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A  
SERMON

Preach'd before the Honourable

House of Commons,

A T

S. MARGARET'S, *Westminster,*

O N

*Wednesday* the 29th of *May*, 1717.

BEING

The Day of Publick Thanksgiving to  
Almighty GOD, for having put an  
End to the Great Rebellion, by the Re-  
stitution of King CHARLES II. and  
*Royal-Family*, and the *Restoration* of the  
Government.

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By ANDREW SNAPE, D. D.  
Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty.

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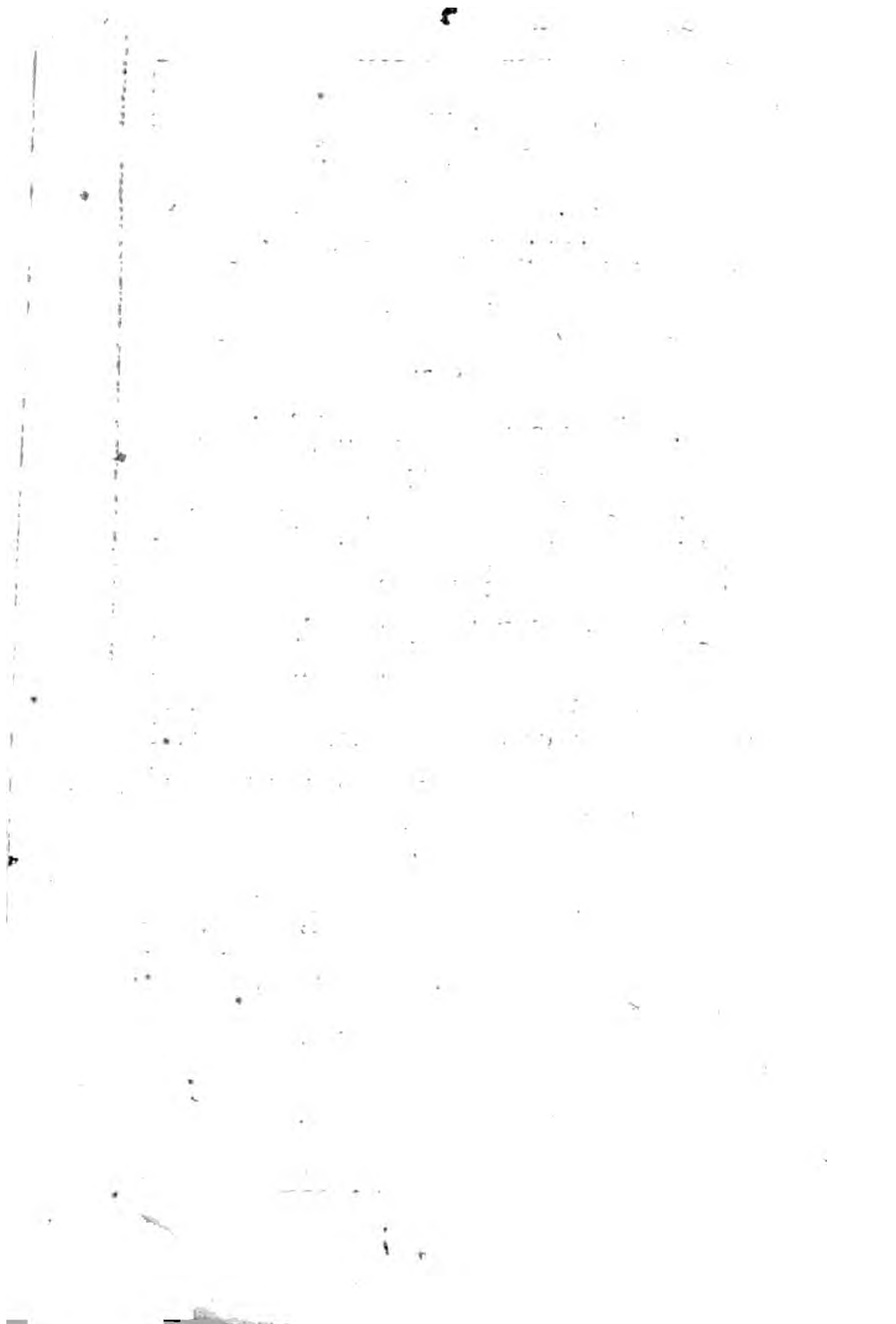
The Second EDITION.

