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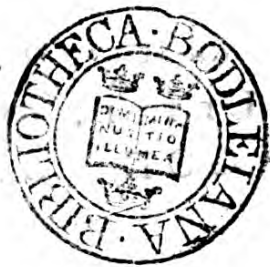
THE
MISERIES
AND
Great HARDSHIPS
OF THE
Inferiour CLERGY,
In and about
LONDON.

And a modest PLEA for their Rights, and
better Usage; in a LETTER to the Right
Reverend Father in GOD, JOHN Lord
Bishop of London.

By a Clergyman of the Church of ENGLAND.

*Nos omnes, strenui, boni, nobiles, atque ignobiles, vulgus
sumus, sine Gratia, sine Auctoritate; ijs obnoxij,
quibus, si Resp. Valeret, formidini essemus. Omnis
Gratia, potentia, honos, Divitiæ apud illos sunt, aut
ubi illi volunt: Nobis reliquerunt Pericula, Repulsas,
Judicia, Egestatem. Sal. Bell. Catil.*

L O N D O N:
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Noster-Row, 1722. [Price stich'd, 2 s. 6 d.]





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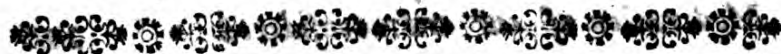
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PAGE 7. Line 22. *del. on.* p. 45. l. 9. read *recte de.* p. 82. in the Notes, r. *media.* p. 88. l. 27. r. *Souple.* p. 89. l. 11. r. *Bubbles.* p. 89. l. 21. r. *at.* p. 115. l. 3. r. *them.* p. 115. l. 4. r. *them.* p. 117. l. 23. r. *nov.* p. 149. l. 1. r. *Clergy* p. 169. l. 5. r. *nurri.* p. 175. l. 5. r. *Stop.* p. 178. l. 20. r. *inanno.* p. 234. l. 4. r. *Constellation.*

THE



LETTER

TO THE

Lord Bishop of London.

My Lord,



This the peculiar Happiness of our Civil Constitution, that the Rights and Properties of Men among us, are so settled and secur'd by Law, as to leave no Room for Diffidence or Fear; where the highest are not exempted from Justice, nor the lowest under any Discouragement to complain. A Complaint from the meanest Subject, express'd in Terms of Duty and Respect, finds Admittance even to the

A

Throne

The Miseries and Hardships

Throne of our Sovereign, and oftentimes a gracious Answer thence: And it would be a sad Defect in the Constitution of our Church, if the like Balance were not preserv'd in it; if there were any Partiality in its Decrees, any Inequality in its Administrations, any Inclination or Contrivance in its Governours, to favour and indulge only one Set of Men, to the utter impoverishing and enslaving of the rest; if the greatest, in short, had any Toleration to do wrong; or the meanest Clergyman among us any Coertion upon him, or any Apprehensions of Danger in suing for Redress.

The Language of our Church in all her Canons and Constitutions, I am sure, breaths nothing but Justice and Equity, makes no Distinction between Man and Man, nor any Discrimination upon Point of our different Circumstances. And for the little I know of the Christian Temper of our most excellent Bishops, I cannot but persuade myself, that they bear always in Mind that awful Charge given them before God, and

¹ Tim. v. 21. *the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect Angels; that they observe these Rules of the Church, without preferring one before another, doing nothing by Partiality.* Consequently, I must believe, that as they are indeed the common Fathers of us all, their Care extends to the Benefit, and their Ears are open to the Complaints of all; that

Griev-

The Miseries and Hardships

scension, that universal Love and Impartiality of Affection, wherewith you embrace your whole Clergy; that I make it my Option, out of all the sacred College of Bishops, to lay *before you* a Specimen of such Miseries, as press hard upon us, and force us to complain: *before you*, who once adorn'd an inferior Station in the Church yourself, and through the several Offices of Religion ascended gradually to the Top of the highest Order; but so ascended, as not to forget the Condition of those that are left at the lowest Distance beneath you: *before you*, who have had long Experience, and made great Inspection into the State of other Churches, where the sorry Provision for the Maintenance of their Clergy encourages none, but the Refuse of the People, † *the Sons of Peasants and the meanest Burghers*, to undertake the sacred Function, and consequently disgrace it: *Before you*, who have the Care and Superintendency of a Diocess, which as it is a Place of greatest Resort, happens at this time to be a Scene, where more Objects of extreme Wretchedness among the Inferior Clergy, and more Instances of Injustice and Oppression among the Superior, are daily found, than perhaps

† *Account of Sweden, p. 25.*

haps in all the Kingdom besides: *Before you, lastly,* who, besides your Episcopal, are invested with the additional Honour and Office, of being * Provincial Dean to our *great and wise* METROPOLITAN; and having the Charge of his Mandates and Missives to us, upon all Occasions, may be presum'd the properest Hand to carry up our Petitions and Requests to him again. Could I prevail with your Lordship to be our Advocate and Intercessor *there*; to intreat of him that he would take our Cause under his Patronage likewise, and represent it in some such View, as I am going to place it, to the Eye of the Legislature; I might promise myself the happy Issue of a well-meant Design, and from the Concurrence of so much Interest and Address, such an Elevation of Mind and Station, such wise Zeal and true Concern for the Honour of Religion, as are found conspicuous in you both, hope to see the Condition of the lower Clergy settled upon a better Basis; the Sense of their Sufferings entering the Consideration of both Houses, and the Rights and Immunities, that, upon

* *Episcopus Londinensis (saith an vncient Record) speciali quadam dignitate cæteris anteponeendus, quia Ecclesie Cantuariensis Decanus est Provincialis. Vid. Present State of Great Britain, p. 72.*

The Miseries and Hardships

Examination, are found to be their own, secur'd and perpetuated to them by Law.

This my Lord, is a glorious Work, and a Field of Honour worth your Cultivation. The Magistrate, whether in a Civil or Religious Capacity, never shines so bright, in my
 Job xxix. Opinion, as when *he puts on Righteousness and*
 14, &c. *Judgment for a Robe and Diadem; as when he is*
a Father to the poor, and the Cause that he knows
not, searcheth out; as when he breaks the Jaws of
the wicked, and plucketh the Spoil out of his Teeth:
Princes and Nobles, we are told, admire him
then, and the Blessing of him that was ready to pe-
rish, comes upon him.

The Bounty of Heaven has given us a Prince, that will suffer none of his Royal Authority to be wanting in the Relief and Protection of the meanest Subject that he has: The same kind Heaven has placed you in a Sphere, where your Example must needs be influential, and dispose other People to a right Conception of things. The great and opulent Clergy, will forget their fancied Superiority, be afraid to insult, and ashamed to treat us otherwise than Brethren, when they see you equally covering us under the Shadow of your Wing, and not disdain to call us Sons. I must fly therefore to your Lordship's Throne, and invoke your
 Favour

of the Inferior Clergy.

7

Favour and Protection, while I endeavour to set before you (not to the best Advantage, that I cannot do, but fairly and impartially, and as it has been transmitted to me) the present State of some of your Inferior Clergy; a thing which others perhaps have industriously conceal'd from your Knowledge too long, for Reasons that will not bear the Light. At this Throne I must take the Freedom to plead the Rights, I conceive, we have; and to complain of the Wrongs, I am sure, we suffer; to suggest some Remedies, that perhaps may be of use, and incite your Lordship to pursue them; with all due Deference to your Lordship's Character and consummate Wisdom, but perhaps with less Tenderneſs towards those that are of the same Order and Equality with us (a few Appendages of Fortune only excepted) and whose unworthy Treatment of us (to give it no harder Term as yet) has compell'd us at last to break a long-continued Silence, if not to work upon on other Mens Minds, at * least to ease our own.

A 4

To

* Est aliquod calamitatum delinimentum dedisse lacrymas malis, & pectus laxasse suspiriis; & nulla major est poena quam esse miserum, nec videri. *Drey. paneg. ad Theod.*

The Miseries and Hardships

To set our Plea then in some Method before you.

- I. As we are the Ministers of the most High God, we think we have a Right to Honour and Respect.
- II. As our Labour and Time is entirely devoted to his Service, a Right to Maintenance and Support.
- III. Because the Passions of Men are not to be trusted, and that this Maintenance may not be precarious, a Right to some Legal Security for it. And,
- IV. Because Offences will come, and that the weakest may not be undone; a Right to Justice and Impartiality, when we appeal. And,
- V. To Mercy and Lenity, when we have offended.

These are Rights that I think we may call our own, because they are made over to us in the Word of God, which is the great Charter of our Privileges: They are confirm'd to us
by

'of the Inferior Clergy.

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by the Laws of Nature, and consent of all Ages: They are maintain'd in the Decrees and Doctrines of ancient Churches, and ancient Fathers; and again, renewed and establish'd to us in the Laws, and Offices, and Constitutions of our own. But this I am to prove, and then, in Contraposition, shew your Lordship how grossly, at this time, they are invaded.

I. Your Lordship is too conversant in all Histories, both sacred and prophane, to need any Information from me, upon what honourable Terms the Priesthood began, when the *First-born*, and Head of the Family, was appointed to that Office; when the Prince and the Priest were united in one and the same Person *; and to have a right of ministring about holy things, was reckoned among the *Jews*, one of the highest kinds of Nobility †: How all other Nations, both civiliz'd and barbarous, that had a Sense of God, or Form of Religion among them, unanimously agreed to reverence the Priests, the Ministers thereof: How the Gospel bestows upon them
the

Nnmb.iii.

12.

* Εξ ὧν ἀπάντων ἐστὶ δῆλον ὅτι Βασιλέως εἰς σεμνότητα καὶ πρὶν περὶ πᾶσι ἱερέσι ὁ νόμος. Phil. de proem Sacerd p. 832.

† Vid. *Josepb. vita Tom. ii. p. 661.*

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the highest Titles and Appellations of Honour; and commands them *to be obey'd* and to be *esteemed very highly in Love* for their Works sake: How the Apostolick Age *received* them, even as the *Angels of God*, gladly *Ministred to their Necessities*, and were ready in comparison to *pluck out their very Eyes* to do them good: How converted Kingdoms admitted them to the nearest Trust; made Edicts, settled Revenues, and granted Immunities in their Favour; protecting their Persons from Violence, and their Reputations from Slander and Reproach*: And in latter Times, when this Zeal began to abate, how the Laws of the Church endeavour'd continually to revive it, *ut omnes suis sacerdotibus, tam majoris Ordinis, quam inferioris, a minimo usque ad maximum, ut summo Deo, cujus vice in Ecclesia legatione funguntur obedientes existant*, as we find it in one of the || Capitulars.

Heb. xiii.
7. Theff.
v. 13.

Gal. iv.
15.

What I chose rather to suggest to your Lordship's Observation, is, the Grounds upon which the Scripture requires that the Clergy
in

* Vid. *Cave's Primitive Christianity*, p. 158. and *Bingham's Orig. Eccl.* vol. 2. *Gib. Cod. Can. Eccl.* p. 1. &c. and *Cumber's Discourse upon the Ordination-Office*.
|| *Cap. Car. Mag. An. 805. ch. 35. p. 437.*

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in all Ages should be held in such Honour and Estimation. And,

1. One of these is the Dignity and great Majesty of the Master they serve, *Let a Man account of us, says the Apostle, as of the Ministers of Christ.* The Use of the word Minister indeed is almost brought down to the literal acceptance of it, a *Servant*; for to serve and to minister, *Servile* and *Ministerial* are Terms in a manner equivocal; but when it is remembered, that we are not the Servants of Men, but of Christ; of him, who is the Fountain and Original of Honour, and to whom all Powers and Principalities both in Heaven and Earth do bow and obey; whose Name reflects Lustre, and whose Promises assure us, that the least Kindness or Affront offer'd to us, shall be resent'd as done to himself; when this is remembered, I say, the Word rises in its signification, and our Imagination begins to feel a grateful Sense upon the Reflection of our being thought worthy to attend in the meanest Offices about so great a Master. For this Reason perhaps it is, that the same Word in the Old Testament, signifies a Priest and a Prince both; and that the Royal Prophet, who had no contemptible Notion of Greatness himself, makes it his Option

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Pfal. 84.
10. tion to be a Door-keeper in the House of God,
rather than to dwell in the Tents of Wickedness.
For this reason, I am sure, it is, that such
care was taken in the *Levitical* Law, that no
Lev. ii.
17, &c. thing maim'd or imperfect should be pre-
sented unto God, nor any one admitted to
the Priest-hood, or allowed to stand before
him, that had any corporal Blemish or De-
fect. For the same reason, strict caution is
given to all *Christian Bishops*, not to lay Hands
1 Tim. v.
22. suddenly on any; and in the Primitive times,
Prohibitions were made, that no Persons dis-
member'd, or any way disfigur'd; no Slave or
Soldier, no Broker or Usurer, or any of a for-
did and plebeian Genius, should receive Ordi-
nation. And, for the same Reason, such as
are intrusted with the Power of Admission
still, should certainly be well advis'd, and
not suffer themselves to be impos'd upon by
the warmest Recommendations. Not only the
Life and Conversation of the Candidate, but
his good Temper and Disposition of Mind,
his Spirit and Generosity, his natural and ac-
quir'd Abilities, his Knowledge of Men, Man-
ners, and Books, nay, the very Decency of
his Carriage, and Comeliness of his Person,
ought to be some Part of their Consideration:
For it is a Shame to send into the Service of
Almigh-

Almighty God, such aukward and distorted Things, as would be ridiculous in any other Occupation; and to commiffion fuch Men to officiate in religious Myfteries, as have lefs Learning and Knowledge than your Lordship would require in a Secretary, or lefs Honour and Honefty than you hope to find in a Steward.

2. Another Reason that the Scripture gives for the Refpect and Veneration that is due to the Minifters of Chrif, is the Dignity and Awfulnefs of their Offices and Adminiftrations. I have before me now that excellent Piece of *St. Chryfoftom de Sacerdotio*, publifh'd by the learned and ingenious Mr. *Hughes*, as a Name of very * great Authority calls him: But, as learned as he was, becaufe he dyed in the Condition of a Curate, your great Divines were all afleep, and no Body was found to preach his Funeral Sermon, but poor *Tom Shallow*. *Shallow*, you muft know, my Lord, has no great Knack at fermonizing, and was therefore forc'd to have Recourfe to a Friend, who run him fome hafty Thing off at one Heat, juft fuited to his low Capacity, and fet to the
Tune

* *Bp. of Rochefter, in his Preface to his Sermon before the Sons of the Clergy.*

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Tune wherein he preaches ; but never dreaming he meant to make it publick, or to injure the Memory of so great a Man, by so vile a Composition. That Fault, however, we must forgive him, because he assures me, 'tis the first and the last Time he ever intends to be an Author, and only send him this Admonition for the future :

** Privatas ut querat Opes, & scripta remittat*

*Mutus, quæ rostro toties recitavit ab alto ;
Ne si forte suas repetitum venerit olim
Grex avium plumas, moveat Cornicula risum,
Furtivis nudata coloribus——*

To return to St. *Chrysoptom*, and some of his lofty Sentiments about the Matter of Sacerdotal Powers and Administrations.

“ When you see the Sacrifice of Christ’s
“ Body, † says he, the Priest standing over
“ it, and pouring out Prayers, and the People
“ around him washing and purifying
“ themselves in his most precious Blood ;
“ when you see him calling down the Holy
“ Ghost upon the Sacrifice, that his manifold
“ Grace

* Hor. Ep. Lib. I. Ep. 3.

† Libro 3. passim.

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“ Grace may diffuse it self, and enter into
“ the Heart of every faithful Communicant ;
“ when you hear *that all Power both in Heaven*
“ *and Earth* given to Christ, he has repos’d
“ in the Hands of his Ministers, and left it
“ upon Record, that whatsoever they bind on Mat. xvi.
“ *Earth, shall be bound in Heaven ; and what* 19.
“ *soever they loose on Earth, shall be loosed in*
“ *Heaven ;* a larger Power than either Angels
“ or Arch-Angels have to boast of: How
“ can you think, but that the Persons, by
“ whose Hands these Mysteries are transact-
“ ed, by whose Invocation Christ descends
“ mystically, by whose Benediction the Ho-
“ ly Ghost is given, and by whose Sentence
“ Mens Sins are retain’d or remitted unto
“ them; should be follow’d and rever’d with
“ a sort of awful Esteem and sacred Venera-
“ tion ? *Except ye be born of Water and the Holy* John iii.
“ *Ghost, except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man* 5.
“ *and drink his Blood, ye cannot inherit the King-* John vi.
“ *dom of Heaven ;* and yet these are Blessings 53.
“ that cannot be convey’d to us, but by the
“ Mediation of God’s Ministers ; for to them
“ only is committed *the Laver of Regeneration,*
“ *and the sprinkling of the Blood of God : As*
“ much therefore as Regeneration is more
“ desirable than birth, and an happy Eterni-

“ ty

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“ ty than a short uncertain Life, so much
 “ should our Love and Estimation of our
 “ Ghostly Fathers exceed if possible what we
 “ owe to our Natural Parents &c.

However * this Father may be suppos'd to have minded his Oratory more than strict Truth, and to carry the Pretensions of the Priest-hood a little too high, for that I shall not answer. The Offices he insists on are certainly common sacerdotal Offices, and such as every one, that is admitted to that Order, has a Right to administer: the Honour and Respect that accrues from such Administrations then, is common to all, and no more *one Man's Right than anothers*. Riches and Poverty make no Difference in this Case; the Curate that tramps it on Foot, and the Rector that rides in his easy Chariot, & *nos despicit illinc*, are Men of the same Power and Authority when they meet at Church, and are in the Work of their proper Calling, whether it be in the Desk, or in the Pulpit, at the Font, or at the Altar of God.

So far then as we are all *Ministers of Christ and Stewards of the Mysteries of God* we stand upon

* Vid Stillingfleet of the *Duties and rights of the Par. Clergy*, p. 116.

upon the same Level, and have an equal Right to the same Observance and Respect. But then, that which makes the Difference and sets one Man in a more Honourable and advantageous Light than another (I speak still as a Minister of Christ) is

3 His more abundant Labour and Diligence in his Calling: For the Apostolick Order is this, *Let the Elders that rule well be accounted worthy of double Honour; especially they that labour in the Word and Doctrine: for the Scripture saith, thou shall not muzzle the Ox that treadeth out the Corn, and the Labourer is worthy of his Reward.* That this Rule most certainly extends, if not primarily belongs, to the Priests of the second Order, is a Point that cannot be denied; and if so, 'tis by this Rule that we desire to have it tried, whether the Incumbents, as they are call'd, or those that are their Curates, deserve more Honour and a better Recompence of Reward *i. e.* whether those that see not their Parishes above once in a Quarter, and perhaps that too with a View to the Profits more than the Souls of them; that think a Sermon now and then of their own an Equivalent for some Hundreds of Pounds, but an Hundred of anothers out-rated at Thirty; that bear off their Revenues to spend in other places, while the

poor, the Widow and Fatherless are to shift for themselves as well as they can ; leave all the heavy Parochial Duties to the Labour and Sweat of a jaded Journey-man, except when a Ring and Scarf, or some blessed Baptifmal Guinea appears, to clear up their Eye-fight, and make them read over a long-neglected Office ; in a Word, whether thofe that live like Strangers to their Flocks, *neither know them, nor are known by them*, nor are follicitous what becomes of them, fo long as they feed *themselves with the Fat, and cloath themselves with the Wool*, are Pastors according to God's Heart, and deserve the Commendation and Emoluments of Clergymen ; or thofe, that obliging themselves to continued Residence, fuffain the whole *Burthen and Heat of the Day* ; That, having a large Parifh to infpect, are *instant in Season and out of Season*, to reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all *Long-Suffering and Doctrine* ; That in *Labours* are abundant, in *Cares above Measure*, in *Watchings often*, to behave themselves decently in the Houfe of God every Sabbath-day, and to teach from *House to House*, and attend the Calls and Exigencies of every one's Soul all the Week following ; and *lastly*, that, with no more than a small precarious Stipend allowed them, have

Ezek.

xxxiv. 3.

Jer. iii.

2 Tim. iv.

2.

2 Cor. xi.

23.

have the Conflict of Poverty added to the Weight of their Employment, and so must in all things *approve themselves the Ministers of God in Patience, in Afflictions, in Necessities, in Distresses.* ^{2 Cor vi. 4.}

Whether of these, (and this I think is the common Case, where the Minister is absent, and the Curate any thing conscientious in his Duty) are more honourable, and more rewardable both in the Sight of God and Man, needs no farther Deliberation. 'Tis as plain, I think, as all those Passages both in the Old and New Testament, that reprove the Negligent, and commend the Sedulous, and make our Labour and Affiduity the Condition of our Respect and Estimation with the People, can be presum'd to make it. And therefore to close this Point in the Words of a * learned Author, who, after a View and Examination of most of those Passages, gives *this* for his Opinion in the Conclusion. " Since all the Returns of Obedience and Submission, of Esteem and Support, are declared in Scripture to be due to the Clergy, on the Account of their *watching over, and feed-*
B 2
" ing

* Bishop Burnet's Past. Care, p. 48.

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“ *ing the Flock of God*: those who pretend
 “ to these, without considering themselves as
 “ under the other Obligations, are guilty of
 “ the worst sort of *Sacrilege*, in devouring
 “ the things that are *sacred*, without doing
 “ those Duties for which *these* are due;
 “ and what Right soever the Law of the
 “ Land may give them to them, yet cer-
 “ tainly, according to the divine Law, those
 “ who do not wait at the *Altar*, ought not to
 1 Cor. ix. “ be Partakers with the *Altar*; those who do
 13, 14. “ not minister about holy things, ought not to
 “ live of the things of the *Temple*; nor ought those
 “ who do not preach the *Gospel*, to live of the
 “ *Gospel*.

