which hath onely rough-bewn a metre Scholar, or
moulded up a rude and rugged Philofopher, is as gold yet in the
ocar, or a jewel neither polished nor well fet; having innate worths,
but not that luftre it merits, and might well bear.) To them
we owe our gratitude, our humanity, our rationall, and religi-
ous liberties, which redeem us from being beasts, or divels; Their
care and labours have absolved us from the chains and bond-
age of blindeness, barbarity, atheifm, vulgar admifions, fen-
sualities, and irreligion; Gods providence having fo tempered
the various ingredients, and feverall doses, which make up, from
divers excellent hands, this admirable Confec of good learn-
ing; that it is a Catholicon, a sovereign for all diftempers of minde,
and disorders of the outward man: for miffortunes in effate;
errors in understanding, pravities in will; violences of pas-
ions; corruptedneffe in affections; troubles in confeience; immo-
ralities of life; dejections of spirit; errors, and encounters of death:
And where learned abilities are rightly ordered, they apply, and
communicate their virtues, with fouh soft and oily insinuations,
feanably and wisely fitted to every genius, capacity and occa-
ion with gentlenesse, humility, charity, and discretion; that they heal any Patient that is willing without hurting,
and cure without afflicting: Giving no caufe of complaint
to any, but such as are unwilling to be healed of their * shame-
full and dangerous diseases; who love ignorant and flattering Mount-
bankes, more than the most learned and faithfull Phifitians of
foules, which are the ableft and best Ministers; who cannot be
lefe necessary for the inward health of the minde, than these are

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for the body, who are one sort of those, whom learning hath fitted for the common good. For I do not think Learning and true study to be onely a couch to rest a soft and wearyd minde upon; or a taraffe to pleaze a wandering spirit, with some variable and pretty prospects; or as a Tower for a proud soul to raise and magnifie it self upon, as Nebuchadnezzar on his Babel; or as a Fort for a contentious Sophister to keep, in a disputative war, and Logical defiance against all the world; Nor is it as a ship for a covetous man to drive his trade, and get gain by the brokage of some ancient pieces: But it is as a grand Magazine, and Catholick Storehouse of all divine and intellectuall excellencies, appertaining to all men, upon all occasions, happy advantages, by which to glorifie the wife and admirable Creator, and also to furnish both a man's self & others with what may most conduct to his temporall and eternall felicitiy: Good learning is neither a wanton Courtisan, onely for dalliance and pleasures; nor yet a slave and drudge, entertained meere for a fordid and illiberall profit; but as a chaste and nobly spirited Wife, for sweet societie and legitimate productions, worthy of such parents, a reasonable Soul and good Literature, happily espoused and married together. We oft see, that moderate minde, with but a small stock of learning well managed, attains to be masters of great affairs; and become as useful, so very desirable in humane societies in practicall ways: others of more speculative retired and sublime learning are nor less in magnitude, but farther remote from sublunary things, having that in their height, and neighbourhood to heaven, which they seem to want in their light and emissions downward: In both, besides the private contents they enjoy in the contemplations of reasons, and Religious beauty (both which fair faces are best represented in the glasse of learning) they have a kind of Empire and Sovereignty over all things, and all men, in all times, who appear at the tribunall of their judgments, fall under their cognizance, and stand to that censure they passe upon them, both in present and after ages, either for vice or virtue, honour or basenesse, gallantry or villany; How ever Arms and Military power have carried the Kingdom and swayed the Scepter, which rules mens bodies; yet learning hath ever carried the Priestly service, and in that a kind of Sovereignty over mens soules and consciences: None being ever thought to fit by the light of nature, and all Nations to teach the service or dispense the Mysteries of the most wise God, but those that were esteemed the wisest men; left the folly and meanesse of the Priest or Minister should prove the reproach of that Divinity which he serves.

I might adde, if any colours could expresse, or adde to this intellectual
These excellencies peculiar to mankind, above all creatures, we owe (beyond all dispute) to those records of learning, and piety left us, in all kindes, by our famous predeceusers; and to the studious industry of those sublimer spirits, who have been impatient to suffer those inestimable reliques of our forefathers, Souls to be devoured by time and mobs, to be buried in dust and forgetfulness; who never thought it enough, for a rationall and immortal Soul to fill its belly, to clothe its back, to satisfy its lufts, * to idolize an horse, to dote upon a Dog, or to court a wanton Missesse: But disdaining all these base, sennuall, and momentary enjoyments, or debasements rather, (when excessive, chief or sole) of their soules; dayly are raised up by generous, virtuous and religious excitations, to advance their own and other mens both mines and manners; And this, not unely during this transient, short and uncertain life among mortals; but further by erecting living monuments in learned books; they fortifie against oblivion; arm themselves against mortality; and counterruine the underminings of time; which is the grave of all

*Pyramidis, Mansoles, and those other like monstros structures. of grosser spirited men.
So that when the ages of learned men are undistinguishable in the grave from vulgar and plebeian dust, yet they still instruct and doe good to mankind, and glorifie the Creator by their soules and spirits, which are partly in heaven, and partly in their bookes; which have so much of heaven too, as they have more of sublimity, splendor, permanency, and influence, on the inferior world, than any other things; whereon men usually leave the impressions of their fading skill and momentary power.

So that these greater cloths of earth, and lumps of mortality, the despiers of Learning, are sure to dye and perish, as much as they merit, and desire; who neither use, nor leave, nor deserve any token or memoriall of literate industry; by which it may appeare, that either they or others ever lived more than their Oxe and their Ash doe: who by how much lesse they are intellectual, and not improvers of their minde, by so much more they degenerate to brutish sensualities, and become wholly devoted to the beast of the man, the Body; which hath nothing on it remarkable, but this; that it is married to a rational and immortall Soul; not to debate and oppose it, but to serve it: Of those (Borborete and Polyfarkistes) groveling, and indolce sensualists, there can be no better account given at their death, than may be of an hog: That being most indolcible, he wallowed at his ease, fed well, dyed very fat, and very unwillingly; worthy of the Epitaph on the Epicures Tomb, *That oneley I enjoyed which I did eat.

Not that here I doe any way despise, or degrade those sober good Christians of either sex, whose education, parts, and way of life hath, and doth deny them the advantages of personal learning; such as is immediately acquired by the study of excellent books; For, first, true wisdome is the same in all languages, and may be obtained in conversation in part, as well as by reading; Next, they have by Gods providence, and indulgence to them, the blessing of many learned mens directions, (both Ministers and others) and the benefit of their good example; whom they have the more cause to love and value, by how much they see their own defects; which while they humbly and diligently supply by the helps which learned men afford them, they testify, not onely to others...
others, the grateful sense, and high esteem they have of the labours of learned men, imparted to them; but also hereby they doe, as it were, admit themselves into the company of learned men, and are adopted into the family, and fraternity of Learning; mutual love, and charity ingraining these lovers of learned men, into the same stock, of whose sap, and virtue they are daily partakers; being diligent attenders upon those whom God hath set over them, for this purpose; that they may be happily taught by them, as children by their Fathers: while the ignorant pride of others, keeping them at a signify, and to themselves most injurious, distance, they not only enjoy nothing of learning in themselves, but by the neglect and disesteem of it in their Ministers, are for ever condemned to their silly beggary and supercilious folly.

The wisdom of God, as in civil, so in Church societies hath tempered the different parts, as in the natural body: where all members are useful in their kind, but not all of equal honour, for the excellence of their faculties and functions; yet the diamonds of the eyes cannot well want the clay and pebbles of the toes: nor are the nobler Organs of the Senses so excellent or commendable in any thing, as in this, that they are useful and service not to themselves so much, as to those less beautiful, but not less necessary parts of the body, for whose direction and good, Nature intended them: Neither charitable learning, nor humble ignorance will make any scornful, or envious schism in a well formed body: whose beauty is the variety and Symmetry of parts. It were an unnatural barbarity for the eyes to deny their light and guidance to the body, or for the lightslesse parts to despis, envy, and seek to destroy those two great lights, which the wise Creator hath set up in the little world of mans body. Such is the distemper and madness of those, who seek to hoodwink with poverty, to blind with contempt, to put out with violence the great Luminaries, both of Church and State. Learned men and Ministers, who are the ordinary means by which true (both humane and divine, moral and mysterious) knowledge is imparted to the common people, without which neither hearts nor lives of men cannot be good; "Blind affections are no more acceptable to God, than blind sacrifices, which were only fit for fools. However God workes grace by a more immediate, divine influence of his Spirit; yet it is by such meanes rationally preparing, and disposing, as he hath appointed in the Church; without the diligent and conscientious use of which, it is as in vain to boast of grace, and the Spirit, as it is to expect the heat of the Sun, without its light; or to hope for harvest without preceding summer;
The ignorant weakness and fiercer rudeness of those men, with whom I have chiefly in this Apology, and in this part of it to contend, may justify this my so large vindication of learning; as necessary in other persons of publick influence; so chiefly in Ministers, whose errors or refutations are of the highest concernment, as conversant in matters of God, of Souls, and of Eternity. I should otherwise, be very jealous, that I had too much in so clear a subject; (which needs as little, and deserves as much commendation, as the Sun in the Firmament) when I remember how many men of learned abilities I make my addresse; of whose personal sufficiencies in this kind of excellency, as I have no cause to doubt, for I see some of them have undertaken the publick honour and protection of these (Kiriath-sephers) the sometime famous and flourishing Universities of this English Nation; The two fair eyes of this Church and State; and the two greatest eye-fores of these Antiministerial Levellers; which above all things as Ravens they aim to pluck out, or to blind, that they shall not be of any use, either to Learning, or to the reformed Religion.

But I presume, that persons of any true worth, Learning, Honour, Valour, or Religion, will never suffer these goodly Garrisons, citadels and magazines of all good literature to be plundered, lighted, or disbanded, either by military, or mechanick rudeness: For besides the shame and infinite dishonour, which it would be before all civilized Nations under heaven, to doe, or suffer so great insolence and injury to be done, against them, and in them against the publick good and honour both of Church and State: It cannot but also be a most crying sin before God; if either we consider, that sacrilegious barbarity, which must in this be committed against (not the living only in their rights, but even against) the Dead; the Monuments of whose devout piety and charity are there deposited; and by many learned men enjoyed, as in inviolable Sanctuarys; Or, if we duly weigh, in order to Gods glory, the many great and publick blessings, which by the bounty and providence of God have, from the benign light and influence of those two great Constellations, constantly and liberally flowed upon this Nation, to its unspeakable honour and advantages, both in Church and State: Which are so eminent, and so necessary, both to the well being of Souls and bodies of men; in all degrees and estates; that no tongue, or pen can with gratitude enough to God acknowledge them: For take it from the highest, who sit upon Thrones, judging the Tribes, to the lowest, who grind at the mill: Neither Counsellours, nor Judges, nor Justices, nor Commanders, nor Lawyers, nor Physicians, nor Embassadors, nor publick Agents, nor any ingenious implantation; nor
It concerns no men to have good learning decry'd, and the Universities demolished, but only juglers, cheaters, and impostors, whose gains are like to be greatest, when their deceits are least discernible for want of true light; * So prodigious tongues and pens were those heretofore, and now, which by an unnaturall envy, brutish ignorance, barbarous malice, or fordid covetousnesse, seek to deprive the children of this Nation, of such full and fair breasts, as these Nurses afford; as if we were all design'd to turn Amazons, and that fitting our selves for Arms only, and not Arts, we must cut off, not onely one, but both our breasts: Or as if the latter generations were to suck not milk, but onely bloud; like the child which Aristides painted so lively, which searching for the breast, applied it self to the wound of its dying mother; which thee now dying seems to remove from the wound to the Breast.

honour to this Nation, Camden.

But, O you nobler, and better educated Souls, who therefore love good learning, because you either have it, or enjoy the blessings of it, your own, and the publique honour are so interested in this point, that no sober man can suspect, that any of you are of your selves so inclined, or can be brought by others Turkish importunities and Barbarities, to the least thought of neglecting the preservation of these two incomparable Seminaries of all good Learning, which have in former ages furnish'd both Church and State with so many excellent, both Magistrates, and Ministers; which places for liberall alimony, for sweet, and quiet accommodations, for copious, and rare Libraries, for stately buildings; and (which is the soule of Universities) for men of eminent learning, and piety, were not to be exceded, scarce parallel'd in all the world. To whose compleat felicity nothing can be wanting that either friends would most desire, or enemies most malign, if such order, government, and good discipline in point of moralls, and practiques be added, as best becomes learned and ingenuous men: whose greatest honour is, to have learning, like gold, enamel'd with all the beauties of virtue, and embellish'd with all the ornaments of true Religion;
That the sacred solitudes, the sweet vacancies, the happy
leisures, the pleasan retirements, the plenteous enjoyments, which by the
indulgence of God, and the munificence of worthy men and women,
they enjoy as Students, beyond the most of mortals; (whom either
hard labour exhausts, or solicitous care distracts, or penurious
servitude opprefteth) may not be abused, to the foster daliances and
idle entertainments of vicious intemperancies and disorders;
when those places were intended by the pious founders, as hives for
Bees, not as nests for wasps and drones; receptacles and encoura-
ments for virtuous industry, religious modesty, prudent integrity,
and not for Cretian Lazy-bellies, cunning sophisters, and prag-
matick wits, (which serve only to set a fairer gloss, and sharper
edge on the basest errors, and the most debauched manners;) which
ought, as ever in conscience, to be avoided, so then also
in policy; when there are, as many enemies against the Universities, as there
are evil eyes upon the revenews. Any plea will serve the design of
covetous and unlearned malice; which seeks by pretending the dissolution
of manners, laxation of government, and the shipracks of many
ingenious young men, sent to the Universities, to justify those
dayly and desperate calumnies used against them: That they are
not only superfluous, but also noxious; as useless, so hurtful to
the Church and State: Both which, some men will never thinke
sufficiently blest, till they have made them, as blinde as Beetler,
both in good learning, and true reformed Religion; that so the
English Nobility, Gentry, and ingenuous youth, may either run out
to utter barbarity in a short time, or else fall under the culture of
those, who affect to be the grand Masters, and Catholick Teachers
of all good learning, the Jesuites. The gravity of whose man-
ners, and exactnesse, both of their Literature, and Discipline (where-
with they adorn that side, and party, which they are lifted to
maintain) is not to be so much imitated, as exceeded by our Uni-
versities; which are of the reformed party the most Illustrious;
That so they may redeem themselves from those jealousies and
reproaches, which either just severity or injurious calumnie,
is prone to fall upon them; and so merit both love, hon-
our, and protection from all, that have any true excellency in this
Nation.

To this humble request, not onely Divines, and Ministers of
religious Mysteries, which tend highly to the temporall and etern-
all welfare of mens soules; but all other liberall faculties (which
exercise the man more than the beast; the head and minde, more
than the hands and body) will (I presume) most readily subscribe;
Since, neither the learned Students, and honest practisers of the
Common Law, (by which the boundaries of our estates, liberties,
honours,
honours and lives are set and preserved under God) Nor those of the Civill Law; (in which are the suffrages of all Nations; the common sense, the generall Rules and rational Maximes of mankind; whereby all forain treaties, correspondencies, traiques, and negotiations in war and peace, with enemies and friends, are regulated and translat'd) Nor yet the conscientious Physitans, who study to preserve the health, strength, beauty and life of our bodies: None of these, any more, than the Ministers of the Gospell, can move or practice rationally, wisely, and conscientiously, in their several callings, without those principles and foundations of humane learning, which are either generally preparatory, or peculiarly necessary to their respective faculties; upon whose stock, first planted, and watered in the Universities, those scions are commonly graffed, which either come to any flourishing, or good fruit in Church or State.

And certainly, if we generally dislike, and despise petitifoggers in the Common Law; meer pragmatiques in the Civil; and quack-salvers in Physick; there is no reason any sober Christians should desire or like Theologitians, meer praters and dunces in the great science of Divinity: Ministers of the Gospell should of all men be least deprived of, or defective in good learning, in as much as their work is of the highest concernment; nor is it without those difficulties, which may whet and exercise the most improved abilities, the most cautious studies, and the most conscientious diligence; All which are necessary ingredients to make up an able, and worthy Minister: What wise and sober Christian can think it fit to commit the care of his soules welfare, the publique service of his God, the honour of his Saviour, the celebration of holy mysteries, the means of grace, the comfort of his conscience, and the conservation of true Religion, together with the peace, order, and honour of the Church of Christ, while he lives, and when he dies; to commit (I say) all these to the custody, care, inspection, and managing of such men, whom he could not with reason, or without great shame in himself, and some from others, entrust with any publique commerce, trade, and negotiation; or with his private welfare in health, honour, estate, liberty, or life?

Since all divine and humane perfections are in our Lord Jesus Christ; and from him every good and perfect gift is derived to the Church; nothing is more just and grateful, than for Christians to use, improve, and return all those gifts, and endowments which our humane nature is capable of in this world, to the glory of God, and the good of mankind; which, when they are sanctified both in the habit and use, are but preventive of, and preparatory to, those eternal accomplishments, which our soules expect in heaven.

K k k 2
which is that highest degree of happiness which holy and humble learning studies to attain.

Nor can any wise man conceive, how either the highest science, which we call Divinity, or those other excellent ones, in Humanity, can ever be levelled to vulgar prattises, and a parity of use among men; (which will prove an Epidemical disease, like the scabs and botches of Egypt, when the ashes were scattered over the land) unless withall there could be a levelling of men's reasons, wits, capacities, and industries, as well as of their callings; or some law of Ostracisme made, by which it shall be forbidden for any man, to be richer and healthfuller, wiser, and learned, more holy, or more religious than another.

But these are Cacotopian fancies, which not the profoundness of Plato, but the shallowness of Thersites, or Dametias, hath laid out to so vile, wicked, monstrous, and ridiculous formes; that no good Christian, who resolves not to banish all reason, and true Religion from himself and his posterity, can ever approve or follow, so, as to wish to be of, or ever to see such a Commonwealth of Coxcombes and Idotes, who by the want of all good learning both in Magistrates, and Ministers will soon learn, like wild Arabs, and Scythians, to rob, plunder, poison, kill, deceive, and damn one another, growing as Maffive dogs, fiercer by dark keeping: Being justly punished by being given up to their own hearts lusts, to commit all wickedness with greediness, for not glorifying God in the high esteem, and holy use of those excellent gifts, which by good learning, he confers upon humane Nature and societies; of all which in reference to the good both of Church and State, a gracious heart is never to seek, how to make a gracious, and thankful use either in himself or others.

But there are some, who ashamed to be reckoned among the illiterate erue (who despise and decry all good learning) and desirous to seem more moderate and well tempered men, plead; That however Learning well used, may be very beneficial both to Church and State, both in civil and religious regards; yet with God there is no * acceptation of persons: and in Christ Jesus Greek and Barbarian, the learned and the Idotes are all one; That God may dispense the beams of his Spirit in the light of Truth as well as in the heat of Love, how, and where, and to whom he will, yea, and oft doth reveal his secret and hidden things, not to the wise and learned, but to the babes and foolish: Therefore a publice liberty,
Of Christian Liberty in Religion.

liberty at least, and fair toleration ought to be granted to any men, to opinie, to teach, and accordingly to act, as they are inwardly persuaded and moved: And this without any such tyrannous restraints, as commonly learned men and Scholars, Ministers especially, have fought themselves and taught Magistrates, to lay upon both the judgment, conscience and practice of people, both in their first education, and after profession; studying to make all things in Religion, or manners, as bastards, and illegitimate, which have not their Certificate for their legitimation; whereas the Spirit of God ought not to be so strictly smashed, spilled, and restrained; least of all curbed, and constrained, by any prohibitions, or impositions on mens judgments and consciences, which in matters of Religion are only to be drawn with the cords of a man, such as mens reasons, or Scriptures, or the Spirits persuasion, may afford to every one's capacity, and not to tye them up by any Creeds, Articles, Catechismes, or Injunctions of Religion, much less by penal and coercive Statutes, which (like Persian sheep) carry tailes of injurious mullets and penalties after them, that are heavier, then their bodies.

Answ. There is no Jewell which Swine delight more to wear in their Snouts, than this of Liberty; which how well it becomes such fordid and indocible cattel, those excellent Christians can best judge, who are worthy to enjoy so precious a token of Chris's love to his Church; as knowing best how to value it, and use it: I know well, that true Christian Religion ought not to be made a snare, or an arrow, or a rack, or an heavy yoak, or an Egyptian bondage to mens minde and Consciencies; this were to turn the sweetest wine into a sharp bramble, and the figtree into a thorn: Nor is there any thing which Christians should be more tender of (as the Ephesine Fathers most piously admonish) than their own, and others true liberties, which Christ hath purchased with his precious blood; off which both Christian Magistrates, and chiefly Ministers, should be most exact keepers, and conscientious defenders; lest they prove an oppression; and the bracelets or ornaments of Religion, become the chains of hypocrisy and manacles of superstition; binding such heavy burthens on mens consciences, which God hath not imposed.


Nil sam voluntarium quam religionem cogi non potest; longe diversa sunt carnis ista charitas, nec potest ovisitas cum vis, et justitia cum crudelitate connungi.

Defendendo est religione non occidendo, sed non nondenique servius sedias sapientias non seelaces sed

fide. Si animus adversity sit, iam sublata est, iam nulla religio. Laelant. li. Juss. 5. c. 20. Religionis non est cogere religiomen, quae sponde sibi se debet, non vii. Tertul. i ad Scap.

So Constantine the Great would have no man compelled but persuaded to Religion. Allud est certamen pro religione sponde sibi se debet, allud supplicium, iacere cogi. Euseb. Eccl. 1. 10. cap. 5.

wherein the severer heights and tyrannies of men are prone to usurp
upon the ingenuous kingdom and gracious dominion of Christ,
where none is a subject, but he that enjoys that free Spirit, which
David prays to be established with; and none is free but he that
willingly takes up Christ’s yoke and burden, which are light and
ease; but yet not loose or flack. For Jesus Christ having re-
deemed us from the greatest slavery, and spiritual bondage, hath
indeed invested his Church with the noblest immunities, and governs
it by the divinest liberties; which drawing is by the cords of God’s
love to us, set forth in his Word; and binding us with love to
God, and for his sake to one another, by so much includes all
true liberty, as it wholly consists of love; whose very life and essence
is liberty; it being impossible to command, consent, or to compel
love; which is (ἀνακεφαλαιο) the most absolute Sovereign of all life,
and under no Empire but that of God, who is love, and perfect
liberty: And our Liberty is then truly Christian and divine (which
only is desirable, because only true) when it is such, as Christ
hath purchased for, and God hath revealed to his Church in his
Word; with which men must seriously advise, and not with
their own wanton and extravagant fancies; if they would be
informed what that liberty is, which only becomes true Christians,
who of all men have the least unlawful licentiousness indulged to them.

I finde there are no people more vehement boastsers of, and stick-
lers for this, which they call Christian liberty, than those who
least understand it; most abuse it themselves, and are most im-
patient to allow it to others; if once they get such power as
makes them able to oppresse, none are more insolent, or less
tolerating those things, even in Religion, to others, for which
they plead more of conscience, both as to Gods and mans Laws,
than these objectors themselves can doe. Nor can any, the most
modest plea, for Christian liberty be heard by those who were
formerly so loudly clamorous for the name, when indeed they
did not either intend, or rightly understand what the thing is.
It will be then a work of Charity; and an effect of that love, which
I owe to these men for Christ’s sake, (in whom alone our
liberties are founded, and conserved) to free them from that cap-
tivity of errors, and bondage of extravagant passions, wherewith
they are oppressed and abused even in this great point of Christian
Liberty; Then which as there is nothing, which sinfull men could
lesse deserve, so nor is there any thing they can naturally lesse
rightly
Of Christian liberty in Religion.

rightly use, or more grossly mistake, and abuse. There is no Jewell, with which Christ hath endowed his Spouse the Church, and every true beleever, for which the Devil hath not some counterfeite; nor is there any, by which he cheats men more easily, and more to his advantage and the Churches detriment, than in the false figures and resemblances of Christian liberty. For as no man naturally is willing to be curbed or restrained from any impulses of his lusts; so neither can he easily learn that Paradox of true Christian liberty, which consists in the severest restraints from sin; and the exactest conformities to the will of God.

You then, O excellent Christians, well understand with me; That as no creature; Angels, or men, have that (αυτανοια) self-subsistence; nor that (αυτερκασια) self-sufficiency, in and of themselves, which is peculiar to God; so neither have that (αυτουσια) unresponsibleliness to any other; nor that (αυτεξεσθαν) independence or absolute liberty in their will, which owns no rule or measure of its motions, but its (ευκοια) own good pleasure. For as Angels and men depend wholly upon God, for our nature and being: so we must needs be subordinate to him, as our Author, and responsible to him, as one wiser, better, juster, and stronger than our selves: Also our will (wherein our rational, and religious liberties are planted, and whence they spread or diffuse to all the motions and faculties under its Empire and command) hath its holy limits and bounds fixed to it by God, both as to the Supreme end and highest good, which the wife God hath proposed in himself; and also as to those means, by which he hath revealed that end, as us as attainable, either in piety, or charity; in private, or publique relations.

This constant tendency, or intention to the Supreme end; and those holy regulations (which in due and lawfull means, the wisdom of God hath prescribed) the more any creature; Man or Angell attaines, the more rationall, moral and divine liberty he enjoys; and he is so much the more freed from those shackles; and impediments, which the chains of darkness and corruption, through ignorance of mind, and error of understanding, or perseverance of will, or excess of passion, or violence of temptations, or depravedness of customs, or delusion of examples, hamper and binde the soul withall, as the wings of a bird with birdline; hindering its regard to the Supreme God, which is the glory of God; and its exact applying to those means, which are proper for the attaining and enjoying of it: In the fruition of which the true and eternall liberty of the soul consists, (as the eyes in seeing most fully, and perfectly, its most desired object) and which it then en-

* Liber est quosquis probus. Servire deo est bonus operibus & justitiam & libertatem conservare, Laet.
of Christian Liberty in Religion.

Whose wise, blessed and unerring will, revealed in his holy Word, being rightly understood, is (now) the only certain and infallible rule; the sole authentick Patent, which any good Christian will regard, and follow, or alledge and plead in this point of Christian Liberty; either internall, or externall; private, or publike; solitary, or sociall; in thoughts, opinions, judgement, conscience, speech, action, or operation in any kind, Which the further it is from any error, transport, or licentiousness in a mans self, and from any cloak of maliciousnesse against others, the more it deserves to be counted and called Christian freedom.

As a man freed from the distemper of madness, and rid of his chains, and got out of Bedlam, hath indeed, now, his true liberty, as a man; not to rave and speak, or doe such mad things, as he formerly did in his distraction; but to doe all things, as a sober man, who is master of his wits and understanding; and consequently under the most strict, yet ingenious restraints of reason and religion; the laws of modesty, humanity, honour, civility, charity, and society; from all which the captivity of his lunacy and madness unhappily freed him. But now the recovery of his right senes happily restores him to those duties and observances which become a man and a Christian: It is mercy, which redeems us from our native bondage to sin and wrath; and which sets us into the gracious and glorious liberty of the sons of God; which is to know, and love, and serve him, as he would have us: It is a madness for Christians, to think of, covet, or enjoy other Liberty, than such as the Saints in all ages attained, and such as the blessed Angels ever enjoyed; which the Lord Jesus himself, our great Liberator, both observed himself, and purchased for his Church; yea such as God himself is eternally blest with all; which is to be good, and to doe good without any impediment.

It is the heaviest chain of the Devils Tyranny, and that in full bondage, which hath entered into mans soul; to imagine, that our liberty consists in thinking, or speaking, or doing, or omitting, what we will; without any regard to God or man, as if men were
were their own Masters, and had no Lord over them: To fancy, that all restraints internal, of modesty, fear, sense of honour, science of truth, or conscience of duty, in purity, piety, or charity, also external, of established order, good laws, just power, and government, either in things civil, or sacred, are encroachments upon, and diminutions of Christian Liberty: The want of neglect of which limiters doth infallibly subject us to the basest, and most infamous servitude.

Whereas, no doubt, the true liberty of any man is to be such in his inward habits and propensities, also to doe such things most constantly, cheerfully, and without sinfull impediments, which are most proper and advantages to the nature and excellency of men, considered both in itself, and its relations, as it stands in reference to God its Creator, and its neighbour: when a Christian is free, to know, consider, meditate of, understand, remember, and believe what ever truths God hath revealed to him; yea, further when he is free to declare, and utter them in such an holy way, which charity, sobriety, order and gravity allow. It is no freedom for a man to think what he lists, in vain, erroneous or blasphemos thoughts; or to bolt out and vent all his raw, undigested, rash and rotten fancies, or irreligious opinions to others; He should set a match over his thoughts, and lips with prayer, modesty, and humility: Trying and weighing all things, first with himself, by the Word, and the Spirit of God, or conferring so with others, as may have some favour of reason, and religion; an holy desire to learn, or teach in a regular, not a rude, insolent, and imperious way: the next liberty is, to doe those duties of piety and charity, publique and private, which God hath commanded every one, not onely in generall, but in such restrictions of place and calling wherein God hath set them.

It is also true liberty for a Christian upon good grounds to hope for, and expect that reward and crown, which God the righteous Judge hath promised to those that persevere in well doing, who in that way are free to enjoy all the comforts, priviledges, and Ordinances, which Christ hath instituted in an holy order and most regular way, for our private, or publique good: a Christian is free from the fears, terrors, judgements, curses and wrath of God; and from the Laws rigour or condemnation, upon his true faith, and unfaigned repentance: By which graces the beleiver being ingraffed into Christ, is free from the observations of the ceremonial law, (which tended to Christ, and ended in him;) Also from the politicall or civil Law among the Jewes, so far, as variation of times, and necessities of affairs require for the good of mankinde; yet without violating the principles of equity or charity, in them;
which are perpetually obligatories upon moral grounds to all men: From the moral law also a Christian is so far free, as to its rigour and exactness of personall actual obedience; the want of which in the least kind is condemnative, in itself; but not so, as we are by faith in Christ; yet are we not freed from the approbation, and love of the moral law, as it is just and good; nor are we from a constant endeavours to conform to its holiness, not now as a requisite to the justification of a sinner, but as a fruit of that in our sanctification, which from faith and repentance brings forth love; and from love of God a steadfast purpose, and reall endeavours to obey his holy commands in all things; which is our Evangelical perfection, and highest freedom in this world; which is not wholly from sinning, but from a willful sinning. Also we are free, as to our purpose and new principle, from that malice, uncharitableness, from those envies, discontent, and worldly disorders in any kind, as they have dominion over mere natural and sinful men: Being further free (that is willing, and content) to suffer what ever God is pleased to inflict upon us, for punishment, trial, or honor, in the way of testifying to his truth; we are also free from a principle of love, to yield ready obedience, as to God, so to man, for the Lords sake; whatever man in the name of God, and in Christ's stead requires of us, in order to God's glory, the peace, good example, and benefit of others, in any society, either as men or Christians.

The grounds and rules of which externall obedientiall freedom in civil and church societies, the Lord hath by generall precepts and directions expressed in his Word: leaving the particular circumstantiating, enacting, and applying of those generals to that liberty of wisdome, piety, and charity, which ought to be owned by inferiors, and exercised by superiors, as governors in church or State; This Politick liberty admits of divers variations according to several states, times, emergencies and occasions, to which Christians, as men, are subject in this world, wherein honest freedom may be used by such laws and restraints, as shall seem best for the publique welfare, to those in whom the power of giving laws to others doth reside; even in that just power and authority which God hath given to some over others, to rule them; to allow no such gubernative liberty to any men, is to deny that indulgence and authority which God hath granted, both to Christian Magistrates, and to Ministers, even to restrain in many things the private liberty of others, for the publique good and order of the community; nor may any man sediously and factiously plead, or contend for his private liberty of speeches, or actions, further than consists with the peace, order, safety, and welfare of the publique; according to what is by due authority permitted, or forbidden: and however private thoughts of,
of discontent, mutiny, rebellion, and cursing others, fall not under humane cognizance and judicature; yet they as not free, as to the tribunall of God, in a mans own conscience. Neither may publicke Authority, (which hath freedome to rule; that is, to command, enjoin and exact external obedience of others;) Nor may private liberty, (which is free to obey in the Lord the commands of Superiours, or else patiently to abide their cenfure;) neither the one, nor the other may turn this liberty to a cloak of maliciousnesse or licentiousnesse; Not the one to tyranny and oppression; beyond what piety, equity, order, and charity require; nor the other to make it any ground or occasion for fictious and seditious perturbings of the publique order and peace: Nor may any party of men (though never so godly, and well affected) being in no place or authority, in Church or State, enabling them, carry on any design (though in its abstract consideration it be better, than what at present may be) by any violent, irregular and disorderly wayes, which are utterly unwarrantable in themselves, and no fruit of that Christian liberty, which Christ hath purchased for us; either inwardly, as to God and our consciences; or outwardly, as to Society and publique relations of men and Christians to one another; where every relation imports a duty; and every duty hath its bounds; beyond which, is not true and vertuous liberty, but inordinatenesse and excelle.

Yea and in some cases of severer restraints, by which Governments doe indeed trench upon those rationall or religious liberties, which God hath allowed to men and Christians; yet in these cases a true Christian only wraps himself up in that liberty of patience, which knowes, when and how to suffer without injury to the publique tranquilliity, or to his private peace of conscience; still keeping a *meek and quiet spirit, with the love, zeal, and profession of that, which he conceives to be the truth of God; these are the fruits of that *free Spirit of Christ, in Christians: which appeared most eminently in Christ; which makes us free to all things, but not to sin in thought, word, or deed: Looking upon sin as the great *tyrant, usurper, and waster of the true liberty of every man and Christian.

It is then as farre from Christian liberty, as sickness is from health, madness or drunkennesse from sobriety, rottennesse from Divels Liber-

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1 Pet. 3. 4. * 2 Cor. 5. 17. * Eccl. 10. 20.

Nam s celus intra se tacitum quos cognosce vertent, Fathi ciren
den haben, Jur. 1 Pet. 2. 13.

Rom. 13. 3.

You must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

Christian liberty and divine necessity may stand together; yea they are inseparable.

* Relations civiles mutuo officio ligamur,

Yea and in some cases of severer restraints, by which Governments doe indeed trench upon those rationall or religious liberties, which God hath allowed to men and Christians; yet in these cases a true Christian only wraps himself up in that liberty of patience, which knowes, when and how to suffer without injury to the publique tranquilliity, or to his private peace of conscience; still keeping a *meek and quiet spirit, with the love, zeal, and profession of that, which he conceives to be the truth of God; these are the fruits of that *free Spirit of Christ, in Christians: which appeared most eminently in Christ; which makes us free to all things, but not to sin in thought, word, or deed: Looking upon sin as the great *tyrant, usurper, and waster of the true liberty of every man and Christian.


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The Divels affected Liberty.

beauty, or putrefaction from perfection, for any Christian to believe what he lieth, though it be a lie; or to disbelieve and deny it, though it be a truth of God; to take up what opinions and ways of religion he most fancies, and to refuse, what ever he pleases to disaffect, upon light, popular and untried grounds; or openly to speak and dispute whatever he lifts, and publiquely to act, according as his private persuafions, passions, lufts, or interests, or other mens, tempt and carry him; wherein neither right reason, nor common order, nor publique peace, nor conscience of duty, nor reverence of men, nor fear of God, have any such serious, and holy ties upon men, as are necessary for the common good; In which regard private Christians are never so free, as to have no yoke of Christ upon them; no exercice of patience, self-denial, mortification, meeknesse, charity, modesty, and sobriety, together with that comelineffe and decorum, which befoemes Religion, and a Christian spirit; beyond which the most transporting zeal may not expatiate: For that is no other than such freedome, as water enjoys, when it overbear and overflows all its banks and bounds; or as fire seizes on the whole house; Such as drunken men in their roarings, and mad men in their rantings contend for; such as wild beasts, and untamed Monsters struggle for; yea such, as the envious and malicious divels affect, and are most impatient not to enjoy: In whose nostrils and jaws, the mighty wisdom and goodness of God (who is Potentissimum & hibernum agents the fountain of all true rational, morall, religious and divine freedome) hath his bower of power, and bridle of terror: not of love: Such are those liberties, which those (* primogeniti Dialo), prime birds of the Divels brood, some impudent Libertines and dissolute wretches now (as of old) aim at, who have cast off all sense of justice, order, (hame, and humanity), while they clamour and act for liberty; that is, that their blasphemies, profaneneses, impudicitles, scurrilities, impudencies, and violences against all publique civill peace, as well as against all religion, order, and Miniftry of the Church of England, may be tolerated if not countenanced; notwithstanding they profess to hold with us some common grounds of Christian Religion, and stand responsible to civill duties and relations.

*As St. John called Cerinthus, who was of this sect of Libertines, Iren. 1. 1. Congredere mentum ut ad principem dedicarem: vos lascivitium Gnosticonum, Nicolaitanum & aliorum Harret, Iren. 1. 1.

True Christians should be as fearefull to enjoy the divels freedome, (not which he hath, but which he desires; that is, to will, and to doe whatever he lifts;) And as they should be zealous for their own.
own true, holy, and humble liberties, which lead them quietly to doe or suffer Gods will, in Gods way; so they should be tender of encroaching upon those publique liberties, which are by right reason, order and Scripture granted to some men, as Magistrates and Ministers for the generall good of Christians. Men must not so please themselves in any thing they fancy of liberty, as to injure others; since no mans right can consist in the detriment, or damage of anothers rights or dues. As then no man rationally can think it a liberty denied him, when he is forbid upon idle visits, to goe to infected houses; or being infected with the plague, to goe among others that are found; or to drink poison and propin it to others; no more can any Christian religiously plead for a liberty to broach, and publith to others any opinion he pleaseth; or to invade any place and office, he hath a minde to; or to disturb others in their duties and power; or to contemne with publique insolence; or, violently to innovate against established laws and orders in Church or State: much lefse hath he any freedom openly to blaspheme or disturb that religion, and way of devotion, wherein sober and good Christians worship God by that authority and order, which is settled in publique, according to their consciences and best judgements.

Here, neither Christian Magistrates, nor Ministers are to regard such pleas for private Liberties, as overthrow the publique order and peace; nor are they to regard those clamours against them and the Laws, as persecuting, when they doe but oppose and restrain such pernicious exorbitancies; nor are they in this infringers of the peoples freedome, but preservers of Liberties, which are bound up onely in the laws; nor are they oppressours of others mens consciences, but disbachers of their own duties, and consciences, which they bear to Gods glory, and the publique good; wherefore as they stand highly related by their place and power, so they are highly accountable to God for them: And, if they should suffer arrogant ignorance to come to its full rudenesse, and extent, tumultuary numbers and brutish power will soon make good private presumptions; and cover over the most impotent lusts, passions, and ambitions of men, with the pleas and outeries for Christian liberty: That is, that they may doe what they list; and no man else, what they should, in right reason and Religion, but onely what their proud fanatick pleasure will permit them; Thus oft by the Engine of Liberty, Christians are caill into 

No mans liberty may be anothers injure.

Nullus emolumentum jus necit tur exaltatius damnus est: injuria. Reg. tur.

True Liberty and good government in Church and State agree well together.

* Leges sunt corporis politici nervi, sine quibus luxus & impietas maxima, de hominibus, ox, Homerus, Verul. Liberti sunt conservantes, civitatis anima, Maril. Fic. est relinquandi norma. Dei

L.113
Sumrna cj} in
tht grcAteft ^7wnH)»j Of Aflarfehy , which grow fr6tn imaginary
publicum chm- ^j, abufed and corrupted freedottles , which, if not
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^^'^^'^h and j«ff Jeverity, ('which is the grt^left charity tothepubthey grow from the lefler fy-bkwlrtgs of fecret opinions,
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flyerS abroad; (as the Frogs, Flics and Locufts of
Egyft) to the great infeftionj and mokftation of ethers; defiling
and defacing all things, that are efteemcd of publiqiie religious
order, beauty, peace, holynefle and true liberty.

irer/v,jii.Reg.

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Nee totamferes

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indulgences and crttell
by all fober Chriftijns ; That it is not
more the happineffeof mankinde, to have ihe Sea refirained by
the bounds, which God in his wonderful providence hath fet
to it J that it return not again to cover theeanh; than this is,
that he hath eftablifliedby the light of Reafon,and the commands
of his ycriiten Word the ordinances of Minijiry and Magiftracy imong
C^^^'riftian men; by which to fre[ei-'ve tnieChriftian liberty in its
fphear and due bounds of jtiftlaws, of found doftrine, true beleeving, well doing, orderly obeying, and comely futferingj and
withall, to keep out thofe enormous extravagancies which ieek
to overthrow both Magiftmcy and Mini{hy , which are the great
ccnfervatoys of Chriftians, in all honeftand juft freedomes ; without which no men fhould enjoy any, while violent lufts and errours make way ('by /roe!/w£ all thingsj for their t'jici^, and muddy
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of Chriftian Religion ; which made Chriftians of all men the moft
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much they moft enjoyed z fftrituaH, gracious, and divine liberty ^
Vi^J^"""^"' which no perfecution or oppreflion took from them, any more,
then it did their peace, truth , faith, and patience; thefe men
alwayes pleafed themfelves in denying themfe'.ves all things that were
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the very appearance of evill ; not onely in the confcience of a
Chriftian, biTt even in the fight of heathens ; Such as not on I7 K t-legion-, but common reafon condemned.Nor did the Chriftians when
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by any force any liberty of Religion beyond what they
had by civill favour of Magiftrares ; or that of their prayers,
tears and patience, when perfecuted and denycd civill liberties;
as Tertullian tcls in his apology : So wary they were oi abufing

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their liberty to any insolency, offence, injury, or indignity against any private person; much more against a publick and common good of either Church or State; the preservation of which, as to the general interests of societies, wherein thousands are concerned, both in their souls and bodies welfare, is far more to be regarded, by wife, godly, and charitable men; than any private pleas, or pretensions for Christian liberty; especially when they look with an evil eye, and lift up an offensive hand against publick order, government, duties and institution; wherein are bound up, and contained that peace, piety, and religion which is enjoyed or professed by any Christians.

As then the best governed families and best disciplined Armies, allow no plea, or practice of liberty to any servants; or soldiers, which are contrary to the rules and ends of right economical or military discipline; which intends the common safety and welfare of families and Armies; So, neither may Christian Religion be thought to bring forth, or be forced to maintain, that Liberty (as a legitimate issue of conscience) in its holy profession, and orderly ministrations; which is in all civil or secular dispensations esteemed, rejected and punished as a turbulent and seditious bastard: And which, being but as Ishmael the son of a bondwoman, is prone to mock and abuse the Isaac of true liberty, which is the son of promise, and is no way fit to be the heir, or to divide the Inheritance of Christian freedom; which is only the portion of holy, humble, sober, and orderly Christians; for while some boast of, and challenge to themselves, and promise to others this false and spurious Liberty, they are still servants to their lusts, and in bondage to their corruptions; impatient of any restraints, but those of their own wits, interests and fancies; yea and this Bastard Liberty, like the one base son of Gideon (Abimelech) when once it can but get power, makes no conscience to destroy all the lawfull heirs of true religious liberty, which are possessed of truth, peace, charity, order, good government in any Church: yea and all civil justice too, and properties of goods and estates; which are presently thought by licentious men, inconsistent with their freedom, when once their powerful lusts have set upon the heads of their unwitty designs, the Crown and title of Christian Liberty. Which disguise the Devill fits to such a compleatness, that there is no error, no lust, no sin, nor blasphemy, no villany, nor deformity in any mens opinions or practices so horrid, which hee doth not seek to colour over, or to cover with the paint and palliations of Christian Liberty.

Which being a pure and spotlesse Virgin, the highest beauty which a Christian can here be inamour'd of, and which he courst with
with all modesty, purity, and respect on earth; hoping to have the full fruition of it in heaven;) disdain above all things, to be abused by those bold and filthy ravishers, who like the inordinate monsters of Gibeah, will never think their licentious lusts satisfied, until they have killed the Levites concubine: Destroying indeed all true Christian liberty (which is preferred only by good order and government both in the Church and State); while they prostitute truths, duties, institutions, Ministry, and Magistracy to all manner of insolencies and confusion; as if Christians were never free enough; till they were without all sense of sin and shame; till they neither feared God, nor revered man; till they had broken all the bands of civill justice; and cast away the cords of all religious discipline from them; as the Cainites, Judaites, Ophitess, Adamites; and others of old.

Which most inordinate liberty is no more to be enjoyed or desired by any good Christian, than that of the Demoniac; who being oft bound with chains and fetters, yet brake them all; and was driven of the Devil into deserts, among the graves, often dashing him against the stones, and casting him into fire and water. Such will be the sad fate of every Christian Church and State, which either affects, or tolerates any such impious, fanatick, unlawful, and unholy liberties; contrary to that purity, equity, order and decency; which is necessary to that religion which they profess as Christian. Therefore no wonder it the Lord by his word, and his true Ministers daily rebukes this unclean spirit; and seeks to cast out of this Church such an untamable Devil, which hath already got too much possession in many mens minds; who are prone to deify every Diana, as an image come downe from heaven, if it be but set up in the silver-sprine of this popular goddess Liberty; which of all puppetly Idols lately consecrated to vulgar adoration, I can least of all Idolize: as that, which I see to have least of divinity or humanity in it: either as to piety, equity, purity, or charity.

Yet is no man a more unfruitful servant and votary of that true and divine Liberty, which becomes Christians; which preserves truth, peace, order, and holiness among men, both in private and publique respects, both in Church and State; and in this I wish all men my rivals in the ambition and sporters, with me in the fruition; which will then be most, when we get our hearts most freed from that heavy bondage, wherewith errour, pride, passion, self-seeking, and the like cruel task-masters (un-
nder the great oppressing Pharaoh, the Divell, doe seek to enslave
the soules, and consciences of men, by so much the baser slavey,
by how much they fancy their slavey to be liberty: their freedom to
be that freedome from sin, which Christ hath purchased:
which dangerous mistake makes them love their bondage; to bore
their cares; and to be most offended with those, who seek to show
them their desperate errors and dregfuls torridom; which is the greatest
severity of divine vengeance in this world upon men, by giving them
over to Satan, or up to their own hearts lusts.

Yet this false and damnable liberty is by some men earnestly con-
tended for, and imperiously claimed in the way of publique toleration;
that they, or any men, may professe, as to Religion, what they live;
being prone through pride and ignorance, to think that no opinion
they hold, or practise they doe, is irreligious, profane, blasphem-
ous, or intolerable; nor ought by any just severity or penalty
bee restrained, or punished. Whereas Christians truly blessed with
tender Consciencies, and meeknesse of wisdome, are most willing to be
kept within Christ's bounds; and loathest to take any liberty, either
in opinion or manners, beyond what in the truth of the
Word, or in charity to the publique peace, and order is permitted;
Humble knowledge makes Christians most tractable; yea and
thankfull to those, either Ministers or Magistrates, whose love and
fidelity to them, will least tolerate any error, or sin in them, without
reproof, and just restraint.