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L O N D O N :

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PSAL. LXXVI. 10.

*Surely the Wrath of Man shall  
praise thee; the Remainder of  
Wrath shalt thou restrain.*



HIS Psalm is a grateful Commemoration of some great and signal Deliverance, which the *Jews* had obtained from their Enemies; and most probably was compos'd on Occasion of the miraculous Defeat of *Sennacherib*, King of *Assyria*, who had invested *Jerusalem* with a formidable Host, and put the Inhabitants into the utmost Consternation. Discouraged by the Number, and aw'd by the insulting Threats of their Beliegers, they began to despair of all Succour or Relief; and thought of nothing else but Fire and Sword, Ravage and Desolation, and all the fatal Extremities that could be expected from merciless and inhuman Conquerors.

In the midst of this distressed State, it pleas'd the good Providence of God to send them an unexpected Rescue: The numerous Army that surrounded their Walls, being intimidated by an

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invisible

invisible Power, slaughter'd by an invisible Hand, and the powerful Invader himself soon after slain by the Hands of his two Sons in the Temple of his Idol.

In Memory, I say, of some such Deliverance, and, as learned Interpreters suppose, of the Deliverance I have mention'd, was this Psalm compos'd by *Asaph*: Which, as it all along extolls the irresistible Power of God, and the certain Victory of those, on whose side he engages; so especially this Verse of my Text sets forth the Folly and Madness of contending with God, or such whose Cause he is pleased to espouse; since the fiercest Opposition that can be made, will redound, in the End, to his Glory: Nor can it last any longer, or prevail any farther, than he himself thinks fit to permit it. *Surely the Wrath of Man shall praise thee; the Remainder of Wrath shalt thou restrain.*

By *Wrath*, we are here to understand rebellious Rage, or tyrannical Fury, an outrageous hostile Bent of Mind, and Thirst after Mischief. By God's *restraining* that Wrath, I conceive to be meant, his interposing in due time, cutting short the Designs of such wrathful Men, before they have completed the intended Measure of their Iniquity. And by the *Remainder* of that Wrath, so much of their mischievous Contrivance, as is still unaccomplish'd, and which the over-ruling Power of God prevents the Execution of. Whereas the former Part of the Verse, *Surely the Wrath of Man shall praise thee*, seems rather to refer to such of the Devices of  
wicked

wicked Men, as had succeeded in the Fact, tho' they were disappointed in the End propos'd, which, contrary to their Expectation, was converted to the Glory of God, and to their own Shame and Confusion.

This then we may take to be the Importance of the whole Verse. ' Altho' for a while thou sufferest the Sons of Violence to prosper, to insult thine Inheritance, to oppress thine Elect, and to lay Waste thy Dwelling-Place; yet so far is this seeming Prevalence of theirs from diminishing thy Honour, that it only helps to magnify and exalt it: These are the Instruments of thy Vengeance, the Scourges wherewith thou correctest thy beloved Children; these Men do but execute thy Decrees, whilst they are persecuting thy Saints, and whilst they think they resist thy Will, are then actually fulfilling it. But this once perform'd, if they have any Dregs of Fury left, any Vengeance of their own to wreak, after thine is satisfied; thou then interposest with a high Hand, and stretch'd-out Arm to baffle their Devices, and confound their Malice, and answerest them, as thou didst the haughty *Sennacherib: Because thy Rage against me, and thy Tumult is come up into mine Ears; therefore will I put my Hook in thy Nose, and my Bridle in thy Lips, and I will turn thee back by the Way by which thou camest, Isa. xxxvii. 29.*

This is the most natural and receiv'd Interpretation of the Passage now before us. It would take up too much of my Discourse to shew the Reasons for preferring this to other

Explications that have been given of the same Text, occasion'd by the Latitude of some Phrases in the Original; and I think it the less necessary, because the Doctrine I shall urge will follow from the Words taken under any of those Meanings.