I have insisted the longer on this Privi-
 lege of Respect, not so much with a Pur-
 pose to magnify our Office, (tho' that were
 no discommendable Attempt) as to take a-
 way some Prejudices, and let the good Peo-
 ple of *England* know (what has been kept
 behind the Curtain too long) that the Glare
 and Figure of an Ecclesiastic is no way essen-
 tial to his Character; that a flaming Gown
 and Cassock have no more Virtue in 'em, and
 perhaps less Learning under them, than the
 meanest thread-bare Jacket; that the Rector,
 that lives in the great House, has no more
 Power and Efficacy in his Office, than the
 little

little starv'd Curate that lodges in a Garret ; that Rents and great Tythes make no Difference in their Orders, nor give any Force of Ratification to their Administrations : That Wealth, in short, may be a Consideration in Traffick, but is none at all in Divinity ; and whatever Regard belongs to a Clergyman, belongs to his Profession, not his Preferment. And I did it too, for the Information of my Brethren, whose keeping their Dependents at so scornful a Distance, proceeds in a great Measure, I hope, from their not having sufficiently considered this State of Equality that is among us ; and thereby to facilitate my way to the

2. Next thing, we think, *we have a Right to*, the Respect and Benevolence that should interfere among us, and be, as it were, the common Soul of the Body of the Clergy. The Body of the Clergy, my Lord, are certainly bound by the same Doctrines that they teach others. The Laws of Christianity, which cherish and promote Compassion and Benevolence, which teach us to be humble and affable, courteous and charitable, ready and disposed to every *good Work*, and prompt to all Offices of Humanity and Kindness, lay hold on the Priest as well as the People. When therefore we read in

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the Gospel suth strict Charges as these, to
 1 Pet. iv. *love and to live like Brethren, to have fervent*
 8. *Charity among themselves, to be kindly affecti-*
 Rom. xii. *onate one towards another, to do nothing out of*
 10. *Strife or Debate, but in Honour to prefer, and*
 Phil. ii. 3. *give the right Hand of Fellowship one to another :*
 Gal. ii. 9. *When more especially we see our blessed*
Saviour discountenancing all Pretences to
Superiority among Equals, and settling and
adjusting this Point once for all in that re-
markable Decision of his ; Ye know that the
Gentiles exercise Dominion over them, and they
 Mat. xx. *that are great, exercise Authority upon them ;*
 25. *but it shall not be so among you, but whosoever*
will be great among you, let him be your Ser-
vant ; where the only Pre-eminence he al-
lows is such as arises from our greater Con-
descension : When we read and consider all
this, I say one would think in the Strength
of these Precepts, and the Improvements of
a liberal Education, the Clergy of this Na-
tion should excel all other Fraternities what-
ever in Respect and Civility, and in Kindness
and Beneficence to one another : One would
think that a Divine, with a fair Fortune,
and many Preferments, should have a sensi-
ble Pleasure to see now and then at his Ta-
ble, a Set of the same Order and Professi-
on with himself, whose Conversation cannot
 but

but be more useful and entertaining, than the bawling Nonsense of a Country 'Squire, or the worse Impertinence of a *little rich* Tradesman, who in all his Thoughts, Words, and Actions, smells strong of the Compter, and so will do to his dying Day; should delight to see his Curate appear every Day as *clean* as his Footman, and if not to come up to the Clark, (which must eternally be despaired of) yet considering all things, to have a Salary very near as good as the Sexton: One would think, that a Person of such Eminence should not fail to do Justice at least, if no great Courtesies, to those that are beneath him; should not fail to treat them with some kind of Manners and Civility, by Reason of their Character; pay punctually their Stipends when become due, by Reason of their Exigencies; promote their Interest and Advancement, by Reason of their Dependence upon him; speak commendably of their Parts and Proficiencies; speak tenderly, or not at all, of their Faults and Imperfections; discountenance all false Rumours and Accusations against them; and when there are real Grounds for Censure and Reproof, reprove them gently, and *in the Spirit of Meekness, remembering themselves, lest they likewise be* Gal. vi. 1. *tempted.*

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This, and a great deal more might be expected from Men in such high Stations, and happy Circumstances, under such Tyes of Love, and mutual Relations; and your Lordship, at that Distance, may think perhaps nothing else, but that all the Clergy in the Kingdom are in this Manner treating, and respecting, and complementing one another. But when the very Reverse of all this appears, as were I to draw the Curtain, and shew your Lordship mighty Rectors riding over the Heads of their Readers and Curates; receiving them with an Air of Superiority that would better become a *Persian* Monarch than a Christian Priest; breaking Jest upon their Poverty, and making themselves merry with their Misfortunes, turning them among the Herd of their Servants into the Kitchen, 'till Dinner comes in, and then shewing them what a mighty Favour it is that they are permitted to sit down at the lower End of the Table among their Betters; curtailing in the mean while, their Allowances, which are only held at the Will of their Lord; keeping them under the worst of Torments, a merciless Suspense, and perpetual Incertitude of daily Bread; then turning them out at a Minute's Warning, purely to shew the Arbitrariness of their Sway; and if at any time they pretend

pretend to murmur or complain, persecuting them with Fury and Revenge, and calling in a superior Power to crush them as were I to shew, and exemplify this to your Lordship, I say, the Reverse of every thing would appear) What shall we say in Excuse for these Men? Shall we give in to the Calumnies of their Enemies, who impute all this to the worst of Causes, Pride, and Arrogance, and a Spirit of Infidelity? Or shall we suppose that there is an † external and internal Doctrine in the Christian System, the one to be delivered and made publick to us, and the other to be concealed and reserved for their own private Practice?

I can never, for mine Heart, consent to either of these dishonourable Suggestions, and was therefore looking out for another Reason to apologize for this odd Behaviour, but could think of none except that common one I learnt at School,

* Ζηλοῖ δέ τε γείτονα γείτων,
καὶ κερμαεὺς κερμαεὶ κοπέει, καὶ τέκλονι τέκτων,
καὶ πλωχὸς πλωχῷ φρονέει, καὶ αἰοιδὸς αἰοιδῷ.

till a Friend of mine, who has always an extensive way of thinking, gave me the Hint,
that

† Viz. Mr. Toland's Clidophorus.

* Hesiod. Op. & Dies.

that a great deal of what in other Men would be called Pride, and Haughtiness, and Disdain, may in a Clergyman, (especially a well-benefic'd Clergyman) very innocently be accounted for by his Manner of Life, and some heedless Misconceptions he may have entertained of us.

1. A secluse and retired Life has many great Advantages in it both to improve and adorn the Faculties of the Mind ; it gives a Man an Opportunity of much reading, and deep Contemplation ; but then it deprives him of the Knowledge of the World ; and by this means, makes him sometimes a *Pedant* and *Misanthrope*, instead of a Man of Letters and Civility.

For this Reason, some have observed, that Men, who have lived long a Collegiate Life, seldom appear in the World with the best of Tempers ; they imbibe, and are so fond of the Discipline of the Place, as to think to apply it to all the Purposes of Life : Their Inferiors must be kept under the same Subordination, and their Curates taught the same Obedience that they themselves once observed to their Masters and Professors ; and this, not out of any Spirit of Lordliness or Assumption, but merely because they think it the best Form of Government, and such as
ought

ought to take place wherever they preside; by which means it comes to pass, that the Man is thought to oppress, where he only meant to govern, and is called a Tyrant, where he only intended to be a Disciplinarian.

This Indiscretion (for we call it no more) is farther encreased by Success in Life, and an hafty Accumulation of Preferments. Preferments by Collation, and Estates by Hereditage and Acquisition, may have this Difference in their Effects upon us; that the one, coming leisurely and after some Expectance, are usually received with Temper, and occasion no great Alteration in the Mind; the other, coming all at once, and sometimes surprizingly and unexpectedly, swell the Heart, and make the Head turn giddy. What the Man gets in this way, he imputes to his own Merits; what he sees others want, he imputes to their Defect; and thus he estimates things, in his Opinion, according to their proper Value; those that are before him in the Race of Wealth and Honour, he emulates; but those that are behind him, he despises*. Never considering,
that

* Ut cum Carceribus missos rapit ungula Currus,
Instat Equis auriga, suos vincentibus; illum
Præteritum temnens extremos inter euntem.
Hor Serm. Lib. 1. Sat. 1.

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that the Race is not always to the Swift, nor the Battle to the Strong, neither yet Bread to the Wise, nor yet Riches to the Men of Understanding, nor yet Favour to Men of Skill; but Time and Chance happen to them all.

Ecclef. ix.

11.

2. There is something more gross that contributes to our Disesteem, and what I should be ashamed to mention, were there not too much Reason for it. And that is, the vile Misconception of our being their *Servants*, because we do their Work, and receive our Wages from them. This, I verily believe, rises in their Stomachs, and is, as it were, *the Oyl of their Thoughts*, whenever they think themselves provoked to use us ill. “*What, shall such a Scoundrel as this, that I feed, and cloath, and maintain, that I send upon my Errands, and employ in my Drudgery every Day, pretend to treat me thus; to controul my Will, or rival me in any thing? I’ll shew him who is his Master, and what it is to affront a Man of my Spirit, and Power, and Authority over him.*”

Whether we are to be bor’d thro’ the Ears, or us’d as the royal Slaves are, which your Lordship has seen in *Sweden*, (because there is something pretty and symbolical in a Collar

* Collar and a Bell) time will discover. But while we have the Liberty of Speech, I cannot but affirm, that, if receiving a Sum of Money, and that no immense Sum neither in Consideration of the Labour and Time we expend upon our *Principals*, denominates us their Servants; then are all the Professions in the World under the same Predicament, and who is the Man that can call himself free? Lawyers and Physicians, that receive their Fees, (or their Wages, if you please to call them so) are, upon this Supposition, Servants to all the Clients and Patients that employ them. Nay this mighty Man, that is so fond of bringing other People under his Dominion, is, upon his own Principles, the greatest Slave in the Parish. What he calls his Dues, are no more than his Wages; and consequently he is a Servant to every one that pays him any; and ten times more a Servant, than any of us, because the Bulk of his Wages is commonly ten times bigger.

If this Reasoning seems offensive and dangerous to some, as I conceive it may, let those answer for it that gave the Occasion,
and,

* Vid. Account of Sweden, p. 19.

and to aggrandize themselves, are content to see us degraded among the lowest Class of Men ; thereby inverting that Order which God has made between the Priest and People ; thereby denying that Authority which he hath granted for the Edification of his Church ; and thereby destroying that honourable Relation we have to the divine Majesty, and to whose Service alone we are devoted. “ And therefore for any * Patron
 “ (or any other Man we may say) to ac-
 “ count such a consecrated Person his Ser-
 “ vant, is in Effect to challenge divine Ho-
 “ nours, and to set up himself for a God :
 “ For if he is any thing less, he must ac-
 “ knowledge that the Service of a Priest does
 “ not belong to him ; for *that* in the very
 “ Terms and Notion of it, is intended for
 “ no Being inferior to that which is sup-
 “ posed to be divine.

Upon this Occasion I cannot forbear, (let the Construction be what it will) not so much to lament the Misfortune of those that live at the Will of such imperious Masters, (for Lamentation cures no Sores) as to encourage and exhort them to maintain
 their

* Vid. *Collier's Essays*, p. 207.

their Freedom, and not betray the Privileges of their Function by any servile Carriage or Submission.

“ Overmuch Ceremony, says the above-cited * Author, and then I am sure overmuch Submission in a Clergyman is frequently misinterpreted; and supposed to proceed not from his Breeding or Humility, but from a Conscioufness of his Meanness: and others are willing to allow him so much Sense as to be a complete Judge of his own Inconsiderableness; and since he confesses himself contemptible in his Carriage, they think it but just to treat him accordingly.” Were this the worst Consequence, much might be suffered; but when the Contempt descends from our Persons to our Professions, and slides and insinuates it self into our very Discourses and Exhortations, much Care should be taken (how free soever we may make with our selves) not to suffer our holy Office to be traduced, and the *Word of God blasphemed* by our Cowardice and Servility.

God has not given us the Spirit of Fear, says 2 Tim. i. the Apostle, so as to be afraid of Men, but 7.
of

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of Power, *i. e.* of Christian Courage and Magnanimity. And therefore let them know, (and know it by the Steadiness of our Actions, more than any cavilling or litigious Words) that, how eminent soever they may think themselves in their Station, we have a Precaution given us not to call any

¹ Cor. ix. Ministry, even as to *become all things to all*
^{22.} *Men*, yet we have an Example set us, not
² Cor. xi. to be *brought into Bondage by any one.*

^{20.} The Constitution of the Government has set us upon the same Ground with them, and upon the same Level with the inferior Gentry, as a Reward of our Education, and a Furtherance of our Function. Let not this Advantage then, (whatever becomes of our spiritual Dignity) be scandalously parted
 Ezek. xiii. with for *handfuls of Barley, and pieces of Bread.*

^{19.} We have a Power to eat and drink, *i. e.* a Right
¹ Cor. ix. to a competent Maintenance out of the Estates of those that we instruct, as well as
^{4.} *they*; and tho' we receive this Maintenance directly from their Hands, yet the Apostle, I think, has settled that Matter pretty justly,

¹ Cor. ix. *if we have sown unto them, much more if we*
^{11.} *have sown for them, spiritual things, is it a great thing, i. e.* a Favour so extraordinary, a

Con-

Consideration that ought to subject us to so much Homage and Obeisance, that *we reap their carnal things*. The Apostle certainly insinuates that the Obligation lies on their side, as much as carnal are exceeded by spiritual, and temporal by eternal Blessings.

But not to insist on all Advantages. If in the Matter of being beholden to one another (as they call it,) where we have their Money, and they have our Labour, the Business seems to be much upon the *Par*, I could wish (and have often wondred, why I never saw it in any Visitation-Charge) that those, who have a proper Authority over them, would remind them of this Equality, and what Candor and kind Deportment ought to be subsequent upon it. The Author of the * Pastoral Care has laid before them their Duty, I think, in very plain Terms, "Those of an higher Form in Learning, Dignity, and Wealth, says he, ought not to despise poor Vicars and Curates; but on the contrary, the poorer they are, they ought to pity and encourage them the more, since they are all of the same Order, only the one are more happily plac'd
C " than

* Pag. 208.

The Miseries and Hardships

“ than the others: They ought therefore to
 “ cherish those that are in worse Circum-
 “ stances, and encourage them to come of-
 “ ten to them; they ought to lend them
 “ Books, and to give them other Assistances,
 “ in order to their Progress in Learning.
 “ ’Tis a bad thing to see a Bishop behave him-
 “ self superciliously towards any of his Cler-
 “ gy; but it is intolerable in those of the
 “ same Degree.

If this is their Duty, and if it be so shame-
 fully neglected (as Informations from every
 Quarter tell us) I shall not presume to direct
 your Lordship’s Wisdom, but was going to
 think it some part of the Episcopal Care,
 to see that a timely Remedy be provided
 for this Evil, and going to offer up our
 joynt Petition, that, in your next Instru-
 ctions to your Arch-Deacon, your Lordship
 would be pleased to remember us; that he
 may mention something of this Nature, and
 set before your Clergy, at their several Con-
 ventions, the many bad Consequences of their
 Transgression in this respect. Telling them,
 what a Scandal to our holy Religion, what
 an Encouragement to others to use us ill,
 what a Matter of Despondency to our selves,
 and Obstruction to our best Endeavours it
 is, to be slighted and disesteemed, to be re-
 viled

viled and vilified, to be oppressed and devoured by one another, Telling them, that we are all embark'd in the same Cause, and engag'd in the same Warfare, but that the Enemy gains Ground, and makes daily Inroads upon us, while we are wrangling in the Camp, and disputing for Superiority; telling them, in short, that we cannot endure this Usage much longer, and must either quit the Service, or be allowed better Quarter, because we have Men among us that still retain this Sentiment *, *Nil detestabilius dedecore, nil fœdus servitute: ad decus & Libertatem nati sumus, ut hæc teneamus aut cum Dignitate moriamur.*

In this we promise our selves your Lordship's Ear, because the next

3. Privilege that we presume we have a Right to claim, is an equal Share of Favour and Respect from our Spiritual Governors, *those that are set over us in the Lord.* And indeed if we consider the Design of Government in general, we cannot but perceive, that the chief Reason of its Institution, was to keep the World in better Order; that the Weaker might not be a Prey to the

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Strong,

* Vid. T. Cicer. *Philipp.* 3. p. 426. ex Edit. Job. Bleau.

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Stroug, nor any one tolerated to do ill, because he had it in his Power ; that Encouragements might be given to laudable Actions, and every one recompenced according to his Merit. For this Reason, *Rulers* are called *the Ministers of God to us for good, if we do that which is praise-worthy ; but Revengers to execute his Wrath upon us, if we do that which is evil.*

Rom. xiii.

4

Now the true Reason for reposing this Power in the Hands of one single Person, was, not so much in Consideration of his superior Qualities, (that is fortuitous) as that there might be a final Resort, and a certain Point fix'd, whither Subjects, under such Grievances, or with such Expectances, might at any time resort. A Magistrate in his personal Capacity, can do no more than another Man, but in his publick Capacity, and in the Power and Authority wherewith the Laws have invested him, he can exercise Justice and Judgment, to the Punishment of Wickedness, and to the Reward and Encouragement of Virtue. In like manner, a Bishop in his Sacerdotal Capacity, * except in the Matter of Ordination and

* Quid facit Episcopus, excepta Ordinatione, quod Presbyter non faciat? Hier ad Evagr. Ep.

and Confirmation, can do no more than a common Priest: But in his *Ruling* and *Prelatical one*, he can make Injunctions, inflict Penalties, censure, and depose, or else confer his Honours and Preferments upon those that are under his Jurisdiction.

Let us then see, what *part* we have in these great Rulers and Guardians of our Church; and whether *our Words*, upon this Occasion, ought not to be fiercer, than the *Words of those* 2Sam. xix. 43. that would destroy our Credit with them, and engross their Favours.

I. Our blessed Saviour has given us this Character of himself, and in it a Precept for all Church-Governors to observe, *The Son of Man* Mat. xx. 28. came not to be ministered unto, but to minister: He himself condescended to wash his Disciples Feet; and has thereby symbolically taught us, that the lowest Condescension in the greatest Ecclesiasticks is no more than strict Duty: *for the Servant is not greater than his Lord; neither is he that is sent, greater than he that sent him.* John xiii. 16. St. Paul, who professed himself an utter Enemy to all such as affected *Pre-eminence* in the Church, obliges Timothy, who was then Bishop of Ephesus, to do every thing 1 Tim. v. 21. impartially, without preferring one before another; 2 Tim. ii. 24. in his Behaviour to be gentle and patient toward all Men, and in his Reproofs to use great

- 1 Tim. v. Candor, not to rebuke an Elder, but intreat him as a
 1. Father, and the younger Men as Brethren. And St. Peter in his Exhortation to the Elders of the Churches, seems to have comprized all that we can desire. *Feed the Flock of God, says he, which is among you, taking the Oversight thereof; not by Constraint, but willingly; not for filthy Lucre, but of a ready Mind; neither as being Lords over*
 1 Pet. v. *God's Heritage* (or not using a despotic Authority over the Clergy in your Diocesefes) *but being Examples to the Flock, (Examples of Kindness and Condescension) and when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a Crown of Glory that fadeth not away.*

Nothing, I think, can be more evident than what these Passages do imply, viz. That every Bishop should look upon himself as a common Father to his Clergy, and as bound to carry all Matters with an even and impartial Hand among them. And indeed, why does the Scripture stile them Bishops, but that their Office is to *inspect* carefully the State and Condition of those, who are subordinate to them in the Constitution of the Church, yet ought to be esteemed by them as *Fellow-Labourers, and Fellow-Servants*? Why Stewards, but that they are appointed to provide for the whole Household, and to *divide*

to every one his Portion of Meat in due Season? Luke xii.

Why Angels, but that they are sent forth to minister in an higher Order and Capacity, and to take the least, as well as the greatest, under their Guardianship and Protection? Above all, why does it so frequently call them Pastors and Shepherds, but that they are more immediately concerned to take care of the Impotent and Weak; and accordingly our Church, in her final Exhortation to the newly consecrated Bishop, gives him these pathetic Admonitions: * “ Be to the Flock of Christ
 “ a Shepherd, not a Wolf; feed them, de-
 “ vour them not; hold up the Weak, heal
 “ the Sick, bind up the Broken, bring again the
 “ Outcasts, seek the Lost.” The Words are taken from the Prophet *Ezekiel*, where God complains of the Shepherds of *Israel*, who had acted counter to all these Injunctions, and abus’d their Authority to Tyranny and Oppression.

2. Might it be deem’d no Presumption, and were we allow’d to make the best of our Plea for what we so much covet and desire, we might say, that, besides these Scripture-Indications, we have a farther Title to Respect and Estimation from our spiritual Rulers, viz. The Proximity of our Order, and

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the

* *Vid.* Consecration Office, ad finem.

The Miseries and Hardships

the near Approaches that the Dignity of the Priesthood makes to that of the Prelacy. For tho' I am far from thinking, that there is any Weight in the Arguments of those Men, who would blend and consolidate these two Orders into one, after what the learned *Hammond* in his Dissertations, and the great Vindicator of St. *Ignatius* his Epistles have said upon this Subject; yet I cannot but conceive, that there is something in the Practice and Opinion of the primitive Church, that ought to bring us a little nearer to your Lordship's Situation, than we seem to be at present; * something in the Titles of Honour that were given to Presbyters of old, and in the Thrones whereon they were allowed to sit in the Churches; something in the Respect and Observance that Bishops paid them, never suffering them to stand, when they themselves were sitting; something in the Right they had to partake in the Ecclesiastical Government, to be Counsellors and Assessors to Bishops, who could hear and determine no Controversies, nor ordain or degrade any of their Order, without their Concurrence and Consent; something above all, "in their Liberty to appeal in case they
" were

* Vid. *Bingham's Orig. Eccl.* Vol. 1. p. 232.

“ were injur’d, to the Metropolitan, or Pro-
“ vincial Synod, which the * *Nicene* Council,
“ and many others, appoint to be held once
“ or twice a Year, for that very Purpose,
“ that if any Clergyman chanc’d to be un-
“ justly censur’d by the Passion of his Bi-
“ shop, he might have Recourse to a supe-
“ rior Court, and there have Justice done
“ him.

I am sensible what ticklish Ground I am upon, and have therefore, for fear of giving Offence, chose other Men’s Words to express my Sentiments in, rather than mine own.
“ In later Times ’tis acknowledg’d †, (says
“ the learned Doctor *Comber*, many of the Pri-
“ vileges belonging to this second Order have
“ been laid aside, whether to repress the
“ Ambition of the Presbyters, who unjustly
“ aim’d at an Equality, or out of an Affecta-
“ tion of Singularity in some of the supe-
“ rior Degrees, I will not determine. It is
“ sufficient to my Purpose, of shewing the
“ Honour of the Priesthood, that, in the
“ best Ages, it was thought worthy to act
“ joyntly with Bishops in most Ecclesiastical
“ Concerns,

Vid. *Bingham's* Orig. Eccl. Vol. 1. p. 91.

* Conc. Nic. Can. 5.

† *Comber's* Discourse, &c. p. 264.

The Miseries and Hardships

“ Concerns, and to have the next Degree,
 “ of Reverence and Authority to them.
 “ And I look upon it as equally pernicious
 “ to the Church, for Presbyters to aspire to
 “ a Parity with Bishops, as for these to de-
 “ spise the others as unworthy to advise or
 “ assist them; for the former destroys, and
 “ the latter very much impairs the good
 “ Government of the Church: The Bishops
 “ cannot exercise that Authority, which
 “ Christ and his Apostles left them, if Pres-
 “ byters be their Equals; this will make, (as
 “ St. *Hierom* speaks) *as many Schisms as there*
 “ *are Priests.* And they cannot have that use-
 “ ful Assistance, toward the Execution of their
 “ Episcopal Function, which was design’d
 “ them, when they exclude so many learned
 “ and able Men, as this next Order affords,
 “ from their Councils and Administrations;
 “ wherefore the Orders must be distinct, to
 “ avoid Confusion, but, provided the Subor-
 “ dination be kept up, due Respect should
 “ be shewn, to exclude arbitrary Domi-
 “ nion. This Temper, says he, is pre-
 “ scribed by the Council of *Carthage*, where
 “ it * decrees that the Bishop shall sit high-
 er

* *Ut Episcopus in Ecclesia in Consequu presbytero-
rum*

“ er in the Assembly of Presbyters in the
“ Church, but within the House he shall
“ consider them as his Collegues. So that
“ Antiquity required of Presbyters, to ex-
“ press all imaginable Reverence in publick
“ to their Bishop; and of Bishops, to shew
“ them in private all possible Respect, and
“ treat them with great Civility.

And if this be the Method and proper Regulation of our mutual Behaviour, how distant soever we may be from either having, or desiring, any Share in the *Government* of the Church, we have certainly a Right to our Share in the *Governors* themselves; and they perhaps may be induc'd to think so too, when it is considered.

3 What an effectual means this may prove, both to promote the Honour and Reverence that is due to them, and the Comfort and Encouragement that our Condition requires. A learned and ingenious Preacher of our Church* (for I still desire to talk under Cover) enquiring into the Grounds of the Contempt of the superior Clergy, resolves a great deal
into

rum sublimior sedeat, intra vero domum Collegam presbyterorum se esse cognoscat.