Grata revigilantibus erit ea molestia, que non patiar erroris, tanquam monitis formos & veterum
marbo, in urbe. Aut.

Others, whom ignorance makes proud, and pride erroneous, and
both unruly; are ready to esteem all they hold or vent ordare to
act, (especialy under colour of religion,) for in civill affairs
they are afraid of the sword, to be so commendable, at least toler-
able, that they merit, if not concurrence and approbation from
all men, yet at least concurrence, and toleration; nor may they be
touched, or curbed by any authority in Church or State, (be their
extravagancies never so pernicious and blasphemous;) but presently
they make huge outeries of persecution; as if all were persecutors,
who helped to binde a mad man; or to put a roaring drunkard
into the cage; which measure of healing them, is best both for
them, and for others too; and is not to be used to any, but those
that
Of Toleration.

that are truly such disorderly and distempered spirits.

I conceive it most clear and certain both in right Reason and
ture Religion, that the prudence, piety, and charity of Governors
in Church and State ought to move in that middle way, between
tolerating all differences, and none, in matters of Religion, where-
in men are variously to be considered, according to that profession
which they own, and make of Religion: Sure none are to be to-
tolerated in blaspemining, or insolencing that religion, which is es-
ablished by publique consent or laws, and which they professe in
common with others; being in this self-condemned and without
excuse; Nor are any of a different belief, to what is established, to
be tolerated in giving any factious and sediously scandals, against
that Religion, which is by the wisdome, and piety of any Na-
tion, and Church there setled, as sacred; being always presumed,
that it is judged the truest and best: for no men can be supposed
to binde themselves, and their posterity to any religion, which they
think false.

Two ways of
just restraints
in the Church:

1 Tim. 3. 10.
Tit. 2. 15.
Tit. 3. 10.
1 Cor. 5. 11.

1. By Church
discipline.

2. Magis-
tratrick power.

1 mistress
in matters of
publique, than
more imponder
more excellent
civitates.

2. A second way of animad-
version or restraint of publique disorders in Religion, is by the
power of the sword in the hand of the Christian Magistrate, who
is to regard not onely the civill peace of subjects, but also that
truth which lies on him, to take care for their religious interests, and
their souls welfare, that they may be taught and preserved in the
right way of knowing and serving God: The happiest condition of any
Christians is, when both these powers are wisely and sweetly twined
together, so as the Ministry directs the Magistracy by the Word,
and the Magistracy affils the Ministry by the sword: where the censures of the Church act by charity, and the censures of the Magistrate by a just severity; yet so, as neither love to the offender; nor dislike of the offence be wanting: That all be done to the edification, not to the destruction of the Church, or of any member of it, so farre as its welfare is consistent with the publicque.  

Neither civil, nor Church power among Christians should be as a sharp and hard rock, dashing presently all in pieces, that touch or strike at it in the least kinde, though never so modestly differing from the received Religion; nor yet ought they to be as pillows and sponges, yielding to soft a reception to every new opinion and prafis, as to invite all errors, and novelties to a recumbency, or rest in their bosome; A Church, or Christian State, will soon be full of all noisome vermine, if they allow as a work of charity and liberty, every forbid error, and beggerly opinion, publiquely to lodge, and nestle under their roof; yea and to contend for place, and crowd out that Religion which is established: Christian Magistrates should neither use the sharp rasor or two-edged sword of the Spanish Inquisition; which forceth with terror, either to deny, what men hold for truth; or to profess which that, they hold not; nor yet should they content themselves with the wooden daggers of Amsterdam; where civil authority excuses its lukewarmness, and gilds over its tolerancy of any Religion, with the benefit of trade and commerce. I do not think it Christian to extirpate Jews or Turkes, much leffe any of Christian profession; but I think it both wisdome and charity, first, to endeavour by all fair means to convince all: And secondly, to restrain by just penalties, all those under civil subjection, (however of a different religion) from saying, or doing any thing publiquely scandalous to, and derogating from the honor, peace and order of that Religion, which is esteemed, and therefore setted, as the best and truest: As civill seditions and treasons are intolerable, so are religions; nor are such endeavours venial, which by printing blaspheinous booke, and divellish Libels seek to rece old rotten errors and heresies; or to bring publique reproach, and scorn upon the reformed Christian Religion in this Church: no not although those infamous pamphlets were attended with learned Confutations; since it's safer to forbid the use of poisons to the incautious people, than to permit them to drink them up, upon confidence of the virtue, which may be in the antidotes applied: The nature of man is prouer to imbibe noxious things, then to egest them: It is a tempting of God to tolerate evils and errors (which we may prevent) onely upon confidence of the remedies
Christians must not be Scepticks in Religion.

Eph. 4:14.

We can apply. This is more like Mountebanks, than like good Magistrates or Ministers.

Since then, neither in right reason, and true policy of State, it is either becoming or safe, for Christian Magistrates, to have no acknowledgment of any face of Religion, to farre among their people and subjects as to establish, own and command it; nor is it any piety, for Christians, to be always scepticks in Religion; ever unsatisfied, and unresolved, and unestablished in matters of Gods worship, and mans salvation, still ravelling the very grounds of Religion with endless cavils and needless disputes. Since the Word of God is near and open to direct all men in the ways of God; and since what is necessary to be believed and obeyed in truth and holiness, is of all parts in Scripture most plain and easy; No doubt, but Christian Magistrates are highly bound in Conscience to God, and in charity to the good of their subjects, (to whom they must doe more good, then they are desired to doe by the Vulgar) to establish those things, as to the external order, Ministry, form and profession of Religion, both in doctrine and duties, which they shall in their conscience judge and conclude, upon the best advice of learned and godly men, to be most agreeable to the will of God, as most clearly grounded on the Word in the general tenor and analogy of it; and as most fundamentally necessary to be believed and obeyed by all Christians; whereto the Catholick beleef and practice of all Churches (more or lesse agreeing) gives a great light and direction. Christians must not be always toasting to and fro in religion, but come to an Anchor of fixation, as to the publique profession; else there will hardly be any civil peace preserved among men: who least endure, and soonest quarterell upon differences in Religion, each being prone to value his own, and contenm others.

These things of publique piety thus once settled by Scripture upon good advice, ought by all serious, rational and religious means to be made known by the publique Ministry to the people; for so Christ hath ordained, and the Church always observed; to which Ministry (which I have proved to be of God's institution, and so most worthy of mans best favour and encouragement) publique and orderly attendance, for time, place, and manner ought to be enjoyned upon all under that power, for their necessary catechism and instruction; And this with some penalties inflicted upon idle, willful and presumptuous neglects; when no ground of conscience, or other persuasion or reason is produced by those, that are not yet of years of discretion: if any of riper years and sober understanding plead...
plead a dissent, they ought in all charity and humanity be dealt with, by religious reasonings, and meekness of wisdom; if so be they may be brought to the knowledge of the truth: But if either weakness of capacity, or wilfulness and obstinacy suffer them not to be convinced, and so to conform to the publice profession of Religion, I doe not think, that by force, and severities of punishment, they ought to be compelled to profess, or to do, that in Religion, of which they declare an unsatisfaction in judgment; yet may they, both in justice, and charity, be so tied to their good behaviour, that they shall not, under great penalties, either rudely speak, write, or act against; or openly blaspheme, profane, and disturb; or contradict and contemn the Religion publiquely professed, and established.

And however the welfare of this publique is not so concerned, in what men privately hold, as to their judgement and opinion, (thoughts being as the Embryos of another freer world; yet when they come to be brought forth to publique notice in word or deed, they justly fall under the care, and censure both of the Magistrate to restrain them, as relating to the good of community; and of the Minifter to reprove them, as his duty and authority is in the Church.

If in lesser things, which are but the lace and fringe of the holy vesture, the verge and Suburbs of Religion established, Christians doe so dispute and differ, as not to trench upon fundamental truths, neither blaspheming the Majesty of God, or of the Lord Jesus Christ, or of the blessed Spirit, or the authority of the holy Scriptures; nor breaking the bounds of clear morals; nor violating the order of the holy Ministry of Christ's Church, which is the very hinge of all Christian Religion; nor yet wantonly disdaining that bond of Christian communion in point of extern order, peace, and comely administrations of holy things; other private differences and dissentings, no doubt, may be fairly tolerated, as exercises of charity, and disquisitions of truth; wherein yet, even the lesser, as well as greater differences, (which arise in Religion) are far better to be publiquely and solemnly considered of, prudently and peaceably composed, (if possible) than negligently, and carelessly tolerated: as wounds and issues are better healed with speed, than tented to continued Ulcers, and Fistulas.

I am confident, wise, humble, and charitable Christians, in publique eminency of power, and piety, would not finde it so hard a matter (as it hath been made, through roughness of mens passions, and intractableness of their spirits, raised chiefly by other interests, carried on, than that of Christ, true Religion, and poor people soules) if they would set to it in God's name, to reconcile.
the many and greatest religious differences, which are among both Christian and reformed Churches; if they would fairly separate, what things are morall, clear and necessary in Religion, from what are but prudential, decent or convenient; and remove from both these, whatever is passionate, popular and superfluous, in any way, which weak men call, and count Religion; if the many headed Hydra of mens lufts, passions, and secular ends were once cut off, so that no sacrifice, or covetousnesse, or ambition, or popularity, or revenge should sour, and leaven reformation; or obstruct any harmony and reconciliation; sure the work would not be to Hercules, but that sober Christians might be easily satisfied, and fairly lay down their uncharitable confufes, and damning distances.

It is easy to instance, in that one point of Church government, as to the extern form; what unpassionate slander by fes not; but it might easily have been composed, in a way, full of order, counself and fraternal content, so that neither Bishops as fathers, nor Presbyters as brethren, nor people as sons of the Church, should have had any cause to have complained, or envied; or differed? So in the election, trial, and ordination of Ministers, also in the use, and power of the keys, and exercise of Church discipline, who in reason sees not; that, as these things concern the good of all degrees of the faithfull in the Church, so they might (as in St. Cyprian's and all primitive times) have been carried on in so sweet an order, and accord, as should have pleased and profited all; both the Ordainers and the ordained; with those, for whose sakes Ministers are ordained? So in the great and sacred administration of the mysteriours, and venerable Sacraments, especially that of the Lord's Supper; which concerns most Christians of years; how happily, and easily might competent knowledge, an holy profession of it, and an unblameable conversation be carried on, by both pastors and people, with Christian order, care and charity; so as to have satisfied all those, who make not Religion a matter of gain, revenge, State policy, or faction; but of conscience and duty, both to God, and their neighbour, and their own soules; which was the harmonious way of primitive Christians in persecution, when no State factions troubled the purer streams of that doctrine, government, and discipline which the Churches had received, from the divine fountainers; and had preserved sweet amidst the bitter streams, and great storms of persecution; when no interest was on foot among Christians but that of Christ's, to save soules; which did easily keep together in humble, and honest hearts, piety, and humanity; zeal, and meeknesse; mens understandings, and affections; constancy in fundamental truths, and tolerancy in lesser differences; That Truth and
and Peace, Order and Unity might kiss each other, and as twins live together, the foundations remain unviolable, while the superstructures might be varied as much as hay and stubble are from gold and silver. That the faith of Christians might not serve to begin or nourish feuds, nor Christians, (who are as lines drawn from several points of faiths circumference, yet to the same center Christ Jesus) might ever cross and thwart one another, to the breach of charity: but still keep the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace: The same faith invariable, as once delivered to the Saints; yet with those latitudes of private charity, which God's indulgence had allowed to true wisdom, and which an inoffensive liberty grants in many things to sober Christians.

I do not despair, but that such blood may one day yet run in the veins of this Church of England, (which is now almost faint and swooning by the losse of much blood, which civil wars and secular interests have let out,) which may recover it to strength and beauty, both in doctrine and discipline: Yet will it never be the honour of those men to effect it, who truft only to military force; or intend, either to set up any one violent faction, or a loose toleration in religion. It will be little lesse indeed than a miracle of divine mercy and Christian moderation, which must recover the spirit and life, the purity and peace of this Church.

In the best settled Church, or State Christian, I conceive it were a happy and most convenient way, for calming, and composing all differences rising in Religion, to have (as the Jews had their Sanhedrin or great Assembly) if we in England had some settled Synod or solemn Convocation, of pious, grave and learned men; before whom all opinions arising to any difference, from what is once settled, should be debated publicly; deliberated of seriously, and charitably composed, if not definitively determined; that so the main truths may be preserved unshaken, which concern faith and holiness, on which grounds peace and charity in every Church ought to be continued: So that none under great penalty should vent any doctrine in public by preaching or printing, different from the received and established way, before he had acquainted that Consistory or Council with it, and had from them received approbation; to that no man should be punishable for his error, whatever he produced before them; but might either receive satisfaction from them; or only this charge and restraint, that he keep his opinion to himselfe, till God strew him the

*Ref*.

An excellent way for unity and peace in the Church. Twice a year Synods were in primitive times appointed, where the Bishops and other chief Fathers of the Church met to consider of Doctrines and disputes in religion: et in temporibus primitivis admittere fasces et legum rebus tertius.
True temper in Christian Government.

truth; and that he presume not to divulge it, save only in private conference to others, and that in a modest and peaceable manner.

In matters of judgement and opinion, (where no man is accountable for more than he can understand, and upon grounds of right reasoning either believe or know) much prudence, tenderness and charity is to be used; which will easily distinguish between honest simplicity, privately dissenting, upon plausible grounds; or harmlessly erring, without design; and that turbulent pertinacity, by which pride is resolved as a dry nurse to bring up by hands, at the charge and trouble of others, every novel and spurious opinion, which an adulterous or wanton fancy lifts to bring forth, though there be no milk for it in the breasts of Reason, or Scripture rightly understood. The first is as Joseph out of his way, wandering and desiring to be directed; whom it is charity to reduce to the right way. The second is like sturdy Vagabonds, who are never out of their way; but seek to seduce others that they may rob or murder them; these ought to be justly punished and restrained.

The first is as cold water, which may dabble and disorder one that falls into it; yea and may drown him too; but the other is as falling into scalding hot water; which pride soone boilys up to malice, and both to publique trouble; unless it be thus wisely prevented, before it have, like fire, a publique vent: for commonly pertinacity of men ariseth more from the love of credit and applause, which they think they have got, or may lose; or from some other advantage they aim at; than barely from any esteem they have of the opinions, wherein they innovate; which brats of mens brains not their beauty, but their propriety and relation commends to an eager maintaining; which in a publique debate by wise and impartial men, of high credit and reputation, for their learning, gravity, and integrity, will be so blasted, that they will hardly ever after thrive or spread.

This, or the like care of Christian Magistrates, by way of rational restrains, charitable convictions, and just repressions of all factions and turbulent innovations in Religion, (being full of wisdom, piety, charity, and just policy for the publique and private good of men) may not be taxed with the least suspicion of tyranny; nor may wise, and good men, startle at the name and outcry of persecution; which some proud or passionate opinioners may charge upon them; any more than good Physicians or Chirurgeons should be moved from the Rules of their art and experiences, by the clamors and imputations of cruelty, from those that are full of foolish pity;
when they are forced to use rougher Physick, and such severer medicines, which the disease and health of the Patient both necessarily require of them: unless they would flatter the disease, to destroy the Man; or spare one part, to ruin the whole body. It is indeed an * baiting of our brother, and partaking of his sin, and to a perverting of his soul, to let him hunt the divels suit, without check, and to follow the trains of error, by which he leads men to perdition; when it is in our way of charity, much more in our place and authority to endeavour to convert, or at least stop him fo, as others may not be perverted by him: Good husbands will not forbear for their lowd crying to ring and yoke those Swine, which they see doe root up the pastures, break through the fences, and wast the corn; yet still they leave even these beasts freedom enough, to feed themselves, and live orderly, but not mischieffully.

diuicere, quam cum litterate decipere. Auff. de coercentis Haereticis, Ep. 48. vid. quid pater is sed quare, & quo modo. Laod. Inst. 1.

Although the man in every one is to be treated humanely, and the Christian Christianly, with all reason, and charity; (because the Creator is to be reverenced in every creature, and Christ in every Christian) yet the Beasts or Devils (which may be said in regenerated men) must be used accordingly; that the man may be preserved, though the other be restrained: as we do, without injury, to those that are mad, or demoniack; to whom if sober men should allow, what liberty they affect, cry out, and strive for, it were to proclaim themselves to all the world the madder of the two. And none would have more cause to repent (when they came to themselves) of those indulgences, fondly granted them; which they (poore men) know not how to use, but to their own, and others harm. Indeed those men * forfeit their private liberty to the publick discretion and power, who will not, or cannot use it, but to the publick detriment, and the injury of others; which to prevent or hinder is the highest work of charity. None but sons of Belial, that is, of such as will not induce the yoke in Religion, either in piety, purity, or charity, nor suffer others to enjoy the benefit of it in peace and order, can desire such a * freedom, as will not induce the Lord for their God, nor man for their Government; who seek to break the slaves of beauty and of bonds on their Shepheards heads; or to wrest the keys out of their hands; who like wild asses would be left to feed in the wilderness of their own barren fancies, and to snuff up the winde of their own or others vain opinions, till they are starved, and destroyed, rather than be kept in good pastures, with due limits.

Math. 5. 10. Blessed are they that are persecuted, but it must be for righteousness' sake.


Non omnis qui partis amicae, sed nec omnis qui verberat iniurias: melius est cum severitate Perpetre non

Salute repetente tuto libellus gratias agimus, quam minimissim quamque peperonis se satiunt. Auff. Ep. 48. of the Domi-

tislis and Cir-
cancelliones reduced by just punishments (abinge et sum te writing) from their i

dicious rail-


N n n There
There is a damnable and damning Liberty, a Toleration, which the Divels would enjoy; who would soone destroy all things, on which is any Image of the Creators glory; if the sharp curb and weighty chains of Gods omnipotency, were not upon them, both immediately, and mediatly, through that wisdome, care, courage, and authority, which he gives to Christian Magistrates and Ministers, to reft, and to bind up Satan. If they then that are thus furnished by God, with just power in Church and State, should leave the things of God in matters of Religion (as outwardly professed) to such liberties, that all men may run which ways they please, of ignorance, error, atheism, prophaneness, blasphemy, being seduced, and seducing others; if they take no care, that younger people bee catechized, and others duly attend the publique duties of that religion, which is establisshed, and which they still profess, if they should neither stop, nor restrain any man in any course of opinion, or practise, which he calls Conscience, without giving any account of Reason or Scripture for it to those in Authority; Certainly such an intolerable Toleration, letting every one doe, what seems right in their own eyes, in the things of God, and onely to look exactly to civill interests and safety; is to make Magistratick power, which is Gods Ordinance for the good of mankind, to concur with the malice of the Divels, and that innate folly, vanity, and madnesse which is in mens hearts, to the ruine of simple multitudes; who cannot sin, or miscarry eternally, in such sinfull liberties, irreligions and tolerations, but at the cost and charge of the Magistrates souls; if they be Christian, and are persuaded of the truth of that Religion; as we read the matter became a trefpasser, or murtherer, and was put to death, who knowingly suffered his petulant Ox to enjoy such a liberty, as ended in the damage, or destruction of his neighbours goods, or life.

...A toleration of any thing as to publique profession among Christians under the notion of Christian liberty, is but the divels finest, and subtillest way of persecution; for he is as sure to gain by such indulgences, as weeds doe, by the husbandmans, or Gardeners negligence or lothness to pluck them up, for fear of hurting the corn or good plants; which when they are fully discerned to be but weeds as they are not possibly to be pul’d up by mans hand, as to the private errors and hypocrites of mens hearts, which are to be left to the great Judge and Searcher of hearts; so nor may they rashly be pul’d up by every one, that sees them, left injury be done to the good seed; but yet they are not careless, and sluggishly to bee suffered to overgrow and choke the good plants; As if nothing were true fixed and certaine in religion; nothing heretickall, corrupt, and damnable in opinion and do-
Some Toleration is a subtil Persecution.

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atine; nothing immorall, unlawfull, and abominable in practife; nothing perverfe, uncharitable, and uncomely in seditions, schisms and separations.

We read frequently the zeal, care and courage of Magistrates, Princes and Priests among the Jews, much commended for reforming Religion, restoring true ways of piety; suppressing all abuses in Religion; Certainly it is not lefse a duty, nor lefse pleasing to God now, among Christians, to take all care that the name of Christ be not blafphemed; nor the way of truth perverted, or civilly spoken of. We read alfo the Spirit of Christ reproving as a great sin and omission of duty, that indifference in the Angels of the Churches of Pergamus and Thyatira; tolerating anything, and condemning nothing; the one suffering those, that held the doctrine of Balaram, and the impure Nicolaitans, who taught all libidinous impudicities to be free for Christians: the other for tolerating Jezebel, under the colour of a Prophetesse to seduce the servants of God. The Apostle Paul commands some mens mouths should be stopped, who speak perverfe things in the Church; wisheth those cut off, that troubled them: He gives over to Satan Hymenæus and Philetus, that they might learn not to blafpheme; Denounce, a grievous curse or Anathema to any that should presume to teach any other Doctrines than the Gospel; that form of sound words once delivered to the Church, which is according to godlinefse; He tells us that there is not onely a word, but a rod, or power of coercion left to the Church, and its lawfull Pfalters or Minifters, for the edification, not for the destruction of the Church.

And however this power Ecclesiasticall, which is from God, as that other Magiftratick, be wholly severed and divided in their courses, while the Civill Magiftrate is unchristian; yet when he embraces the profession of Christianity, these two branches of power, (which flowed severall ways, yet from the same fountaine, God,) doe so farre meet again, and unite their amicable streams, of Magiftratick and Miniftricall, Civill and Church power, as not to confound each other; nor yet to crosse, and stop one the other; but rather to increase, strengthen and preserve mutually each other; while the Minister of Christ directs the Magiftrate, and the Christian * Magiftrate protects the Minister; both of them, with a single eye, regarding that great end, for which God in his love to mankind, and to his Church, hath established both these powers in Christian Churches and Societies; That neither the bodies, nor the soules of Christians should want that good, which God hath offered them in Christ; nor suffer those injuries in society, for the prevention or remedy of which, both Magiftracy and Miniftry are the Ordinances of God; for enjoying the benefit of both which

Magiftratick

and Miniftricall power

when united.

Herod is to be the

Pref. in the

H. c. 5.

* As Eusebius, A.D. 251 tells in Conftantinople the great time, who joined with the Bishops and Ministers of the Church in good government.
Tolerations of all Religions.

blessings, as every Christian hath a social capacity; so every lawfull Magistrate, and Minister hath according to their places, and proportions, a publique duty, and authority upon them, to see justice and holinesse, truth and peace, civil functions, and divine institutions, purely, and rightly dispensed to inferiors, for whose good they are of God ordained.

If there were indeed no rule of the written Word of God, which Christians owned as the settled foundation of Faith, the pure measure of doctrine, and guide of good manners in religion, both public and privately; or if there were no credible Tradition, delivered by word of mouth, and parents examples, which men might imitate for the way of Religion, revealed to them by God; which was the way before the flood; but, every one were to expect daily, either new inspirations; or to follow the dictates of his own private fancy and reason; Nothing then would be more irreligious, then to deny all freedom, publique, as well as private; nothing more just than to tolerate any thing of opinion, and speculation which any one counted his religion; yet even in that liberty, of walking and wandering in the dark, when no Sun of certain Revelation (divine) had shined on mankind, the very light of Nature taught men, as among Heathens, that some things in point of practice, are never tolerable in any humane society.

But since the wisdome, and mercy of God hath given to mankind, (which the Church always rejoys) the light of his holy Word, and a constant order of Miniftry to teach from it, the ways of God, in truth, peace, and holiness: not onely every Christian is bound to use all religious means, which God hath granted to settle his own judgment, and live accordingly in his private sphere, without any Skeptical itch, or lust of disputing always in Religion. But both Magistrate and Minister, (whose several duties are set forth, and different powers ordained over others, in Scripture, for a social and publique good) must take care to attain that good of a settled Religion, and preserve it in all ways of verity, equity and charity, which may all well consist with the exercise of due authority: Nor is it any limiting or restraining of the Spirit of God in any private Christian, to keep his Spirit within the bounds of the Word of God; wherein the things revealed belong to us and our children; Nor is it any restraint to the Spirit of God in the Scripture, to keep our opinions, and judgements, and practices within the bounds of that holy faith, and good order, which is most clearly set forth in the concurrent sense of the Scriptures, and explained by the Confessions of Faith, and practice of holy Discipline; which the Creeds, and Councels, and customs of the Catholick Church hold forth to them; Nor is it any limiting, or binding up of the Spirit.
Spirit of God in private men, for the Christian Magistrate and Ministers, to use all publique means both for the information, conviction, and conversion of those under their charge, as to the inward man; and also of due restraint and coercion, as to the outward expressions in which they stand related to a publique and common good.

But if the negligence of Governours in Church and State, should at any time so conivne, and tolerate out of policy, or fear, or other base passion; if through the brokynesse, and difficulties of times the sons of Zeruiah be too hard for Magistrates and good Ministers; so as the vulgar fury, corrupted by factious, and unruly spirits, are impatient of just restrains; but carry on all things against Laws and wiser mens desires to a licentious Anarchy, and all confusions in the outward face and publique Ministrations of Religion; yet must no good Christian think this any dispensation for any private errors in his judgment, or practise; he must be the more circumspect, and exact in his station, and duty as a Christian, when the publique course runs most to confusion: tolerating leaves in his own conscience, when most is tolerated by others: The love of God, and Christ, and of the truth of Religion; and the respect and reverence borne the order of the Ministry and to the Churches honour and peace; these must be to every good Christian the constant Law, and severest discipline; Teaching him to govern himself most strictly, when others affect most a misgovernment, or none at all in Religion; to act nothing immorally, rudely, and exorbitantly; to discharge all his relations, and duties with the more exactness: to bear with patience, yet with sorrow; the want of that publique good, which he desires; No way to hinder the restoring of due order and authority to the Church, and honour to Religion; to pray for, counsel, and assist the recovery of it, according to the Scripture rules, right reason, and the custom of the best times.

And however the vain and mad world goes on wildly and giddily, as an untaimed heifer; enduring no yoke of Religion, as to any publique order. Government, Discipline, or Ministry; yet must not a serious and well advised Christian delay to guide his feet in the ways of truth, and holinesse, nor neglect to work out his salvation (in Gods way) till publique distractions are composed: or delay to be good, till all turbulent and fanatick spirits returne to their wits; or till ancient publique order and Government in the Church be restored, and Religion so fortified by civill sancti-

ions, as it ought to be: for no man knowes, how long the Apostle Paul may be in a storm; or the Church tossed with schisms and factious, and secular interests, before it recover the haven of a happy settledness.
Therefore a Christian that makes it his work, not to prate, and dispute, and to play a part, or to gain, by the name of Reformation and Religion; but to believe sedulously, and obey constantly that holy rule; hath never more cause to prize and adhere to the true Ministry, and Ministers of Christ, than when he sees the greatest persecutions lying on the Church, either by violence, or toleration; by open force, or fraudulent liberty; which are (both) the Tivels Engines, to batter, or undermine the Church of Christ: Never should holy dissenstions be more earnestly desired and diligently attended from the hands of these Ministers in whom only is the right power, authority, and succession; then, when nothing is less tolerated among various and violent men, than a true Bishop and Minister; or a right ordained Ministry; which, of all things, is to the dwell and evil men the most intolerable: Satan well knows, that if he destroy the Shepheards, the sheep will be scattered. When good Christians see the abomination of desolation set up; profanely tolerating any thing for Religion, allowing of any Mimicks for true Ministers, vulgar adoring of a rotten Idol of licentiousnesse, gilded over with the name of Liberty, when silencing true Ministers, and supressing good learning, and crying up illiterate impudence, shall be thought a means to propagate the Gospel; Then let them that are seriously and soberly godly fly to the Mountaines, (to the true Ministers of the Church) from whom God hath appointed salvation to descend to the believing souls: Nor are they to regard whatsoever bold and ignorant upstarts, boasteth and feigneth of Inspirations, liberties and blessed toleration; obtruding kimselfe out of the promptness and pride of his own heart upon the credulous and silly vulgar (who love to be flattered to their ruine, and deceived to their destruction, but hate to be truly guided, and faithfully governed to their safety;) For all these pretenses of Liberty, Toleration, Inspirations, &c. are manifest to be but as the divils silken halters, by which he hopes to strangle the Christian and reformed Religion hereand elsewhere: it may be (seemingly) and with more gentlenessse; but not with less malice, and cruelty to mens soules, than with those rougher hempen cords of open persecution.

From which, such sad toleration and rude Liberties are not very far; being but new expressions of Anarchy, and colours of contending confusion, or utter dispositions of all Church order, peace and Government, into a cruel licentiousnesse, which is always tyrannous to true Religion: Nothing is more burdensome than some mens levities, nor more fulsome, and deformed, than their Reformations; nothing more uncharitable and untractable, than their liberties; nor more a plague and death, to Religion, than, what they
Of the maintenance of Ministers in England.

they call, health and recovery; when vulgar or fanatick violence binds so much the staflfe of discipline, till it breaks; heady men forfeit the flock by over-driving it, and Wolves in sheeps cloathing, scatter and tear the sheep of Christ under pretence of letting them goe, whither they lift; in stead of being true shepheard, fetching them home, and feeding them in due bounds, with good pasturfe: in which wholesome and safe bounds, both Christian Magistrates, and true Ministers should seek to feed the flock of Christ; not as bare spectators of their wanderings and errors, but as enabled and intrusted by God with a coercive power from Christ, for the Churches good: and where the Magistrate is negligent, there the Minister should be the more diligent in the place where Christ hath set him; who is the great Shepheard of our souls, beyond whose holy bounds for any Christians to affect any Liberty, is to wear the devils livery, while they are in Christs service. Few men complain of want of freedom, but they whose freedom were to be their own and other mens greatest bondage: Nothing is lesse desirable to a good Christian, than to be left to himselfe: for men are then nearest to be undone, when they may doe, what they lift; and least in safety, when they are their own keepers.

My next Calumniating Adversary, against the Ministry of England, which I have to deal with and detect, is posseflf with a thristy and covetous Spirit; which would fain have Liberty, if not to speak, and act, what he lift in Religion (without any restraint of Magistrate or Minister) yet at least to pay what he lift to any Minister, since he is free to hear whom, and when he lift; or none at all; he would not by any law to pay any thing to their support, although it be due to them, and a right which none else might challenge. He likes not that fettled maintenance, which they challenge as due. This subtil and frugal cheat of a Christian is a Jesuitick terrer, hath many wary fetches and windings against the Ministers of the Gospel in the reformed Churches; but none beyond this plot, that he hopes ere long to be too hard; or too cunning for them here in England: while under some specious, and politic pretention, he shall deprive them of all fettled maintenance; and by fo spoiling and distressing the Ministry, he shall be sure to pillage, and lay waste in a short time, all the reformed Religion, and face of any Church in England.

This thristy and covetous Divell is the eldest son of Pluto; Beelzebubs Steward, a perfect hater of the true God; a servant of Mammon; the spirits.
Of the maintenance of Ministers in England.

Math. 26. 8

Ver. 12.

Joh. 12. 6.
Non nulli pari dolore commoda alienta ac suas in-
jurias metiuntur. Tacit.

Hist. 1.
2 Cor. 2. 16.

Mal. 3. 8.

6 Siifoc o
πάντοτες ο
γραφήματι
ας εγός. St Pd.

Isai. 52. 5, 6.

Sacrilegious ag
against the
light of Na-
ture.

Jer. 2. 11.

Plato calls Sa-
crilegious.

And indeed what can be more fordidly vile, or should be
more strange, and less named, among those that are called Chi-
rians, and reformed too; than such degenerations from the very
dicates of nature, and the common sense of all Nations? Hath any
nation changed its gods? And if they retained them, as Gods, did

the very ghost of Nabal; a child of darkness; an enemy to all saving
light; so deformedly black, that he is ashamed to shew his face, but
under the veil of religious, and reforming pretences; his envious
eyes, like Judeasses, cannot endure to see any costly effusions, which
the devout and liberall plenty of former times have powred upon
the heads of Christ and his Ministers; which some men would now
make to be but an Omen, or presage, that their death and burial is
not far off; The envy and anger of these Antiministerial
adversaries is dayly and lowly clamorous in speech and pamphlets;
To what purpose is this waste; might not the Glebes and Tythes be
sold, and better imploed? when there are so many frugal un-
der-takers, who are able and willing to preach the Gospel gratis;
who would be no burthen to the people? Not that Judas cared for
the poor, nor these for the people; but, because he was a thief, &c.
What these envious objecters will be, tinie will best shew; at
present their eyes are evil, because other mens have been good;
and, as by an ignorant confidence they contradict the Apostles que-
tion, Who is sufficient for these things? so by a sacrilegious ingrati-
tude they hasten to answer the Prophets question; or rather the
Lords; Will a man rob God? Yes; these projectors for Atheifm, Bar-
barity and profaneness, would fain perfwade this whole Nation
to join with their cruel and covetous design; to rob fo many
honest men, and able Ministers of that maintenance, which their learn-
ing and labours merit, which they have a right to as by law, so by
the possession of many hundred years: that so they may at once rob this
Church of the blessing of the true Christian reformed Religion;
and rob God also of that honor and holy service, which both pri-
vately, and publiquely is done to him by thousands of his serv-
ants, the Ministers of this Church. It is no wonder, if those
that grudge at the cost bestowed on Christ meditate to betray him;
and had rather make a benefic or save something by his death,
than see any thing bestowed on him while he lives, though it be
by others bountly: For alas, what these men grudge at as given to
Ministers, is little or nothing out of their own purses or estates:
Nor is it given by them to Ministers any more than the rent they
justly pay to their Landlords. But what can vile men meditate fave
onely vile things?

early
ever any Nation rob, and spoil their gods; which yet were not gods? Ask among the heathen, and let them teach these unchristian spirits; was it not always esteemed among men, as an act of piety, and honor and virtue, to devote any thing to the service, and worship of their Gods; as a thankfull acknowledgement of that homage, they owed, and that dependence they had on the divine bounty? Was it no: likewise counted in all times a most *impudent and flagitious villany to take take away any thing rightly dedicated to divine, and holy uses? So far the very light of nature taught men to abhor such execrable theeveries, and rapines, that it was by the *Romans esteemed as paricide, or murderous of parents, worse then Treason: a fighting against God. It was esteemed an high ingratitude, not to devote and and dedicate something; how much more to alien or take away from God's service, who is the giver of all?

Now, why any Christians should take any such liberty against their God, which the very heathens abominated; (and which the primitive Christians never practised, but contrarily dedicated many great and rich things to the service of God in his Church; which were called (Patrimonium crucifxi, Donaria fidei, Anathemata Dominica, Deposita pietatis,) the pledges of piety, the bounty of believers, the donatives of love, (deposited with Christ, a faithful repayer, no lefs than an amplem deserver of all things) I can see no cause, but onely that the divell, and evill men have more spite at our Religion in England, both as Christian, and as reformed, than at any other, and therefore they envy anything, that may be any means to continue, or encourage it. And since he could not keep us in Idolatry, he tempts us to Sacrilege: which the *Apostles question clearly implies to be a sin equally or more abominable to God; The one robbing him of his service, by a false worship; the other of the meanees dedicated to maintain his true service and worship; Which was one of the desperate projects of Julian against Christian Religion; who tooke away the gifts and holy vessels, which Constantine the Great had given to the Churches use, and Miniflers maintenance with this scoffe; See in what goodly vessels the Nazarene is served!

But the great grievance which these men cry out of, and hope will be very taking with tender conscience, covetousness, is this; That the Ministers of the Gospel should have Tithes; At these they are scandalized, as much as a Jew would be at eating of Swines flesh; They are so afraid of turning Jews by paying Tithes to Miniflers, that they had rather turn Turks, by taking quite away both Tithes and Ministers: How well doth our blessed Saviour's severity fit these mens hypocrisy? while they strain at the gnat of Tithes, and swallow down
Of Tithes as due to Ministers by the Law of the Land.

Tithes due by a civil right of Donation and Law cannot justly be taken away. See Sir Edward Coke, on Lit. Ten. 1. c. 9. Sect. 72. An. 850, King Ethelwulf with the Prelates and Princes in several Provinces of all England (gratis in conciis) of their free will endowed the Church with the tithes of lands, goods, and chattels; cum decimis terrarum, & hereditatium, & beneficiorum fundorum, universalis donationis Ecclesiam, per Receive Regnum Chirographum. Ingulph. Qui augere voluntis nostro donationem, augerit omnipotens Deus dies ejus prosperos. Si quis vero mutare vel diminuere presumpserit, nescit ad Tribunal Christi redditorum rationem, nisi prius satisfactione commovatur. In lib. Abingd. Quod divini juris est id nullius in honis eft, Iuxta. In lib. l. 2. tit. 1. Prov. 20. 25. It is a snare to the man who devoueth that which is holy, and after vows to make enquery.

2. Not honorably or piously. And if there could be a lawfull resumption by posterity, or an abrogation of the will of this Nation, in what it hath thus dedicated and given to God, if this could be done without a crying sin of sacrilege; yet doubtlesse the piety and honor of this Nation is still such in all worthy mention, that it would never be done by a free Parliamentary and publique vote: since, if all humanity and honour forbids any man to resume the gifts of charity, which he hath once given to poore men, whereto they have both mans and Gods right, (as freely given to them for Gods sake by the lawfull owners) much more doth all piety and religion forbid;
Of Tithes as due to Ministers by the Law of the Land.

Forbid any men (να δειναι την αποκαταστασιν) to take away, or subdue by force or fraud, as Ananias and Sapphira did) any thing, that is once by themselves (or others) dedicated to God: especially in such a way of service, which he requires in his Word; That is, for the maintenance of that order, government, and Ministry of holy things, which the Lord hath appointed in his Church. Which cannot be done without necessary subsidies of life, for Ministers, as men; And since a power of demanding, and receiving maintenance is in the true Ministers of the Gospel, in Christ's name, (as the Apostle Paul proves;) no doubt there is no lesse power in Christian people, of giving them, or rather paying them, as a due debt, both in divine, and humane equity, either in occasional, and moveable maintenance; or fixed and perpetual.

Why hath Satan filled thy heart to ly to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back, (or defraud and plunder) part of the price of the land? * x Cor. 9, 6, 7, &c. Gal. 6, 6.

The first was the way of Ministers and Bishops alimony in the primitive unsetled, and persecuting times; when Christians could not expect to be long masters of their own estates in lands; nor could they endow any Minister or Church with any part of them, to perpetuity; yet then in those hard and perilous times, we read in Ecclesiastical stories, that the liberal gifts and free-will offerings, of all manner of good things, from the devout Layry to the the then most deserving Clergy, amounted to more, than the after settled means by way of Tithes.

Which way of maintenance was as ancinctly, so generally settled in all Christians Churches after Constantine's time, as well as in England: The benefit of which, as in all other things, thus given by believers to God (as a grateful acknowledgment, of his dominion over us, and all we have; of his bounty, conferring all upon us; of his mercy, vouchsafing to accept from us any portion of that, which is his own;) returns, indeed, to the bosom of the givers; and aims, next the glorifying of God, at the spiritual and eternal good of their own souls; Nor can God be unhankfull to thosc, unto whom he gives the grace of being so really thankeful to himself, for what is done to the Ministers of Christ, as done Christ himself; and what is done to Christ redounds to a man's own good: The divine munificence as

Ne invidia
clericis obviam,
at de postsessionibus Ecclesiae obtulit plebi B.
Augustinus
mallese ex collocationibus vitæ
et antiqui.

Sed id Laici
succipere multis
rurum. Pollich.
Aust.

3. Nor wisely.
Am. Marcel.
lib. 17. De Dom.
mafo & urisci
no pro fede Epif.
copali ad eadem
& sanguinem
etiam contemn
denobus: Hanc
enim (inquit)
adepsi, futuri
iis in securi,

ut dinun tum obla
tionibus marin

narrum; procedam ve biculis, circumstellis vestitis; epulis currantes profusius, deo ut corn convivia veget

tetere mensas. Primitius in novis regis Canuti contributis Ecclesie, quam contribuunt.
Senee Ecclesie, Church feed, appellabane, Fleric. 1, c. 37. St. Augustine complains in his time, Majoris
nostri ide fractor umniabus abundabat, quia deo decimam dabant; et Cefari concern redcessant. Mode
autem quia diss dissatis divinò deò, accessit indistilio fifti. Nonnum partire cum Deo decimas, modo autem
retum tolliur; Aust, hom. 48.
the heavens always returning with liberall showres and fruitfull dews upon us, what ever gratefull exhalations our devout humility (as the earth) sends up to him; either in charity to the poore, or in a liberall requital to his Ministers: Neither of which are welcome objects to those ravenous appetites, who so much grudge that Tithes should by any title, though never so free gift, which is very just and good, be given to Ministers, and enjoyed by them; When once these hungry stomachs have satisfied themselves with the flesh of Ministers, the Clergies maintenance, or Churches Patrimony; who may doubt, but they will also pick the bones of all Colledges, Hospitals, and Almshouses? Nothing being sacred to a sacrilegious minde; nor unviolable to a violent and rapacious hand, Nor is it a hope fo much to relieve their own necessities; but a kind of wanton cruelty, which makes many of these Evening Wolves, so fierce and ravenous against the Ministers maintenance: Nay, many of them covet nothing more, than to see all the excellent Ministers of England, reduced to the same beggary, which the meanest of themselves now contend with all, or lately did; so little have most of them profited by their ever thristy piety: Nor are such illiberall souls ever to be satisfied with good things.

But Tithes are Ceremoniall, Legall,Typicall, Judaicall, and (which vizard makes every face ugly and terrible to the vulgar) they are Anchristian.

Answ. *Tis possible some simple-country people may be scared to subscribe against Tithes with these bugges words; But sure, for these men, who pretend to fright others, I believe they have no more reall horror upon them, to take Tithes, or more, of others, either as they pretend to be Preachers, or as they are Lay Impropiators; than the conjurers in Lapland have, who make many strange faces, and searfull noises, as if they had raised, and espied a divell in their circle; when all isto get but a little money of the silly spectators: The meaning of all this great cry against Tithes of Ministers is, to save a little wool, though the sheepe be the more scabby; to spare some small matter, which some of these objecters (it may be) yearly pay to the Ministers, with much regret and murmuring: Yea, it is generally observed, that these clamovers who make the greatest cry, do not yeeld the fairest fleece; nay most of them not one grain to the feeding, nor one lock to the clotthing of any Minister; nor indeed have they much wooll (for the most part) on their own backs, which makes them envy all that have. Sheep are silent under the sheepeers hand: but dogs are prone to bark and
and snarl at those that feed them: of whom the Apostle Paul bids Phil. 3: 2. the Saints, Bishops, and Deacons of Philippi to beware, as of evil workers, who are not content with the circumcision of Ministers maintenance, which hath been already too much made, by severer hands; but they aim at a total concision; a taking all away. As for these Re-piners, they are not so guilty of paying Tithes, as they would be of receiving them; 'Tis as much a covetous, as an envious spirit, which possesseth them: Yea, rather than fail of their designe against Ministers, they are not content with their own not paying anything to Ministers, but they repine, that any men else should; whose gratitude and religion teacheth them to give to every man what is their due, especially to the Ministers of Christ, which they justly doe, as with a good will and cheerfull minde, so with a good will, and with a far more judicious and upright conscience, both to God and man, than these covetous cavillers can possibly carp, or grudge against them; who, poor men, every day think they grow leaner, while they see or hear any Minister hath what they call a fat Benefice, or a competent Living: Although the faithful Lamp spends its self, and all the Oil too, in the place, where he receives it.

But these murmurers cannot digest the Jewishness of Tithes, and they are still fancying, and afraid some costly sacrifice must needs Jewish, goe along, where every Tithes are continued.

Answ. It may be, these men cannot endure Tithes, unless the Jews might enjoy them; who (although still crucifying Christ in their malice, hardness, and blasphemies, yet) these men seem far less averse from entertaining them with their fawning and flattering insinuations into their bosomes, than from maintaining or countenancing those Ministers who preach and beleive in Jesus Christ crucified, as the onely Messiah and Saviour of the world; Nay these Anti-decimists glory in two things, as high tokens of their Sanctity: one is, their endeavours, suit, to further the conversion of the Jews: the second is, to hasten the subversion of the office of the Christian Ministry: Nor doe the Jews unwillingly flatter them sometimes, as very great factors for them, when they see what rare Jewish projets they have common with them; against both the name and faith, the Church and Ministers of Jesus Christ; who had never so prevailed by his word against the Jewish pertinacie, and obstinacy, if he had not had an able, constant, faithfull and ordained Ministry; nor had this Ministry without miracle continued, if there had been no constant maintenance; which the more settled it is against covetous and ungratefull spirits, the more is the preaching of the Gospel, and its power likely to settle, in all humane reason; (Notwithstanding that the corrupt lufts of men are...
are prone sometime to abuse peace and plenty, as David did his leisure, strength, and retirement; One would think, that these men did forget, that the Ministers of the Gospell are men, as well as the Jewish Priests were, and that they have mouths given them not only to feed others with the Word of life, but also themselves with bodily food, as the necessary staffe of life: Yea, they not only may, but ought to live of the Gospell, as the Priests did of the altars service. Indeed the words and spirits of these Calumniators against Tithes and Ministers doe signifie, as if it would more trouble them, to see the knife of a Priest ready to slay a beast, than to see the rudest fellow of their faction ready to cut any Ministers throat in England.

But it is strange these men should now be so squeamish, as to Ministers receiving of Tithes (which were by the piety of our ancestors given of old to them, or to God rather, for his service: And this not by Ministers perfwasion, or importunity so much, as by the good will, and devotion of this Christian Nation) when themselves have always so good stomachs, that they devour nothing more easily and digest nothing more cheerfully, than these sacred morsels, when either they fraudulently detain them, or injuriously deny them to the Ministers; to whom in all justice and humane law, (it is clear) they belong; yet it is stiled by one of this party a conscientious sincerity in many, that refuse to pay them; Is it not rather a detestable covetousnesse, (which is Idolatry) that denies, or defrauds any man of their due? is it not an abhorred sacrifice, that rob the Ministers of theirs? for which right or dues they have as much to shew (at least) as any man hath for any thing that is his, by the Laws of the land: Sure, we are but a very base and bad Nation, if many (as we are lately told by one) of the very best of the people, had rather in conscience and sincerity doe other men, and especially Ministers so great wrong (who must starve most of them with their families, or beg their bread having no other livelihood, if they have not this) than pay, what is due to them, and so necessary for them; O consciences more thrifty, than tender; more sparing, than sincere; which have thus much of the Jew in them, that they make little or no conscience to confen any, that are not of their own Tribe or faction; When did any of these sincere men, as he calls them, make conscience to pay their Tithes unjustly? or if not in that kind, when did they make conscience to pay, as much, or more of free will to the Minister, as their Tithe came to? They might soon pull this thorn or scurpul out of their consciences; if in stead of the tenth they would pay rather a sixth or seventh part, or any, that is not short of what the Law of man commands: So they shall be sure, neither to favour of the Jew, nor of any injustice. But still we...
we may observe, when some men handle Conscience, their meaning is to lick their own fingers: But when I pray, are these sincere and boist of men, any whit scrupulous, or tender conscienced, in the point of their possessing any Tithes by an Impropry Lay-tenure? When did any of them ever complain of them? when were they surfeited, or over-charged with them? Notwithstanding there is more of the Pope in an Impropry, than in any thing else, about Tithes, for Tithes were generally so Impropryed by his authority; and are held in no other manner now, than as they were by the Popes power aliened from the Rectory, to some Monastery, or Religious house.