Now, the Things I would infer from this Observation of the Psalmist, are these.

- I. That Almighty God, for wise and good Reasons, does for some time bear with the Instruments of Evil, and suffer them, without Controul, to proceed to a very great and surprizing Height of Impiety. But,
- II. That there is a determinate Degree of Wickedness, beyond which the Divine Providence will not suffer them to pass, but manifestly interposes to prevent the fatal Consequences that would follow from an unrestrain'd, unlimited Power, join'd with a malicious Will, and brutal Disposition to Mischief. After which I shall proceed,
- III. To consider that particular Act of Providence, in the middle of the last Century, which we are now met to commemorate; when, tho' the Wrath of Man had prevailed to an excessive high Degree, so as to murder the Best of Kings, and overturn the Best of Constitutions; it yet pleas'd

pleas'd God to restrain the Remainder of that Wrath, by the Restoration of the Royal Family, and settling us again on our Ancient Foundations.

*First,* That Almighty God, for Wise and Good Reasons, does for some time bear with the Instruments of Evil, and suffer them, without Controul, to proceed to a very great and surprizing Height of Impiety.

As to the Fact itself, that this Case does frequently happen; that there are daily Instances of dejected Innocence, and triumphant Villany; that the great Oppressors of Mankind do often flourish in Pomp and Splendor; that they enjoy, or seem to enjoy, an Abundance of all outward Comforts, and fatten on the Spoils of the Injur'd and Oppress'd; that this, I say, is a Case of daily Occurrence, as well the Testimony of Holy Scripture, as the Universal Experience of Mankind, and the Complaints on this very Subject as Universal, make it needless for me to prove.

But it seems a Thing of more Consequence, and far greater Difficulty, to reconcile these Things with the Justice and Holiness of God, and to account for the Equity of such Dispensations, than to prove that such there are. But this Objection, however plausible and popular, is founded on such apparent Mistakes, that nothing but a latent Infidelity, and a secret Distrust of a Future State, where an equal Retribution shall be made for all that we have done and suffer'd



fer'd here, could induce Men to insist on it, or to urge it as a Defect of Providence.

One great Mistake in this Objection is, that it supposes the Miseries of this Life to be the proper Punishment of Vice, and the Pleasures or Honours of it, the Reward of Vertue. Whereas, these are not the Benefits we contract for, nor the Wages for which we serve. A Crown of Glory and Immortality will be the undoubted Portion of such as have Patience to expect it, and who approve themselves God's faithful Servants: As for Temporal Prosperity, so much of it as is conducive to that End, or at least not inconsistent with it, may be added to our Portion, by the bountiful Grace and Favour of our Supreme Lord: But such Kinds or Degrees of it, as that great Searcher of Hearts foresees would prove a Snare to us, and be the Means of beguiling us of a better Inheritance, he most indulgently denies us, and 'tis our great Privilege to be without them.

Nor are good Men promis'd an Exemption from worldly Crosses and Misfortunes: Their Religion and Goodness will indeed protect them from some Evils, but will expose them to others, which Suffering for Righteousness Sake, however grievous in itself, may be made light and easy by this Consideration, that it gives them a sure Title to a proportionable Degree of Blessedness hereafter. And in the mean time, a firm Reliance on that Blessing in Reversion, founded on the Testimony of a good Conscience;

ence; the repeated Experience of their own Steadfastness under the greatest Pressures, by the Assistance of God's Grace; the habitual Readiness they have acquir'd of withstanding all the Temptations that can be offer'd either by soothing Flattery, or terrifying Force; the Command of their Passions, and Conquest of their ghostly Enemies, are such a comfortable Support to the Mind under the severest of worldly Evils, that even then, when they seem most afflicted and distress'd, they are full of inward Joy, and inexpressible Satisfaction.