Conc. Carth. 4. 35. Bin. T. 1. p. 589.

* Dr. South's Sermon. Vol. 1. p. 211.

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into their own Proneness to despise others.
 “ There is a kind of Respect, says he, due to
 “ the meanest Person, even from the great-
 “ est; for it is the mere Favour of Provi-
 “ dence, that he, who is actually the great-
 “ est, was not the meanest. A Man cannot
 “ cast his Respects so low, but they will re-
 “ bound and return upon him. What Hea-
 “ ven bestows upon the Earth in kind Influ-
 “ ences and benign Aspects, is paid back a-
 “ gain in Sacrifice, Incense, and Adoration.”
 A free and generous Benefaction cannot fail
 of illiciting Praise; and * Praise in a skilful
 Hand is sometimes the Consecration of a
 Man’s Name to all Posterity; but there is a
 Shock and Disgust attending the Thoughts
 of him, who after long and fruitless Ex-
 pectances, obliges his Dependant to accost
 him thus,

*Armand, l’ age affoiblit mes yeux :
 Et tout ma chaleur me quite :
 Je verrai bientôt mes ayeux
 Sur le rivage du Cocyte ;
 Je serai bientôt des suivans
 De ce bon Monarque de France,*

Qui

* Dignum laude virum musa vetat mori.

*Qui fut le Pere des Savans,
En un siecle plein d' ignorance.
Lors que j' aprocherai de lui,
Il voudra que je lui raconte
Tout ce que tu fais aujourd'hui,
Pour combler l' Espagne de honte.
Mais s'il demande a quel emploi
Tu m'as ocupe dans le monde,
Et quel bien j' ai regude toi,
Que veux-tu que je lui reponde ?*

But to proceed with our Author. " A great
" Person gets more by obliging his Inferi-
" or, than he can by disdaining him; as a
" Man has a greater Advantage by sowing
" and dressing his Ground, than he can have
" by trampling upon it. It is not to insult
" and domineer, to look disdainfully, and
" revile imperiously, that procures an Esteem
" from any one; it will indeed make Men
" keep their Distance sufficiently, but it will
" be distance without Reverence; such as
will bring in Parasites and Flatterers enough,
but very few faithful Friends or Admirers.

Far am I, my Lord, from quoting this
Passage with a secret Purpose to satyrize any
of my reverend Fathers in God. I know
my Duty better, than to *speack evil of Digni-
ties*, and am far from thinking that Disdain
and

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and Haughtiness has any Habitation in such devout and heavenly Breasts. The Multiplicity of Business, the Importunity of Addresses, the Concerns of the State, the Concerns of their own Families, besides *the thing*
 2 Cor. xi. *which comes upon them daily, the Care of all the*
 24. *Churches,* may in a great measure apologize for that kind of Carriage which their Station in Life makes necessary to preserve their Authority, and secure to themselves some leisure Hours. Wish however we may, that they would take all proper Occasions, to come down, as it were, from their Eminence and Superiority, to let their Inferiors know, that they are not altogether unmindful of them; and we wish it for our own sakes too, because we chiefly feel the happy Effects of such Condescensions.

Your Lordship has had the Honour to be intrusted with Affairs of great Importance, and to serve more than one Crowned Head with just Applause and Approbation. Think then, and recollect with your self, what an unspeakable Pleasure it was, what a Transport and Exultation of Mind it gave you, after a Return from an Embassy, or some weighty Negotiation, to be received graciously, and rewarded bountifully by your Sovereign; to have your Praises told, and a *well done*
good

of the Inferior Clergy.

47

good and faithful Servant, resounding in your Ears from the Mouth of Majesty.

The like, if not a greater Tide of Joy, comes in upon us, and refreshes us, at the least Indication of Respect that you vouchsafe us. A ready Reception, a pleas'd Countenance, a kind Expression, a small Commendation, nay to seem but tolerably easy, and not altogether weary in our Company, raises and revives our Hearts, and gives them great Designs and Resolutions; whereas the contrary Behaviour of Reserve and Shyness, of stern Looks, and harsh Rebukes, of being said to be busy, or deny'd to be at home when called upon, dejects and makes us sad.

*Sic leve, sic parvum est, animum quod laudis avarum
Subruit, aut reficit.*

* “ In short, he only in this Sense *makes the*
“ *Office of a Bishop a good Work*, who espouses
“ his Clergy, Rich and Poor alike, into the
“ Intimacy of his Bosom, his Care, his Affa-
“ bility, his Provision, his Prayers; considering
“ with himself, what a mighty Advantage
“ he

Hor. Epist. Lib. 2. Ep. 1.

* *Toung's Sermon*. Vol. 1. p. 178.

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“ he has from the Height of his Place, to
 “ recommend and endear his Love: For
 “ Love in an inferior Station may possibly
 “ look more mercenary, and so affect less;
 “ but Love, condescending from such an
 “ Height of Place, wins and captivates, and
 “ makes a Man look like God both in Tem-
 “ per and Beneficence.

Were I allow'd to particularize in any of the
 sacred College of Bishops, where every one is
 so eminently good, my Gratitude would remit
 me to our most EXCELLENT METROPOLITAN
 OF YORK; who, in every Instance of Life, has
 set the World a Pattern, how far the Behavi-
 our of a *fine Gentleman* may adorn the *Prelacy*,
 and comport with the Conduct of a *good Chri-
 stian* *. Secure of his own Greatness, he fears
 no Diminution of it; or that the Dignity of
 his Station will suffer by his Lowliness and
 frequent Condescensions. I have returned
 from his Presence (and his Presence is not
 guarded with the tedious Formalities of Ad-
 mission) not only refreshed with the Riches
 of his Liberality, but reviv'd and re-invigo-
 rated

* Cui nihil ad augendum Fastigium superest, hic
 uno modo crescere potest, si se ipse submittat, securus
 magnitudinis suæ; neque enim ab ullo periculo Epif-
 coporum Fortuna longius abest, quam ab humilitate. 13
 Plin. Pan. ad Traj.

rated with the Benignity of his Countenance ; for whole Weeks afterwards liv'd as happy as a King, in my aerial Mansion ; forgetful of the Cares of Life, and pregnant with my little great Designs of re-munerating his Favours to me, in the only Method that he allows, by doing my best Service to the Church. Happy they ! who live under the nearer Influence of so much Goodness and Humanity, which I can only salute at this Distance, and under a Restraint to say no more, for fear of offending that Modesty, which is so innate to his Temper, or of incurring the Imputation of Flattery, so abhorrent to my own.

If then, my Lord, (and in you I speak to all the rest of our reverend Fathers in God) *there be any Consolation in Christ, if any Comfort of Love, if any Fellowship of the Spirit, if any Bowels and Mercies, receive us, and* Phil.ii. 1. *strengthen us, that we may perform the Work* Heb. xiii. *of our Ministry with Joy, and not with Grief,* 17. *for that is not profitable for you.*

The Burthen of the Ministry, you know, lies chiefly upon our Shoulders ; our Principals are absent ; they are hunting about for more Preferments, and making what they have *Living and Emoluments* in the most carnal Sense of the Words. Let it be allow'd

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us then, to have some part in the Honour of our Vocation, as well as all the Pains of it; Let the Inequality of our Labour be thought to deserve a little better Proportion of Wages; to hold, at least, the poor Pittance we have at a more certain and less dependent Rate; above all, let us not be secluded from your Care, or depriv'd of the Light of your Countenance, the only thing that can alleviate all other Inconveniencies, and make us *courageous and strong in the Lord*: with such a

Heb. xii. *Cloud of Witnesses* inspecting and encouraging us, we can contend for Mastery, and run with
 1. 1 Cor. ix. 25. *Patience the Race that is set before us.*

Mat. v. 14. The Providence of God has plac'd you, as *a large City upon an Hill*; we are the Villages, or little adjacent Cottages below: The Indulgence of the Government has annexed Honours and other Advantages to your high Station; we are seldom, and then very sparingly, considered by the Legislature. You therefore, *that are strong*, ought to pity us *that are weak*, and make the Power of your Interest, as well as your Munificence and Liberality, abound to our better Establishment and Support. We have Hearts as grateful, and Heads as studious as any, to requite your Benevolence with suitable Acknowledgments; but then we have a farther Qualification

lification to glory in, that others have not, our frequent Infirmities and Necessities. To this very Day (and in this, perhaps, we are the only Apostolic Clergy in the Nation) we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain Dwelling-place. 1 Cor. iv. 11. And therefore we are the rather confident to implore your Interest and Intercession; There, my Lord, where we now come, at last, to appeal for our share of Respect and Encouragement,

4. And that is, at the Feet of our secular Governors. Our secular Governors know very well, that the best Foundation of their Authority over Mankind is laid in Religion; that human Laws, and the Terrors of them can only bind the outward Man, which upon a secure Opportunity will be often breaking loose: But Conscience, which is the inward Man, can no otherwise be bound, than by the Ties of Religion, and the Rewards and Punishments that are fetch'd from the World to come. For this Reason, some of the wisest Heathens have ever thought it more expedient to humour the common People in their * Mistakes about a
D 2 future

* Esse aliquos Manes & Subterranea regna,
Et Contum, & Stygio Ranas in gurgite nigras,
Nec

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future State (because how gross soever they might be, they found them very serviceable to keep them in Subjection) than to endanger the Government, by invalidating their Belief: And for the same Reason, even † Atheistical Politicians advise their Princes, in all Ages, to take an especial Care of Religion, and see it rooted as firmly, as possible, in the Hearts of their Subjects, how slender an Hold soever it has of their own; because it is the only Instrument of Government, and the best Expedient to keep their Subjects under controll.

Now if Religion be so assistant to the great Ends of Government, it is Matter of Prudence, as well as any thing else, in the Civil Magistrate, to protect and encourage those, that are the Teachers and proper Officers of it; such more especially, as have the largest Share in its Administrations, and by that means, the frequentest Occasions of conversing with his People; of forming their Principles, of directing their Consciences, and of guiding and disposing of their Inclinations and Affections, just in a manner as they please.

Who

Nec pueri credunt nisi qui nondum ærè lavantur,
At tu vera puta — Juven. Satyr. 3.

† *Young's Sermons.*

Who these are, needs no long Scrutiny to discover: for if a constant Habitation among Persons inclin'd to think well of Religion and its Ministers; if a daily Attendance on their Calls, and sparing no Pains to satisfy their Desires; if a Conversation modest and grave, but chearful and free, devoid of all supercilious State, and an Haughtiness that must be shocking; if a Life quiet and easy, and contented, without any wrangling for Tithes, or litigious Contention for Offerings; if preaching the Word in Plainness and Simplicity, without any crafty intermixing of Schemes, that have no Relation to the Gospel of Christ: *In a Word*, if living quietly, and *minding their own Business*, loving their Neighbours, and condescending to the Meanest, visiting the Sick, strengthening the Weak, comforting the Dejected, *and to all Men becoming all things, that by all means they may gain some*, be a proper way for the Clergy of the Land to attain an Interest in the Love and Affections of the People (and I know no other that can be justifiable) then are those of an inferior Degree (for to them I think these Characteristicks do chiefly point) none of the most contemptible Bodies in the Nation. They draw Shoals after them; they command at least half the Ears of the

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People once every Week ; rule their Passions, and temper their Resentments ; and 'twill therefore be no false Policy, in any Government whatever, to make them its * Friends, and attach them to its Interest as firmly as may be.

It has pleas'd Almighty God, since his Majesty's happy Accession to the Throne, to dissipate *one Storm*, that seem'd to threaten our Government both in Church and State very loudly ; how that Storm came to arise, after such a general Satisfaction express'd at his Accession, is pretty unaccountable ; but I am apt to believe that it might have been prevented spreading so wide, and extending its Terror so far, had but a proper Invitation been given to the Subalterns of our Order, (who at that time were a mighty Army of Preachers) to *cry aloud and spare not, to lift up their Voices like a Trumpet, and shew the People the Iniquity of what they were doing.* And upon the like Emergency (if for our Sins the like Emergency should at any time befall us) I know no better Expedient, than to comfort and encourage those, whose Office

* Quum plurimis amicitis Fortuna principis indigeat, præcipuum est Principis Opus, amicos parare. Plin. Pan. ad Traj.

rice and Employment it is, to put *the People*
in mind to be subject to Principalities and Pow- Tit. iii. 1.
ers; to submit themselves to every Ordinance of 1 Pet. ii.
Man for the Lord's sake; not to speak evil of 13.
the Ruler of the People, not to curse the King in Eccl. x.
their Hearts, but to obey Magistrates, and pray 2c.
for those that are in Authority, that we may live 1 Tim. ii.
quietly and peaceably under them; and from 2.
 these Topicks can fire the Consciences of their
 Hearers to take up Arms without beat of
 Drum, and to die Martyrs (if Occasion be)
 for the present happy Constitution.

And how meanly soever some may think
 of us, (if the Great and Wealthy have not
 engross'd all the Learning and all the Loyalty
 in the Church) we have Men among us that
 are sufficient for these things; we have Men
 among us, who notwithstanding the Pressure
 of adverse Fortune, and the want of many
 Assistances proper for a studious Life, have
 not only approv'd themselves to the *Govern-*
ment, but to the *Republick of Letters* likewise;
 have stood in the Gap both when the Civil
 Constitution was alarm'd, and the Authority
 of the Church invaded; have both entertain'd
 the World with Tracts of Wit and Ingenu-
 ity, and instructed it with more solid and more
 useful Lessons: And many more we have,
 who, if they were drawn out from their

John v.
35.

Obscurity, would become *burning and shining Lights in their Generation.*

But it is not for what we can do, but for what we suffer, that we crave the Protection and Countenance of the Government. how it is I cannot tell, but in the present Situation of our Affairs, we seem not only to be cut off from the Body of the Clergy, but fallen, as it were, from the Consideration of the Legislature. Not only the Mean-ness of our Circumstances dispirits us daily, and cramps the Sinews of our Endeavours for the publick Good; but what is more discouraging, in those very Statutes, which are purposely made for the *Maintenance of the poor Clergy*, and whose Titles promise no less, we find no manner of Mention made of us, or of our Condition. Every Vicar, every benefic'd Curate, that hath something already to trust to of his own, promises himself farther Advantage from a Royal Augmentation: We are the only Persons that are excluded, and have nothing to hope for but the *kind Quarter* of such Masters, as pay us, and use us, and dismiss us as they please. The * Law that is our Barrier against them (and we have
but

* Act for the better Maintenance of Curates with-
in the Church of *England*, 12. *Anna.*

but one, I mean Statute Law, that I know of, provided in our Behalf) is flinted in its Bounds, and evaded in its Execution. 'Tis scandalous to see what Shifts they are contriving daily to preclude us the Benefit of it, and to hold us under their Power, *their arbitrary Power*, while we are forc'd to live under their Pay.

This Yoak, we desire in all Humility, to have removed from our Necks, that the common Calumny of our Enemies, in time, may vanish, *viz.* That the Clergy of the Church of *England* are the greatest Tyrants to one another; and that, for the future, it may be said with Truth, that the few that were redeemed lately, were the only Slaves, of all his Majesty's Subjects.

O veri Principis, said I to my self, when I saw the moving Objects of our gracious Sovereign's Bounty and Compassion in their Proceſſion, and your Lordship ſo commendably employ'd in conducting them to the Altar of God to offer up their Praiſes for their joyful Release. * *O veri Principis, miſeros ſublevare, captivos redimere, quicquid fieri non debet infectum reddere; poſtremo velociffimi Syderis more, omnia inviſere, omnia audire, & undecunque*

* Plin. Paneg. ad Traj.

decunque, invocatum statim velut Numen, adesse, & assistere! So good and gracious a Prince (continuing my Reflection, said I) cou'd not but commiserate our Calamities, if they were once fairly represented to him: his Charity and royal Zeal, that extends it self so far, and into such distant Countries, cou'd not (but for want of Intimation) overlook Objects that are at home, and in the very Bosom of that Church, whereof he himself is the *supreme Head and Governor*. *Blessed among your Brethren*, must your Lordship be, for carrying to his *sacred Ear* the Information of what his poor Clergy, under your Inspection, are known to suffer; and for recommending, with such Advantages, as you can easily, the Consideration of their Condition to the Wisdom of the Legislature!

I decus, I, nostrum.

To go on with our Pretensions then,
My Lord,

II. The next thing, that we think we have a Right to claim, is a proper Maintenance and Support for our Labour. What Provision God Almighty was pleas'd to make for his Ministers under his Law is visible to any one that looks into the Bible. The *Levites* indeed were excluded from having
any

any part in *the Division of the Land*, but *this*, Deu. xviii. 1.
 not for their Loss, but their greater tempo-
 ral Advantage. Had they been Sharers in
 common with the rest, a twelfth part only
 must have been their due; whereas in the
 Settlement that God made for them, they
 were admitted to a *Tenth*; and that without
 the Trouble or Charge of Tillage, to the
 Intent that they might be in a Condition to
 attend his Service without Distraction, and
 to relieve the Poor without impairing them-
 selves. Nay, not only the Tenth of every
 thing, but their farther Allotment in the *Sa-*
crifices and Oblations, that were daily brought Deu. xviii. 9.
 in to the Altar, was a constant additional
 Supply, and enabled them to live in great
 Affluence and Hospitality.

In these Days it is observable likewise,
 that there was no encroaching upon one a-
 nother, nor any engrossing of such things as
 were of common Right and Distribution,
 permitted to the Greatest. The *Sin of the* 1 Sam. ii.
Sons of Eli, and God's Severity against them 13. 30.
 and their whole House, is recorded for this
 Purpose, that none presume to *lord it over*
 their Brethren, because they have a *potent*
Patron to stand by them, or to arrogate
 to themselves more of the *Offerings*, more
 of the Revenues of the Church, than comes
 to

to their Share, because they can possibly get a Dispensation for Encroachments.

The Christian Church was founded in a great Measure, upon other Maxims than the Jewish; and yet we may observe, that the Evangelical Prophet, proclaiming the *acceptable Year of the Lord*, whereby he means a Gospel State, promises great Plenty and Prosperity to its Ministers. *Ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord, ye shall eat the Riches of the Gentiles, and*

Isa. lxi. *in their Glory shall ye boast your selves* Our blessed Saviour, when he sent and commissioned his Disciples to preach about *Judea*, forbids them to take any of the usual Necessaries for a Journey, and gives them this Reason for it, that they had a just Pretence to Maintenance wherever they went, *for the Labourer is worthy of his Hire*. St. Paul shews very fully what Right the Clergy have to be supported

Luke x.7. *by their Office, as well as Men of any other Occupations, and thereupon gives the Laity*

1 Cor. ix. *this Injunction, Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. He himself indeed, in some Churches, (particularly in that of Corinth) refus'd to accept of any thing, that he might*

Gal. vi.6. *not be burthensome, or that his Glory in preaching the Gospel freely might not be made void; but at the same time, he tells them, that he took Wages*

1 Cor. ix. *of*

15.

of other Churches to do them Service ; that those of² Macedonia supply'd his Wants ; those of Philippi sent frequently to his Necessities ; and that he had an equal Power to demand the like of them.

Cor. xi.
8, 9.

Phil. iv.

16.
1 Cor. ix.
12.

In this manner, and by such Contributions as these, did the Clergy for a long while live, in the first Ages of the Church ; and live so comfortably, as to be thought by * some in a better Condition, while this primitive Zeal continued warm, than all subsequent Endowments made them. † The Care of these Contributions (as well as other accre- wing Revenues) was committed to the Hands of the Bishop, till their vast increase, as well as other Reasons, made it convenient for proper || Officers, (then called *Oeconomi*) to be appointed to this Purpose. The general Rule for their Distribution was, an equal Por- tion to those of the same Order, except where some pressing Necessities called for more. * Where the Bishop and his Clergy liv'd separate, the common Division was, one Part for the Bishop, a second for the Clergy, a third for the Poor, and the fourth for

* Vid. Chryf. Hom. 86. in Matth. † Vid. Bingham's Orig. Eccl. Vol. 2. p 284. || ibid. p. 66.
* ibid. p. 286.

The Miseries and Hardships

for the Repair, and other Uses of the Church. Where the Bishop and his Clergy liv'd together, (as they usually did in several Places) there was no need for any such Division; they, as the Apostles in their Days, *had all Things common.*

Before the Parochial Division of Cures here in *England*, Bishops, and their Clergy, lived together in this wise; and before the Number of Christians were much increased, they sent their Clergy out to preach to the People as they saw Occasion; who brought constantly home, to the common Treasury, whatever Oblations they had receiv'd in the Course of their Ministry. As Churches in the Country were erected and endow'd, their officiating Priest was still accountable to the Bishop for the Revenues of them, and oblig'd to return them to the Cathedral or Mother Church, where Distributions were made in this quadrupartite Manner, as Pope *Gregory's* Answer to *Augustin* informs us. *

During this Oeconomy, 'tis easy to see that there could be no Distinction between those
 1 Cor. ii. of the same Order, *no one being hungry, whilst*
 2. *another was full and drunken.* All the Oblations of
 particular

* Quatuor fieri debent. Portiones, una Episcopo & familiæ suæ propter Hospitalitatem, alia Clero, tertia pauperibus, quarta Ecclesiis reparandis. Bed. Hist. Eccl. Lib. 1. C. 27.

particular Churches were repositèd in a common *Bank*, and thence issued out, either monthly or yearly, as Occasions required in equal * Distributions. But when once this Order was broke through, Churches settled in another Manner; and every one that was a *Sublimis & literata Persona* (as a † notable Council calls him) thought abundantly qualify'd to be a *Pluralist*; Oppression crept in at the Heels of Covetousness, and such as thought it no Robbery to ingross more than was their Share, soon thought it no Injustice to stint the Stipendiary in his Wages. To this Purpose our Historians have observ'd, that the *Normans*, after their Conquest, together with the Estates and rich Manors of the ancient *English*, took to themselves the Possession of the Tithes likewise, and dispos'd of them just as they thought fit. The poor parochial Clergy were *English*, whom they hated, and cared not how poor they were: The Bishops were *Normans*, as fast as they cou'd make them; and the Business of great Men was to encourage *Norman Monks*, who came over in abundance, and to build and endow

Monasteries

* Bingham. Orig. Ecc. Vol. II. p. 284.

† Con. Lat. Can. 29.

Monasteries for them, to pray for their Souls, which they minded so little themselves * To these Monasteries very large Possessions, together with the Advowson of several parochial Churches, were oftentimes bequeath'd; and the *Monks* likewise took Care to build Churches within their own Manors where there were none before, and in the Right of the Foundation, to make themselves Patrons thereof, till some Decrees came out to restrain them. These Churches were supplied by secular Priests, (for *Monks*, at that Time, were not allow'd to officiate, without the Bounds of their Cloisters) presented by the Monastery, and confirm'd by the Bishops. Bishops, it seems, in those Days, had Power to regulate their Endowments just as they pleas'd; but so Partial or Remiss were they in this Matter, as to deserve a Reprimand from Pope *Alexander* the III^d, in *Henry* the III^d's Time, for favouring the *Monks* too much, and the Clergy too little; and a positive Injunction to take more Care, that the Vicar had a competent Subsistence, so as to be able to bear the Burthen of his Place, and to keep Hospitality.

Bull's

* Vid. *Duties and Rights of Par. Clerg.* p. 296.

