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T H E

FREEHOLDER'S

POLITICAL CATECHISM.

Salus Populi Suprema Lex, esto.



DUBLIN:

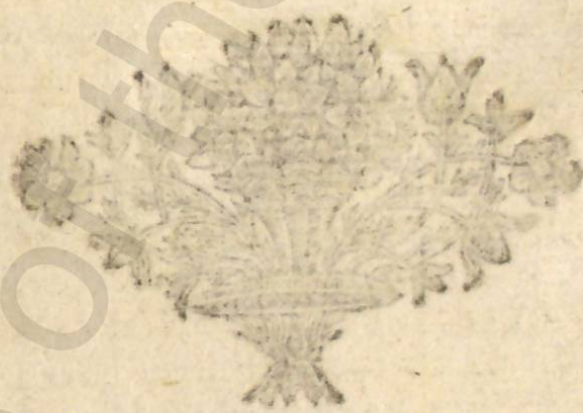
Printed for T. MOORE Bookfeller in Dame-
street, near Crow-street. MDCCLXXXIII.

T H E

WEEHOLDERS

POLITICAL CATECHISM.

By the Rev. John G. ...



DUBLIN:

Printed for T. Moore's Bookeller in ...
Street, near Green Street. MDCCLXXXIII.

Question, **W**HO are you ?

Answer, I am T. M. a
Freeholder of Great
Britain.

Q. What Privilege enjoy'st thou by being a Freeholder of Great Britain ?

A. By being a Freeholder of Great Britain, I am a greater Man in my Civil Capacity, than the greatest Subject of an Arbitrary Prince ; because I am govern'd by Laws, to which I give my Consent, and my Life, Liberty, and Goods, cannot be taken from me, but according to those Laws : I am a Freeman.

Q. Who gave thee this Liberty ?

A. No Man gave it me: Liberty is the Natural Right of every Human Creature ; he is born to the Exercise of it as soon as he has attain'd to that of his Reason ; but that my Liberty is preserv'd to me, when lost to a great part of Mankind, is owing under God to the Wisdom and Valour of my Ancestors, Freeholders of this Realm.

Q. Does not every Man give up his Liberty, to the government of the Political Society, whereof he is a Member ?

A. Mankind give up some part of their Natural Liberty to the Government for the Benefit of Society and mutual Defence (for in Political Society an Infant has the whole Force of the Community to protect him) but no Man can make himself a Slave.

Q. Why ?

A. Because no Man can give an absolute Dominion

nion over his Life, for that is not in his Power, and belongs only to his Creator.

Q. How comes it then that the Civil Magistrate has a Right to take away Lives ?

A. Because by the Laws of Nature, every Man has a Power of taking away the Life of another in Self-defence, which Power is given up to the Magistrate, and which Power returns to every Man, when the Magistrate cannot defend him, as in the Case of being attack'd with sudden and lawless Violence.

Q. Has not the Magistrate a Power to compel thee to be of what Religion he thinks fit ?

A. No. Because neither in the State of Nature, nor in the State of Civil Society, has any Man an absolute Power over another Man's Mind or Conscience ; from whence it follows, that in the first of those States, no Man could give the Magistrate a Power which he hath not to give : and that in the Second of those States, the Exercise of this Power is impossible ; Compulsion without Conviction making a Man an Hypocrite, that is a Criminal, but can never secure the publick Peace.

Q. Wherein does this Liberty which thou enjoyest consist ?

A. In Laws made by the Consent of the People, and the due Execution of those Laws ; I am free not from the Law, but by the Law.

Q. Wilt thou stand fast in this Liberty whereunto thou art born and entitled by the Laws of thy Country ?

A. Yes verily, by God's Grace I will ; and I thank his good Providence that I am born a Member of a Community govern'd by Laws and not by Arbitrary Power.