So that as Cato merrily, yet severely said of the Tuscane Sooth-sayers, (who were leaf of all such, as their name sounds;) Hee wondred they could forbear to laugh at one another, who so well knew each others juggling, and their own knavery: So may I reply to these scrupulous Antidecimists: Sure it is but their sport and merriment, thus to abuse simple people, with their over-righteousness or superfluity of malice rather, feigning a sense of that, as a sin, and unlawful in Ministers; when themselves practise the same thing most willingly on very suspected grounds without any remorse, or scruple; as if they had an excellent good title from the Pope, and the Laws for Impropry tithes (where the very end of peoples paying Tithes is frustrated: which is their Institution and direction in the publique service of God;) And yet neither God nor man could give a good title to Ministers for receiving Tithes; who carry on that great good end, for which impiety and equity they were designed; which is to help on people in serving of God, and saving their soules; Such self-condemned, and unexcusable cavillers feeme in many things to be children, (as in peevishnesse, and inconstancy: in the most commendable quality (innocence) they are leaf like:) but I wonder they should be so much babies, and so weak in understanding, as to this point of Tithes, (unlesse, because they are too much men in malice;) since this subject about Tithes, as the settled and best maintenance of the Ministr of the Gospel, hath been so clearly, fully, and learnedly explained, proved and asserted by all law, both divine and humane, by many excellent pens, not onely of Ministers, but of others; who may be thought more impartial (as Gentlemen, and Lawyers) both long since and of later times; But the way of these Antiministerial men is to read no books, whose title they prejudget, nor to admit any truth to their partial tribunal, but what is saying; (they mean, and so do I) to their purses.

To refresh their memories therefore in so trite a subject; and stir up their duller consciences by a little account; I wonder how these Scrupulous can be ignorant, that Tithes were of divine use before the ancients: right and use of Tithes.
For the Jewish constitutions: That they draw their origin either from the common light of Nature; or from that traditional Theology, which was in the Patriarchs of old: which dictated, as a Deity, to a Priesthood, or Ministry to serve it; also a duty to consecrate, ordain, and maintain for that publique service some men, who should be fittest to attend it. Do they not read that Tithes were paid by Abraham the father of the faithfull to Melchisedek, the Type of Christ? And why then should any worshippers of Christ, who are children of faithfull Abraham (by imitation of the same faith, which was in him, long before the Law of Moses) think it a sin or error in them, to pay Tithes to Christ, (the Antitype) by the hands of his Ministers; who are deputatively, and Ministerially himself? whereas indeed it may rather seem a sin not to pay them; since we see Christ hath so good a title to them, who yet did not claim them when he lived, because the Levitical Priesthood was yet standing: yet Luk. 8.3 divers that had been cured ministr'd to Christ and his family of their substance, and Matth. 10.10. he declares the Ministers right to be as good, as the labourers to his hire. He that receiveth you, receiveth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that giveth to a Prophet a cup of cold water in my name, gives it to me; if these be true, and Evangelically: why is it not as true and Evangelically, He that payeth Tithes to you, as my Ministers, payeth them to me? Whether it be by private and solitary, or by publique and joint gift and dedication; Sure the highest right and claim Parasount must be eminently in Christ who is Lord of all, more then in Melchisedek; and so either the obligation to pay them, or the lawfulness to accept them in Christ's name, as a right to him; or as a free gift offered from believers to the honour and service of Christ, must needs bevident in all justice and religion; (As water is purest in the Fountain, and light clearest in the Sun, so is Melchisedek's right most in Christ:) Nay I think in good earnest, that a Christian Jew would hence draw an argument, (although he were of that tribe of Levi, to which Tithes were after commanded to be paid among the Jews) that he ought now to pay them to the Christian Ministers, or to Christ; as in relation to his service, and as an aggiuntion of him to be Lord and God; since, even Levi in Abrahams' laws paid Tithes to Melchisedek; that is, to the type and representor of Christ: And since the Lord Jesu Christ is the perfection and sum of the Priesthood and order of Melchisedek, he may justly claim, whatever was typified; as a due or honour to be done to him; of which this is one; that he should receive Tithes who never dyeth, Heb. 7.8. & 15. So that this Evangelical right of Christ, as those promises to Abraham, being before the Legall establishment, is not to be annulled by that law of the Jews, which was 400 years after.

As
As to the interventient appointment and after custom of paying Tithes, divinely settled by a positive Law among the Jews, (as the then onely Church of God:) it carries nor any frown in its face against Christian Miniflrs now receiving Tithes, or others paying them under the GospeU; if there were no Law of the Land devo-ting Tithes to God, and enjoying the payment of them to Miniflrs as a rent charged upon lands, and estates; what fin could it be for any Christian (as many primitive Christians spontan.oufly did) to devote, set apart, and give yearly the tenth of all his increase to the Miniflrs of the GospeU? Sure nothing of right reason, Scripture, or true Religion, (which onely shou'd rule the conscience of any sober man) doth teach any Christian to abhor, what ever was instituted or prafticed among the Jews; if it be but after the law of common equity, gratitude, piety, or civility, toward God, or man; Else there Antidemocrats must think they finned, if they should but cover their excrements, which was once a law of cleanlineffe among the Jews; yea the example of God for confirming by a positive law, in that his ancient Church of the Jews, those general dictate of nature, and the preceeding praftice of Abraham, paying Tithes to Melchi-fedek, as to the Prieft of the moft High God, and a type of Christ, according to grounds of common equity and naturall piety, or gratitude to God and man; This consideration I fay should have the greater inducement to affure Christians; that, what is neither meerly Typiffall, nor Ceremoniall, (as Tithes were never thought to be by any learned or wise men) but rather a thing of common equity, and piety; confirmed by a divine positive command, and the choice of God, this cannot but be as acceptable to God now, when dedicated (by the consent of any Christian people) to his Evangeliffall service, and Miniftiy; as it was before either from the hand of Abraham, or his posterity: since it is no where forbidden in the GospeU, and by Gods wisdom hath been chosen as the fiftine proportion under the Law.

Yea, and to those, that have not the loofefl, but the liberalifl con-fciences among Christians, it seems expressly recommended, after that pattern, Even fo hath the Lord ordained, that they that preach the GospeU, fhould live of the GospeU: Even fo, as they did, who served at the Altar; fo far as the imitation can now hold; which though it cannot in the Sacrifices, yet it may in the Tithes, and in first fruits, and free-will offerings, which were frequently, and plentifully brought to the Bishops and Miniflrs of the Churches in primitive times, for their own support and the Deacons, with the poor; If the Tenth, or (quantum) How much, be not here expressed, yet it is vehemently implied; Else the Apofle had proved nothing, nor given any di.rections, either for Miniflrs fitting support, or for

\[P \ p \ p \ p \] Christians
Christians regulating of their retributions; if he doth not command them to pay, at least a Tenth, sure he doth not condemn their paying a Tenth part, which they may freely doe, if there were no such divine right pleadable, as this indeed is to all Christians, whose covetousnesse doth not teach them to cavill against reason and Scripture too; However, this is the least, that we can make of that place; if in difficult times, (such as the primitive were) something were left to the gratitude, ingenuity, love, and largeness of Christians hearts towards their Ministers, (wherein sometime they even exceeded their power and estate in munificence;) yet in quiettimes, and in a plentiful land it may well be expected by God, (at least, it cannot be blameable for any Nation, Church, or private Christian to give, and settle such a portion, as the Tenths of the increase, upon those that serve the Lord, and the Church in the Ministry of the Gospel). It is easily computed, that Tithes were not one half of the Levitical maintenance; What reason can these men give (beyond their will and despite) why the Christian Ministry should fare worse, or have leas honour, than the Jewish, since it is in many things, a better Ministry? 1. Clearer in the light of Doctrine, promises, and prophesies. 2. As venerable in the Mysteries. 3. Far more glorious in its chief Minister and Mediator, Jesus Christ, the Son of God; the other by servants. 4. Much easier in the burthen both of labour, ceremony and charges, to believers and worshippers; 5. Yet not leas painfull to the Ministers, whose spirits are more exhausted by studys, preaching and other Ministerial duties, than the Jewish Priests by more grose and bodily labours. 6. Not leas comfortable to devote and pious soules. 7. More universally diffused, as more convenient for all mankind; 8. And never esteemed leas necessary to the Church, or leas acceptable to God; save only by Atheists, or Niggards; who had rather read that most blasphemous and no leas irrational than irreligions book, De Tribus Impostoribus, than the four Evangelists; valuing a cheap Alcoran before a costly Bible.

...So then, I think I have with a very soft and sober fire, quite divested the Jew out of Tithes, and with as much or more ease, will Antichrist, as they call it, or any dregs of Popery, evaporate out of them; Some mens teeth are so set on edge by too much chewing of the Pope, that they cannot bite, or taste any thing, but it reliseth of Antichrist to them; if the Romish Church and Bishops did ever use it: If any thing (as I have said) be suspicable for Popish or Antichristian in Tithes, sure it goes with the Improprations; for if it were blameable to alien Tithes from the Ministry, and cure of souls, by annexing them to Regular and Monastick uses; and if it were not commendable to alien them from both, to meer secular uses; where they are usually expended
expended with more luxury and vanity, as with luxury and charity, sure the best way was to have kept them in their original design; which was for the maintenance of the Ministers: Nor is the Popes traffiquing, or disposing of them, during his usurpation, here any prejudice to them, no more than a bleer eye eclipseth the Sun by looking on it, or a foul hand abaseth a Jewell by touching it. That the Popes of Rome invented Tithes, is as true, as a learned Rabbi of these new ways, (and a great Preacher too) once told me with most unhistoricall confidence; That Pope Gregory the first invented Infant baptism; (which his sure enough St. Jerome and St. Austin, Cyprian and others mention as a Catholick custome in their dayes, which was some hundred of yeares before Gregory; and they oft declare it to have been an antient, primitive and Apoftolical practice, which no Father, no Bishop, no Council, ever began; but was generally used, as we finde in St. Cyprian, from the first plantation of Christianity, and the making Disciples to Christ:Initiating them by water, as the Jews formerly had done Prophetes in their Church.) But this is only in passant, to shew how great confidence attends groffe ignorance in these men. As to this of tithes, so farre as the Pope had to doe with them at any time, I have taken away the foolish scandall and vulgar prejudice, giving in another place sufficient account to all that are capable of sober truth; That nothing in Christian Religion, either in Scriptures, Sacraments and doctrines, or in the order, power, succession, government and maintenance of Ministers in the Church, are therefore burnt with Antichristianism, or with any thing which the Vulgar calls Popery, because the Pope set his foot sometime in them; For truely then our Parliaments (which are accountd sacred in their esence and honour) should be Antichristian too; for time was, when they did own the authority, yea and reconcile and submit themselves to the power of the Pope and See of Rome. If any men reply Parliaments have long agoe purged themselves of the Pope and Popery: Truely so have all things else in this Church, and Tithes among others, which these mens mouths so much water after; and sure such squaminsh stomachs, as theirs, would never desire and digest them, (as they doe) if there were the least grain of Antichrift or Popes either in Lay or Clergy mens Tithes; for they vehemently pretend to have vomited up all, that savours of the Pope or Popery.

But it's lost labour to seek further to pull this prating worm out of some mens tongues, when the root of it is in their brains; if they had but the tiche of common reason and sober sense, they would easily see, how little the Ministers of England, or any Christian Church of the like way is beholden to the Popes of Rome, in the matter of tithes; It had been better for us, that the Pope had never meddled with them; which occasioned so many Improprations, and these so many
Of Tithes put into a Lay tenure.

many beggerly livings; which can hardly expect or make a rich and able Minister; if these men would really reform, they should promote the restoring (by some convenient way) those Impropricate Tithes to the Church; But their reformation is always on the taking, not on the giving hand; like the footsteps to the Lionsden, all are towards, none forwards. It's very probable, the Popes made little of their own lands any where Tithable; if, when they saw the charity of Christians grow cold, and their luxury, in peacefull times, great, the Bishops of Rome perswaded others to settle the maintenance of the Ministry, and to provide for the double honour of the Clergy, by this way of Tithes, which might not be arbitrary, but legall, and certain; Truly it was one of the most prudent, and pious works, that ever any of the best Popes did for the Church; (And truly many of them were so wife and holy men, that they might in great part cover and expiate the lesser errors of others, if too much of secular pride, and humane passions had not afterward transported them beyond all bounds, becoming Christian Prelates). It were a madness, onely worthy of these Antidecimists, to abhorre to doe any thing, never so sober, which others (now become frantick, and disordered,) sometime did in their better moodes.

But there is a late writer, who hath projectted, how to percolate Tithes so through Lay hands in a publique Exchequer, or Tith-office, which will effectually purge away all that is Jewish, Antichristian, or uncircumcised in them; (as sure as a Monks cowle will recommend a dead man to heaven;) I am as solicitous for those officers danger, as that writer is for the Ministers; lest they prove tithc-coveters; when they shall have pregnant hopes, to make their fees better, for dispensing those Tith-pensions to their poore pensioners and humble suppliants, than any one Ministers maintenance will be out of them; unless he be a strange favorite of that Court: I suppose those Officers for gathering, receiving, and distributing of Tithes in, such pensions to the remnant of those poore dependent, and most patient Ministers, will be more sincere and conscientious, for a time, than to take any bribes, or rewards for expedition; But it is very probable they, will not bemen of such metall, as will never be corrupted: And O. how sad a project will this be in a short time, if these Lay exactors should be more heavy and grievous, not only to the poore Ministers, but also to the common people, in their rigorous exactions by troopers or treble damages, than ever Ministers were! How deplorable will it be, if these Lay exactors of Tithes should prove sons of Belial too, as well as Elyes sons; who found, I think, but little of the peoples tithes, in the sacrifices; So that, in this odious reflexion, that writers pen
Of Tithes put into a Lay tenure.

strikes not so sure, as the Priests flesh books did; and as unseason-ably too: (which was indeed the sin, serving themselves of the people's oblations before God;) while that proposer hath no tender consideration of any poor Ministers condition: against whose conscience it may be, as well as against his ease and profit (very much) to be deprived of what is his by a former and better Law; and after he hath laboured hard, then to ride and solicit, and pray and pay for his wages; Which of these envious projectors and supercilious distributors of other mens estates, will kindle a fire, or open any door to a Minister of Christ for nothing?

Nor doth that Reformer of Tithes lay to heart the dissatisfactions, and scandal of many as wise and as godly mens consciences as his preitious ones are, who are (ten for one) persuadest, that they ought, as by lawes of the Land, so in all Religion to God, and gratitude to their Ministers, pay their Tithes immediately, and truly to them, which they had much rather doe, than have the best place, that any man can fancy in this new designed Office and Exchequer for tithes: Nor do I belive a like project would please that great projector, if one should take his clock from his home, and make him ride ten, twenty or thirty miles to fetch it, every time he would make use of it. Certainly Tithes are by all equity and law, as much due to every Minister in his place, as the coat, which that Proposer hath on his back. Nor is the property of things, onely to be considered; but the proximity also, and the conveniency of using and enjoying them; which the Law also intends to every man, in his goods: For my part I like not, either the changing of the stream, or of the channell of Tithes; because it will but make it winde further off, or goe more about; and the new channell will lick up a great deale of the old stream, so that but little will come at last to the Ministers Mill. The former course of paying them to the Minister immediately is much easier cleared; where ever any obstructions, or inconveniencies shall be found, either as to the Ministers, or the people; How easily are far greater sums dayly gathered in every parish, without any suits at Law or trouble, by the ordinary Officers, which may in this case easily be authorised to doe for Ministers, as Church-wardens and Overseers for the poor doe in their rates and customes. The Vision of changing the way of Ministers maintenance, or of making them receive Tithes by amediate lay hand, hath a further State mystery and politick meaning in it, than barely to ease the Minister and people of trouble; or to wipe off the fully and finet of imaginary Popery, Jewishness, or Antichristianity from Tithes; which may, through the hardnesse of mens hearts, have something inconvenient in them; but nothing, that I can see, evill or sinfull, so as to give any tender con-

P  P  P  3
Of Tithes as too much for the Ministers.

7.

Tithes are too much for the Ministers. Answ. This indeed is the thorn I looked for in these halting Christians; Here it is that the shoe pincheth envious avarice: And why too much O you narrow soules? Their ordinary Arithmetick, at their fingers ends, tell them; that the Ministers are not the tenth man of the land; and why should they have the tenth part of the Increase? I answer, 1. What is freer than gift? and what wiser, than to publicke and to ancient a gift, of a whole Church, and Nation Christian, which gave to God not according to the measure of these mens thirst, but of the largenesse of their own devout hearts, and as became the riches and honour of this Nation? The Laws of the land past and conveyed Tithes to the Clergy and their successors for Gods service, even then when they were forbidden, for the most part, to marry; and enjoined to lead a single life: O how would the munificence of those times have burst these men with envy against the Clergy in their rich Celibacy, who repine to see them thus moderately provided for, when they are most what charged with families, and many relations? 2. I may retract, No more are those Laymen the tenth persons in any Parish, who yet may have sometime the Improprisite Tithes, it may be, of ten parishes. 3. I adde, all worthy Bishop, and Ministers, that have any competency, are never such unhospitable Nabals, as to eat their morfell alone; many poore creatures are frequently relieved by them, and bleffe God for them; after the example of Archbishop Warham, a most charitable and good man, who being sick, asked his Steward what money was in his treasur, and being answered there was none; he smiled, saying, It is well, it is time to go to God: Erasminus tells of that Prelates great liberality to the poor. 4. All, but envious eyes, see, that there is not one of ten among other men, but he hath either lands, or moneys, or some trade, and way of livelihood, which the Ministers seldom have, being bred up wholly to their studies; nor is it fit they should have other cumberstome employments, since that holy work will take up the whole man; if they study to be able and faithful full warriors, and not meerly popular and flourishish scorners: No man going to war intangleth himself with the affaires of this life. 5. I might plead if not in equity, yet in pity; few Ministers in England now are single men; chusing rather to live among Gods cares and thornes, and the incumbrances of honest and honourable marriage; then either in concubinary scandals, or other ways of luxury and lubricity, which are the devils cunions and featherbeds: Not, but that the godly and learned Ministers of
England doe highly honour that Celibacy or single life, which is indeed a redemption of the soul from secular attendance and cares (with Martha) to a vacation for God and his holy service, with Mary; we condemn not the ancient or modern devotion of any in this kind; when either distresse of times enforce it, or purpose of heart doth chuse it: Not as a refuge and easie support of life; but as an exercise of penitence, mortification, charity, devotion, and heavenly meditation; not upon presumptuous confidence, or friends persuasion, or fond superstition; but upon mature deliberation, humble resolution, and good experience of that gift obtained; which is able so to subject nature to the Empire of grace, the body to the soule, the flesh to the spirit, carnall and sensual imaginations, to divine and spiritual contemplations; repelling innate flames by holy fervencies, so as preserves the purity both of body and minde, together with the title of virginity; so that votaries, (not strict and presumptuous, or peremptory and absolute; but conditionate, upon humble, and modest supposition of that gift and matter, which *God only can give them over themselves, in order to an holy Celibacy) have yet power of that Liberty, in some cases, to be enjoyed, which the great and wise Creator hath allowed to humane infirmity: without any reproach either to Himself, (who is the God of Nature, as of Grace; of the Body, as of the Soul; of the flesh, as of the Spirit;) also without any uncomely or dishonourable reflection upon any of his servants, who thankfully and holily use that his divine indulgence. We like the golden chain of Celibacy, when it is sincere; not copper gilded over, but pure gold throughout: when it is as an ornament or bracelet, which may be taken off, if need require; and not as fetters or manacles to strait, so heavy and so severely sodered on, as weak nature cannot bear, and true Religion doth not impose.

There have not been wanting many learned, holy and excellent Bishops and Presbyters in this Church of England since the reformation, who have glorified God, not in a cloistered and vowed, but yet in an unfotted and voluntary Celibacy; as others have in an holy and allowed Matrimony: Both of them abhorring those preposterous presumptions, rash affectations, necetitious snares, and rigid impositions of a single life, upon our selves or others; which make many votaries like, fair apples splendid to the eye, but rotten at the core. We find that of ten Virgins, five were foolisli. Flesh will putifie in a close cupboard as well, as if it be abroad, unlefe it be throughly seasoned with salt. A Cloister is no security to chastity, unlefe there be such a measure of grace, as may keep from secret pollutions, no less then from publique purifications; wherein who so findes himself so frail and defective, that hee.
Maintenance of the married Ministers.

he cannot conquer and command himself: it is both wisdome and piety for him, or her, rather to chuse Gods Purgatory of marriage; than the devils Paradise of a Monastery: rather to sleep on Gods bolster, stuffed with thornes, or hard as Jacobs stone at Bethel, than to repofe on the devils pillow, stuffed with doun; Fulnesse, ease and idlenesse breeding and nourishing infinite swarmes of lufts, which may be hived up, as so many Drones, Wasps or Hornets, in those receptacles, which pious munificence intended only for piety and purity; not onely in the title, but truth of Virginity. Experience of laterages hath much abated the glory of enforced Virginity, and vowed celibacy; restoring to Christians, and to Ministers as well as others, the honour and liberty of holy marriage; which is by the Apostoical oracle aserted, as honourable among all men, and by Scriptural Canons granted to Bishops and Presbyters as well, as any other Christians; and so used and taught in Primitive times: as Clem. Alexandr. telleth us. Against which, by a preposterous imitation of that celibacy, or single life, (to which the persecuting extremities of primitive times drave many holy men and women; that so the Gospel in its first planting and propagating should not want, (among other Miracles) this of holy mens and womens chastity and severer virginity, in desert cells and solitudes first, after that in Convents and Monastick Societies;) some mens after zeal and emulations, so superflitiously cryed up virginity, as injuriously to cry down the honour of marriage, especially among Churchmen.

Which yet was not done, without much opposition, and remonstrance to the contrary, by many holy men, in those times; Among which, most remarkable was that of Paphnutius, a Confessor, and worker of Miracles; who had lost his right eye for Christ's sake, whom Constantine the Great the more loved and reverenced for that glorious defect; He in the Council of Nice, (where many holy men out of no ill minde, but thinking it would tend much to the honour of Christian Religion, to continue those strictnesse of Virginity in the Church, in the times (now) of peace and prosperity, which had so adorned it in times of persecution; that so it might not seem a matter of necessity, compelling, but of devotion, choosing a single life;) he vehemently opposed what was proposed touching making of Decrees and Canons against the marriage of the Clergy; shewing by Scripture and ancient practice, the lawfulness of marriage in Ministers of the Church; and the many not inconveniences only but mischiefs also which would follow such prohibitions, whose
Honor of the married Clergy.

whose holy and weighty reasons then swayed the Council, that they made no such injunctions touching the Celibacy of the Clergy, which after times plentifully cast upon them, as so many chains and snares; which proved no lesse to the dishonour and stain as of the Ecclesiastical order, so of all Christianny, than the primitive freedom of virginity or marriage had advanced the honour of both.

In both conditions of life we think a pure and chaste minde the best rule or measure; and a good conscience the highest crown or reward. We are not at all taken with gilded frames and titles of *celibacy and virginity, put to ill wrought and uncomely pictures of vitiated and deformed chastity; which is a double impurity, and of the divels deepest dye; when it is, but a colour and artifice of those that speak *lies in hypocrisy, forbidding both meats and marriage; Nor yet does any wht dispise or undervalue any excellent modern piece of *holy Virginity, wrought after those primitive patterns, and pristine originals of sublime severities in holy retirements; yet withall we give that due honor which holy antiquity, the blessed *Apostles, the sacred Scriptures, Christ and God himself have given to marriage; which hath also its divine beauty and comeliness; however it be set in a plainer frame of more familiar conversation, domestick cares, and secular businesse.

That of St. Jerom (whose holy beats many times made his pen boil over) was an hard saying; while I doe the duty of a Christian: St. Austin with more calmnesse and judgement, upon the words of the Apostle (Heb. that married not doth better, 1 Cor. 7:38.) tels us, The meaning of the Apostle is, so to excite to higher pitches of piety in single life, as not to condemn the lower form of marriage; And certainly St. Jerom, *who was so mighty a champion for Virginity, or single life, would never have so highly advanced that above and against first or second marriage, if he had lived to have seen how much the after softnesse and delicacy of votaries had degenerated from those primitive strictnesse and severities, which St. Jerom requires: Or, if he had calmly and charitably considered those violent impulses of nature, to which others may be subject, he as confesseth himself to have been even in his eremetical life; and yet furnished it may be, with farre lesse gift of continency to deny and overcome them, than that holy man had; who yet carried not the Trophies of his so much ginitas Christi bosin, enim nec carnem libido, nec mentem cogiticio magnificavit, Jeron. cont. Iovin.
magnified virginity, unviolated to his grave. Or, lastly, if he had lived to have seen, and heard the feliciies and abominable obscenity's, which afterward rendred many Monasteries, and Numeries, as the divels sinks; cages of most unclean birds; and channels of all impudicities; rather than Gods cabinets of Jewels; or the Churches crystall springs; or the Angels rivals, and emulators; or the followers of Jesus Christ; As those his primitive servants in their persecuted and unspotted purity did, who chose purity with poverty, and chastity with necessity in any condition; married or unmarried; rather than splendid fordes; and hypocritcall pretensions; which the more they mock God, and delude the world, and ensnare unwary soules to dreadful inconveniencies, the more they fear mens confences, and damn mens soules; yet and when those dunghils strowed over with the roses and lilies of chastity, and virginity, come to be turned, and discovered, who can express, or expiate the infinite shame, dehonestation, and infamous, which they bring to Christian Religion?

But this large digression by way of vindicating of the fullness and honor of Ministers marrying, (which a far more eloquent and polite pen of a learned Bishop hath formerly done beyond my praises) is so far ventall, as it was more necessary to plead for a setled and competent maintenance for them, now, when they enjoy the liberty, and bear the burthens of married life; To whom Supplies far more, than that of Tithes, were granted then, when under the restraint of Celibacy; which yet was shrewdly blemished by scandaline convivences; which was the best of those evils, which much wasted the credit and honor of the rich and unmarried Clergy in those times.

To speak plain English, I suppose, that those objectors and projectors against Tithes, and so against any setled competent maintenance of Ministers in this Church, (saving those impulses of covetousness, and temptations to envy, which are natural in them) are set up, and animated, by such Antidecimal proposals and petitions to drive the Jesuites nailes home to the head: That they may urge for the more peevish, politic or superstitious Papists this sharp argument of poverty, indigence, beggary, or dependent necessity, which will be the strongest reason in the world against Ministers marrying; (Against which nothing from the minde of God in the Scriptures, or the practice and judgement of holy men in primitive, and purest times can be, with any colour of Truth, allledged.) But the poverty of Ministers will, beyond all the Sophistry of Bellarmine, without any injunctions, or vows of Celibacy, either bring forth an unmarried, because a necessitous Clergy; or else none at all, that shall be worthy (for learning, just confidence, and due authority)
from the Rev. Ministry.

authority) the name or place of a Minister, in this sometime so famous and flourishing a Church; whose honour even among its enemies, as well as friends, was not the least in this. That of all reformed Churches it had least spared from the maintenance and honour of the Ministers; but maintained them in great part, worthy both of them, and itself. Alas what hedge creeping creatures will the Clergy of England soon come to be in thenext generation; when nothing shall encourage the parents, or the children of any wise and provident men, either to fit them for, or to undertake such an office and calling, as will take up the whole man; and yet afford little or no maintenance; and that not feyled, but arbitrary, and depending upon Mechanick or feminime bounty; where he that hath most craft, and can best croach or flatter, shall have the best living; not according to his merit, but his cunning. This policy of starving the learned and married Clergy of this Church, (making this rich and plentifull land as those defolate and inhospitable Islands of old were, whither many learned Bishops and Presbyters were oft-times condemned and banished by the command of cruel persecutors) will soon make room for the Priests, and Seminaries of the Romish party; who will easilie supply this Nation with a better fed and better taught Clergy, than ever these hungry projectors against Tithes will be able to afford; who, as they shall be lesse pinched with want, or debased to forlorn shifts and complyings; so they will be far better stored with learning and abilities, which may recommend and set forth the doctrines they teach, and the place or function they pretend to: Nor will it be the effect of their policy, in order to advance the Papal Monarchy, more than of their piety and charity rather to draw and confirm the people of this Nation to the Romish profession and subjection, (which hath much in it of learning, devotion and Catholick verity and order) rather then to suffer poor people to be led by blinde and base guides into all manner of ignorance, and extravaganey in Religion.

So then in all sober and impartial reason, how can Tithes, as now they are pared, be or seem too much for the worke or charge of the Ministry? Save that to envy and avarice all, that is anothers, seemes too much: Sure if these men had been Lay Papists, nothing would have converted them from Popery so much, as to have seen the rich lands, the goodly revenues, the plentifull tithes, oblations and donaries, which are there paid to their Bishops and Churchmen, without any grudging, yea with much conscience, by the people, (who in that point are very commendable, as in a matter of justice, gratitude and devotion; whose sincerity is never more triyed, than when it makes men conquerers of covetous desires.)

Q q q 2 And
And truly, in this part of a free and liberal spirit, most Papists are far beyond these men, who make so great an affair with their thrifty reformatioris, who are still driving the bargain so hard, with God and their Ministers, even in those matters, which concern their soules, that all their piety cannot be worth three half pence, since they grudge, if their Religion cost them one penny; This wretched temper, as it is little to the honour, so little to the advantage of the reformed Religion; That men should be always thus shocking upon God, and his Church, under shews of piety.

...And truly, I am strongly of this heresy, against all these penurious reformers; That nothing hath more nipped, and hindered the progress of true, and necessary reformatioris in this western world, (as to matters of doctrine, discipline, and manners) or will occasion a greater relapse and Apostasie, than these sacrilegious projects and covetous principles, with which the Devil hath always fought to blemish and deform, that which is called (and jutly in some things) reformation. Many reformers are but kites, though they soar high, yet they have an eye to their prey beneath; some men still so propound and manage Church reformation, as if it could not take place in any Church, without devouing all the lands of the Church, and beggaring all the Churchmen; That to be reformed, never so well in doctrine, and manners, would not serve the turn; unlefe the Clergy suffer those Lay corruptionists to devoure all; and to reduce the State Ecclesiastic, every where, from that dignity and plenty, (the double honour, with which pious predecessors endowed them) to beggery and shameful dependences; even upon those mens courtesies, from whom, (when they have truly hunted, and by learned pains gained a just reformation in points of doctrine and outward manner of religion) yet they shall as Ministers be then rewarded with nothing, but the very garbage, some poore and beggery stipends: It is very probable, that the wholesome waters of true Reformation (which by the confession of many of the learned and moderate Romanists was in many things of religion necessary among them) had been willingly ere this drunk by many of the Romish party; if this sacrilegious star (which may well be called wormwood, although it seem to burn as a lamp) had not fallen upon the waters of Reformation; of which many in Germany, and other places have dyed: because they were made bitter with such sacrilegious and fordid insuffusions; Reducing their reformed Ministers to such necessities and begggerly ways of life, that could be little to their comfort, or to the honor of their profession; and, no doubt, infinitely to the other mens prejudice and abhorrence of, what they so called, their reformation.

Indeed it will be hard to perswade wise and learned men (how ever...
ever in other points of controversie they may be convinced, and willing to agree with the Reformed Churches: that they must without any other cause, but this, that they belong to the Church, presently forsoke, and forfeit their lawfull and goodly possession to some mens unsatiable sacrilege, who make Church Reformation, but the Lay mens walking horse to get estates: Men doe naturally chuse to attend on fat and ointed errors, rather than on lean and starved truths: Nor doth any thing render the Christian and reformed Religion more dreadfull and deformed to the view of the ingenuous, and better bred world, than when it is set forth like the Gorgon, or Medusaes heade, compassed with sacrilegious Serpents, and circled with the stings of poverty and contempt; threatening by poysonous bitings quite (at length) to destroy and devour all true piety: Then which, nothing is lesse envious of others enjoyments, or more prodigally communicative of its own: The word of Christ, bidding Christians sometimes, as that young man, to forfake all and follow him, doth not oblige always; nor doth it become these mens mouths, who care not, who follow Christ, so as they may get the spoiles of his naked followers: Reforming Christians cannot im more in themselves, and be a greater temptation to others, (hindring them from due reforming) than, when by their covetous principles, and cruel practices, they shall scare men from true reformation: and indeed from all good opinion of such mens religion; who in the peace and plenty of all other estates and degrees of men study to recommend piety to Church men onely, attended with poverty and contempt: As if Ministers could not be godly, except they were beggerly; nor worth the hearing, till they were not worth a groat: That they could never trust sufficiently in God, till they were brought to mean, and shamefull pondeuces, for their bread, upon the flunk and withered hands of such mens, as these Antidecimists are, which they are always stretching out against God and his Prophets; Christ and his Ministers: Although piety be a Jewell to be taken up, where ever we finde it, though in the dust of poverty; and Christ is beautifull, when he is strippd: yet none, but rude and barbarous hands would treat Christ in such a manner, as exceeds their wanton crueltie, who crucified him; for when they parted his garments among them, they did not own him for their Saviour, or the Messiah, as these self-inrishinge reformers pretend to doe.

Matt. 27. 35.

O. fad and fordid soules; O. mean and miserable reformers; with whom the Ministers of this Church of England have now to plead, for their last mortell; that little remnant of their Oile.

Q. q. 3.
and Mals. Charity forbids me to condemn you, and your Santi-
legious faction to be punished with your own manners and designs,
which are most wretched, and unworthy the name of the Christian
profession; which above all Religions, ever encouraged most the * chear-
full givers, and abhorred rapacious * receivers; I might say to you,
as* St. Peter did to Simon Magus, Your money perish with you; No, I
rather wish your Salvation, (if possible) though it be without the
 restitution of, what you have already and intend further to rob
Christ of, and his Church, and his Ministers; and his poor too:
(for they had a good share in the Church's revenues;) Only I wish
withall, that all the learned and godly Ministers of the Gospel in
England, were in such a condition, as to worldly competency, that
they could preach the Gospel freely; that so these repiners might hear
them gratis, (as most of them doe when they vouchsafe to hear them)
and to without prejudice, or grudging at the maintenance of Mi-

nisters in point of Tithes; That so, if it be possible, they may repent,
and be converted from that gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity, in
which they are; It were happy if (as St. Austin offered to doe) all
Ministers could receive, that equitable, and Evangelical power,
which they have by Scripture; and that legal right, which the
law of the land hath given them, to demand and receive Tithes,
and other emoluments: That their necessites might not force
them (having neglected all other ways of getting, or improving
estates, that they might fit themselves by their studies for this
great work of the Ministry) either to take Tithes; or (which of
all things is most detestable to men of any ingenuous spirits and
learning) to depend upon vulgar contributions; which are so stuffed
with pride in the givers, and contempt toward the receivers; so full
of uncertainty; and so certain high ways to baseness, and beggary
(as the genius of most men now is) that there are few Mechaniques,
who would not disdain to be such Ministers; as must, when they
have done their work, beg for their wages; and shall be sure to want
them, unless they always abound in servile compliances and flatteries,
with the vilest men, and their vilest humours: For however peo-
ple have now and then a warm fit of giving to their Teachers,
yet it seldome lasts longer than the heat of some factious design or
new fancy melts and thaws them: After that, they soon returne
to that frozenesse, which is hardly dissolved by any mans warmest
breathings, to some few drops, of incompetent, yet insolent, and super-
cilious contributions.

But I am afraid our distemper is deeper, and more subtilly dan-
groos to our reformed Religion, than we are aware of, in this point
of Ministers maintenance: The burthen is not, That Tithes are paid
(for that these projectors doe not intend to quit so (either to Land-
lords
lords or poor Tenants:) but that they are paid to the true and
dominated Ministers, that thereby they are still continued, and in-
couraged in their Ministry; The grief is, that as they receive them,
of every where they deserve them: The vexation of that is, that
Ministers are not yet driven out of their lives; as Bees after all their
labours; by the smoak of some such sulphurous projects: that for
these hungry Reformers, and new stamped Preachers with their Je-
mitick arts and insinuations may possesse their honeys: The displeasure
of some men is, that any Ministers, worthy of that name and call-
ing; or that any thing of good learning, of studious abilities, of real
which the Godsmen, or of that name and call-
ing, yet, many gives the Bishops: many "
that The; or preaching the gospel, and among
them to any splendor or prodigality; Alas, the most of them have cusses.
scarce for honest necessities: Look to their poor widows and fa-
therlesse children, commously, their greatest portion is Godsmen's
and mans charity. And (to the shame of this Nation; so blest of
God and Nature with abundance) many of them are by the
graciousness of their Benefices, kept far enough from exercising that ho-
sitable largeness, which many of them have in the Theory and spec-
culation, but cannot practice it; which is so commended by the
Apostle Paul, and required in a Bishops and Ministers way of living,
among men; as having, not more a face of humanity with it, than
Divinity: (it being the glory of God to be of a bountiful munificence
and liberal goodnesse) as carrying a sweet savour with it, making the
Ministry of the Gospel, as a fragrant ointment poured out; much
recommending the Gospel to men, when they can hear Christ's Word,
and taste of his loaves too; Besides, it gives a great advantage, and
usefull authority to Ministers in the places, where they live; renders
their counsels more conderable; their examples more venerable; their
dogtrine more acceptable, and more credible; for nothing more
justifies, what we preach of God's bounty and great gifts in Christ's
poor men; than, when they see religious men, and chiefly Mi-
nisters, most liberall of this worlds goods; as believing, they have
treasures laid up in heaven, which the poor hand mans (which is God's
box) carries thither: And indeed considering the great numbers of
poore, in many or most places of England now abounding; and
the.
the retrenching of most men's estates both in trade and housekeeping, it were no more than needed; if Ministers, (who are constantly resident among the poor) were able also, to be some very relievers of them, beyond bare and barren words of godliness; which signifies little to those, whose bellies have no eares when they are pinched with urgent and extreme necessities.

Nothing should be less illiberal, than true Christian Religion; which sets forth the highest bounty of God to mankind in giving Jesus Christ; Nor ever was any thing less forbid, than Christians in former times; the many monuments here in England, of their religious prodigalities, and devout excesses to the Church and to pious uses, doe sufficiently testify how far those Christians were from the niggardize and Nabalian of some men in these times; Then, they thought nothing too much for Churchmen; now nothing is too little: And truly it is a very foul shame that superstition, (which is but the * Minick and Ape, or the wen and excrecency of Religion, an Hydropick holiness, a nimiety of piety, an overboiling devotion, which at length quencheth it self) that this should put true Reformation to the blush: *Poverty is always attended with shame, or impudence among the vulgar: and though it have no cloak, yet it needs one to cover its own confusion; and to keep it from vulgar contempt: O how large hearted and liberal banded in former times, and at present; in other Churches and Countries, is that Religion, which is commendable as it is Christian and liberal, however reformable as it is blameable for the taints of error and superstition, which have, in many things, infected it! What hath more splendor, what more plenty, what more superfluity, than those that are of the Roman Clergy? who have more vacancy to their studies, devotion, and publick duties, than their Ecclesiastics, or Church-men, of all degrees? who have learned to use now those things, far better, than it may be former Luxury and disolution did; which occasioned, many worthy mens complaint of the abuses and faults; but not their envy at the enjoyments? The moderation of the English Church in this part of Reformation was at first very nobly commendable; and most worthy of the generous piety of this Nation; which did not deny or grudge Church-men to have good and great maintenance, or honour, but only required that such means should still have good Ministers. They never applauded, as these new Projectors do, for a most heavenly Oracle, that voice which is signified to have been offended with Constantine's munificence to the Church; as if it had been poisoned when enriched: Nor did they think Religion thoroughly reformed, till it was starved; nor Ministers mended enough, till they were stark naked, or dead. Nor had heretofore the common and plain hearted people those presient principles, which
which now the drage of men have here in England taught them; That an hundred pound a year is more than any Minifter can well spend or deserve; It were good that these men would first try themselves that meafure which they mete to Minifters. Certainly nothing is too little for Church men, if they lead men to false gods, or to a false worship; but nothing too much for them, if they teach men to serve the true God, in a true way.

Nor may these poor spirited men object against Minifters, the poverty of the primitive Apostles, Bishops and Presbyters; when the times, and the eftates of Christians are now much changed from those difficulties and necessities, which then pressed upon all sorts of Christians; To be sure, if Christian people gave not then much of their own eftates to their Minifters; yet, they never thought of taking away, what their Minifters had, as being too much for them; But, there is no doubt, that one beam of Christian love, bounty and re- fpect, in after settled and plentifull times, (which were very pure and primitive too) was more warm and comfortable to their Bishops and Presbyters, than all the large streaming tayles of these modern comets, and meteors of Reformation; whose malign and direfull apest against Minifters and all Church men, is no way recompended by those prodigious fees, and pretentions of propagating the Gospel, or furnishing the world with purer and brighter shinings, than ever were in the Church; who shall be lamps without oil, and shine without sustenance. Minifters are stars in Chrifts right hand, but not in that fenfe, that they need no fewell to nourifh them, in a naturall and civill life: Such interpretations of Scripture, and such entertainment of Minifters in the Church, will soon eclipse, or extinguish truth and charity, honour and gratitude, in the reformed Churches, and in all Christian profefors; not onely to man, but even toward God, who as he hath ordained Minifters to impart to the people of their spiritual things, so also he hath commanded people to communicate to them, that are their true Pafiors and Minifters, of all their temperall good things: But it is in vain to urge Scriptures, to covetous hearers and Sacrilegious mockers of God and man: Nothing is more Apocrypha to those misers, than such texts, as command honourable maintenance for the Minifters of the Gospel; first recover the primitive bounty and charity of peoples hearts and hands to the Clergy, before you reduce the Clergy to primitive uncertainty.

But why do not these muck-worms and no men (who would gnaw the very bones and carcases of Minifters) with the fame teeth bite at other mens eftates as well as Minifters, which are far greater every way; who yet doe leffe service to the publique, either to God or man, to Church or State, than the able and faithfull Minifters
Why the Ministers most envied.

doe; since these whining objectors have such a pain and wringing colick in their bowels against Ministers having any settled competent and decent way of maintenance, why doe they not as well complain, that the Captains, Commanders, and Military officers, who draw more immediately from the peoples purses) have too much for their pay? why doe not these men propound, that there should be nothing but parity, and poverty among the soldiery? That they should depend on peoples benevolence, for their salary and pay? Yet they fee that even to these military mens entertainment, the poore Ministers must pay; not a tenth, but of a fifth part of their small, hardly earned, and hardly gotten meanes, arising from their ill paid tithes: which are but the wages of their work; yet they are rated in taxes, as if their livings were their inheritance; when all is but for life, and to many of them not so good, as an ordinary troopers pay; few so ample, as an ordinary Foot Captains: And, as for higher Commanders, and Colonels, all men know, they have Military Denaries, and armed Bishopricks; enjoying much more, than is by some men thought fit for any Bishop and Clergy man; who (with their leaves, and without disparagement to any of those fons of thunder) had and have as much learning, true worth, and industry, to merit their large entertainments of the publique; and they had no lesser grace and true wisdom to use them, to the glory of God, and the benefit of others, than any of these, who are so much the favorites of Bellona, as to get what they merit, and to keep what they have gotten.

But these Antidecemists who seek to eat through the Bowels of their Mother the Church, dare be bold and shew their teeth only against Ministers, and their maintenance by Tithes, (which may be easily proved as lawfull as any taxes are:) They know well, that the soldierys frownes, and swords command their pay, and so are able to curb these mens spitefull tongues and griping hands: only they think, they may safely vent their passions and poison against the despised, dejected, and unarmed Ministers; greatly crying out against their small salaries, which no doubt cost these men least, who speak loudest: who preferring, by a most sinful and brutish judgement, the welfare of their bodies, before that of their soules, grudge to have any, so good rewards allowed to the Phyfians of mens soules, as are publiquely granted to the Phyfians of mens bodies, in the Army. Yea, these men are so in love with their spirituall diseases, that they hate their spirituall Phyfians: and had rather content themselves with any cheap leaches, or perish in their feverish ravings, than be at any cost for cure, by learned and able Ministers.

But
The Farmer satisfied in point of Tithes.

But these Antidecimists have a fit of charity upon them, which troubles them the more, because they are not wonted to it, in regard of other men; (for their charity not onely begins, but altogether stayes and ends at home;) O the poor Farmers (they say) finde it heavy to pay Tithes, to the Ministers! Answ. And will it not be as burdensome to them, when they shall pay them to some Lay exactors; who will be as rigorous to the full as ever Ministers were? But the husbandman is discouraged, and disabled in his tillage, and husbandry by paying the tenth of his increase to the Ministers. Answ. What? more now then when they shall be paid to other men that shall be in office, to gather them, or to compound for them, when did any countryman finde himself poorer at the years or life's end, who made conscience to pay his Tithes to the Minister? which was ever thought by the Jews, (and is no error I think among Christians) to be as a hedge, and blessing to the rest of that estate which a man hath; it's certain a Christian man enjoys the remainder with more peace, when he payes honestly that which is due to another; but chiefly to his Minister, who hath the title of the Law, and of God, and of personall merit, for his Tithes. And is it not a profound project meriting a publique reward, for a Christian to propound wasies for plenty of corn, and for a famine of the Word? So much it rules some mens Religion more to have a good stomach, than to keep a good conscience: for these, that would alien, or alter the right of Tithes from the Ministers, can make no scruple of any sacrilege, while they make no bones of violating the will of the dead, and that holy dedication, which hath been made to God, by this whole Nation, and so continued for many generations.