Bulls of Appropriation came afterwards frequently from *Rome*; and whoever wanted not Money, seldom or never fail'd to obtain them. This gave the *Monks*, as well as other rich Patrons, a fresh Opportunity to use their Curates or Vicars, or Chaplains; (for by all these Names they were then call'd indifferently) not so very kindly. The Appointment of Stipends was however still left to the Pleasure of the Bishop; but Bishops, in those Days too, were apparently prone to favour the Party that was great and powerful. *Five Marks per Annum* was, in the Provincial Council of * *Oxford*, decreed a sufficient Salary for Parochial Curates in the Year 1222. After a severe Plague in *Edward* the III'd's Time, *Ann. Dom.* 1362. when Chaplains could not be got to attend, but at excessive Rates, it was enacted, and with a smart Penalty too, that no secular Man should pay to any Priest more than † *five Marks* yearly in Money, or other things in value. The learned † *Stillingfleet* makes it *six Marks*, and justly observes from *Lyndwood*, that those, whom some mistake for Parish-Priests in the Act,

E were

* *Ibid.* Tom. 2. p. 113.

† *Vid. Gibson's Cod. Jur. Eccl. Ang.* p. 938.

‡ *Rights and Duties of Par. Cler.* p. 293.

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were no other than annual Chaplains, or Mass-Chaplains, such as had no legal Endowments, but depended only on the good Will of the Parson or People, and were hired to officiate in Chapels of Ease, or to perform some Offices for the Dead. In *Henry the Vth's* Reign, *Ann. Dom*, 1414, and as the Price of things advanc'd, I suppose, Salaries augmented: for Chaplains were then allowed *seven Marks*, Parish Priests *eight*, and sometimes *nine*, if they cou'd but procure a Licence from the Bishop, who had the whole Settlement and Limitation of such Stipends under his Disposal still. In the beginning of the Reformation, when abundance of these Appropriations (now turned into Lay-Fees) were resolv'd into the Crown, and the dispensing Power of the Pope lodg'd in the Hand of the Archbishop, a new Æra of Calamity beset the Curates. The Faculty of Dispensation for Pluralities, mentions indeed a * competent and sufficient Salary, to be limited and assign'd by the Bishop of the Place, or the Archbishop, in Case of his Neglect.

* *Competens & sufficiens Salarium a loci illius Episcopo, sua sana Discretione, vel a nobis aut Successoribus nostris (casu quo Dioecesanus huic officio minime satisfecerit) limitandum & assignandum, bona fide præstetur, & persolvatur.*

Neglect. Our * Canons enjoin likewise, that whosoever has two Benefices shall *maintain* a Preacher *licens'd* in the Benefice where he does not reside; but then *this Maintenance and this Salary* has been always brought down so low, as to give just Offence to all sober and considerate Minds. Divers Bills ^{18. Eliz.} have accordingly been brought into Parlia- ^{16. Car. I.} ment for the Correction of this Abuse: One particularly was sent from the House of Commons to the House of Lords, *July* the 26th, 1661, with this Title, *An Act for a competent Allowance to be made to such Curates, as shall officiate in such Livings where the proper Incumbent does not reside*: But the Rule of such Allowance being the real Value of the Benefice, and the Labour of the Cure, and these attended with so much Uncertainty, (besides other accidental Considerations proper to be regarded) the said Attempts prov'd ineffectual, and it remains now, says our † Author, where the common Law of the Church, and the Tenor of Dispensation have lodg'd it, in the Power and Discretion

E 2

of

* Can. 41. and 47.

† *Gibson's Cod. Jur. Eccl. Angl.* p. 932.

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of the Bishop, and is indeed a Matter well worth his Care and Inspection.

Since that time, we have a later Act, in the 12th of Queen Anne, intended, *no doubt*, for the Encouragement and better *Maintenance of Curates within the Church of England*, as it is entitled; but the Force of it has been so totally evaded, or turn'd upon our selves, contrary to the Purpose of the Legislature, that, what the Apostle says of the Moral Law, we may too justly say

Rom. vii. of this, *the Commandment which was ordain'd*
9, 10. *to Life, we have found to be unto Death.* For whereas the Act requires, that the *Absence of the benefic'd Ministers* should be supply'd by *Curates that are sufficient and licens'd Preachers*; that these Curates should not be employ'd without the Examination and Admission of the Bishop of the Diocese, or Ordinary of the Place; that every Minister should nominate and present before hand the Person he designs for his Curate, to the Bishop or Ordinary, to be thus admitted, and then licens'd; That upon granting such License and Admission, a sufficient *certain Stipend and Allowance* should be appointed by the Bishop *under his own Hand and Seal*, to the Curate for his Maintenance; and in Case of any Difference between the Minister and his Curate,
that

that the Bishop should arbitrate upon the Point, and cause the settled Stipend to be paid: Whereas the Act, I say, ordains all this, in the strongest Terms imaginable, we have Demonstrations, too many, to let us see how easy it is to elude its Force. 'Tis but my forgetting (as it were) to give my Curate a Nomination to the Bishop, and then he can have no License; he himself will not dare to demand one of me; if he does, I cashier him at once, and the Bishop is too much a Gentleman and my Friend, to call upon me for one, or to insist on such trifling Niceties. While therefore I keep him from a License, (and that I'll endeavour to do as long as I live) he's properly no Curate of the Place; and therefore I'll use him as I please, I will pay him as I please, and send him adrift when I please, in spite of his boasted *Act for the better Maintainance of Curates.*

'Tis a Shame, my Lord, (I speak it with some Concern) 'tis a Shame, I say, that the Legislature is not more publickly told, how their Authority is every Day slighted; and this Act of Favour and Benevolence towards us, defeated, and made of no manner of Significance, by such fraudulent and evasive Practice.

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Nay, well it were if this Act were only of no Significance to us, but the Mischief is, 'tis too commonly turn'd upon us, and made an Instrument of our greater Abasement and Humiliation. For whereas it appoints that our Salary should not *exceed fifty*, nor fall *below twenty Pound per Annum*; and has left the proportioning of this to the sole Discretion of the Bishop or Ordinary; the Bishop or Ordinary is usually *encumbered with too much serving elsewhere*, to be at leisure to interpose in our Agreements: Bargain then we must for our selves as well as we can, but are usually brought down to the lowest Extream, and told, to our Comfort, that if we like it not, others there are that will accept it; that they offer us no Injustice, because the Act allows them that Latitude; nor can it be any Dishonour in them to take all the proper Advantages of it. We, for our parts, are forc'd to submit then, and can only lament inwardly,

*That when tyrannick Usurpation
Invades the Freedom of a Nation,
The Laws o' th' Land, that were intended
To keep it out, are made defend it.*

Our wise Legislators, to be sure, never sup-
pos'd,

pos'd, that twenty or thirty Pounds *per Ann.* were an Equivalent for the Cure of a Parish, that perhaps consists of ten thousand Souls, and may bring the Incumbent in yearly, four or five hundred Pounds neat Money. They had an Eye chiefly, in this Clause, to small Livings, and cheap Countries; they left the wealthy Clergy, in a great Measure, to their own Generosity; never dreaming that they would be the first Men to beat down the Prices of their own Vocation. They plac'd the Vigilance of the Bishop's Eye over them; as little thinking, that, in a Matter of such Consequence to the Quiet and good Order of the Church, any Vigilance would have been wanting: Had they suspected this, 'tis probable, they had put our Stipends under another Regulation, and considered a little farther, whether the third part of the clear Produce of the Benefice, and that recoverable by addressing to the Civil Magistrate (as it is now in the Case of small Tythes) be not a fitter Proportion, and a safer Establishment for us, than what we are now upon.

For to take the Act, my Lord, in its highest Elevation (what few of us I believe ever yet came up to) *fifty Pounds per Annum* (how big soever it may sound in the whole)

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is no great Sum, when it comes to be parcel'd out into twenty for Board and Lodging; half as much and more for wearing Apparel; something for washing, making, and mending; something for Books, and other Utensils of Study; something for Charity, and Relief of the Poor; and something for several other occasional Expences, that are almost unavoidable in this great Town: for, unless we would be the Scoff and Ridicule of Company, we must endeavour to appear * full as well as we can, to gain Respect among our Equals, and access to those that are above us: Unless we are minded to sink into Ignorance and Stupidity, some Books we must buy, both to employ our vacant Hours, and furnish our Minds with Materials for our Calling: Unless we would fortify our Hearts against all Pity and Compassion, some Money we must part with, when we visit the Sick and Indigent, to ease our own Bowels as well as relieve their Wants: And unless we could break through all the receiv'd Rules of Life, and turn mere Cynicks, we must think now and then of meeting with a Friend, and of taking a little something together

* Commune id vitium est, hic vivimus ambitiosa Paupertate omnes — Juv. Sat. 4.

together, for our Stomachs sake, and our frequent 1 Tim. v. 23.
Infirmities.

Thus, upon the best Supposition, that the Man is single, and has the Top-Allowance of the Law, yet he acts no unfrugal Part, I conceive, if he can but make both Ends meet, as we say, and find himself out of Debt when the Year is run round. But then, if he chance to be the *happy Man* that's married, and under a little lower Exhibition, how comfortable must it be to have a Wife coming every Year upon him with a terrible Defalcation; and the Charge of one *Lying-in* making such a Gap in a Quarter's Wages, as a twelve Month's Parcimony afterwards will scarce be sufficient to repair. How pleasant a Life, to be perpetually frugling to get out of Debt, and as perpetually relapsing!

*Just as a Dog, that turns the Spit,
Bestirs himself and plies his Feet,
To climb the Wheel; but all in vain,
His own Weight brings him down again!*

† Oh my Lord, how prettily and temperately may a Wife and half a Dozen Children

† *Vid. Contempt of the Clergy, p. 112.*

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dren be maintain'd with almost thirty Pounds *per Annum*? What an handsome Shift will an ingenious and frugal Divine make to take it by turns, and wear a Cassock one Year, and a Pair of Breeches another? What a Primitive sight will it be, to see a Man of God with his Shoes out at Toes, and his Stockings out at Heels, wandering about in an old Ruffet Coat, or a tatter'd Gown, for Apprentices to point at, and Wags to break Jest on? And what a notable Figure will he make in Pulpit on Sundays, that has sent his *Hooker* and *Stillingfleet*, his *Pearson* and *Sanderfon*, his *Barrow* and *Tillotson*, with many more Fathers of the *English Church*, into Limbo long since, to keep his Wife's pensive Petticoat Company, and her much lamented Wedding Ring?

To speak seriously to the Point, my Lord, 'tis impossible to conceive, how any Man, with such an Allowance, can maintain a Family, without being plung'd every Day into such, or worse Difficulties as these, or without being engag'd in such intolerable Dependence upon others, or committing such mean and debasing Actions himself, as must in all Probability render him and his Administrations both contemptible.

Were

Were he indeed in any Expectance of coming at Preferment after such a Course of starving, much might be born with Patience and Magnanimity; but your Lordship is too well acquainted with the Methods of Promotion, to think, that a poor Spectre of a Man, with a meagre Look, and † long Train of Children at his Heels, can ever succeed in his Pretensions, where a Person of great Wealth and Affluence, with many Friends, and powerful Intercessions, is in competition with him. Readers and Curates, of all others are usually postpon'd for this very Reason; that being a kind of *Drawers of Water, and Hewers of Wood to the rest of the Tribe,* the Promotion of them would be robbing the Church of so many *useful Drudges*; just as an Army is sometimes suppos'd to suffer, by advancing its old experienc'd Serjeants.

Or were he allow'd, in want of other Preferments, to make the best of his Interest in the Parish, some good and charitable Hands might perhaps lighten his Burthen, and by a seasonable Contribution now and then, *refresh his Spirit,* as the Apostle calls it, 1 Cor. xvi. 18.

† *Haud facile emergunt, quorum Virtutibus obstat Res angusta domi Juv.*

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it, and those of his Family. But, as if the Rector were sole Proprietor, not of the Tiths and Oblations only, but of all the Bounty and Munificence of his Parishioners, he has the Curate under formal Stipulation, not to detain any thing of this kind; and if at any time he finds him *smuggling*, away he must troop, without a Recommendation elsewhere, and consequently in an happy Capacity of starving ever after.

Nay, were he allow'd to have his Share in the People's Oblations at the Altar (and for my Heart, to read over the Sentences at the Offertory, I cannot but think that he has a Right to his Share and Proportion in them.) This might be some small Accession to a scanty Salary; at least, some Preservative to his own Pocket, by having wherewith (of the publick Stock) to relieve the piercing Wants of such miserable Objects, as are every Day under his Visitation: But here again the Rector and Parish-Officers step in and sweep away all; some to be guzzled and consumed in Taverns, and some to be squandered away in Coach-hire, and Attendance on great *Men's Levies*, to the wonderful Diminution of Parish-Rates, and the great Comfort and Consolation of many poor Families.

Nay,

Nay, to descend lower still, were he but allowed to hold some other little Business in Commendam with his Curacy (as many good things are held in Commendam we know) what he lacked one way, might happily be supply'd another; but Oh! as if his particular Fatality were still to be poor, the whole † Canons of the Church, we are told, are level'd point blank against any such Indulgence; he must not follow any Trade or worldly Labour upon pain of Excommunication; tho' the great Apostle of the Gentiles, under Circumstances of much such Necessity, made this his Boast and his Triumph once; *these Hands have ministered to my Wants.* Acts xx.

But instead of labouring with his Hands, 30.
may he not exert his Intellectuals, and, after some Flourishes about Town, cut down all before him, and come in full Victor to some City-Lecture, which, with a little chopping and changing, and now and then hiring a *sixpenny Reader*, may be held in Commendam, to his Heart's Desire? He may do this indeed, if he can but undergo the Trouble and Fatigue; the Prostitution of himself and his Character, and oftentimes the wear of Conscience,

† Vid. Can. 75, 76.

Conscience, as well as wear of Shoe-Leather that attends such popular Canvassings. St. Paul tells of some in his Days that preached *Christ of Envy, Strife, and Contention, supposing to add Affliction to his Bonds.* I could make my Reader merry with some notable Exploits of our modern Pulpit Prize-Fighters; but that it is real Affliction to all sober Minds, and ought to be more so, to such as have the Correction of such Abuses in their Power, to see with what envious Emulation, and *Contention for Mastery* in the worst of Senses, what flandering and Defamation of one another, what plotting and caballing, what mean Arts of Popularity, fawning and glaving upon the worst of Men, cringing to Bulks, and complimenting *Madams behind the Counter*, with fine invented Words to win the Women, and by them draw in their Husbands, is every where practis'd by such as intend to succeed in their Elections. He that will not submit to this, (and a Man of conscious Worth will submit to starve sooner) must for ever despair of being the happy Candidate, with his Name triumphantly recorded in the Weekly Journal.

But if he cannot thus baffle for Preferment Abroad, may he not keep at Home in his Garret, and there write Sermons or Pamphlets, or other Penny-Merriments, to help out a little,

a little, and bring him in sometimes a Spell by way of Augmentation? A pretty Employ for a learned Divine! But Sermons, alas! who will read them? a Baker's Dozen for Twelve Pence! *turpe & miserabile!* or where's the bold Man that will give them the Publishing without a proper Security for the Charge of their Impression? Clergymen of all others too, may, without Disparagement, be presum'd to be least qualify'd to dress up any thing to the present Taste; where there must be a great deal of Scandal, some Spices of Infidelity, a Lard or two of Smut, and here and there a good Sprinkling of disguis'd Treason, to give it the Run and Approbation of the Town. For ever must they despair of succeeding in any Composition of Wit, be it but a Song or Madrigal, who have traded all along in Text and Context, in dull Morality and plain Prose, and have nothing now, in the decline of Life, to invite the Muses to, but a Cup of acid Tiff and a Pipe of vile Mundungus.

—————*Neque enim cantare sub antro
Pierio, Thyrsumve potest contingere sana
Paupertas, atque aris inops, quo nocte, dicque
Corpus eget. Satur est cum dicit Horatius Euboe.*

Juv. Sat. 7.

But

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But if he cannot live by his Wits at home, the Seas are open, you know, and Churches there are enough vacant in Foreign Countries, where, by Planting the Gospel, he may be sure to get plenty of Sugar to his Rice-Milk, and whole Hogsheads of Tobacco, (if he can but compass an equal Quantity of Liquor) to regale with. My Lord, *my Heart's*

Rom.x. 2. *Desire and Prayer to God is,* that Christ's Kingdom may be enlarg'd, and the Light of the Gospel extended over the Face of the whole Earth. For this Purpose, I could wish to see some of our great and learned Divines, that sit so gravely debating the Matter at the lower End of the Board, giving us for once, a Specimen of their Zeal, quitting their Habitations, and resigning their rich Livings to go upon the great Errand of Propagation. They might then expect, from among the Inferior Clergy, a Train of able and ingenious Preachers following their Examples, and attending their Travels; a little better appointed and more competent for the Work, I hope, than such poor starv'd Striplings as are commonly now made use of, or such fugitive and insolent Wretches as make their Mission a safe Escape and Protection from a Goal. Things then would look as if we were in earnest; we might then;

then, in some Time vye Successes with the Church of *Rome* : But in the present Management of this Affair, there seems to be more of the Expedient in it to ease the Church of a Superfætation, by shipping off such as would be lazy or scandalous, or noisy and clamorous for Preferment here, than any certain prospect of better accommodation; for where the attendance for admission is so tedious, the encouragement for going so small, and the reception, if at any time they return, so very cold, Men of Sence and Sufficiency will be backward in offering themselves, whatever their good Friend the tall Arch-Deacon may say, by way of Stale and Decoy, to draw them in.

Thus, my Lord, we have examined most of the things, that may any ways be helpful to the poor Man's Circumstances, and, upon the whole, the best that we can do, is to advise him to sit down contented with his Thirty Pounds *per Annum*; for that is the common Run, and all that he must expect, without a miraculous Accident indeed.

And is this a sufficient recompence for all the Carking, and Care, and anxious Thought that the good old Father has been at; starving himself in a manner, and injuring the rest of his Children, to breed this Son a Scholar, that

The Miseries and Hardships

Nature had better fitted for a * Plow-man? Was it for this, that the poor Lad at School was † dieted so long with Rules and Exceptions, with tiresome Repetitions of *Amo's* and *verses* and lash'd so severely for every Transgression against *Lilly*, or Infringement upon old *Priscian*? Is this an equivalent for the Fatigue of a Studious Life, much Reading and little Eating at College, and of poring so hard upon a set of crabbed Systems, many and many a Night, || when the Butler has been happy, and the meanest Scull of the Kitchen fast asleep? Must a Man for no more than this, be expected to be a Linguist, * a Grammarian, a Critick, an Orator, a Philosopher, an Historian, a Casuist, a Disputant, and whatever speaks Skill and Knowledge in any learned Science? Must he for this, in the particular Science of Divinity, be so thoroughly acquainted with all † Writers Systematical, Textual, Historical, Polemical and Practical, as the
great

* Si duri puer ingeni videtur. Præconem facias, Mar. Lib. 5. Ep. 56.

† *Grounds of the Contempt of the Clergy*, p. 28.

|| ——— Medice, quod noctis ab Hora
Sedisti, qua nemo Faber, qua nemo Sedebat
Qui docet Obliquo Lanam deducere Ferro.

* Dr. Edw. Prea. p. 268.

† Comber's *Discourse upon the Ordination-Office*, p. 238.

great † Directors of our Studies appoint? *O quam vilis est annona Literarum!* And how much wiser is that Parent, who disposes of his Son in some honest Handy-Craft, (where if he will but work, there can be no danger of starving) than to run him into a Profession, where (unless he is minded to be a Bungler) there must be so much moiling in Books, and beating his Brains, and all to no purpose; where, without some reasonable prospect of Provision, he must be content to be a Beggar, for the bare satisfaction of being a Gentleman: For I may venture to say, that an ordinary Bricklayer, or Carpenter, (I mean not your great Undertakers, and Master-Workmen) that earns constantly but his Two Shillings a Day, upon the whole, has clearly a better Revenue, and certainly more command of Money, than this Gentleman Divine, seated in his Country Curacy, or commencing an Hackney-P preacher here about Town, where fair Words will butter no Parsnips, nor all the Learning in the World bring from the Market one Joynt of Mutton; where every

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Scholar-

† Vid. *Hug. Grot. & aliorum Dissertationes de Studiis instituendis, Amstel, 1645.* Bp. Barlow's *Directions for Study, Dr. Bray's Paroch. Library, Wilkins Eccles. Dr. Edwards Preach, p. 252.*

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Scholar-like Habit will not do, and a short Gown (if he be not able to provide a long one) with a standing Collar, and Sleeves straight at the Hands, to hide his want of Linen, is sure to be *pinkt thro' and thro'* with incessant Scoffs, and Words that are sharper than Razors, notwithstanding a very wholesome * Canon to prevent such Usage.

Parents should therefore have more Consideration, than to throw away the towardness of a Child, and the Expence of Education, upon a Profession, the Labour of which is increased, and the Rewards of which are vanished: To condemn promising lively Parts to Contempt and Penury, in a despised Calling, what is it else but † the casting of a *Moses* into the Mud, or offering a Son upon the Altar, and instead of a Priest, to make him a Sacrifice?

The Clergy of the Church of *Rome* have in many places, we own, no very large Allowances; but then, what may not a Man do, that is supposed to be a Retainer to an Infallible Head, and the maker of God in every Consecration of the Host? What Money may not he draw out of the Peoples Pockets,

* Vid. Can. 74. † *South's Serm.* vol. 1. p. 170.

who, besides an exemption from Marriage, and consequently no Family Deductions to keep him low, has the whole affair of auricular Confession, of injoyning and mitigating Penances, of forgiving Sins, of freeing Souls from Purgatory, and of admitting Saints to Heaven, besides many more useful Cheats and Tales, and lying Wonders under his sole management and administration.

The Ministers of separate Congregations, have one way or other, an ample Provision made for them: For besides the constant Subscription of an Hundred or two Hundred Pounds *per Annum* to some, or the accreuing Rent of the Pews, which by others is thought a more eligible Settlement; they have many profitable Perquisites, and Arts of getting Money, that are not so much in request among us; such as enable them to live up visibly to the Port and Figure of the greatest *Dignitaries*, and at the same time, provide no inconsiderable Estates for those they leave behind them.

We grudge no Success to our Brethren the *Lecturers*, who come skimming about the Parish once or twice a Year, and carry more off at one sweep, than goes to maintain three or four Curates: But it grieves us to see every

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little Clark of a Parish, who not long ago was a Footman, or some broken Mechanick, and who, by his Institution, is to attend our Orders, and be subservient to us, scorning our Character, as knowing the disparity of our Wages, and Lording it over us with an arrogant Disdain, as being not unconscious of his own Merit, and our Unconsiderableness, when he finds that his bare saying *Amen*, brings him in so very much, and our performing all the rest of the Service, is thought to deserve so very little.

But why should we grieve at the Clark, when the very Sexton pretends to outvie us in point of Income, and is not afraid to tell us, that any common Footman, with Seven Pounds Yearly, and Seven Shillings a Week Board-Wages, with a good entire Livery, his Master's Cast-off Cloaths, and now and then some accidental Vails and private Advantages, is in a more prosperous and thriving Condition of Life, than the highest Stipendiary Curate among us. Thus, *Servants upon Horses, are no new or uncommon height in our Days, and Priests, Eccl. x. 7. that call themselves Spiritual Princes, walking as Servants upon the Earth.*

But to carry this matter into some of its Consequences: How can it otherwise be, but that

that Contempt and Ignominy, as well as all other Calamities of Poverty, should be the certain effect of such incompetent Allowances? For, say what we will, there is no correcting the Opinions of Mankind; even Wise People will follow the Vulgar in esteeming Men, according to their Riches, Dignities and Honours, and such other things as are without them, notwithstanding the manifest absurdity of the thing; And tho' the Respect that is due to us is settled, as I have shewn absolutely upon our Sacerdotal Character, and in that Regard is unalterable by any circumstances of Fortune, yet few People have such logical Heads as to distinguish, or such nice Conceptions as to separate the Man from his Profession, and so reverence him as a Divine, while they despise him for being Poor; few People such unprejudiced Minds, as not to account of an Ecclesiastick in proportion to the value of his Livings, and think that he rises or falls in his Pulpit-performance, according to the Colour of his Wig, or the Lustre or Tarnish of Scarf, Gown, or Cassock.