Again, we have very wrong Notions of the Attributes of God, if we imagine that either his Holiness or his Justice suffer the least Diminution by those promiscuous Events, that befall the Righteous and the Wicked. As to the former, what greater Argument can be given of it, than that he has so strictly forbidden whatsoever is contrary to it, and so solemnly declar'd, that without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord?

'Tis true, he could, if he had pleas'd, have prevented the Evil he forbids, and have enforc'd his verbal Prohibitions by actual Restraints. He could have tyed us up from Vice by the Chains of invincible Necessity, and have dragg'd us to Heaven by the Cords of a blind Fatality. But how then should he have serv'd the great End of his Providence, which was to bestow a Heavenly Kingdom on those, who by a constant Perseverance in Vertue, should render themselves (thro' the Mercies of Christ) proper Objects of  
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it? Whereas, if there were no Vice in the World, there could be no such Thing as Vertue; In the Pursuit whereof, if it were not our Choice that directed us, but our Fate that led us, we might with just as much Reason expect a Reward for eating when we are hungry, drinking when we are thirsty, or performing any other Natural Action, as for being honest, chaste, or temperate.

But Man had his Portion assign'd him on very different Terms: He was made a free Agent; he was endu'd with Rational Powers, and an Elective Faculty: He was requir'd and enabled to glorify his Maker, on certain Conditions stipulated between his Creator and him: He lives here in a State of Tryal and Probation, invited and call'd upon to obey, by the strongest Obligations both of Interest and Duty, but tempted to disobey by outward Objects and inward Lusts, and not incapable of yielding to the Force of such Temptations: God has set before him Life and Death, Good and Evil; he has made him sensible what will be the Consequence of either Way of Acting; and after many gracious Calls and fatherly Admonitions to make a wise Choice, leaves both Ways open, and him to the Liberty of that Course, to which his own Discretion, thus prepar'd, thus byass'd and influenc'd to the better and happier Choice, shall guide him.

This is the Way of God's dealing with Mankind; and what Pretence can we take from such a Conduct, to arraign his Purity, or tax him as  
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a Lover and Encourager of Vice. Not to hinder a thing, when we can, and to approve it, are far from being equivalent Terms: There may be many Reasons, even in Human Conduct, why we choose to bear with that which we condemn: And so there are in the Divine. He makes a strict Proof of the Sincerity of his Servants, that those who are faithful may be made manifest; that their Integrity may shine out with a distinguish'd Lustre: He tries us like Silver, and hopes to find us as pure: He gives us Opportunities of offending him, which he wishes we may never take. He is far from desiring the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he should turn and be sav'd; and in order thereto, he has encouraged, commanded, besought, nay even inclin'd us, and only does not necessitate us to be good; and consequently, his barely permitting that Impiety, which he so manifestly hates, can never be constru'd as an Approbation of it.

Since then God may bear with Sin and sinful Men, without being a Favourer of either, how far, or to what Degree he may bear with them, he sure himself is the most proper Judge. The greatest Irregularities that can prevail in the World, are no more a Reflexion on his Holiness, than the least, and the self-same Reasons will account for both: Some Monsters of an unusual Size may be allow'd of in the Moral, as well as in the Natural World, and there may be Giants in Iniquity, as well as in Stature.

Nor is God any more to be charged with the Want of Justice, than of Purity. As for all the unequal Dispensation of Blessings and Afflictions we complain of, and the little Proportion they bear to the several Demerits of Men; this is a much better Argument that there must be a God, who will judge the World, than that there is none who governs it. The Divine Justice is indeed concern'd, that the good and evil Actions of Men may, sooner or later, meet with a suitable Recompence: But whether in this Life, or the next, or in both; infinite, unerring Wisdom can best direct. Why he should not alway do it in this, or at least, not just at that Time, and in that Manner we would have him, the following Reasons may be offer'd, which I shall but just mention, and forbear to enlarge on them.