Q. What do'st thou think incumbent upon thee to secure this Blessing to thy Self and Posterity :

A. As

A. As I am a Freeholder, I think it incumbent upon me, to believe aright concerning the fundamental Articles of the Government to which I am subject; to write, speak, and act on all occasions conformably to this Orthodox Faith, to oppose with all the Powers of my Body and Mind, such as are Enemies of our good Constitution, together with all their secret and open Abettors, and to be obedient to the King the supreme Magistrate of the Society.

Q. Rehearse unto me the Articles of thy Political Creed.

A. I believe that the Supreme or Legislative Power of this Realm resides in the King, Lords, and Commons; That His Majesty King George the Second is Sovereign or Supreme Executor of the Law, to whom upon that account all Loyalty is due. That each of the three Members of the Legislature are endowed with their particular Rights, and Offices; that the King by his Royal Prerogative has the Power of determining and appointing the Time and Place of the Meeting of Parliaments. That the Consent of King, Lords, and Commons, is necessary to the Being of a Law, and all the three make but one Lawgiver. That as to the Freedom of Consent in making of Laws, those three Powers are independent, and that each and all the three are bound to observe the Laws that are made.

Q. Why is the Legislative Power Supreme?

A. Because what gives Law to all, must be Supreme.

Q. What mean'st thou by Loyalty to the King?

A. I have heard that Loy, signifies Law; and Loyalty, Obedience, according to Law; therefore he who pays this Obedience is a loyal Subject, and he who executes the King's Commands when

when contrary to Law is disloyal and a Traitor.

Q. Is it not a Maxim in the Law, that the King can do no Wrong?

A. It is : For since Kings do not act immediately by themselves, but mediately by their Officers, and inferior Magistrates; the Wisdom of the Law provides sufficiently against any undue Exercise of their Power, by charging all illegal Acts, and all kinds of Male-Administration upon their Ministers: by the great regard which is paid to the King by this Maxim, laying him under an indisputable Obligation, not to screen his Ministers from publick Justice or publick Enquiry.

Q. What do'st thou mean by the Royal Prerogative?

A. A Discretionary Power in the King to act for the Good of the People where the Laws are silent, never contrary to Law, and always subject to the Limitations of the Law.

Q. Do'st thou owe no other Duty to the King but Obedience according to Law?

A. Yes. I am bound to Pray for him, to Honour him, to behave my self respectfully towards him, and to speak respectfully of him, as it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the Ruler of thy People.

Q. Thou hast promis'd that in order to preserve this thy Liberty, thou wilt resist to the utmost of thy Power the Enemies of our good Constitution; who are those Enemies?

A. Such as deny the Title and Authority of the King who is acknowledg'd to be so by the Legislature: Such as by Heretical Doctrines exalt the Royal Authority above the Laws: Such as endeavour to destroy the Authority and Independence of any of the three Members of the Legislature.

Q. How comes it that denying the Title and Authority of the King, who is acknowledged by the two Branches

Branches of the Legislature, is subverting a fundamental Law of the Constitution?

A. Because if private Judgment is to be opposed to that of the Publick, there can be no Peace in that Society: Besides every Man in the Society is suppos'd to have given his Assent in that Matter already, for the Act of the Majority is the Act of every Individual.

Q. What are those Heretical Doctrines which exalt the King's Authority above the Laws?

A. Asserting, That there is something particularly Divine in Kingly Government, as being the first Government of the World, and appointed by God: and that there is in Kings an Authority and Hereditary Right of Succession independent of the Laws.

