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VINDICATION  
OF THE  
PRINCIPLES  
AND  
CHARACTER  
OF THE  
PRESBYTERIANS  
OF  
IRELAND.



Addressed to the BISHOP of CLOYNE, in Answer to his  
Book, entitled, The present STATE of the  
*CHURCH of IRELAND.*

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THE SECOND EDITION.

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By WILLIAM CAMPBELL, D. D.

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*Ista quidem ratione fateor, bene consultum rebus erorum qui dignitate pollent—Cæterum lubens audiam rationem, qua consultatur et POPULI vel libertati, vel commodis.*

ERASM.

The Protestant Religion is the *Child* of the Constitution—the Presbyterian is the *Father*,—the Roman Catholick is not an Enemy to it. The political principles of Presbyterians, I prefer before all others—Speech of an illustrious COMMONER.

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M, DCC, LXXXVII.



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A  
VINDICATION  
OF THE  
*PRINCIPLES and CHARACTER*  
OF THE  
PRESBYTERIANS OF IRELAND.

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*My Lord,*

**T**HE representation you have given of the Church of Ireland is very alarming. Her situation is full of distress, and, as you alledge, she is on the brink of destruction. At other periods, High Churchmen have thought it useful

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to



to raise a cry, that the *Church* was in danger, when they only aimed at serving their interest or ambition, or gratifying their love of persecution. But you are more generous than these men; you extend your views to the State; your country has a great share of your concern; you have sounded the alarm, as you tell us, and wish to rouse the attention of government to the safety of *Church and State*, as, in your opinion it should seem, they had been too remiss, and their exertions too feeble for the greatness of the occasion. Now, if, indeed, the evil be thus pressing, if there be the most urgent necessity for Protestants of every denomination to unite their strength in support of our admired constitution, where was the prudence of an unprovoked attack upon the whole body of Presbyterians? Was it prudent to hold out to the world, that the Protestants of Ireland were not intimately united in support of the constitution? Is it thus you would strengthen the hands of government? And, at a moment so awful and critical in your apprehension, could it be imagined that wisdom should dictate the expedience of representing the Presbyterians, who form the great body of Protestants in this kingdom, and who consequently form the great *natural* strength of our Protestant Government, as a “*body of men who cannot be entitled to national confidence* †?” You ought, my Lord, before you brought such a charge, to have been better acquainted with their principles and conduct. Had you been better acquainted with their history, you would have known that, from their first establishment in this country, they had rendered the most

† p. 19.—Third Edition.

important services to government; that for near two centuries, in the most difficult and trying times, and in the most dreadful convulsions of the State, their conduct had been uniform and steady in support of the constitution, when some members of your Church, and not a few, were more than suspected by government, as we shall see hereafter. When you consider these facts with attention, you will perhaps find reason to change your opinion, and to find the principle is merely fanciful, dictated by your fears or by prejudice, that the members of the “ established Church, *alone*, “ can be cordial friends to the entire constitution “ of this realm, with perfect consistency of prin- “ ciple.”

The charge you have brought against Protestant Dissenters is not founded on any part of their conduct as subjects of the realm. You have not mentioned, and, I trust, you will not be able to mention any action of theirs of a public nature, that will not redound to their honour. The charge is founded on opinion, and therefore may be called fanciful, or the child of prejudice, and, in our judgment, is not supported by your arguments, and the authorities you have adduced, either of ancient or modern times. Let us go on to examine it with that respect, which is due to your extensive learning and knowledge of the world, and still more with a sacred regard to truth—to the interest of our country, and the vindication of Presbyterians from the injurious representation you have given of their principles.

The established Church you consider “ in a “ point of view merely political, and you propose

“ to prove that it is so *essentially* incorporated  
 “ with the State, that the subversion of the one  
 “ must necessarily overthrow the other.” \* To  
 enable your readers and yourself to judge whether this principle be founded on truth or be merely fanciful, it would have been necessary to describe the nature of this ecclesiastical polity, which you would advance thus highly—to point out its extent and limits—and to shew those important effects it is necessarily fitted to produce, and without which our civil constitution cannot exist. But instead of giving any distinct view of the question, you think it better to use general, undefined terms, and trust to strong assertions, on a subject avowedly of great importance, where the fancy has been accustomed to indulge certain implicit notions without enquiry. This is the true field for declamation, and you have chosen your ground well, from whence to sound an alarm. The delusion, perhaps, might vanish if you attempted to describe the ecclesiastical establishment in a political view, and to inform us how, and by what power it gave strength and stability to the State. We know that there are two Houses of Convocation; that the Bishops have a seat in the House of Lords, and that they are possessed of great revenues; that there are different degrees of dignities in the Church; and that courts and visitations are held in the name of the Bishops, wherein Laymen often preside.

Now, in what part of this political establishment are we to look for the support of the State? The houses of convocation have not, even the

\* page 6.

shadow of power. They have neither legislative nor judicial authority—and their meetings did not contribute either to the strength of the empire, or to the honour of the clerical character, as appears particularly by their conduct in the reign of Charles I. and in the reign of Queen Anne. Their sittings therefore are wisely discontinued, as in no sort essential to Church or State.

Is it on the Bench of Bishops in the House of Lords, that we are to look for this powerful support of our justly admired constitution? But our parliamentary history will not authorise your assertion that they are essential to a free State. If you say, they have been zealous supporters of the Crown, it will be acknowledged that they have been so much the devoted servants of it, as to bring our admired constitution well nigh to destruction. The temporal peers, the *hereditary* counsellors of the Crown, have authority and dignity sufficient to give that constitutional support to the Crown, which is essential to maintain the balance of the State.

It will scarcely be alledged that the Bishops Courts are an essential part of the constitution, or that the inferior Clergy in a *political* view are more useful than other good subjects.

But perhaps it may be said, that it is the combination of these several parts that constitutes this ecclesiastical establishment so essential to the State. And here you are called upon to explain this combination, and shew, how it is entitled to that political importance, to which you would exalt it in our constitution. Until you do this, you will  
excuse



excuse us for asserting that *your* particular ecclesiastical establishment, or any other particular ecclesiastical establishment, is not *essential* to our constitution.

Where the ecclesiastical authority is lodged in the church of England, seems as little determined, as the seat of infallibility in the church of Rome: For, not to mention the famous debate between *Hoadly* and *Sherlock*, we find *Parker*, bishop of Oxford asserting, the King was superior to Christ: But *Cozens*, dean of Peterborough asserts, that he had no ecclesiastical authority; whereas, by statute, all ecclesiastical power is asserted to the crown; all authority of jurisdiction, spiritual and temporal, is derived from the king's majesty, as supreme head of the churches and realms of England and Ireland. Episcopal jurisdiction may be vested in laymen by the crown, by the statute 31 Hen. VIII. c. 12. f. 23. This statute was repealed the first and second of Phil. and Mary; and this of Phil. and Mary was repealed in this matter, 1 Eliz. c. 1. so that ecclesiastical jurisdiction in lay hands stands to this day on the foot of 31 Hen. VIII.\* The opinions therefore of churchmen are at variance with the laws of the land.

Nor is it easy to understand what you mean by an "ecclesiastical establishment, considered in a view merely political." Do you mean, that we should exclude from it every idea of religion? But such abstract notions, if they could be formed, only lead to perplex and involve the subject; and there is the more reason to be explicit on this part of  
your

\* Examinat. of the Codex Jur. Eccl. Anglic. p. 16—23.

your argument; because the only utility of ecclesiastical establishments that you have pointed out, is not of a political, but of a religious or moral kind, —it is, “instructing the people in their duty, as  
 “men and citizens: The impossibility of fixing  
 “morality on a broad, or indeed on any sure basis,  
 “but that of religion; the necessity of establishing  
 “in the mind of the subject, an internal principle,  
 “as a collateral aid to the check of the law,”—  
 and for this you adduce the “authority of Christendom, since the days of Constantine.”\*

These are effects of christianity truly excellent. But will it be said, that these effects are confined to political establishments, and that they have not been produced by teachers of religion in every age, who were not members of any establishment? The early teachers of christianity did thus fix morality on the basis of religion, and they were dissenters from the established church. The Protestant dissenting ministers in England, and the Presbyterians in Ireland, it is presumed, are equally diligent in instructing the people, under their pastoral care, in their duty as men and citizens, with the ministers of the established church. But all established churches are not thus diligent; for at this day, in many of them abroad, teaching is seldom used; and in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, teaching was little encouraged at home: it was necessary for the clergy to take licences for preaching, and these were granted sparingly. It is, no doubt, the wisdom of every government to encourage practical religion, which is more essential to the happiness of a state than ecclesiastical establishments, considered

dered in a view 'merely political.' And here it may not be improper to lay before you the judgment of a divine of the established church: "If  
 " we would but open our eyes, we should see that  
 " we are beholden to the dissenters for the conti-  
 " nuance of a great part of our theological prin-  
 " ciples; for if the high church-men had no checks,  
 " they would have brought in Popery before this  
 " time, by their over-valuing pomp and ceremo-  
 " ny in divine worship. So that if there had been  
 " no dissenters, the Church of England had been  
 " long since ruined."\*

You say, "that almost every legislature (in  
 " Europe) has adopted an ecclesiastical polity,  
 " conformable to the genius of the civil constitu-  
 " tion."†

When Constantine came to the throne, he found the Christian Church governed by a power derived from the sacred founder of it, and not from any civil authority. This has been called the *inherent* power of the church; and the Emperor was so far from encroaching on this power, or superseding it by his imperial edict, that he supported it, and earnestly exhorted the church to continue the exercise of it. He appointed, indeed, by law, church revenues to be paid out of the revenues of every city. Large donations were made to some churches; but many of the bishops were poor, and some bishops were obliged to follow trades.‡ The influence that a few of them might have in public affairs, was due to the personal favour of the Emperor. But in his ecclesiastical establishment, if you will

\* Dr. Edwards Preacher, Vol. II. p. 133. † p. 9.

‡ Sozom. hist. eccl. p. 567. 600. 749. 752.

will allow it the name, he did not raise the bishops to any civil power; he did not raise them to be members of the legislature; he did not create them senators, or members of his council;\* and, what is to our purpose, if tithes be an essential ingredient of an established church, he gave them none; nor did he nominate to vacant bishoprics. The election of bishops or pastors was in the people, and had been so from the beginning of christianity, as it is practised to day by the Presbyterians of this kingdom. The Emperor writes to certain churches, “ that the election was in their power, and depended on their judgment—and should be made according to the rule of the church, and the tradition of the Apostles.”† Was this an establishment similar to the absolute government of the empire? Or was it the *independent* principle, or government in a civil view, which you charge as a fault against Presbyterians?‡ This independent, or inherent power continued long in the church, after the empire became christian. Ambrose was chosen bishop of Milan by the people, when he was governor of that city, and upon his election he demitted his government. Was this the *levelling* principle of the Presbyterian church, which you say, was adopted by republics? || This I ask, because you do not explain what you mean by it. It certainly shews an *independent* power in the church, not as to any civil matters, for in these they were, and ought to be subject to the state, but as to things merely religious; and that it was her opinion, that bishops ought not to be entangled with civil affairs, but that they should devote themselves entirely to the ministerial office. Con-

\* Episcopatus est nomen operis, non honoris. August. civ. dei. l. 19.

† Euseb. de Vita Constant. l. III. Theo l. l. I. c. 20. † p. 19. ‡ p. 10.



Constantine, and the emperors that succeeded him, had no idea of being heads of the church, in the sense that it is now used; nor did they think that any sort of ecclesiastical power was derived from that source to the pastors of the church. The notion of an “ecclesiastical establishment in a point of view merely political,” which has given rise in modern times to the fashionable phrase of *Church and State*, was unknown to Constantine: so that the church government under this despotic prince, was not “conformable to the genius of the civil constitution.” In your church, all ecclesiastical authority is derived to you from the crown. Hence it was, that the council of Nice, though convened by Constantine, did not look up to him for power to judge in the case of Arius; they decided by their own authority. But an English convocation could not thus decide in the case of Whiston. The decision of heresy was in the Queen, she was silent; and the convocation dared not pronounce sentence for fear of incurring a *præmunire*.