No Man can think, † says another much quoted, that he, whose "Countenance is

F 4

"cheary

† Vid. *Grounds of the Cont. of the Clergy*, p. 129. 126.

“ cheary and Barns full, can preach more
 “ powerfully, or petition Heaven more pre-
 “ valently, than he, who is pitifully pale,
 “ and has not one Ear of Corn of his own;
 “ and yet (so the Humour is!) Men will
 “ not believe that he talks any thing to the
 “ Purpose, that wants ordinary Food for his
 “ Family; or that his Advice can come
 “ from above, who is scarce defended against
 “ the Weather; nor care they to confess
 “ their Sins, or pray against them with him,
 “ that they think sighs more for Money and
 “ Victuals, than for his Trespasses and Of-
 “ fences.” The wise Son of *Sirach* has more
 gravely remark’d this Difference. When *the*

Ecclus.

Rich speaketh, says he, every one holdeth his Tongue,
and his Words are extoll’d to the Clouds; but if
the poor Man speak, they say, who is this? Who
is this, that in such a forlorn Habit dares in-
veigh against Riches and Excess? That with
such a meagre Look flies in the Face of tri-
umphant Wickedness? He forgets the Di-
stance his Condition should teach him, and
that such Boldness as this but badly becomes
his tatter’d Gown.

† *La Richesse permet une juste Fierté*
Mais il faut être scrupule avec la pauvreté :

For

For your Lordship must know, that there are some Texts and Points of Doctrine, that we dare no more touch upon, than take a Bear by the Tooth, for fear of offending some of the *new-fashioned Gentry*, and thereby losing the standing Perquisite of a Sunday's Dinner.

Thus, for Instance, if there happens to be in the Parish such an one as the Poet describes,

————— *whose Trade has been
To draw profuse young Bubbles in,
To drain their Pockets and their Fobbs,
For Gimcracks, Toys, and Jigambobs.*

And I am led by the Tenor of my Discourse (thinking no manner of Harm) to expatiate a little upon the manifold Methods of Extortion; and to shew the People, by some few Instances, that as a *Nail sticketh between the Joynings of the Stones, so does Sin stick close between buying and selling*; immediately he Eccles. xxvii. 2. takes the Alarm, as if I levell'd all him, and for ever thenceforward must I despair

of filling up the Pageantry of his Table any more. Or if his Wife chance to be one of those who was formerly
* * * * *

Nonnulla * * * * *
Desiderantur * * * * *
* * * * *

And

And I knowing no more of it than I do of my dying Day, should unluckily take for my Text one of the *three things that disquiet the Earth, an Handmaid that is Heir to her Mistress, or a bawling Woman in a wide House*; I shall find, to my cost, that I have rouz'd a Lioness, for pretending to mortify the Pride of an *Upstart*, and to cure, without a Cucking-Stool, the prevailing Itch of Scolding. Thus difficult it is for us to execute our ministerial Office, my Lord, especially in the Matter of reprovng and correctng Sin, without the Terror of giving Offence perpetually hanging over our Heads, to rebate our Zeal and Christian Courage. Pray for me, is the Apostle's Request to the *Ephesians, that Utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my Mouth boldly, to make known the Mystery of the Gospel; and that therein I may speak boldly as I ought to speak.* Much more then should we have the Prayers of the Church offered up for us, who want the enlivening Graces of the Primitive Christians, and yet have all their Difficulties and discouraging Circumstances to contend with.

Prov.
xxx. 22.
xxi. 9.

Eph. vi.
19, 20.

Men that are easy and secure in their Fortune, have no need to fear the Faces of the Greatest; they may encounter Sin and Vice wherever they "find it, tho' it be clad
" with

“ with Purple, and guarded with Ensigns
“ of Authority, tho’ it be deck’d with
“ white and purer Garments, and seems to
“ fly to the Altar for Protection.” But it is
much to be questioned, whether he, that † runs
upon trust for every Ounce of Provision he
spends in his Family, can scarce look from
his Pulpit into any Seat of the Church, but
that he spies some Body or other that he
is beholden to, and depends upon; and knows,
at the same time, that, upon any slight Of-
fence, or sorry Information, he lies lyable to
be divested of all; can have the Heart to
express the Sentiments of his Mind, with that
Courage and Intrepidity, that becomes a
Preacher of the Gospel. ’Tis much to be
question’d, whether he will not rather incline
to the timorous Side, and in the Composition,
as well as Delivery of his Sermon, think it
prudent to palliate some Reproofs, and file
off the Sharpness of others, for fear of ex-
asperating the Butcher that brought in his
Bill last Week, or the inexorable Robe-maker,
that swears he will trust no longer. Much
to be question’d, I say, whether he will not
chuse to preach to the Fancies, rather than
the

† Vid. *Contempt of the Cler.* p. 127.

the Edification of his People, and instead of
 Ezek. xiii. 18. awakening their sinful Souls, *ſow ſoft Pillows to
 their Arm-holes,* and ſtroak their Conſciences
 over, as one expreſſes it, with a Feather
 dipt in Oyl.

2. Nor is it only in the Execution of our
 Office, (tho' that be the worſt of all) but
 in every inſtance of our Private Life likewise,
 that this Calamity diſcovers it ſelf. The
 Bleſſing of *Iſſachar*, and that of *Judah*, ſays
 † *Sir Francis Bacon*, falls upon no Men both
 at once, to be *Aſſes couching under their Bur-*
thens, and to have at the ſame time *the Spirit*
of Lyons. Men's Minds grow low with their
 Fortune, and a perpetual Incumbrance of
 Poverty ſinks them in their Sentiments of-
 tentimes to a Forgetfulneſs of what they are.
 They therefore deſerve our Pity, more than
 the Severity of Eccleſiaſtical Cenſures, whoſe
 Neceſſities have brought down their Spirits,
 to keep mean and inferior Company, and to
 frequent ſuch little Places of Refreshment,
 as comport with their Fortune, rather than
 their Office and Vocation. To behold a young
 Divine, after ſcouring about from Church to
 Church to huddle over Prayers at an under
 Rate, ſitting down in an Ale-houſe, or ſome
 Cook's-

† Hiſt. Lib. 4.

Cook's-Shop, among the Herd of *Gentry* that come thither, to refresh themselves a little after their Fatigues, is not perhaps a Sight so commendable as we could wish : But then we ought to consider, that, how well soever we may be inclin'd to the Honour of his Profession, we are not to desire that the poor Man should starve ; that some things there may be, abhorrent to his Temper, which nevertheless his Necessities force upon him ; and that however a *better Purse* might procure a more reputable Reception, this perhaps is the only Place in Town, where he can have Credit (for Money 'tis probable he has none) for the ordinary Necessaries of Life.

Wish therefore we may (if such a Wish were canonical) either that he were permitted to appear in a common Habit, like other Men, unless when he's upon the Business of his Function, that he may croud in, and mix himself among them, without being distinguish'd, or bringing Contempt upon the Order by Reason of his Dress : or that he were allowed to divide himself sometimes between the Service of the Church, and an handsome secular Calling, in order to raise his Condition a little, and enable him to live at a better Rate. These Wishes indeed
are

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are opposed by the * Wisdom of our Church, but it may not improperly be asked, whether the Poverty of some that are in Orders, may not deserve an Indulgence *now*, as well as it did in the Primitive Times. As to the Kind and Fashion of the Clergy's Apparel then, it does not appear for several Ages, says our Author, that there was any Distinction between them and the Laity. Whatever they wore, was to be modest, and grave, and *becoming their Profession*, but no certain Garb or Manner of Habit was appointed them: And what was thought then *becoming their Profession* †; St. Jerom's Direction to *Nepotian* may give us Intimation, where he orders him to wear neither black nor white Cloathing; for Gayety and Slovenliness, says he, are equally to be avoided; the one favouring of Niceness and Delicacy, and the other of Vain-glory.

|| *A prescript Form of Apparel* then to distinguish us from the rest of the World, might indeed, if our Condition were flourishing, be, what the Canon presumes it (and the Canon, if I mistake not, designs it

* Vid. Can. 74, 75, 76.

† Vestes pullas æque devita, ut candidas; ornatus, ut Sordes, pari modo fugienda sunt: quia alterum delicias, alterum gloriam, redolet. Hier. Ep. 2. ad Nepot.

|| Vid. *Bingham's Orig. Eccl.* Vol. 2. p. 401.

it for none but the wealthy Clergy) a means to procure us outward Reverence and Respect ; but Poverty, we know, is usually attended with Contempt, and sometimes the more so, because the Garb that covers it, and discovers it, and displays it the more, I should say, happens to be canonical. Better therefore it is that we be not known to the People in this wise at all, than known to our Disadvantage and Disgrace : For, for one that will honour and esteem us as the Messengers and Ministers of Almighty God, ten will despise us for being poor, and seeing us reduced to little and inglorious Shifts.

And in like manner, the Laws were frequently made in the Primitive Church *, prohibiting the Clergy to follow any secular Employ, such as were usually attended with Covetousness, or occasioned a Neglect of Divine Service ; yet, where these were not the Reasons of the Prohibitions, and where the Revenues of the Church were not a sufficient Maintenance for all the Clergy, some of them, especially among the inferior Orders, were † oblig'd to betake themselves to honest

* Vid. Bingham's Orig. Eccl. Vol. 2. p. 389, ad 400.

† Clericus, quantumlibet verbo Dei eruditus, Artificio victum quærat. Conc. Carth. 4. C. 51. Clericus, victum & vestimentum sibi, artificio, vel agricultura, absque officii sui duntaxat detrimento, præparet. Ibid. C. 52.

honest Callings and Occupations, thereby to be enabled both to live reputably themselves, and to contribute to the Necessities of others. To this Purpose * *Epiphanius*, as our Author tells us, makes it a general Observation, that many of the Priests of God, imitating their holy Father in Christ *St. Paul*, worked with their own Hands, in such honest Trades, as were no Dishonour to their Dignity, nor inconsistent with their constant Attendance upon their Ecclesiastical Duties; by which means they had both what was necessary for their own Subsistence, and to give to others that stood in need of their Relief.

Where the End was Charity then, or a competent Provision for themselves, it was not thought unlawful (whatever it is now) for the Primitive Clergy to intermix in secular Employments: But where the End was for *filthy Lucre*, and the Persons thus employing themselves sufficiently rich, and provided for already; the thing was justly accounted scandalous, so as to deserve many publick Laws, and many severe Censures and Invectives against it.

The Man, that is to be detested then, and avoided as a Plague, must be the great and
opulent

* *Epiphan. Hær. 80. Massalian. 116.*

opulent Ecclesiastick, when he turns *Traf-ficker*, or *Stock-Jobber*, as we may well enough render that Passage of St. *Jerom*, † *Negotiatorem Clericum quasi pestem fuge*; and Shame light on him, that ever apologizes for any such: But for a poor Clergyman, to endeavour at any thing in a secular Way, that may be a means to augment the very small Pittance, that his Profession brings in, deserves, in my Opinion, a different Construction; and whatever it may be in the *Letter*, cannot be contrary to the *Intention* of our Laws, which ought to be interpreted with the same Limitations, and Distinction of Cases, that the Laws of all antient Churches were.

2. Another Instance of Misfortune opposite to this, such as our Necessities subject us to, but such as we cannot so easily pity or excuse, is the sordid Humour of creeping and cringing to wealthy Tables, where, either we must become perpetual Parasites and Flatterers, or expect to be receiv'd with Coldness or Superiority; for it is not every Man that can entertain with the Air of a Guest, or do good Offices with the Mien of one that receives them.

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For

† Hier. Ep. 2. ad Nepot.

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For my part, my Lord, I can hardly think *that* Clergyman has ever read over, with proper Observation, that remarkable beginning of the 28th Chapter of *Solomon's Proverbs*, who can be allur'd with the Smell of a Kitchen, or make himself a Slave to the greatest Peer of the Realm, much less to a † *mean Mechanick newly commenc'd Gentleman*, and, by way of Commutation for antient Frauds, pretending to be hospitable, for all the Delicacies of eating and drinking, that Nature can afford. The Antidote is strong, if he would but take it: *when thou sittest at Meat with a Ruler, consider diligently what is before thee, and be not desirous of his Dainties, for they are deceitful Meat.* (This for the best Nobleman's Table that we frequent.) But then, for your little mungrel sort of Gentry, *eat not thou the Bread of him that hath an evil Eye, neither desire thou his daintly Meats, for as he thinketh in his Heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee, but his Heart is not with thee; the Morsel that thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet Words; for the Bread of Deceit may be sweet to a Man,*

Prov.
xxviii. 13.

V. 6, 7, 8.

† Tu tibi liber Homo, & Regis conviva videris,
Captum te nidore suæ putat ille Culinae;
Nec male conjectat: Quis enim tam nudus, ut illum
Bis ferat? Juv. Sat. 5.

(as he has it in another Place) *but afterwards his Mouth shall be filled with Gravel.* A sufficient Discouragement, one would think, to pall the Stomach of the keenest Epicure, and to deter Clergymen especially, from hunting about so greedily after rich Men's Tables; where, besides the Uneasiness of the Obligation for a Dinner, enough to make them vomit up the Morsel they have eaten, as the wise Man terms it; they must expect to have a Restraint laid upon their Tongues, for every thing but Adulation, and their *Mouths filled with Gravel*, as it were, when they pretend to speak any thing befitting their Profession: Where tho' they swear not at all themselves, nor lead the Forlorn in Vice and Prophaneness, † as one expresses it, yet they must by no means pretend to controul those that do, or damp any Frolick, be it never so mad and extravagant, for fear of forfeiting all future Expectances, as well as incurring the present Penalty of being turn'd out of Company, as pragmatICAL Invaders of the Freedom of Conversation.

Some there are indeed (and of these we can never speak too honourably) that re-

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ceive

† Vid. *Contempt of the Cler.* p. 135.

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Gal. iv. 14. receive us with an open and generous Heart as the Ministers of Christ, or even as the Angels of God; but the Number of *these* is so small, in Comparison to *those* who make their Invitations Snares, and their Entertainments a Foundation for Superiority over us, that the best Rule is, † go as seldom as may be, and never but when called, for fear of being brought under Bondage to any one, and of being reputed Squanderers of Time, and Lovers of Pleasure, more than Lovers of God.

To reduce the other Instances to as few Words as may be, (for I take no Pleasure my Lord, in enlarging upon this melancholy Subject.) How much our Poverty subjects us to the Humour of all kinds of Men; how naturally it leads us into the Paths of Idleness and Sloth; how easily it betrays us into Methods of sopiating Sorrow, that are not so temperate; how frequently it engages us in the Arts of getting Money that are not so warrantable, and how daily it compels us to Shifts and Evasions, that are not so honourable; what clandestine Marriages,

† Facile contemnitur clericus, qui sæpe vocatus ad prandium, ire non recusat, nunquam petentes, raro accipiamus vocati. Hier. ad Nepot.

Marriages, to the utter Ruin of many worthy Families; what fraudulent Intrusions into other Peoples Cures; scandalous Derelictions of our proper Functions, and base Apostacies from the Service of the Church, to turn Leaders and Teachers in separate Congregations, have been the Effects of such incompetent Allowances; The Clamours and Accusations of such, as too insidiously watch our Haltings, have reach'd *the very Garret from whence I write*. I must leave the whole Matter however to the Candour and kind Construction of such, as consider human Nature as it is, and *us* as Men subject to the *like Passions and Infirmities with themselves*: Desiring Acts xiv. 15. them to cast the Veil of Charity upon what appears to be our Faults, and to grant us their Pity and Commiseration, for what they see is our Misfortune.

3. Thus, my Lord, we have observed with what Difficulties and Temptations our *poor Divine* is beset, both in the Administration of his Office, and the Conduct of his private Life. Let us now follow him into his Study, and consider him in the Capacity of a Scholar, and a Man acquainted with Divinity.

Into his Study did I say? For once we must be allowed to call so that little Hole in the

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Garret, with a Stool and a Table, and a Shelf furnish'd with such valuable Pieces, as *Wits Commonwealth*, the *Pearl of Eloquence*, *Spencer's Similitudes*, or *Things new and old*, rare Helps all, for Matter and Sense; old *Burgersdicius*, for Method and Ranging; some *German System*, for a general View; here and there a *Classick*, for the use of interlarding; a few sticht Sermons, by way of Imitation; and an old *Geneva Bible*, with an useful Concordance at the end on't, to crown and compleat all. And now, what may not a Man do that is thus furnish'd and equip'd? What an eloquent and instructive Preacher, what an able Defender of Truth, what a vast Destroyer of Heresies, what a skilful Interpreter of hard Places, what a nice Resolver of Cases of Conscience, as well as prudent Conductor of other Men's Souls must he make, with such *never-failing Auxiliaries* standing by him, if he has but the Skill to *play* them off to the best Advantrge.

A well-furnish'd House, † says the *Italian* Proverb, makes a notable Dame; and so we may say of a well-appointed Study, that it
makes

† *Camara adorna fa Donna savia.*

makes an eminent Divine: And doubtless we must ascribe the Ignorance of some, and the Looseness of others, in holy Orders, principally to this fatal Want; because it cannot be suppos'd, that Men of an ingenuous Education should either be so dull, as not to improve with these mighty Helps; or so wretched, as to seek mean and unbecoming Company, when they have at home the Benefit of conversing with the most Learned, and best Men in all Ages.

Suppose then for once (for we can scarce suppose that he can attempt it often) that this Divine of ours gets into his *Study*, as we have called it, and, with all his Tackle about him, resolves to fall to work in good earnest; yet, unless he has stupify'd all Sense of his Condition, no sooner has he set himself into a Posture of thinking (I judge of others by my self, my Lord) but immediately start up the horrid Images of *Baker*, and *Brewer*, and *bloody Butcher*, that will bring in no more Provision of any kind, till their long-neglected Bills be paid. 'Tis natural, upon such Occasion, for an honest Man, that would pay if he could, to put his Hand in his Pocket and ask himself the Question, — What he has? — but one solitary Shilling God wot, — that to be gone before to

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Morrow Morning,——where to find another, Heaven only knows that,—— for Friends have been tried over and over again, all to no Purpose. This quashes all his Ambition to be *Great*, hurries his Mind from the thing he was upon, and drives him from his Books, in deep Confusion and Despair : For the Man must be befotted, that can sit him down to study when the great Design of all (become of Learning what it will) remains unanswer'd, *how he is to live.*

† Several of the *Jewish* Writers, my Lord, insist on the Necessity of these Qualifications antecedent to a Spirit of Prophecy. 1. An excellent natural Temper. 2. Good Accomplishments of Wit and Fortune. 3. Separation from the World. 4. Congruity of Place. 5. Opportunity of Time, and 6. Divine Inspiration. Their Reason for taking in the Accomplishments of Fortune, is plainly this, — That, without a competent Measure of these, they think it impossible for any one to have that Freedom, and Chearfulness of Mind, which they make so necessary to a prophetick Spirit, that it is an Axiom of great Authority with them, *Spiritus sanctus non residet super hominem mestum.*

† Vid. *Stillingsfleet's Orig. Sacr.* p. 94.

maſtum. Whatever Obſtruction a troubled and diſordered Mind may be to the Spirit of Prophecy, 'tis certainly ſo, to the Acquiſition of any Science, and the true Spirit of writing in any kind whatever. For tho' a Man may poſſibly gain a Truce from thinking, and break from the Senſe of his Miſfortunes for a while, yet he nevertheleſs draggs perpetually an heavy Chain after him, which, in every Effort he makes, weighs down his Fancy, and enervates his Stile.

And this, my Lord, I think a convenient Stand, to make my Apology in, for the numberleſs Defects, in what you have already read, and the many more, that will in all probability inſue; and to excuſe my ſelf to my Reverend Brethren, for pretending to undertake a Cauſe, *ſolus & proprio Marte*, which I knew my ſelf inſufficient to maintain, and ſo liable to betray, for want of Aſſiſtance. I am not inſenſible both what your Lordſhip's Judgment deſerves, and their calamitous Caſe requires; the one, the niceſt Compoſition of Wit and Learning; the other, the ſtrongeſt Arguments to enforce their Plea; and could my Penury afford any thing better, I ſhould not entertain your Lordſhip at this low rate, with ſuch a languid Stile and Invention, ſuch
needleſs

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needless Excursions, second-hand Quotations, Latin Fragments, long Recitals, and all the other Shifts of Plagiarism, that my Necessities put me upon. But your Lordship, I am confident, is too good, not to accept of a poor Man's Treat, let it be made up of never so mean Ingredients; and a Lover of Truth too sincere, ever to despise or reject it, because it comes not attended with all the Address and Advantages that may be. If it answers not the Wants and Expectations of my Brethren, they themselves are in some Measure culpable, who were invited to come into the Work, and make it a *joynt Endeavour*.

Whether it is that I have a quicker Sense of Indignities, a tenderer Fellow-feeling of other Men's Sufferings, or a Prudence less remarkable for concealing my Resentments, I cannot tell; but with me, it seem'd high time to *complain*; and when I publish'd my Intentions to that Purpose, if few, or none stood with me, I pray God that it may not be laid to their Charge. Questionless, we might have prevailed more, had we united our several Forces, and alternately supported one anothers Hand. For me, it is enough, under greater Disadvantages than most of them, to have mark'd out the Ground, and begun the Attack,

2 Tim. iv.
16.

Exod.
xvii. 11,
12.

tack, and espous'd to my self the Hazard and Disgrace of coming off no better.

— *Exoriare aliquis nostris ex ossibus!*

'Tis wonderful indeed, that, under such Discouragements, we should be in a Condition to do any thing deserving the Observation of the *Learned World*; and not rather become a Sport to the Prophane, and a Reproach to the sacred Order, by our inavoidable Ignorance; but that we have certain compendious Ways, both to conceal *that*, and to assume the Air and Appearance of great Scholars and Divines, that every one finds not out.

The Care of our Church has provided us with a Set of Homilies, to go to when we please, and, in some † Men's Opinions, better to be us'd, than the crude and indigested Discourses that we call our own. The great Bp. * *Burnet* has been very kind in recommending the using of other Men's Sermons, rather than making any our selves; and has taken some Pains to shew, how, by chusing fit Authors, changing their Stile, and reversing their Method, we may impose upon the People as we please, and steal without the Fear of Detection. The renowned *Tillotson* has let us
see

† Vid. *Comb. Ord. Office* p. 194.

* *Pastoral Care*. p. 226.

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see the right Manner of Epitomizing to Advantage, and, by his own Example, made it appear, that a Man may acquire a Reputation to himself, merely by being the *Editor* and *Pruner* of any luxuriant Author. To the learned D——n of W——r we owe the true Method of consolidating four Sermons into one, so very nicely, as to escape the Observation of our *keenest Adversaries*, and deserve the *Thanks* and *Commendation* of our Brethren; and the Art of dilating one Sermon into four, by the Help of long Prefaces, Digressions, and Recapitulations; by making our Words run glib, and our Matter spread thin, we may learn every Day, from more celebrated Preachers than one.