Q. How canst thou prove those to be heretical and false Doctrines?

A. Because they are so far from being founded upon Scripture (as is pretended) that they are contrary to it. For first, It does not appear from Scripture how the first Political Societies were formed. Secondly, The first Government of God's People was not Monarchical; the Patriarchs were not Kings; the Government of the *Israelites* before *Saul's* Time was Republican; the People sent Ambassadors, *Josua* xxii. the People in full Assembly demands Justice, *Judges* xix and xx. Thirdly, God Almighty gives a disadvantageous Character of Absolute Monarchy, which see *2 Sam.* viii. 4. If by God's Appointment, be meant a Divine Revelation or Mission, no Monarch upon Earth has it: If by God's Appointment be meant the Divine Authority, enjoying Obedience to the lawful Ordinances of Man, the Supreme Power of a Commonwealth has it as much as a King: If by God's Appointment be meant God's Providence, a Rob-
ber

ber, Tyrant, or Usurper may be said to be so. Fifthly, There are several Passages in Scripture, that favour the Original Power of the People. *Abraham* demands a Burying-place for *Sarah* of the People. The first Governors seem to have been Captains chosen for their Valour, by the People, *whoever will give Battle* (say the Princes and People of *Gilead*) *to the Children of Ammon, shall be Head over the Inheritance of Gilead*, accordingly *Jephtha* was chosen. God Almighty demands the Consent of the People even to his own Laws, accordingly *Moses* proposeth them in a full Assembly, and demands their Consent as to a Covenant, See *Deut. v.* God Almighty condescends to this Natural Right of the People in changing the Form of their Government (tho' contrary to his Admonition) when they demanded a King to rule over them, and commands *Samuel* to *hearken to the Voice of the People*, 2 *Sam. viii.* There are many more Proofs of this Truth to be found in Scripture, by any Man who reads with Attention.

Q. Does not Conquest give a Right to absolute Monarchy?

A. No: For unjust Force can never give any just Dominion: And Conquest in a just War, gives the Conqueror absolute Dominion only over the Individuals he has subdu'd.

Q. What thinkest thou of Hereditary Right?

A. No Man can have Hereditary Right by the Title of King, for there are Kingdoms Elective; several Kingdoms have different Customs and Laws in determining the Successions of their Monarchs; those of *Britain* and *France* are different, and both from the Customs of some other Monarchies; therefore there can be no Right of Succession but by the Law of the Land, and accordingly by the Act of Settlement his present Majesty
King

King George the Second has an hereditary Right in himself and lineal Descendants, subject to the Limitations of the Law ; a more authentick Deed for Hereditary Right, than can be produced by any Prince in the World.

Q. Is not then the King above the Laws?

A. By no means: For the Intention of Government being the Security of the Lives, Liberties, and Properties, of the Members of the Community, they never can be supposed by the Law of Nature, to give an arbitrary Power over their Persons and Estates. King, is a Title, which translated into several Languages, signifies a Magistrate with as many different Degrees of Power, as there are Kingdoms in the World, and he can have no Power but what is given him by Law ; yea, even the Supreme or Legislative Power, is bound by the Rules of Equity, to govern by Laws enacted, and published in due Form ; for what is not Legal is Arbitrary.

Q. How comes it that those who endeavour to destroy the Authority and Independence of any of the Branches of the Legislature, subvert the Constitution?

A. By the fundamental Laws of the Constitution, the free and impartial consent of each of the three Members is necessary to the Being of a Law, therefore if the consent of any of the Three is willfully omitted, or obtain'd by Terror or Corruption, the Legislature is violated ; and instead of three there may be really and effectually but one Branch of the Legislature.

Q. Canst thou illustrate this by any Example.

A. The Royal Authority and that of the House of Peers were both destroy'd by the House of Commons, and by a small Part of That, in the

B late

late Civil War ; so that the very Form of Government was annihilated.

Q. Can you give me an Instance where the Form of Government may be kept, and yet the Constitution destroy'd?

A. Yes. The Forms of the Free Government of Rome, were preserv'd under the Arbitrary Government of the Emperors : There was a Senate, Consuls, and Tribunes of the People ; as one might say King, Lords, and Commons, and yet the Government under the Emperors was always Despotick, and often Tyrannical ; and indeed the Worst of all Governments is Tyranny sanctify'd by the Appearance of Law.