Neither was the “ecclesiastical establishment so incorporated with the state, that the subversion of the one, must necessarily have involved the overthrow of the other.”—Constantine supported, or if you will, established one sect; his immediate successor supported an opposite sect; and Julian subverted them both, and established, strictly speaking, the Heathen Temple instead of the christian church. But these changes were so far from necessarily involving the overthrow of the civil government, that it made not the smallest alteration. And it was this Julian, branded with the name of Apostate, perhaps improperly, that has furnished the model of religious establishments, and it is to him

him we are to refer them rather than to Constantine ; at least the model of this hated Apostate has been faithfully attended to by certain christian establishments ; and some, who arrogate to themselves high claims of excellence and perfection, have not been ashamed to imitate his laws. I shall, therefore, mention two or three of his laws, as it may gratify those that are curious in such researches ; he had his *test-act*, by which all that were appointed to places in the government, or army, were obliged to *qualify*, by attending the service of the Heathen Temples, and offering sacrifices to idols.—2. He enacted a law prohibiting christians from having a liberal education—that they might not be able to defend their religion against the philosophers, and that thereby it might fall into contempt.—3. He imposed extraordinary taxes on christians for being dissenters from the national establishment, similar to a double land-tax.—They that are desirous of seeing the whole of his system, will find it in the historians of that period.†

But, as the ecclesiastical policy, introduced by Constantine, gave no new strength or stability to the empire, so neither did it produce the other good effects, which you suppose to result from religious establishments, and in your opinion evince the propriety of them. The christian church had recommended itself to the world by the virtues and amiable characters of its members for several centuries, whilst they were either neglected or persecuted by the reigning emperors. But the virtues, that so much distinguished them in adversity, seem-

† Socrat. Eccl. hist. p. 184. & seq. Sozom. hist. Eccl. p. 623.

ed to have very quickly disappeared, when they were advanced to riches, and the favour of a court. Instead of instructing the people in their duty as men and citizens, the bishops neglected their own, and became factious, turbulent, seditious. So that Constantine quickly felt the dire effects of his ecclesiastical policy, and bitterly complains of their hatred and variance, and their doing every thing for the destruction of the human race.\* This first instance, then, would seem to overturn your principle rather than confirm it, and plainly points it out to be the wisdom of government to support men in the free exercise of their religion, and not establish any political institution of it.

His successor had equal reason to complain of the assuming and arrogant temper of his prelates, and among these none is more distinguished than St. Athanasius. He partook of all the priestly domination which, in succeeding ages, was so remarkable in the Church of Rome, and displayed itself throughout all the nations of Europe, and particularly in England, with no small violence. If the character of St. Athanasius be contrasted with that of the most haughty Popish Prelate known in the history of England, and be found to bear a striking resemblance, may it not strengthen our conclusion, that to raise ecclesiastics to great eminence and power did not tend to promote the peace either of the Empire or of Britain?

Every one, acquainted with church history, knows that few names have enjoyed a greater portion of fame as champions for their order than  
St.

\* Sozom. p. 488, 492.

St. Athanasius and St. Thomas à Becket.—They not only partake of the general likeness of character derived from the order, but are conspicuous among their brethren for a double portion of the spirit of it : And in the circumstances of their fortunes there is a remarkable similitude also, as well as in their manners and characters.

They were both early possessed of high reputation, and attracted the public attention—they were both raised to the highest Episcopal dignity in their country ; the one in Egypt, the other in England—they were both deeply infected with the spirit of bigotry and priestly domination, which led them into perpetual scenes of strife and variance—they both had the misfortune to be publicly accused of peculation ; the one as chancellor, the other as guardian of a charity for support of widows and orphans. Athanasius, however, had zealous apologists, who confidently deny the charge. They both gave occasion to the calling of councils to sit in judgment upon their conduct : and the judgment of the council of Tyre was unfriendly to Athanasius, as the *Constitutions of Clarendon* were to Becket : So that they both fled into banishment, having embroiled their country in distress and calamity.

To misfortunes and banishment, it is said, we owe some of the most exalted characters among the philosophers and poets, who were the ornaments of antiquity. But these *holy* men seem not to have profited by their misfortunes—they learned no wisdom—they acquired no virtues—they were persuaded they had already attained perfection : and in this persuasion, they both maintained



ed that their cause was the cause of Christ and of his church: and thousands believed them, or affected to believe them. Becket thought christianity consisted in priestly dominion—Athanasius in the vain questions of a vain philosophy. Therefore instead of the law of kindness; instead of that divine temper, which suffereth long and is kind; instead of that gentleness, which is easy to be entreated, and which leads us to prefer others in honour to ourselves—these prelates were filled with strife and variance and the bitterest contention. No wonder, then, their conduct was marked with none of those graces that adorn the Christian character, and that ought to distinguish the Christian Bishop. Instead of learning wisdom in the school of adversity, their minds sat brooding over their lost power and dignity; instead of learning humanity, as became their profession, their hearts were solely bent on recovering their former rank and eminence. To this end, they were restless, indefatigable, fruitful in expedients; and their expedients partook of the character of the men, dextrous and cunning, but at the same time daring, violent, and full of revenge. They inveighed against their sovereigns with bitterness and acrimony—they treated their names with contempt—they represented them as impious and profane, enemies to religion, and the church; and succeeded but too well in rendering them hated, and vile, and contemptible among the nations, where they sojourned, and to many of their own subjects.

They, therefore, both met with very powerful protection; it may be said, from the same quarter. The Pope of Rome supported them both with all  
his

his weight and authority : by which, along with their own restless ambition, they procured such power, as enabled them in a very threatening tone to pronounce vengeance against their sovereigns. Constantine, emperor of the West, was induced to declare war against Constantine his brother, if he did not restore Athanasius. And we do not find that the *Saint* had any reluctance to engage two brothers in a civil war, and to deluge his country in blood, that he might triumph over his adversaries in angry dispute—but Constantius thought it most dishonourable to engage in war, and with a brother, for the quarrel of a factious, wrangling Priest.

Becket had equal success in his intrigues with the king of France ; and by his assistance and the spiritual arms of the church, he obliged Henry II. powerful as he was, to descend to a treaty with a rebel subject, and even submit to be insulted by him.

Thus were these illustrious prelates restored in spite of their sovereigns ; and, as might be expected, returned home more haughty and arrogant than ever. Athanasius confronts his emperor, and meets him, as it would seem, on more than equal terms—then continues his procession through the provinces with a triumphant sort of insolence—foment the spirit of discord—and marks his progress with faction, presumption, and arrogance ; for all which he was accused and condemned, and this turbulent high Priest was a second time sent into banishment.

Becket returned equally triumphant through  
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the streets of London, and equally swelled with pride and insolence, which at length became so insupportable, that this arrogant prelate was miserably slain.

Their fame after death has been great, but various—Becket was admired, revered, adored by the christian or antichristian world. His shrine was visited with uncommon devotion for ages, even down to the Reformation.--An ingenious writer of that time, hath with much humour, given us a very lively picture of the pilgrimages and devotions paid at Becket's tomb, and the lucrative traffic carried on at his shrine.\*

During that period, Becket's fame far outshone that of Athanasius: but at the Reformation it was eclipsed, and set to rise no more.—Athanasius's, though not so splendid, has been more lasting, and has survived the Reformation, though it might have been expected that it would have sunk into equal obscurity and darkness.

Their fame, in certain respects, was equally unmerited—Becket was revered for virtues he did not possess—Athanasius for a creed he never saw; and both were introduced into the calander of Saints.

Such were these champions and confessors, or martyrs for the church, and for orthodoxy—Men, whose forbidding, ungainly characters were formed after the model of the heathen priesthood of their respective countries, famed for their intolerance,

\* Erasmus.

rance, bigotry, and religious fury.\*—The Egyptian faint had his full share of the factious, wrangling, turbulent spirit of his countrymen; as the English faint had of the gloomy, cruel, unrelenting superstition of the antient Druids.—This is the unhallowed source to which we should trace the uninterrupted succession of the hierarchy: for such is the origin of diocesan prelacy—An order the most opposite imaginable to the purity, the simplicity, and true dignity of the christian bishop.†

It were easy to adduce many other instances from this first ecclesiastical establishment, (to which you refer us) to shew, that it did not tend to the stability or peace of the empire, but, “considered in a point of view merely political,” was subversive of the publick peace and happiness. Saint Chrystom, by his intolerance and bigotry, and by his insufferable insolence and personal abuse, not only disgusted some of the chief nobility, and highest officers of the state, but by his influence in Constantinople, of which he was patriarch, involved his country in a dreadful civil war, and was himself at length driven into banishment, where meeting with no such powerful protectors, as those of Athanasius and Becket, to involve his

C country

\* Cæsar de Bello Gall. l. VI. Mosheim hist. eccl. Bower's hist. of the Popes. Diodor. Sicul. lib. II. c. IV. Juvenal Sat. 15.

————— Summis utrinque

Inde furor vulgo, quod numina vicinorum

Odit uterque locus; Cum solus credat habendos

Esse Deos, quos ipse colit —————

† Socrat. hist. eccl. lib. II. G. 23. 24. 26. Sozom. hist. eccl. lib. III. c. 20. p. 532. 546. Philostorgii hist. p. 485. Rapin's hist. of England. Lord Lyttleton's hist. of Hen. II.



country again in calamity, he sunk under the disgrace he so well deserved, and there ended his restless life.\*

We might mention a character of an illustrious prelate,† in an established church very nearly connected with ours, that bears a striking resemblance of this last. But church history furnishes a thousand instances; they abound under the emperors of Greece and Rome, as well as under the kings of England. These are the ecclesiasticks, who have been revered while living, and whose memories have been treated with the most distinguished honours by their brethren in every succeeding age. And it is they whose names have furnished out the long list of Saints to the calendar of the church, while the humble and peaceful servant of his God is unnoticed and forgotten.

Thus in the decline of the Roman empire was laid the foundation of church power, which was brought to its summit in the papal hierarchy. In this hierarchy, you say, “despotick states have found—a congenial system of arbitrary dominion.” But the English hierarchy, from whence our establishment was copied, is friendly to civil liberty—How does this appear, and where shall we search for proof? is it in political discussion, or in historical deduction? But here we are at a loss, even at our entering on the subject; for you have not told us what you understand by the church of England. Is its *political* constitution the same now as it was before the Reformation? or is it different? One of her prelates has told us, that the church of  
England

\* Theodorit. hist. eccl. l. V. c. 32. Sozom. p. 761. 767.

† Laud.

England is an equivocal term, and should it go back to Rome, it would be the church of England still. "The papal authority, you say, is congenial with arbitrary dominion;" be it so: but was not the church of England under the papal authority, when the barons established *Magna Charta*, and, as you observe, made the first article, "That the church of England shall be free, and enjoy her whole rights and liberties inviolable?" Now, what were those rights and privileges, and what was that freedom which the barons asserted for her? was it a freedom from the papal authority, or from subjection to the laws of the land, or from the encroachment of the crown, or of the people? If it was from the encroachments of the crown, then this boasted freedom consisted either in her being subjected to the court of Rome, or in the exercise of the *inherent* rights of the church—One of which is slavery, according to your principles; the other is independence, with which you reproach Presbyterians. Whilst the church of England was Popish, it was often kept in the most disgraceful thralldom by the court of Rome. Therefore it is not easy to understand, why you should refer to that period of the ecclesiastical establishment in England, as being friendly to liberty, since it is in apparent inconsistency with your principle, and unsupported by historical evidence.