'Tis well for us, that we are fallen into an Age, when the Work of the Pulpit, which may be had at so cheap and inexpensive a Rate, is thought the Top-qualification of a Divine; when Sermons may be bought for a Trifle, or stoln with Security, or borrowed without Sense of Obligation; for there is nothing more common, than to decry in Conversation, the very Man we are forc'd to preach from, almost every Sunday: Well for us, that Invention and Mother-wit has almost turn'd Learning out of Doors; that the Humour of reading Men has got the upper hand
of

of reading Books; and the Fear of Pedantism prevail'd so far, as to make Authorities and Quotations (even such as are taken from the Scriptures) reputed obsolete, and the little Frippery of *Greek* and *Latin* in a Sermon, a very sad Defacement to the Beauty of it's Margin.

'Tis well for us, I say, that we live in an Age, when the most * accomplish'd Way of using Books, is, either to serve them as some Men do Lords, learn their Titles exactly, and then brag of their Acquaintance; or what is the profounder Method of the two, get a thorough Insight into their Indexes, and thence manage them to our Purposes, as Fishes are turn'd and govern'd by their Tails: Well for us, that instead of cutting our Way thro' the Knowledge of Tongues, the Study of Philosophy, School-Divinity, the Fathers, and Councils; we can, by the Help of little Compendiums, Lexicons, Criticks, and Commentators, make a considerable Figure in Learning, and, in a few Weeks fit out a Treatise, that shall appear handsomly on a Bookseller's Shelf, bating us only some Circumstances of Stile, Method, and Invention, and allowing

us

* Vid. Tale of a Tub. p. 151, &c.

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us the common Privileges, (that I am claiming now) of transcribing from others, and digressing from our selves, as oft as we shall see Occasion. With these Helps and Advantages, we can go on pretty roundly, and screen our want of Knowledge from the Sight of our Enemies; unless they are vigilant indeed, and reconnoitre very nearly, to find out our weak Side.

But, had we liv'd in other Ages, when Matters were not made so easy to our Hands, we must have sunk into the same State of Ignorance, that our Ancestors were so renowned for; when to † translate a Piece of Latin, and understand some Rules in Grammar, was accounted a vast Atchievement; and a Matter of Episcopal Enquiry at several Visitations it was, *Whether the Priest could read well the Epistle and Gospel, and construe the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Sentences of the Mass.* If we have escap'd this Abyss of Ignorance and Stupidity, 'tis no Thanks that we owe to the Benignity of our Masters: Their scanty Allowances wou'd have forc'd us into it, had we not made inconceivable Efforts

† *Ordinati ita Literatura carebant, ut cæteris esset Stupori, qui Grammaticam didicisset, Math. Paris. An. 1061. p. 5.*

forts, even in 'spight of our want of Books and other Encouragements, to withstand the Byass of our Poverty, as it drew that Way.

If some of us are fallen in, we are to be pitied and condol'd, for no one knows, but he that has try'd it, what a strong Temptation to Idleness and hebetude of Mind, is the want of Necessaries for Life, and of fit Accommodations for Study.

Every Man who knows the World, and the Business of Learning, † says the great Defender of Pluralities, must confess, That the Study of Divinity, and those other Sciences that are necessary to a compleat Divine, is so vast and diffuse, and the Number of Books, wherewith he ought to be acquainted, so very great, that a small Estate can never enable him to obtain such, as are even necessary to make him useful and considerable in his Profession. Ten times more Books are requisite to this, than to any other Calling; and therefore a Revenue, (suppose of Sixscore Pounds *per Ann.*) will not be enough to purchase such a Quantity as are requisite to his Purpose. And, if so, what must poor Readers and Curates do with their

† Vide P. 189.

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their *Twenties* and *Thirties*? What Books will they be enabled to purchase with the Surplus of what they cannot conveniently spend, at the Year's End? None at all. And yet the same Author observes, ' That if the Necessary Helps to Learning be denied to the Clergy, (and Curates I hope are some of the Clergy) they cannot maintain the Honour and Well-being of the Church; they cannot defend the Cause of Christianity in general, or of the Reform'd Religion in particular, as it ought to be.

Prov.
xvii. 16.

Wherefore is there a Price in the Hand of a Fool to get Wisdom, seeing he hath no Heart to it? is an Expostulation then, that befits none, but your wealthy *Clerks*, who occupy great places, and pervert the Bounty and Charity of their Founders and Benefactors, to the Support of Luxury and Sloth. From us, who have not the *Price of Wisdom in our Hands*, who have not the Helps and Opportunities of Study, if we be found illiterate, if we have *not the Heart to get Knowledge*, 'tis no more than may be expected. 'Tis from you therefore, that are in Ease and Plenty, that have Money to buy, and Leisure to peruse all Books, that we expect the Advancement of Sciences, the Understanding of Mysteries, the Explication of
hard

hard Passages, the Resolution of difficult Cases, the stating of Controversies, Confutation of Errors, and Confirmation of all Truth.

You are the Champions of our Church, and therefore take care that it be not destroy'd by the Enemies, that seem, at this Time, to invest it closely. To you we commit the Defence of her Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship, against all Attacks whatever: 'tis enough for us, that we can render an Account of our Faith * in Latin, and confirm it with Testimonies out of Holy Scripture; that we can read over the Service of the Day without much Hesitation, and trudge about the Parish, to take off from your Shoulders the other heavy Duties of your Function: From us you can expect no more, " for a
" Soul oppress'd with Poverty (as the same
" † Author continues) can never raise it-
" self to attempt any great Design; or if it
" should attempt it, in a Condition unable to
" purchase the necessary Helps of Learning,
" the Attempt would be in vain.

I will not carry your Lordship into any distant Consequences of this Calamity, nor re-

H

new

* Vide *Can. Ecc. Ang.* 34.

† *Defence of Plura.* p. 191.

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new your pious Grief, by relating what a daily Triumph it is to the Infidels of our Age, that so many, now a Days, are found among us, unable to support the main Principles of Religion, and demonstrate the divine Authority of that *blessed Book* from whence we every Day preach. These Things, no doubt, have *vex'd the righteous Souls* of our Reverend Fathers in God *both Day and Night*; and therefore 'tis wonderful how it comes to be made so small a Part of the Episcopal Care (since the Church has made it some part of her Injunctions) to examine into the Learning of Curates, whether they be able to drive away Errors, and *withstand Gain-Sayers* as they should, and to raise their Allowances, especially in rich Benefices, as far as the Law and their Authority reaches, that they may not be under the Temptation of doing *little Things* for Bread.

If the Illiterate must be admitted, let them be dispos'd of in distant Country-Parishes; where they may steal as they please, and preach other Men's Sermons with good Applause, provided they keep but up to the Bishop's * *Instructions Never to take an Author*

too

* B. Burnet's *past: Care* p. 226.

*too much above themselves, lest that, compar'd with their ordinary Conversation, give a cunning Farmer some Reason to suspect him, and find them out. But let him not be seated in this great Town, where the Enemies of Religion are so numerous and strong; Men of much Reading, subtle Argument, and nimble Elocution, ; where they are in danger of betraying the Cause of God, and of rendring themselves and their Profession ridiculous, almost in every Coffee-house they enter. And if Pluralities must be allow'd of, in the Name of God let us have enough, (while our Principals are sauntering about the World to spend the rest) to put us in a Condition of doing our Duty, above the Approaches of Want, and Darings of Contempt: For, if an Angel should descend from Heaven, and take upon him the ministerial Office, ('tis a Wonder how the warm * Defender of Pluralities cou'd write these Words, without once considering his starv'd Curate.) ' If he abstain'd from
' working Miracles, he would never be able
' to procure any great Respect to himself,
' or do eminent Service to the Church, and to
' Religion; unless he might converse with the
H 2 ' Gentry*

* Def. of Plur. p. 194.

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‘ Gentry upon equal Ground, and were rais’d a
 ‘ Degree above the the Commonalty.

☞ “ But what wou’d these Curates have ?
 “ may a great Incumbent say ; are not the Al-
 “ lowances we give you according to the Stan-
 “ dard of the Law, and much advanc’d of
 “ late, from what they were formerly, when
 “ a few Marks were thought a sufficient
 “ Stipend ? wou’d you have no Difference,
 “ no Subordination among us ; the Tithes e-
 “ qually divided, and the primitive Method
 “ of Distribution, that you so much admire,
 “ take place again ? Curates, of all others,
 “ must not be fed and pamper’d too much ;
 “ that will make them fat and foggy, and
 “ unfit for their Businness. For the Good
 “ of the Church therefore, we must diet you,
 “ and keep you low, that, like Spaniels you
 “ may hunt the better : *Ye are idle, ye are*
 “ *idle, and therefore ye cry, Give us more Wages ;*
 “ *to your Bricks and to your Labour, for you shall*
 “ *have no Straw.*

*Jamdudum ausculto, & cupiens tibi dicere Servus
 Pauca, reformido. Davusne ? Ita Davus ; amicum
 Mancipium Domino, & frugi quod sit satis : hoc est
 Ut vitale putes. Age Libertate Decembri
 (Quando ita Majores voluerunt) utere, narra.*

With

With your Lordships Leave then (since my Master has vouchsafed to give me his) I will take the Libery to relate a short Fable, that this Speech of his has brought to my Mind.

A Lion, an Afs, and some of their Fellow-Foresters went a hurting one Day, and every one to go *Share and Share alike* in what they took. They pluck'd down a Stag, and cut him up into so many Parts: but, as they were entring upon the Dividend, *Hands off* says the Lion: This Part is mine by the Privilege of my Quality; this, because I'll have it, in 'spite of your Teeth; this again, because I took more Pains for't; and if you dispute the Fourth, we must *e'en pluck a Crow about it.*

We never expected at our first setting out, and while we continued in the Condition of Curates, to go *Share and Share alike* in the Revenues of the Church: We know our Disadvantages, and the Manner of bestowing Preferments better. We desire to reverse no Order that is settled, not to invade any one's Property, or Estate. A Gavel-Kind among the Sons of the Church may perhaps have Consequences as prejudicial, as this mighty Disproportion: But we cannot but think that a little more just and equitable Distribution would have it's good Effects; and a great

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Scandal to Religion be remov'd, if such, as hunt after more Preferment, when they have enough, were taught to keep within due Bounds, and restrain their * greedy Appetite, and insatiable Boulimie.

Some Inequality we must allow however, that an extraordinary Merit may have a more abundant Reward. In the Apostle's Sense of Mankind, some were *worthy of double Honour*: but 'tis Honour, we may observe, that the Apostle regards, more than Riches or filthy Lucre: And this the Dignities of our Church are, in most Men's Opinion, sufficient to answer, (and in the Eye of the † Law were so intended) without the Iniquity of Pluralities. *Each Man his Living then with the Cure of Souls*, and no more, and your Deaneries, and Arch-Deaconries, Prebends, and other honourable Offices in the Church, by way of Encouragement to Men of superior Birth and Qualities, is a fitter Distribution, than what now obtains among the Sons of the Church: where we see some starving, whilst others are glutted; and some dandled on the Knee, and waxing fat, whilst others are thrust out of Doors,
and

* Vid. Edwards *Preacher*. r. p. 316.

† Vid. Stillingf. *Duty and Rights of Par. Clergy*. p. 99.

and fed with the Bread of Affliction: For twenty or thirty Pounds a Year, (considering the Ways of living now, and the Dearness of every Consumable we buy) can afford us no better than the Bread of Affliction.

Three or four hundred Years ago, when every thing was cheap, and the Clergy not allow'd to marry; when Learning was out of Use, and few or no Books wanted; even five Marks, † as appears from *Lyndwood*, was sufficient for Maintenance and Hospitality too. As the Price of Things encreased, the same Author observes, That Allowances rose; and in Stipendiaries, soon advanc'd to eight or ten Marks; which, according to Sir *Henry Spelman's* Computation, comes to about sixty Pounds per Annum.

I observ'd from Bishop *Stillingfleet* too, that these Five-Mark Chaplains were only Mass-Readers, and not parochial Curates; for their Allowances were always higher. Archbishop *Ispel's* Constitution calls them, *Animarum curæ non intendentes*: Whereupon *Lyndwood* has this Observation, *His namque assignandum est quandoque Salarium largius, quam octo Marcarum, secundum quantitatem, & magnitudinem curæ, qualitatemque personæ hujusmodi curæ deservitura;*

H 4

nam

† *Lyndwood* f. 34. Of Tithes. p. 153.

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nam justum est, secundum magnitudinem quantitatemque Oneris & Laboris, ad majus, vel ad minus aestimetur Salarium, vel Stipendium administrantis; which is enough to shame our modern Arts of evading the Law, and holding Pluralities (some of very large Parishes too) without any settled Curates; of hiring Mercenaries by the Job, and taking Assistants as we do † Post-horses, the first that comes, and to be turn'd off at the next Stage.

Men may sweeten a Youngster, that is newly come to Town, and is flush of Money, with fair Words and fine Promises, as much as they please; to give them some *Casts* of his Office *gratis*, sure to be repaid with a gracious Salute of their Beaver, the next time he falls in their way. This is no more than an Instance of their great Address; but 'tis a cruel Advantage that they make of his Necessities, when they compel a *poor Brother*, that's grown old in the Service, and has nothing else to trust to, to read Prayers for two Pence a Time, and a Dish of Coffee; to preach for twelve Pence a Sermon, and a Sunday's Dinner; and to do the other occasional Offices at a proportionable Rate.

Good

† *Vid.* Stillingfleet, *Duties and Rights of Par. Cler.* P. 160.

Good God! what a Grief to the Pious, as well as standing Banter to the Wicked and Prophane; what a Disparagement to our Profession and Administrations, as well as Re-proach to thy most Sacred Religion; and Discouragement to sufficient Labourers to enter into thy Vineyard, must such scandalous Bargains, and incompetent Wages be! When therefore thou makest Inquisition into the Sins of this Nation; when thou turnest thine Eyes upon this wide City to *look for Judge- Isa. v. 7. ment, but behold Oppression, for Righteousness, but behold a Cry,* we pray that thou lay not this *Iniquity to the Charge* of thy Clergy: Their Covetousness, which, in this Age, is a Kind of *fashionable Quality*, has blinded their Eyesight, and *they know not what they do.*

It may not be unbecoming the Wisdom of our Governors however, (among other Means of pacifying Heaven) to look into the *Sanctuary* likewise, and see, whether some Provocations of divine Wrath, (to hasten the destroying Angel) proceed not thence. For, if the *Complaint of those that reap down the Field,* or of any other Hirelings defrauded of their Wages, enters the Ears of Almighty God; what will not the Oppression and cruel Usage of his more immediate Servants do? *The Stone shall cry out of the Wall, and the Beam out* Heb. ii. of 11.

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of the Timber of the Church answer it, Wo to him that coveteth an evil Covetousness to his House, and detaineth from his Curate what is a sufficient Recompence for his Labour.

You expect from us, that, besides the Work of the Pulpit, and the Fatigue of other constant Parochial Offices, we should be Men sufficient, both *in Season and out of Season*, to awaken sleepy and secure Sinners, to instruct the Ignorant, to reclaim the Vicious, to rebuke the Prophane, to convince the Erroneous, to satisfy the Doubtful, to confirm the Wavering, to recover the Laps'd, and to be *thoroughly furnished* unto all the great Purposes of our Vocation. You leave the whole Burthen of the Parish upon us, and hope, from our Care and Inspection, that all Matters will be rightly manag'd, the Calls of Charity and Hospitality answered for you, and our Penury extend it self to the sparing of your Abundance. Nay some of you are so silly, as to please your selves, and sing Requiem's to your Consciences upon this Presumption, *viz.* That the whole Charge is devolv'd upon us; we stand responsible for all Defaults; and that if any one *perish for lack of Knowledge, God will require the Blood of that Soul at our Hands.* And yet for all these Abilities expected in us, all these Expences and
Dangers

Dangers we are expos'd to, what is our Profit and Reward? A very poor one, God knows, for pledging our Souls for yours, and for running the *Risque of Damnation* in your stead, if the thing were really so. But be not deceived: The eternal Rule is this, *he that receiveth much, of him shall much be required*, and a Maxim founded upon Equity it is, *that the Benefice goes along with the Office*. Either therefore you must give us more of the *Benefice*, or take from us more of the *Office*, to make us accountable with you; or else stand or fall by your selves, for *at the great Day of Retribution*, we shall be your *Substitutes* no longer.

If then you have any Regard to the Nation's good, and that the impending Judgments of Heaven may be averted from it; or any Regard for the Church's good, whose Credit must certainly suffer by the Poverty of its Ministers: If any Concern for your Parishioners Souls, which are likely to fare in their Edification, in Proportion to the Maintenance you allow your Curates; or any Concern for the eternal Fate of your own, which must answer for your personal Care or Neglect of every particular Church, whereunto the Bishop, under God, gave you Institution: nay, I may add, if you have any Regard or
Concern

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Concern (which you seldom want) for your temporal Interest, and that your *Tithes* and *Oblations* may be paid more duly (for the People will be apt to catch the Example, and to learn from you the *little Sin* of defrauding their Minister, when they see you so scandalously hard to a Person, who, to their certain Knowledge, does all the Work.) If any of these Considerations move you, I say ; In the Name of Goodness, open your Hearts, and give us our Portion of the *Patrimony of the Church*. We allow you the Privilege of *Primogeniture*, if you please ; but let us not look upon our selves as *Bastards*, because we chance to be *younger Brothers*.

'Tis a mistaken Notion you have, that Indulgence will spoil us, but Poverty keep us down, and make us more subservient to you. Ill Usage may debase some Men's Spirits, but in others, that are truly † generous, it only tries the *elastick Force* of their Minds, and puts them upon their Mettle. If you would have more Obeysance from us then, or more Sedulity in our Office, 'tis but considering
us

† Si quis existimet, me, aut voluntate esse mutata, aut debilitata virtute, aut animo fracto, vehementer errat: Mihi, quod potuit vis, & injuria, & sceleratorum hominum furor detrahere, eripuit, abstulit, dissipavit: Quod viro forti adimi non potest, id manet, & permanebit. *M. Tul. Orat. post. reditum.*

us for it, and you shall not want it: but if, notwithstanding this, you are resolv'd to go on in Oppression and Wrong; and in an arbitrary Manner, upon one Pretence or other, sweep away all, while we have nothing to do in the Dividend, but only pine and look on; be sure that you chuse for your Assistants, such Creatures as the Lion here chose for his Fellow-Hunters, and pursue this Precaution to a Tittle,

*Curandum imprimis, ne magna Injuria fiat
Fortibus & miseris: Tollas licet omne quod usquam est
Auri — et Argenti, Spoliatis arma supersunt. †*

This Advice I leave with my Master, and so proceed with your Lordship to the next

III. Claim, we think, we have a Right to, viz. a legal Security for this Maintenance of ours, be it what it will, that it may not be precarious, and liable to be taken from us upon any freak of Malice or Disgust.

“ But you want not a legal Security,
“ may a Man at first hearing say; You have an
“ Act of Parliament provided for that Pur-
“ pose, your Qualifications specified, your
“ Stipends

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“ Stipends stated, and your selves, as well
 “ as your *Principals*, referred to the Hearing
 “ and Arbitration of the Bishop, upon any
 “ Article of Dispute.

Our Answer to those that ask the Reason of our Complaint is this. We gratefully own that we have an Act provided for this Purpose, and, had we but the Qualifications requisite to entitle us to the Benefit of it, the Act would be a sufficient Security to us, and a Means to relieve us, we conceive, when we are injur'd by our Principals, and our Ordinary refuses (what the Law calls upon him to do) to arbitrate between us. But then, here is the great Misfortune that we labour under. None are deem'd Curates in the Eye of the Law, and entitled to the Benefit of this Act, who have not Licenses from the Bishop himself, (for Licenses from his Chancellor, or other Ordinary † are voidable, if not void.) But the Bishop grants Licences to none, but such as bring a Nomination from the Incumbent; and the Incumbent gives no Nomination, if he can help it, for fear that the Person, so nominated, should be fixt upon him, and, in Case of any Difference, enabled to stand upon the Defensive, and claim the Benefit of
 the

† Still. *Duties and Rights of Par. Cler.* p. 160.

the Act. Why the Curate demands not a Nomination, is easily answered, — *he dare not for fear of giving Offence, and thereby losing his daily Bread.* But why the Incumbent gives none, when he knows he must not be asked; or why the Bishop compels him not to *give*, when he knows that the Laws of the Land require it of him, are Questions somewhat abstruse, but such as I hope to clear up to your Lordship by observing,

1. What the Power and Practice of Bishops in this particular has, all, along, been, since the first Institution of Curates.

2. These Curates, what Right they have, and upon what Accounts they ought to be admitted, to the Benefit of Licences. And,

3. What Artifices are commonly made use of to hinder and obstruct them, in this Affair; notwithstanding the many mischievous Consequences that are manifest in their Want of them.

1. To find out the original of Curates, and the Practice of Bishops, with Relation to them, we must have Recourse to the Times, when Diocesses first began to be divided into Parishes, and particular Revenues affixed to Parochial Churches, in this Kingdom.

What the *Æconomy* of the *British Church* was, before the Invasion of the *Saxons*, we are

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at a greater Loss to know for want of sufficient Records. † Mr. *Selden* has, from some obscure Hints, endeavoured to prove, that a Parochial Division was settled among the Clergy *then* ; but others, with more Probability, have conjectured, that the common Method was, for Bishops to educate and maintain, at their Cathedral, in a kind of Collegiate Life, a great Number of Priests ; whom they sent out by turns, to travel and instruct Lay-Christians in circumjacent Countries, and, as soon as relieved by others, to return to their College again. But whatever the Manner of these Clergy might be ; whether they liv'd in a settled or itinerant Capacity, 'tis certain, they cou'd do nothing without the particular Appointment and Designation of their Diocesan.

* When Christianity again was planted in this Nation by the Labour of *Augustin*, and the Zeal of good King *Ethelbert* ; it was not long, before it took root and prevailed. Other Kings (for *England* was then under an Heptarchy) following his Example, called over for Bishops ; built them Cathedral Churches, and settled Mannors and Possessions

† Vid. Ch. 9. p. 1.

* Vid. Bed. Eccl. Hist. Lib. 1. passim.

ons upon them, as he had done. These Churches however could not long receive the Number of Converts that came in daily; and as Christianity spread it self into the Country, the Distance began to be too great for People to resort to the Mother-Church: so that other Churches were erected, that the Service of God might be better attended.

The *Thanes*, and other great Men, who had vast Possessions within themselves, built, upon their own Manors, Churches, and extended their Bounds, at first, as far as the Territory of their Demesnes and Tenances reach'd. The Extent of these Territories was afterwards found too large, and then came a Necessity of dividing them again, and of building other Oratories and Churches, for their better conveniency still. The former of these were the original Parochial Churches, the other were no more than Chapels of Ease; till, in Process of Time, they came to be sub-divided again, and other Churches erected under *that Denomination*. And accordingly the Bishop of *Worcester* has observed, that in the Laws of *Canutus* there was a fourfold † Distinction of Churches, 1st. The Head-Church, or Bishop's See.

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2dly,

† Vid. Still. *Rights and Duties of Par. Cler.* p. 128.

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2dly, Churches of a second Rank, which had a Right of Sepulture, Baptism, and Tithes. 3dly, Churches that had a Right of Sepulture, but not frequented: And 4thly, Field-Churches, or Oratories, that had no such Right at all.

What I have to observe to your Lordship, during this Period of Time, is something relating to the Episcopal Power, *viz.* That none of these Parochial Divisions were made, none of these auxiliary Churches erected, none of their Revenues settled, none of their Curates (for they were all then but Curates) chosen, and allow'd to officiate, without the Bishop's particular Allowance and Designation. The Bishop's Consent for the Erection of Churches is required in one of the † *French* Capitulars (and by them was the *English* Church then in a great Measure modell'd) made at *Salz*, in the Year 804; which decrees, that whoever is minded to build a Church upon his own Estate, must have the Permission of his Diocesan.