Q. By what Means sell that great People into this State of Slavery?

A. I have read the Roman History ; and by what I can judge, it was by Faction, Corruption, and Standing Armies.

Q. All that might happen to Romans ; but did ever any Parliament of this Nation give up the Liberty of the People?

A. Yes: A Pack'd Parliament in Richard the Second's Time, established by a Law, the King's Arbitrary Power, and with Leave to name a Commission with Parliamentary Authority. Parliaments in Henry the Eighth's Time were Slaves to his Passions, and one gave the King a Legislative Authority. And there are many Instances of Parliaments making dangerous Steps towards the Destruction of the Liberty of the People.

Q. Who were the English Monarchs who were most indulgent to the Liberties of the People?

A. The great King Alfred, who declar'd, *That the English Nation was as free as the Thoughts of Man.* The glorious Monarchs, Edward the First,
Edward

Edward the Third, and *Henry* the Fifth, who would not let his People swear to him till he had an opportunity of swearing to them, at his Coronation. And the immortal Queen *Elizabeth*, who declar'd it by Law, High Treason, during her Life, and the *Premunire* afterwards, to deny the Power of Parliament in limiting and binding the Descent or Inheritance of the Crown, or the claim to it.

Q. When were those slavish Maxims of Hereditary Indefeazable Right and Prerogative, superior to Law, first introduc'd?

A. In the Time of *James* the First; who by endeavouring to establish them, laid the Foundation of all the Miseries which have since happened to his Family; and it is the greatest Security to the present Branch of it, that such Doctrines which sow the Seeds of Jealousy between the King and his People, are by the present Establishment quite exploded.

Q. What do'st thou learn from those Histories?

A. That a King of this Realm, in the full Possession of the Affections of his People is greater than any Arbitrary Prince, and that the Nation can never be effectually undone but by a wicked Parliament; and lastly, to be thankful to God that under our present most gracious King our Constitution is preserv'd entire, tho' at the same time there are many Circumstances which call Loudly for Vigilance.

Q. What are those?

A. Such as have been the Fore-runners and Causes of the Loss of Liberty in other Countries, Decay of Virtue, and Publick Spirit, Luxury and Extravagance in Expence, Venality and Corruption, in private and publick Affairs.

Q. How comes there to be a Decay of Publick Spirit, when there is more than usual a Desire to serve the Publick?

A. If a Desire to live upon the Publick, be a publick Spirit, there is enough of it at this Time, when Extravagance makes People crave more, and the Administration of a publick Revenue (perhaps treble what it was before the Revolution) enables the Crown to give more than formerly.

Q. What dost thou fear from this?

A. That such as serve the Crown for Reward, may in Time sacrifice the Interest of the Country to their Wants; That greediness of publick Money may produce a slavish Complaisance as long as the Crown can pay; and Mutiny when it cannot; and in general, That Motives of self Interest will prove an improper and weak Foundation for our Duty to our King and Country.

Q. I much rejoice to see a Person of your Knowledge and Publick Spirit; therefore I ask you what is the Sum and Substance of the Virtue of a good Citizen?

A. The Love of our Country comprehends in it the Viriues of a good Citizen, as the Love of God those of a good Christian: It is the Love not only of One, but of Millions of Neighbours; not only of our Neighbours now living, but of them and of their Posterity. It is an Instinct as well as Duty of Nature; the very Soil from which as from a common Mother, Mankind are nourish'd: and the last common Repository of their dead Bodies, has been reputed amongst human Creatures, as a Bond of Union; *Joseph* comforted himself with his dying Breath, reflecting that his Bones should rest amongst his Brethren. I read of one *Themistocles* who, tho' he had been banish'd from Greece and Hospitality, and receiv'd in *Per-*
sia,

sia, ordered his Corps to be carried back and buried by stealth in his own Country. All Nations sink and rise in proportion as this Virtue prevails. When I read the *Roman History* I am transported with Joy, and a profound Reverence for those Worthies who sacrificed their Lives, and what was perhaps dearer to them, to the Love of their Country. Nor is our own Country destitute of Examples of such Heroick Virtue, of which some have transmitted the glorious Fruits to their Posterity; and such as have fail'd of that, have attain'd to a glorious Immortality, and advanc'd the Temporal Felicity of Generations past and to come. The Love of our Country is both a Moral and Religious Duty.