We know that in succeeding times several statutes were made, and particularly, the 24th Henry VIII. which recites the former statutes, asserting the independence of the church of England on the church of Rome. Shall we say that the freedom and privileges of the church of England were then taken away, which you say, were secured by *Magna Charta*?

But you assert that, “ so essential was the preservation of the church esteemed to the welfare of the state, that the barons, when they were laying the foundation of English liberty, made it the first article in Magna Charta, that the church of England shall be free, and enjoy her whole rights and liberties inviolable.\*

Here we have a striking proof, my lord, that even learned and ingenious men are liable to be led away by the sound of the words in direct opposition to their sense; because the freedom, that is asserted to the church of England in this first article of Magna Charta, is altogether destructive of what we would call, the freedom of our established church at present. The liberty, asserted to the church by this famous charter, was the liberty of trampling under foot the laws of the land, of infringing an important prerogative, for which king John’s father and all his ancestors had zealously contended—it was establishing the right of appeals to Rome, which were deemed so dishonourable to the nation, and thereby subjecting it to a foreign jurisdiction. So that, perhaps, there is no period in the English history, that will less support your principle, or will less support the freedom of the church of England, than this of Magna Charta. For, however high the breasts of the nobles beat in the cause of civil liberty, there is no period, in which the kingdom was held in greater thralldom by the court of Rome.

Let

Let me call your attention to the history of this period, one of the most remarkable in the annals of England. King John, by his ill-fated conduct had been reduced to the necessity of surrendering his crown, in the most abject and humiliating manner, to a haughty and ambitious pontiff. After some days, he received his crown and kingdom, as a fief from the pope, and became his vassal. As a farther mark of his degradation, he granted a charter to the clergy, resigning in a still more formal manner the privileges and liberties of the church of England. Here was a supreme triumph of sacerdotal power. Langton, archbishop of Canterbury, and the clergy joined the confederate nobles—The general, appointed by the barons, was called the *Mareschal of the army of God, and of Holy Church*; and the first article of Magna Charta was to confirm these palpable usurpations of the court of Rome.\* The freedom of elections was secured to the clergy: The former charter of the king was confirmed, by which the necessity of a royal congè d'elire and confirmation was superseded: All check upon appeals to Rome was removed, by the allowance granted every man to depart the kingdom at pleasure. And the fines upon  
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\* Magna Charta, 1st. Art. That the Church of England shall be free, and enjoy her whole rights and liberties inviolable. And we will have them so to be observed, that it may appear that the freedom of elections, which was reckoned most necessary for the Church of England, and which we granted and confirmed by our charter, and obtained the confirmation of from Pope Innocent the third, before the discord between us and our Barons, was of our mere free-will; which charter we shall observe, and do will it to be faithfully observed by our heirs for ever.



the clergy for offences, were ordained to be proportioned to their lay estates, not to their ecclesiastical benefices.\*

Was it at this time of papal tyranny, or since the Reformation, that the ecclesiastical and civil constitution is to be likened to “ a double cone, united by the authority of the crown ? ” † In the reign of king John we have seen, that they were not thus united, and that one of them supported the triple crown at Rome, and overthrew the other. But this quaint simile is not easily understood. It is to be wished you had explained it. At first view, it conveys no very favourable idea of the ecclesiastical constitution. It points it out as a separate body from the state—as having a separate interest, and forming something like imperium in imperio, a constitution not to be endured in a free state. If, therefore, it has a different, and a better meaning, it would have been well to have explained it. This notion seems to have been introduced by the ill judged policy of William the Conqueror. He augmented the superstitious veneration for Rome—The dignified clergy pretended a total independence on the state ; and he broke those bands of connection, which, in the Saxon times, had preserved an union between the lay and clerical orders. Lord Lyttleton speaking of this reign, says, “ there was another alteration, which, though it “ was made with the concurrence of parliament, “ *essentially* hurt the commonwealth ; I mean the “ separating of the civil and ecclesiastical jurisdic- “ tions, which the Saxon bishops and earls had “ exercised jointly, in the county courts by giv- “ ing

“ ing the bishops a court of their own—Though  
 “ this was done under a specious pretence of re-  
 “ formation—it proved a great cause of the cor-  
 “ ruption of the clergy, and of the advancement  
 “ of their power beyond its due bounds—includ-  
 “ ing many causes purely civil.”\*

But whatever the ecclesiastical establishment is, and to whatever period we are to assign it (for you have not defined it) you assure us, it is “ an essential part of the constitution—and that there is a *natural* union of the civil with the ecclesiastical branch of the constitution.”† If it be the present establishment of the Protestant church, which is an *essential* part of the constitution—this position is contradicted by fact, for the Britannick constitution flourished in great vigour many ages before the Reformation—But if you would include also the Popish establishment in former times, you have already told us, this is congenial with arbitrary dominion, and consequently cannot be an *essential* part of a free constitution ; nor can there be a *natural* union between them.

There is another difficulty—After laying it down that the ecclesiastical establishment is an *essential* part of the constitution—you say, “ the kingdom of Scotland may perhaps be held forward in opposition to these principles ; but you answer, “ that a single exception is never a fair objection to “ a general rule.”—Shall we call this an oversight, or an apparent inconsistency in reasoning, to alledge that any thing can exist without what is *essential* to it ? In any other subject this would be look-  
 ed

\* History of Henry II. vol. I. p. 53. vol. II. p. 363.

† p. 12.

ed upon as a contradiction in terms ; but where ecclesiastical authority is concerned it may sometimes be a merit to assert and *believe* what is unintelligible.\*

But besides Scotland, the kingdom of Prussia, and several of the German principalities, will be found exceptions to your general principles ; for they have not adopted ecclesiastical establishments, similar to the state. And still more ; prior to the Reformation, the churches in the several republicks of Europe were governed by bishops. So that it is not *essential* to the nature of ecclesiastical establishments to be similar to the civil constitution, nor is there any *natural* union between them.

It may be proper to mention here, what are the established principles of the church of England concerning church government in a political view.

First, then, it is said, that a national church government in a christian kingdom is necessary to preserve order among the particular churches within the nation, to be a check on the manners of the clergy, and a security against foreign usurpations.

2. That the national church government by archbishops, bishops, archdeacons, &c. is a human constitution, and may be altered by the civil magistrate.

3. That this national church has an entire power within itself, and is absolutely free, and independent of that foreign power, and that the king is as much the supreme head of it, as he is of the state.

4. That,

\* Credo quia impossibile.

4. That, upon this principle, our first reformers broke off from Rome, and by fixing the independency of this national church, it is secured against ever returning back to Rome.—If these be the principles of our first reformers, you will observe they are not at all favourable to your argument.

These things, however, are matters of speculation, which might be passed over, were it not that important consequences are drawn from them, which have very materially affected society. It may be more satisfactory, because more convincing, to consider the operation of these principles in our country in an historical view.

The present ecclesiastical establishment is founded on an act of parliament, 28th Henry VIII. By this statute, the supreme ecclesiastical power was vested in the crown, and the authority, that was formerly claimed and exercised by the Pope, was henceforward to be exercised by the prince. And Henry VIII. the first supreme head of *this church*, by virtue of this supereminent power, did in a very decisive manner convince the nation, that, with the change of name from Popish to Protestant, they had only changed ecclesiastical tyrants. Their minds were distracted, and kept in continual anxious suspense, whilst they looked up to their new guide to fashion their uncertain opinions according to his caprice and humour; which, to their cost, they found was as cruel and tyrannical, as that of the hated sovereign pontiffs ever had been. Henry VIII. continued to defend the doctrines of the church of Rome as fiercely, as he attacked its jurisdiction. He alternately persecuted Protestants  
for



for rejecting the former, and the Catholics for acknowledging the latter; infomuch that Protestants and Papists, by the capricious cruelty of this bigotted prince, have been consumed in the same fires together. This is to be attributed to the political power of the establishment; for the religious principles of Protestants must discountenance persecution, as they are founded on the indefeasible right of private judgment. But an ecclesiastical power, so absolute, was unfriendly to civil liberty, as well as to personal safety, and continued to produce very unhappy effects in the reign of Edward VI. in which were passed several statutes, that punished non-conformity by fines and imprisonment. The same spirit of persecution continued throughout the long reign of Queen Elizabeth, and the reigns of the several princes of the unfortunate family that succeeded her. Were we to descend to an enumeration of particular instances of persecution, the detail would be black and cruel. Let us hear in a few words the account the late Lord Chancellor King has given of them, as practised in the glorious reign of Queen Elizabeth; over which, however, he wishes to cast a veil, for the honour of that renowned queen—“ Some hereticks were  
 “ burned; other persons were hanged; some had  
 “ their goods confiscated; others had their per-  
 “ sons imprisoned. And to mention more parti-  
 “ cularly, an act was passed in the 35th year of Eliza-  
 “ beth, by which the Dissenters are, among other  
 “ penalties, to abjure the realm in forty days, or  
 “ suffer death without benefit of clergy—Which,  
 “ he observes, was worse than abjuration for fe-  
 “ lony, at common law; in that, they had the  
 “ benefit of clergy; in this, they had not—This  
 “ is one of the severities of Queen Elizabeth’s  
 “ reign—

“reigh—Whether this be wholesome severity or  
 “not, human nature will determine—Again,  
 “what those wholesome severities were, your  
 “lordship has been told: they were hangings,  
 “burning, abjuration, confiscation, imprison-  
 “ment, loss of estate, liberty, and life.”\*

These things shew the danger of trusting power in the hands of ecclesiastics of any denomination; and that this boasted religious establishment is capable of defeating all the good purposes which you alledge such establishments are fitted to produce. In the breast of a persecutor there can be no religion—and accordingly we find, that in the solemn, stately reign of Elizabeth,† and in the gay licentious reign of Charles II. religion was equally banished from their courts.

We do not find in this period, where arbitrary government made great strides, that the religious establishment afforded any support to the freedom of the state; but so much the reverse, that we  
 have

\* Sacheverel's trial, fol. p. 71, 290.

† The character of Queen Elizabeth's church and court, from a writer of their own, is very remarkable. The churchmen heaped up many benefices upon themselves, and resided upon none, neglecting their cures—Many of them alienated their lands, made unreasonable leases—granted reversions and advowsons to their wives and children, or to others for their use—Churches ran greatly into dilapidations and decays; and were kept nasty and filthy, and undecent for God's worship. Among the laity there was little devotion; the Lord's-day greatly profaned; the common prayers little frequented—Some lived without any service of God at all. Many were mere heathens and atheists—the queen's own court a kind of lawless place, an harbour for Epicures and Atheists, &c.” Strype's life of Parker, p. 395.

have the testimony of Hume, and he was no friend of Dissenters, that, “ so absolute was the  
 “ authority of the crown (in the reign of the Tu-  
 “ dors) that the precious spark of liberty had been  
 “ kindled, and was preserved by the Puritans  
 “ alone. And to this sect the English owe the  
 “ whole freedom of their constitution.” And they  
 certainly have not been negligent in “ instructing  
 “ the people in their duty, as men and citizens :  
 “ and fixing morality on the broad basis of religi-  
 “ on ; and establishing in the mind of the subject  
 “ an internal principle, as a collateral aid to the  
 “ check of the law.”\*

As to the trite adage of James I. *no bishop, no king*, it cannot be supported from History, or any just political reasoning. For, when you mention this adage, I suppose, you understand a bishop vested with a political character : but surely, a throne may be supported without such aid ; and innumerable kings have reigned, who never heard of such bishops. This king aimed at arbitrary government, and he flattered his bishops, finding them subservient to his purpose : and they, in their turn, flattered this vain prince in order to exalt the mitre.