The Bishop's Power for disposing of Ecclesiastical

† Quicumque voluerit, in sua proprietate, Ecclesiam ædificare, una cum consensu & voluntate Episcopi, in cujus *parochia* fuerit, Licentiam habeat. *Capit. Car. Mag.* Tom. 1. p. 416. Cap. 3.

fiastical Revenus is settled by another * Capitular, which blames some for attempting to have them appropriated to Churches of their own Erektion and Endowment, and remits them to the Hand of the Bishop, wherein they were primarily lodg'd.

The Bishop's Licence and Approbation of the Priest, that was to officiate in any of these Churches, is expressly required in one of the Constitutions of † Egbert, Arch-bishop of York, made about the Year 750; and in the Council of Clove-Shoo we read, that Presbyters were plac'd, by the Appointment of Bishops, in the Manors of the Laity, and in Places distant from Episcopal Sees.

As the Exigencies of things, and the Number of Souls required it, two or more of these Presbyters were plac'd in a Parish (co-ordinate, or subaltern, as the Wisdom of the Bishop pleas'd to direct it) and none was allowed

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lowed

* Multi, contra Canonum Instituta, sic Ecclesias, quas ædificaverint, postulant consecrari; ut Dotem, quam ejus Ecclesiæ contulerint, censeant ad Episcopi Ordinationem non pertinere. Quod factum, & in præterito displicet, & in futuro prohibetur. Sed omnia, secundum constitutionem antiquam, ad Episcopi Ordinationem & potestatem pertineant. Capit. Tom. 1. p. 1205.

† Sine Autoritate, vel consensu Episcoporum, Presbyteri in quibuslibet Ecclesiis nec constituentur, nec expellantur. Con. Angl. Tom. 1. p. 258.

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lowed to remove himself thence, without his Diocesan's Leave, upon pain of * Degradation.

After the *Norman* Conquest, the Interposition of Bishops, in this respect, is still more visible. The Humour of building Monasteries, and endowing them so profusely, some Ages before, had made the *Monks* so proud and powerful; that they gave the Bishops no small Disturbance, and put them upon the Necessity of exerting their Power.

Sometimes they were for engrossing as many Advowsons as they could get, on purpose to enrich themselves by the exorbitant Pensions, which they draw from their Vicars. But in this they were impeded by a † Canon in the Council of *Westminster*, in the Year 1126, unless they could gain the Consent of the Bishop, which, in these Times, it seems was not so difficult to obtain. Sometimes they would treat with mercenary Priests; never fix them at all, but only hire them from Year to Year, to supply the Cure of their vacant

* Presbyter vel Diaconus, qui deserit Ecclesiam suam, & ad aliam transferit, deponatur. Cap. Tom. 1. P. 932.

† Nullus Abbas, Prior, Monachus, vel Clericus, Ecclesiam, sive Decimam, seu quælibet Beneficia Ecclesiastica, de dono Laici, sine proprii Episcopi assensu, suscipiat. Con. Ang. Tom. 2. p. 34.

cant Benefices; thereby to reap the whole Profits to themselves. But this Abuse was likewise opposed by a Canon made in the Council of *Auranches* 1173, forbidding Churches to be committed to * yearly Curates, and by another, at the Council of *Lateran*, directing Bishops, that, in Case a Clerk were not nominated in due time, they themselves should assume the Presentation.

At other times, they were cruel to their Curates, and would not allow them sufficient to maintain them. But here, the Decrees of several Popes were very severe against them, commanding the Bishops, (under whose Discretion the thing lay) to appoint a better Subsistence for *their* Clergy, and for the future to † institute no person, that came with *their* Presentation, unless a competent Maintenance was provided for him first.

The *Monks* being driven at last from all these Artifices, betook themselves to the

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Design

* *Ecclesiæ vicariis annuis non committantur.* Con. Ang. Tom. 2. p. 101.

† *De Monachis, qui Vicarios Ecclesiarum parochialium ita gravant, ut hospitalitatem tenere non possint, eam providentiam habeas, quod ad præsentationem eorum nullum recipias, nisi tantum ei de proventibus Ecclesiæ coram te fuerit assignatum, unde Jura Episcopalia possint persolvere, & congruam sustentationem habere.* Extr. de Præbend. C. de Monachis.

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Design of *Appropriation* : By the Power of their Money they obtain'd of the Court of *Rome*, that the Profits of the Churches, whose Advowson belong'd to them, shou'd be made over to themselves, and their Successors for ever : and elated with this Success, they began again to be fullen and unruly. They were either for personally serving their Churches themselves, or forcing upon their Vicars scandalous Allowances. But here again the Bishop's Authority stept in, forbidding them to † officiate in their own Persons ; settling in their Parishes such a * Number of Priests as their Largeness requir'd ; and compelling them to give them a sufficient Subsistence (for upon this the Confirmation of their Appropriations depended) either in Money, or else in Tithes, Oblations or Obventions, (as the Manner of most Endowments

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† Cum inhonestum sit, & Canonum inimicum, ut viri Religiosi, quibus concessum est in proprios usus convertere Ecclesias, Ecclesiis parochialibus deserviant ; Statuimus ut in Ecclesiis sic eis concessis perpetuos Vicarios per nos constituent ; & certum & competentem Vicarium ad Taxationem nostram in dictis Ecclesiis infra 40 dies eis assignent. Con. Ang. T. 2. p. 239.

* Statuimus, ut in singulis parochialibus Ecclesiis, quarum Parochia est diffusa, duo sint vel tres presbyteri, pensata pariter magnitudine Parochiæ, & Ecclesiæ Facultate ; nec forte ægrotante uno presbytero vel debilitato, &c. Con. Ang. Tom. 2. p. 183.

is now.) For so the Statute of 4 H. IV. 12. requires, that the Vicar shall be a secular Person, and made spiritual Vicar, and have such an Endowment, as the Ordinary should think fit; otherwise the Appropriation to be void †.

I am wondring with my self, my Lord, why the learned Defender of Pluralities, from whom I have in a great Measure compiled this Account, happened to be so severe upon the *Monks in those Times*; when his great Friends the *Pluralists in these* copy their Practice and Behaviour so exactly. For the same greedy Accumulation of Livings, the same Neglect of them, as soon as they have got them, the same hiring *occasional Mercenaries*, the same starving all stated Curates, and Arts to prevent their being fixed and established upon them, are conspicuous in both.

But I mean not to draw any Parallel between them. I had rather decline the Invidiousness of the Comparison, and observe to your Lordship, how, at the first Establishment of Christianity among us, and according to the Form of Church-Government that obtained then, a Bishop was look'd upon as the *sole Pastor of his whole Diocess*, and all

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other

† Vid. Stilling. *Duties and Rights of Par. Cler.* p. 298.

other Clergy, of what Denomination soever, were no more than *Curates and Assistants* under him. 'Twas certainly so, while the Bishop and his Clergy lived together, and made up, as it were, but all one Family; while the *inferior Churches* were dependent upon the *Cathedral*, or Mother-Church, and the Revenues of *all* remitted to the Bishop, and left to his Management and Distribution; while every Clerk was under his Diocesan's Eye and Observation, and the honest Assistant had the same Examination of his Sufficiency, the same Designation to his Cure, the same *Faculty* for his Admission to it, and the same Security for his Maintenance and Allowance in it, as had the *greatest* Incumbent.

I am figuring to my self, my Lord, the Happiness of such a Constitution, when the *poorest* Curates (but poor we must not call them under such a Patronage) had Prelates and Metropolitans, not only for their Rulers and Governors, but for their Tryers and Examiners, for their Comforters and Encouragers, for their Patrons and Protectors, nay for their Receivers and Paymasters, if my Reverence for that sacred Order would allow me the Expression, as the Matter of Fact requires it. Certainly, my Lord, they pay not the highest Complement to the Understanding,

derstanding, we need not say, but to the Power and Authority at least, of Bishops; who wou'd keep them unacquainted with perhaps a *third part* of their Clergy, and that the *working* and *laborious part* too, and upon whose Care the Weight of all Administration lies: and who take into their Service Curates, without any Examination; (but that perhaps for a very good Reason) bargain with them, without your Privity; continue them, without your Licence; and dismiss them, without your Knowledge or Consent; when, in all these things, the Episcopal Interposition is required, and their own *Canonical Obedience* forfeited by presuming to overlook it.

What we lose our selves by being secluded *thus* from the Knowledge and Observation of our Diocesan, is not so much, as what the Church may suffer by these illegal and clandestine Practices. We hope then, that we express not only a Concern for our own Quiet and Security, but some Zeal likewise for the Welfare of our Church, and all due Subjection to those that preside in it; when we desire to be taken out of the Hands of those, *whose Mercies are cruel*, and to have our Governors *re-instated* in their antient Authority over us; when we desire, in short,
to

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to be examined by them, before we be admitted to any trust, for fear of Insufficiency; to have our Allowances tax'd and determined by them, for fear of Disagreements; to have a Letter of Licence under their own Hand and Seal, for fear of Collusion, or Removes; and no Cause of Dismission allow'd against us, but such as their own Wisdom and Impartiality, upon a proper hearing, shall approve.

These are Privileges, my Lord, that we may call the *Birth-right* of the Inferior Clergy: Our Ancestors had them, from the first Institution of Christianity in this Nation: Their Descendents had them, in the darkest Ages of Popery, and when Oppression was in its highest Elevation: And, if we pursue the Enquiry farther, we shall find that they have been handed down to us, along with the Reformation, and make some part, at this time, of our happy Constitution, both Civil and Ecclesiastical.

The famous Statute of 21 *Hen. VIIIth*, that transfers the Power of dispensing with Plurality of Livings, (which the 4th *Lateran* Council had plac'd in the Pope only) into the Hand of the Archbishop of the Province, makes no Alteration in other Bishops, with Relation to the Affair of Curates; but leaves them

them in the full Possession of the same Power that they had *before* by the Canon Law ; which was to settle them in Parishes where they were wanted, and to allow them fitting Salaries under the Episcopal Seal. To this purpose we may observe, that, in the Form of Dispensation, which has always been us'd since the Reformation, there is Provision made *that the Cure of the Church, from which the Incumbent is chiefly absent, be, in the mean time, well supplied in all things by some fit Minister, able to explain and interpret the Principles of the Christian Religion, and to preach the Word of God to the People ; if the Revenues of the said Church can conveniently maintain such an one : and that a competent and sufficient Salary for this Purpose be limited and appointed by * the Bishop of the Place, or (in Case the Diocesan Bishop do not his Duty herein) by the Archbishop or his Successor, to be given and paid bona fide to the said Curate.*

The Constitutions and Canons of our Church are far from being defective in this particular. The 41st Canon requires, that *whoever is entituled to a Licence or Dispensation*

* Hoc Salarium, says Lyndwood, debet limitari per ipsum Judicem : non ex conventionem fiendum per partes, sed ex ipsius Judicis officio.

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sation for the keeping of more Benefices with Cure than one, shall have under him, in the Benefice where he does not reside, a Preacher lawfully allowed, that is able sufficiently to teach and instruct the People. Who this Preacher lawfully allowed is, the 47th Canon declares, viz. a Curate that is a sufficient and licens'd Preacher, and then follow the Qualifications that make him such, in the very next Canon;

Can. 48. *No Curate or Minister shall be permitted to serve in any Place, without Examination and Admission of the Bishop of the Diocess, or Ordinary of the Place, having Episcopal Jurisdiction, in Writing under his Hand and Seal, having Respect to the Greatness of the Cure, and Meetness of the Party.*

Our Church has therefore sufficiently acquitted her self in these her Orders and Constitutions. But why the prefatory Injunction of them is no better minded; why every Minister, by what Name or Title soever he be called, does not, in the Parish Church or Chapel where he has charge, read them all over once every Year, on some Sunday or Holiday, for their better Observation; why all Archbishops, Bishops, and others that exercise any Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction within this Realm, every Man in his Place,

* Vid. Preamble to the Const. and Can. Eccles.

of the Inferior Clergy.

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Place, do not see and procure (as much as in them lieth) all and every the said Canons to be in all Points duly observed; not sparing to execute the Penalties that are mentioned in them upon any, that shall wittingly and wilfully break, or neglect to observe the same; especially, since they are charg'd so strictly to do it, as they tender the Honour of God, the Peace of the Church, the Tranquillity of the Kingdom, and their Duties and Service to the King, is a Matter that affords but a melancholy Speculation.

In the Eye of the Statute Law, Licences are so essential to the *Being* of a Curate, that no one is deem'd to serve in that Capacity without them; and therefore the Preamble to that Act in the 12th of Queen Anne, which provides for the *better Maintenance of Curates*, takes care to repeat the Condition, that entitles us to the Benefit of it, in the very Words of the above-cited Canon; viz. that they be *licens'd Preachers*, for *no Curates or Ministers ought to serve in any Place without the previous Examination and Admission of the Bishop*. “ How then, asks a very great Prelate, came Curates to officiate without ever coming to the Bishop at all, or undergoing any Examination by him? This is a plain Breach of the Canon, and ought to be reformed. For I think it a very great
“ Fault

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“ Fault in those that have *Pluralities*, that
 “ they look no more after the Curates they
 “ employ, and that they do not bring them
 “ to the Bishop to be approv’d, and to have
 “ their Allowances fixt before they employ
 “ them. Especially considering, that not
 only the necessary Information of the Bi-
 shop, but the Satisfaction of the absent Mi-
 nister likewise, the Ease and Encouragement
 of the residing Curate, and the Peace and
 Tranquility of the whole Congregation seems,
 in a great Measure, to depend upon it.

1. Whatever then becomes of the Opi-
 nion, *that the Bishop is the sole Pastor of his Di-
 ocess*, that the Care of all Souls is intrusted
 with him, and other inferior Orders are no
 more than his Curates ; tho’ it be mightily
 supported by Authorities from Antiquity :
 This certainly is true, in Relation to his
 Office, (even if we bring it to its lowest
 Gradation) that he has a general Sway and
 Jurisdiction over his whole Diocess ; that
 the Body of his Clergy are more immedi-
 ately under his Care and Superintendency ;
 that he is concerned to acquaint himself
 particularly with them, and their Proceed-
 ings ; to know their Qualities, and see to the
 Execution of their Office : but then, that
 his Care is to *center it self*, as it were, and
 his

his Eye be more attentively fixed, *where the grand Stress lies*; on those, I mean, that have the *main Execution of the Office* devolved upon them; least the chief Points of the *Pastoral Care* (for reading Prayers or a Sermon, alas! is the least part of it) * “ the instructing, “ the exhorting, the admonishing and re- “ proving, the directing and conducting, the “ visiting and comforting the People of a “ Parish, come to be neglected; while the “ Incumbent is absent, or does not think fit “ to look after it, and the Curate thinks “ himself oblig’d to nothing, but barely to “ perform the stated Offices of the Church, “ according to Agreement.

We suppose the Case then, that Pluralities are lawful, and that Non-residence may be conniv’d at; yet, since so many Canons require, and the Fate of so many Souls depends upon, the Supply of a *sufficient Curate*; who shall be Judges of the Man’s Sufficiency? The Incumbent, I think, is excluded the Question; because Cheapness with him, tho’ with no Body else, is a valuable Consideration, and a *Foil* may be necessary sometimes to give a faint Lustre to very dull Parts. The People, we are told, have no Right in such Elections;

* Vid. *Past. Care*, p. 16. Pref.

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Electiōns; but admitted they had, the Man must be a *poor Tool* indeed, that cannot impose upon them, and, either by the Help of printed Sermons, or the Strength of some of his Acquaintance, muster an *handsome thing* up for his *first Essay*, whatever becomes of his After-Performances. *The Priest's Lips*, we are told in the mean time, *should preserve*

Mal.ii. 7. *Knowledge, that the People may enquire the Law at his Mouth, for he is the Messenger of the Lord of Hosts: And yet, by this Manner of excluding the Bishop from the Power of Examination, a numerous Parish may be committed to the Care of an old Woman of a Curate, who has nothing to recommend him, but a grave Stupidity, and sanctimonious Look; who is forc'd every Sunday to commute for his want of Stile, Method, and Invention, with odd Distortions of Countenance, sudden Elevations of Hands and Eyes, and other theatrical Shews of Devotional Grimace; who instead of being a sufficient Teacher himself, has need to be taught the first Principles of the Oracles of God, to be fed with Milk, and not strong Meat, and to have the Archdeacon, for that Purpose, give him * a Lesson out of the New Testament in Latin, according to the good old Custom,*

Heb. v.
12.

* Vid. *Johnson's Clergyman's vade mecum*, p. 52.

Custom, to be considered over by him against the next Visitation.

But Ignorance is not the only thing that may be apprehended from such a clandestine Induction of Curates into Parishes. St. Peter forewarns us of false Teachers, who shall privily bring in damnable Heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them. Nay even among yourselves, says St. Paul, (taking his leave of the Church of Ephesus) among your selves shall Men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away Disciples after them. And therefore the Angel, or Bishop of that same Church is highly commended in the Revelation, for taking Pains to detect such deceitful Workers as transformed themselves into the Apostles of Christ; I know thy Works, and thy Labour, and thy Patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil, and hast tried them which say they are Apostles, and are not, and hast found them Liars.

'Tis much to be wished, that the Humour of the Times, as well as the Example of some that affect to be Leaders, gave no Comfort and Encouragement to weak and unstable Minds, either to corrupt sound Doctrines themselves, or to be the Apes of the Age, and little Retailers of other Men's Heresies: Much to be wish'd, that Dissenters were the only

People, that have ever dar'd to handle the Word of God and his Sacraments, without any Designation; and that the fond Ambition to be thought *Divines*, and called *Doctors*, had never tempted any to take the Habit and Profession upon them, without any Manner of Commission, or Authority.

2 Sam. i. 20. What we know of this kind, my Lord, must not be *publish'd in Gath*; lest the *Daughters of the Philistines rejoice*, and the Enemies of our holy Religion *triumph*. 'Tis much to be wish'd however, that the Danger of it were prevented for the future, by putting some wholesome Injunction in Execution, "That every Person, to be admitted to a Curacy, should by the Bishop be examined very narrowly; should in his Presence subscribe the thirty nine Articles of Religion, as if he came for * *Institution*, and exhibit his Letters of Orders before he receives his Licence to the Cure." And to detect *Wolves and Deceivers*, that may possibly still be lurking in the *Fold*, 'tis much to be wished, that an excellent Canon of our Church, which assigns the proper End of all Visitations, were strictly and religiously observed, "Forasmuch Cap. 137. " as a chief and principal Cause and Use of Visitation

* Vid. Stat. 13. Eliz. Cap. 12.

“ Visitation is, that the Bishop, Archdeacon,
“ or other appointed to visit, may get some
“ good Knowledge of the State, Sufficiency,
“ and Ability of the Clergy; we think it
“ convenient, that every Parson, Vicar, Cu-
“ rate, &c. do, at the Bishop’s first Visita-
“ tion, or at the next Visitation after his
“ Admission, shew and exhibit unto him his
“ Letters of Orders, Institution, and Inducti-
“ on, and all other his Dispensations, Li-
“ cences, or Faculties whatsoever; to be
“ by the said Bishop either allowed or (if
“ there be just Cause) disallowed and reject-
“ ed.” This, like the Touch of * *Ithuriel’s*
Spear, will expose a Fiend, even tho’ he shel-
ter himself in Paradise,

*For no Falshood can endure
Touch of Celestial Temper, but returns
Of Force unto its Likeness: Up he’ll start
Discover’d and surpriz’d.*

But now, how can the Bishop attain to a competent Knowledge of the State and Condition of his Clergy; how can he be supposed able to detect all sacrilegious Frauds and Impositions, to † *banish and drive away all er-*

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roneous

* *Milton, L. 4.*

† *Vid. Office of Consecr. of Bishops.*

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erroneous and strange Doctrines, as he has promis'd, or to censure all Impugners of the Articles of Religion, as the * Canon requires; when so considerable a Number of them, all liable to such Imputations, for any thing we know, are kept in Sculk as it were, and un-subjected to his Visitation? How those that are the Originals of this Default, and chief Obstructors of the Episcopal Care, by withholding their Curates from coming before you, may answer it to your Lordship's Authority, I cannot tell: But to me they seem to have a pretty difficult Task to be able to answer it to their own Consciences.

2. The Man, in my Opinion, must be somewhat callous and insensible in that part, who can, without Remorse or Disorder of Mind, think with himself, "that he has undertaken
 " the Cure of so many Souls, and is amply
 " rewarded for it; that the least of these
 " Souls is of more real Value *than the Gain*
 " *of the whole World*; that for the Blood of
 " these Souls he is responsible, if any of
 " them perish thro' his Neglect;" and yet leaves the whole Care and Conduct of them to a *blind Guide*, and *lame Assistant*, whose Scholarship he desires to know
 nothing

* Vid. Can. 5.

nothing of, and whose Clerg-man-ship he cannot directly swear to.

For my part, my Lord, I could never rightly comprehend the *Ecclesiastical Sense of residing upon a Living*, when the Person perhaps lives fifty Miles from it; but if such a Wonder is to be wrought, he only, in my Thoughts, seems to offer at it, who chuses a sober and ingenious Man for his Curate; admits him to his Share of the Benefice, as well as Share of the Cure; and so presents him to his Diocesan, to have it confirmed and continued to him for Life. Such an one may, with a better Grace, make his Appearance every Summer at *Tunbridge* or *Bath*, and at the *Court of Requests* all Winter long. His Curate, he knows, has both Abilities and Encouragement to do his Duty; he pays him for his Diligence, and by a liberal Allowance makes the Parish in some measure his own. And 'tis the Opinion of Pluralists too, * “ that if the Incumbent alledg-
“ eth, at the great Day of Enquiry, that
“ the same Authority of the Bishop, which
“ committed the Care of the Parish to him,
“ did disburthen him of that Care, and im-
“ pos'd it, in whole or in part, upon a Sub-
K 3 “ stitute,

* *Defence of Pluralities*, p. 33.

“stitute, God will accept of his Plea. How this may be, I cannot tell, (to me the Position seems to be both false and dangerous) but certainly at *that Day*, their Plea will be accepted but badly, who leave their Charge now, *as the Ostrich her Eggs*, and are not concerned what becomes of them, *forgetful that*

Joh xxxix. *the Foot may crush them, or that the wild Beast*
 15. *may break them: And their Account very dreadful, who have Reason to think their Negligence characteriz'd, as well as their Punishment included in the Prophet's Denunciation; The Diseas'd have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which is sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, but with Force and with Cruelty have ye rul'd them; therefore Woe be to the Shepherds of Israel that feed themselves, and not the Flock; I am against them, says the Lord, and I will require my Flock at their Hands.*

Ezek. xxxiv. 2, &c.

3. But how negligent soever the Shepherds may be, 'tis an Affair, I think, of no small Importance to every one of the Flock, to see that their Curate be licenc'd, even as they tender their own Edification, and desire to be satisfied in the *Validity of his Administrations*. The Objection that we have against some Dissenters is a very good one, *viz.*

That

That they lie lyable to *Cheats* and *Impostors* every Day, because they require no Test of their Teachers, but admit any, that pretend to Sanctity and Illuminations extraordinary, to officiate among them in *that way*, without any scrupulous Examination. This gives *Atheists* and *Deists*, say we, whose Pleasure it is to bring Religion under ridicule, as well as the cunning and deceitful Emissaries of *Rome*, whose Business it is to raise Confusion in it, an happy Opportunity of sliding into their Meetings, and making either *Sport* or *Merchandise* to themselves, at the Price of Men's Souls.