But they would not have Ministers Tithe coveters. Answ. No more would Ministers have such projectors coveters of Tithes or any thing else which belongs not to them. But I pray may not Ministers be as subject to the temptation of covetousnesse, when their Tithes shall be dispensed, as an Almes out of a common basket, by a Lay Officer? (which is one of their rare and sovereign antidotes propounded to cure the Clergics coveting.) I beleive their means will not be much more satisfying to them by that project: Sure these projectors forget that covetousnesse is an * inordinate desire of another mans goods, or an exccelv love of ones own; Honest men are not to be odiously branded with coveting that to which they have a right, both by Gods and mans laws: As for the trouble, and scandal of Ministers suing for their Tithes, and persecuting, as one calls it, their neighbours; the projector might have far more handsomely removed that from people, than objected it to the Ministers; if he had with more conscience and sincerity exhorted people to pay their Tithes.

* Avarizia est inordinarius appetitus boni quod aleri debetur jure sui aut inordinarius amor honorum secundarioum, quos ab ipso possidentur. Lett.
The Farmer satisfied in point of Tithes?

Tithes as they are due, justly, cheerfully, and conscientiously to their Ministers; so as the laws of man (at least) command; which in things honest become the Laws or Ordinances of God; But not a word of those exhortations to people, because nothing is like to be got by them: Although those had better become any Christian man, that pretends to a publick piety; or preserves of a capacity to advise a whole Nation; than to teach men first to detain injuriously, than to scruple willingly or weakly the paying Tithes to Ministers; that is, to give to every man what is his due; which is the rule of common justice; and the best project in the world to preserve either Kingdoms, or Common-wealths in peace.

Tis very true, it becomes Ministers least of any men to be covetous or contentious; It is worthy of them to suffer wrong, rather than revenge it in many cases: But if they be by such iniquitous projections and unjust temptations put upon using the benefit of the Law, to obtain their own, the persecution is on the Laymans side; who is taught thus, rather to put forth his hand against the Minister, than to him his due in a fair way, in which payment the husbandman, Farmer, or owner of the land, hath no other merit, but only this, of quiet and honest payment; for the Tenth of the Increase is neither bought nor sold, nor rented to any Landlord, or by any Farmer; God gives the increase; Nature the land; and the Law that quantum to the Minister; as God's portion, and the Churches rent. Which if some country Churches refuse, or grudge to pay to their Minister, so, no doubt, many of them, would to pay their Rents to their Landlords, if they had but enough of John of Leydens spirits, and CIpperdolins principles to animate them, and arm them against paying, or owning any thing of Landlords title or dues; There are many impure and unjust men, who will soon style themselves Saints and mence of the earth, if that be a good title to claim the lands, and to inherit: other mens estates on the earth, as those false Christs and Theudas did endeavour in Germany to the ruine of themselves and thousands of others.

But by the favour of the Antidecinifs, and their petitions, which pretend to be so bigge with the names of whole Countreys and many sincere godly people in the countrey, petitioning against the maintenance of Ministers by Tithes, that they must needs come up to London, to lay their great Bellies, at the Parliament-house door; I doe not believe (because I never saw any ground, or had experience, to think so hardly and uncharitably of any Country-men, Farmers or others, that are either good Christians or honest men) that ever they did, or doe complain simply and absolutely against Tithes. Possibly they could wish, that some things about them were better ordered, for the Ministers, and their owne greater ease; which
The Farmer satisfied in point of Tithes.

which may be soon done, if the values of them were once brought to a just rate and certainty: and Collectors appointed, as in other Town-rates, to gather them in, according to the compositions made in money, or goods, by way of distress: which may as conveniently be done in the Ministers behalf, as in any other way of collecting publique rates: And if Tithes have sinned in any thing; yet what have the glebelands of Ministers offended? yet there is as much ill will against them, as the other; though there be evil, indeed, in neither, to any men, but such, as call good evil, and evil good.

Furthermore to gratifie the plain country man and Farmer with plain dealing; (who hath the honour above all men in this Nation, to be the great supporters (by their honest labour, and love) of the Ministry and Religion in this Church and Nation) they may easily consider, with themselves, how they have no reason in the world to be against paying, and maintaining their Ministers by Tithes: For first, let them but take care, and pray to God for a good, able, and true Minister, and study to profit by his holy labours; they will never grudge him his dues in Tithes, or any thing else; for they will finde they have a good penny worth for their Tithes in the blessing of God, both on their souls and on their estates; if paying their Tithes were wholly their own bounty and gift. Which secondly, they may consider, is not so; but they are as a rent charged upon their lands, beyond what they pay to their Landlords; only the Minister hath some benefit by their labours, as they have of his. 3. They ought seriously to consider; that if Tithes were not by Law assigned to the Ministers maintenance, and paid to them, either they will return to the Landlords, in advance of their rents; or else be confiscated into some publique Exchequer; for the like, or the same, or other uses; But to be sure no benefit will flow to the Farmers, or country mans purse, by the ebbing of Tithes from the Church and Ministers.

As for the Landlords, Gentlemen, or others of estates, and revenues in land; I know many of them scruple their having any Tithes by the way of Improprations: they never think they thrived the better for them; many of them if their fortunes other ways would bear it, would willingly give them, or at ease rates fell them again to the Churches users; Some to their great honour have freely restored them; whom it grieved to see so many small Vicarages, and Livings; even ready to starve the painfull Ministers in them; So that I cannot think any true English Gentleman, that is a good Christian, would accept, or doth covet any such augmentation, which may be added with a curse to his revenues; by having the Ministers portion and his call into the lap of his inheritance, the benefit:...
of which cannot be great; but the mischief of it may be very great, to his estate, his conscience and posterity: And besides the sin; the shame, dishonour and uncomlineff of such acquisitions cannot be little, when once Christians return to their right wits, from that popular madness, giddinesse and greedinesse which may reign for a time; who will not in sober Senses think it most unworthy of persons of honour, learning and ingenuity, being Christians, and pretending to be more exactly reformed; that (these having other wayses fair, flourishing, and best estates) should sell their owne, their families, their countries and their Churches honour and happinesse, (which consists in true Religion, and this depends on true and able Ministers; and these on competent and constant maintenance) as Esau did his birthright and blessing for a meafe of potage, for some small sacrilegious additions; which carry with them a stain to their names, a mofh to their estates, and a sting to their conscience? Such will be the accepting of Tithes, though freely given them, by those, who have no right to alienate, or dispose them, otherways than the will of the Donours, and piety of the Nation have settled them for maintenance of the Ministry. And alas, how little emolument will hence arife to splendid and conspicuous estates? Tithes like Molehills in an Evening Sun, cast long shadows from little heights; the noise may be great, the benefit will be little, and the comfort none, from such morsels taken from the Altar, to which there hangs a coal of fire, which may destroy even Eagles nests; and this with the greatest justice of divine vengeance; when Christians consider those robberies and sacrileges, tend, as to Gods dishonour, to the reproach of Christian reformed Religion; so to the unspakeable temporall detriment of any Church and Nation, besides the inestimable loss of many poor soules for ever; who will soon want Ministers, that are able and worthy, if there be no other means for them, beyond what can be expected in a shameful and precarious way from arbitrary benevolences; which never yet failed to fail in a short time, as an Egyptian reed, all those that leaned upon them. Indeed, it is a foul shame for persons of honour professing Christianity to deal worse with their holy men, the Ministers of the true God and their onely Saviour; than Pharaoh, and the Egyptians did with their Priests; whose lands they would not buy into the Exchequer rents, no not in extream famine; but supplied them freely with bread, and preserved to them and their successors the lands, dedicated as they thought to the service of their Gods; which piety that great and good favorite Joseph approved; nor doth any zeal for the true God tempt him to unseanneable exactions, sacrileges against the imaginary and reputed gods of the Egyptians.

And
And here, while I seriously consider the many and great blessings both of minds and fortunes, which the bounty of God hath liberally bestowed on the English Gentry; I am so far from suspecting any such sacrilegious baseness in them, as if they gaped to make a prey of the Priest's portion, to devour holy things, or to rob the Ministry of their maintenance; That I cannot, but here take occasion, rather to perswade those true Gentlemen, whose parts and piety, equall their honour and estates; that they would out of zeal to the glory of God, and love to their Saviour, and pity to this Church and Nation; come in, as the (Triarii) last assistence, and surest reliefe of the reformed Religion, and of the true Ministry of this Church; which is almost overborn, and oppressed, by the cunning and clownish clamours, and not by any true valour, worth or virtue, of their enemies: Nothing would be more worthy of that ancient honour, which the Nobility and Gentry of this Nation hath gained and enjoyed in all the world, than to see now the Christian zeal and gallantry of their spirits, therefore the more forward, to bear up the dignity of Christ's holy Ministry, by how much they see so many set to oppose it, seeking by contempt to debase it; and by poverty to oppresse it: presuming, that the present Ministers, (though never so learned, godly and faithfull) once ever burthened with secular necessites, will not long be able to afford the honour of their calling; nor will any after generation succeed to inherit their poverty and pains; but onely such, as shall further debate the dignity of the function.

How glorious were it, for honourable and worthy gentlemen, like Joseph of Arimathea (whom good education and experience of true Religion have matured to pious wisdom, and sober zeal) now to own Jesus Christ, when the world is stripping, scourging, mocking, and crucifying of him; when he is so much forsaken of those men, whose tares dare not own him; or whose lufts aim to make a prey of him: Now to give the more honour and respect to the true Ministry of this Church, (by which they have beene baptized, and educated in Christian Religion); when they see so many vile and illiterate spirits, studying to debaue the persons, striving to destroy the very function? This were worthy of a true gentleman, (whom vertue and grace more then birth and relations make such) to stand by the forsaken; to countenance the defected; to pity the oppressed; and (at least) to Petition and intercede for the preservation of the true Ministry, and worthy Ministers, of whom they and the whole Nation have had so great and good experience.

I do not think it seafeonable, now, to invite Gentlemen; (where their estates and expenses may bear it), to follow those patterns of
of extraordinary munificence, which some of their rank have here-
tofore given them; by restoring the Improper Tithes and alienated
glbes to the Church; either freely, or at an ease price; This
were, now, to give sacrilegious rapine a greater temptation; which
dayly gapes to devour all the remains of the Churches Patrimony and
Dowry. To adde any blood now to the Churches veins, were but
more to provoke the thirst of greedy and unsatisfied horseleeches of
this age; who cry Give, give, till they have quite exhausted the
very life and spirits of all true Religion. This motion and bounty
will be more seannorable in better times; when Sacrilege shall be
accounted (as it is) a most damnable sin, and not a trade, or a fruit
of zeal, or a flower of reformation; which by the Apostles arguing
is a more heinous sin, than that of Idolatry, in as much as this owns
a god, though false; this robs God, though true.

But behold, I shew your noblenesse a more excellent way: my an-
bition is to, propound an higher degree of Christian glory to you,
the learned and religious Gentry; which is to follow the steps of that no-
bile Prince, George Duke of Aulburg, who disdain'd not having Ministerial
Gifts, to serve Christ and the Church at Marburg in the work of the Mi-
istry, taking upon him holy orders, in times of the greatest con-
tradiction against the reformed Religion: and esteeming it greater
honor to tread in Christ's more immediate and narrow steps, than
to enjoy the more spacious paths of secular pleasures, and State
imployments; If you know the excellency of Christ; the vanity of
this worlds glory; the worth of mens soules; the weight of that,
Crown, which is prepared for those, that forsake all, and follow Christ;
you cannot think your selves disparaged by this my humble motion to
you; Your estates will set a greater lustre now on you in the eyes
of good people, than ever the great state, pomp, plenty, and digni-
ties of former times set upon your predecessours; who of many of
your families were Church men, and many of them very worthy
ones. Where God hath given you Gifts, fit for so sacred a service
of him, and his Church, no man can propound to you a more
goodly province, wherein gratefully to use them; or a more emi-
nent way of presentment, wherewith to entertain your pious and
commendable ambition; which is most worth the pregnancy of
your parts, and nobleness of your spirits; No Cedar is too tall,
or goodly for the building of God's Temple; Nor may it disdain
to descend from Lebanon to the holy hill of Zion: and no Jewell
is too rich and glorious, for Aaron's breastplate; nor for the foun-
dations and walls of the New Jerusalem. The more splendor God hath
set upon you, the more shall you reflect to his glory and the honor
of that Religion you profess, by devoting your selves to serve him,
and his distress'd Church; in times, when labourers are few; and
those
those much overburthened: If any religious way of life might be
meritorious, this would be beyond the strictest notaries; in as
much as it carries more pains and more benefit with it.

I have seen by the experience of God's bounty, how great advantages. The advan-
tage; if God gives him grace and wise-
tages of an
done with it; How it addes to his just confidence, and courage in
serving God, and guiding his people; how it redeems him, not
only from vulgar depreciations, mean thoughts, and worldly so-
licitousness; but also from the temptation of flattery, popularity, and
that most fordid shamefull dependance on others frownes and fa-
vours; their givings, and withdrawings. I know how much it
addes boldness, credit, and authority to a Ministers words; to his
reproofs, comforts, monitions, and examples; As the express-
ions of those men, whom, not necessity of subsisting, but the con-
science of doing good; the unsighed love they have to Christ;
the firm belief they have of the Gospel; and the value they have
of mens soules, put upon the work of preaching: Then will
the country people think such Ministers of the Gospel to be in good
earnest, when they see hospitable relief of the poor, both in health
and sickness, both of their bodies and soules, goe along with the
Word preached: whom many Sermons, and good words will not
move; some charitable good works seasonably applied, as a hotter
fire or warmer Sun, may soften, melt and convert; To all which,
your plentifull, or at least, competent estates, piously and prudently
managed, will give you greater advantages, than most of the ordinary
Ministers can have; whom for the most part necessity drives into this
post of the Ministry; and there keeps them so under hatches, or
on the Lee, that they are seldom able to adventure upon any way
further, then their country Congregation, and obscurity afford them:
who have onely this glory, of being faithfull in a little, and bearing
poverty with great patience.

A few persons of your rank and quality, by some such heroic and
exemplary zeal, (as to many brave Christians of old against the Sar-
cens) would much confound the insolency of our Antiministerial
Jannes and Jambres: It would put the devill to new shift's and inven-
tions; when heand they shall see the Lord stirring up in a way,
not usuall, the spirits of gentlemen, eminent for estates and relation-
s, who then chuse to put their hands to the Churches Oars, and helm,
when they see the danger greatest, and the tempest blackest. You, as
Hercules, may come in to relieve those Atlases of the faithfull Bishops
and Ministers, who finde some mens new heavens too heavy for their
shoulders, and their new earth an unstable foundation, to set
their feet upon. Your learned humility cannot easily be seduced
by popular novelties and pretentions; to climb over the wall; or Joh.10.2;
to break in upon the Ministry by new ways, and posture of factious and fanatick presumptions; but will rather chuse (if God moves your heart to his work) to keep your feet in his way; that you may come in by that ancient and holy ordination; wherever it may rightly be had in this Church; This will make not only the true sheep of Christ; but the true shepheards also, glad to hear your voice; and to partake of those excellent gifts, which God hath given you; which study, prayer, and exercise will daily increase upon you; It is great pity so many of your learned, and pious abilities should lie idle, or not have employment worthy of them; especially when they are fitted for the Lords service, and the Lord hath need of them: Do not despise the calling; though it be black, yet it is comely, as the curtains of Solomon, though it be now forced to dwell in Meseck, and to have its habitation in the tents of Kedar: The first founder of our holy function, was a man of sorrowes, an outcalf of men; in whom the world thought there was no form or comeliness: Affliction hath reformed us by restoring Ministers to Christs image.

Which of you that hath the true sense, what it is to be a good Christian, and what honour it is to serve Christ in saving of souls, but will at the first word, which Christ sends, loose the Asse, (which is tied it may be to some snaile secular businesse,pleasure, or study) and let it be brought to Christ, being fit for his service; That so being strowed, and adorned with the richer ornaments wherewith your condition is cloathed; Christ may with the more conveniency and decency fit thereon; and ride, as it were, in an extraordinary triumph to Jerusalem; and many may follow him with Hosannas: Bleffing you, that come in the name of the Lord to save them. The leffe encouragements you can now expect, as Ministers of Christ, from men; the greater will be your honour, the sincerer your comforts, and the ampler your reward from God; when the world shall see, that you honour the work of the Ministry for the work sake; and love Christ for himself, no leffe, than others doe, where that service is attended with great revenues, and dignities; There will shortly be need (more than enough) of some Ministers, who can undertake the work; and not want the wages; even the meanest minded men now begin to divert their studies, and education to another way rather than that of the Ministry: finding, that there they are like fooneft to come a ground, and to dash against the rocks of poverty and contempt. A few of you (like Davids worthies) furnished with due and divine authority for the Ministry as well as with gifts, would mightily stand in the gap, repel, and confound the vanity and insolence of those, who are risen up to lay waste and desolate, this sometime so famous a Ministry and flourishing Church.
Taking away Tithes will be a great burden to the people.

But this is only an occasional digression humbly offered to those worthy Gentlemen, who have parts, learning, piety and courage enough, to make them dare to be good, and to do good, in so high and eminent a way, in the midst of a degenerate and declining age, which knows not how to prize the Gospel of Salvation, nor worthily to entertain the Ministry and Ministers of it.

But to return to my former subject; it is most evident that these projectors against Tithes are no ways friends to the Farmers, any more than to the Gentlemen and Landlords; for when Tithes are once taken away from Ministers, and being in Lay hands, are as easily cast into the balance of secular business, (as other Church lands have lately been;) if then Christian people, any where would be desirous to have a true and able Minister (and cannot satisfy themselves with those false Prophets, and unordained Preachers which are so cheap;) truly they will find a new burthen must then lye wholly on their estates and purses; to maintain their Ministers, while yet they must pay their Tithes other where.

These just considerations, and most undeniable reasons, have already made the honest Teamen so wise, as in stead of petitioning against Tithes, to cry aloud, to all those busy projectors: Before you take away Tithes from our Ministers, first provide a better way for their maintenance; Exchange will be no robbery, if it be no detriment: (that is,) such as shall be neither more chargeable in a new way; nor less comely and honourable; where a legal right may give claim against all impediments; else vile dependences on any mens favour, or good will, will abase both the calling, and spirit, and carriage of our Ministers, below what is comely for them, or willingly seen by us; who know, that in our true Ministers welfare the good of our own; and our childrens souls, under God, is bound up. Deprive not them of that due and double honor, which the piety and gratitude of this Nation hath given to them; left you deprive us, and our posterity of the true Christian, and reformed Religion; which we fear to be the aim of all those, that level against Tithes and Ministers; That so they may by a Jesuitick back blow, unperceived, strike through the loins of the reformed Religion, which hath been for many years happily among us, and this with more encrease of true saving knowledge, and praise of piety in one century of years, than was for many before; which blessing, next to God, we owe chiefly to our able and faithful Ministers, who are not so our servants in the Lord, that they should be used as our beasts, or slaves; but rather (as they are called, and deserve to be reverenced) as our Spiritual Fathers, our guides and instructors in the Lord.

Besides this, That I may wholly drown this Wasp's nest, which makes
makes such a stir in the country, by their stinging Petitions, and buzzing projects against Tithes and Ministers; Let them know, That it becomes no men of honesty and ingenuity, thus to delude with specious pretences, the credulity of the country. Farmers, who for the most part love their Ministers so well, and prize the reformed Religion so highly, and value so much their Saviour, Jesus Christ, his holy Institutions, and their own soules; that they would utterly abhorre the bottome of these repining thoughts and projects of these murmurers against their Ministers, if they did but discern them: Yea like Zachæus, many of them had rather part with half their goods, than starve or lose their Ministers, and their own soules too with their childrens and families: No, the jolly plainness, and honest integrity of the English Yeoman, is neither so lazy and idle, nor so fordid and illiberall, nor so cunning and hypocritical, as these nimbler and shrucr fellows are: whose quick-silver wits, roving fancies, and fallacious tongues, aim at new modelling all things to their advantages; and hope with their Jesuitick pretensions and fanatick leaven to infect all sorts of men, both in City and Countrey: For their designe is, that all the worthy Ministers in England should be rather starved or beg their bread, than that they should come short of any such rare and little beneficall projects as they have in their crownes: Hoping either to buy some glebelands and Tithes, or to farm some part of them, or to have some Office in a new erected Tithe Exchequer, which for a while assarding some Ministers some small pensions, afterwards will serve for any secular occasions, that so Ministers being unprovided of means, the people may be left without any Ministers.

As for that stinging, which is in the tail of these projects, that by paying of Tithes to the Minifier, the husbandman and farmer is disabled to pay Taxes to the State, whom it concerns more, to keep up and pay a Souldiery than a Ministry; My answer is, As the other objections favour of hypocrisy, and self-interest, so this of flattery; These Polypussers are so cunning, as to apply to the surest rocks, and turn themselves to any colour, which may be for their safety: But, are they such wretches, as to think, that nothing will suffice to buy Souldiers swords and pistols, but only Christ's own food and rayment, which must be sold? It seems they had rather Christ should goe starved, naked in his Ministers, than themselves be ungarded: But we hope, that this is not the sense of any valiant, honest, or religious Souldier; who knows how to be content with his wages, to doe injury to no man; least of all to the Ministers of Christ, whom they have not yet so learned of these men as to hate and despise, because they would destroy them, his Minifters:
Ministers: And sure no souldier can have any motive against the welfare of the able and faithfull Ministers of this Church; unlese they fight against the Protestant Religion; and in stead of Reformes, turne Renegadoes to that Profession, in which they were brought up.

The bottom and dregs of some mens agitations against the settled maintenance of Ministers in this Church is, not so much to ease the people from paying Tithes, (which they shall be sure to doe, either by way of publique Exchequer, or to the private purse of Landlords, when these have bought them into their revenue;) but the project is to have no settled Ministry in this reformed Church: For these Antidecimists know by their country Logick, which is not very good, (but there are Jesuites, who are excellent at it.) That in a short time it will follow, No settled competent maintenance, no able or worthy Minister any where: But roome enough will be quickly made either for Seminary agitators, from forain nurseries; or for those forty pieces of motly predicants, and miny-gill Ministers, (Centaures in the Church, that are half Laicks, and half Clericky) who are indeed but the by blowes of the Clergy, uncalled, unordained, and commonly unblest; because false Prophets; either as to the errors of their Doctrine; or the arrogancy of their authority; whose calling, commision, and tenure, as Ministers, must chiefly depend upon popularity, flattery, and beggary: Such despicable Mendicants, as will in a short time make all ingenuous people weary of their literate opportunities; and such thread-bare preachers even ashamed of themselves.

This will certainly follow in a Spanish projecion, by as necessary a consequence, as, No Swine no Day; no fewell, no fire, no oil in the lamps, no light in the house; no pay, no souldier, no provender in the crib, no labour of the Oxen: yea, and the utter vaffaltion of the reformed Religion, as to the order, honor, and beauty of its publique profession, will as inevitably succeed, as the burning of the corn fields did the running of the fiery tailed Foxes among them.

...But the Antidecimists would have the Ministers of the Gospell follow other honest trades, taking upon them some mechanic or mercurialy occupations, that so they might earn their livings other ways, and preach gratis; that is, for nothing; and at length as good as nothing, both for want of ability and authority; How would these men rejoyce to see men of learned parts, of noble minds, and of ingenuous breeding, brought down to the levell of their low form; to shine no better, than their twinkling and unsavorie snuffes; to be eminent in nothing beyond the plebeian pitch, and vulgar proportions; that so they might spin out their famous at their weebles; or weave them up at their loomes; or dig them out with
their Spades; weigh and measure them in their Sheds; or flitch and cobble them up with their thimbles and lafts; or thresh them out with their flaylies, and after preach them in some barn to their dusty disciples; who, the better to set off their odneffe and unwontedniffe, to their silly Teachers, must be taught (like crazy or frantic men) to fancy themselves into some imaginary persecution; as if in times of even too great liberty, they were thus driven with their new found Pasteurs, into dens, and caves, and woods, rather than vouchsafe to hear with the greatest ease, order, and decency the ablest Ministers of England in those places, which are dedicated to the Churches publique use and service. Indeed the rudest way of these mens exercising their small endowments, and discovering their great idleness, by extemporary pratings, may well enough confine with those mechatnicks imployments, to which they have been brought up; and from which this their predicating now and then, is but a sport and recreation; if it should not turne to some account for profit; But to such men, as make the Ministry of the glorious Gospel, to be their work and study, dayly to fit themselves for that great and sacred dispensation, of saving Truths, and sublime mysteries, it will appeare to be, alone, an employment, so more than enough; that there will be little vacancy to intangle themselves in secular and inferior business; which is casting down the stars of heaven, from their orbs and firmaments, to things terrene and fordid, which at best are but loffe and dung in comparision of the excellency of that knowledge of Jesus Christ, which they determine above all things to know, and make known. If the work of the Ministry, (which is of so vast a latitude, and of so high concernment) require and takes up the prime and flower of the time, as well as the thoughts of the best and ablest men, that ever were conscientiously imployed in it, and all little enough; how fordid are those projects, which seek to divorc Ministers by worldly necessities, to debase their minds below that worthy office and weighty work!

But contempt and beggary are the double honour, which these mens bounty and gratitude would give to those, that have and still do diligently labour in the Word and Doctrine: Either they own them not, as invested in any holy office and divine authority; or they would have them so debased by poverty, and vile dependency; that they might not be thought fit to be owned as such: while they are forced to intangle themselves contrary to the Apostles Canon, in the meanest affairs of life; hindering other poor men in their manuell trades: and receiving no other benefit of their learning and labours; but what comes in an arbitrary way from others, or is extorted by their most illiberall importunities: bringing down
to the lowest step of disgrace the dignity of this holy function in this reformed Church, as if Ministers were to be nothing but an order of mendicant Fryers; these beg, when they need not; but those shall need, and beg, and have not: O how devious are these men to have all true Ministers, like to Christ their Master; not to have, wherefore hide their heads; while the Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; Such airy, light and high flying fancies, as thele, (who like felled Pigeons, the lefle they fe, the higher they fore) doe daily build their nests on high, and feather them very well: Yet they could be well content the Apostle Paul, (and all his succours, in the Ministry of the Gospel among the Gentils) should, either lie in the tents of their own making, or else with the dogs of their flocks, out of dores; while they fattted, and annointed may rest at ease, within the curtaines of Solomon, and dwell in felled houses; to which some of them have hardly so good a title, as Ministers have to their houses, globes and Tithes.

Thus, the Pharaohs, dream of none, but lean cattell in the field of this Church; or, to compleat the Vision, they see the following lean cattell, which are now coming up, after the former (which were fat and wel favoured devouring) them up, as if they had not been; The new ill ordained, ill gifted, ill maintained, and every way ill favoured Ministers, will in short time (they hope) consume all those learned, worthy, able, rightly ordained, and sometime competently, if not honorably, entertained Ministers, which have been the glory of this Church, and Nation for many ages: These must now give way to hungry, necelitious, crowching, and fawning pieces of impudent ignorance; such as their Antidecimall Masters affect: as if they thought, that the more thread-bare, and hunger-starved Ministers were, and the lefle wool or flees they had on their backs, the more spiritual they must needs be, the more like Angels or separate and naked soules; and the lefle chargeable they are, the more acceptable they will be to these patrons of avarice and sacrilege: Such are the noble, generous, and blessed projects, or proposals of these Antidecimists, than whom, a meaner spirited subject never exercised any ingenious pen, nor more infested any Christian Church; nor (like gadflyes) more importantly disquieted learned, godly, and true Ministers of the blessed Gospel.

...O you excellent spirited, and liberal hearted Christians, to whose candour I must still appeal, as the great encourager and comforter (next God and a good conscience) of all faithful and true Ministers, in these blustering encounters; Although we know, by too much experience, that there are many such whining people, pernicious protestants, triobolary Christians; whose beggarly soules are prone to be leavened with the suggestions of these Antidecimists; (who...
for the most part are pitiful pieces of ignorance, avarice, and sacrilegious envy; through whom, as through vaults, and trunks, the divell whispher into common peoples ears, this Infernall Oracle, Save your purses, though you damn your souls) yet all worthy and true Ministers, who are humbly conscious to their endeavour, to deserve well of this Church of England, (of their own charges and all other good people) are still far from that defect, or despondency into which their adversaries seek to cast them: For they still have frequent experiences of their peoples unfeigned love, respects, and chearfull kindnesse to them; whose generous piety oft Clem to tell their Ministers, as David did Araunab, That they would be ashamed to serve their God, of that which costs them nothing. Notwithstanding they have many other publique pressures upon them, (which are of a far later edition than Tithes, and of a greater print) yet they cannot finde in their hearts the least grudging, at their paying Tithes to their Ministers; since they see no reason, why these, as Christ's Agents, and God's Embassadors, should not as well deserve, and enjoy a competent, and comely maintenance, as any publique Officers, either Civill, or Military: Who have more of power to exact, but not more of right, either humane or divine; nor yet more of merit, to require their payes, and fees; Yea, Ministers still dare to hope, that those in power have not any such Nabaltick, and curious humor, as to feast those that fear, and sometimes slay the sheep; while they starve the Shepheardes: So great a confidence always arises from the conscience of well doing

And whereas the strongest insufflations are made on the weaker minds of the common people, by these popular orators, against the fetled maintenance of Ministers, (as if the Vulgar shall save much by the shift:) I have before touched, and here again I inculeate it, to them, (because the sharpest goades are pointed with profit:) That when the old Ministers are spent or laid aside, and the former way of fetled maintenance turned to another course, there is no doubt, but the new projected Preachers, whatever they be, (either like muskeetoomes growing up of themselves; or miscalled, and misplaced by the people) will finde their stomachs full as good, as their gifts; and their digestion full as strong, as their elucution; that when once they come to looke upon themselves, as any way feted and elected, or in any fashion ordained for Preachers, and Pastors, (or what ever title they please to put upon themselves) they will come quickly to plead and urge Evangelical precepts, divine right, and natural equity, for their maintenance; which first they will mutter, then exact, and grudge, if they be not satisfied, from their ill fed flocks, and fubious Congregations: And they will be prone to think, all is well in their Churches and bodies, if themselves be but well fed,
of Ministers maintenance.

fed, and blithe, though their poor people's souls be starved, their minds scattered, their confciences crazy, their diseases many; and neither skill, nor will in their ill gifted teachers to heal or help them: who are not likely to be very good at that work, or cure: when from among the lowest of the people they mount to be Ministers for a morse of bread, and from countrey Farriers will needs turn Physicians?

These men are rather of that sort, whose mouths ought to be stopped when they speak perverse things, for filthy lucre sake, as the Apostle Paul tells us: who was no enemy to the preaching of the Gospel: yet he approves not any false intruders, or disorderly walkers: Every simple and flight Afe is not fit to tread out the corn, but the ponderous and solemn Ox; whose mouth ought not to be muzzled.

There are no doubt many Jesutick Geniuses, in England, who like the Ravens would perfwade the Sheep to starve their Shepards, and to beat out their eyes and brains, pretending that for the flock may feed the freer, and the fatter; but hoping indeed, soon after, to pluck out the eyes of those weak and silly animals, and with more safety to make a prey of them. O how farre are some men in these days, who seek thus to pull out Ministers eyes from that grateful and affeotionate zeal of the Galatians to St. Paul; who were ready to pull out their own right eyes to doe him good; before they were foolishly bewitched by such enchanters who pretended new Gospells, fo as to think him an enemy for telling them the Truth! O how lothe are vain and proud men to think, the egges of any opinions, which they have laid or batched, to be addle; or their ways erroneous! if they doe but please themselves, it matters not how they displease God, and those worthy men, who have indeed deserved best of them.

Truly (O you excellent Christians) it would, and ought to be, a great grief and shame to the whole Order of the Ministers of England, if they had not better of those Christians in this Church, (whom they have for many years baptized, taught, and nourished up in true religion) by all the labours of their love; then thus to have a cup of cold water, not given to them, but taken from them in the name of Christ's Ministers. Here in they are forced to appeal to your humility, prudence, and equanimity; whose grateful piety hath oft expressed your love and value of their persons, profession and pains, far different from, (though now not sufficient to reprefle) the petulancy of these kicking Jesuruns, who in many places being better fed than taught, despite through much wantonnesse of the flesh, the bread of heaven, this Manna; Studying nothing so much, as to make many traveling Christians and lean Congregations, through their sacrilegious cruelty, seeking to deprive the true Ministers...
of their due maintenance; that so, they may deprive the poore people of their true Ministers; That the sins of this afflicted Nation, and self-defolating Church being filled up, they may bring by a famine of bread upon the Ministers a famine of the Word, and a scarcity of Ministers, upon the people; which is the (to ζευγαρός) Palladium; the thing so much desired, by the enemies of this and all other reformed Churches.

We know well, and have always found it by sad experience, that no Adder is deader, and harder to be charmed, than sacrilegious covetousnesse; which, (laying one ear to the earth, listening to its gains, and stopping the other with its tail, that it may hear no noise or voice from heaven) easily eludes, and mocks all sacred spells of the best enchanters, charm they never so wisely: Indeed it is seldom seen, that any men either private or publique (for it's possible a Nation may be guilty of this sin) who gilded over their holythesis with the names of Religion and Reformation, ever forbare the sin, or repented of it, or made due restitution after it: No Harp or hand of David can play so sweetly, as to make this evil spirit of sacrilege for sake those Sauls; whom it may possesse (though they be higher by the head than the rest of the people) as well as the lowest and meanest of the people: whose necessities may have greater temptation, and their confidences lesse information of the evil. Indeed no man is so base, and feeble, but he dares to adventure at this, the robbing of God, of the Church, and the Ministers; which is a felony against the publique, and to every good Christians injury in the Church, or Nation. The reason of this boldnesse in some men is, because they finde, that although men of estates have quick resentments in their particular concerns, of private profit or honour; yet they have (for the most part) a great coldnesse and indifferency, as to those things, which concern the Churches support, or Religions patrimony; in scrambling for which, every man secretly, hopes (unlesse he be of the more honest and severe piety) for some advantage. To be sure, these great sticklers against the Ministers maintenance by Tithes make no doubt, but they shall lick their own fingers well, if once they can but pull them from the Ministers; either they flatter themselves, (and I think very fondly) that as Tenants they shall save their Tithes, from both Minister and Landlord; or else as Landlords augment their rents; or buy some part of them; or, at worst, have some place in a new office of gathering and distributing of them.

The great sense I have of that little, or no sense, which many men have of so publique a businesse, as that is, which concerns the settled support of Ministers; and in them of all learning and religion in this Nation, makes me sometimes prone to think it, alm-
most a vain, unseasonable, and uncomely labour in me, or any other Ministers, (who pretend to something of more ingenuous spirits) thus to plead, and that publiquely, with any earnestness (which seems to draw somewhat of the dregs of meaness) for their very bread: which, in the unequall distributions of humane affairs, we see is not always to men of worth and understanding; whom Christian principles and patterns teach to live above earthly things; to minde things, that are above; to learn to want and to abound, to be content in any condition; And truly in this, the Ministers of England, (I think ought to have been prevented by some other advocates, than men of their own cost;) As lately my worthy friend Mr. Edward Waterhouse, hath done in his Apology for learning and learned men: a work so honest and so seasonable, as well became the candor, piety, and ingenuity of a Gentleman and a Christian, who hath (the honour to have) made one of the first and bravest adventures in this kinde against these modern English Saracens. And possibly many good men have a good minde so to doe even publiquely; but they think it is (conclamatares) a forborne and desperate cause, as may bee offensive and unacceptable: I almost think so too, if some men may have their will; and therefore the rather I have been excited to it: if it be displeasing to some, yea to many; yet I doe not think, it is so to the nooff, or the greatest part of Christians: I am sure it is not to the best of this Nation, of what condition soever they be; they cannot be so destitute of, and unaffected with, all reason, Religion, grounds of Conscience, rules of Prudence, considerations both of piety, honour, and honest policy: In all which they are related by their own interests to the good and welfare of their true Ministers. As Socrates when he was reproached for having no preferment in Athens, answered, It was enough for him to have fitted himselfe for preferment: It was other mens work to bestow it on him: So the studious learned, modest and pious Ministers of England, might well have thought it enough for them, to have merited employment, and decent entertainment; having with much paines, and study, and prayer furnish'd themselves for every good word and work, within the bounds of their calling; It seems hard thus to be put (many of them after many yeares fore labour and travaile of their soules) to plead for their wages, or livelihood; yea and for their liberty, but to worke, while it is day, in the Lords Vineyard, of this Church; wherein Christ hath set and ordained them.

Although there be a generation lately sprung up of degenerate Christians, and ungenerous English; who would make this whole Nation like themselves, unworthy of the very bones of those excellent
The Ministers of England merit their maintenance.

I gratefully acknowledge that some learned Ministers, which have lived here and merited so well of the publique (as Scipio Africanus said of his bones, when he died, banished by his ungratefull country, which he had so preserved) yet (we hope) neither the most, nor the best of men can be so stupid, as not to consider how much they are concerned in the continuance and encouragement of such Ministers among them; wherein no Nation or Church under heaven hath exceeded this. However Ministers be earthen vessels, and many have had both heretofore, and lately, great flaws and many failings; yet they ought in this Nation to be still highly regarded, if not for their learning, civility, ingenuity, and good society (which is to be valued in any Nation that covets not to be barbarous) yet for their work sake; for that Gospel, that God, that Saviour, that blessed Jesus his sake, whom they truly teach; for the holy Scriptures sake, which they so frequently, and so fully explain; for those holy Sacraments, which they duely administer; both for the admission and augmentation, birth and nourishment of Christians in the Church of Christ; for the holy and good counsels, and spirituall comforts which they oft give; for the many wise stops and grave restrains to sin and error, which they frequently put; for the publique and good examples, which most of them afford, and all should, by their place and calling. These are cords of love enough to draw and binde all excellent Christians to them; these are places of Oratory sufficient to make even any ordinary speaker an eloquent and potent Orator in their behalf.

And for my owne part, having taken some serious view of the estate of this Church and the Ministers of it, both in reference to the present and after times; both as to that reall worth, which hath been, and still is in them; the excellent use of them; and the miserable want which will be of them; I cannot but at present, be extremely sensible of, and very much pitty, those sharp, sad, and unjust necessities, which already have and must presse dayly more upon many worthy men of them, and their families, if some mens envious and malicious designs take place: onely I hope better things of those, whose wiwdome, piety and publique influence hath hitherto, under God, restrained those Fountaines of the great deep, from breaking in with all sacrilegious violence upon the whole Ministry: whose wiwdome, power, or counsel, I doe not any way by this Apology seek to obstruct or prejudice, as to any thing that may be better disposed of to the advantage of true Religion and the Church of England, which are inseparable from a right and setled Ministry; nor can that be had without such maintenance, as is worthy of worthy men.
The comfort of good Ministers.

...If no men will be with us, but all forsake us, and some oppose us, as Ministers: yet we have one remedy, besides the sympathy and charity of you, O excellent Christians; which is patience and prayer: first hopes in him that allows us to pray for our daily bread, and commands their deserters to labour honestly for it, even in this function of the Ministry; ours from men, he teacheth us to believe, that he will either give it, or the grace to want it. There may be some good, Obadiah, who will feed the outed and impoverished Prophets of the Lord, by sitting in their caves, and obscure retirements, as some have already done; and it may be good Ministers shall then speak lowdeft, when their mouths are stopped; and be as well liking in all true grace and comforts of Religion with their pulse, as those that feed daily on Kings provisions.

Shaward's Epistles εὐαγγελίων ἡ τα' ἀναφερόν. Gr. Nis. in vita S. Ephraim.

*1 King. 18. 4. * Dan. 1.

However, if we must be thus stripped and starved, to gratifie the lusts of some men; yet we hope for this mercy from God, and favour from man, that we shall not be forced to desert our calling; or to contract a woe of not preaching the Gospel, while we have abilities, though we preach (αὐτοκρατορός ὡς τέλεος) though we have no publique incouragement: For why should all our studies and time be made unprofitable? It may be, we shall, by God's help, redeem our former defects, by after diligence in the work of Christ: we may happily work and war the better; when we are more expedite, lighter armed, and lefse incumbered with envy and worldly impediments: We may (I hope) without presumption enjoy that liberty to preach the Gospel, which others now take to prate against it, and us; and it may be, people will hear, and profit better, when they see they have the Gospel at a cheaper rate: and will be more in love with the reformed Religion, when they shall see, how much better penny-worth they have of that, than of the Romish superstition, which is more costly by farre, yet lefse comfortable to a serious Christian: Though we be made poor, yet we may still make many rich; though we have nothing, yet we may enjoy all things; though we are troubled on every side, yet we may not be distressed; though perplexed, yet not in despaire; though persecuted by men, yet not forsaken of God; though cast down and cast out, yet not destroyed, through the grace of God, which is sufficient for us; Many worthy Ministers may justly plead for their liberties, lives and living, as those did with Ismaiel, Destroy us not, for there are treasures of learning and saving knowledge with us. But it is better for them, to be Christ's Lazarusses, and beggars, than...
Ministers plea for their dues not uncomely.

than the worlds rich glutens and favorites: Yet it must needs be so; and so it will be, unleffe some Michael and his Angels, overcome this greedy Apolloyn, this sacrilegious Abaddon, this penurious Divell, and his Angels, who prodigally offers Kingdomes to damne one soule, but grudgeth one great to redeem many thousand.

Nor will your noblenesse (O excellent Christians) interpret this, which I have wrote in behalf of the maintenance of Ministers, in this Church and Nation, to be any pleading for Baal, or clamouring like Demetrius and his complices in his panicke feares, for his silver shrines and his Diana, where he considered more his gain, than his Goddesse: These are unjust and malicious glosses, which the enemies both of the Ministry and of humanity, are prone to put upon any, that plead new for righteous a cause with words of the greatest truth, justice, soberness, and moderation; those having a thinking breath themselves, think every man unfavourable. But by the leave of such latrant Orators, and back-biters, I must tell them, what the wiser and more Christian world well knows; that there is no cause, why Ministers, more than any other order of men, should neglect in fair and just ways to obtain for, or preserve to, themselves, and their successors, those worldly comforts and supports, which the providence of God and the Christian munificence of this Nation hath in the most free way of gift and by Law granted to them in Gods name, and for the service of Christ, and the honour of Religion; Other men are commended for their good husbandry, and honest care, to preserve their just estates; which tend not so much to the publicgie good, as the labours of Ministers doe: who may not in prudence, or conscience neglect those great, and publicke concerns of Christ, and his Church, with which they are intrusted: Yea if they should have an eye to the reward, to their own just right and particular interests (which all other we see still have) yet it were no more than Law and Reason, all humanity and Christiani
ty allow; unleffe they would be worse than those Infidels, that provide not for their own families; or beat a dead, as those men, who to provide for themselves, and their families, care not to rob, and de
dole even the Church and family of Christ: Ministers may be wise, yet innocent; provident, yet not fordrid; diligent in things honest, yet not injurious to others: Nor is it any whit uncomely for them, to crave this justice or favour from any in power; That they may quietly enjoy those publicke rewards of their learning and labours, which are injurious to no man, merited in the eftem of all honest men; and therefore offensive to none, but envious eyes and evil minds; Being the fruit of the publice bounty, wisdom, gratitude, and devotion of this Christien Nation to God, to Christ and
and his Ministers; what they have a long time by law injoyed; what they are righteously possessed of; and what they have no way forfeited (unless other mens calumnies and cavils, their covetous projects and desires of novelty, be the crime and fault of Ministers:) And lastly, they doe intend with all peaceablenesse, thankfulness, and usefulnesse to use and enjoy, if God and man permit, so that no man shall have cause to repine at their enjoyments, who knowes how to make use of their gifts and labours.

The shame of pleading this cause of Ministers maintenance lies at their dore, who meditate, speak, and act for vile and dishonest things against them, as force them, thus to vindicate their just rights, against unjust projects: which seek by falsehood and violence to take away, not only the children, but the fathers bread too, and to give it to dogs: who always have sought to bring this reproach and scandal on this and other reformed Churches; that they still carry on, and serve some covetous and facileious design with their reformation. When (God knowes) it is not the design, nor desire of any, that are truly reformed Christians, to robb the Church, and Churchmen of one shoelatchet; but rather to have added necessary augmentations to them: if they had not always been hindered by the covetousnesse and envy of some base faction, who have longed to see the day, when with Rabsneakhs unclean spirit, and foul language 

they might see all the reformed Clergy, reduced to those Jridid necessities; which I have as much shame to write, as these Antiministers all sticklers have pleasure to wish it, and glory to speak it.

Our comfort in the worst of times and things is, That we know in whom we have trusted: not in these Egyptian reeds, which may faile us and pierce us, but in the living God; whom we have served though with many frailties, yet with sincerity and godly simplicity; We beleive he will not fail us, nor forsake us, though men—though Christians, though reformers doe: There is not a better sign of Gods love, than to be persecuted for rightesnesse sake: It is our honour, as St. Jerom wrote to St. Austin, that the devill and his fanaticke factions do unanimously hate us, and malign us; for if they were for Christ, they could not be against us: And we finde by experience, that these Antiministeriall agitators have no such displeasure against any men, as they never so flagitious, or their estates never so luxuriant, as against the most orderly and deserving Ministers: So that it is their piety and pains, which afflicts their enemies, more than their plenty; And if they cannot strangle Christ: in the Cradle, yet they hope to starve him in the Desart.

Blessed be God, we see the end, and bounds of these mens power, and malice; They are finite flesh, and not infinite Gods; yea they are proud flesh, lately riled up, which God will eat off with finding
These murmurers never set us on work, nor doe we depend on such unjust masters for our wages: Though they be not converted or gathered from their follies, factions and separations, yet our reward shall be from the Lord, who hath sent us, and whom we have served with faithful hearts; as to our temporary subsistence, we hope wee shall never depend on these mens injurious justice, or cruel mercies; much lesse on their envious alms, and suppercilious charity, who are our enemies for the Gospels sake, which we preach: And although we should not be protected in point of our civil rights from their despiect and rage; yet as to the honour and vindication of our Ministry, and holy function, we must not give place, no, not for an hour, to their cavils and calumnies: Yea we doe not despair, but that we may find so much equity, and pity in some mens hearts, in whose hands is power; that they will rather harken, and incline to the just plea of those labourers in Christ's harvest, (who have borne the heat and burden of the day, and who crave but liberty first to doe the work, to which Christ and the Church hath ordained them; and next, which is but a just and righteous thing, to enjoy that reward, which the Law hath assigned them) than to listen to the envious suggestions, or injurious proposals, of those novell intruders upon the Ministry, who have yet given not the least assurance to the wiser world, or any reformed Christians, that they in anything exceed, or equal the true ancient Ministers of England; nor have they yet, by any demonstrations of modesty, ingenuity, sense of honour, or of shame, nor by any part of good learning, (which they decry and hate,) nor by any other usefull and commendable quality, redeemed themselves, from the most fordid passions, and faddest distempers of humane nature; nor yet reconciled themselves to any love and value of vertue, worth and excellency in others.