Before we presume then to murmur on this score, and complain that we are hardly dealt with, we ought seriously to consider: That whatever Afflictions the best Men suffer, 'tis far less than they deserve: That happy is their Case, who have their Portion of Evil allotted them in this Life: That every Thing the World reputes an Evil, is not so in Reality: That if God should visibly interpose to restrain every Act of Injustice, he must work continual Miracles: That the temporal Interests of good and bad Men are so twisted and link'd together, that the one cannot suffer any remarkable Calamity, without involving the other in a considerable Share of it: That if it had been the constant Method  
of

of Providence, to punish every Offence, by sending some immediate temporal Judgment on the Offender; the Race of Men would have been but of short Continuance, and the World had long since been again unpeopled: That if every Fact were to meet with its Reward, as soon as it was committed, it would leave no Room for Faith in Blessings or Punishments to come: Nay, such a Proceeding would almost as necessarily over-rule the Will of Man, and determine it one Way, as if he had no Liberty of Election at all. All which consider'd, I think, we may very fairly and reasonably conclude, that it is not without wise and good Reasons, that Almighty GOD does for some time bear with the Instruments of Evil, and suffer them, without Controul, to proceed to a very great and surprizing Height of Impiety, which was my first Proposition. But which will farther qualify the seeming Hardships, and effectually convince us that there is a Reward for the Righteous, and a GOD that judgeth the Earth; I come now in the

Second place to shew, That there is a determinate Degree of Wickedness, beyond which the Divine Providence will not suffer them to pass, but manifestly interposes to prevent the fatal Extremities that would follow from an unrestrain'd, unlimited Power, join'd with a malicious Will, and brutal Disposition to Mischief.

I do not affirm, that this Interposition of God to restrain enormous Wickedness does ordinarily appear by miraculous Effects, and supernatural Operations. Not but that he has reserv'd to himself a Right of Over-ruling second Causes, and diverting Nature from its settled Course: He has not made it so far his Substitute, as not to be able to resume the Power into his own Hands, whenever he sees a just Occasion. When the Exigence of Affairs requires it, when mighty Mischiefs call for no common Aid, when all the usual Remedies fail, and all the Foundations of the Earth are out of Course; he then supersedes the Commission of Nature, rules by a special Providence, and by stupendous Instances of his Power convinces the World that a Superiour Agent is at work. He writes his Judgments in such legible Characters, that all Men who see them shall say, *This hath God done, for they shall perceive that it is his Work.*

The whole Sacred History abounds with remarkable Instances of his miraculous Power, both in preserving and destroying. Nor have later Ages been without the Experience of some Events, the immediate Author of which must be confessedly more than Human. But this is very Rare, and not the usual Way in which he chooses to exert his Restraining Power, and to curb the Extravagance of Lawless Oppression. He can compass his Ends as effectually by Inferiour Agents, and make us the Instruments of executing his Judgments on one another.

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He is the Supreme Lord of Nature, and of every Power belonging to it: He can command the Assistance both of free and necessary Agents, and by an imperceptible Influence dispose and put into Motion those subordinate Causes, whose Concurrence will best accomplish any Purpose which he is determin'd to bring to pass.

But it may be ask'd, How shall we distinguish these Providential Appointments from the Ordinary Occurrences that befall us? By what Rule must we judge, *when* the Hand of God is in any Event, and *when* it is a Matter of common Course? Must we be guided in this Case meerly by the Success? Must we look upon those as most favour'd by GOD, who are most fortunate and thriving, and ascribe the Advantages they enjoy to GOD's peculiar Interposal in their behalf? This is a Pretension indeed which has been often made, as well by the Enemies as Friends of GOD, and by none more than the Authors of that Confusion with which this Nation was so long distracted, and to which the Deliverance of this Day put a happy and a glorious End. They succeeded in their base and bloody Attempts, which embolden'd them to style the most wicked and detestable of their Actions, *the Blessed Work*, and *the Lord's Work*, and while they seem'd to ascribe to him the Praise, they entitl'd him to the Guilt of all they had been doing.