In the succeeding reign, these intrigues were pursued with a fatal violence, and produced the most dreadful effects. For, while the prelates were so liberal in raising the crown at the expence of public liberty, they made no scruple of encroaching themselves on the royal rights the most incontestible, in order to exalt the hierarchy, and procure

cure to their own order dominion and independence. All the doctrines, which the Romish church had borrowed from some of the early fathers, and which freed the spiritual from subordination to the civil power, were now adopted by the church of England, and interwoven with her political and religious tenets. A divine and apostolical charter was insisted on, preferably to a legal and parliamentary one. The sacerdotal character was magnified as sacred and indefeasible. All right to spiritual authority, or even to private judgment in spiritual subjects, was refused to profane laymen. This account is given us by a zealous advocate of Charles I. and for the measures of his government, who adds: "So disgusted were all  
 " the lovers of civil liberty at the *slavish* doctrines  
 " promoted by the clergy, that they received  
 " without controul vehement invectives, (*i. e.* in  
 " the House of Commons) against the usurpations  
 " of the Bishops, against the high commission,  
 " against the late convocation, against the new  
 " canons."\*

This judgment is confirmed by men of the highest character and authority with the church. Every one, acquainted with the history of this eventful period, knows that Lord Falkland and Lord Digby were Episcopal and Royalists, and yet no men can with greater severity censure the conduct of the bishops than they have done. Falkland charges them with labouring, evidently, to bring in an English, though—not a Roman Popery; and that whilst Masses had been said in security, a Conventicle had been a crime.† And how doth Lord  
 Digby

\* Hume's hist. of England, vol. VIII. p. 395.

† Rushworth, vol. IV. p. 184.



Digby in the indignation of his soul, where he is earnestly pleading in their behalf, describe their fury and oppressions as beyond all enduring! “ I do not think, saith he, that any people hath been more provoked, than the *generality* of England, of late years, by the insolencies and exorbitances of the prelates.”

“ I protest, Mr. Speaker, I cannot cast my thoughts on the churchmen, that have governed of late, but they appeared to me as a scourge employed by God upon us, for the sins of the nation. For my part, I profess, I am so enflamed with the sense of them, that I find myself ready to cry out with the loudest of the 15000: down with them, down with them to the very ground!”\* I only mention the authority of such men, whose testimony in this case, we must suppose, could only be extorted by the force of truth. What then, shall we say, is the political tendency of this ecclesiastical establishment, especially when we are told by the same authority, that the faults of individuals of the order proceed from the nature of the order itself?† Shall we say with you, that the church is so essentially incorporated with the state, that the subversion of one must necessarily involve the overthrow of the other, and consequently that this religious establishment is friendly to civil liberty? or shall we agree with the long parliament, that the ecclesiastical establishment is in no sort essential to the existence of the state, and to the freedom of our constitution?

You

\* Rushworth, vol. IV. part 3. p. 172. † Lord Falkland.

You speak pretty plainly, in more places than one, of the principles of Presbyterians, as unfriendly to the church, and say, “ that though  
 “ they may acquiesce for a time in establishments,  
 “ which they dislike, from love of quiet; yet,  
 “ when ever a safe opportunity shall offer to  
 “ give free scope, these principles will operate.” †  
 The principles you refer to are contained, I suppose, in your 19th page, and tend, as you are pleased to represent them, merely to pull down an “ Ecclesiastical establishment.”

Upon what ground you have hazarded this assertion, I am at a loss to conjecture. I could have wished you had mentioned your authority; whether it was derived from History, or any publick paper or record, that we might have examined it, and not have satisfied yourself with barely saying it was from the “ leading Presbyterians in this Kingdom;” for, as you appear to be very imperfectly acquainted with our principles, you will excuse me for thinking that you have conversed very little with the leading Presbyterians on the subject of Church Government, or on their general history.

And here, give me leave to observe, that the principles you mention, may be the principles of Independents, but that Presbyterians, are not Independents; to call them so is a contradiction in terms. You may possibly have met with a man, or a few men, in some parts of this kingdom, that are Independents; but it is not from them, but from the great Body of Presbyterians, who  
 compose

compose the general synod of Ulster, that you are to form your opinion of the principles of Presbyterians. You would scarcely think it fair, if any one should give an account of the principles of your Church from the Free and Candid Disquisitions, from Dr. Clarke's improved Liturgy, from the Bishop of Clogher's Essay on Spirit, or in Ecclesiastical polity from Hoadly Bishop of Bangor and his abettors. You would refer us, perhaps, rather to the Act of Uniformity, and other Ecclesiastical Statutes, and the opinion of Convocation; if, by the constitution of your Church, they have authority to give an opinion.

I would farther observe, that the Presbyterians, who first settled in this Kingdom, were educated in a national Church, and therefore they could not be supposed "to reject the Idea of it." But, as Ecclesiastical Establishments differ widely from one another, as they descend through various gradations, down from the vast fabrick of the Episcopal hierarchy to the simplicity of the Genevan, founded on the model of the primitive Church, it seemed requisite that you should have defined what you understand by these terms; and that you should continue to use them in a certain definite sense; particularly, whether you mean an Establishment that raises Churchmen to distinguished eminence for riches and power in the State, and gives them a political character as members of the Legislative Body. If this be your meaning, then we may dislike such an Establishment, and yet it will not follow that we reject the idea of every other National Church. The National Church of Scotland, such as it was  
in

in the days of our Ancestors, the Presbyterians of Ireland certainly did not dislike. The Church of Geneva they could not dislike. They do not disapprove of the maintenance of the Clergy by the State. Thus they are maintained in Scotland, and on the Continent : and the Presbyterian Ministers of Ireland have, for more than a century, received a small salary from the Crown, and which, however small, they have received with most grateful acknowledgments, as a mark of the Royal favour and protection, and which, from the favourable dispositions of Government, they hope will be augmented ; but they think the Clergy should be chosen by the people ; and that Ecclesiastical discipline should be exercised by the Pastors of the Church assisted by the people. They think all equally good subjects should be equally protected by the State, and that there should be an universal toleration of Religion,—that the King is not the head of your Church alone, but that in his political character, he is the head of all his people, to whom they all owe equal allegiance.

You assert, however, that our principles tend merely to pull “ down an ecclesiastical Establishment.” How is this proved? not by historical evidence ; for that is clearly against you. Beyond all doubt, it is not the general principle of Presbyterians to “ reject the idea of a “ National Church ;” this you acknowledge ; the presumption therefore is, that the Presbyterians of Ireland do not reject it ; and it is incumbent on you to prove your assertion, and shew at what period they adopted this opinion, in contradiction to their principles at their original settlement



lement in this Kingdom, and in opposition as you tell us to all “ their Brethren of Geneva, “ Switzerland, Holland, Germany, and Scotland.”

But if you mean your own Establishment, and that our principles would lead us to use violence in pulling it down, you are called upon to bring a particular charge founded on facts ; and to tell us also what you mean by a “ *safe opportunity*, “ which, when it shall offer, will give free scope “ to our principles to operate.” This you ought to have done, or not to have brought the charge against us. However, since you have not chosen to speak out plainly, I will tell you what I would reckon a *safe opportunity*. If your Church should, unhappily, at any time hereafter, give reason to her chief members among our Nobility and Commons, to censure her conduct with such severity as was used by the Lords Falkland and Digby, and so many others in the reign of Charles I. ; If the legislature in England and in Ireland should think it for the interest and happiness of these kingdoms, to abolish the present ecclesiastical Establishment by acts of Parliament—Then, the Presbyterians of Ireland might think it a *safe opportunity*—And if, in the course of things, it should appear eligible to the wisdom of Parliament to change the ecclesiastical Establishment, don't be afraid that the protestant ascendancy, or the stability of government would be in any danger from the want of another national Church. For, if a national Church be essential to the civil constitution, the Presbyterians might disappoint your anxious fears for the safety of the State ; and as they so far outnumber your Church, they would give a greater strength to the constitution ;

tion; because, on your own principles, so many more might, then, be "trusted as cordial friends" to the State, with the most perfect consistency." And on their own principles, they would fix the Crown, not on the narrow points of two divided cones, which have, sometimes, made it a crown of thorns, but on a solid pyramid, whose basis would be as extensive as their influence: for in that case we must lament the loss of *all good churchmen* as cordial friends to the State; because, if I understand your opinion right, it would seem to imply, that none can be trusted, if they, or their party, be not well paid for it.

But your fears for the safety of your church from those dreaded, levelling principles of Presbyterians, whether real or feigned, may safely be dismissed; for the Church of England was never yet in danger of being pulled down, but by her own members. And to this memorable transaction I would wish to call your attention, as your conjectures, or your fears are grounded, perhaps, on that very remarkable transaction of the last century:

And here I would observe from the proceedings of the long Parliament, that the defence of civil liberty and the constitution was their first and principal consideration. This at the beginning engaged all their care and attention: and the hierarchy was at length struck at, only, because it was judged unfriendly to the freedom of the State. This was, professedly, the cause of the first attack upon the Bishops. It was intended to deprive them of every sort of *civil* jurisdiction, and

*particularly* of their votes in the house of Lords, because they were blindly devoted to the court. Many of the Peers were much disposed to this, believing it could do the church no harm, if the Bishops had fewer diversions from their spiritual charges. \*

Let it be farther observed, that whatever may be charged on the ambition of some, or on the craft and enthusiasm of others, in the subsequent contest between the King and Parliament, we are now speaking of a time, when the attention of the nation was turned towards the deliberations of a council of men, which the necessity of the King's affairs, in spite of his inclinations, and all his favourite principles of policy, had forced him to call together—a council of men worthy of the arduous task, they were now to undertake; chosen by the people of England, not through the influence of corruption, but under the awful sense, that all that was dear to them, as a country of liberty, was, by the wisdom and fortitude of their representatives, now to be preserved, or to perish, and be lost for ever.

Notwithstanding the alarming exigency of the case, they suffered not themselves, to be precipitated into random prescriptions, but with manly composure of spirit set themselves, by a careful inquiry and patient investigation, to find out the original and latent sources of all this mischief—In consequence of which, in spite of all preconceived opinions, and in spite of the prejudices of education, how quickly did they come  
to

\* Clarendon Hist. p. 133.

to discover, and to be fully convinced—“ That  
 “ the constitution of the ecclesiastical hierarchy  
 “ had been one of the most powerful engines, in  
 “ the hands of a devout and arbitrary spirited  
 “ prince, by which he had well nigh effected the  
 “ total subversion of the laws, and liberties of  
 “ his country. And the absolute necessity there  
 “ was, *in the circumstances they were then in*, for  
 “ wresting this engine out of his hands. And  
 “ they therefore declare, that the government of  
 “ the Church by Archbishops, Bishops, their  
 “ Chancellors, and Commissaries, Deans, Arch-  
 “ deacons, and other ecclesiastical Officers, hath  
 “ been found, by long experience, to be a great  
 “ impediment to the perfect reformation and  
 “ growth of religion, and very prejudicial to  
 “ the State and government of this kingdom,  
 “ &c.” \*

Here, then, is a testimony as unexceptionable as can well be given by human wisdom, that the *ecclesiastical hierarchy* is, in its constitution and natural course of operation, dangerous to the liberty and legal government of Britain, but extremely friendly to kingly domination, and arbitrary power. And this is the more remarkable, as this assembly of patriots, for purity of manners, wisdom of council, and heroism of spirit, the most venerable that England or, perhaps, any other country ever produced, was composed almost entirely of episcopals.

For Clarendon tells us, “ that in the house of  
 “ Peers there were only two, at that time, ta-  
 “ ken

\* Preamble to the Bill for abolishing Episcopacy.