We know well, that their ignorances, and errors are grosse in many things, both divine, and humane; (for how can they but erre excessively, who are very active, and for the most part both bold and blind?) Any piece of rusticall ignorance & clownish confidence serves some mensturn to oppose any Minister withall, setting up their puppetly Terebinths, their deformed Dagons, their Images of jealousy, in the place and temple of the living God. Among their other errors, this we hope, is none of their least; that they fancy and every where proclaim, that they have so charmed with their philters and enchantments, (which are Confessions made up of ignorance and malice; pride and cruelty; covetousnesse and uncharitablenesse together, with a perfect disdain of all, that is rationall, learned or excellent) that with these charms they have so possessed many or most
most of those, in power, That they are resolved to root out, abase, and destroy all those Ministers, who are any way eminent in learning, courage and constancy, both for the honour of their function, and of the reformed Religion, and of this Church and Nation; We cannot think those in power to be so easily persuaded to be enemies to themselves and the publick, by being made enemies to true Ministers, without a cause: One of whose serious and solid abilities, is able to do more good to Church and State in one year, than can be hoped from the whole fraternity, and faction of those supercilious adversaries of the Ministry, in as many ages, as a year hath days; For if wise men may guess at the future, by what they already finde of them, they must conclude, that like Fisius and gangrene Ulcers, the longer they prevail, the more desperate and incurable they will be, both to the Church and the State; every day bringing us neerer, either to old Rome, or the elder Babylon: to superstition, or confusion. For there is nothing almost in this Church of England, as to the extern order and profession of Religion, which some of these Antiministers, and Antidecimists do not contest against, and study to overthrow.

...Which makes me here a little digresse, (yet not from my main design (which is to satisfy all excellent Christians and others, as to any thing by these men objectable against the Ministers and Ministry of the Church of England) by looking at some leffer cavils, and scruples, which they every where scatter among the common people, to alienate them from, or prejudice them against their Ministers: quarrelling against the places, where publiquely we meet to serve God, and many things used by us in our holy Ministrations; 1. As to the publick places where Christians meet and Ministers officiate, these supercriticall masters of words, and censors of all mens language and manners, but their owne, cannot induce the impropriety, and profaneness (as they say) of calling those places Churches; This they scorn with very severe smiles, and supercilious (fromnes; so profound is their judgement, and so scrupulous their conscience, that they had rather pull down such publick and convenient places, than venture to be defiled, by coming into them, or once so much, as to call them Churches; they say they have far higher senses, and definitions of a Church, than will agree with piles of wood and stones.

Answer. We doubt not of their deep Divinity, touching a Church; which it may be, they will not dare yet to define; as not being well agreed, what a Church is, or what is the right matter and forme or way of a Church; Much broken and wrangling stuffe they have heaped up touching a Church; but scarce one stone is yet laid of the edifice. I have elsewhere endeavoured to lead them out of the
Of Churches local.

labyrinth of their rubridge; who have disputed more about constituting Church, than ever they studied to be lively and orderly members, either of the highest sense of a Church, the mysticall body of Christ, (which is made up by faith and charity;) or of that lower sense of a sociall Church, which yet is most proper to us, and falls nearest under mans consideration; which consists of a visible polity of men on earth professing to believe in the name of Jesus Christ, and partaking of those holy Institutions, which he hath appointed, both to gather and distinguish, to plant and propagate, to build and preserve, to guide and govern such an holy fraternity of religious professors, in such truth, order, and unity; as to have a professionall relation to Christ the head; and a communion of Charity with each other, as members of one body: which is that Catholic Church all over the world in its severall parts and branches: In these and some other the like ambiguities about a Church as greater or lesse they please themselves, spending much time to instruct their silly auditors, how much difference there is, between these Churches of Christ, which are spiritual, or rational; and those Steeple-houses, which we other (weaker ones) call, most absurdly as they pretend, Churches.

O how devout a thing is ignorance! How Sarabick men, and women grow, by having no skill in any language but their own mother tongue, which yet in this is of our side; and being the rule of speech, every where justifies our calling those places Churches, by the authority of the best writers in humanity, law, history, or divinity. But that they say was an errour of speech which men sucked in with their milk: which to spend, and evaporate, these men are every day making issues in their auditorues ears; that they may unlearn that dangerous errour, and scandalous word of calling the meeting places, Churches. I know these Rabbies fororne to be brought to their Grammars, or to any Etymological authors or makers of Dictionaries; (for these they reckon among the cursed spawn of learned men: and look on them as if they were Negroes of Chams posterity;) yet I cannot but make a little stay here, that I may shew them the way to that local Church; where some of them have not been, these many years, unlese it be to make a wrangling rate: For however these be not the main Ulcers which I desire to cure; yet they are a strange kinde of itch, and scurse of Religion, which makes many Christians oft scratch very unequely and unhandsomely.

It is very easy, and very true to tell them, that it is no more unproper, to call these places, where Christians as the Lords people publiquely meet to worship the Lord, Churches; than it was to call the Synagogues among the Jews, the Houses of God, for the building.
building of which we read no precise command from God; which
was but for one house: namely the Temple at Jerusalem. The Saxon,
Scottish, British, and Dutch names, which are all from the Greek
(Kyriakos:) do the Latin, Dominiculum, (as the Lords Table, and the
Lords day) signifies no more than this; That such a place, time,
or table, is set apart for the Lords service; or for the Lords people:
Doth not Joshua say, I and my house will serve the Lord? meaning
the rational family, not the material pile; Senate and City, are used
for both the person, and the place; so is the Parliament house for
both: These Metonymies are no solacismes, but elegancies, and apti-
tudes of speech; and if they were better proper, yet sure, it is no
sin for Christians to speak after the vulgar use, and common lan-
guage. True Religion hath set no such pedantique bounds, as these
captious Criticks would pretend; which scrupulosity of speaking
is among the other pedling superstitions and popular trifles, which
they pin on the sleeve of piety: Affecting to be knowne by such
small differences of speech as their Skiboleths from other Christians:
Indeed their great penury both of knowledge, and discretion makes
them no more fit Masters to teach men, how to speak, or what
to doe, then how to give; their learning, and their liberality are
much alike.

2. As it is ease to help these Infant-wits over the straw of the
name, Church, applied to the place which they will needs make a
stumbling block: so with as much ease we may relieve them, from
that rock of offence, on which they dash, against the places we
call Churches: in regard of their dedication, or consecration to sac-
cred or religious uses: This they have once heard; (it may
be they never either saw or read it) yet they abominate the
places for the report; counting them defecrated, and ex-
creable.

Here they may please to know, That wise men look upon that
ancient custome among Christians of setting solemnly apart some
place for the service of God, not as any affixing inherent holiness
to them, or deriving any communicative, or virtual holynesse from
them, but meerly a publick and solemn owning, appointing,
and declaring those houses or places to be erected, and dedicated
by common consent for those holy ends, uses, and duties, which
Christians ought to intend, when they meet in those places; not

Vide Hospin, de Temporum Origine.
Quidapides
Hachtboume
sancitatis habe-
re? Ber.vid.
Ser.6.
Non locus ho-
mineum, sed he-

minor locum sanctificant. Nemo se blandiamur de loco, qui sanctus dicatur, Bern. 182.
U u u 2 for
for common, civill, profane, or uncomely affaires; which appropriating or dedicating is an act of right Reason, flowing from the light of Nature, and that common notion of reverence to be externally express'd to God, which is in all men, that owne any God: which right Reason is most agreeable to true Religion, and always as servient to it, as Deacons, and Church-wardens ought to be to the Ministers in holy things; as both these, Reason and Religion, distinguish ends, duties, and commands, which are divine, (as coming from God, or relating to him) so likewise they distinguish times, places, persons, actions, and other things, which are separated from mere humane, naturally, and civill uses, to such, as are (both preceptively, and intentionally) divine; that is, from God and for God: Nor can the God of order (who hath made the beauty of his works to consist, and to be evident in those distinctions, which he hath set upon every thing, both in the species and individually) God (I say) cannot be displeased to seemankinde, (on whom is the beauty of Reason,) or Christians, (on whom is the beauty of Religion,) to use such order, distinction and decency in all things, which becomes them both as men and Christians; after the examples of the Apostles and Christ himself, who went about all the Cities and Villages, teaching in their Synagogues and preaching the Gospell of the Kingdom; which also befits and adorns Christians, as to external profession (which is all, that appears of any mens devotion, or Religion to the eye of man) setting forth in comely form that duty, relation, and service, which we publickely profess to owe and pay to God, who abhors fardidnesse and confusion, as much as profane vaftators love it.

Necessity indeed admits no curiosity of place, nor affects any elegance, but excuseth that, which, in plenty and freedome, is esteemed fardidnesse, and sluttishnesse; Religion requires externally no more, than God hath given of external power and opportunity; where these are wanting, and by providence denied, a sick bed, a Barn, a Lyons den, a Dungeon, a Whales belly is as a Temple, or Church, consecrated by the holy duties, which any devout soul, there performs to God: But as the Church of Christ, considered in its external communio or profession, is visible; and Christians are exemplary to each other, and to the world; it is warrant enough for Christians to build, and to set apart to those publick holy duties, some peculiar places, upon Gods, and the Churches account; which grant we have in that great Charter and principle of Church policy (which, like a common rule, measures all things of external, social Religion) Let all things be done decently, and in order; Both which fall, not properly under the judgement of Religion, but of Reason; not of Scripture, but of Nature; not of piety, but policy or society; nor need we other command
command to doe them, than the judgement, and consent, or custome of wife and holy men; which we have for this use of local Churches, thus peculiarly applied to holy services, ever since Christians had either ability to build them, or liberty to use them, which is at least 1400 years agoe.

If humane, or Romish superstition used, or affected, or opined any thing, in consecrating Churches, which is beyond true reason, and sound Religion, yet we do not think, that to be a Leprosie sticking so to the walls of the buildings, that they must be scraped all over, or pulled down, else they can't be cleansed; No: But, as places are not any more than times, capable of any essentiall gracious, or inherent holinesse, (which is onely in God, Angels, or Men,) so neither are they capable of inherent unholinesse; The superstition is weak on either side, & weighs little; but the worst is on this side, to which these men so incline; which tends more to profaneness, supinenesse, and slovenliness in the outward garb of Religion, which is not either so Cynical, or so tetrical, as these men would make it.

What ever there is real or imaginary, of Superstition in the places, or rather in mens fancies of them, who possibly ascribe too much to them, it will as easily recede, and quit them, when they come to be consecrated by the Churches reall performing of holy services, or publique religious duties in them; as dreams doe vanish, when one awakes; or as the dark shadowes of the night depart from bodies, when the Sun comes to shine on them, or into them; if these poore objectors mindes and spirits, could as soone be freed from those profane, superstitious and uncharitable tinctures, (with which they are, as with a jaundice deeply infected, against those places, and against those that use them, with the decency, becoming duties done to the Majesty of God, and in the presence of the Church of Christ) as those places (justly called Churches) may be freed from all misapprehensions, of their name, or their dedication; If the former were as ease, as the latter; both local and rationall, materiall and mental Churches, both places and persons, might long stand and flourish; Both which some furies of our times seek utterly to break down, and demolish, that there may be neither Christian Congregations, nor decent Communion in any publique place, beyond the beauty of a Barn or Stable.

But these men have so much tinder and Gunpowder in them, against Ministers, that, whatever they enjoy, say, use, or doe in their function, be it never so innocent and decent, yet they kindle to some offensive sparkes, or coales, and flames against them: As if against Mini-

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If any Minister prays publiquely with that gravity, understanding, and constancy, either for matter, words, or method, which best becomes a poore sinfull mortall on earth, when he speaks to the God of heaven; It is (they say), but a form, and a stinting of the Spirit: If they preach with judgement, weight, exactnesse, and demonstration, of truth, it is not by the Spirit; but of study and learning, If they read the Scripture, 'tis but a dead letter, and meer lip-labour: If they celebrate the Sacraments with that wisdome, reverence and decency which becomes those holy mysteries; they quarrell at the place, or time, or gesture, or company, or ceremonies used; Not considering that Ceremonies in Religion, are like hair, ornaments, though not essentials; and ought to be, neither too long; left they hide and obscure it; nor too short, left they leave it naked and deformed: Since the end and use of them is no more, but to set forth piety with the greater comelineffe and augueft majesty to men. If they name any Aposle, Evangelift, or other Christian of undoubted sanctity, with the Epithet of Saints, they are so scared with the thought of the Popes canonizing Saints, that they start at the very name so used: as if it were an unsanctified title; and not to be appliyed to the memory of the just, which is blessed, but onely arrogated to some persons living, who frequently and ambitiously call themselves, and their party, The Saints: If they use the ancient Doxology, giving glory to the Father, Son, and holy Ghost, which all Churches, Greek and Latin, did; the Socinian and Arian Ears of some men are highly offended at it: as if Christians must ask them leave to own the holy Trinity, and to give solemne publique glory to the Creator, Saviour, and sanctifying Comforter of the Church. If Ministers use those wholesome forms of sound words, which are fitted to the memories, and capacities of the meanest hearers; containing short summaries of things to be believed, practised, or prayed for; as in the Creed, the ten Commandements, and the Lords Prayer; Presently these men fancy them as the recitation of some charmes; and look on the Minister, as some Exorcists, confined to these Articles of stinted spells and formes: Yea so far hath the prejudices, affectations and ignorance of these men prevailed, against all Reason and Religion, in some places; that many Ministers (in other things) not unable, or unworthy men, are carried away with fear and popularity to comply with those mens fondnesse in a way of dissimulation; Forbearing to use publiquely at any time either the title of Saint due to holy men, or the Lords Prayer, and the Decalogue; which are both Scripturall Summaries, and commanded to be used. So also they lay aside the Creed, which is an Ecclesiastical compendium taken out of the Scripture, and very ancient in the chief articles of it; containing the main foundations or heads of Christian Faith; nor was
was any of these ever neglected, or not both frequently and devoutly used in the publice Liturgies or Services of sober Christians, either ancient or modern.

O how sower and spreading a leaven is the pride, passion, and superstition of mens spirits which run after faction and novelties! that even learned and grave men should be, not so much infected with it in their judgements, as to be swayed and baffled, or over-awed by it, in their practice, contrary to their judgements; meerly, as St. Peter with his dissimulation, gratifying these pretenders to novelty speciall sanctity, by the not using of those divine and wholesome forms of sound words: in which neglect the presumed perfection of these Antiministeriall men, disdains to condescend to the infirmities of novices, and weaklings in religion, the babes in Christ, Those Lambs, which good Shepherds, must take speciall care of, as well as of their stronger sheep, feeding them with milk, (or cibo prae manfo) the often repeated Catechisti- call rudiments, and chewed principles of Religion, which are by the wisdome of God, and our Saviour, most fitly and compendiously set forth in the ten Commandements and the Lords Prayer, as to the main of things to be done or desired by a Christian; as also the summe of things necessary to be believed were anciantly comprized in the Articles of the Creed, according to that wisdome of the Apostles or the primitive Fathers, which imitated those patterns, set by the Lord to his Church: That so the Infants or younglings of Christs family might not be starved, because they have not such teeth, as these mens jaw-bones pretend to; who (before they have well stuffed in the first principles) are gnawing bones, or cracking kernels and nuts, exercizing themselves, or vexing others, with odd questiones, and doubtfull disputationes; more troubled with their Familistyicall fancies, about their own partaking of the divine Nature, their identity with Christ, and when and how it is; in what manner, and what measure they may be said to be God, and Christ, and the Spirit; than soberly establishing their minde in the fundamentall points of things to be believed, obeyed, and desired to the glory of God, and the honour of the Gospell.

But I must leave these envious and unquiet Spirits to their censorious separations, wrangling themselves into vanities and errors; at length falling (like Lucifer) into the blacknesse of darkness, to injustice and cruelty; after that into grosser blasphemies and presumptions against God, Christ, and the holy Spirit: while they proudly affect, and presume to be not like to the most High; but the fame with him; not in the beauties of holinesse, grace, and godlinesse; which are the clear (Image of God set forth) in the Word; but in the glory and majesty of the divine Essence; which is inscrutable; not to be communicated or comprehended, in its supreemential being,
True Ministers not seditious.

and super intellectual perfection; no more than the vast and glorious body of the Sun, which is 160 times bigger than the earth, can be locally contained in the eye; to which yet it is by its beams in some kind impertinent and united. Such superfluity we see there is of folly, ignorance, weakness, pride and malice in some spirits: who, upon very peevish and perverse grounds, forsake our Christian public Assemblies and duties celebrated in our Churches; (which are sanctified by the Word and prayer) scorning and condemning what we do, upon the best grounds of Scripture and Reason; separating themselves from the true Ministry, and fellowship of the Church of England; as if they were most spirituall and refined; when yet they seem to be so grossely ignorant, so passionate, and some of them so sensuall, as is no argument of their having the Spirit of God, which is wise in all holinesse.

7 Calumny.

But our Antiministeriall Adversaries object, as Tertullus, and the Jews did against St. Paul, that the ordained Ministers of the former way, are pestilent fellows, stirrers up of the people; faction, turbulent, seditious; not to suppose, conform, and well affected to the present constitution of powers and publice affairs: So that it is not onely lawfull, but necessary, either to bring them to a plenary conformity, and subjection; or to exauthorize and suppress them, as to all publique influence in the Ministry: Thus doe these Wasps and Hornets buzz up and down, who hope with their noise and stings ere long to drive all the ancient and true Ministers of God out of the land; or at least out of the service of the Church, that so they may be possessed of the Hive, though they make no Honey.

Answ. This Calumny is indeed of the promising advantage to the enemies of the Ministers, and their calling; and therefore it is with most cunning and earnestnesse every where levelled by some men against their persons, actions, and function; It is like the policy of Julian the Apostle, who to ensnare the Christians set the Natures of the Emperors with the Idols of the Gods; That if Christians did civilll reverence, as to the Emperours, they should be defamed as Idolaters; if not, they should be accused as defpiers of the Emperours: And because I perswade my self, that all excellent Christians, how potent soever, can bear an honest freedome, and plainnesse, I shall only, as to this sharp and poisonous arrow, oppose the shield of plain dealing; that in a matter so much concerning the
True Ministers not seditious.

First of all, I need not tell you, what all the English world knows abundantly: That there are many Ministers of very good abilities, who are not at all blameable in this particular, as to any refractory
ness and incompliancy in civil subjections; they have sufficiently testi
fied how Arts and ingenious learning soften the spirits and manners
of men: how they fuple in them that roughness and astringency, which
remains in others: how of oves it makes them become willowes;
and in stead of hard wax, (which onely fire can tame) makes them
gentle, as soft wax; so good natured, that they are not at all per
tinacious of any former signatures, and stamps; either as civil, or
sacred, made upon them: but readily and explicitly yeld to any
forms and impressions, though never so new and different; which the
hand of power is pleased to make: And this, not only as to a pas
tive sequeaciousness, in the externall fashion of their civill conver-
sation and profession; but as to those internall characters and
persuasions, which their judgments have made upon their consciences.
Nothing is more tractable and malleable, nothing more easily runs
into any State mould, and receives any politick figure and mark,
than many Ministers doe: whose judgements, or policy, or fears,
or necessities have taught them how they may serve the Lord, and
the times too; how to become all things to all men, in regard of things
civill and extern; they have many wholesome and prudent latitudes
of evasions, absolutions, cautions and distinctions, by which they
unravell the cords of any Oath, and untwist the bonds of any
Covenants, or Protestations; They have in things meerly politick,
as many distinctions, as would furnish any good Cauuit, for
the abdication of entangled, or the satisfaction of grumbling con
sciences; Thus furnished, no wonder if in civill changes which are
fatall, and by them unavoidable, they can never be brought to
Baalams straits; where an Angell should meet them with a drawn
sword; and the Afe either fall under them, or crush them against the
wall on either side.

These Ministers acting according to their consciences cannot
justly be blamed for any refractoriness, many of whom are so much,
every where, in any civill conformities, that you can hardly lose
them in any State alterations, or labyrinths: nor doe they doubt
but the Lord will be mercifull to them in this thing, which not
private choice & inconstancy, but publique force and neceffitie puts
upon them. Charity commands to judge and hope, that thes

* Rom. 12.11.

Acts 15.29

sere

Bega interp.

Domino servientes:

Basil, &c.

Erasmus, Temp

portis servientes

i. e. Temporum

incommodis se

accommodantes,

patienlia 

charitate.

Numb. 22.

sunt

qui

documento

didicervit, ne

continaciam cum pernicie malleat, quam

securitatem cum obsquo, Tacit, hist. l. 4.
of pragmaticall and factionous Ministers.

doe all things, according to that light, and latitude, which is in their consciences, as to things secular: Wherein they conceive, that the Providence of God, which is as his voice teaching us by the event of all humane affaires what is his will, is a sufficient absolution; as to all preceeding ties, civill or sacred; which they look upon as obligatory onely in relation to power Magistratick publique, and effectuall, in what men, and in what manner soever they see it placed and exercised. Thus some learned men and Ministers plead it as a matter of not onely necessity and prudence, but also of justice and gratitude; that what ever power Christians are by providence cast under, and by that doe, in any order of justice, enjoy civill protection, there they should pay a civill and peaceable subjection, according to Conscience and equity; while they have the benefit of Lawes and government, they ought to yeeld obedience according to Law: and this not fo much to the persons of men governing, who may be unworthy; but to the Ordinance of God, civill government, which is managed at present by them.

...2. There are indeed other Ministers, who are not only of hander-mettall, but of hotter tempers; of more cholerick constitutions, and feaverish complexion; who love to be moving in the troubled waters of secular affaires; who seem most impatient of any order, or publique rule, in which they have not some stroke, and influence, ready to undoe, what ever is done without them: Their breast is as full of turbulent and seditious spirits, as the Cave of Aelous is of windes, forgetting what spirit becomes the Ministers of the Gospell in all times; who, though they may denounce hell fire against all impenitent sinners, yet they may not kindle civill flames of sedition, or imprecate revengefull fire from heaven upon any men to destroy them. To the misguided activity of such Ministers some think the publique may owe much of its troubles; for whom the best Apology is their repentance, for any transports and excesses whereof they have been weakly or wilfully carried beyond those bounds of duty and gravity, which as Ministers and subjects they ought to observe, both toward God and man. All that can be pleaded in any veniality for their folly and fury is, the common genius and generall destemper of times, which slackening by civill diffensions the cords of humane lawes, and loosning the ties of wonted modesty and observance to Superiors, gave so great temptations, that many Ministers of more forward spirits, knew not how to restrit them.

Alas! who hath not sufficiently seen in our dayes by sad experiences, that even among Ministers there are not onely poor, weak and credulous, but also heady, turbulent and factionous men; prone to affect any miserable way of popularity, and to debase their function and profession,
profession to most **pragmaticall impertinencies**, as in Ecclesiastical, so also in **Secular affaires**; though their gifts be (other ways above the ordinary size) very usefull and commendable, yet they retain much of the vulgar maffe and leaven, and are subject to the same passions and common infirmities; yea, no men are more prone to rash **indeavourings** and bold **activities**, by how much they have many **specious fancies**, and **pretty speculations**, suggested to them by those bookes they read: which to some men is a **kinde of Necromancy**, a **conversing with the dead**, and **conjecturing** by their **counsells**; So that some of them, like Alchymists, by their reading of **chymical lights**, grow so posses sed of their Elixars, or **Philosophers stones**, as if it were within a stones call of them; counting it a sinfull and **shamefull laziness**, for them to sit still, when they are tempted to such **goodly prizes**, as their notions and conceptions hold forth, in some way of **reforming**, or wholly changing the **State of Religion** and government of any Church; and in order to that they shake even the **civill frame of things**; to which they doe not think themselves longer bound in subjection, then they want a party strong enough for opposition; nor will they easily be **perswaded** that is the sin of Rebблion, which carries the face of Reformation: easily dispensing with obedience to man, where they pretend amendment before God. Wants of experience in worldly affaires (which is hardly gained, within mens Study walls) oftentimes prompts warm spirited men, first easily to approve, then passionately to desire; afterwards weakly and unproportionably to agitate, those precipitant counsells and **specious designs**, which oft prove to the shame, and ruine of themselves, and their seduced party. Indeed few Ministers of more pragmaticall heads, and **popular parts**, but think themselves fit to be (and take it ill, if they be not) Counsellours of State; Members of Synods, or moderators and determiners of all affaires both Ecclesiastical and Civill; hardly acquiescing in any thing, as well seeled either in Church or State, wherein regard is not had to their judgement, party, and perswasion; of which they are always so very well perswaded, that, when they cry most down others as Churchmen from having any foot or hand in any civill businesse, themselves can presently step in **over head and ears**, so far implunged in State troubles and secular commotions, that they hardly ever get out of them with honour and safety, or with inward peace and comfort; Nor can they easily lick off that blood, which may lye upon them, when they have no weapon left them but their tongues.

The truth is, **no men are more violently and superstitiously devoted to their own fancies and opinions**, than some Ministers are; none more **unseigned Idolaters** of those little Idols, which their owne, or

**X x x 2**

others
others imaginations have figured, and which they would fain set up, as Gods both in Church and State: To these, they preach it necessary that all Christians should bow down; that without this mark of conformity to their way none should either buy or sell: And when they have once so far flattered themselves in their own well meaning projects, that they proclaim God, and Christ to be engaged on their side; then they conclude, that Hee can by no means be so wanting to his own glory, as not to give all speedy and effectual affitances to all their purposes and designs; which are verbally as much to his honour, as they would be really to their own advantages, if they should prevail and succeed: If they be defeated, both God, and all good Christians, (of a different mind from them,) are prone to fall under their hard cenfures; and if they doe not charge him foolishly, yet they doe blame their brethren and better, for want of zeal to Christ, and to what they lift to call his cause: Such great counsells are oft agitated in the small conclaves of Clergy men: And what they blame in Cardinals abroad, or Bishops at home; themselves are eager to practise even beyond Richelieu himself: For they lay designs, not for one Church, or Nation, but for the whole world.

Forgetting, that Gods thoughts are not as mens: who may be never more mistaken, than when they think, they doe God, very good service even by killing of others: Nor are, indeed, the thoughts of the wisest and most learned Ministers, or the humblest Christians; such as those (mens pragmatick projects are) who by easie persuasions, and popular prejumptions do so much flight all ancient ways, and Catholick cuttonties of the Churches of Christ, which are the great scales of Religion, both evidencing and confirming those holy orders and institutions, which were appointed by Christ and his Apostles: Pretending to follow some new Scripture rules and patterns in things of extern order, and discipline, which can never by any sound interpretation of the places allledged be supposed, or proved to be either diverse from, or contrary to the univerfall way and use of the primitive Churches; who, without doubt, were as carefull to act in their outward order and government of the Church according to Apostolical patterns, and traditionall institutions, which were first the rule of the Churches practise; as they were faithfull to preserve the Canon of the Scriptures which were after written, and to deliver them without variation or corruption to posterity. But specious novelties in Religion or Church forms once formed in some mens heads, are prone to move their hearts, with very quick excitations and zealous resolutions: Soon after, (like faint rheums) they descend and fall upon their lungs, provoking them to continuall coughs; so that they cannot be
be silent, or suppress their desires of new things in Church and State; Then they are violently carried on to the spreading of their opinion, and way to others, who are easily made drunk with any new wine; At length they run giddily and rashly to some rude precipices, where if they go on, they are destroyed; if they retreat, it is not without shame from others, and regret in themselves: Together with after jealousies of State brought upon their whole function, or that faction at least; it being a case sufficiently known, that most men are so much self-flatterers, and self-lovers, that they are impatient of any defeats, ready to study and watch opportunities of revenge; when they see the children of their brains, which soon become the darlings of their devotion, to prove meek abortions; or to be violently dashed in pieces; when, indeed, they never had the due formations of Scripture, nor conceptions of Reason, nor productions of Prudence.

Hence, in Politicks, many times sharp examples have chastened severely the preposterous machinations and motions even of Churchmen and Ministers, when they forfake the ancient refuges of Christians, and Ministers (especially) which were preaching prayers, and tears, and betake themselves to swords, and helmets, to plots, and conspiracies. If those Ministers of hotter spirits do not; yet others do finde themselves sufficiently taught that wise, temper and modest behaviour, which becomes Ecclesiasts in all civil relations and affaires; especially if they carry any face of change and novelty; or have the least lineament of factional non-conformities to the established laws and customs in Church or State; wise men have sufficiently seen those miseries, obstructories, and disgraces, which (as black shadows), have attended, even Churchmen, in that shame, and those defeats, by which God hath quenched the rash heats, and over, boilings of their fancies, hopes, and activities.

Therefore my answer to the main of this Calumny is, by way of humble request to all excellent Christians; that the jealousies, which some Ministers' weaknesses, rashness, or folly may have occasioned, may siers errors not not reflect upon the whole function of the Ministry: nor the sins and imputable to errors of any men persons be imputed to their profession; as if it all were among the principles of all Ministers, neuer to rest quiet from civill combustions till they have their wills: That Ministers may have many failings, is not denied; if you would have them wholly without fault, you must have none of humane race and kinde; Not only Gods exactness, but sober mens sight may easily discover folly in the purest Angels of his Church; many spots in the brightest Moones, and much nebulousness in the fairest Stars: Yet, God forbid, that any men of justice, honour, or conscience, should charge upon all Ministers, and the whole function, the disorders.
disorders of some; when as there are many hundreds of grave, learned, wise, humble, meek and quiet spirit men, whose excellent virtues, graces, endowments, and publick merits, may more than enough, countervene, and expiate the weakness, or extravagancies of their brethren; Ministers, as well as other men, (except those, whose opinions and fancies are so died in graine, that their follies will never depart from them,) have learned many experiences both in England and Scotland; that an over-charged, or an ill-discharged zeal usually breaks it fell in funder; with infinite danger, not only to its authors, but to its abettors, allians and spectators: And however, at first it might seem levelled against enemies, yet it makes the nearest friends and standers by, ever after wary, and afraid both of such Guns, and their Gunners; of such dangerous designes, and their designers. Nothing is more touchy and intractable, than matters of civill power and dominion, in which we have neither precept nor practice from Christ or his Apostles, for Ministers to engage themselves in any way of offenses; which their wisdome avoided. They were thought of old, things fitter for the hands of Cyclops, who forged Jupiters thunderbolts, than for the Priests of the Gods.

Great and sad experiences (shewing how rough, and violent with blood and ruine all secular changes are: how unfitable and unsafe to the softer hands of Ministers) these have added wisdome to the wise; and taught them very sober, and wholesome lessons, of all peaceable and due subjection, both to God, (who may govern us by whom he pleaseth) and to man, who cannot have power, but by God's permission; which at the best and juftest posture, is not to be envied so much, as pitied by prudent and holy men; who see it attended with so many cares, fcares and horrous, infinite dangers and temptations; besides a kind of necessity sometime in reason of State to doe things unjust and uncomfortable: at least to tolerate ways that are neither pious nor charitable.

So that the humble, peaceable, and discreet carriage of all wise, and worthy Ministers (which only becomes them) may justly plead for favour and protection against this calumny of proneness to sedition, faction, or any illegall disturbance in civill affairs; even in all the unhappy troubles of the late yeares, the wisest and best Ministers have generally, so behaved themselves, as shewed they had no other design, than to live a quiet life in all godlineffe and honesty; to serve the Lord Christ, and his Church, (peacefully if they might) in that station, where they were lawfully set; if they could not help in fair ways to fleer the ship as they desired, yet they did not seek to set it on fire, or split and overwhelm it: If in any
thing relating to publicque variations and violent tossings, they were not able to act with a satisfied and good conscience; yet they ever knew their duty, was humbly to bear with silence, and suffer with patience from the hands of men, the will of God; whose judgements they humbly adore, though dark, deep, and past finding out; If some mens dubiousness and unsatisfiedness in any things (as they are the works of men, who may sin and err) be to be blamed, (as it is not in any righteous judgement) yet it is withall, so far to be pitied and pardoned, by all that are true Christians, or civill men, as they see it accompanied with commendable integrity, meekness, and harmless simplicity; which onely becomes these doves and serpents, which Christ hath sent to teach his Church, both wise and innocency, to walk exactly and circumspectly in the slippery pathes of this world not onely by sound doctrine, but also by setted examples.

Which excellent temper would prevent many troubles among Christians; and much evil suspicion against Ministers; who could not be justly offensive or suspected to any in power, if they saw them chiefly intentive to serve, and fearfull to offend God; always tender of good consciences, and of the honor of true Christian Religion; which was not wont to see Ministers with swords and pistols, in their hands, but with their Bibles and Liturgies; not rough and targetted as the Rhinoceros, but soft and gently clothed as the sheep and Shepherds of Christ. There is not indeed a more portentous fight, than to see Galeatos Clericos, Ministers armed with any other helmet, than that of Salvation; or sword, than that of the Spirit; or shield, than that of Faith; by which they will easily overcome the world, if once they have overcome themselves: whose courage will be as great in praying, preaching, and suffering with patience, meekness and constancy, as in bustling and fighting; which becomes Butchers better than Ministers; to whom Christ long ago commanded in the person of S. Peter to put up their swords; nor was he ever heard to repeal that word; or to bid them draw their swords; no, not in Christ's cause, that is meery for matters of Religion, who hath Legions of Angels, Armies of truths, gifts and graces of the Spirit to defend himself, and his true interests in Religion withall: which are far better and fitter weapons in Ministers warfare, than such swords and staves, as they brought, who intended to betray, to take, and to destroy Christ. Let secular powers forcibly act (as becomes them) in the matters of Religion, so farre as they are afferfed and established by Law, (whose proper attendant is armed power.) It is enough for Ministers zeal to be with Moses, Aaron, and Hur in the Mount praying; when Joshua, in the joltest quarrell, is fighting with Amalek; that is, the unprovoked and causelesse enemies of the Church. If at any time they counsel or
Ministers civil obedience.

... matters of life and death, they must be so clearly and indisputably just, and within the compasse of their duty and relation, as may every way become valiant men, humble Christians, and prudent Ministers.

But to confute all that can be said for the Ministers of England, their adversaries are ready to object, that many of them scruple the taking of the Engagement; This they think is a pill, which will either choak their consciences, if they swallow it, or purge them out of their living, if they doe not; For, contrary to all other Physick, this operates most strongly on those, that never take it.

Answ. Truly this is the onely tender part, the undipped heel, where (it may be) some of these Achilless, able and good Ministers, may be hurt; In which I humbly crave leave without offence to the power, or prejudice to the wisdome of any men, to offer thus much in the behalf of peaceable Ministers. That,

1. It is not true of all: many Ministers have shewed, by their taking it, in such a sense of passiveness under, and non-activity, against the present establishment, as is satisfactory to the Imposters, and inoffensive to their own consciences; what others would doe, if they could, with inward peace. And if there were no other excuse or Apology for these peaceable, and painfull Ministers, (who have not subscribed) but onely those many pleas of Conscience, which have been humbly tendred to publique view; these ought not to be unconsidered by such as profess to be Christians; who remember, how cruel a thing it is, to make mens consciences passe, as Gideon did the men of Succoth, or David the Ammonites, under briars and thorns, under saws and harrows; of either sharp contradictions, or prickly distinctions; unsafe Savoys, which if they may seem evasions before men (in matter of Oathes lawfully taken) yet possibly, may not prove full absolutions before God, who hath oit severely exacted the forfeitures of perjury; as of Saul and Zedekiah. And how ever God in his providence may put suspensions of oathes, as to their actual execution; yet they cannot find any absolution from the obligation which goes with unconditional Oathes, so long as they are within our morall possibility of keeping them: How any man can swear or promise to be true and faithfull to two different interests, without being forsworne, or false and unfaithfull to the one or the other, seems a Gordian knot which onely the sword dissolves by cutting, not untying.

And who can wonder, that seriously considers the state of humane affaires, (which are most fully represented in the glaffe of our times, with as many variating faces, as the Moon) if some Ministers, (whom both grace and experience, age and manners have
have made grave and calm) are tender and wary of further hampering their consciences on any State cables: since they have seen that the former threefold cords, of Oathes, Protestation, and Covenant, could not resist those tides, and storms, which have driven the whole Nation (as to extern events and affaires) from those grounds of fidelity and allegiance, both as to Civill, and Ecclesiastical obedience, whereon they thought they had conscienciously, safely and quietly cast anchor according to laws.

Furthermore some mens non-engaging cannot be any great weakening to power, (however it may to seem to some mens jealousies and policies) since no mans engaging seems to be any great fortifying of it: For experience hath taught us how easily men are absolved from such publick ties, seem they never so strict: Nor is there any reason to think they will be stronger for the future, than they were in former times: Publique security doth not much consist in any verbal formalities, but in that efficacious power, which men have by the sword; and which they exercise as long, as the Lord of all the world is pleased to execute his will, and pleasure by any men. Next to power, publique authority and safety riseth from the satisfaction of mens judgments, as to the justice of mens proceedings; winning respect and love by that equity in government and moderation, which is according to Laws settled and known: not by arbitrarines of will, and meer force; which as to the principle is tyrannous, be it never so tempered in the exercise. Under any such orderly Government, wise Christians and Ministers know, how with humility, peace, and patience, to submit as farre as is agreeable to piety, and necessary for the publique peace, no lesse than for their private safety. Last of all; Possibly those men whose interests made them most forward at first to goe in these new and untrodden wayes, found them not so smooth, (without any rub or scruple) in their own judgments and consciences; that they should greatly wonder, if others, (who are onely driven that way, without their choice, counsel or consent) doe fear, or finde something in it, which makes them starte or stumble. And truly, in this point, without any further arguing, (which is neither safe nor discreet as to publique resolutions of State, in any private man) it must be freely confessed, that some Ministers (as well as other sober men) doe humbly cast themselves on the mercy of God, and the clemency of those in power; hoping for such toleration, and connivance in this particular, as many did plead for, and injoy in their former non-conformities, which favour they may best deserve, because they will least abuse it: * Their quiet and godly carriage being as great security to Governours, as any oath can be from others: * Behaving themselves within those bounds
of discretion, peaceableness, and civil subjection; which becomes
them, and all truly wise and godly men in the many roulings, and
changes, to which they are subjected, as other mortals, in this mutable
world: In all which, if the strictness of religion terrifies any good
Christians with the fear of any thing, that looks like false Oaths, or
perjury, (one of the blackest stains, most indeleble spots and unpard-
donable sins of the soul) being a blaspheming, denying and defying
of God: yet, certainly it allows the most conscienious men,
(wherever their worldly necessities and livelihoods force them
to live under any power), such latitudes of honest and peaceable
subjection, in things meerly civil and external, as may not al-
ways force them upon banishments, prisons, and persecutions; or else,
evermore embroil them with civill wars, and open hostilities; even
there where they cannot hope to preserve themselves, without a mi-
acle. A wise and humble Christian is never far from his refuge;
And when pursued or urged, beyond what he thinkes agreeab-
le to a good conscience, he is not to seek for base and Foxes shifts,
subtill windings, or sinfull coverts: He is alwayes ready either
fairly to obey, or fairly to suffer: He needs not wiredraw his
conscience, till it fits every State passage: if the way of the
world be strait, yet Gods is still enlarged to him; if the worlds
be large, yet he still keeps to Gods strictness. Certainly, good
men ought not too rashly to cast away that just and faire protection,
which they enjoy under any civill power; (which, Christ tells us,
no man can have but from above, Job. 19.11.) But rather with all
humble gratitude, both to give God the glory; and man, that respect,
which is due for any favour, and indulgence they have in worldly
regards; which will ever seem least heavy to a good Christian;
while there is no torture, rack or tyranny exercised upon the conscience;
by forcing to declare or act there, wherein their judgments are not so
fully satisfied, as to the point of approbation, or actual concurrence.

It is happy if at any time truly conscienious Christians can en-
joy any fair quarter among men of this world; whose high and
haughty spirits, if puffed up with success, are hardly patient of
Christ's self-crucifying methods: It is wisdome in Ministers to
merit, by humble and peaceable carriage according to a good con-
science, all moderation from secular powers; who are more easily
provoked against them than other men: Statesmen are often flat-
terers, seldom such real friends to Jesus Christ, and his Church, as
to deny themselves much for their sakes: Nor doe they usually
much regard those holy interestes, further than they are brought to
a compliance with their designes: The yoke of Christ is commonly
too heavy for the iron sinews of Conquerours necks; and his gate
too strait for triumphing Armies to march through; with out much
stooping;
flooring and self-denial; which is a hard lesson for those to learn, whose advantages are in their hands, unless grace be also in their hearts: It's always seen that men of power set up themselves speedily and effectively, in places of honour, and profit: but to set up Christ and his Kingdom in any real way of godliness and holy order (further than some verbal, cheap, and popular gratification) is a work of many ages, and worthy of that pious and magnanimous spirit which was in Constantine the Great; whose Eagles wings served no less to protect the Church in peace and prosperity, than the Empire and his own person. Great men are generally thy of those conscientious strictness and self-dimensions, which true Religion requires; so that Ministers had need study to walk inoffensively, that they may catch men by honest guile: Laying aside all uncomely rigour, rude severities; and whatever may favour of either scorn, or stubbornness; using in civil affairs all fair submissions, which may conflict with the peace of their confidences before God, and the honour of their profession before men; which is the purpose, and will be the practice of all truly wise and godly Ministers; who think it more honest and honorable to be open enemies, than false and feigned friends; to withdraw from, rather than abuse protection.

...But yet in matters properly religious, so far as Ministers are in Christ's stead, and have the care and charge of true Religion, of the Church, and of the welfare of men's souls; Herein (O you excellent Christians) I know, you not only allow, but expect, that all true Ministers should be faithful to God's glory, & the souls of them; *although they should offend them; That they ought to speak the truth seasonably, and wisely, though they contract enemies; that they must not by their pusillanimity, and flattery prostrate the honour of true Religion, nor of their Ministry; which ceases not to be Christ's Jewel, when it is for its splendor (which men cannot bear) trodden under feet. *They must still look steadfastly to heaven, though men cast dust and ashes, stones and firebrands in their faces upon the earth. In this holy satisfaction and resolution, which is proper to them, as Ministers of the truth of God, I hope there are still many so *valiant for the Truth, so zealous for the glory of God, the name of Christ, and the honour of the reformed Religion; so faithful also to men's souls, and their own integrity; that as they will not disdain to serve even wicked Magistrates, in Gods way, no more than *John Baptist

2 Cor. 12, 16.

The courage of Ministers in things properly religious and in their calling.

* Non est dicentis presumptio ubi est submisis domini autoritas, Chryfost. 1, 70.

Ministers' courage in their place and duty.

did to preach to Herod) yet they would infinitely disdain to flatter them in any way, as Gods, or agreeable to true Religion, which is not so; or to fear them so, as to betray the cause of God; (which is always pleading against the ignorance, or error, or violence, or hypocrisy, or pride of the evil world) and to bow pillows under any men's elbows, who may perhaps lean uneasily on the skulls and bones of those they have unjustly slain; or like Ahab 400 false Prophets, to speak only soft and smooth things to those men, whose hearts and bands are prone to harden by the use of arms both against piety, equity and charity: so that, at length, they may grow rough as Esau, and red as Edom; military passions and actions, especially in great and violent changes, seldom keeping within the bounds of justice and mercy which Christian Religion constantly prescribes without respect of persons, to the strong, as well as the weak; to the Conquerours, as well as the conquered; Success being for the most part, an irresistible temptation to men, by power to gratify their lusts; and to think any thing necessary, and so lawful, which is but safe and beneficial: not regarding the exact rules of justice (in the Laws of God and man) which are divine, and immutable, by no advantages of gain, or honour to be warped or varied: The common places, Sermons and prayers of true Ministers must not be like some men's Almanacks, calculated just to the elevation of men's counsels, designs and success, (wherein flattery would seem to be Prophetick and foretelling) but without respect of persons the same at all times to all men, as to the main rules and duties of holiness.

Although it be very impertinent to dispute with power irresistible, to tax Cæsar, when he is able to tax all the world; or to quarrel at his coin, when he is master of ours; yet a wise Minister and Christian may distinguish between the publice power in men, and the private personal sins of men; A grave and constant spirited preacher of righteousness, will (as he should, in God's way and Word) with all religious freedom, yet with all civil respect tell even the greatest Princes, and Potentates of their sins: as resolute Eliah, and honest Micah, did Ahab; as Nathan did David; as Jeremiah did the Princes and people too; as John Baptist did Herod; as St. Stephen did the Jews, and as St. Ambrose did Theodosius the Emperor; who for that Christian courage loved him the better, professing, that no man was worthy the honour of a Christian Bishop, or Minister, but he that knew how to own and use such pious and resolute constancy, as he had done; Yea what will you think of the freedom used by Menis Bishop of Chalcedon to Julian the Emperor, telling him that he was an Atheist and Apostate? Being blinde and led to the place where they were sacrificing; Julian, with scorn asked him,
him, why the Galilean did not open his eyes; The old man answered, he thanked God he wanted eyes to see so wicked a person.

It is certain no men are better subjects in any time or under any State, than such plain dealing Preachers; although oft times none are leste esteemed, by such men, who had rather enjoy the fruit of their sins with peace, than hear of them to repentance. But Ministers, who are Gods Heralds, must not consider, what voice pleaseth those to whom they are sent; but what he commands that sends them; It were better that hundreds of them were sequestr'd, plundered, imprisoned, banished, or burnt at Stakes in Smithfield, (after the example of many holy Martyrs) than that their votes and suffrages (as more sullen parasites) should ever flatter men, either great or many, in their sins; or call evil good, and good evil; or speak good of that, and bless those whom they think * God abhorreth, who is as far from approving, as from commanding, any immorality, or injustice in any agents, (whom he suffers to act and doe great things in the world,) when yet he so far approves strange events, as he permits them in his unsayable, yet always most just wisdom, which knows how to make good use of evil men and manners. God can make Bathsheba to be the mother of a Solomon whom he loved; when yet he never allowed the sin of * David or Bathsheba in their first coming together; the fruit of which the Lord destroyed. It justifies, as St. Austin faith, Gods omnipotent goodness and wisdom, but not mans impotent passion and folly; when he brings his glory, or his Churches good out of their evil.

Yet this just and necessary freedom, which Ministers of the Church in all duty to God, charity to men, and fidelity to their own souls, ought always, as they have the occasion, to use, must not amount to bitter, rude, importune, and unreasonal reproaches; not to publique raylings, seditious reproaches, and popular inveigles against any mens persons, or actions: * There must be meekenesse with zeal; humility with courage; modesty with freedom; gravity with constancy, and prudence with innocency.