But



But to answer the Enquiry. 'Tis not the Success of any Event, 'tis not a Train of lucky Accidents, but the Righteousness of the Cause, and Excellency of the End which is to be serv'd by any great Deliverance, that can encourage us to believe it is sent from God. He is a God of Justice, and of purer Eyes, than to behold Iniquity with Approbation: He is a God of Peace and Order, and not of Discord and Confusion. Whatever Dispensations are agreeable to the former of these, are worthy the Divine Being; and such as he delights to be call'd the Author of: But whatsoever tends to produce the contrary Effects, tho' he permits, tho' he connives at, tho' he bears with it for a Season, for Reasons mention'd under the foregoing Head; is so far from his Doing, or from being warranted by his Authority, that in his own due time he will effectually reverse it.

Let us not think, when his Providence winks, that it is unobserving, but persuade ourselves that it is a close, tho' silent Observer of human Actions, and treasures up Wrath, tho' it forbears to strike; till rous'd at last by daring Impiety, and provok'd by outrageous Violence, th. Lord awakes as one out of Sleep, and puts his Enemies to a perpetual Shame. We may rest assur'd that every thing is beautiful in its Season, and that God can direct the Actions of wicked, as well as of good Men to his own Glory. The Lord hath made all things for himself, yea even the Wicked in the Day of Evil.

Whatever

Whatever Power the Instruments of Ill have; their Commission still is limited, and they have their Bounds set them, which they cannot pass. The Devil had Inclination enough, at first, to have afflicted *Job* in his Person, as well as in his Fortune and Relations, but that he was with-held by the express Command of God: *Behold, all that he hath is in thy Power, only upon himself put not forth thy Hand.* And as willing was he, upon a farther Trial, wherein his Commission was enlarged, to have remov'd out of the World such a profess'd Enemy of the Powers of Darkness, if he had not been under such another Prohibition. *Behold, he is in thy Hand, but save his Life.*

And as God manifestly abridges the Power of the Wicked, after they have serv'd his Ends; so he sometimes lays invisible Restraints upon the Will: As he baffles the Rage of some, so he softens that of others, and takes from them the very Disposition to do Evil. A remarkable Instance whereof we have in the Case of *S. Paul*, who at first was a Blasphemer, and a Persecutor, and injurious, a Confederate with the Murderers of *S. Stephen*, and one that consented to his Death: He made Havock of the Church, and entred into every House, haling Men and Women, and committing them to Prison. And thus far the Almighty thought fit to bear with him, as well knowing that all this Wrath and Fierceness would turn to his Praise. But when he yet breath'd out Threatnings and Slaughter, when not contented with what

what he had done at *Jerusalem*, he was going to *Damascus* with the like cruel Intention; this was the Remainder of his Wrath, and this was happily restrain'd by his wonderful Conversion.

As bad as the World is, if the great Sovereign of it did not sometimes interpose to set things right, it would be much worse: And if Men would but reflect on the Evils he prevents, as well as those he bears with; they would not be so forward to speak and think injuriously of his Providence. But that *we* may be possess'd with juster Notions, and look back with a grateful Remembrance on the great Deliverance he formerly wrought for us, let us in the

*Third* place consider that particular Act of Providence, in the middle of the last Century, which we are now met to commemorate; when, tho' the Wrath of Man had prevailed to an excessive Degree, so as to murder the Best of Kings, and over-turn the Best of Constitutions; yet it pleas'd God to restrain the Remainder of that Wrath, by restoring the Royal Family, and settling us again on our ancient Foundations.