Q. How do'st thou prove that?

A. The Love which we owe to all Mankind, is not only allow'd but enjoin'd, in greater Degrees to particular Societies, whereof we are Members, as Nations, Neighbours, Kindred, Families, and Children: There are many Precepts and Examples in Scripture enforcing this Duty of the Love of our Country; and holy Men of Old, as they were endowed with a religious, seem'd proportionably fill'd with a publick Spirit; the *Old Testament* is full of such Examples: This was the shining Virtue of *Moses*, and of all the Captains, Princes, and Prophets of God's People. One of the Books of the Prophets is a Lamentation for the Captivity and Desolation of *Judab*; *woe unto me (said Matthias, 2 Maccabees ii.) wherefore was I born, to see the Desolation of my People.* Then he and his Sons rent their Clothes and put on Sack-cloth and Mourning; *we are ready to die,* said the young Men, *rather than transgress the Laws of our Country.* It is said of *Judas Maccabeus*, *That he made the Jews bold,*
and

and ready to die for the Laws of their Country.

This Virtue was more eminent in our Blessed Saviour than in any of the Sons of Men: He confin'd at first the Benefit of his Gospel and Miracles to his own Country; he heals the Centurion's Servant upon the Motive of his being a Friend to the *Jewish* Nation; and most tender is his Lamentation over the approaching desolation of his Country, and his Intercession for it with his dying Breath. *St. Paul* cou'd e'en wish himself accursed for his Countrymen, his Brethren, and Kinsmen after the Flesh. And I am of Opinion, that the Decay of the publick Spirit at this time is much owing to the Decay of Virtue, and that true Religion which is always free from Bigotry and Superstition, and a persecuting Spirit.

Q. What would'st thou do for thy Country?

A. I would die to procure its Prosperity: and I would rather that my Posterity were cut off, than that they should be Slaves; but as Providence at present requires none of those Sacrifices, I content my self to discharge the ordinary Duties of my Station, and to exhort my Neighbours to do the same.

Q. What are the Duties of your Station?

A. To endeavour as far as I am able, to preserve the publick Tranquillity; and as I am a Freeholder, to give my Vote for the Candidate whom I judge most worthy to serve his Country: for if for any partial Motive I should give my Vote for one unworthy, I should think my self justly chargeable with his Guilt.

Q. Thou hast perhaps but one Vote of Five Hundred, and the Member perhaps one of Five Hundred more, then your share of the Guilt is but small?

A. As

A. As he who assists at a Murder is guilty of Murder, so he who acts the lowest Part in the Enslaving his Country, is guilty of a much greater Crime than Murder.

Q. Is Enslaving one's Country a greater Crime than Murder?

A. Yes: Inasmuch as the Murder of Human Nature is a greater Crime than the Murder of a Human Creature; or as he who debaseth and rendereth miserable the Race of Mankind, is more wicked than he who cutteth off an Individual.

Q. Why is Enslaving Mankind murdering Human Nature?

A. Because Mankind in a State of Slavery and Freedom is a different Sort of Creature; for Proof of this I have read what the Greeks were of Old, and what they are now in a State of Slavery.