If those, that are at any time in power, doe not like, or will not protect and encourage such Ministers in all suct religious freedom of speaking, as becomes the Word of God; if they presently make those-offenders for a word; and looke on them, as enemies of Isai. 29, 21., their power, who only tell them and all men of those sins, which the Scripture reproves, equally in all men, and God will mightily punish in the mighty: If they resolute to destroy all those Preachers, which:
which are both they should be damned; Truly such men deserve to have no Ministers, but those that are not worth the having; Teachers after their own hearts, and not after Gods; None are worthy the name of Christ’s Ministers, who suffer Christians to sin severely; others may heap up, and feed on *sweat Teachers, for a while, but they will finde them like *St. John’s book, in the belly, bitter, and miserable comforters in the end: None are so worthy of Christian Magistrates protection, as those that fear not to tell them of their sins; yet in a fair way too: Not in a Cynicall severity, but in a Christian charity; not so, as to diminish their power, (which * is Gods more than mans) but vindicate true piety; What good Christian will not be glad of satiety wounds, rather than *poisonous kisses, to hear of those faults in a fair way, which he hath cause to be sorry, that ever he committed; and of which he must repent even to a restitution of injuries, or at least an agitiation, if ever he have pardon? True Ministers are to consider, not what will please poor mindfull mortals, but what will profit mens foules; not what may seem good to them, but what will doe them good; and however they may not transgress the laws of honour, and civility by a rudenesse of Religion; yet they must take that *liberty of speaking, which the word of God allows, and conscience requires, whether men will hear, or forbear.

6. Ministers quire et subjiciunt merits protection.

* If then Christian Religion be not in England grown a meere fable, (as the Ministers of it, are too many, become a reproach and a by-word, a burden, and a song) If modern policies hath not quite eat up all that piety, which was sometime profesed, in privater and obscurer stations: If Mammon hath not juxted God out of the throne of great and strong mens hearts: If Belial have not depos’d Christ: If the enjoyment or catching at the shadwes of temporall power and possessions, have not made men foolishly let goe the care to get and to hold fast eternall life. If Arms have not beaten away the graces of Gods Spirit; and fighting against Christians have not taught them to fight against God, and the checks of conscience: If the shedding of mens blood have not taken away the sense and virtue of Christ’s blood: If *the noise of warre, and the cry of the slain have not deafned mens ears against the voice of God, and the calls of his Spirit: If the dreadful and lamentable aspect of poore Christians suppurating in vain for life, and dying with horror and anguish at the feet and before the eyes of their brethren, have not taken away the sight of charity and deprived men of the light.
light of God's countenance in love and mercy: If there be any
tendernece of conscience, any sense of sin, any fear of God, any
terours from above, from beneath, or from within; if any belief
of the judgment to come and accounts to be given; if any thoughts of,
and ambition for a better Kingdom, than the earth can afford: No
men will be more acceptable, even to the greatest, than those Ministers,
who know, at once how to speak the truth, and yet to keep within
the bounds, both of Charity and civility; Nor doth it follow (as
the sophistry of some Sycophants would urge against true Ministers)
that those will be most active to destroy or disturb the powers of
this world, who are most faithful to keep potentates soules from
damning, in the world to come.

In these Christian bounds then of peaceable subjection, humility
and holiness, if the Ministers of England, which are able, dis-
creet, and faithfull, might but obtain so much declared favour, and
publique countenance, (which all other fraternities and professions
have) as to be sure to enjoy their callings, liberties, and properties,
which seem to be many times in great uncertainties, under the obe-
dience and protection of the laws; as it would much encourage them
in their holy labours, (which always finde carnall opposition en-
nough in mens hearts, and discouragement from their manners)
so it would redeem them from those menaces, insolencies, and oppres-
sions, of unreasonable men; who look upon them as publique ene-
mies and perdue; because they thinke they have little of publique
favour and encouragement: Ministers are so much men, that kind
and Christian usage will, no doubt, much win upon them; The Sun-
saine of favour is likelyer to make the morocest of them lay off that coat
of rigour and austerity, which some (perhaps) affects to wear; than that
rough storm and winde, wherewith they are dayly threatened, and
by which many of them have been and are still disstressed; which
makes them wrap themselves up, as Elias in his hairy mantle, when
they think their lives, and liberties, and livelihoods are sought
after; and no such protection like to continue over them, as they
thought in a Christian State and Church they might have both
obtained and deserved, by their quiet and usefull conversacion. As
just protection invites inferiors to due subjection; so no men pay it more
willingly than they, who besides the iron chains of fear, have the softer
cords of love, and favour upon them: By how much (after many
violent stormes and hard impressions) they are more tenderly used,
the more is respect gained, and peaceable inclinations raised in men
ward such as will needs govern them: The very best of whom are
seldome so mortified, or heightened by Religion, as to forget they are
men; or to be without their passions, discontents, and murmurs,
joined with desires and endeavours to ease and relieve them-
selves:

Nemo potest ver-raciter esse animus hominis, nisi qui fuerit primum veritatis.
Ministers Trust in God.

Non diu flave potest potestas, quae multorum malo exercetis. Sen. de Ira.

Dan. 3. 18.

Hoc posteris dicite, Hominem Christo dedicatum posse mori, non posse superari. Icron.
Psalm 8. 13.

Minervae petita sunt, cuncta mundi est amaranthi, in immortali aeternitatis urbe. Dicitur juvenis inter tormenta, cum toto vulnus evasit, simulque hominis at non fidei amissus Euch. hist. l. 5. c. 1.

selves: At least to change their condition, if they finde it Tyranique and Egyptian; (that is, unreasonable, arbitrary, injurious, and oppre{ive: quite contrary to what is pretended, of honest and just liberties, both Christian and humane, civil and conscientious; which are, for every one to enjoy, as his private judgement of things, so what ever is his priviledge and property by Law; while he keeps within the practique obedience and compass of the Law, whereby Government, as well as governed, are bound, not onely in piety, but also in policy: Both tyranny and rebellion are their owne greatest Traitors: Magistrates seldome losing or hazarding their power, nor subjects their peace, but when they wander out of the plain highway of Laws, which are the conservatories both of Government and governed. It is the least degree of justice, and short enough of any high favour, to permit, and protect worthy Ministers (with all other honest and peaceable men) as in doing their duties, so in receiving their dues: Yet this is as great a measure, as in these times, they dare either ask, or hope for; Immunities from any burthens, that lye heavy on them, Additions of honour or augmentations of estate, I think all wise Ministers despair of: Peace with a little as to this world, would be a great means, both to compe{e their studies, and to strengthen their hands in the work of God: Also to quench that fire, with which many mens tongues are inflamed against Ministers, their calling, persons, and their maintenance: thinking they may both safely, and acceptably despise those, whom power delights not to honour: For whose ruine the malice of some Antiministerian spirits willtheth, as many gallowses and gibbets set up, as there are Pulpits.

But the Lord is able to deliver us: if not; yet, be it known to these violent and unreasonable men, that no learned, judicious and conscientious Ministers will bow down to worship that papall, or popular Image of Anarchy and confusion, which they seek to set up, as to the shame and ruine of this and all Reformed Churches, so infinitely to the detriment and dishonour of this Nation, as to its common welfare, in peace, plenty, or power, in good learning or true Religion. And however we are forced for some time to lye among the pots; yet shall we be as the wings of a dove: nor shall we want an Ark, whither to fly at last: where a gracious hand will receive us to eternal rest; when we shall retire to heaven, wearied with the troubles on earth, and finding no rest for our souls, amidst those overflowing scourges, which the just and offended God will certainly bring upon all such evill and unhankfull men, who love their power or profit more than their soules; and glory in depifying those who profess to be Noahs, the Preachers onely of righteousness and of repentance; but no way the pragmatick plotters of troubles or seditious movers of civill perturbations.
Have now, O you excellent and truly reformed Christians, only left a wary super-politick, and over-cautious spirit to encounter and dispell; which pleads policy against piety; and prefers outward safety, before inward peace: Being, as it pretends, lothe, yea and afraid to displease, deny or gainfay so great and powerfull, at least so active, bold and pragmaticall a party, as is by these Antiministeriall adversaries pretended to be, both among military men and others, implacably ingaged against, not only the persons present standing, and maintenance of Ministers; but even the very calling, ordination, and function of the Ministry: which they are resolved to undermine by calumnies, or overthrow by force; either by fair or foul means: these Antiministeriall spirits must by all means be gratified; and by no means displeased; left impatient of the repulses and elusions often given to their many petitions and essays against the Ministry they fly out to greater disorders, than either the Ministers or the Gospel, the reformed Religion, or Christ himself are worth: Better this one function of the Ministry, (though ancient, usful full and necessary to the Church; yea though holy and of divine institution, the greatest gift of God, next Jesus Christ, to the world) better this be destroyed, than a generation of violent spirits should get a head, and destroy both us and our Nation. Thus some men, whose fears are strong objecters against their judgements, and consciences; which cannot but acknowledge both of the Ministry and Ministers of England, that God is in them, and hath been with them of a Truth.

Answ. I see how many Lyons the base fears and cowardise of men are prone to fancy, to be in * their way, when they should undertake to maintain the cause of God, of Christ, and of true Religion, (which the cause of the Ministers indeed is,.) * Here the shadows of mountaines and * fields of thistles appeare like armed men to timorous and degenerose Christians; when yet all the outward difficulties, all the inward terrores, all the devils in hell cannot deter some men from those adventures wherein their worldly interest of profit, safety or honour are concerned; there oft-times necessities are first made, then they are prosecuted, after they are pleaded as grounds for excuse, at least, if not of justification, of actions leffe warrantable.

If I thought (as truly I doe not) that this ungratefull mutiny of some men against the Ministry, and the mean despondency of others, (their cold and faint friends) were generall and Epidemicall among men of any considerablenes, for quality, number, and estate, that these did either oppose or desert their Ministers, I conceive it would admit of no better confutation and remedy, than for Ministers (with Cesar) to open our naked breasts, and to offer them to the ponyards and swords, or pistols of those, that think it fit to desert us; and by a second hand to destroy us.
If those that excell in any vertue, or in power, doe indeed think the Ministers and Minifttry of England have deserved to be thus vilified and exploded, as the filth and off-scouring of all things: if in reason of state and politick interest it be found therefore best, because false; that Learning must yeild to illiteratenesse; study to temerity; knowledge to ignorance; modesty to impudence; ingenuity to rusticity; order to confusion; gravity to giddinesse; holy eloquence to vain blemishes; serious disputings to rude and profane janglings; That the grave, learned, and venerable Preachers of the true Christian reformed Religion must give place to cunning and insolent Factors for all manner of errors, superstitions, and confusions; if this be necessary, or highly convenient for the publique good, they shall doe wisely, if not well, with all speed to stigmatize by publique vote and act, both the Ministers and their Ministry on the foreheads, as to many vile persons, whose craft hath hitherto cheated and abused the English world, in stead of seeking, and shewing men the true way to heaven; Nothing is more just, than to stop such mouths, whose Oracle are no better than those, which were silenced when Christ came into the world: Yea, quite to abrogate the function will be the shortest way whereby to satifie the Antiministeriall malice.

And to expiate the sin or folly at least of this Church and Nation; which self-displeased for entertaining them so long, and so liberally, shall now take but a just revenge in either serving them, and their families to death, or condemning them to a wandering beggery.

That so by such a penal retaliation, (as that Emperour commanded a Cheater to be stifled to death with smoak, because he vented only smok.) Ministers may want common bread to live, who have pretended to feed mens souls with the bread of life, and have in this onely deluded men; For coming now to be searched by the more accurate eyes of some new Illuminates, they are found, like the Priests and Temples of the heathenish devotion, to have in them, in stead of a venerable deity, nothing but the Images of cats or crocodiles, and the like despicable figures.

If, neither God, nor good men have any further pleasure in the life's labours, and prosperity of his servants the Ministers of England, against whom the Shimeis of these times are bold so loudly to call forth their cursing and evil speeches; Let the Lord do with us as it seemeth good in his eyes; Loe, we are many of us in our several places and charges, yet refiding: (some are already scattered and ejected) most of us almost beggered, exhausted, weather-beaten, and shipwrecked in storms and tossings of these times. Some are even weary of themselves, filled with the dayly and bitter reproaches of their insolent adversaries; and even praying with Elias. It is enough, we are not better than our Forefathers, (thus persecuted they the godly Minis-...
Ministers innocency unarmed.

fiers, the Bishops, the Presbyters, the Apostles, the Prophets of old;) fit our souls for thee, and take them to thee; that we may be delivered from so injurious and unthankful a generation, whose aim is to destroy the true Prophets, and pull down all the house of God in the land.

Alas! we of the Ministry have no weapons or arms, no strong holds, or defended Cities, besides our prayers, patience, and (as we hope) good consciences; it will be no hard work for a few Dogs to destroy all the true Prophets and Ministers of the Lord in the land: That so this great Hecatomb, so long desired, and expected, may be an acceptable sacrifice to the Jesuited Papists, and pragmatick Separatists, and all other malicious enemies of this reformed Church; and that true Religion, which the Ministers of this Church have profess'd and preached in many years.

And this, not upon light and unexamined presumptions; not upon customary traditions, and the meer ducrure of education; not upon politick principles, and civill compliances, with Princes or people; but upon serious grounds; as solid, and clear demonstrations, as can by right and impartial reasonings, be gathered from the Word of God: and, (in cafes of its obscuritie, or our own weakneſſe) from that light, which the content and præſtice of the primitive, and pureſt Churches of Chrift hath held forth to us, in points of Faith, doctrine, and in all good orders or manners, becoming Christians; either in their private moralities, or their publique decencies. In this integrity, innocency, and simplicity, (which neither men nor devils can take from us) we are sure to be destroyed, if it must be so, and to be delivered from an ungrateful de generation of vipers; who think it enough to destroy those, who have been a means of their being and life, as Christians; if our injuries and blood could be silenced with us, yet the very dust of our feet, will be a testimony against such men at the last day of judgement: when it shall be more tolerable, for any Christian people under heaven, than for these in England; since among none clearer truths have been taught, or greater works done, or better examples given; than have been here, by the Ministers of this Church.

Where hath there been under heaven more frequent, and more excellent preaching? where more frequent, and yet unaffected praying? where more judicious, pious and practical writing? where more learned and industrious searching out of all divine truths? where more free and ingenuous declaring of them? so as nothing hath been withheld or smothered; where more devout, holy and gracious living? where more orderly, harmonious and charitable agreeing, than among those that were the best Bishops, the best Ministers, and the best Christians here in England? Adorned with these

Ministers unarmed innocency.

1 Sam. 2. 17. Non nobis tanti est vita, ut armis benda sit. Tiber. ad Senium. Tac. an. 6.

Ministers merit of this Nation.

Matth. 3. 7.

Matth. 10. 14.

Z 2 2
these ribands, fillets and garlands, of good words, good works, and good books, must the Ministers of England, like solemn victims, and pia-
tory sacrifices, be destroyed? onely to gratifie, some mens pec-
tulancy, insolency, covetousnesse and cruelty, who lift to be actors,
or spectators in so religious massacres:

But O you excellent Christians of all ranks and proportions; If
there be yet any ear of patience left free to hear the Ministers plea
and apology; if calumny hath not obstructed all wayes of justice or
charity; if flourish feares have not so imbeded your piety and zeal
for the Christian reformed Religion, that you dare not seem no not to
pity the Ministers of it; if the separations and brokennesse of Religion (in
our unhappy times) have not wholly blinded your eyes and baffled your judgements; so that you have loft all fight both of true
Church and true Ministry here in England; I humbly desire, that
before the true and ancient Ministers be castiered, and quite destroy-
ed, these things may be considered.

1. Whether it be a juff proceeding to impute the personall failings
of some men to the whole function and profession? whether, at that
rate, all Judges, Magistrates, and Commanders may not be cryed
down, as well as all Ministers? Since, where there are many, there
are always some, that are not very good. 2. Whether it be fitting
to commend and destroy any men in any of their rights, to which
they pretend, either of office or reward; (and that by Laws, both
divine and humane) without a fair and full hearing, what can
be said for them? or whether any man would have such mesure
meted to themselves? 3. Whether Pride in some Lay-men of their
gifts; Envy in others, against the welfare of the Ministers of Christ;
Covetousnesse in others, as to their maintenance; Profanenesse in others
against all holinesse; Ambition in others to begin or carry on
some worldly ends and secular projects; Licentiousnesse in others,
against all religious restraints; Impatience in others, to see any go-
vern without or besides themselves; Malice and spite in others,
against this, as all other reformed Churches; Hopes in others
by our confusions to introduce their superfetitious usurpations;
Whether I say these, and the like inordinate lusts, and motions in
mens hearts, as their severall interests lead, to only tempt them, may
not be great causes, and influentiall occasions of these violent
distemperers, which break out thus against the generality of the Min-
isters, and the whole calling of the Ministry in this Church?

Yea, what if all odious clamours, and calumnies against them, and
their calling, have no more of truth in them, than a jewell hath of dirt
in it when filth is cast upon it? (whose innate firmness preserves its
inward and essentiaall purity.) What if nothing be wanting to the
innocency and honour, of the Ministry of this Church, but onely pa-
tient
tient, and impartial Judges; pious patrons, and generous prote-
teurs? which was all St. Paul wanted, when he was accused of many
and grievous crimes, by the cruel and hard-hearted Jews; which
were his Countrey men, and for whom he had that heroick charity,
as to with himself Anathema from Christ, that they might be faved;
Whether ever any Ministers of learning, honesty and piety, (that
had done so much for the religious welfare of any Christian Na-
tion, as the able Ministers of England generally have done, for
many ages;) were ever so rewarded by Christians? or whether
ever it entered into the hearts of religious men, so to deal with their
Ministers, as some now meditate and design?

It were good for men, how mettall and resolute so ever they seem to
be in carrying on their designs, to make some pause and halt, before
they strike such a stroke, as may seem to challenge Christ, and fight
against God: whose strokes against men are heaviest, when they are least visible; and his wounds most, when men have the least
sense of their contending against him. The persuasions and confi-
dences of men may be great in their proceedings, (as was in Saul
persecuting) when yet their zeal is but daboarding against the
goades, or thornes; and a meer persecuting of Christ himselfe; which
will in the end pierce their own souls through with many errors.
What if (notwithstanding many personal failings in Ministers as men)
their function, calling, and Miniftry be the holy institution and appoint-
ment of Jesus Christ; transmitted to these times, and this Church
by a right order and uninterrupted succession, as to the substance of
the power, and essence of the authority? (The talents or gifts were
Chrifts, and from Christ, delivered to his Servants the Ministers
of the Church: though some of them might be idle and unfaithfull;
whose burying them in the earth, or wrapping them up in a
napking at any time was no wasting or imbeiding of the substance
of them; nor any lessening of Christs right to them.)

And for this I have produced, not weak opinions; not light con-
jectures; not partiall customs; not bare prepossession; not uncertain
tradition; not blind antiquity; not meer crowds or numbers
of men; much less do I solemnly alledge my own specious fancies, de-
vout dreams, uncertain guellings, Seraphick dictates, and magisteriall
Enthusiasms; But it evident grounds out of the Word of God, for a
divine Ordination, and institution at first. 2. Scripture history for
succession, to four generations actually. 3. Promises and precepts
for perpetuity of power Ministeriall, and assistance, which was
derived by the solemn ceremony of the imposition of hands, by such
only, as had been ordained; and so enabled with successorall power,
till the coming of Christ. 4. This primitive root and divine
plantation of the Ministeriall office and power, we finde oft con-
confirmed
confirmed by miraculous gifts; besides the innocency, humility, simplicity, piety and charity of those Apostles, primitive Bishops and Presbyters, set forth in the holiness of their lives; and the glorious successses of their Ministeriall labours; converting thousands by preaching the Gospel: and by their Ministeriall power, and authority planting Churches in all the then known and reputed world, oft crowning their doctrines and Ministry with Martyrdom. 5. After this I produce, what is undeniable alleaged, from authors of the best credit, (learned and godly men) famous in the Church, through all the first ages, shewing the Catholick and uncontradicted content; the constant and uninterrupted succession by Bishops and Presbyters in every City, and Countrey; which all Christians in every true Church owned, received and reverenced, as men indued with such order and power Ministeriall, as was divine, supernaturall and sacred, as from Christ, and in his Name; though by man, as the means and conduit of it. This is made good to our dayes in the persons, and office of those Ministers, who were and are duly ordained in this Church. 6. Next I plead, (with the like evident and undeniable demonstrations) the great abilities in all sorts of ministeriall gifts; the use and advancement of all good learning; the vindicating of true Christian and reformed religion, the manifold discoveries of sound judgement, discreet zeal, holy industry, blamelesse constancy, and all other graces, wherein the Ministers of England have not been inferior to the best, and most famous in any reformed Christian Church, and incomparably beyond any of their defamatory adversaries. 7. I add to these as credentialLetters, the testimonies and seals which God hath given of his grace and holy Spirit, accompanying the Ministry in England upon the hearts of many thousands, both before and eminently since the Reformation; by which men have been converted to, and confirmed in Faith, Repentance, Charity, and holy life; the tryall of which is most evident in that patience and constancy which many Ministers, as other Christians in this Church have oft shewn in the sufferings, which they have chosen, rather then they would sin against their Conscience, and that duty which they owed to God and man. 8. Last of all, if any humane consideration may hope for place in the neglect of so many divine; the civil rights and privileges, which the piety of this Nation, and the Laws of this Land, have always given to Ministers of the Gospel; by the fulllest and freest consent of all Estates in Parliament; that they might never want able Ministers, nor these all fitting support and encouragements; These I say ought so far to be regarded by men of justice, honour and conscience, as not suddenly to break all those sacred sanctions, and laws a under, by which their forefathers have bound them to God, to his Church and Ministers.
The Ministers of England how deserving.

Furthermore, if the godly Ministers of this Church of England (whom some men define to as certain destruction and extirpation, as ever the Agagite did the Jews) if they be the messengers of the most high God; the Prophets of the Lord; the Evangelical Priests; those, by whom Salvation hath been brought, and continued to this part of the world; If they have, (like the good Vine and Figtree) been serviceable to God and man, to Church and State; If they have laboured more abundantly, and been blessed more remarkably, than any other under heaven; If they have preached sound doctrine in season and out of season; if they have given full proof of their Ministry, not handling the Word of God deceitfully; nor debraving the Church of any Truth of God or divine Ordinance; If many of them have fought a good fight, and finished their course with joy, and great success against sin, error, superstition, and profaneness; If they have snatched many firebrands out of hell; pulled many souls out of the snares of the devill; If they have fasted, and mourned, and watched, and prayed, and studied, and taught, and lived to the honour of the Gospell, and the good of many soules; If they have like Davids Worthies stood in the gap against those Anakims and Zau- zummins, who by lying wonders, learned sophistrys, and accurate pollicies have, (to this day) from the first reformation, and coming out of Egypt, sought to bring us thither again; or else to de-estroy the very name of Protestants, and reformed Religion from under heaven; If almost all good Christians, (and not a few of these renegadoes, their ungratefull enemies) doe owe in respect of knowledge or grace, to the Ministers of England, as Philemon to St. Paul, even their very selves; If they have oft in secret wept over this finfull Nation and wantonly wicked people; (as Christ did over Jerusalem) and as Noah, Daniel, and Job, oft stood in the gap to turn away the wrath of God from this self-destroying Nation; If, now, they have no other thoughts, or practises, but such as become the truth, and peace of that Gospell, which they preach, and that blessed example, which Christ hath set them; whom in all things they desire to imitate; in serving God, edifying the Church, doing good to all men, praying for their enemies, and paying all civill respects, which they owe to any men: If all true and faithfull Ministers, have done, and designe onely to doe, many great and good workes in this Church and Nation; for which of these is it, that some men seek, and others with silence, suffer them to be stoned; as the Jews threatened Christ; and the inconstant Lystrians stuck on St. Paul; who after miracles wrought by him among them, and high applauses of him from them, was after dragged, as a dead dog.
of their City by them; supposing him to be dead. If all true and worthy Ministers being conscious to their own Integrity, (a midst their common infirmities) after their escaping the late storms, (in which many perished) are easily able, without any disfavour to them, to shake off those Vipers, which out of the fire of some mens spirits now feels upon them with poisonsur calumnyes of faction, covetous, seditions, &c. If there be still upon the true and able Ministers of England, those Characters of divine Authority; those gifts of the holy Ghost, in all good understanding, knowledge, utterance, zeal, courage, industry and constancy, which fits them with power for that holy function, and carries them through it, with all fidelity and patience, not only to serve, but to suffer for the Lord Jesus and his Church: 

If they have been just Stewards, and faithful dispensers of the Mysteries of Christ to his household this Church; how can they without infinite rudeness, and unchristian insolence be shamefully used, and driven out of their places and Offices? If they have been spiritual fathers to many souls, and as tender mothers to them; not disdainful to bear with the manners of childish Christians, in many places, (who turned their respect into peevishness, and their love into scorn) how unnaturall will it be for Christians to become patricidies, nurtherers of their spiritual fathers? to whom in some sense they owe more, than to their natural? If Ministers be Embassadors, they ought not to be violated by the Law of Nations, (behaving themselves, as becomes the honour of their Embassy, and tender) how much more if from God, sent by Christ, in his and his Fathers Name; and that with a message of Peace, and reconciliation from heaven to poor sinners? The greatest and proudest of them, being but worms near, may not safely despise, injure, or turn away the least of the servants and Messengers of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, which speak in his Name, (that is, both his Truth, and by his Authority) which can be no where else (in any ordinary Ministry) but in those, who are daily ordained in this holy descent and succession.

If they have been watchfull Shepheards over their several flocks, for good and not for evill; how barbarous must it be for Sheep to turn Wolves, and devour those Pastors, who have fed them, as Jacob did Labans flocks, with all care and diligence, day and night, leading them by the purest waters, and in the safest pastures? Nor is there now any more cause to change the wages of these Shepheards of souls (which is always like to be to their loss) than covetous Laban had against honest Jacob.

If none other can authoritatively, and as of Office and duty, in the name and by the million of Christ, bring the message of peace, and reconciliation to sinners; (which hath besides the Word, sacred
The Ministry of England its great blessing.

sacred and mysterious seal; and other holy actions of power and authority to be performed by peculiar, fit and appointed Ministers; how beautiful ought their feet to be, and their steps welcome; which flow with truth and peace, grace and mercy? How farre should they be from being trodden under the feet of proud, covetous and envious men? who first casting dirt in their faces, after with much dust, and clamour, seek to stir up, not only the people, but the powers against them; as if they were burdens of the earth, not fit to live? But wisdom is justified of her children.

...I cannot be so injurious to my countrey and countrymen, as to think, that to persons of such worth, standing in such relations between God and man; invested with so holy authority; managing it with such divine power and efficacy; crowned with so great success; recommended to all worthy Christians with so many publique merits, both to Church and State; (as the true and duly ordained Ministers of the Church of England are) either men of purity or of power, can be so wanting to, or so shrink from their duty to God, their love to Christ, their zeal for the reformed Religion, their care of their countrey, of their posterity, and of their owne soules; as not to dare to speak, or appear for them; or not to endeavour in all fair ways to improve the interest they have in the publique, by which to preserve so many good and righteous persons (as to mans tribunall) from poverty, contempt, and ruine; yea to preserve themselves and their dearest relations from most irreligious intamy of ingratitudefull desertyng and oppressing so deserving men.

Men cannot but be unholy, that can be so unbankfull: And if Ingratitude be in all other relations, and merits among men justly esteemed as the most detestable disease and inhumane deformity in the soul; shall it onely seem beauty, health, and a commendable quality, when it is offered by Christians to their Ministers? Such as may with equal modesty, and truth plead their own innocency, and protest against the immanity of their enemies malice? For setting aside the idlenesse and pragnatick vanity of some Ministers in later, and more licentious times, (whose either insufficiency, or lazynesse, or inordinate activity, or abject popularity, hath made them the staine and shame of their holy function; and whose burthen is too heavy for my pen to discharge them of), if we looke upon those learned, laborious, sober and venerable Ministers, who have been, and still are the glory and crown of their function, of this Church and Nation, in their severall degrees and stations: *I may lowly proclaim with Samuel this protestation in their behalf: Behold the Ministers of the Lord and of this Church, (O you unbankfull Christians and causelie enemies) witnesse against them before the Lord and before his people;
Ministers merits of this Church and Nation.

whose Offe, or Affe, have they taken? whom have they defrauded or oppressed? whose hurt or damage have they procured? whose good have not they studied, and endeavoured? whose evil, or sin, or misery have they not pitied, and fought to relieve? what is the injury, for which so desisting a vengeance must pass upon them, and their whole function? What is the blasphemy against God or man, for which these Nabothes must lose their lives, and livelyhoods? wherein have they deserved so ill of former or later ages, that they should be so used (as Ahab commanded of Micaiah; and the Jews did to Jeremiah), to be cast into prisons, into forced, and obscure restraints; or to be exposed to Mendicant liberty, for to be fed only with the bread and water of affliction, if they can obtain so much? What necessary truth of God have they detained in unrighteousness? what error have they broached, revived, or maintained? what superstition have they nourished? what licentiousness in sin have they encouraged? what true Christian liberty (which always contains it selfe in bounds of God and mans laws) have they denied to, or defrauded the people of? unless all things of publique peace and externe order, in which the publique wisdom and consent of the Nation confined itself, them and all men in it, by laws, are to be called superstition, tyranny and oppression, in Ministers, more then all other men; who being under government, thought it their duty to submit to every ordinance of man, which did not crosse any divine ordinance; but kept within the bounds of that liberty, order and decency, which are left to the wisdome of any Christian Church and State; whereby to preserve the honor of Religion, and the order and peace of the publique.

Those jejune, and breadbare objections oft used against Ministers, in these things, (wherein there were but obediancials, and passeve; the activity, lying in those, who had the power to enjoyne, and command them, which was done by all Estates in Parliament) have been so oft and fully answered, that all sober and wise Christians see the weakness of reason; and the strength of passion in them, as they are charged for faults on Ministers in their respective obedience and conformity; For which they were like to know better grounds, than any their enemies had against them: And being in all other main matters, very knowing and conscioncious men, they are not in charity to be suspected, in those lesser and extern matters, to have sprung any leak, of infallible weakness, or to have made any shipwreck of a good conscience; Later events have much recommended former duties and laws, *shewing how weak, even Truth and Religion are, (as to extern profession) where (like loose and scattered soldiars) Believers or Professors are destitute of all order and just discipline. 

But
But if the Ministers of the Church of England had discovered many failings, as men compassed about with infirmities, which easily befet them, (for which they oft mourned; against which they were always praying and striving) yet what is it wherein the pretended perfections of their presumptuous, and implacable adversaries doe excell the very weaknesses and defects of Ministers? yea wherein will the vapouring of any new projectors be able to repair the damage or compensate the want, which thousands must have; (yea this whole Nation suffer) if by these mens-ennemies they be deprived of the blessing of these, whom they please to count so weak, unworthy, and contemptible Ministers? Will thos old pieces, or those new Proteus (who pretend and fancy to be new stamped with the mark of popular ordination, (which is none of Christ's, whose wisdom never committed any power of Ministry, and holy offices, or divine Ordination to the common people, as I have proved) who are betrayers, haters, and deserters of that true power and authority, which they formerly received in that just and lawful ordination, (which was from all antiquity derived to this Church, from which no mean and vulgar complance should have drawn any man of piety, learning, and honesty, to so great a schism, defection and Apostasy, from the Catholick rule and ancient practice:) will I say, these new masters, or those heaps of Teachers, which country people are prone to raise up to themselves, in their fervent folly, and zealous simplicity; will they furnish Church or State with better and abler Ministers in any kinde, with better learning, better doctrine, better preaching, better praying, better living, then those former Ministers did in the midst of their many infirmities?

Yea will not these new obtruders, with most impudent forebodings while they looke you in the face, cheat and deceive you? Will they not (while they smile upon you, with shews of Gifts, and Spirit, and Prophets, and speciall calls, and extraordinary ordinations,) exchange counterfeit for true Jewels, brasse for gold, stones for bread, pebbles for pearls, dirt for diamonds, glow worms for stars, candies full of theives and ftoil, for the Sun? In stead of the excellent and useful worth, the divine and due authority of your learned and godly Ministers, you shall have either confident ignorance, or fraudulent learning, or Jesuitick sophistry, or fanatick nonsense, or flattering errors, or factious semblances of truth to usher in most damnable doctrines and most unchristian practises; Doe men gather grapes of thornes, or figs of thistles? Can these bitter fountains send forth sweet waters? or these burning Ernas breath forth other than such sparkes and flames as their sulphurous spirits, and their hearts full of envy, and malice, and pride afford? which seek to darken the Sun of Truth at noon day; or to scorch up the fruits of holinesse; to

\[A a a a 2\]
Antiministerial deceivers.

Infect the common air of Christian charity, order, and peace; in which true Christians delight to breathe. When these plagiaries have destroyed, or driven away the fathers of Christ's family, and Church; will they not either seduce and steal away the children to their own erratick fation; or even sell these Orphanes for a pair of shoes to Cantors and Tom-a-bedlams; committing, or rather calling away the foules of men to the careless care of those sturdy vagrants; whose minds are more unsettled than their eyes, or feet, or tongues; which are so far bent against true Ministers, as they are intent to their booty and prey from every quarter?

Will these (who seek to be the maules and hammers of the Ministers of this Church) either by their skill or power, wit or learning, prudence or policy, ever forge on the hard anvils of their heads; or bring forth out of the rude moulds of their inventions, any thing that shall be like a true Minister of the Gospel? Are there ordinarily any such blocks to be found among them, of which there is any hope, that they may be sharpen to such Mercuries, as are the true God's Messengers? Are there any such tempting materials, as any art and industry may promise to fit them up to such a degree and pitch of competent Ministers, as may direct the country plainness; and guide that peevish and disputative madness, which is among even the meanest people in every village? Will these skippers or skilurers, ever furnish out such Pilots, as may safely feere the skip of this Church, in which the Truth of God, the honour of Christ, the reformed Religion, the happinesse of thousands of foules are embrazed, amidst the rocks of errors, Syrens of secular temptations, and piracies of strong enemies on every side? They say, that better ships are now built in England than ever were; and shall we be content with worse Pilots? lesse able Ministers in the Church? who are as the Argonauts; bringers of the golden fleece; the riches, and righteousness of Christ the Lamb of God; the treasures of heaven; the true gold of Ophir; which hath been seven times tried; in stead of which these new traffiquers intend to trade for nothing, but the Ape and Peacockes, toys of new opinions: Shall Noabs Ark, the Churches purity, (which is the Conservatory of Christ's little flock, of the holy seed of a Christian succession, both for fathers and children) be broken up or dashed in pieces against the rocks of sacrilegious envy and policy; for these Antiministerial projects will never be the mountaines of Ararat, on which the Church or true Religion may rest. Shall this Island, whose safety consists so much in the guard of the Seas, be lesse carefull to guard the coasts of the Church and the reformed Christian Religion? whose narrow strait or strait runs between the rocks of Atheisme and Superstition; of Parity and Profaneness; of Heresie and Schism; of Tyranny and Tolerations. Will
Late eminent Bishops and Presbyters in England:

Will ever these new dwindling Divines, the Propheticall pygmies of this age, (which oppose the able Ministers and true Ministry of the Church of England) will they ever bring forth for the service of God, or for the maintenance of the true Christian reformed Religion, such a race, and succession of mighty men, of excellent Ministers, of incomparable Heroes, worthily renowned in their own, and after generations, whose work yet praise them in the gates; of whom none, but evill tongues can speak evill; such as this later age or century hath brought forth, to looke no further back to those excellent men of former and obscurer times? Can you expect Grammers, Latimers, Bradfords, Riddys, Hoopers, Grindals, Whitgifts, Fletchers, Sands, Elmers, Jewels, Kings, Abbots, Lakes, Bils, Eabbingtons, Andrews, Fels, Fields, Compers, Whites, Davenants, Potters, Prideauxes, and Westfields; with many others now at rest in the Lord, all venerable in their Episcopall order and eminency; as fathers of the Church; and as elder brothers, among their brethren, the other Ministers; whose humility disdained not to be subject to those reverend Bishops; although some of them might be equal to them in eminent gifts: Such as were Gilpin, Fox, Knowtubs, Perkins, Whitaker, Reinolds, Willet, White, Richard Hooker, Umphry Overall, Greenam, Rogers, Dent, Ded, Heron, Bifield, Smith, Bolton, Taylor, Hildersham, Crakenthorp, Donne, Stoughton, Ward, Holsworth, Skutes, Fealty, and Doctor Sibs: (which laft fragrant name, I may not mention without speciall gratitude and honour due to the memory of that venerable Divine: not onely for the pietie, learning, devotion and politeness of his two genuine writings, (The bruised Reed, and Stules confci) but also for that paternall love, care, and counsell, by which hee much oblied mee to him in my younger yeares. Indeed that holy man I found altogether made up of sweetenesse and smoothenesse, oil and honey. As his actions, so his gifts and graces were set in a kinde of Mosaick work, admirable for that meeknesse and humility; which while they fought to conceal and shadow over his vertues, they gave the greatest lustre to them.

Besides these, there were an immenurablie company of other immortal Angels; but yet Ministiring spirits to this Church of England; who are now made perfect; and whom nothing would so probably afflict in heaven, as to see the degenerate succession, both of Ministers and Christians, now likely to follow in this age; Many of these and other Worthies of this function, in former times (as now) living and dying in country obscurities, were buried in those splendid places, which they had made in the Gardens, (that is, those Diocees or Parishes,) which they had planted, or diligently watered; and disposed by pious industry to a pleasant, peacable and happy fertility.
lity: Men, however different in some external lineaments (as may be among Brethren) yet all of excellent features; and some of the first three, both in beauty and strength for piety, learning, judgement, eloquence, depth, devotion, charity, gravity, industry, and a kind of Angelick majesty; at once both amiable and venerable, both in their preaching, writing, and practice.

These great men and great Ministers, have indeed left us behind them, a generation far inferior to them, (for the most part) more feeble, and unable to work, or war; having more enemies, enjoying less encouragements, (scarce any now considerable as to this world) bearing greater croffes, and heavier burdens every way; for charge, duty and reproach; who are oft forced to lay out in publique taxes a great part of that little, they have to buy themselves books or bread: Who have onely this advantage of our troublesome, envious and evill times; that we may learn to be more humble in our selves; more diligent in our duties; more charitable to others; and more valuable for the Truth: hoping, that while we have after the primitive pattern, nothing left to glory in, but the Cross of Jesus Christ, both our afflictions and infirmities may prove opportunities to exercise, discover and increase the graces of God and true Ministeriall gifts in us, whose power can perfect it selfe, and us too in the midst of our infirmities, and support us under the many unjust oppressions, which threaten us. There are indeed yet left, through Gods mercy in the field or forest of this Church, and Nation, some goodly old Trees, both venerable Bishops, and worthy Presbyters, here and there: Some shrewdly battered, and strangely neglected; which yet retain something that is very goodly and gracesfull; amidst their battered tops and shattered arms; being yet stately monuments or reliques of that former benignity which was in this English soil toward Churchmen and Ministers; many of whom grew to so tall a procerity, as of learning and worth, so of wealth and honour, in some degree answerable to their worth, and becoming that real dignity which was in them: far more useful and considerable by wise men, than any bare descent of titular honor. These I must be so civill to, as not to name any of them; that I may avoid suspicion either of envy or flattery; (two most detestable distempers in mens spirits, and full of malignity.) Indeed I need not name some of them, for although they are left, as cottages in a wilderness, and as beacons on a hill, yet they are still such burning and shining lights, as cannot be quite hid: Some of whose fame is in all the reformed Churches; and their eminency renowned in all the learned world; being indeed the beauty and glory of these British Nations; the pillar and honor of the Protestant party; the grand examples of pious Prelacy, learned humility, holy industry; the great lights of this Northern climate
Some Ministers distresses are publicke reproaches.

Which alone might serve to fulfill, what the Cassiopeian flames did portend, by that new star in the year, 1572. Shall this age be, not onely guilty spectators, but cruell actors in their distresses; whose necessities must needs be some reproach of the Nation; even a publick sin and shame, never to be expiated? Will it not be the height of barbarity, to compell such persons to Bellerophon's his Obelum? After so many learned victories and triumphs, to force them to turn their bookes into bread; or to be their own Cannibals, to feed on their owne bowels, or to starve upon others uncharitableness? O how sad and fordid is it for such learned worth to be tried with want, and such piety be exercised by penury! O prodigy of covetous cruelty, capable to astonish heaven and earth; which seekes to hide its wickednesse by its enormity; and to make its selfe incredible, by its monstroity and excess: men will think ita fable, which humanity (much more Christiannity) should so much abhor to act, or suffer to be done, when it is in their power to help. O Divine Providence, which art indisputable, unsearchable, uneflable; how dost thou thus chuse darknesse for the garment of thy glorious lights; and thick clouds of obscurity, wherein to wrap up thy brightest beams among mankind! Art thou preparing Ravens for such Eliaffes; and working wonders for the nourishment of such Prophets? or shall their retirednesse, poverty and patience be thy greatest wonder, and their Martyrdom thy highest miracle, by which to convince and convert this crooked and adulterous generation? Truly, O excellent Christians, it is infinite pity, grief and shame, that so deserving vertues and most reverend years should be so much obscured and neglected, whose great learning and excellent gifts in all kindes, none or Christians would despise, or not use and encourage, save onely such as are afraid, that either the true reformed Religion, or true Ministers should have any lustre put upon them, or so much as any competent livelihood afforded to them, here; while forain Churches and Universities admire them, and would gladly entertain them.

There are also some fair Plantations of young and thristy trees, yet left, in this Church; whose luxuriant floridnesse wants nothing but a right church government, to culture, prune, and order them; These, rightly planted out by due ordination, and preserved by wise discipline, would in time bear store of good fruits; if the coldnesse and sewinesse of the soil, and inclemency of the English climate (ever since our Northern blasts) did not make them dwindle, grow mossy, and shrubbed by popular and plebeian adherencies; or if a violent band doe not pluck them up by the root, or to bark them round, and circumcise their maintenance; that no fair fruit can be expected from.
from them, when there is no sap derived to them; who, if they were duly ordered, and encouraged, would fill make the vain and erratick genius of this age see, That true Religion is to be preserved, and the Kingdom of Christ in mens hearts advanced, and the power of godliness maintained in Christians lives, not by new modes and fancifull fahion, but by old truths, and the old Ministry; of whose line and measure, these new pretenders coming far short, they strive by their calumniating ativity to supply their defects, after the same arts that the ungrateful sons of Sophocles did; who, that they might get their fathers estate (of whose longevity they were impatient) complained; that bee doted, and was past the use of those admired parts, which formerly had got him the love and applause of all Athens; beseeching the Magistracy, that they might make their father their pupil; and manage that estate for him, to which he was superannuated: The old man hearing of this practice of his unnaturall sons, made and publiquely recited the famous, and laft of his Tragedies; which gave the people so great assurance of his still remaining reafon and sufficiency, that they caused the former unjust grant to be revoked, and his unworthy sons worthily punished.

I must in like manner leave it to the judgement and conſcience of all excellent Christians; whether there be any compare, betweene the gifts, labours, and successes of those goodly Trees, the true Ministers; (who have had the right power and succession derived to them from the Apoftolical root) and these new Shooters, or suckers; who seek to shake the ancient trees, which so far exceed them, and over drop them; Are they not like vines and brambles, thorns and figtrees fit together? Is not the comparison uncomely, and disparaging, not onely to Christians judgements, but to their very religion? Can the exchange passe without infinite losse, injury, and indignity, to all true Christians, of this, and all other reformed Churches? And therefore I shall presume such a commutation can never be desirable or acceptable to any, that are soberly religious, and truly conſcienious, who have no secular interest wrapped up, under specious pretensions of piety.

Wife and worthy Christians cannot but remember, and be extremely sensible, of those many great benefits, which their forefathers themselves, and their countrey, have evidently received and enjoyed many years, by the labors of the true Ministers of this Church: equal, or like to which, they cannot, with any probability, (nor by any experience yet had) expect, from the sorry simplicity, and extravagant ignorance of those Antiministeriall adversaries; who have as little ability, as authority, to carry on the great and holy work, of saving foules, either by dispelling ignorance, errors, or prejudices out of mens mindes; or by settling mens judgements in truth; or
Worthy and pious Souldiers can't be against true Ministers.

or satisfying mens consciences in doubts: (or by reforming mens manners in a way of due reproof, and discreet counsell; or by vindicating the reformed Religion against learned cunning and powerful opposers; or by preserving any decency, order, and honor in the outward form and profession of Chriftian Religion, which will soon deform to all contrary effects, if other Ministry or Ministers be applied, than such, as Chrift hath instituted, and the Church always ordained, and sent in Chrifts Name.

No man then can desire, or design the change of this Ministry, as to the authority, order, rule, and succession, who doth not also aime at the change of the whole Miniftration, and work; Indeed those rude and unchristian novelties, which some men seeme to agitate; carry the aspect, not onely of Papifts, and other collaterall adversaries against us as reformed, but of Jews, and Turks, and Heathens, such as would most diametrically oppose the name of any Chriftian Church; or, which is as bad or worse, they seeme to prepare the way for some great Antichrifts, whose coming must be by strong pretensions and presumptions of some new wayes of Miniftry, Sanctity, and Piety; in which are hidden the strongest delusions, most probable to overthrow the true Ministry and Churches of Christ, while they sall speciously cry up such new wayes of Miniftry, and spirit, and gifts, and Churches; which neither we, nor our forefathers, nor primitive Chriftians, nor the Church Catholick, ever knew, or were acquainted with, either by Scripture precept, or any Churches practife; for however the best reformed Churches have restored many things to their pristine lustre, yet they innovate nothing as to Scripture grounds of doctrine, or Catholick order, succession and Institution.

As, then, thoſe men are moft the souldiers friends, who advise them, to keep to their able and experienced commanders; and not to venture their safety upon the activity, and feats of every forward and nimble fencer: So are they moft friends to all good Chriftians, Magistrates, souldiers, or others in this Nation and Church, who perfwade them (as Clemens did the Corinthians) to keep to their ancient, able, and true Ministers, of whom they have had fo long, and fo good experience; and although their persons be changeable by death, or other wayes of deprivation: yet ought the way and succession to be preserved, as to that ordination, triall, and invocation, which is Apostolical, and universally practisèd in the Church of Christ.

And since herein the Allusion, reason and proportion lies so fit, and equall between worthy Ministers and able Commanders, who have a right Commission; I cannot think, that any of the military order, who are persons of any worth, true honour, conscience,
Worthy and pious Souldiers can't be against true Ministers.

Docti Ministri foris milites dirigant juxta ministres pios ministriis pro.

Ministri illi veritate, hi virtute.

or considerable for piety, prudence, and Christian valour, (which daret any thing, but sin;) that any such souldiers, (I say) should be prone to kindle any discontent and mutinies, against the able and true Ministers of this Church. To whom (no doubt) they cannot but thankfully confess; that, under God, they owe (for the most part) what ever good learning, good breeding, or good conscience they have: I am the further from suspecting to unchristian, and unreasonable a tempter in that sort of souldiers, because I know by experience that in all the troubles and shakings, which have been in these times, those of them who are sober and ingenuous men, have been both in public, and in private very loving, civil, and respective to the true Ministers of this Church; so that those who glory in their affronts, contempts, and oppositions against the Ministers, doe but thereby proclaim, that they are the very drosse and ruder dregs of that profession; (for so it is like to be in England:) Nor can I think, that the irreligious motions, unwly mutinies, and inconsiderable menacings, of a few such unbred men, should either over-sway or over-awe, the sober counsels, and better purposes of those many better gentlemen, who sway either in counsell or in power.