When it seem'd good to the Divine Wisdom, to restore the Body Politick to a perfect Soundness, to recover it from that low and languishing Condition, to which its severe and reiterated Convulsions had reduc'd it, to heal up those Wounds which for so many Years had been kept bleeding, and to put an End to that long and dismal

**Train**

Train of Miseries, in which our own Wickedness had involv'd us. When God was pleas'd, as at the first Formation of the World, to bring forth Light out of Darkness, and Order out of Confusion: And that too by such unlikely and unpromising Instruments, by working so sudden and surprizing a Change in the Hearts of some, who had been the Authors of many Mischiefs, to whom much of the Ill that had been done might be imputed, and who, but a very little time before, seem'd rather to be contriving a Prolongation and Increase of the Nation's Calamities, if greater they could have been; as to make them the Authors, under him, of so glorious a Deliverance, of settling the Kingdom in a perfect Tranquillity, uniting the Divided Interests and Factions of Men, who before were in the utmost Distraction, between their many Lords and their various Forms of Government, freeing them from the worst Consequence of habitual Sin, the almost inevitable Necessity of sinning on, and making it their Safety, where it was always their Duty, to render their Allegiance.

And such was the Case, when our late Injur'd Sovereign was so unanimously brought back to his Rightful Possessions, which, thro' a Succession of so many Years, had been detain'd from him, by the Avarice and Ambition, the Violence and Iniquity of his Father's Murderers. When the Hearts of his Subjects were turn'd to him, as one Man, notwithstanding they had been so long alienated, and tho' they had been accusom'd, after

the Example of their seditious Rulers, and more seditious Teachers, to think and speak of him, not only without Reverence and Common Decency, but in the vilest Terms of Abhorrence and Reproach.

When the good Old Establishment, both in Church and State, was so peaceably introduc'd, after so long a Difuse and Interruption; and the People, who had run through so many Changes both of Religion and Government, were so generally dispos'd to say of the Old one, that there was none like it: They remember'd then, with a sensible Regret for their past Follies, how dearly they had paid for their giddy Curiosity, and wanton Desire to alter a safe and happy Constitution: How they had shaken off the imaginary Yoke both of Monarchy and Prelacy, and never till then were real Slaves: How they had seiz'd on the Possessions of both; and when they had done so, like other Robbers, quarrel'd among themselves about dividing the Booty: How they had been deluded by false Representations of their Christian Liberty, and taught to undervalue Ordinances, the Blessed Sacrament of the Lord's Supper not excepted, the Use of which had been intermitted to a scandalous Degree; with what a misguided Zeal they had lent a Hand to the Pulling down the Strong Holds of what they call'd Ecclesiastical Tyranny, and destroy'd all Discipline and Jurisdiction in the Church; and when that was done, how miserably

serably they were sometimes confounded by the Want of any Discipline at all: How heavily at other times they groan'd under the Severity of a much more rigorous and imposing Church-Government, than that which they had discarded: How they, who had join'd in a Cry of Persecution against the Bishops, when they came afterward to be divided among themselves, as they severally happen'd to have their Turns of prevailing, persecuted one another with greater Heat, and treated each other with less Indulgence, than they had even complain'd of in the Times of their Regular Governors.

They saw how fatally they had been misled by the noisy Clamour, and plausible Pretences of some turbulent and unruly Men, who complain'd loudly of those Grievances they meant to make heavier, and express'd a tender Concern for their Liberties, when all they aim'd at, was more effectually to enslave them.

And surely there is no Bondage so irksom, no Chains that feel so weighty, or gall so sorely, as those which are impos'd by one's Equals or Inferiours; which was the Case in those rebellious Times, when the Vilest of the People had thrust themselves into the highest Stations, and, with a full Swing of Violence and Oppression, lorded it over their Superiors. The Liberties and Properties of their Fellow-Subjects were arbitrarily invaded, without any

Method of Redress: Nay, the sure Consequence of seeking a Redress of their Grievances was, to be more heavily aggriev'd for seeking it: Justice was then decided by the Military Sword, and all Civil Power was at an End, or nothing at least remain'd, but the Mock-Appearance of it.