“ ken notice of, the lords *Say* and *Brooke* : and  
 “ of the leaders in the house of commons, *Fi-*  
 “ enne and Vane, and afterwards *Hambden*,  
 “ were *believed* to be enemies to the whole fa-  
 “ brick of the Church, and to desire a dissolution  
 “ of it. For without doubt, the major part of  
 “ that body consisted of men, who had no mind  
 “ to a breach.” \*

In this great transaction, Presbyterians had little share—they had no power to abolish the ecclesiastical establishment—no other power could have abolished it but the parliament of England ; nor is it likely any other power will ever abolish it. Protestant dissenters do wish, no doubt, to see your church farther reformed, and in this they are joined by many members of the church : And they earnestly wish that government may very soon engage in that arduous undertaking. But we know this must originate in England, and be perfected there ; and then according to the changes that shall take place in it, there may, or may not, be fewer dissenters.

But, still, considering it in a view merely political, we have the authority of an English parliament that it is not *essential* to the civil constitution, as you would assert. So that the state is in no danger from the disturbances which alarm you so much. Its native vigour will support it, let the church government be what it may ; and whether tithes be well or ill paid, or whether our government shall think fit to continue tithes, or appoint any other maintenance of the clergy, according as their wisdom shall think best. You

\* Hist. page 133.

You exult in the revival of the hierarchy at the Restoration—and yet during the reign of Charles II. the political principles of churchmen did them no honour, as members of a free state. Their favourite doctrines of passive obedience—non resistance—the divine right of kings\*—and the damnable sin of schism, did not shew their inviolable attachment to our admired constitution. For who is there in our day, that will not acknowledge these principles to be subversive of civil liberty, and of all legal government?

If the opposition of the seven Bishops to King James be brought forward to redeem the character of the clergy, sorry would I be to deny them the praise that may be due to them. These prelates had been as industrious, as their brethren, to poison the minds of the people and the king, by instilling into them the most slavish or arbitrary principles. The king, being a ready pupil, and as fond of these doctrines as they could have wished him, was not slack in reducing them to practice. And he attempted to execute them, it would seem, prudently, where the largest professions had been made of an unlimited obedience, and therefore, where he might expect the most implicit submission. But, he found himself, here, most miserably disappointed and mistaken—Happy for the nation and for the Protestant religion, that these men were false to their principles! In a Hampden, or a Ruffel, or a Sydney, such opposition would have been justly deemed noble, manly, resolute: it would

\* Les princes ne tiennent, disent-ils, leur pouvoir que de Dieu seul. Cette maxime, imaginée par le Clergé—ne met les rois au-dessus des peuples, que pour commander aux rois mêmes au nom de la Divinité. Abbé Rainal hist. tom. VI.

would have been deemed worthy of every praise, and have reflected additional lustre on their distinguished and venerable names, through every age, as being consistent with the glory of their characters—But, in such men, and professing such principles we can only admire the spirit of the constitution bursting forth, and rising superior to their avowed doctrines of slavery.\*

The high-church party, throughout the kingdom, behaved in the like unworthy and inglorious manner. By a dishonourable prostitution of principles and character, as members of a *free* state—they pushed on this infatuated prince to the most licentious abuse of power: and in the end, did as much by their slavish principles of absolute, passive obedience, and by their disingenuity, to ruin the Stuart family, as Cromwell, by all his dexterity, and prowess, and his most adventurous courage.

The power and domination of ecclesiasticks was checked at the Revolution. Their turbulent temper broke out towards the end of Queen Anne's reign, but by the wisdom of the present royal family, moderate churchmen have been generally advanced and countenanced, and the nation has enjoyed more internal peace and security, than in any period since the foundation of the monarchy. So that, it would seem, the happiness of the people has risen in proportion as the power of the clergy has diminished. Here again, we are justified

\* It was a saying of those times, "Of the seven Golden Candlesticks put into the tower by King James, five of them proved Prince's metal."

fied in our conclusion, that your ecclesiastical establishment, “in a view merely political,” is not an essential part of our civil constitution. Nor is it “precisely formed on the same model,” as you assert: \* for in that case the bishops must have been hereditary, as our peers are: and the lower house of convocation must have been chosen by the people, if they are supposed to represent the church according to the definition of the church in the XXXIX articles. But you do not use the word in this sense; you use it to denote the clergy, building, or house of prayer,—and often a political constitution, which ambiguous and indefinite use of the word occasions confusion and perplexity, and ought to be avoided in discussions of this sort.

The political establishment of the church, which you propose, only, to consider, is not an *essential* part of the civil constitution. It is not so essential as our courts of law, which are most intimately blended and interwoven with the constitution, and may with much propriety be said to be essential to it—or as a well regulated military force, by which the internal and external peace of the state is secured. It should rather be considered as a matter of regulation, which may be modelled according to the views of government,—may be continued or laid aside, and the throne remain firm on an immovable basis—and the state be in no danger of “risking any of those *tremendous* evils,” † with which you would alarm us, and which are merely imaginary, dictated by prejudice and the spirit of party.

But

\* p. 11.

† p. 20.



But you speak in high terms of this church establishment, as if it alone gave stability to our admired constitution—and then, again, you describe the clergy a *helpless* “class of men,”\* and call aloud for support, not only from government, but from Presbyterians—Here is the most apparent inconsistency; for you have said before, that the members of the *Established* Church alone can be cordial friends to the *entire constitution* of this realm with *perfect consistency of principle*.† If this means any thing, the entire constitution must mean the church and state, and the reason why Presbyterians cannot be cordial friends is their dissent from the church—and yet you call upon them to support you in that part alone, where you say they cannot be cordial friends, with consistency of principle. What shall we say of such reasoning as this? and what credit will the publick give to those charges you have brought against Presbyterians, which you yourself seem immediately to relinquish? The nation is not so blind, as to think the state is in the smallest danger from the distresses of the South—and your want of information in regard to the principles and conduct of the Presbyterians of Ulster, where you lived so long, will induce them to receive with caution all that you have said concerning the risings and tumults in Munster.

Another apparent inconsistency I might mention, is, when speaking on commutation, you find a strong objection from the difficulty of ascertaining the value of church livings—but you find no difficulty to state their value and form an average, when you wanted to shew the *very scanty* appointments

\* p. 93—78.

† p. 11.

pointments of the clergy; you did more, you could find out the appointments of other churches in Britain and on the continent. So that we cannot help admiring that happy facility of making every thing *bend* to secure the payment of tithes. In stating the average of church livings too, you have chosen to omit the revenues of the bishops, and an account of some of those sees where the church livings are greatest. This omission may be immaterial in this kingdom; but in regard to strangers, into whose hands your book may come, it might not have been improper to inform them, that the church enjoys, as is supposed, the thirteenth part of the lands of Ireland; a circumstance which would satisfy them that with so great a landed interest, the clergy are in no danger of wanting support.

You have advanced several modes of commutation, and have overthrown them; and we will suppose your objections to be well founded; but it does not, therefore, follow that there may not be other modes, which would be effectual both for the ease of the people and of the clergy. Whenever government shall be desirous of entering in good earnest into the subject of commutation, it will be no difficult matter to find out a mode, that will effectually answer the end.

You are anxiously attentive to the emoluments of the clergy, and seem to think it material that, in any proposed scheme of commutation, the amount of each living should at least remain as great as it is at present. But in a new regulation, this might seem unnecessary, or improper. The value

value and extent of parishes appear to have arisen from accidental circumstances. We see livings, worth perhaps 1000l. a year, contiguous to small towns or villages; and others of little amount, adjacent to considerable towns or cities. This might be altered without hurting the political importance of the establishment, and it will scarcely be alledged that the moral or religious purposes, which you mention, will be defeated, if instead of 1000l. a year, the successor should have only the half, or even a quarter of that income: Because it will, generally, be found that wealth is unfriendly to labour. And though in the highest departments of the law, the incessant labour and unwearied attention bear proportion to the dignity of rank, and emolument of office, it is far otherwise in the church. With the fages of the law it is a maxim, that "where no service is done, nothing is due;" if this were adopted by the church, many complaints concerning the clergy would be no longer heard of.

In Scotland, you say their parishes amount, on an average, to 140l. 16s. 8d. Irish: and in your church, if the national allotment were distributed in equal portions, the nett sum for each clergyman would amount only to 133l. 6s.\* Here now it would seem you have given a precedent in favour of commutation: for, in virtue of that, or something equivalent to it, the livings of the Scotch clergy were settled, and they are higher, as you have stated them, than those of your clergy. If therefore such advancement be desirable, it might be very material for the consideration of government,

\* p. 43.

ment, should they go into this important subject, under the sanction of your name. But would the established clergy of this kingdom, thank you for such advancement of their livings? or would they treat the proposal as a *levelling* principle? “to reduce clerical incomes to so base a level, as will exclude from the sacred function all men of *ingenuous* birth, promising abilities, and liberal education; and leave a trust, so difficult as well as important, involving together with religion, every political and private interest, to the lowest of the people.”\* Whether such complaint would be made on the present supposition, I will not say: Nor will I pretend to judge, whether this higher standard of the Church of Scotland ought to be adopted by your church. The only standard, that would appear most desirable, is, that which will induce men of competent learning and abilities, to devote themselves to the clerical office, and will secure a proper attention to the duties of the pastoral care. In Scotland, these great ends of a national Church are well provided for. Among their ministers we find the names of Robertson and Blair, of Leechman, Campbell, Reid, and others of distinguished learning, who do honour to their country: and in this Church pluralities and non-residence are unknown, and unheard of, except when mention is made of the shameful practices of other churches; for here a constant, *personal* attention to the duties of their office is indispensable—you know how much it is the reverse in some other Churches, and particularly in your own.

The subordination of ranks amongst the Clergy will scarcely be objected here, because you say,  
“that



“ that is a point of doubtful discussion, and is to-  
 tally irrelevant to the present question. But  
 you ask what particular mischief could arise from  
 the wealth of the Clergy, circumstanced as  
 ours, were their appointment—as great, as  
 some men falsely imagine?”\* Even the same  
 that has ever arisen from the wealth and opulence  
 of the Clergy—indolence, non-residence, neglect  
 of duty, avarice encreasing in proportion as riches  
 encrease—the consequent lust of power and domi-  
 nion, and, when a *safe opportunity* offers, all the  
 mischiefs that have arisen from this source since  
 the days of Constantine, in every country, and in  
 every age †.

But, be this as it may, you tell us, that “ the  
 State has allotted tithes for the maintenance of  
 the Clergy. It is the most antient establishment  
 in the realm”; and for this you refer us to *Selden*.  
 But it would have been more satisfactory to  
 have laid before your reader an account of the in-  
 stitution of tithes in this kingdom, as early as we  
 have any records of it—whether the Clergy were  
 proprietors or trustees, as in other churches, at  
 so remote a period. For when christianity became  
 the reigning religion, before the institution of

\* p. 147.

† Plus scandalizat laicos pompa hæc clericorum, quam ædifi-  
 cat: plus ad indignationem, et murmur, et invidiam eos excitat,  
 quam ad amorem: et plus auget in his avaritiam et superbiam,  
 quam extinguat. Neque potest Sacerdos pompaticus verbo et  
 exemplo, humilitatem, frugalitatem, et sobrietatem, aliis per-  
 suadere — Munditia mentis facit ornamentum Clericorum —  
 alioquin Christus et ejus Apostoli non sufficienter ornassent eccle-  
 siam, et honorassent, quando talia in se contempserunt, et abiis-  
 spernenda suaserunt. Spalat. de Repub. l. 9.

tithes,

tithes, the ecclesiastical revenues continued for some ages to be divided into four parts : whereof one went to the Bishop, a second to the inferior Clergy, a third to the poor, and a fourth to the repairs of the Church, and of other publick buildings\*. Tithes in the original institution of them, and for a considerable time afterwards, were not considered as a provision for the Clergy alone, but as the estate of the Church, or congregation of the faithful; out of which the poor and the places for religious worship were to be provided for. This is so clear to those conversant in Church history, as to require no proof : and it is plain that tithes were originally received by the Clergy, not as a *property*, but under a trust, to be divided as the Canons direct †. And left the trustees

\* Quatuor, tam de reditu Ecclesiæ, quam de oblatione fidelium fiebant portiones : prima erat pontificis : Secunda Clericorum : pauperum tertia : quarta fabricis Ecclesiæ deputabatur. Gelasius Papa cit. a Valesio in Annotat. in Theod. Lector. l. 2. p. 567, & p. 170.