Q. What is become of the Heroes, Philosophers, Orators, and free Citizens of Greece?

A. They are now Slaves to the Great Turk.

Q. What is become of the Scipio's and Cato's of Rome?

A. They sing now on the English Stage.

Q. Does not the Tranquillity occasioned by absolute Monarchy make the Country thrive?

A. Peace and Plenty are not the genuine Fruits of absolute Monarchy; for absolute Monarchies are more subject to Convulsions, than free Governments, and Slavery turneth the fruitful Plains into a Desert; whereas Liberty, like the Dew from Heaven, fructifieth the barren Mountains. This I have learn'd from Travellers, who have visited Countries in both Conditions; therefore as I said before, I should reckon my self guilty of the greatest Crime human Nature is capable of, if I were any ways accessory to the enslaving my Country; tho' I have but one Vote, many Unites
make

make a Number, and if every Elector should reason after the same manner, that he has but one; what must become of the Whole? a Law of great Consequence, and the Election of the Member who voteth for that Law, may be both carried by one Vote; great and important Services for the Liberties of their Country, have been done by ordinary Men: I have read, that the Institution of the Tribunes of Rome, or the whole Power of the Commons, was owing to a word spoke in season by a common Man.

Q. Is it not lawful then to take a Bribe from a Person otherwise worthy to serve his Country?

A. No more than for a Judge to take a Bribe for a Righteous Sentence; nor is it any more lawful to corrupt, than to commit Evil that Good may come of it: Corruption converts a good Action into Wickedness. Bribery of all Sorts is contrary to the Law of God; it is a heinous Sin, often punished with the severest Judgments; it involves in it the Sin of Perjury as the Law stands now, and is besides the greatest Folly and Madness.

Q. How is it contrary to the Law of God?

A. The Law of God saith expressly, *Thou shalt not wrest Judgment; Thou shalt not take a Gift:* If it is a Sin in a Judge, it is much more in a Law-giver, or an Elector; because the Mischiefs occasioned by the first reach only to individuals, that of the last may affect whole Nations, and even the Generations to come. The Psalmist describing the wicked, saith, *his right Hand is full of Bribes:* The Prophet describing the Righteous, tell us, *he shaketh his Hand from holding a Bribe:* Samuel justifying his Innocence, appeals to the People, *of whose Hands have I taken a Bribe?*
Then

Then as to divine Vengeance, holy *Job* tells us, that God shall destroy the Tabernacle of Bribery. *Achan's* Avarice who had appropriated to his own Use the golden Wedge and the *Babylonish* Garment, brought the Judgment of God upon the whole People, so that they fled before their Enemies, till the Criminal was discovered and stoned to Death. The Leprosy adhered to *Gebazi* (the Servant of *Elisha*) and his House for ever, for taking a Bribe from *Naaman* a rich Minister of a great Prince: Therefore he that taketh a Bribe may justly expect what is threatned in Holy Writ: *He shall not prosper in his way, neither shall his Substance continue; his Silver and Gold shall not be able to deliver him in the Day of the Wrath of the Lord.*

Q. Why is he that taketh a Bribe guilty of the Sin of Perjury?

A. Because he sweareth,

I *A. B.* do swear (or being one of the People called Quakers) *I A. B.* do solemnly affirm) *I have not received, or had by my Self, or any Person whatsoever in Trust for me, or for my Use and Benefit, directly or indirectly, any Sum or Sums of Money, Office, Place, or Employment, Gift, or Reward, or any Promise or Security for any Money, Office, Employment, or Gift, in order to give my Vote at this Election, and that I have not before been polled at this Election.*

Q. What thinkest thou of those who are bribed by Gluttony and Drunkenness?

A. That they are viler than *Esau* who sold his Birth-right for a Mess of Porridge.

Q. Why is taking a Bribe Folly or Madness?

A. Because I must refund ten-fold in Taxes of what I take in Election; and the Member who bought me, has a fair Pretence to sell me, nor can I in such a Case have any just Cause of Complaint.

Q. What wilt thou say then to the Candidate that offers thee a Bribe?

A. I will say, “Thy Money perish with thee; as thou art now purchasing thy Seat in Parliament, I have just Reason to suspect that thou resolvest to sell thy Vote; what thou offerest and what thou promisest may be the Price of the Liberty of my Country: I will not only reject thy Bribe with Disdain, but will Vote against thee.