These, with many more insupportable Calamities, were the Result of those causeless Jealousies and Discontents, which embroil'd the Reign of the most gracious and indulgent Prince that ever fill'd a Throne, the most tender of his People's Rights and Liberties, the farthest from pursuing those arbitrary and destructive Measures, in which his unhappy Son, by the Advice of treacherous Counsellors, was so deeply engaged, as to make a subsequent Change of the Government necessary and unavoidable. But no such threatenng Projects to Religion and Liberty were form'd under the Father's Government; His People were, or might have been the happiest Subjects upon Earth, could they have understood or valu'd their own Happiness. But a Spirit of Faction and Discord was gone forth; they were quarrelsome and uneasy, they knew not why; something they still wanted, they knew not what; they were angry and dissatisfied, and resolv'd to be so, in Spite of the most condescending Methods that could be taken for their Satisfaction. Artful and designing Men knew how to work upon their Discontents, and fill them with groundless Fears,  
till

till they had rais'd such a Ferment as broke out into Treason and actual Rebellion, and from thence proceeded to the Murder of the Sovereign, and Extirpation of the Royal Family: Thus far did God suffer their Wrath to prevail to their own Hurt, and make their Crime their Punishment. But when they had smarted sufficiently for their perverse Folly, and sensibly experienc'd the Difference between an easy Government, and a State of Anarchy; he restor'd the former to them by so strange and surprizing a Turn of Providence, as few Histories can parallel. An Event wish'd for by many, hoped for by few, but expected by none. A Design carefully conceal'd from any one's Knowledge by the Principal Actor, and perhaps not fully resolv'd on by himself many Days before the Accomplishment of it; but when accomplish'd, receiv'd with universal Joy, and submitted to with so ready and chearful an Acquiescence, with so little of Struggle and Opposition, as if the whole Body of the People had been in the Secret of the Restoration, and been dispos'd by some previous Notice to expect the Blessing of such a Change.

But the Disposition was from Above; it was the secret Influence of a Divine Monitor, that wrought so sudden a Conversion in them, that shew'd them the Errors of their former ill Conduct, and taught them to embrace their own Happiness and Security. How wise is God in his Counsels, how wonderful in his Works!

How



How short is human Foresight, how precarious the Schemes of the ablest Politicians! By what unexpected Means, in how unlook'd for a Manner are the greater Dispensations of Providence brought to pass! Vain is the Strength of the Mighty, useless is the Craft of the Subtle, in crossing any Ends, which he is resolv'd to accomplish, or in promoting those which he is determin'd to bring to nought. Without his Assistance, neither can the Strong Man gain the Battle, nor the Swift one win the Race, nor Men of the Deepest Reach of Understanding succeed in their Designs. They may value themselves highly on their supposed Abilities, and that Superiority of Genius, by which they are distinguish'd from other Men; they may entertain themselves with their large and comprehensive Views, and the Vastness of their Schemes: But when they have deliberated with the utmost Sagacity, 'tis God at last that will determine the Issue. He has numberless Ways of defeating their best laid Stratagems, and turning their pretended Wisdom into Foolishness. They are infinitely more inconsiderable in his Hands, than the meanest Instrument they work with is in theirs. He can cast them down from the most promising Height of Expectation, when they are big with vain Hopes, and think themselves out of the reach of Disappointment.

The truest Wisdom then is that which cometh from above: The surest Policy is to recommend ourselves to the Divine Protection, to engage in  
no

no Designs wherein we may not reasonably promise ourselves his Favour and Encouragement. And they will ever be the best Patriots and the best Subjects, will contribute most effectually to the Welfare and Preservation of their King and Country, who prosecute all their Aims by the most honourable, righteous, and Christian Methods, and direct them to the Glory of that God, without whose Blessing on our Endeavours, whatever we take in Hand must unavoidably miscarry.

*To whom, with the Son and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed, as is most due, all Praise, Might, Majesty and Dominion, both now and for evermore. Amen.*



*F I N I S.*

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