† Theodorus Lector says, the custom of the Church of Rome was to hold no possessions, and if lands were given, immediately to sell them : *Και εθος ειναι εις μοιρας τρεις διαιρεισθαι ; Και το μηνη τη εκκλησια διδουσαι, το δε, τω επισκοπω, το δε, κληρω* Hist. eccl. l. II. p. 567. The same custom was retained in England in the distribution of tithes, so late as in the year 1014, as appears by the laws of Ethelred : — *de decimis, Rex et Sapientes ejus statuerunt et decreverunt, prout justum est, quod una pars Decimarum illarum quæ ad Ecclesiam pertinent detur ad Restaurationem Ecclesiæ, et secunda pars Dei Ministris, tertia Pauperibus Dei et inopibus servilibus* Wilkins f. 113. Again, *Sancti etiam patres statuerunt, ut Ecclesiæ Dei decimas suas quique conferant ; tradanturque eæ sacerdoti, qui easdem in tres distribuat portiones, unam ad Ecclesiæ Reparationem, alteram Pauperibus erogandam, tertiam vero Ministris Dei qui Ecclesiam ibi curant.* Canones Ælfrici. Spelm. Con. Vol. 1. 578.

should

should be tempted to apply too large a share of the trust-estate to their own use, the wisdom of those ages provided, that the distribution should be made in a publick manner before witnesses; for which we have the authority of Mr. Selden, whom you have quoted\*. Now, if this, or any thing similar to it, was the first institution of tithes in Ireland, it is evident, that they were not the property of the Clergy: and if the institution was different, it would have been satisfactory to have pointed it out. For the matter is not so clear, as to “require no proof;” nor does it appear from any thing you have said, that “it is due of common right,” or that it “is the most antient establishment in the realm, prior to the date of the titles of almost every estate;” and much less that, “no other person has the shadow of a claim to it.” I do not pretend to say what was the original institution in Ireland; but the presumption is that it was similar to the institutions of England and Rome, from which the present claim of the Church is a manifest deviation, whether it be, or be not, “sanctioned by statute law.†” Therefore, when you are considering the defects in the settlement of your Church, and the means of remedying them, might it not be of use to recur to first principles, and apply part of your revenues, as

\* *Ipsi Sacerdotes a populis suscipiant Decimas, & Nomina eorum quicunque dederint Scripta habeant, & Secundum Auctoritatem Canonicam coram Testibus dividant; & ad Ornamentum Ecclesiæ primam eligant partem, secundam autem ad usum pauperum & pergerinorum per eorum manus misericorditer cum omni humilitate dispensent, tertiam vero sibi met ipsis sacerdotes reservent.* Selden of Tithes, 4to. f. 196, 1 Spelman 259.

† p. 26.

at first designed, to the building and repairs of Churches and Glebe-houses, instead of of perpetually, and as it would seem, improperly applying to parliament for large grants of money for these purposes. But here again, perhaps you will discover the *levelling* principles of Presbyterians ; if so, it is hoped you will treat them with indulgence, since we find that the kings of England, as far down as the eleventh century, with their nobility and prelates, entertained those *levelling* principles, and were solicitous, both by statute and canon law, to secure an equitable dividend of the tithes. But the Clergy being intrusted with the distribution, though under the caution already mentioned, quickly engrossed the whole to themselves : Which easily accounts, it has been alledged, for the extraordinary zeal that has discovered itself in after ages on this head\*.

The encomiums you bestow on the Clergy of the South, I hope, are well merited, though the same favourable opinion has not always been entertained of them ; and their conduct has been sometimes represented in parliament by gentlemen of your own Church, in a light not very honourable to them : for which it may be enough to refer you to the printed debates in the Irish parliament, ann. 1763 and 1764 ; particularly the speeches of L. O. and J. G. afterwards a learned judge and a peer. Where “ the insurrections of that time are  
 “ attributed to the shameful negligence of our  
 “ Clergy, and the defects in our religious institu-  
 “ tion—to our having a mere nominal clergy,  
 “ whose conduct appears chargeable with the most

\* Examinat. Codex Jur. Eccl. Angl. p. 97.



“ flagitious injustice, and the most cruel oppressi-  
 “ on. Lord A—y speaks of enforcing the resi-  
 “ dence of the beneficed clergy by a penal law.  
 “ It is true indeed, saith he, that the superiors of  
 “ the church have a power already to enforce re-  
 “ sidence ; why they do not exert it is best known  
 “ to themselves, but why it should be taken out  
 “ of their hands who do not exert it ; or, at least  
 “ why it should be lodged where it would be ex-  
 “ erted, is, I think sufficiently known to us\*”.  
 If the power alluded to here be any part of your  
 ecclesiastical establishment, which you assert to be  
*essential* to the state, it is plain his lordship had a  
 very different idea of it : He thought it was abused,  
 and might be taken away, and expresses no sort of  
 apprehension that the state should thereby be endan-  
 gered. It is farther evident, that in his judgment  
 there was no *natural* union of the civil with this  
 part of the ecclesiastical constitution. The defects,  
 complained of here, are very different from those  
 that engross your attention ; the principal defects  
 which you point out arise from the want of money  
 and of glebes : and the means you propose of re-  
 medying them is by farther grants from parlia-  
 ment. Those mentioned above are of a much  
 more serious and important nature : they are de-  
 fects in our ecclesiastical institution——shameful  
 negligence of our superior as well as inferior cler-  
 gy, insomuch that it is alledged, “ that many pa-  
 “ rishes might truly say, as the disciples at Ephesus  
 “ to St. Paul, We have not so much as heard  
 “ whether there be any holy ghost†”. If there  
 be any foundation for such complaints at present,

\* Vol. II. p. 655, to 661.

† Ibid.

and

and if farther grants be necessary for the purpose you mention, it is for the wisdom of parliament to consider in what hands they shall be lodged, as the power vested in the hierarchy has it seems but a few years ago been so much abused.

By the non-residence of the clergy, their duty is not only neglected, but it is acknowledged, and has been long lamented that the Protestant interest in some parts of the kingdom suffers by it. Your apology grounded on the want of glebes must appear somewhat extraordinary\*. In other departments of the state, no such apology is made or thought of. We don't see that the venerable sages of the law desert their painful and laborious office, because the state has not provided them with palaces—that the gentlemen of the revenue, some of whom are of distinguished rank and family, neglect their duty in the metropolis or country, for want of houses or lands being provided for them. Why should it be more difficult for the Clergy than for those gentlemen to procure the necessary accommodations?—are their persons more precious, that they must be more delicately lodged and provided for?—Is their duty of less importance, that it may more easily be dispensed with?—Is it by such conduct, that they are to instruct others in the conscientious discharge of the various duties of life; and is it thus they wou'd “fix morality “on the sure basis of religion, and establish in the “mind of the subject an internal principle—in “aid of the check of the law?” or does their example, in this instance, do the reverse of all this? and by their contempt of duty, do they teach  
E 2 others,

others, also, to neglect theirs, either to one another or their country? how shall we comprehend this mysterious character?—so important and assuming—that can with confidence hope to support itself with government and the kingdom, without that honourable and noble discharge of duty, which alone can stamp dignity on any character? Ay; but the desertion of duty was sanctioned at that illustrious æra of magna charta, in which you triumph, as the security of the freedom of the church. Hear the severe censure which an historian hath adduced from a distinguished prelate of that time:—“ There cannot be a greater  
 “ defect, or which carries with it a more direct  
 “ opposition to the doctrine of our Saviour  
 “ and his apostles, than to destroy men by depriving  
 “ them of the pastoral office; and yet  
 “ it is evident that those are guilty of this sin,  
 “ who undertake the sacerdotal function, and receive  
 “ the profits without discharging the duty.  
 “ For in the scripture account, the pastor who neglects  
 “ his *stock* is a murderer of the *sheep*. Can  
 “ one help therefore considering as a most flagrant  
 “ crime, a conduct which tends so strongly  
 “ to the destruction of truth and virtue, and the  
 “ happiness of mankind\*?” But I presume, enough has been already said on magna charta, to shew how utterly it subverts the liberty and independence of the church of England; and that its first article stands in direct opposition to the purpose, for which you have adduced it.—An author must be in a very uneasy situation, when he *feels* himself confronted by the authorities he appeals to.

\* Rapin's Hist. Eng. Vol. III. p. 518.

Your

Your defence of pluralities and great livings on the presumption, that they are proper as a reward of superior learning, will not be deemed sufficient; because the fact is otherwise: they are *not* bestowed on clergymen distinguished for learning, and perhaps you will not be able to point out in a century, three instances, where livings with great endowments have been given on account of superior learning.

You take no notice of farmers either gentlemen or cottagers, members of the established church, being averse to the payment of tithes, but charge this aversion wholly on dissenters; whereas, if I am not much misinformed, the cottager that goes to church, is for the most part as averse to the visit of the tithe-farmer in this province as the Presbyterian, who has never given cause for your unkind reflections on this head\*. “Facts are the only sure ground-work for the decision of this point:” therefore you ought to have produced the facts in support of your charge, and not have rested it on bare surmise or assertion, which cannot be admitted as proof. You say, “that the present argument does not apply to—an impeachment of their conduct, but merely to the effects of their principles—towards the constitution of the kingdom†”. But how is the effect of principles to be known but by conduct? You cannot impeach their conduct, and therefore indulge yourself in the liberty of framing such principles, and drawing such inferences from them, as may best suit your purpose of “founding an

\* p. 40.

† p. 20.

alarm,”



alarm," and at the same time may tend to give an unfavourable opinion of Presbyterians to government; which certainly is unfair and ungenerous.

Instead of pursuing any farther the indefinite charges you have brought against Presbyterians in many parts of your book, it may be more satisfactory to lay before the publick a summary account of the settlement and conduct of that body in Ireland, extracted from their records, by which every one, interested in this argument, may form the clearest opinion of their principles, and whether they have not a just claim to the most perfect confidence of government.

The Presbyterians settled in Ireland, by encouragement from the crown, in the reign of James I. When that prince came to the throne, he found this kingdom in so distracted a state, as not to be able to levy the revenues of the crown, nor execute the laws, nor protect his subjects, without military force.

A law passed in the reign of Philip and Mary against bringing in the Scots, retaining them or intermarrying with them. The design of this law was to prevent the spreading of the Reformation. It continued in force during the long reign of Queen Elizabeth. But in the reign of James I. the Irish Parliament repealed it, and gave a parliamentary encouragement and invitation to the Scotch nation to settle in Ireland, thereby to promote the reformed religion, the settlement of the kingdom, and to support the English interest. This laid the foundation of what in our history is called the Plantation of Ulster, which proved the  
most

most effectual means of promoting these purposes, and of checking the frequent insurrections, that laid waste and distracted this country. From this plantation of Ulster have sprung not a few of our nobility, and most of the principal families in the province.

The first Presbyterian ministers came over with this colony, under the sanction of government, not as Dissenters from the established church, but rather as comprehended in it; being so far encouraged and supported by the state, that all of them were inducted into the churches and had the tithes. And Echlin, bishop of Down, and Knox of Rapho, joined with their Presbyteries in their ordinations. They frequently met and consulted with the bishops about affairs of common concernment to the interest of religion; some of them were members of the convocation, in the year 1634. The mutual moderation of the Episcopal and Presbyterians in Ireland at that time was of essential service to the settlement and plantation of Ulster.