Q. Is not the Justice of a King, sufficient Security for the Liberty of the People?

A. The People ought to have more Security for all that is valuable in the World, than the Will of a mortal and fallible Man: a King of Britain may make as many Peers, and such, as he pleaseth; therefore the last and best Security for the Liberties of the People, is a House of Commons Genuine and Independent.

Q. What mean'st thou by a Genuine House of Commons?

A. One that is the lawful Issue of the People, and no Bastard.

Q. How is a Bastard House of Commons produc'd?

A. When the People by Terror, Corruption, or other indirect Means, chuses such as they otherwise would not chuse; when such as are fairly chosen, are not returned; when such as are returned, are turn'd out by partial Votes in controverted Elections, and others not fairly chosen set in their Places.

Q. How may a House of Commons become dependent?

A. When the Freedom of Voting is destroy'd by Threatnings, Promises, Punishments, and Rewards by the open Force of the Government, or the Insults of the Populace; but above all by private

vate Influence ; for they who are armed with the Power of the Crown, have many Ways of gratifying such as are subservient to their Designs, and many Ways of oppressing such as oppose them, both within the Bounds of the Law.

Q. Can a King have a more faithful Council than a House of Commons, which speaketh the Sense of the People ?

A. None: For they will not only give him impartial Council, but will powerfully and cheerfully assist him to execute what they advise.

Q. What are the Marks of a Person worthy to serve his Country in Parliament ?

A. The Marks of a good Ruler giv'n in Scripture, will serve for a Parliament-man : Such as rule over you shall be Men of Truth, hating Covetousness, they shall not take a Gift, they shall not be afraid of the Face of a Man, Deut. xvi. therefore I conclude, That the Marks of a good Parliament-man are Riches with Frugality, Integrity, Courage, being well affected to the Constitution, Knowledge of the State of the Country, being prudently frugal of the Money, careful of the Trade, and zealous over the Liberties of the People, having stuck to the Interests of their Country in perilous Times, and being assiduous in Attendance.

Q. Who is most likely to take a Bribe ?

A. He who offereth one.

Q. Who is likely to be frugal of the People's Money ?

A. He who puts none of it in his own Pocket.

Q. You seem by this to be averse from chusing such as accept Places and Gratuities from the Crown, what is your Reason for this Partiality ?

A. I am far from thinking that a Man may not serve his King, and his Country faithfully at the same time ; nay their Interests are inseparable.

Mr. Such-an-one, my Lord's Steward is a very honest Man, and yet if I had any Affairs to settle with my Lord, I would chuse my Neighbour for a Referree rather than my Lord's Steward.

Q. Why is Frugality of the People's Money so necessary at this Time?

A. Because they have run out much, and are still much in Debt: My Father and I have paid our Share of One Hundred Millions, and I have heard there are near Fifty more to pay; I grudge not this prodigious Expence, as far as it has been the necessary Price of Liberty; but as it would grieve me much to see this Blessing ravish'd from me which has cost me so dear; so on the other hand I think it expedient to save, now the Affair is over, and the Government settled.

Q. Who are those who are careful of the Trade of the Nation?

A. Such as are willing to keep it free from all vexatious Interruptions by Inspections, Entering into Houses, Seizures, Suits, and the Oppression of Tax-gatherers, as much as possible; such as are willing to take off the burthensome Duties which encrease the Expence of the Workman, and consequently the Price of our Manufacture.

Q. But as you have a Freehold, would you not be willing to be excus'd from paying two Shillings in the Pound by laying Excises upon other Parts of our Consumptions?

A. No doubt but every Landed Man would be glad to be free from paying Two Shillings in the Pound; but at the same time I would not raise by another Tax Two Shillings in the Pound, nor One Shilling in the Pound for Perpetuity. For Parliaments who have no more to give, may be disappointed in the Redress of their Grievances. Besides, I would not be deluded by an Impossibili-

bility; for if my Tenant has any new Tax laid upon him, I am afraid he will not pay me so much Rent; so that the new Tax must still affect Land. Then it is utterly impossible to raise by Excises what shall be equivalent to Two Shillings in the Pound without the Ruin of Trade; for the Excises which are settled already, generally speaking, raise double the Duty upon the People, of what they bring in to the Government.