Whose protection, in all peaceable, and good ways, why the Ministers of England should not as well deserve, hope for, and enjoy, as any other order, or rank of men, I see no reason; unless injuries, obloquies and indignities offered, by some of very mean quality and condition (for the most part) (and hitherto borne with that Christian courage and patience, which becomes grave and godly Ministers, should be argument enough to perfwade all Christians to forfake them, and destroy them;) of whose safety, and welfare (no doubt) God himself, and the Lord Jesus Christ, are very sensible; as much concerned in their sufferings: Nor can I think but that those men, who are so hardned in their malice and persecution against the Ministers, and their holy function; doe oft hear a voice secretly calling within them; O you Sauls, why doe you persecute mee in my servants the Ministers; who preach my Word, in my Name, by my authority, and accompanied with my grace and spirit?

Yea, not only in all true Religion, and fear of God, which becomes true believers, but in all reason, and policy of State, it is, as necessary for those in places of power to protect the true Ministers, their divine calling and succession, as for these Ministers to be protected by them; and this, not only in order to Gods glory, and the good of mens souls, their own and others; but for their own and the publick peace, safety, and honor before men; Nor is that promise, and obligation, (once given to the public) to be forgotten, by which it was assured, that the Leway of souldiers; and laying of forces should be only, as scaffolds to build up learning, piety, and
The true Ministry to be preserved in policy.

and the reformed Religion to higher heights, than formerly; and not as sealing ladders, to help to storm, plunder, and impoverish the Church; to destroy the Arsenals, and nurseries of good learning, or to pull down the main pillars both of learning and the Christian reformed Religion; which are the ancient Ministry, and succession of rightly ordained Ministers.

If those in power and counsel care not to help either in preserving, or restoring the true Ministers, and their calling, to their due honour, rights or encouragements: it will be thought rather a want of will, than of power, (of which the British world hath had great experience:) If they would help, but cannot; they must not think long to enjoy that power, which shall discover it self to weak, or to pusillanimous, as dares not own to be master of so pious, safe, and just purposes, as these are, to protect honest and godly men, in so holy, so useful, and so necessary an employment; as I have proved the Ministry to be. If they can, and dare; yet do not; either help will come another way, by the gracious hand of God; whose terrours ought to be upon the highest mindes and loftieft looks: Or else we may fear the Lord hath, in his fierce anger, decreed to powre upon highest and lowest, root and branch in this Nation, the vials of his fierce judgments, and severest wrath, turning our Sun into bloud, and our Moon into darknesse, removing the presence of his glory, the Gospel, and the Ministry of it from us, and our unhappy posterity.

However God shall please to deal with his servants the true and faithfull Ministers in this Church; yet it becomes them so far to be of good courage, as they have him for their trust, who hath overcome the world; who foretold we should have trouble in the world, but hath promised, we should have that peace in him, which the world cannot give nor take away; This comfort they have, that their labours shall not be in vain in the Lord: yea and for after times, they may be assured, That this bush of the true Ministry of the Gospel in its due authority, divine ordination, and holy succession, (wherein God hath so evidently appeared to his Church; and to none more clearly than to us in this age, and in this Church of England, shall never be consumed; however it may seem to be set on fire: Great tribulation threatens those, that will live godly in this present world; especially those, that contract more of the devils malice on them, by persuading many to live well; which is the work of true Ministers: whose labours are great; their burdens many; their encouragement small; and those greatly envied: their enemies encreased on every side; their comforters few; their defense little or none, unless God be on their side; Which he will not fail to be, though all men forsake them, as they did St. Paul; And he alone is able to bear them up, amidst the rough encounters of these times, with that Christian patience.

*2 Tim. 3.12.

Jer. 14. 27.
16. 33.
Pathetic to true Ministers.

12. Pathetic to true Ministers.
* Job 32.

To such Ministers I here crave leave, as Elibu did, to make my addresse with all humility and charity, as to my reverend Fathers, and beloved Brethren; You, who have upon you the marks and characters of right Ordination, and true Ministriffall power; accompanied with competent gifts, sanctified learning, devout industry, holy zeal, unblamable lives, and good consciences toward God, and toward all men; whose grand designe is to give full proof of those Ministriffall gifts and endowments, which you were, upon due trial, found to have, and to exercise that divine authority, which you solemnly, and rightly received; to discharge that holy duty, which in the Name of Christ, and by the power of his Spirit, was enjoined you, in the day of your Ordination, by those, through whose hand the succession of that Ministriffall authority is derived from the Apostles: By all which, you were qualified and disposed, not to get a good living or two; but to cast into the Sea of the world, the net of the GospeU at Christ's word, to gain soules to God, and Disciples to Jesus Christ; to teach and guide by sound doctrine, and holy discipline the flocks committed to you, in your several places and proportions: Your earthly entertainment is from the munificence, and devotion of men; but your heavenly calling and authority to be Ministers, is from Christ; in whose Name you doe all (as Ministers) and not in the peoples, whom some have taught to grow tumultuous against you, and imperious upon you: Neither your work, nor your chief reward depends upon men; It is the least of your comfort, or encouragement, that can from hence be expected, as nothing of your authority is from thence derived. Level not your selves by popular crowchings, and base compliances in this high point of your Ministriffall power: It matters not much, how you be levelled, as to your maintenance, for which you chiefly do depend, not upon envious men, but upon a bounteous God; who will either give you liberally to en-
Ministers must not desert their calling.

joy all things, or contentedly to want them; The withered bands of these Jeroboams which are stretched out against you, may at your prayers be restored to the ancient fulness, and favour used toward the Prophets of the Lord in this land: If bonds and imprisonment, poverty and contempt attend you in this world, yet be of good comfort, Christ your great Master hath gone before you, and both by word and example, by his life and death hath called you out of the world; armed you against it, and set you above it; while insolent dust flies in your faces, and proud worms fight against God in you, remember the battle is the Lords. The weapons of your warfare are spiritual, and of greatest proof in sharpest affliction.

If you are to contend with principalities and powers, it must be, not by ill language, by railing and Satyrick invectives, by secret plottings, and practice, but by the primitive Ammunition of Patience and Prayers; by holy perseverance in your Ministry; such as becomes the spirit of the Gospel, in wisdom, learning, gravity; between the extremes of fear and flattery; with humble love and charity to all men: It becomes you (as Vespasian said of Emperours) to dye upright in your spiritual arms and harness; intent to your duty; fighting the good fight of faith, till you have finished your course with joy. In the midst of crosses, comforts grow best, as Lilies among thornes: The clouds of your enemies darts, poysonous opinions, corrupt doctrines, fraudulent dealings, sharp arrows of bitter speeches, fiery trials of persecuting menaces, your adversaries cruel mocking, and insultings, your friends prevarications with you, withdrawals from you, and forsakings of you; all these must go on (ακολούθησιν) stir up the more to quicker flames of study, prayer, meditation, devotion, and holy resolution, those many gifts and graces, that learning, eloquence, and sufficiency, which are in you, as Christians, and as Ministers; wherein (to the praise of God) you are not behind even the chiefest Ministers in the Christian world. You are not now to expect Prebendaries, and Deaneries, and Bishoprics, as the honorary rewards and encouragements of your studies, pains and piety; This age could not bear your enjoying of them, though you used them never so well; It is your part to know, as well to want them as to have them; and in stead of those, to prepare for poverty, contempt, and imprisonment; you may be then at your best, when the evil world thinks you deserve no better; Never study by any mean ways to merit better of satyrical spirits; Be sure your treasure be out of these mens reach; It is your part to doe well, and worthy of your high calling: Leave it to God, how well you shall be rewarded here and hereafter: Paul never preached with greater authority, than

B b b b 3
in his chains; nor wrote with greater eloquence and majesty then when he styl'd himself, a prisoner of Jesus Christ; well doing will be reward enough, and a good conscience will be good cheer at all times.

You cannot but observe, that your great enemy the divell, hath commanded, (as the King of Syria did) his Legions of Hereticks, Schismaticks, Fanaticks, erroneous, superstitious, idle, profane, licentious, and Atheisticall spirits, (who jointly combate against the truth of Christian and reformed Religion) that they should fight neither against small, nor great, but chiefly against the reformed Ministers, and the very Ministry it selfe of this Church. Take heed that these smite you not, as those did the King of Israel, between the joints of your harness: between your conscience of duty to God, and your civil complany for safety with men: between your love of Christ, and the love of your relations; between your fear to offend God, and your loathnesse to displease men; between your holding your livings, and keeping good consciences; between your looking to eternall necessitie, and your squinting on temporal conveniencies.

As Pompey said, when he set to Sea in a storm, against the advise of the timerous Pilot and Mariners; so I to you, It is not necessary to live, but it is necessary to preach that Gospel, which hath been committed to your care: It is not necessary to be rich, and at case, and in liberty, and in favour with men; but it is necessary to witnesse to the Truth of God, and to that office, authority and divine power of the Ministry of Christ in this Church, against a crooked and perverse generation; against the errors, pride, falsity, ignorance and hypocrities which are in the world: What if Christ calls us in this age to forsake all, and follow him? Shall we goe away sorrowfull? Truly the world will not treat you much better, when you have forsaken Christ to follow it: For, having once drawnne you from your conscienceious constancy, and judicious integrity, and pious reserves, it will the more despare you, and with the greater glory destroy you as Ministers: Our meat and drink must be to do the will of our heavenly Father, as it was the Lord Christis, our great Sender and first ordainer: Better we live upon almes and beggary, than thousands of soules be starved or poyned, by those hard fathers, and terrible step-mothers, who intend to nurse Religion with blood in head of milk; and feed the Church of Christ after a new Italian fashion, commanding stones to be for bread, and giving it Scorpions in head of fishes; mixtures of hemlock and Soulebane, with some shews of hearts of grace, of wholesome truths, and of spiritual gifts.

Let the envious, penurious, sacrilegious, and ungratefull world, see that
that you followed not Christ for the loaves; Nor as Judas, therefore
liked to be his Disciples, because you might bear the bag; Let no
Scribes or Pharisees, Priests or Rulers outbid your value of Christ,
or tempt you to betray him, and his holy Ministry on you; by any
offers, unworthy of him, and you. Shew your skill and courage
in the storm, wherein you are like, (for a time) to be engaged. Ser-
ner times made you carry flacker sayles, and a looser hand; now
your eye must be more fix'd, and your hand more strong and fled-
dy, in steering according to cart and compasse: the Euroclydons or
violent windes of these tempestuous times will bring you sooner to
your Haven: Hitherto you have (for the most part) appeared,
but as other men; (busie, as other ants, on your molehills) conversing
with the beasts of the people, in the valley of secular aimes, and af-
faires; now God calls you with Moses up to the Mount; and with
Christ to a transfiguration, where you shall see the meeknesse, and
charity of Moses, and the zeal, and constancy of Elias appearing with
Christ; in which great Emblemes your duty, your honour, and
your comfort will be evident; when you come to be tried with
St. Stephen, the form of your countenance will be changed, and you will
then most fully see Christ, and most clearly be seen of men, as
the Angels of God. Nothing hath lost and undone many of us Mi-
ners so much, as our too great fear of losses and of being un-
done; our too great desires to save our selves by complying with
all variations, even in Religion; nothing will save us so certainly,as
our willingness to lose our lives, and livelihoods for Christ's sake;
and this, not now for one great truth, which is worth 1000 lives;
but for the pillar and ground of all truths; the office and very Insti-
tution of the true Ministry, whose work is to hold forth, and publish
the Truth of the Gospell to the world in all ages, by a right and perpe-
tual succession.

Delpair not of God's love to you: as Philo said to his country-
men the Jews at Alexandria, when he returned from the Emper-
our highly incensed against them: Be of good courage; it is a good
Omen, that God will doe us good, since the Emperor is so much against
us: Possibly you may (as St. Paul) be stoned, cast out, and left for
death, yet revive again; as is foretold of the witnesses. It may be
your latter end shall be better, as Jobs, than your beginning; The
experience of the sad effects, which attend sacrilegious cruelties against
the true Ministers, and the want of such in every place, may in time
provoke this Nation by a sense of its own, and of God's honour,
to more noble, and constant munificence, which is not so much
a liberality, as an equity to able and faithful Ministers; It may be
this Church, which hath so much forgot the blessednesse thee speke
of, in having learned, able, and rightly ordained, and well go-

For Comfort:

Viro fideli magis inter ipsa flagella sidene-
Enseh. bif.l.2. cap. 5.
* Rev. 11. 11.

Gal. 4.15.
Ministers may not despair.

Revel. 2, 4.

vern'd Ministers, which seems to have forsaken her first love and honour to the Clergy, when Religion was (as in all times, preserved, so in these last) reformed, and vindicated by the labours, writings, lives, and sufferings of those excellent Bishops and Presbyters, who were heretofore justly dear and honoured to this Nation, so as no worthy mind envied or repined at the honors and estates they enjoyed: Possibly it may remember from whence it is fallen, and repent, and doe its first works: which were with piety, order, charity, true zeal, and liberality, without grudging, or murmuring against the honour or maintenance; much less the office, and function of the Evangelical Ministers; whose pious wisdom calling off onely the additaments, and superstitious rags of mans invention, yet retained with all reverence and authority, the essential institutions of Jesus Christ: The disguised drefs and attire, had no way destroyed the being and right succession of holy things: but only deformed it to a fashion, something different from their primitive majesty, beauty and simplicity; by putting on, what was superfluous rather, than pernicious.

But, if there should not be in our dayes so just and noble recantations, from this Church and Nation: yet, as Ministers of Christ it's fit for us to desire it; we are reduced but to the primitive posture of those holy Bishops and Presbyters, who more sought to gain men to Christ, than honour and maintenance to themselves; Better we cease to be men, than cease to be Christs Bishops and Ministers: we must do our duties, till we dy; (having any opportunities) though we have no encouragements from men; our lean, wasted, and famished carcasses (such as St. Chrysostome faith the Apostle Paul carryed about the world, so much subdued by himself and neglected, as if he had not been battered, and persecuted enough by others) those will serve to be Temples of the Holy Ghost, and livelystones or pillars to the reformed Church of Christ, as well as if they had the fatness of Monks, and the obeseness of Abbots; whose fatness you will let us have cause to envy, when the pious industry of your poverty shall exceed the lazy dulness, and slyfle fogginess of many of them amidst their plenty; (which no true reformed Christian grudges them, when they imploy in industry, humility, mortification, devotion and holy contemplation, as some of them doe; and thereby shew, that plenty is no enemy to piety in them;) Let us shew, that neither is poverty an enemy to vertue in us: Though the Roman Clergy rejoice at our penury; let not us repine at their superfluity, but with them truth and holinesse, as ample, as their revenues; Above all, take heed, you doe not gratifie them, or any others, of meaner spirits, with any defection or abasing of your holy calling, and Ministry, either in word, or in deed: Neither adopting a fpiri-
rions Ministry, of novell and popular production; nor giving over
the confeicioufly exerçize of that, which you have received here by
an holy and right succession; your religious constancy in it will be
the highest vindication of it, to be of no mean and cravenly kinde;
which preacheth more out of duty and confeience to God, than
from secular rewards from them.

Many of your afflications, have been, still are, and are like to be as
great, fo of long continuance: Such, as to which God (no doubt.)
hath proportioned his gifts and graces in you, that so by this
great honorary of suffering, as becomes you, both God may be glo-
rified further in you; and you may be more sensibly comforted, and
ampley crowned, by him; your losses will turn to your greatest gains;
and your defections as from men, to your happiest fruitions of God.
The highest and spring tides of grace usually follow the lowest
ebbes of estate. Then are holy men at their best and moft, when
they seem leaft and nothing to man; as those stars whose obscuri-
ty is recompenfed with their vicinity to heaven. Your restrains
will be your enlargements; and your silencings, will proclaiine the
worlds folly, and unhappineffe, to deprive it self of your excellent
gifts; and also set forth your humility, who know how to be
silent with meeknefe and patience no leffe than to speak with wise-
dome and eloquence.

I should not need, nor would presume here, to make any par-
ticular addrefse to those reverenved Bifhops, learned and godly
fathers as yet surviving and almost forgotten in this Church; (whose
worth I highly venerate; towards whose dignity, I never was, nor
am either an envious diminisher, or an ambitious aspirer: whose
eminency every way hath made good that abstract and character, which
I formerly gave, of a true Christian Bifhop) if I did not observe, how
little they are for the moft part considered by any ordinary minds,
who generally admire the ornaments more, than the endowments
of vertue; Vulgar spirits seldom falue any Deity, whose shrines
and Temples are ruined: Few men have that gallyantry of minde
which M. Petronius expreffed to Julius Cesar, when he led Cato to
prifon, whom he with other Senators followed, out of the Senate,
telling him: He had rather be with Cato's vertue in a prifon, than
with Cesar's violence in a palace: The worlds vanity is prone to
judge those the greafteft Sinners, who are the greafteft Sufferers;
whereas thoufands perifh eternally by their prosperous fucciffes, few
by their calamitous fufferings; The methods and riddles of divine
dispensacion and love are far different from plebian cenfures and
flatteries: God fuffers his Peters to be winnowed, and his Pauls to
be buffeted: yea he grindes in the sharpeft mills, (as holy Ignatius
desired) the corn he most efteemes; casting his gold into the hottest
C c c c furnaces.
This (no doubt) makes it seem not a strange thing to you, that the Lord hath thus dealt even with you; who have suffered the loss of all things, as to those publick, legall and temporary rewards of your studies, learning and labourers: while yet you were uncondemned for any sin, that ever I have heard of, committed either against the laws of God or man: only upon this account, because you were Bishops or chief Presidents in the order, government and care of this reformed Church; * according to the present Laws then in force, and agreeable (for the main) to the practice of all pious Antiquity. I need not put your learned piety in minde of that voice from heaven, which was audible to blessed Polycarp (a primitive Bishop and Martyr at Smyrna) when he was haled at four and forty years old to execution, (the tumultuous rabble crying after him, αἰτήτω τὸν αἰτὼς, &c. Away with these wicked ones, &c.) But the celestiall echo was (ἐστι καὶ ἐν οἷς Πολύκαρπος) O Polycarp be of good courage, and quit thy feit like a valiant man, a faithfull Christian, and worthy Bishop of the Church. None merit more to be preserved (many times) than they, whom vulgar fury and faction seeks to crucifie and destroy: Nor are any lesse meriting than those, who are by such easy Idolaters commonly adored. I well know, that there needs not greater incitations to constancy in vertue, or patience in afflictions (especially if for no evil doing) than those, which innocency suggestst to good consciences; by which the grace of God hath (no doubt) enabled many of you to those (δυνάμει) great agonies and victories of faith, which you have (as Job) sustaine in, and obtained over, the world, by your meekness, and, to such as observe it, admired patience; Enduring at once even from those of whom you had deserved, either as Brethren or Fathers, better things, for great contradictions, and so many diminutions; as not onely to have been despised, yea and by some contumeliously used in your persons, (venerable for age, learning, piety and gravity) but also to be quite dejected from that height, and utterly ejected from the enjoyment of those ancient places, to which both high honours.
Honours and ample revenues were anciently annexed; wherewith your selves were justly invetered, and which your predecessors peaceably enjoyed many hundreds of years past, in this Church and Nation: Herein you have excelled most of the ancient Bishops; who, although great and commendable sufferers, as Martyrs or Confessors; yet seldom from those, who were of the same faith and orthodox profession; Gregory Naz. indeed was stoned and reviled when he came to Constantinople; and rejoiced to be so entertained, because they were of the Arian faction; enemies of Christ's glory and godhead, which is the Churches greatest glory and comfort: In like sort divers godly and Orthodox Bishops were molested, banished, imprisoned and destroyed by prevalent Heretics and Schismatics, who yet ever set up Bishops of their own leaven and faction: For however men dared much against several truths and fundamental doctrines of Christianity; yet never till of later times did they rise to the boldness of denying and destroying the evident Catholic custome of the Churches government by Bishops as chief among the Presbyters: how ever single Tenets might be dark and disputable; yet this was so clear by universal practice and consent, that none ever gainsayed it, that were of any repute for learning or piety among the ancients. Your sufferings are the more strange and remarkable in this; that they are from those, who solemnly protested to maintain the Protestant reformed Religion, as it was established in the Church of England; in the extern order and policy of which, you then were, and had at all times been, chief pillars and ornaments.

In this so strange and sudden alteration, men soberly learned and peaceably pious, (and uncovetously Christian) doe still with all respect and reverence to you and your Order, consider; not onely that great and undeniable justification, which you have from the Lawes, wisdome and piety of this Church and State ever since they were Christians; as also from the Catholic and undoubted practice of all ancient Churches, blest every where with the excellent lives, learned labours, and glorious sufferings of many your famous predecessors; to whose care and fidelity the Church owes, for the most part, (under God) as the lawfull succession of Ministers, so the preservation of the Scriptures, of good learning, and of all holy administrations; But also they lay to heart that great humility, moderation, meekness, candor, and charity, most worthy of you, and most observable in you; By which you have been as sheep before the Shearers, not opening your mouths, yea you were, in order to publique peace, content so far to gratifie your enemies, and displease your friends, as in many things to have been lessened, in those rights.
rights and preheminences you had, according to the Laws and ancient customs of this Church and State; hereby hoping to have drawn others from their exorbitancies, to such a peaceable temperament, as might have been happy for us all.

...Nor is it unobserved by wise men, how greatly a justification the providence of God hath soon given even to your order and office, (which some Ministers were so impatient not to root out) not only by the preservation of it, and by it a constant Ministry and holy order in his Church every where for 1600 years, but also by that notable constution and speedy defeat given to the vast hopes and violent projects of those (for other mens counsels and results upon a secular account I neither examine nor censure) Ministers, who being of your own tribe, were your sharpest rivals in a Presbyterian excess: who have now as little cause to rejoice, in the so much endeavoured extirpation not of any Tyrannique, and Papall, but of all Presidential or Paternall Episcopacy; that they have great cause to repent, and be ashamed of those immoderate counsels and precipitant actions, which knew not how to distinguish between the failings of persons, and the benefit of order; between the rectitude of a Canon, or rule, and the crookedneffe of depraved manners; which are incident to all forts and degrees of men whatsoever, and to Presbyters no lesse than to Bishops: So that in such severities, which ruined at a dear and dangerous rate, what they might have repaired safely and easily, they shewed themselves neither good Church-men, nor wise States-men; neither very pious, nor greatly politick; For, by snuffing Episcopacy too close, they have almost extinguished Presbytery; and occasioned this ruine, threatening the order, honour, maintenance, and succession of the whole function, and calling of the Evangelical Ministry; Their zeal not to leave an hoof in Egypt (as some violent spirits pretended) is probable to bring us back again to Egypt; or so lose us in the wilderness of Sin, as few heads in after ages shall enter into Canaan: No wonder if the branches wither, when the root is wasted. It is comely in your piety and gravity, that you have not rejoiced in these so sudden defeats, and speedy frustrations of their so bitter and implacable adversaries; whose tongues (it seems) dividing, their building ceased and soon decayed: But rather you pitie these confusions, incident to poor mortals; who so oft bruise themselves very sorely, by the fall and ruines which they maliciously, or unadvisedly bring upon others: as those violenter Presbyters have done even upon Presbytery itself, who in its due place and decent subordination is also an ancient, honorable and Catholick order of the Church of Christ, by their hasty demolishing of all moderate Episcopacy, where one Ministir is preferred before another, agree-
Ministers in their sufferings.

able to the eminency of his gifts and graces; the priority of his age; the rules of all right reason and order, which owns any government in any society of men; The kindly height and orderly strength of which Prelacy was, not only as the root for right derivation and succession, but also as the shelter, stay and protection (besides a great beauty and ornament) to the whole Ministry, of this and all Churches; yea and to the reformed Religion here as established; as not with less piety, so (without boasting) with as much (if not more) prudence and moderation, as to the external policy of it, as in any Church under heaven: The want of that great benefit and those many blessings, which the Churches of Christ, both in primitive and pouter times, have enjoyed, by the learning, wisdom, authority, care, circumspection, and good example of excellent Bishops (whom no men will want more, than the commonalty of Presbyters) may in time (according to the usul methods of humane folly, and passions, late and costly repentings) make men the more esteem them, and desire their just restoration; The ancient Persians are reported, when their King dyed, to have allowed five dayes interregnum; during which time every man might doe what seemed good in his own eyes: That so by the experience of those five dayes rudeness, riot, injuris and confusions; wherein rich and poore suffered, they might learn more to value the necessity and benefit of lawfull, orderly and settled government; Want doth oft reconcile men to those things, which long use hath made nauseous, and so offensive to them: when wanton novelty hath glutted and defiled it self with its pulped waters; possibly it may grow so wise, by an after wit, as (alhamed of it selfe) to returne to the primitive springs, and purer fountaines; where was both farre more clearnesse, and far wholesomer refreshings. Your charity forgiving and pitying your enemies, and your humility digesting your injuries and indignities offered you by any men, will invest you in more, than all you ever enjoyed or lost, as to reall comfort and gracious contentment; By how much you now have leFFE to be envied of secular splendor, the more you will be now, and in after ages admired for your meeknesse and contentednesse in every estate; Primitive poverty of Bishops will but polithe and give lustre to your Primitive piety; Humane disgraces are oft the foils and whetstones of divine graces. The highest honour as of all good Christians, so chiefly of godly Bishops and Ministers, is not onely to preach and rule; but to suffer also as becomes the eminency of their places and graces; Christ is (for the most part) on the suffering side; and oftener to be found, not onely in the Temple, but in the furnace and wilderness, than in Courts and Palaces.
I may not (I hope I cannot) flatter any of you, so, as to tempt you to boast of your Innocency, to glory in your merits, or your crosses before God; His exaltedness finds scarce in the purest vessels, and defects in the weightiest shekels of the Sanctuary, shewing the most innocent and meritorious persons (as to men) so much of sinfull infirmity in themselves, as may both justify God’s inflicting, and provoke the afflicted to true repentings; either for any excesses, to which they might be transported, as men; or defects, where to they might be subject, as Bishops and chief Ministers in the Church of Christ; whose holy industry and pious vigilance before God ought to be proportioned to those eminencies, which they enjoyed above others in the eye of the world; All that I aim at, in this Paragraph, is by this touch of Christian sympathy, to expresse a sense of duty, gratitude, honour and love, which I owe to God, and for his sake to your Paternity: Also to deprecate any offence, which I either really have, or may seem to have given any of you; To whose hands chiefly I owe, what I count my greatest honour, my being dulyordained to be a Minister of the glorious Gospell of Jesus Christ in this Church of England.

. . . You are still your selves, and not to be lessened by any mutations of men or times, while you poseffe your learned and gracious soules in patience. Your sufficiency hath lost nothing while you enjoy God and your Saviour in faith and love; your friends in charity; your enemies in pity; your honours in knowing how to be * abased; and your Estates in knowing how to want, as well as to abound. You have by experience found the Episcopal throne and eminency to be, as Gregory Nazianzen and Nifon call it, a sublimity fuller of envy and danger, than of glory and dignity; A dreadfull Precipice, hard in the ascent, laborious in the station, hazardous in the descent; of which Chrysostome expresseth so great an honour, that he thinkes, few men fit for it, and few saved under it; the charge is so great, the care so exact, and the account so strict.

* Nor doth he think it (δεσωδια, αλλα πινην πος αυτουαρ) a preeminency so much, as pains; rather aburthen and oppression, than any honour or exaltation: And indeed to great and excellent mindes, there was nothing in your former height and splendor, truly worthy of your ambition or others emulation, save only the larger opportunities they afforded you, not of being better in your selves, but of doing more good to others. Of which conveniences being now deprived, as you will have lessto account for to God; so the noblest revenge you can take of the present agé is, by patience under so profuse afflictions, by your prayers for your most unjust and unplacable enemies, by your constancy in studious industry and holy gravity, to let the world see, how impossible it is, for true Christian
Sympathetick to godly Bishops.

Christian Bishops, not to be doing, or desiring good (while they live) to all men; and even to those, from whom they have suffered much evil without a cause.

Your experienced piety knows better, how to act, than I can write; as to true contentment in the world, contempt of the world, triumphing over the world, and expectations above the world; your storms and distresses, though (decumani) great and vast, cannot be long; And to be sure will never be beyond your Pilots skill, who looks on you as sufferers; if not for the fundamentall saving Truths, yet for the comely order and ancient government of his Church; Many of you are already in prospect of that fair and happy haven of eternall tranquillity: To which I beseech our God, and Lord Jesus Christ, the chief Bishop of his Church, safely to conduct you by the wisdome and power of his Spirit: As for your fatherly solici-
tude and Christian care of this Church and posterity, God will relieve you, by affuring you, that he hath so vigilant and tender care, as will cause all to work together for good; Nor shall the insolvency of enemies, forain or dometick, who are pleased with your disgraces, and enriched with your spoiles, always triumph in the ruins of the Bishops, Ministers, and this Church of England. Since then nothing is more apposite than the words of one of your own degree and order, Gregory Nazianzen (famous for his piety and learning, zeal and patience) I crave leave with all pristine respect to present you with that elegant and consolatory expression, which he used to some godly Bishops whom the Arian fury had dethroned from their seats. Such of you (faith he) as are thrust from your Episcopal Chaires here on earth, yet are not forsaken of God: You shall enjoy safer seats in the heavenly Cathedrall, which is infinitely more high and happy: No good and wise man but prefers holy obscurity, before prompt injury. A minde exercised with such gracious literature as yours, will know better how to enjoy its own wisdome, and others follies; its own sufferings, and other indignities; than vain men can their seeming plenty and prosperity: wise and holy men draw good and wholesome nourishment out of dinners of swre beare's; while others turn to poison and forfeit their staled Oxen.

I beseech you therefore Reverend fathers and brethren by the mer-
cies of God, by the bowels of Christ, by your zeal for the truth, by your love of this reformed Church, and your Country; by your former experiences of your prospered labours; by your Christian victories of the many enemies over your order, profession and calling, who have hitherto only scolded, and railed at you, and put

* Osian 31. 32.  
* Non minoris est gloria bene tolerata puiper-

Tacit. An. 1. 4.
Encouragement to true Ministers.

put rude affronts upon you, but neither lawfully fought you with the weapons of either Scripture, or Reason: I beseech you by the care and charity you have to your neighbours souls; by the necessity which lies on you to preach the Gospel, and administer holy things; by the woe which hangs over you, if you do not, or draw back; by the compassion and tenderness you have to posterity, that the reformed Religion may not be abolished, and all superfluous vanities, with fanatical profaneness and confusions, prevail in these sometime fortunate Islands;

I conjure you by your patience and perseverance hitherto under many trials, both in war and peace; (which may be to you the sharpest war) by the peace and joy you have had in the holy Ghost, and in well doing, and comely suffering; by your hope of heaven, and the glory, which shall be revealed in you; by the coming again of Christ your Master and Sender; by the Talents you have received; by the accounts you are to give; by the Crown you may expect; by all the thoughts of honor, virtue, grace, glory, immortality, eternity, which your precious souls and raised minds are capable of; by all that is dear to you, and worthy of you as men, as Christians and as Ministers: by the oblique pertinacy of your enemies in their malice against you: Never desert your station as Ministers of the Church of England; to quit and forsake your standing, as some have done, is to sacrifice your understanding to vulgar folly and senseless importunities; cast not away your holy profession; betray not that due and divine authority you have by your holy ordination in this Church; wipe not off with your own or the people's unwashed hands that sacred union, which is upon you, by your being duly consecrated, through the gifts, order, power, authority and appointment of the Spirit of Christ, to the office and work of the Ministry: Divert not your studies to any other more gainful, safe, plausible, and honoured profession among men; whose dishonour it is to think any thing more worthy of their honour; as it is the honour of Ministers, to suffer dishonour upon that account, because they are Christ's; whose ways being leafe agreeable, no wonder if his message, and messengers be leafe acceptable to the world: Let not the soft fleece on any Wolves backs deceive you; as if you might well spare your labours, when there are so many spontaneous Preachers: Be sure you out-live them in all ways of true holiness; you can easily (as you do) far out-preach them and out-pray them, both for truth, method, judgment, and Oratory: It is neither their learning, nor their conscience, nor their eloquence you have to contend with, but their ignorance, hypocrifie, and insolence: when these clouds shall thunder and lighten; when the
they shall resolve into *open violence, and oppression, (which is the
last result of error, if it attain to power) yet *fear not these, that
can plunder, sequester, imprison, banish and *kill you; you have
learned little in Christ's school, if thefe be still a terror to you;
*Cannot you be content to be such poore, despifed and persecuted
Preachers, as Christ was? (you may be good Ministers, when you
are beggers; as fome have been forced to be in these times.) Are you
ashamed and afraid to be fuch, as the Apoflles were, *who forfook
all and followed Christ in this work of the Ministry; Such, as were
their *immediate fucceffors for fome hundred years; fuch as your
later predeceffors were, thofe holy and reforming Bifhops and Pres-
byters in the Marian perfecution; *Such as the moft of our brethren
are now, or lately have been, or are likely to be in all the reformed
Churches; Such as thofe holy Bifhops and Presbyters were, be-
fore they met in the first Nicene Council; *whither from their
incontroftable-Islands and deferts, from their woods, caves, and de-
folate cottages, from their prifons, racks and dungenous, they
came forth with the marks of the Lord Jesus on many off them;
some *with an eye pulied out, others with an hand lopped off;
with mained legs, with shrunken fkins, with ftagmatized foreheads,
and with knees made horne by continual prayer, for thofe that
had fo persecuted and misufed them.

exemplis. Thal. moriens ap. Tacit. *Atpepyvov nV Í72v100 ÀVXov XEmov xT Fic AvvOv

O glorious fpectacle! O venerable Council! O truely Christian Synod,
and Sacred Assembly; not of Presbyters, scorning and extirpating their
Bifhops; but of Reverend Bifhops and humble Presbyters; all of
them in their due order and holy fubordination, renowned for
their constancy in perfecution, and fo moft worthy to be Minis-
ters of the mysteries of Jesus Christ! Shall we now be ashamed
(as a more soft and delicate generation) of their fcarfs and maines?
Have we fo striven for the right and left hand in Christ's Kingdom of
Church Government, as to forget to drink of Christ's cup, and to
abhor to be baptized with his baptism, which was not of water only,
but of blood? Are we ashamed of Christ's wounds, and thorns, and
reeds; or of Saint Paul's chains; or Saint Peter's prifon; or Ignatius his
beats; or Polycarp's torments; from whose body in the flames a
fweet odour diffpered to the fpeftators? Doe we abhor to live,
as Cyprian did, firft banifhed, then martyred? Or as great Atha-
nafius, five years in a well without the light of the Sun, forfaken
of friends and every where hunted by enemies? Or as Chryslo
tome, whose eloquent and learned courage exempted him not from much
D d d d trouble
trouble and banishment, where he dyed? You will want com-
forts, if you want trials and afflictions: Saint John had his glorious
revelation in his exile; Those will be but probations, and in-
creases of your graces and gifts too, which may be rusty with
much ease; and warped by the various turnings, wherewith many
Ministers think to shift off persecution, and to grinde with every
winde.

*Theodorus ju-
vennis trifthor ab equules depositus, inter crucianus cantabat. Ruffin. hist. l. i. c. 30.

If you be indeed conscious to your selves of any fraud and falsity,
of any sinister and unsincere way, by which your predeceasers,
and you after them, have either attained or maintained your Mi-
niistry, and function in this Church; if you know any thing unre-
f reasonable, unscripturall, uncomely, immoral, irreligious, or superstitious, in
the way or work; in the means, manner, or end of your Ministry;
if you are guilty of any thing different from, or contrary to the
rule and way of Christ, his Churches good, his Fathers glory; dan-
gerous to your own, or others mens foules; In Gods name, re-
pent of your sin betimes, recant your learned folly, renounce
your ancient standing; Doe this (as most worthy of you) hearti-
tly, ingenuously, publiccly, that by the foyle of your shame,
the lustre of Gods glory may be more set off. Gratifie at length,
(not now your enemies, but your friends, because your Moni-
tors and reformers) the Papifts, Socinians, Separatifts, Brownifts,
Anabaptifts, &c. with what they have so long and so earnestly
desired, to such an impatience, as you see now threatens to cudgell
you to a recantation of your Ministry, if you will not do it by
fair means and plausible allurements: O how joyfull and wel-
come news will it be at home and abroad, to hear, that you, as
Ministers of the Church of England, have not onely helped to put
down Bishops, and abolish Episcopacy; but you have, (to perfect
your repentance, and to cumulate the courtesie) abjured your
Office, renounced your standing, abated your calling, prostra-
ted your Ministry at the feet of any, that lift to kick at it, or tread
upon it; and upon you too; as Ecehelians; as unsavory salt, that is
good for nothing, unless it be new boyled in an Independent Cauldron
over a Socinian Furnace, with a popular fire! O hasten to remove
your selves from that rock of ages, the Cathlick ordination and
succession, on which the Church and Ministry hath so long stood
in all places, as a City on a hill, both in peace and persecutions:
and levell your selves to those smoother quick-sands, which would
sain levell you to themselves.

You will never be able to suffer what threatens you as Ministers of
of the old standing and way, with cheerfulness and comfort; where your constancy is but pertinacy; as it is, unless you have solid grounds, sound minds, and sincere hearts; if you have any scruples, or thorns in your feet, your motions must needs be painfull, tedious and uncomely. When you are converted, help to redeem us, (the remnant of your poore seduced brethren) from our errors and mistakes; from our mists of ignorance, our chaines of darkness; from our Catholick customes; from our Ecclesiastical Canons; from our historickal testimonies; from that holy succession, that Apostolical practise, that Scripture foundation, that divine institution; by all which we fancy our selves both solidly built and strongly supported; And this we have done in the simplicity of our souls, both we and our Forefathers for many generations, not onely since the last reformed century; but for a thousand and half a thousand yeares before, even ever since the Christian Religion hath beene planted, propagated, and continued, by such consecrated Bishops, and such ordained Ministers in all the world.

If you have found nothing of God goe along with your Ministry, either in your own breasts, or your peoples hearts, or your Predecessors labours; if you are justly unsatisfied in that Ordination, and succession, by which not only the Ministeriall authority, but all Christian priviledges and rites have been derived to you in this Church; if you never found it confirmed to you by Gods blessing on your owne, or others Ministry in your way; if you doe indeed finde a brighter light, a warmer heat, and a sweeter influence from those new Parelii, which of late have appeared in our sky, as rivals in brightness to our old Sun, in number exceeding it; yea now threatening to eclipse it, and utterly expell it out of its ancient orb & sphere: if you really judge, that you have cause to blaspheme, or to speake evil of those seemingly holy, and reputedly excellent Bishops and Ministers, of this Church; as if they had hither-to been bashfuls for God, deceivers for Christ; done evil, that good might come thereby; if you judge, that you have cause to reproach, traduce, and despise all those Christians, (whose profession, full of order, humilietie and holinesse hath been the crown and glory of this Church, and the Miniftrie of it) as if they had beene slyly soulers, whom Ministers smooth tongues had onely deceived; If you can, or dare to reprobate all thiose, both godly Pastors and people; to annull their Ministry; to overthrow their Faith; to woff off their baptism; to cast out their Sacraments; to deliophe their Sermons; to laugh at their prayers; to cancel their writings; to detest their examples; to vilifie their graces, as fancifull, hypocritical; furious, suppositions, superstitious, imaginary, unauthoritative, antichristian.

Parelii are the seeming or mock-lunnes which sometime appear with the true Sun; as there did two here in England, an. 1640.

* Rom. 3,8.
Advisse to true Ministers.

If you finde in your consciences good grounds for this boldneffe of cenfure; and consequently for a separation, profanation, and abnegation of your former way, both as Ministers, and as Christians, (for renounce one, and you must needs begin both; If you had no true Ministers, then you were no true Christians; and if no true Christians, you could be no true Ministers;) if so, follow by all means with speed your later and diviner dictates; please your selves in your happy inconstancy; hasten to disabufe the people of this Nation, whom so many holy seducers, the Bishops and Ministers of old have abused: O undeceive the miserable and only nominall Christians of this age, before they perish in their errors and confidences of having true Ministers, and true Sacraments, true Christ, true Faith, true Repentance, &c. O deplore with bitter lamentation, the many poore creatures, both Shepheard and Sheep, who are gone down to the pit: death gnaweth upon them, while they dyed in so zealous and dangerous errors, in so fond a Faith, in so vain hopes, as mistooke the gates of hell for heaven; Antichrist for Christ among us: you may well bleffe your selves in so glorious a change; and boast of your gracious Apostafie: Hasten to beget some new Church body, which may give you a new call, and standing; which may rebaptize you, record you, and ere long invest you in such an office, power, and Miniftery, as they and you shall think more valid, more authentick, more Christian, more comfortable; which hath furer footing, and better standing both in the favour of the times, and of God himself.

...But if Scripture, and Reason, and consent of all holy learned men in this and other Churches; if Catholick custome, particular experiences, and holy successe; if divine testimony, clouds of witnelfes, of blessed Ministers, and blessed people; of blessed Sermons, and blessed Sacraments; of blessed lives, and blessed deaths; of blessed Converts, and blessed perseverants in grace; if these be as mighty bars, crosse your conffences, which stop you either from a weak retrogradation to old Popery, or a wicked precipitancy to new vulgarity; if neither your judgement, nor your conscience can bear such a rude revolt, without great violatings of the one, and woundings of the other; if you dare not in a fit of popularity, to injure the dead, that are at rest in the Lord, to discourage the living and thriving Christians, to overthrow the Faith of many, to blaspheme the God, the Saviour and the Spirit of those holy men and women, living and dead, who have been called, and converted, and sanctified, and confirmed, and saved by that Word of Power, and those holy Miniftractions, which your Fathers, and your Brethren, and your selves the Ministers of this Church have duly preached and administered, in that office, standing and authority,
wherewith they were and you now are duly invested in this Church;

I beseech you, then, be so valiant, as to dare to be, and still to own your selves, as true Ministers of Christ in this Church, ordained by him, and for him: still seeking the things of Christ in the good old way of the ordained Ministry, while others seek their own in their new models and fashions. Do not study to disguise your selves (no not outwardly) as if you were afraid your coat should discover your calling; or as if you pretended to have renounced it with your changed habit: you may preserve white souls under black clothes; as others may black souls under spendid colours: your fable colour, although very becoming the gravity of your calling in the best times, yet was never more decent than now, (besides that you are Ministers) you have cause to be mourners: Add: not to the other confusion of times, this of your garments; nor gratifie them so far as a shoe-latchet in your clothes, whose aim is to level and confound your calling with the meanest of the people: Although I placed heretofore no Religion in clothes and colours, yet now I almost think it piety to persevere in such a fashion, whose change would argue inconstancy, and so farre be irreligious, as it is acceptable to the erroneous, confirms them in their errors, and casts some shame upon the truth, both of our Ministry and our Church; In such a case a few grains of frankincense are not to be offered to any Idol. It was in ancient times thought an heavy punishment, for a Presbyter to be deposed from his degree and office, so as to be treated but as a Layman: O do not seek to deprecate, depose, or disguise your selves; hang not out the flags of your motly Coats, or pybald colours, as if you had taken from, or rendered up your orders to high shoes, and quitted that distinction you ancietly have from the vulgar; since you did not ordain your selves, but were consecrated by the Word, and authority of Christ; through the hands of those who had received power to send you in Christ's Name, into Christ's Harvest; why should you study or affect those mean palliations and miserable confusions, which are uncomely for men of holy gravity, learned constancy, and religious honour? Other men have dared much more in worse adventures, and more unwarrantable undertakings: You cannot adventure your many talents of learning, and ingenuous parts, your studies, labours, liberties, and lives in a safer way, or on a better account; than in that ship where Christ is imbarqued, and so many precious souls with him; you need no other policy entred to insnare you, than this, that you deal for Christ, as his Factions for soules, and Agents for that heavenly commerce between God and sinners.

Therefore:
Therefore hold fast your profession, so, as neither to be ashamed of; nor a shame to your holy calling and Ministry; whose honor depends not on faldous fancy, or vulgar novelty, but on divine Institution, and Catholick Succession; Let the soules of men and the purity of Religion, be then dearest to us, when they are grewne cheapest to others: Let our lives be strictest, when liberty is made a cloak to licentiousness; There will never need more true Ministers, than when every man shall be tolerated to be a Minister; that to true ones may be suppressed, and none but false encouraged: That the eyes of Duty and Conscience may lie upon none, either as Ministers, or hearers; as Pastor, or flock, to attend any holy publicke worship and service of God: which is the high way to Atheism, superstitition, confusion, any thing but the true Christian and reformed Religion. Abate not your labours, though men grudge, withdraw, and deny your wages; What can bee more glorious than to see you contentedly poore for Christs sake, and still continuing to make many rich; while you are exhausted and have nothing? imparting things spirituall, though you receive little or nothing of things temporall? this is after the pattern in the mount, after the example of divine munificence, where goodnesse is of free grace, and not of the reward or merit. Make any honest shift to live, but use no base shifts to leave your calling; Better your tongues cleave to the roofe of your mothers, than you shoud renounce your Ordination and Ministry; or cease to preach in that Name, while you have power, liberty, and opportunity; Nothing will become us Ministers better, than thread-bare coats, if we can but keep good consciences: Nothing will be sweeter, than dry morfels and howre hearbs, and a cup of cold water, (the Prophets portion) if we have but inward peace, and the love of Christs therewith.

It wasarticled against Saint Chrysostome, (when he was Bishop of Constantinople) by some of his envious enemies, as a matter of pomp and scandall, that he rode in the City upon an Asse, to ease his age. It will be lesse offence, when the world shall see holy Bishops and deferving Presbyters go on foot, and asses riding upon them; Princes (which Saint Jerome interprets Bishops) on foot, and servants on horseback; Though we be never so low, let us doe nothing below the dignity of our Ministry, which depends not on externall pomp, but inward power; the same faith, which Hewes to a true beleiver, the honor and excellency of Christs, sets forth also the love and reverence due to his true Ministers of the Gospell; who are in Christs stead, when they are in Christs work and way, and need not doubt of Christs and all good Christians love to them.
Exhortation of Ministers to Unity.