It is remarkable that this plantation was much promoted by means of the hard treatment of Presbyterians at that time in England and Scotland; for persecution drove many of them from both kingdoms into Ireland; and those, who gave too much countenance to their ill treatment at *home*, found it for the publick safety of Ireland, and the Protestant religion, to protect them here.

It is farther to be observed, that after the principles and character of the Presbyterians, who came into the province, were publickly known, even as long after as the tenth year of the reign of Charles I. the parliament of Ireland made an act for the  
naturalization

naturalization of all the Scottish nation, born before the accession of King James to the crown of England and Ireland. The design of the act was to give farther encouragement to some of the Scots, who had settled in Ireland while the law of Philip and Mary was in force, and were liable to certain inconveniences mentioned in the act, and also to encourage more of that nation to come over and settle in Ireland. And the parliament particularly sets forth the usefulness of the Scots for promoting the happiness of the kingdom by the "farther civilizing, strengthening, and securing this realm against rebels at home, and all foreign invasion."

Here is one of the most ample testimonies, and from the parliament too, of the loyalty and usefulness of the Scotch planters in Ulster. And whoever compares this with the desolated state in which they found the country, when they came to it, must acknowledge the justice of the observation, made by the Presbyterian ministers of the North of Ireland in their first apology to Queen Anne; wherein they say,

"That since our first settlement in Ulster, an  
 "hundred years ago, by encouragement from the  
 "crown, the British and Protestant interest, which  
 "was very weak before, has been considerably  
 "strengthened by our means, to that degree, as  
 "to have a great influence on the safety and peace  
 "of the whole kingdom, of which your royal  
 "predecessors have been very sensible."

The union and comprehension of the Episcopal and Presbyterian church of Ireland continued to promote

promote their mutual peace and happiness, till it was broken by the intemperate zeal and bigotry of archbishop Laud, against the mind of the venerable and learned primate Usher. After this time the Presbyterians were subjected to much hardship, but continued steady friends to the constitution. They opposed the violent measures of King Charles's administration—and they opposed his violent death, which was contrived by the Independents and Cromwell.

They opposed the authority of the Rump parliament and their Republick, refused the oath called the *Engagement*, which abjured the antient constitution of King, Lords, and Commons; for which they were treated with great severity by Venables, Fleetwood, and the commissioners of the *Rump*.

The principal gentlemen and ministers were summoned to appear before the commissioners at Carrickfergus, to submit to the Republick. They first protested against their authority, and amidst a vast concourse of people, the ministers continued, during a long conference, to maintain that the then prevalent power in England was an illegal usurpation—that it was unlawful to abjure the king and house of lords, whose title they strenuously asserted; and they exhorted their people with a courage and steadiness, becoming the cause they maintained, to be just and loyal to the King, and to refuse the *Engagement*.

The commissioners, finding they could make no impression on the Presbyterians, formed a design of clearing the North of Ireland of them, and of transporting



transporting them to the South, where they imagined their Common-Wealth could not receive so much opposition from them, when they were no longer to be supported by their near and intimate connection with their brethren in Scotland. But in the mean time, while the commissioners were full of this project, and just about sending the ministers aboard a ship lying ready in the harbour, the publick attention was roused by the account, that Cromwell had raised the Parliament, dissolved the Common-Wealth, and made himself Lord Protector.

The same steady opposition was carried on against Cromwell as against the *Republick*, and for the same reasons. After his son Henry was made governor of Ireland, he being of a generous temper, the Presbyterians, for some time, enjoyed greater peace than formerly; but refused all compliance with his court. He, at length, wrote them threatening letters full of resentment, and some of their ministers were charged to appear before his council. Henry demanded the reasons, why they and their brethren would not observe the fasts and thanksgivings appointed by his authority; to which they answered, *that their consciences did not allow them to comply with any power, that was against the constitution and lawful magistracy of the kingdom.* He was much incensed at this answer, and accused them of ingratitude, alluding to a salary of one hundred pounds a-year which each of them had from government. But they did not look upon that salary as laying them under any obligation to acknowledge the authority of the usurpers who had taken the tithes from them, and had given them one hundred pounds a-year; which they

they accepted of, not as a gift from the government, but as a part of that property of which they had been deprived: And notwithstanding the temptation they were laid under by this precarious support, they persisted in their loyalty, and publickly prayed in their churches for the king and his restoration.

These facts are appealed to by the Presbyterian ministers, in an address to the Duke of Ormond in 1662, when they were yet fresh in the memory of every one, and when all that generation could have refuted them, had they advanced any thing, that was not strictly true and of publick notoriety. What are the inferences to be drawn from these historical facts? or what stronger expressions of attachment could the most loyal subjects have shewn to their king and to the constitution? They preached and prayed for their king, asserted his title upon all occasions, pressed others to be loyal, refused to abjure him, were banished, reviled, sequestered, imprisoned, miserably harassed and oppressed for him; faced the greatest dangers with fortitude not to be shaken, spoke and did what the ruling powers had decreed to be high-treason, and were not affrighted from their integrity by all the terrors of a military government, so formidable as to awe some of the greatest Crowned-heads in Europe, and to make foreign States court its alliance—and yet these are the men that have been charged with republican principles—have been called *levellers*, *Independents*,—and have been branded with disloyalty, according as it served the interest, or gratified the humour of those interested men, that chose to insult them.

They

They were no less active and zealous in promoting the Restoration; and none rejoiced more than they did at the revival of the antient constitution. Could it have been expected, that such men, deserving so well of their country and of the newly restored government, should not have been themselves restored to all their former privileges? —But it was not so—others reaped the reward of their sufferings and their zeal—their ministers were not restored to their livings.—These were intercepted by the episcopal clergy, who came forward triumphant in those *golden days* of the Church, and were not ashamed to continue the oppression of Cromwell against our fathers, by usurping the tithes. The primacy was filled by a bigotted high churchman, who had been a creature of Laud, and had assisted in his violent measures against the Presbyterians:—severe laws were passed—the usurpations of the episcopal clergy were confirmed; and they have continued to enjoy those livings, which Presbyterian ministers had held from their first settlement in this kingdom, 'till they were ejected by Cromwell. However, after some years, Charles II. in consideration of their sufferings, and of their loyalty, and as a mark of attention and kindness, granted them a salary of 600*l.* a year to be divided among them. Though they had lost their Tithes, and though this royal bounty fell so far short of Cromwell's composition, yet they did not “ sound an alarm,” as if the State was in danger. They received that mark of royal favour and protection with thankfulness, and the more so, as it originated with the king himself. He communicated his gracious purpose to the ancestor of the Earls of Granard, Sir Arthur Forbes, who, from his knowledge of their principles,

principles and conduct, and of the hardships they laboured under, encouraged his Majesty in his intended munificence. Twelve hundred pounds were intended to have been given, but an accident intervened, that prevented, in part, his Majesty's kindness.—But tho' their services seemed to claim an ample reward, they were not restored to their former right in the tithes, nor even to Cromwell's composition.

Every one, acquainted with the transactions of those times, knows how early and zealous the Presbyterians were in the principles of the Revolution, and with how much vigour and activity they exerted themselves, for accomplishing and maintaining that happy event. Their Ministers were so forward in countenancing that glorious undertaking, that they sent two of their number, commissioners to wait upon the prince of Orange, before he was proclaimed king, to congratulate him on his safe arrival, and to assure him of all the power of the Presbyterians in Ireland in support of his great enterprize; to which king William bears a most honourable testimony, in his letter dated at Hillsborough 19th June 1690, in the following words:—“ Calling to mind how  
 “ early they were in their address unto us, upon  
 “ our arrival in England; and the promises we  
 “ then made of a pension—and being assured of  
 “ the peaceable and dutiful temper of our said  
 “ subjects, and sensible of the losses they have  
 “ sustained, and their constant labour to unite  
 “ the hearts of OTHERS in zeal and loyalty  
 “ towards us, &c.” Here is a striking contrast between Presbyterians and OTHERS, whom they wished to reconcile to his Majesty. It is plain,



plain, this could not refer to the Roman Catholics, against whom other arms than persuasion were at that time necessary. His Majesty had expressed himself in the like gracious manner in his letter to the Duke of Schomberg, dated 9th of November 1689, from Whitehall.—In these principles the great body of Presbyterians in Britain and in Ireland were united ; but in your Church, my Lord, it was far otherwise. There was a direct opposition of political principles in the members of the established Church. Moderate Churchmen were the authors of the Revolution, and have been ever steady in support of the civil constitution. They were an honour to their country, and to the Church of which they were members.—High Churchmen were the reverse. They have been a dishonour to their country, and have acted in violent opposition to the civil constitution. They have disgraced their order : an opinion in which I hope, all episcopals in this kingdom, at present, are agreed. We have the authority of a Bishop in king William's reign, that  
 “ many of the clergymen had taken the oaths,  
 “ read the prayers for the present government,  
 “ and observed the order for publick thanksgivings ; and yet shewed in many places their  
 “ aversion to our establishment but too visibly.—  
 “ This made many conclude, that the clergy  
 “ were a sort of men, that would swear and pray,  
 “ even against their consciences, rather than lose  
 “ their benefices, and by consequence that they  
 “ were governed by interest, not by principle.  
 “ This behaviour, it must be confessed, gave  
 “ atheists no small advantage.”\*

This

\* Burnet, Vol. II. p. 59.

This account refers to the conduct of the English Clergy; in Ireland they were no less inconsistent and divided; for proof of which it will be enough to refer to the speech made by the Bishop of Meath, in the name of the Clergy, to King James at the Castle of Dublin, and that made to King William at his camp near Dublin, July the 7th 1690, which contain expressions of attachment and loyalty equally strong, and in direct opposition to one another.

You tell us that King William “ was induced  
 “ to yield to the suppression of Prelacy in Scotland,  
 “ only by the opposition, which the Bishops, at-  
 “ tached to the house of Stuart, unanimously gave  
 “ to the proceedings in his favour.”\* This account would seem to confine the opposition to the Bishops only; in which view, it is very defective. For a Scotch episcopal and bishop informs us, “ that King William could not hinder the change  
 “ of the government of the Church of Scotland to  
 “ Presbyteries, without putting all his affairs into  
 “ great disorder. The episcopal party went *almost*  
 “ *universally* into King James’s interests: so that  
 “ the Presbyterians were the only party, that the  
 “ king had in that kingdom.† If this be added to the account you have given—it will be more full, but not more to the honour of Prelacy, as to its influence on the state, “ considered in a point of  
 “ view merely political.”

Let us not deceive ourselves, my lord; let not the nation be deceived. Episcopacy gives no title

\* P. 13.

† Burnet, Vol. II. p. 17.

to superior confidence in the state—your order is not remarkable for consistency—History will justify no such claim; nor will you be able to prove that you are the only “cordial friends of the state, “that can be trusted in perfect consistency of “principle.” Let me not bring an indiscriminate charge against the members of your church. *Some* of them were men of generous and noble principles. With them the Presbyterians united *in a body*, concerted measures for putting this kingdom into a posture of defence, asserted the liberties of their country, and saved this kingdom to the Crown of England by their matchless valour in defending Derry and Enniskillen. And yet in this very reign the high churchmen described above reviled and harrassed those illustrious defenders of their country as enemies of the state, and unworthy of enjoying a liberal toleration—and within a few years, a very few years, in the beginning of the succeeding reign, when these heroes had scarcely taught their children the story of their fame, and told their listening neighbours the adventurous deeds of their prowess and hardihood, these illustrious defenders of Derry and Enniskillen beheld with indignation, that they were rendered by law \* incapable of serving that country, which they had just saved to the crown, and defended with such distinguished honour and gallantry. This invidious and dishonourable law was promoted by those men, whom they had endeavoured in vain to unite in affection to King William. This was their crime, and it could not be forgiven. It pursued them throughout Queen

\* Test-Act, 2 Anne, c. 6.