Q. How can'st thou prove that?

A. By Experience of several Excises, as of Leather, Candles, Soap, &c. Whatever is brought into the Publick by those Excises, is raised double upon the People; therefore if a Million of Money, or what is equivalent to Two Shillings in the Pound, were levy'd by Excise, it would be two Millions upon the Excis'd Commodities, which must destroy every Subject of Trade in Britain.

Q. Why do'st thou insist, that a Knowledge of the State of the Country is a necessary Qualification for a Parliament-man?

A. Because this is a Qualification, of late, very much unheeded: I have heard that there are many Corporations that never saw their Members.

Q. Is then a Writ of Parliament only a Conge d' Elire for a Bishop, where the King nominates?

A. God forbid; the Crown is never to meddle in an Election.

Q. Why is assiduous Attendance so necessary?

A. Because a Parliament-man is entrusted with the Lives, Liberties and Properties of the People, which have often been endangered by the Non-attendance of many Members; because if Representatives do not attend, I may have a Law impos'd upon me, to which I had no Opportunity of giving my Assent.

Q. Thou hast prudently and justly resolv'd to promote,

note, to the utmost of thy Power, the Publick Tranquility; what are the Advantages thou propos'st from that?

A. All the Advantages resulting from Political Society depend upon the Publick Tranquility: Besides, by Publick Tranquility, Armies, which are a Mark of Distrust of the Affections of the People, may be Disbanded.

Q. *Why do'st thou not love Armies in Time of Peace?*

A. Because Armies have overturn'd the Liberties of most Countries; and all who are well-affected to Liberty, ever hated them; because they are subject to an implicit Obedience to their Officers, and to a Law of their own; because they are so many lusty Men taken from Work, and maintain'd at an extravagant Expence upon the Labour of the rest; because they are many ways burthensome to the People in their Quarters even under the best Discipline, especially in dear Countries; because there are so many more Preferments in the Hands of Designing Ministers; and lastly, because the King will never be deny'd an Army as great as he pleaseth, when it is necessary.

Q. *Thou rightly judgest of thy Happiness in being a Member of a Political Society, govern'd by Laws, to which the People give their Consent: Thou hast been likewise well instructed in the fundamental Laws of the Government, and art well aware of the wicked and abominable Practice that undermine, and are like to overturn the Constitution: Be thou likewise verily persuaded that the equitable and fundamental Laws of a Nation are, in a sound Sense, stamp'd with a Divine Authority; and that the good Order, Peace, and Happiness of the Society is firmly connected with a strict Observance of them. That the Prosperity of Nations depends upon their Virtue, not only as an Effect upon its Natural Cause, but by the immutable*

ble Appointment of Divine Justice, by which Political Societies must receive their Rewards and Punishments in this World, since they have no Being in the next ; consequently the Threatnings and Promises which occur in the Old Testament are, in a proper Sense, as applicable to other Nations as the Israelites, therefore thou and all the People of this Land may suppose that God Almighty speaketh to them as he spoke by Moses unto the Israelites, Deut. xxviii.

1. And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the Voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and do all his Commandments, (that is the Laws of their Constitution) which I command thee this Day ; that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all Nations of the Earth, &c. Vers. 15. But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the Voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his Commandments and his Statutes which I command thee this Day ; that all these Curses shall come upon thee and overtake thee. Cursed shalt thou be in the City, and Cursed shalt thou be in the Field. Cursed shall be thy Basket and thy Store. Cursed shall be the Fruit of thy Body, and the Fruit of thy Land, the Increase of thy Kine, and the Flocks of thy Sheep. Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and Cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out, &c. &c.

F I N I S.