An high point of wisdome, and piety would be in all true Ministers, of what degree soever, would be to take the advantage of this Antipertifaffs; by the snow and salt, as it were, of papall and popular ambition, they should be the more congealed and compacted together into one body and fraternity: Having so many unjust enemies on every side, against every true Minister of this Church, whether Bishop or Presbyter; all prudence invites us to compose those unkinde jealousies, breaches and disputes which have been among us, because we own our selves, as brethren; among whom some may be elder in nature, or superior in authority without the injury of any: This subordination, if Scripture do not precisely command, yet it exemplarily propofeth; Reason advifeth; and Religion alloweth; and certainly Christ cannot but approve; the more, because the pride of Papall Antichrifts on one side, and the unrulinesse of popular Antichrifts on the other side studies to overthrow it, and are the most impatient of it. I know some mens folly will not depart from them, though they be brayed in a morter: But sober men will think it time to bury (as Constantine the Great burned) all unkinde disputes, breaches and jealousies, which have almost destroyed not onely the Government, but the very Ministry it self of this Church: No doubt, passions have darkened many of our judgements; earthly distempers have eclipsed our glory; secular and carnall divisions have battered our defences, discovered our weaknesse, and invited these violent assaults from enemies round about; that none is so weak, as to despaire of his malices sufficiency to doe us Clergy men some mischief; the most ratling Gosrips, the fillyeft shees, who are ever learning and never come to the knowledge of the truth, undertake, not only to be teachers, but to teach their teachers, as Tertullian observed; yea and to Ordain their Ministers; such (no doubt) as they do deserve, having such Preachers for their greatest punishments.

The kinde closing and Christian compoſing of passionate, and needless differences among learned, and pious Ministers, by mutual condescending about matters of sociall prudence, order and government to be used in the Church, (which have chiefly (if not onely) brought so great misgovernment upon us, in England) would be a great and effectual means to recover the happinesse of this Church, and the honour of the Miniftrey; which consi...
Exhortation of Ministers to Unity.

consists in an holy fraternity and godly harmony of love, no leffe than in truth of doctrine, and holynesse of manners; By our own leaks and rents we first let in these waters which have sunk us so low, that every wave rakes over us. No man, that is truly humble, wise, and holy, will be ashamed, to retract any error and transport, whereof he hath been guilty, and of which he hath cause to be most ashamed; Ingenious offers of fraternal agreement, and mutually condescending to each other had bene exceedingly worthy of the best Ministers both of the Episcopal, Presbyterian and Independent way, whose wisdome and humility might easily have reconciled and united the severall interests which they pretend to support, of Bishops, Presbyters, and Christian people. But who sees not that secular desigues, and civill interests have too much leavened the dissensions of many Ministers, though in the conclusion they have not on any side much made up their cake by the match? while Church men, Bishops, and Presbyters, had no such worldly concernments to engage them, they had no such disputes, and mutinies, as to the order and government of the Church; which no Conuexl, no particular Bishops, nor Presbyters, no one Church or Congregation of Christians began of themselves; but all by Catholic and undisputed consent conformed themselves to that order, which the Apostles and Apostolicall men left in common to the Churches in every place, most suitable to their either beginning or increasing, to their settling, or their settlednesse.

It is easie to see what Christ would have in the Church, as to extern order and policy, if Christians would look with a single eye at Christes ends. You may easilie see how the worlds various interests, (which are as hardly commixt with Christes, and true religion’s, as oil with water) serve themselves with Ministers tongues, pens, and active spirits; who should rather serve the Lord Jesus and his Church, in truth, simplicity, peace, and unity; without any adherences to secular policies, parties, and studies of sides; by which sudden and inconsiderate rowlings to and fro, (as foolish and fearfull passengers in a tottering boat) some Ministers of England have welnigh overturned the Vessel of this reformed Christian Church, which might easilie (as the most famous and flourishing Churches anciently were) have been uprightly balanced, and safely steered by a just fitness and proportion of every one in their place, either for Ministrisy, or Government, and Discipline; where of old the paternall presidency of Bishops stood at the helm; the grave and industrious Presbyters rowed, as it were, at the Oares; and the faithfull people, as the passengers kept all even, by keeping themselves in quietnesse, order, and due subjection. Nor was it wont in primitive times, to be asked of Princes, or people, how they would have
have the Church governed, or by whom; who should ordaine Preachers; or who should preach the Gospell, administer the Sacraments, confirm the baptized, censure the scandalous, and receive the penitent; These were mysteries proper to Christian Religion, and intrusted to the Pastors of the Church, at first: also conserved by them in the midst of hot persecutions from secular Magistrates, without any variations, save only such, as necessity of affaires and Christian prudence (yet in an orderly way) required and practised, as to some circumstantial; which was no more, than for a childe from his coats to come to breeches, or for the bark of a tree to increase, as the bulk and branches grow.

What humane passion then, and inconsideration hath any way wounded, wisdom and Christian compassion in Ministers of all forts should seek to cure; The wounds of the Church will commonly fester and gangrene, if Ministers stray, till Laymen take them to heart; nor is the hand of any of them so proper as them, who have occasioned most hurt: we Ministers ought to be the good Samaritans, and by first healing the deformed scars of our own scandals; the boiling Ulcers of our own passions; the gaping orifices of our own religious dissensions; our influence will be much more sovereign, and benvient to draw togetherness, and heal up the publick sores of the Church, and reformed Religion; when we appear fit for so holy and good a work, it may be God will put it into the heart of those in power, to call us forth, and encourage us to this happy understanding.

Consider with your selves, how much the men of this world are wiser than in their generations; you are commonly but the beaters of the bush for the mighty Nimrods of the world: what have Ministers got, yea what have you not lost (which wise men would have preserved) of credit, honour, comfort, or encouragement; while they helped to pull down the Sion of this Church? whose dust hath fallen into their own eyes, and besmeared their garments to a most uncanny deformity; Will you all leave this Sion thus in her dust, without any pity of her? Is it better she should be ever defolated, than your animosities laid aside, and your poor feuds reconciled? Such everlasting burnings become not mortal breasts; least of all heavenly hearts, such as Ministers should have: Plead no longer such a zeal for Christ, as over-lays charity and humility; or such a desire for Reformation, which produceth so great deformities; It is not so much a charity, as a justice for us Ministers to advise, to weep, to pray for the peace of our Jerusalem; for from the Prophets in great part evil is gone out into all the land; our cold or our hot fits, our luke-warmness, or our negligence, or our timorousness, have cast this Church and many poor souls into
Ministers speciall diligence now necessary.

into this lingering distemper, this almost incurable Quartane, which will never be cured, till we smell the Rose of Sharon; the sweet and celestial temperament of Christs fragrances; in all love and charity; in humility, meeknesse, kindness, forbearance, pity, and tenderneffe to each other.

Not onely all policy and honest prudence then, as to the recovery of Ministers credit and reputation, but all conscience and piety, as to the requisites of Gods glory, and charity, as to the dangers and necessities of peoples soules, require now, such double diligence of us, all, as may compensate any former failings, and shew the world how necessary a good, worthy Ministers are; who every way fit those places, and fill thofe carps, in which God and the Church have let them: It is high time for us to get beyond all cold formalities, superficial solemnities, popular complayings, covetous projects, secular ambitions; Penurious pains, fackler care, and indifferent tendance, will not be sufficient to cure those diseases, we have now to contend withall; which are ingenious to avoid all cure, subtil to elude all skill, cunning to increase their maladies, cruel to spread their infection, and fierce to destroy their Physitians. Moderate and indifferent industry will hardly at any time convert sinners, and save soules; They are now like harder metals, which melt not but in such a degree of heat; Least of all now, when error is adored for truth, sin and damnation it self are drefs'd up, and esteemed as a way to salvation; when belit self is by some courted for heaven, and chains of darkness counted liberty (like thofe Succubus and Empufas, which somemen are reported to have espoused and embraced for beautifull wives.)

There needs, now, besides preaching gifts, and oratorious breath, that vigor of grace; that spirit of zeal; that fervency of charity; that humble confancy; that magnanimoous meeknesse, which may make us Ministers unwearied in our studies, frequent and fervent in praying, oft in falling, attentively watching, tenderly weeping, charitably visiting, solidly instructing, and diligently examining, &c. In all wise and meek condescendings, even to bear with mens infirmities; to frustrate their passions; to receive their bullets and shot as upon Wool-sacks; to overcome their oppositions by something of a softer yielding: still beseeching them and intreating them, to be reconciled to God in Jesu Christ, when they are to us irreconcilable. All obstructions of private peevishnesse, passion, hard speeches, haughty carriage, rough demeanor; all fashion of disdain, revenge, and secular contentions, must be removed as uncomely, uncomfortable, noxious: That people may see the blood of Chriftoftening us; and the bowels of Chrif enhancing us, as brethren, as fathers, or mothers, as tender and carefull Nurifes in Chrif's family.
It is ever, and now most of all unseasonable (in so short and uncertain a moment, which is allowed us to preach, or people to hear, to learn, and to live in order to eternity) to exercise Christians in continuall disputes; to lead them in perplexed paths, full of thorns and thores; to waft their and our time in modern impertinencies; which will not proft a poor sinner, either living or dying. All times and paines is lost, which is not laid out in Catechizing, Preaching, and applying sound, wholesome, healing, saving necessary truths; which really mend both minde and manners: either laying the foundations in principles, or maintaining them in doctrines, or building proportionably upon them in practices and comforts: where the truths of faith bear up the practice of an holy life; and an holy life adorns the Articles of true faith; where the Creed and the Decalogue goe together: That besides the shewes of leaves in doctrines and opinions; there may appear goodly fruits of purity, justice, mercy, charity, patience, peaceableness, civil obedience, self-denyall, which are grown fo much out of fashion.

Alas! while poor people are amused with novelties, (as Larks with dancing glaffes): or picking up curiosities; or gazing at sublimities; or dubious in uncertainties; or intangled with subtlesties; as Deer in acorn time, they forget their food, grow lean and fall into divers snares and temptations; into many lusts and passions; yea into the grave and pit of destruction, whence there is no redemption. Many (as leaves from trees in Autumn) every day drop away: and dye in their mazes and labyrinths of Religion, by wearying themselves; in which they advance no more than birds in a cage, and blinde horses in a mill: whereas a true Christian should every day grieve to see himself nothing advanced in true holinesse, or solid knowledge: with grand steps he should be daily going onward and upward, with ample progresses and mighty increases, of sound knowledge, indisputable verities, unquestionable practices, of ly duties and heavenly conversation: (these are the steps by which holy men and women have ascended to heaven, and conquered the difficulties of salvation.) That thus all the world might bee themselves to see the happy improvements of true Christians beyond other men; and the inestimable blessing of true and excellent Ministers paines among the silliest and worst of men in the dissolutest and worst of times.

O let not us then of the Ministry stand still, and look on our own, and the Churches miseries (as the Leper, or mothers did in sieges) till their children and themselves grew black with famine: You that pretend to stand before the Lord of the whole world, and the King of his Church; you that bear the name of the most compassionate Redeemer, who shed his blood for his Church, and laid
Exhortation of Ministers to fervent Prayers.

down his life for his sheep; Doe you never hear in the sounding of your own bowels the tears, sighes, and tears, of infinite good Christians; nor the voice of this English Sion, lamenting and expecting pity, at least from Ministers? Is it worth thus much misery to root up Episcopacy, to set up Presbytery, and to undermine both with Independence? All which might be fairly compossed into a threefold cord of holy agreement: such as was in primitive times, between Bishops, Presbyters, and people; whose passions have now ravelled out peace by sad divisions, and weakened Religion by uncharitable contentions: Though Parliaments, and Assemblies, and Armies, and people, should be miserable comforters, palling by without regard and remorse; yea though some be stripping the wounded, and robbing this desolated Church; yet doe not you forsake her, now she is smitten of God, and despised of men: Is it nothing to you (O you that are more politicians, than Preachers) that passe by? Stand and see, if there be any sorrowes like the sorrowes of this reformed Church of England, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted her in the day of his fierce anger: It concerns no men more than Ministers to succour her, which hath received these wounds most-what in the house and by the hands of her friends; O give the Lord no rest, until he hath returned to this Church in mercy; if you can by counsels and prayers reform nothing in the publique, yet let nothing be unreformed in your private; if you must be laid aside, as to the peculiar office of Ministers, yet you may mourn and pray the more in secret; That the Lord would breath upon us, with a Spirit of Truth and Peace; of love and holy union; of order and humility; whereby none having any pride or ambition to govern, every one may be humbly disposed to be governed: For the great crisis of all Ministers distempers is in this; (not what Truths we shall beleive; what doctrine we shall preach; what holyneffe we shall act; but,) who shall govern? whether Bishops, or Presbyters, or people? yea the Keyes of some mens pretended power hangs so at the peoples girdle, that it is too near the apron-strings even of menchanicks, and silly women.

When a right temper of Christian humility and love shall be restored to every part, then will the spirits of Religion be recovered, and aptly diffused into every member of this Church; which blessed temperament, as Christian Churches enjoyed in their primitive, and florid strength; nor is it lefse necessary now, in their more aged, and so decayed, constitution; O let not after ages say, the Ministers of England were more butchers, then Surgeons: That they were Physicians of no value; neither curing themselves, nor others; If any of us have (not by malice so much as mistake) given stronger phiyick; and more graine of violent drugs, than the constitution of
of this or any well reformed Church can well bear, let us not be lefle forward, to apply such cordials, lenitives, antidotes, and restoratives, of love, moderation, concession, and equanimous wise-
dome, as may recollect the disipated and re-inforce the wafted spir-
ts, which yet remain in this reformed Church, and the Minis-
try of it; On which the enemies round about do already look
with the greedy eyes of ravens and vultures, expecting when its lan-
guishing spirits shall be quite exhausted, and its fainting eyes
quite clofed; that fo they may draw away the pillow, and re-
maining supports, of civill protection from under its head; and
violently force it to give up the ghost: that the reformed Religion,
and Ministry of this Church may beat length quite cast out, and
buried with the burial of an Afe; that neither the place of re-
formed Bishops, nor reformed Presbyters, nor reformed people, may know
them any more in these British Islands.

In the laft place therefore, I humbly crave leave to remind those
that are in highest places and power, who are thought no flight or
fofallow Statesmen; That, if neither piety to God, nor conscience
of their duty, while they undertake to govern, nor charity to
mens soules both in present and after ages, nor zeal for the re-
formed Religion, move them as Christians; nor yet juilece and
common equity, to the encouragement and preservation of fo many
learned and godly men, the lawfull Ministers of this Church in
their legall rights, and liberties; nor yet common pity, and charity to
relieve fo many pious men, and their families: If (I fay) none
of these should fway them, as men, or Christians, (the leaff of
which should, and I hope greatly will) Yet worldly policy and
right reafon of State seems to advise the preservation and efte-
blifhment of the (fo much fhaken) reformed Religion here in England,
which hath ftill deep root and impressions in the minds and af-
fections of the moft, and beft people in this Nation: Nor can
this be done by more idoneous means, than by giving publique favour,
encouragement, and eftablishment to the true and ancient
Minifters, as to its main support; and to godly Ministers as its head-
moft Professors.

If it be not absolutely necessary; yet sure it is very convenient, in
order to the quiet and satisfaction of mens mindes, (who gene-
rally think themselves most concerned in matters of Religion)
either to confirm and reftore to its prifline honouur, order, and sta-
ibility, the ancient Ministry of the Church of England, (which I
have proved to be the onely true fucceffion of divine authority.)
or else wholly to remove it; and to set Religion upon fome
other bafis: For neither the reformed Religion, nor its Ministry,
can either long, or safely, or comfortably ftand in fo tottering and
mouldering
The preservation of the Ministry necessary.

moulder of apostacy; like the walls of some great old fabric, or ruinous Cathedral, swelling out, and threatening to fall. It were better to take it down, than to hazard its dangerous breakings, and precipitious tumblings; Scratches in Religion doe soon fester, and easily turn to Gangrenes, which must either be speedily healed, or discreetly cut off.

It were high presumption for one to advise, who professeth his ignorance, in State Policies: yet common prudence fheews, this to be the high way, and most compendious pave to publique peace. Namely, 1. The setting of the reformed Religion in this Church of England, and its publique Ministry, in comely government, compe- tent maintenance, and holy succession. 2. The confirming, and if need be, explaining, or enlarging the Articles of the Church of England, in the main fundamentals of Religion, as Christian and reformed, both in things to be believed, and practifed. 3. The restoring of that holy power and ancient exercise of Discipline to the Church, both in privater Congregations, and in publique associations: which may both carry on true knowledge, piety, and charity in Ministers and people: Also recover the sacred Or- dinances of Christ, and publique duties of Religion to their primitive purity and dignity; which have been infinitely abased by Laymens policies, Ministers negligences, and vulgar insolencies; These would keep a fair course and form of Christian peace and ho- lineffe in the publique, a midst leffer differences; and no leffe satisfie, than oblige every sober minded Christian; whose good examples have great influence on the generality of people.

But if the vulgar rudeneffe, deformity, and inconsistency, be once taught, (by being tolerated) to flight, and scorn their Min- ists, and in them all holy things, and true Religion; Either beleiving (as they are prone to doe) that their Ministers are not invested by any due and divine authority in that Office and Mini- ftry, any more than themselves are; nor are affifted by any special grace and blessing from God; if they suspect that civill Powers doe set Divines at nought, and regard them no more, than as so many pretenders, falsaries, and intruders: How willingly will the minds of common people, (whom nothing but Conscience, or the Sword keeps in awe and order) embrace any thing that makes to- wards laxation of duty to God, and observance to men? No water is more easily diffused, or more naturally strives, by its fluid na- ture to overbear, whatever bounds pen it up, or refrain it from wafting it self: Nor are such tempers slack, (where occasion tempts them) to revenge by their riots, all former restraints cast upon them, by any men, that sought to fet limits, either of power, or piety to their lufts and passions.

To
To avoid which rude and irreligious extravagancies of common
people, all wise Governors have still countenanced the publique ex-
ercises of that Religion, which they owned and established as best;
*Adding all civil reputation, favour, and authority to the use of
it, and chiefly to those, who were its prime professors and Ministers;
who were ever *unviolable in their publique officiations; generally
esteemed, as sacred, both for the protection they had from men,
and the institution from divine power and wisdom: Which po-
licy was not more wisely carried in all false and seignied religions,
than justly and most conscientiously to be observed, as it ever hath
been by all worthy and noble minded Christians, (either Princes
or States) in that, which we hold to be, and profess, as the
only true, Christian and reformed Religion: whose Oracles,
Doctrines, institutes, offices, authority, and ministry have their
original, not from man, but from the only wise and true God; who,
first sent his Prophets, and servants; after that his Son (the Lord
Jesus Christ) to be not onely a fulfiller and establishe, but al-
so a Preacher of righteousneffe to mankinde; whose preaching,
Prophetick, or Ministeriall office, (as to extern and visible admini-
strations) the holy order and due succieon of Ministers doe sup-
ply; and in the same power succeed by his speciall mission and
appointment in the Church.

apud eos suis honore Drudides s. Nam fere de omnibus controversiis publicis privatissime constiutit.
Plut. Rudens. *Luis homo est tanta confidentia, Qui sacerdotem undecat violare? At magnis
sum malo suo facit hercle. Liv. dec. r. l. 2. Sacrificus Rex sacrorum deicatur. Constatine the
Great, always received the Orthodox and godly Bishops and Presbyters with all respect and venera-
tion. Euseb. in vita Conf. Ministry of the Gospell was called Deificus ordo, Amb. Seis. 75-
epi. Clem. Al. 3. 1. Meat. 36 & 37. Or. 1. Ruusenda ipsis Angelis spir-
itus Ministrum. Ber. Columna Ecclesiae Id. Honor sacerdottii. firmamentum imperii. Tacit. de
Jud. 3. 4.

Whose most sacred Mysteries, for infinite wisdom; for inestimable
mercy; for unparalled love; for holy precepts; for divine ex-
amples; for precious promises; for ancient and undoubted Propheyes;
for exact fulfillings; for apt institutions; for suitable Ministry; for
beautifull order; for blessed comfort; for sweet peace, and mu-
tual charity (which are, or ought to be) among the true pro-
teflers of it, infinitely exceeds all the wisdome, desigues, defires,
and thoughts of all those, that ever pretended to any Philosophy,
Religion, vertue, sanctity, or felicity. All which come far short,
as of the inward comfort of mens consciences, so of that outward
beauty, peace, and order, which doe most bleffe humane societies;
which bonds of publique tranquillity, all true and unpragmaticke Ministers of
the Gospell of peace, doe most effectually lay (in Christs Name) up-
on.
Light of Nature against debasing of the Ministry.

on men; in which regard, of all ranks of men and orders, they deserve best of mankind, where ever they live; while they keep within those Evangelical bounds, that holy and humble temper, which becomes them; and which is proper to the Spirit of the Gospel.

Constantine the Great writes: The greatest safety or danger to any State comes by Religion; if the reverence of it be weakened and honour abated, dangers attend: if by Lawes and authority it be fecked and preserved, great blessings follow, &c. So that no men seem more to fight against their own peace, than those that suffer the ancient Minisflyy and true Ministers of Christ to be destroyed, or disregarded in any Christian Nation; which will be interpreted a fighting against God, and an opposing Christ Jesus; who as he is the only true rock, on which the Church is to be built, astro internal comfort, and eternall happinesse; so he hath regulated it as to external order, beauty, and harmony; and this not by every unskillfull hand, that hath a minde to be meddling; but by such, as he hath appointed to be tried, approved, and rightly ordained to the work of edifying the Church in truth and love: This Galilean must overcome: Christ will no doubt prove as a stumbling stone; so a rock of ruine and offence, to all those that dash against him, in this Ordinance of his holy Ministry, which, though it seem small, and contemptible to those, that think themselves Grandees, (in power, and policy) yet as it was not cut out by humane hands, so it will be a very burdensome stone to all, that think to lift it out of the way, and lay it aside, from being an holy function, and divine institution.

I think therefore (under favor) that it will be not the least point of wisdom, and policy, in those who by exercising magistratick power stand most accountable to God and man, for the support of the Ministry; to harken to, and follow that grave counsel; * Take heed what you doe to these men, who are the true Ministers of Jesus Christ, the messengers of the most high God, who preach to you the way of salvation. For if their function, mission, and Ministry be from Christ, (which I have proved, and those who can hardly doubt, who are so much inlightened by Scripture, as some are, who may yet be blinded by secular interests) it shall prevail, though it be in the way of being persecuted: Humane malice may a while oppose; but it shall not quite blow out, quench or smother those burning and shining lights of the Church: Which it would doe with no less detriment to the Church, and State; than if it should extinguish the flame, light, and lustre of the Sun in the Firmament; * Nor are those ordinances of heaven, and that Covenant God hath made in Nature, more

* Vide Jer. 33: 20, which Prophesy is clear for a constant and immutable Ministry in the Church of Christ.

necessary
True Ministers under Christ's special care.

necessary, or leas durable, than are these of holy Ministrations, and Evangelicall Ministry, which God hath appointed for Christ in the Church; It is but little, and with far less comfort, that we see, of God in the creature; than what we see of him in Christ; nor are the beams of the Sun so glorious, or necessary, as these of the Sun of righteousness, which are diffused by his Ministers; which are as his wings, by which he hath moved into all parts of the earth, and his voice hath been heard to the ends of the world.

And truly the most judicious Christians, who are able to discern the day of God's visitation, do look upon this shaking and battery made by some men, against the publique office, and authority of the Ministry of this reformed Church of England, to be nothing else, but the effects of those counsels and plots, which are always contriving by the powers of darkness, and the gates of hell, against God, and Christ, against the Orthodox Faith, and purest Churches; And however they shall never prevail to destroy the true Christian reformed Religion, in all places; yet they may occasion its ebbing, and receding from a negligent, wanton, and ungrateful people, who love Apostasies, and increase back-studios; as many in England seem to do: It may provoke the Lord to transplant the Gospel to some other Nation, which shall bring forth better fruits; and leave our houses desolate, who brought forth such sour grapes, as these are, wherewith, after so many hundred years, some men now seek to requite the Lord and his faithful Ministers in this Church; what can indeed be expected, but some fatal Apostasie, either to gross superstitition, or Atheistical liberty, or heathenish barbarity? which is high and bold, and even at the dore; when once the divine honour, and succession of the Evangelicall Ministry is ousted, and overthrown; for what else can follow, when people shall either have no true Ministers; or be taught to believe that they need not any; and have no more cause to regard them that are such by profession, than so many Mountebanks; whom no man is bound in reason, honour, conscience, or civility to hear, obey, maintain, or reverence, as having no higher mandate, mission, or authority, than from their own mindes, or peoples humors?

To prevent which direfull sin, shame, and mischief; to give some stay to the fears, and life to the hopes of thousands, besides (and better then) my selfe, I have taken this boldness upon me (by God's direction and assistance, (as I trust,) though unknown, and not much considerable to the many excellent Christians, which are yet in this Church, and least of all to those in power, whom the matter most concerns,) with all due respects, all Christian charity, and humility to present to the publique view of all those (whom this

Mal. 4.
Rom. 10.18,

Gildas de exist. Erit. enquires the sacrilegious injuries and neglect of holy men and holy duties before those miseries.

Isai. 1, 51
Dec. 32.6

To prevent which direfull sin, shame, and mischief; to give some stay to the fears, and life to the hopes of thousands, besides (and better then) my selfe, I have taken this boldness upon me (by God's direction and assistance, (as I trust,) though unknown, and not much considerable to the many excellent Christians, which are yet in this Church, and least of all to those in power, whom the matter most concerns,) with all due respects, all Christian charity, and humility to present to the publique view of all those (whom this

16.

The preservation of the honour of the Ministry most worthy of all excellent Christians.
Blessing of the Ministry preserved.

this subject of the Ministry and reformed Religion doth concern, these most sad and serious thoughts of my heart, which are not busied about Prophetick obscurities, or Apocalyptick uncertainties; which may please melancholy fancies, and abufe curious readers; but about a matter moft clear, from Scripture; moft necessary, to the being of any true Church in this world; to the comfort of every true Christian; to the succession of Religion in after ages. None of which can be kept in any way of Gods revealed will, and ordinary providence, but only by a right and authoritative Ministry; which carries a relation and bond of conscience with it, between Ministers and people; which cannot be had, unless we still keep to the pattern, which Christ hath set us, and the Church of Christ in all ages followed; without any falsity; though not wholly without some infirmity.

Nor is there any thing, wherein men of the highest power and excellency can shew themselves more worthy of the name of Christians, than in their endeavouring effectually to restore, and establish the due authority and succession of the Ministry; by being patrons, encouragers, and protectors of all able, and peaceable Ministers and their calling: Whose honour is Gods, and will redound to theirs, whom God shall so far bless, as to make them instruments of so noble, and most Christian a work; But they had need to be Heresieles, men of most divine virtue, and resolution, that encounter the many headed hydras, and various monsters, which are at present set against the Ministry of this Church.

What ever censures any other actions of men may ly under (which God will judge), and of which they may have more cause at last to repent, than to boast) yet this (the vindicating and establishing of the true Ministry and its authority) they shall have of all things the least cause to repent of. Nor (I hope) will any worthy men give me (or any other Minister) cause to repent, that I have presumed to become an humble sifter, and a faithfull Monitor, in a matter of so great and so religious concernment; yea, peradventure I may find favour, (which God can only give in the eyes of men) as Abigail did in Davids; who blessed God for her searable diverting of him from that excess of vengeance, to which immoderate passion had tempted him; It is not safe to treat those as enemies, which are Gods friends, and friends to mens soules; It was an action onely fit for Saul, (whom God had forsaken) to destroy the Priests of the Lord, as enemies and traitors. If any consecrated vessels of the Temple should have foil, or decayes on them, yet none but Nebuchadnezzars, Belshazzars, or Antiochus would quite break them in pieces, or melt them, and prophan them; No time can be too long, no counsel too deliberate, before.
before Christians put so severe a purpose in execution, or gratifie any party without hearing all sides; Nor should they, that disadvice from it, upon sober, and good grounds, be less acceptable to men in power; than any of those, that prompt and incite to so hardy and hazardous an adventure.

This gives me some hope if not of acceptance, yet at least of pardon, for either that prolixity (for which none can doe greater penance than I have) or for that plainness, by which I may exercise any mans patience, who vouchsafe to read this my Apologetick defense: wherein I have not forgot, that, as it is written in a busy and pragmatick age, so possibly it may fall into the hands of some perfons, whose employments admit of little leisure, for such long discourses, or tedious addresses: But, as others in reading may be prone too much to remember their momentaries; so, I in writing have chiefly considered my owne, and others everties. I have weighed with myself, how important a business God had laid in this upon my heart; and my heart upon my hand; The vehemency and just zeal for which, hath still dictated to my pen both this spurre and excuse; That in a Cause of so great consequence, it were not only a sin for me to say nothing, but to say little; lest shortness of speech should detract from the worth of the matter; Weak shadows would argue faint flames; either a dimness in that light, or a chilness in that heat, which ought to attend a business, which (to my judgement) seems of infinite importance to present, and future times; So precious a Jewell, as the true Ministry of the glorious Gospell of Jesus Christ, was not to be set with an unhandsome foil, or by a light and perfunctory hand. I know small fires and short puffs, will not serve to make great irons malleable; No Divell is harder to be unmuzzled and detected, than that which conceals itself under Anglican masks, which some weak and credulous soules think a fin, to lift up, or to suspect. But we are not ignorant of Satan's devises; No droffe, or masse of corruption is more untamable, and unseparable from mans nature than that of sacrilegious enmity against Christ, the Gospell, and the Ministry while they have anything to lose.

I am sure, whatever we or our posterity of this Nation may want, we cannot want Christ, or the true light of the Gospell, in its power and authority, without being a most unhappy Nation; To which, if the preservation of a learned, godly, and authoritative Ministry in a due ordination and divine succession, (such as was of late and still is, (though much wasted and weakened in England) be not thought necessary; truly no more will the Scriptures, nor
the Sacraments, nor the peace of Conscience, nor the pardon of
sin, nor the saving of souls are long be thought necessary; Nor
nor the excellency of the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; whose
Name and Worship will shortly be, either shamefully abused,
scurrilously despised; (as now it is by many) yea and cleane
forgotten, by the profane, stupid, sensual, and Atheistical hearts
of men; unless there be some men, whose special calling and com-
mission, from God and man, shall both enable and ordain them to
preach and administer holy things in Christ's Name; whose duty and con-
science so commands them to serve God and his Church, that they
cannot be silent, or negligent without sin.

To expect that arbitrary, and occasionall Preachers will doe
the work of Christ, and the Church; is as vain, as to thinke, that
passengers or travellers will build, and plant, and sow, and fight
for men in their civil occasions; The men of this world, will
finde many other employments of greater hoitude, credit and content,
than to preach the GospeL with the crosse of poverty, and
contempt upon them; (which is ever crucifying the world, and must
expect to be crucified by the world;) It's rare to finde any gene-
eration of men that are truly favourers of Ministers, or the Gospel;
therefore they are ever grudging at all cost laid out on Christ's
account, as lost and going beside their Mill; who had rather bee
savers, than saved by him; Nor is the opinion, which sober men
generally retain of the excellency and necessity of Christian Religion,
in order to their salvation, sufficient to keep it up to a constancy
and succession, without a true powerful and authoritative Ministry:
For we see that, although nothing concerns men more, than to
believe there is a God, (the supreme good) of whose goodness,
bounty, power, and protection we have every moment need, use and experience; and upon whose mercy our sinful mortality can
(only) with any reason depend, both living and dying for our
cernall welfare; yet many (yea most of men) are ready to run
out to Atheism, and to live without God in the world; unless they
have frequent and solemn remembrances; (besides their owne
hearts) to put them in minde in their dependance on, and duty to
God; In like manner, although nothing should be more welcome to mankind, (because nothing more necessary,) than the
news of a Saviour for sinners; yet the bitter root of unbeliefe, and
many sensual distractions, which in mens hearts and lives, are
prone to entartain nothing with leffe liking, than the hearing
and obeying of this holy GospeL though applied to them in the
best and winningest matter, that humane abilities can attaine:
Nature and Reason teach there is a God, and no miracle was ever
wrought.
The excellency and the necessity of this Subject.

wrought to convert Atheists; but the mystery of Salvation by Jesus Christ crucified is by no light of nature or reason attainable, and needed both miracles at the first planting, and a constant Ministry for the continuing of it in the world.

If then men be naturally so much aliens from the life of God, and so much enemies to the cross of Christ; it is not like they will ever be so good natured, as seriously to undertake the constant task, care, and toil of preaching to others; especially, when they have no call to it, but their owne, or others pleasure; no conscience of it, as a divine Office, and duty; no promise, or hope of divine assistance, or blessing in it; no thanks for it, or benefit by it, either from God or man: Alas, these warm fits and glea
es of novelty, curiosity, popularity, pride, wantonness, self-opinion, and self-seeking; (which seem to be in some men, who count themselves gifted, prophetick, specially call'd, and inspired:) these will soon damp to coldness and deadness, when once either their design, which is bad; or their weakness, which is great; or their folly, which is grosse, shall be manifest to themselves, and to others, as it is already to very many, good Christians; who finde, that all the frolick and activity of those men, is but helping forward the pragmatick policies of those, who study to ruine this, and all reformed Churches.

For if once true and able Ministers be cryed down, cast out, and cut off as to right succession; the true Religion, as Christian, and reformed too, cannot (without a miracle) continue, but must needs be overrunne with brutifh ignorance, damnable errors, and barbarous manners; which are already prevailed much in many places, partly for want of able Ministers, and partly by the peoples supine neglect of publique duties, and despifing their true Ministers, under pretence of engraining to new bodies, and adhering to new gifted Teachers and Conventicles; which we find breed up few or none in knowledge, or piety; but only transplant proficients out of other mens labours, and nurseries: the mean time the younger sort generally runne out to ignorance, and the elder to what liberties they most affect; for want of that seced Ministry, order, and government, which ought in Religion, and reason of State to be both estab-
lished and encouraged.

For my owne particular, I have obtained all I designed by this defence; if I may but put all excellent Christians, and those chiefly (whom it most concerns,) in minde of that, which I thinke they cannot forget, or neglect without great imprudence, as well as sin: nor will any man be excuseable, who doth not with his best en-
deavours promote it. No private ends, or sinister passion of envy, covetousness, or ambition; no fear, or contempt of any men,
hath any ingredient in this piece, (however, in other things, no man is more prone to discover how weak and sinfull a creature he is, without God's grace) I have nothing of private interest, for profit, or honor, to crave, or expect from great or good men; Indeed they have little or nothing left to tempt men with: I have more then I can merit, or well account for; yea I have enough; through the bounty of God, and the blessing of one (to me) Inestimable Jewell: whose virtuous upfire both beautifies and enricheth my life, to an honorable competency, and a most happy tranquillity, whose every way most over-meriting merits have deserved, as much as can be, to be consecrated by my pen to an eternity of gratitude and honour.

I have seen so more than enough of the world's vanity, madness, and misery; that I do not desire any thing more, than to spend the remainder of my life in a contented privacy to the glory of God, the honour of this Church, and the welfare of posterity; If I were offered the choice of all wishes, and the fulfilling of them in this world; I would desire nothing, next that justice which is the conservatrix of all civil peace and society, but this, That such as are able, would so far consider the honour of God, and the welfare of the Church of England; as to become Patrons, and encouragers of good learning, and the reformed Religion; and to this purpose, that they would establish that holy Discipline, right order, ancient government, and divine succession of able Ministers, which ought to be in the Church of Christ.

In reference to the generall function, and fraternity of whom, I cannot but intent, and offer thus much at least as I have done, which cannot be to any good man's detriment, or the Publick's injury: For it is not a pleasing for a restitution of those honours, lands, jurisdicitions, and dignities, which were by pious donation, and devout lawes appropriated to that profession: I know how vain and unseasonable a motion it were to crave the restoring of honors, goods, and estates of those who are now almost reduced to petition for their liberties and lives. (It is nobler (since God will have it so) for Clergy men to want those blessings with content, than to enjoy them with so much envy and anger; as in this age seems inseparable from Bishops and Ministers in any worldly prosperity.) Nor is it a challenging of those immunities, and privileges, which the lawes Imperial, and National, every where among Christians indulged to the Clergy; we must learn to think it freedom enough, if we may have leave but to preach and practice the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which is our duty and dignity; we must esteeme it a great privilege now to be but exempted from vulgar-rivalry and mechanick infolency; which dares not onely to intrude into Ministers
The Author's Sympathy.

Ministers Pulpits, but to pull them out by unheard of outrages; not suffering the Church to be their Sanctuary. We claim not exemption from civil magistrates Court-constituences, and jurisdictions, (as was of old in many cases) our aim is to do all things, as shall feare no men to be spectators; nor our enemies to be our judges: Nor can we have so full and desirable a revenge on our enemies, as to doe well; who are never more sorry, than to see any true Minister live unblamably and commendably. We dare not crave to be eased of publique taxes, either in whole, or in part; Notwithstanding (for the most part) our charges are great, our livings small, and but for life; yea and but the wages for our wars and works; (while we serve in a better Militia:) It matters not what our secular burdens be, so as we may make the Gospell anyway lesse burthensome, or more welcome to our hearers: We urge not that common liberty which we have; and our joint interest in the publique civill welfare, as men; while yet we are made uncapable, and the onely men of any calling that are excluded from all publique votes, counsels, or influence; when yet any trade may invade our calling, and usurp our Miniftry: It is well, if wee may be sufferd to be of God's Counsel; and permitted to acquaint others with it, in order to their salvation; our ambition is, so to live, that the diminutions, contempt, and poverty, cast upon the Minifteriall order (as to all secular priviledges or interests) may be no disparagement to our function, any more than it was to Primitive Bishops and Presbyters; who by their constant patience and humility gave greatest Testimony to the truth of the Gospell: whom, that their preaching moved not, their patience did. Yet, it will be little to the honour of this Nation, which as yet professeth the Christian Religion, to treat the Ministers of Christ after the rate, that Diocletian, or Maximinus, or Julian did; or those primitive persecutors, either heathens, or hereticks; or as the Mahometans at this day doe; under whom, it is a favour to tolerate any Christian Bishops, or Preachers, or Professors, among whom, even the remaining Embers of Christianity are almost raked up and buried, under the oppressions, poverty and barbarity used against them and their Ministers. Nothing hath a deeper and sharper sense upon my soule, than when I see, not onely the great and heavy distresses, which already have, and will further fall on many, and most of my betters and brethren; (who as learned, godly, and ingenious men, merit something at least of compassion;) but, chiefly, when, by foresight of future times, I consider, not without grief and horror, the great decayes, if not utter vassations, of the reformed Religion; and of that true piety, (which
Deprecation of offence from worthy Christians.

such hath heretofore so flourished in England) through the want of true, able and authoritative Ministers, all those inundations of ignorance, error, superstition, and confusion will certainly flow, which all good Christians would most deprecate both from God and man; my own, and other men’s serious sense of all which, I shall much grieve to find either unacceptably, or unsuccessfully expressed in this Apologetick defence; which is humbly presented to the Christian candor, and submitted to the judgement of all those excellent Christians, whom it most concerns, and to whom it is directed; the least of whom I would not willingly offend.

Beseeming them in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to accept in the spirit of meekness and love, what I have written (I hope) as becomes a Christian, and a Minister of the Gospell in this reformed Church of England; Also to cover with the veil of charity, what ever infirmities may appear, as in a frail and sinful man; who knowing, that I had chiefly to contest with some men, that are wise in their own conceit, thought it a part of wisdom, in its season to answer them, according to their folly. And when I considered, that these Antiministerial spirits, if they fear God, yet they seem little to reverence men, either in the boary heads of pious antiquity declaring its judgement in the writings of the Fathers, Canons of Councils, and histories of the Church; or in the learned judgement of those excellent Authors of later edition, (who are all against them.) It hath made me the more sparing in so clear and confessed a cause, to cite their infinite Testimonies: My intent being, neither to make this Apology a flag of ostentation, for great reading: nor yet to crowd up and another these men, meerly with numbers of names and quotations, (which is very easie) but rather to breath upon them with the breath of life, and to convince them with Scripture, and right reason: which may serve to meet with any in the ordinary rodes of rigid Separatists, Papists, and Socini ans; as for Seekers, Enthusiasts, Seraphicks, and Ranters; they commonly fly like Night-ravens and Scratches, so much in obscurities, that I can hardly see them, though I oft hear their ominous voices portending utter darkness, after their evening fulgurations and flashes: when I meet with any of these, I thought it my duty, and honour not to give them way; though indeed I know nothing probable to conquer such obstinate passions, to confute such proud ignorance, or to curb such wanton liberties, as these unruly spirits pretend to, but only the hand of God in sickness, poverty, terror, and impiosity: A little winter of affliction will easily kill all those vermine of opinions, which are bred in a summers toleration, through health, plenty, successes, preferments; and which feife at length the very heads and hearts of men.
The Author's Resolution against passionate Repliers.

If any Christian, through mere simplicity, and honest credulity, have erred; not daring to take the hundred part of that confidence to maintain Truth, or to assert worthy Ministers, and the right way of the reformed and Christian Religion, which others doe, to broach, and abet their desperate errors and calumnies: I hope I have (as my purpose is) offered to those well meaning Souls, in all plainness, and charity, what may redeem them from those many false, and erratical fires, which seek to seduce them, from their true Ministers, whom the light of right reason, and Scripture, and experience will shew them, as much as to be loved, honoured and esteemed, as ever any Ministers of the Gospel were to any Christians in any Church, since the Apostles time.

If any rude and injurious detractors, being over grown with proud and presumptuous flesh, instead of healing, rise to insolent humor, and intolerable inflammations, rayling, defaming, decrying, and speaking all manner of evil falsely against worthy Ministers, and their calling, being resolved, and having vowed, as the forty men against Saint Paul, quite to destroy them; The corrosives or burnt alum here and there sprinkled on the pliafer of this Apology is purposely to meet with, and to eat out that proud and dead flesh, which may be in their corrupted minds, and benumbed consciences. The sober Christian must not think, that every one that makes a soure face or wry mouth, or wincheth at this Apology, or passeth a fierce, flight, or scurrilous answer upon it, or its author, is presently hurt or injured by me, or it, farther than he whose bones are broken, is hurt by one that strives to set them; or he that hath ulcerated fores, is by him that seeks to search and heal them. These men I must needs offend as to their displeaser: I did design it; I ever shall offend them, if I will defend this Truth; It is my duty, and charity, by displeasing them, to doe them good: Apologetic diseases are incurable, till sense be restored; some men are benumbed, and past feeling; I cannot live, or dye in peace, if I should hold my peace, when I ought to rebuke, and with all authority, (because with Truth and good conscience; in the name of Christ, and of all my brethren) the intolerable vanity, ignorance, pride, arrogancy, and cruelty of those, who have set up themselves above, and against all those, that are the ordained, reformed, and faithfull Ministers of this, or any other Christian Church; In whom they lift to finde nothing but faults, and insufficiencies; while they boast of their own rare accomplishments; which are no where to be found, but in their proud swelling words, by which they lie in wait to deceive the simple and unstable foules.

I could no longer bear their insolent Pamphlets, their intolerable prattises.
The Authors resolution against passionate repliers.

...their uncharitable projects, against the glory of Christ, and the happiness of this reformed Church, and Nation; It grieved me to see so many shipwrecked souls; so many tossed to and fro, who are floating to the Romish coast; so many overthrown faiths; so many willing and affected Atheists; so many cavilling Sophisters; so many wasted comforts; so many scurrilous and ridiculous Saints; so many withered graces; so many feared consciences; so many satirical Christians; so many causeless triumphings, of mean persons, over learned, grave, and godly Ministers; I was troubled to behold so many fears, yet so much silence, so many sighs and sorrows, yet so much dejection, and oppression of spirits, such oversights, in those men, whom it becomes in a spirituall warfare to encounter with beasts and unreasonable men, as being sure to overcome at last; Therefore (among others) I desire, this apology may be a monument of my perfect abhorrence and publice protestation against all evil counsels, and violent designs used against this reformed Church, its Religion, and Ministry: when posterity shall see the sad effects of some mens agitations. I expect no acceptance from any men further, than I may doe them good: Such as refuse to be healed by this application, probably their smart will provoke them to petulant replies, which as I cannot expect from any sober and serious Christian; so to the wantonness of others, who are woeful wasters of paper and inke, I shall never have leisure to attend; I have better employment, where to I humbly devote the short remnant of my precious moment; even to the service of Christ, of this Church, and of all those excellent Christians in it; to whose favour this sudden Apeologick defence is humbly dedicated, in the behalf of the Ministry of this Church of England, by their humblest servant in the Lord

I. G.
# A Table of the chief heads handled in this
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FINIS.
Christian Reader; these and some other Errata's have escaped the care used in Printing; and are, against the Authors and Printers will, left, as exercises of thy judgment and candor in reading and amending.

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Sir,—Will you allow me to draw the attention of those interested (and who are not in the present proceedings at Lambeth, to the work that has been done by Mr. Littleton, in the course of the last 20 years, in which the Eastward Position comes in, which the Eastward Position...
practice: 'Predestination,' he said, 'should and ought to be preached in every sermon, and in every place, before all congregations, as the only doctrine of salvation; and they that granted a truth in it, and would not have it everywhere preached, as well as they that denied it, were enemies to God and the eternal predestination.'

The same sentence he pronounced on them who judged it—as Keats did—a high and secret mystery fitter for the schools and universities, where the auditories were learned, than discussion in a rural district. Having thus set the pastor to rights, he proceeded to the flock, haranguing on the enormity of those women who accompanied the processions in Rogation Week—an obscene derivation from the feast of Bacchus—and shamelessly said Amen to the curse on removers of a neighbour's landmark. This was, it may be supposed, a trial of patience. Keats, and many another like him, were exposed to this treatment from a man whose insufficiency might provoke the retort of Petruchio. But he was still more galled by a check from one who could claim some authority over him. The Dean of Bocking liked his regularity no better than the licensed preacher: his use of the surplice displeased that dignitary, and his mode of reading prayers: and he, with his brethren, were charged by the Dean at his visitation 'not to turn his face towards the high altar in service saying. Keats at last could bear this system of contradiction no longer. He wrote to the archbishop's almoner that he was quite willing to disuse the surplice, to stop

**January 14, 1876.**

Amen's, etc., but earnestly requested a sight of the primate's articles, and an answer whether he should obey them or the annually varying injunctions of the dean. The conclusion is not given by Strype, but it is not needed to point the moral of the tale."

A series of choice bits from the book would be well worth extracting and reprinting.

G. W.
January 14, 1876.

more unpleasant household work, and the
agreed: the person's employ would be to do the

important to persons who, having no
and, moreover, it would have been a season

thing so harsh and absurd. If the scheme

have ventured even to dream of any

have ventured to clean houses and books as if they

employed a lad for an hour or two in the

some idea of attempting to tax people who

that the influx does not hour or have bad,

Police Court on Wednesday, it would appear

From a conversation at the Lambeth

by a section of the Churchmen.
High Allan

and 1564 was a wonderful
few weeks!