Anne's reign, and towards the end of it brought down upon them the resentment of the convocation, in a memorial to the Queen, expressed with much severity. The opportunity was well chosen. The ministry knew their schemes would no where meet with more determined opposition, than from the Presbyterians. Their violence therefore corresponded with the violence of the clergy—and they received their invectives gladly. The times were big with danger. The nation was agitated with anxious apprehension, torn in pieces by faction and party; and every thing threatened to involve this devoted country, again, in all the horrors of a civil war. But this cloud, fraught with so much mischief and horror, was happily dispelled by the death of the Queen, and peace and happiness restored by the accession of the present Royal Family to the throne; an event in which none did more zealously concur than Presbyterians, and in which none had greater reason to rejoice. In the reign of George I, they obtained an act of toleration on very liberal principles, and in the reign of his present Majesty, the Test-Act has been repealed, which was so long a disgrace to our Statute-Book, and dishonourable to the nation. It may be added, that in the reign of both these princes, the Presbyterian ministers received an augmentation of the royal bounty.

From this account you will observe, my lord, that the establishment of the Presbyterians in Ireland was of a peculiar kind: that they were not Dissenters from your Church, more than you were Dissenters from them; that they made no rent or breach in your church, of which they were never

F

members,



members, except by a comprehension, which should ever be desirable to liberal minds. And, I apprehend, it will be very difficult for you to point out, on just principles of policy in this kingdom, what the reasons of state are, that should exalt the episcopal church so very high, and depress the Presbyterian church so very low. For it may be observed,

1. That they were not so originally—The Presbyterians being settled in Ulster by an encouragement of government, on a fair and equal footing, as we have seen, so far as the difference of their church discipline permitted.

2. That in establishing their church they had peculiar privileges—that these privileges they never forfeited to the state; but that they were torn from them by those men, who overturned the constitution.

3. That from the nature of their first establishment, they have not only a right to a toleration, in common with other good subjects, but have a claim on the state for support and protection; and that this claim is strengthened by the manner, in which they lost the privileges and emoluments of their church.

4. That they were invited here to strengthen the hands of government, and to support the constitution; and that for this end, the whole body of Presbyterians was firmly united;—but that the established church was not thus united, many of its members being violent in their opposition to  
King

King William, and to the Hanover succession ; of which a thousand proofs might be adduced, besides those already offered. You may judge, therefore, what degree of credit is due, or is likely to be given to that confident boasting, where it is said, “ the established clergy of this kingdom may  
 “ with confidence appeal to government, and to  
 “ their fellow-subjects, for their zeal for the con-  
 “ stitution, as well as for that example of a duti-  
 “ ful and orderly demeanour, which they uni-  
 “ formly have set to their parishioners, in the most  
 “ *disorderly and factious* times ;”\* and whether it be *malice to contradict it*.

5. That the principles and conduct of Presbyterians are no less strongly marked by the ill treatment they have received, than by the protection they have met with ; as they have been always persecuted by the Tories, and always protected by the Whigs, and moderate church-men. Those illustrious characters, who were an honour to the nation, and the church of which they were members, who took the most distinguished part in those great events, the Revolution and the accession of the house of Hanover, considered the Presbyterians as a steady and determined set of men, whom they could trust with entire confidence, and in opposition to your opinion, looked upon them as  
 “ cordial friends of the constitution in most per-  
 “ fect consistency of principle.”

But if you still persist, that members of the established church alone can be “ cordial friends of  
 “ the state, we might reply, that during the  
 F 2 “ *comprehension*

“ *comprehension* of the two churches, Presbyterians were cordial friends.”—If a change has happened, by whose misconduct has it happened?—our loyalty is untainted—therefore, as a political man, you should plead for a restoration of our original rights and privileges. Your principles narrow the foundation of allegiance. That generous and exalted sentiment, the love of our country, which has formed the patriot and hero in every age, is thereby debased, and sunk in the fanciful or interested notions of ecclesiasticks.

But, if your principle is still to be maintained, the question might be brought to another issue. And I would then refer to your consideration the opinion of the present arch-deacon of Carlisle. In his book, which you have quoted with approbation, he lays it down that the established church should consist of the sect, that is most numerous. Now as Presbyterians would maintain the Protestant ascendancy, and as they out number your church so very far, they ought to form the ecclesiastical establishment, and then they might be trusted with perfect consistency of principle. And as the strength of a nation consists in the number of inhabitants; and the stability of government is in proportion to the number of subjects, that are to be trusted with the most perfect confidence, then, I suppose, my Lord, you will think it a mark of wisdom in government to adopt this idea, how much soever it may hurt your particular interest. But for the discussion of this subject, I will refer you to the learned arch-deacon, who will be able, I trust, to defend his opinion in our favour—You will observe also, that this opinion is in direct opposition to your favourite notion of an *essential* union

on between your particular ecclesiastical establishment, and our civil constitution.

Presbyterians, most unquestionably, think your ecclesiastical establishment is in no sort essential to the existence of the state—*non tali auxilio, nec defensoribus istis*, as you express yourself on another occasion. Our constitution would be feeble indeed, if its existence depended either on your, or our church government, or on any other particular form of church polity. The Lord Abbots lost their seats in parliament; the state was not weakened or convulsed—the effect would be the same, if the lord bishops were restored to primitive episcopacy. Church-men of whatever denomination should, as a body, have no political existence. Wherever such ecclesiastical polity has been established, it has, by working on the superstitious weakness and folly of mankind, produced the most unhappy effects, and has ever been a ready “engine of state,” in the hands of interested, ambitious men; and in this judgment we are confirmed by the authority of an English Parliament.

You call upon Presbyterians in a very alarming tone to turn their attention to the present danger of your ecclesiastical establishment. “They can have nothing before them, but an option of the ascendancy of either the church of Ireland, or of Rome.”\* But why should they not? they were originally *comprehended* in the church of Ireland; and, if the safety of the state depends upon it, why might they not be restored to their first privileges? You tell them however, that “their situation cannot be improved.”

\* p. 78.



improved."—How far that may, or may not be so, will depend upon government. To government they have been obliged for the freedom of religion they have experienced; but from the historical facts before produced, they cannot be thought to have any great obligations to your established church. For, if considerations of policy had not induced government to restrain the violence of high-churchmen in this kingdom, there is little reason to think that the persecutions would have been less cruel here than in Scotland, in the reigns of Charles II. and James II. If you will compare the history of these persecutions of Protestant Bishops with the persecutions of Lewis XIV. you will have little reason to boast of the spirit of your hierarchy.\* I mention not these things from any invidious purpose of reviving the memory of past transactions, which you, my Lord, and every liberal minded man must so highly disapprove; but to shew the ill effects which this constitution is capable of producing, and that, in the hands of arbitrary princes, it is as fit an engine of tyranny, as you have represented the Popish hierarchy to be,

But

\* Whether we ascribe persecution to ecclesiastical establishments, considered in a political or religious view, it is contended that all sects, when in power, have been guilty of persecution. This is a levelling principle, and is a fashionable one; it decides readily, without the trouble of inquiry; and assumes the appearance of historical knowledge and candour: Though there is reason to think that it is sometimes used to evade difficulties, with which the person feels himself entangled, and cannot otherwise get rid of. But the Presbyterians of Scotland and Ireland call upon their adversaries to produce one instance of any man being fined, imprisoned, set in a pillory, losing his ears, suffering torture or death, because of his departing from their Confession of faith. See preface to the Confession.

But you go on to tell them; “ how much  
 “ *their* situation may be changed for the worse,  
 “ under the Church of Rome, it behoves them  
 “ to consider with attention, and without delay;  
 “ as the conduct of so numerous and respectable  
 “ a body may decide the event.” \* If, indeed,  
 the interposition of Presbyterians be so decisive in  
 this critical moment, it is somewhat extraordi-  
 nary, that you have pointed out no scheme for them  
 to pursue. If they pursue their own principles,  
 as you have described them, they would only  
 precipitate the “ fatal moment :” for according  
 to you, they would be led away by a “ fairy vi-  
 sion.” When you call for their support, if you  
 wished for it, they might have expected you  
 would have proposed some plan dictated by ex-  
 perience and wisdom. But they are left in the  
 dark, and know not in what manner they may  
 most effectually co-operate with your views for the  
 public safety. Would you have them address par-  
 liament, and assure them that the nation is wrong  
 in considering tithes as a tax on industry, and a  
 grievance : or would you have them muster their  
 Volunteers, and march to Cloyne to protect the  
 clergy, and their tithe farmers ? or should they  
 allow the laymen of your own Church to take the  
 lead, and then follow their decisions implicitly,  
 whether for the continuance of tithes, or for a  
 commutation ? or will it be still better to wait  
 the deliberations of government ; and will it be  
 soon enough to give their opinion, or to act, when  
 they shall be called on by parliament ?

In

\* Ibid.

In all arduous matters, where the safety of the State was concerned, they presume they have never been wanting in their duty. But, the present case appears to them in a very different point of view. They are confident that the wisdom and strength of government are more than equal to quiet the object of your fears, and settle the maintenance of the clergy in such a manner, as to promote the interest and happiness of the kingdom.

Thus, my Lord, I have made such observations, as seemed necessary to assert the dignity of our civil constitution, and its independence on the ecclesiastical establishment, considered "in a political view," and also to wipe off the foul aspersions thrown on the Presbyterians of Ireland, whose *conduct*, it is acknowledged, gave no cause for this unprovoked attack. You are called upon, my Lord, to reconsider this subject; and if you would defend what you have asserted, it is expected you will explain, particularly, what you mean by the *levelling* and *independent* principles of Presbyterians; "that you will adduce facts of so general a nature as to support political conclusions;" † and from thence shew, *why* Presbyterians may not be trusted as good subjects, and with perfect confidence. An argument that may involve the happiness of thousands should not be lightly taken up—nor a charge be brought against them founded on fancy or prejudice, or superficial information—and therefore it is, my Lord, that you, who neither want abilities, nor inclination, are called upon in this publick manner, to bring forward a particular, explicit charge, supported by historical evidence, to shew in what instances they

they have acted against the liberties, or interest of their country. Here is a large range proposed to your consideration, a period of near two centuries, abounding with the most interesting events, and the various fortune of contending parties, in which the constitution suffered the most dreadful convulsions, and was at length restored by the virtue and by the valour of her citizens. In this eventful period, where the principles and fortitude of men were put to the severest trial, we do not hesitate to challenge a comparison between the members of our church and yours, not from ostentation, but compelled by the necessity you have laid us under to support our character in the most open manner, and being persuaded that the more our conduct is examined, it will redound the more to our reputation and honour, as the steady and determined friends of our so justly admired constitution.

In the mean while, you are to consider, whether there may not be reason to apprehend, that your book may have injured them in the opinion of men, who have access to government and to our gracious sovereign; and that such unfavourable impressions may operate hereafter to the disadvantage of a very numerous and respectable body of loyal subjects. Should this happen, it is your duty to consider how your conduct may be defended. Others may think it highly criminal. I may be thought too much interested to give an opinion. I will therefore submit to your consideration in a case somewhat similar the judgment of an author of no mean authority, Montesquieu,\* who cannot be thought partial—and so bid you heartily farewell. “ Il est accusé d’un grand crime : c’étoit d’avoir calomnié la *nation* ; & de lui avoir fait perdre

\* Lett. Fref. tom. II. p. 120.



perdre la confiance de son Roi : forfait, qui, selon moi, merite mille morts.”

Car enfin, si c'est une mauvaise action de noircir dans l'esprit du Prince le dernier de ses sujets : qu'est-ce, lorsque l'on noirci la nation entiere, & qu'on lui ote la bienveillance de celui que la Providence a établi pour faire son bonheur.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord, with all due regard,

Your Lordship's

most obedient and

most humble servant,

**WILLIAM CAMPBELL.**

Armagh,  
January 15th, 1787.