But while we are making this Obiection against them, we ought to be well advis'd whether it lies not equally against us, and whether the like Danger of admitting *false and deceitful Workers* into the Service of our Church, be not chargeable, *some where or other*.

Our Church indeed is chargeable with no such thing. She, in her Canons, and Constitutions, has taken effectual Care to preclude all such. But Canons and Constitutions are but a dead Letter, unless they are put in Execution. In her 48th Canon, which admits of none to serve in any Place, without the previous Examination and Admission of

the Bishop, she requires, that in Case any Curate or Minister shall remove from one Diocess to another, he shall not, by any means, be allow'd to serve, without a Testimonial in Writing from the Bishop of the Diocess, or Ordinary of the Place from whence he came, of his Honesty, Ability, and Conformity to the Ecclesiastical Laws of the Church of England. And to shew her great Caution farther, in her fiftith, and fifty second Canons, she directs, that neither the Minister, Church-wardens, or any Officers of the Church, shall suffer any Man to preach within their Churches, or Chapels, but such as, by shewing their Licence to preach, shall appear unto them to be sufficiently authorized thereunto: And that the Bishop may understand, if Occasion so require, what Sermons are made in every Church of his Diocess, and who presume to preach without Licence; the Church-wardens, and Side-men shall see, that the Names of all Preachers, which come to their Church from any other Place, be noted in a Book, which they shall have ready for that Purpose; and wherein every Preacher shall subscribe his own Name, the Day when he preached, and the Name of the Bishop by whom he had the Licence to preach. I may add, that in the Articles of Presentment, which are to be exhibited every Visitation, the Church-wardens are required (I think charg'd upon Oath) to present

sent their Curate, in case he has not a Licence, be it which way it will, either thro' his own Neglect, or the Incumbent's *Management*, that he wants one.

These are all excellent Rules, and wisely contrived for the Prevention of Mischiefs arising from *fraudulent Intruders*; but notwithstanding all this, if the Incumbent will take into his Service, or hire only for a *present Turn*, a Curate *upon Content*, as we call it, without ever enquiring into his Abilities and Honesty, without ever desiring to inspect his Letters of Orders; if this Curate shall never be presented to the Bishop, to be examined and licenced by him, never call'd upon to appear at Visitations, never required to produce his Orders, and never presented by the Church-wardens *for presuming to preach without Licence*; what can we say in this Case? And wherein lies our boasted Security? For may not this Curate, as well as the Teacher of any separate Congregation, be a mere Lay-man, that has been contaminating the Mysteries of Religion; or a crafty *Jesuit*, that has been carrying on the Designs of the Conclave, for some Years perhaps, in one of the largest Parishes in this Town; unless we can suppose, that this is no Age for *Counterfeits* and *Cheats*, and the Malice of the Church
of

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of *Rome* is a little better reconciled to the Church of *England*.

But now, if any such Impostor should insinuate himself, what a sad distracted Condition must a People be in, when they come to consider, that all the Sacraments he has presum'd to administer, all the Prayers and Liturgies he has offered up, all the Benedictions and Absolutions he has been bold to dispense, are null and of no effect; if the Doctrine of *the Invalidity of Lay-Baptism*, (and equally of all other Lay-Offices) appears to be true, as there are some very great Authorities to make us believe it is.

For my part, I cannot see how any one, that thinks he has a Soul to save, and hopes to save it by the ordinary means of God's Word and Sacraments, can permit a *Stranger* to administer to him in these high Concerns, coming from a distant Diocess, and without any Commendatory-Letters from the Bishop thereof; until he has been first examined, and approved, and admitted to the Curacy, in a regular Manner, and by those that have the proper Authority. This, I think, every one that desires his own, and his Families Edification, ought, some way or other, to be acquainted with; before he joins in full Communion, and commits the Guidance of his

his Soul to a Man, that he knows to be a *Divine* by no other Token, but only his *Habit*, and outward Appearance.

Our Church has wisely committed the Matter of this Enquiry to the Church-wardens of every Parish, who have full Authority to demand of the Curate, the first time that he comes to preach among them, (as I take the Sense of the above-cited Canons to be) an Exhibition of his Letter of Licence from the Bishop of the Diocess; are requir'd to present him at the next Visitation, in case he has none, for *presuming to preach* without it; and may be prosecuted in the * Ecclesiastical Court themselves, as perjur'd Persons, if they wittingly or wilfully refuse or neglect it.

And therefore we must not forbear, upon all Occasions, my Lord, to remind the Church-wardens of their Duty in this respect, and to bespeak their Care and Observance of it for the future. They may value themselves, perhaps, upon their being *the Head-Officers of the Parish*, and distinguish'd by the *Pew* wherein they sit; upon their having the *Goods* and *Utensils* of the Church, and sometimes the Revenues, and Reparations of it, under their Cognizance
and

* Vid. *Johnson's Clergyman's Vade mecum*. p. 166.

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and Direction. But certainly, if they would consider their own Authority truly; the greatest Power and Trust, that is committed to their Hands is, that of enquiring into the Qualifications of the *officiating Minister*.

Our Church presumes, that the Bishop, thro' various Avocations of Business, may forget; and the Incumbent, for Reasons best known to himself, may not be *sollicitous*, whether the Curate has a Licence or no; but in *her* Church-wardens *she* supposes no such Neglect, because *she* knows, of what Importance it is to them, to be satisfied in this particular; and therefore, when all *her* Officers fail *her*, *she* makes them *her* Stay, and reposes *her* last Confidence in their Fidelity. They ought therefore frequently to be told, (when they come to make their *Presentments*,) that it will be Perfidiousness in them, as well as downright Perjury, not to be true to their trust herein; and that, if they are sensible, their Curate has no Commission from the Bishop, or any other Licence to officiate among them, but the bare Permission of the Incumbent only; as they *tender* their own *Souls*, they *speak it out*; and not conceal from their Bishop what Danger, they conceive, their *Parish* may be in, by this
Juggle

Juggle and Contrivance to elude his Authority.

He, no doubt, will thank them for the Discovery, because it gives him an Opportunity of knowing the *State and Condition of his Clergy*, and of correcting a *gross Abuse*: and if the Incumbent is not so well pleased with it, on him let the Shame and the Condemnation lie; for 'tis a scandalous thing, that his *Clark* should be allow'd a Licence, and his *Curate* none; and that every little * *Schoolmaster*, or *Surgeon*, or *Midwife*, shou'd be authoriz'd by the Bishop, before they can follow their Employments, and yet he, who has the *great Work of the Ministry*, the *Edification of the Church*, and the *Concerns of Men's Souls* upon him, should be admitted to a full Exercise of *his Office*, *unsight unseem* by the Bishop, and without any previous Examination or Cognizance of his Abilities to perform it.

Nothing, my Lord, as Matters now go, can prevent this Evil, but the Interposition of honest Church-wardens; and therefore they are to be exhorted daily, not to fear the *Face* of any Man in the Execution of their Office; and given to understand, that they

* Vid. Stat. 3. Hen. VIII. Ch. 11.

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they are appointed to be a *Curb* and *Restraint* upon the *Licentiousness* of their Minister in this particular; and, all Favour and Affection apart, ought to take care (for fear of drawing the guilty Consequences upon themselves) that the *Publick receive no Detriment* by their Default; that they owe it therefore to the Church, whose Officers they are; to the Bishop, that expects it from them; to the Parish, that entrusts their Safety with them; and to their own Souls, that must be perjur'd if they thus betray it; not to make any Concealment of this kind. I was going to say, (if our Concerns were of any Moment to the World, my Lord) that they owe something of *this* to their Curates likewise; whose Quiet and Security, as well as happy Execution of their Office, depends, in a great Measure, upon the obtaining Licences.

I have made it my Enquiry, among most of my Acquaintance, to find out a *Letter of Licence to a Curacy*, merely to see the Form of it; but can meet with none; and may therefore be excus'd, if my Conjectures upon it prove erroneous, and that I am forc'd to talk upon this Subject not so warrantably, as I could wish.

But

But according to my present Conception, and as I always understood the Sense of Licences ————— By *them* we are made properly Curates to the Bishop, and not to the Incumbent; are appointed to take care, either in part or in the whole, of such a Church or Parish; but not put under the *Service* or *Jurisdiction* of such a Rector or Vicar. He has the Nomination of us indeed, but the Bishop gives us the whole Sanction and Appointment to our Office; he pays us our Salary, as 'tis fit he should, but the Bishop takes care to settle and adjust it between us, before we begin. By the same Authority then, which *instituted* him to the Living, we are *admitted* to the Curacy; and by that Authority only are removeable. Consequently, every Pet or Disgust taken, every View of Profit or Advantage in him, every Surmise of Faults and Misdemeanors in us, is not a sufficient Cause for Dismission, (in this case, we presume, the Incumbent is not a Judge for himself) without a *fair Hearing* before the Bishop, that appointed us. Nay, according to my Notion of Licences, we are not removeable upon the *Demise* of one Incumbent, and the *Induction* of another, or any other Change that may befall the Parish, where we are *plac'd*; because, as we apprehend,

hend, we are not the Servants of particular Men, or subject to their Humours and Vicissitudes, but fix'd permanently in a Church, where we have an *unalienable* Right to serve, so long as any Curate is kept upon the Place, and the Bishop is pleas'd to *abide* by his Licence, and approve of our Service. And for this Reason, I suppose, it is, that, in one of the above-cited † Canons, every Curate, is required, at the Bishop's first Visitation, or at the next Visitation after his Admission to such a Curacy, to exhibit his Licence; and if it is approv'd by the Bishop, then, as the Custom is, to have it sign'd by the Register.

If this be the Sense and Intention of Licences, as || I conceive it may, then, all that Ease and Tranquillity of Mind, that arises from a secure Possession of what we have; all those Motives and Encouragements to study, that the Sense of a Bishop's Eye upon us inspires; all that Alacrity and Diligence in our Duty, that a settled Abode, and good Understanding with our *Parishioners* gives; and all that Freedom of Speech, and Simplicity

† Can. 137.

|| Since I writ this, I have seen a Letter of Licence, sign'd by a Register only, (for I can meet with none under the Hand of a Bishop, as the Law directs) presuming however, that the Form is every where much the same, I perceive that my foregoing Conjectures are pretty right.

city of Manners, highly becoming Gospel-Ministers, that an *independent State* occasions, is the Result of *our having*; and the very Reverse of all this, the certain Consequence of *our wanting* Licences. For how just soever a Man may be in his Temper, yet 'tis a sad Consideration, to have no other Law for one's Safety against him, no other Security for one's Maintenance under him, than his *bare Will and Pleasure*; and tho' a Master may not tyrannize at present, yet 'tis a most * miserable thing, that 'tis in his Power to do so, when he will.

This Reflection, improv'd by the Observation of the several Instances of suffering, which are occasioned by the Abuse of such a boundless Power, is enough to make a Man distracted, when he comes to consider, that his State and Condition is expos'd to the same Danger; that he has no better *Hold* of his Curacy, no safer *Fence* against the Passions of the Man with whom he has to do, than had the many *Victims* that lie before his Eyes; that his *Principal* may deal with him, and his poor Family, just as he pleases; pay at Discretion, and dismiss with Defiance, be-

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cause

* *Etiam si non sit molestus Dominus, tamen est Miserrimum, posse, si velit. Cic. Phil. 3.*

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cause he has no Superior to controul him ; that the Bishop, the only Power, under God, he has to look up to, will think his *want* of a Licence a *Contempt* of his Authority, and turn the *deaf Ear* to his *Complaint*: Nay, that he cannot so much as *sue* in the * *Ecclesiastical Court* at all, nor even at common Law, without proving a *Contract* (which he is not always able to do) for his *little little* Stipend ; if the Will of his *mighty Master* be to *withhold it*.

With such Considerations as these molesting his Mind perpetually, I ask not your Lordship how a Man can apply himself to study, and the Acquisition of such Knowledge as becomes his Vocation, or how he can attend the Care of a Parish without Distraction ; † that is all over : but how he can appear in *Company* with Chearfulness, how he can live *at home* with Satisfaction, or eat the *little Morsel* he has with Content ; when he sees || the Sword of another Man's Wrath, impending

* Vid. *Clergyman's Vade mecum*. p. 92, 93.

† Vid. p. 86, &c.

|| *Diffictus ensis cui super impia
Cervice pendet, non Siculae Dapes
Dulcem elaborabunt saporem:*

*Non Avium, Citharæque cantus
Somnum reducent.* Hor. Car. Lib. 3. Ode 1.

impending over his Head, and sustain'd only by the slender Thread of a right Understanding at present, which every little Disgust, or presum'd affront, or Prospect of Advantage *knaps* asunder. We owe a great deal of our Happiness, without doubt, to Indolence; to our *taking no Care* for to morrow, nor anticipating Dangers by *Cogitation*; or otherwise I cannot see, how any one, that gives himself Liberty to think, can be easy for one Moment, under such *precarious* Circumstances.

We have the Happiness, or Mortification shall I call it? my Lord, to live in a Kingdom, where we see *Deputies* of all sorts better provided for in point of Allowance, and Servants of all kinds better secur'd against the Oppression of their Masters, than 'tis our Fate to be. The Laws of the Land agree with the Laws of the Gospel, in calling upon Masters to give unto their Servants, that which Col. iv. 1. is equal and just, knowing that they have also a Master in Heaven, neither is there any respect Eph. vi. 9. of Persons. They step in to the Assistance of the Weak, as well as the Strong, when at any time they are defrauded in their Wages, or abus'd in their Persons, or injur'd in their Reputations.

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Nay in the very Laws of *Moses*, (before the merciful Precepts of Christianity came down from Heaven, and while Men were in some Measure indulg'd in the Hardness of their Heart) we read such Injunctions as these,

Lev. xxv. *Thou shalt not rule over thy Servant with Rigor,*

^{43.} Deu. xxiv. *Thou shalt not oppress an hired Servant that is*

^{14, 15.} *poor and needy: At his Day thou shalt give him his Hire, neither shall the Sun go down upon it, for he is poor, and setteth his Heart upon it, lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee. And if at any time thou and he part, thou shalt not send him away empty ;*

Deu. xv. *thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy Flock,*

^{14.} *and out of thy Floor, and out of thy Wine-Press ; of that, wherewith the Lord thy God hath blessed thee, thou shalt give unto him. We perhaps*

are the only *Servants* (for as yet I hope we are not thought *Slaves*) that were ever heard of in the World, who may be turn'd away for no Fault, and without any warning ; who may be starv'd, while we stay, and cannot help our selves ; who may be oppress'd, when we are gone, and must not complain ; and who may be defrauded of our Wages at last, and have no Course at Law to recover them ; in a *free Country*, under an *happy Government*, a *wise Administration*, and, what is the greatest Aggravation of all, by Persons
of

of the same Order, and Fraternity with our selves, and all this for want of Licences.

This however my Lord is not the worst ill Consequence that befalls us. We have a greater Concern to take care of, than our easy Maintenance in this World, and that is, the *Work of our Ministry*. But in this, I fear, we grow most of us remiss and careless (tho' certainly we shou'd not be so) at the Consideration of what uncertain Terms we are upon, more than any thing else.

*“ I have no Licence, and may therefore be
“ dismiss'd by the Doctor this Moment. His
“ Humour and mine may soon disagree, and then
“ I must be gone. Some Pet or other perchance
“ he may take, and revenge himself on me by
“ turning me away. Some Sycophants or other
“ may rise up against me, and I must be sa-
“ crificed, to make his Court to them. My Set-
“ tlement therefore is not determined here, nor
“ can I expect to continue long. The Parish
“ was never committed to me, nor am I respon-
“ sible for their Souls. I'll do their Offices, how-
“ ever, perfunctorily, read them Prayers, and
“ preach them Sermons, and go to their Sick, if
“ they please to send for me; but as for the great
“ Pastoral Care of their Souls, let him look
“ to that, for he has undertook it, and has the
“ Pay for it: The little Pittance I have is suffi-
“ ciently*

"*ciently earned in what I do.*" This, I fear, my Lord, is the Language of too many Breasts, and will never be removed, as long as their Condition is thus precarious and dependent.

John x. *The Hireling fleeth,* as our Saviour observes, or, 12, 13. (what is little better) stayeth to small purpose, *because he is an Hireling; and careth not for the Sheep, because the Sheep are not his own;* and a blessed Condition must that Flock be in, whose Shepherd is *wandering about the World,* and Hireling *loitering at home!*

The *Hireling* however does no more than what may be expected from him; for what Encouragement has he to set himself heartily to the difficult Parts of his Office, when he sees he has no fixt Station, nor any Prospect of long Continuance in the Place? For what Purpose shou'd he endeavour to acquaint himself with the Parish, to learn the Maladies of their Souls, and to apply proper Remedies to them, *by Doctrine, by Reproof, by Correction, by Instruction in Righteousness, every where, and from House to House;* when the next ill Humour his Master is in, he must be sure to turn out? For what Purpose should he labour to excel in preaching, or take such mighty Pains in the Composition of a Sermon; when, perhaps, before next Sunday comes, he may be forbid to
preach

preach it; or if he is not, may only provoke the Indignation of a Man, that reckons his own Parts *eclipsed*, and himself *injured*, by the *Learning* or *Eloquence* of his Curate. For there is Danger of an *Ostracism* in the Church, as well as elsewhere; and a Popularity, rais'd upon no worse Foundation, than too much Diligence, or too great Abilities, has (if it durst be own'd) occasioned more scandalous Dismissions, than any thing else.

It may not be amiss then, for those that have Curacies of this uncertain Tenure, and are willing *at any Rate*, to secure themselves in them; to conceal their Parts, and preach the very worst *Stuff* they have (tho' this be contrary to the common Practice, I know) when their *Master* is at Church, intending to hear them; for fear of raising his Envy, and † destroying themselves by their own *Brightness*: He only must be allow'd to *shine* in the Pulpit, and it will be deem'd *Presumption*, upon pain of high Displeasure, to pretend to *rival* him *there*: Not amiss, to swear Fealty to his Opinions, both Religious and Political, to pay great Deference to his Judgment in all things; give him the ascen-

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dant

† Urit enim fulgore suo, qui prægravat Artes
Infra se positas. Her.

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dant in every Company, and the Privilege of prescribing to them, upon all Occasions: Not amiss, to sooth his Pride, and flatter his Folly, and *blow* up the * *Bubble* with an Imagination of his great † Learning and Ingenuity (if therein lies his *Foible*) never minding what an honest Tongue should say, but what the *Ears* of *Vanity* are most delighted with: Not amiss, to cringe, and fawn, and run, and fly, and stand at an awful Distance, and turn themselves into ten thousand || ridiculous Shapes, if *all* wil! but please, and keep him in good Humour.

These are Rules of excellent use in their kind, and yet I have known them all defeated, for want of one Instruction more, *viz.* a due Complaisance to such, as are the *sanctified Gossips*, and *religious Backbiters* of the Place. These are Vipers that we must care for, for fear of stinging, and worship, as some *Indians* do the Devil, that they may not hurt us.

I

* Importunus amat laudari? Donec Ohe! jam
Ad cælum manibus sublatis dixerit, urge; &
Crescentem tumidis infla Sermonibus Utrem.

Hor. Sat. Lib. 2. Sat. 5.

————— † Vincet longe plus
Expugnare Caput. Scribit mala carmina vecors?
Laudato. Ibid. || ——— Davus sis comicus, atque
Stes Capite obfuppo, multum similis metuenti. Ibid.

I have known one of these Godly Gossips,
such as the Poet describes,

† *Qui follement outree en sa serverite
Baptisant son Chagrim du Nom de Pieté,
Dans un cœur tons les jours murri du Sacrements
Mantient la Vanite, l'Orguevil, l'Entetement ;
Et dans Charite fausse, ou l'amour propre abonde
Croit que e'st aimer Dieu, que hair tout le Monde.*

that has persuaded a Minister to turn away his Curate, (after the solemnest Protestations of Friendship, and Fidelity to him) merely because she thought her self neglected, and that he paid her not Homage, forsooth, suitable to her Qualities. “ So necessary it is, to
“ make our court sometimes to the || She-Fa-
“ vourite, and to *plow with the Heifer*, if ever
“ we wou'd find out the Riddle of some Men's
“ Humour.

Thus, my Lord, you see what *vile things* we must become, if we think to continue in Curacies, that are held by no other Title than the bare Will of the Incumbent. We must be subject to every one's
Humour

† Boileau Sat. 10.
|| — Mulier si forte dolosa,
Libertusve senem delirum temperet, illis
Accedas socius: Laudes, lauderis ut absens.
Hor. Sat. L. 2.

Humour and Cognizance; for every one will then take an Authority over us: We must be Slaves, and Flatterers, to the Vanity, and wild Caprice of our Principals, for we have no other Hold of their Favour and Affection to us. We may be abus'd, and ill treated by others, for Injuries are invited very often by a known Inability to resist them: We may be dismiss'd for Trifles, for Surmises, for nothing, nay, for what deserves Commendation, our more abundant Labour and Affiduity; or we may sink into the Neglect and Indifference to a Charge, which we cannot think our own, because we may be driven out from it, before the next Sun goes down; and all this for want of Licences.

“ *But what should you do with a Licence?* says
 “ the Incumbent to the Curate, a little before
 “ the Day of *Visitation* comes, (for I know his
 “ Language upon that Head to a title) *what*
 “ *should you do with a Licence?* 'Tis but throwing
 “ away so much Money to a worthless Officer, that
 “ *inhances the Price of every thing, and makes us*
 “ *pay Sauce, whenever we come in his Clutches.*
 “ *The Bishop is old, and cannot live long: I too*
 “ *shall be removed from this, to a much better*
 “ *Living in a little while. I have great Friends,*
 “ *and vast Promises, and daily Assurances that*
 “ *make me not doubt it: You too have a Chance*

“ to

“ to be promoted to something better ; and if a-
 “ ny of these things happen, why, there’s an end
 “ of the Validity of your Licence, or so much
 “ more Money to be thrown away upon a Re-
 “ newal of it. What Occasion is there then for
 “ this Expence, when People agree, and mean to
 “ deal honourably with one another ? For my part,
 “ I can only say, that in me you are safe. The
 “ Parish justly likes you, and so do I, nor shall I
 “ ever think of another, till you find your Account
 “ in the Change. Our best way therefore, I think,
 “ considering all things, will be to go on, as we
 “ have hitherto done, not troubling our Heads
 “ with a thing that’s of no real Service, unless
 “ it be to create Charges, and raise uneasy Jea-
 “ lousies between us. For it looks like Distrust of
 “ the Minister’s Honour and Honesty, (and my
 “ Behaviour, you know, can give no such Um-
 “ brage) when a Curate is too solicitous for a
 “ Licence. I’ll take care therefore to be at the
 “ Visitation my self, and if your Name be called
 “ upon, answer for you, and make some excuse or
 “ other, to spare you the Trouble of going, and
 “ save you so much Money in your Pocket.

† *Mene salis placidi vultum, fluctusque quietos
 Ignorare jubes ? Mene huic confidere Monstro ?*

Three

The Miseries and Hardships

Three Weeks, perhaps, are scarce come and gone, till this Gentleman of strict Honour and Honesty, of Civility, and great Complaisance, with all his fair Words, and solemn Protestations, assumes another Air; picks a Quarrel with you, you know not for what; turns you out with as little Ceremony as Lord † Peter did his two Brothers; and for all his former Care and Frugality of your Money, (if he denies not to pay the Salary, which he knows you cannot make him) leaves you, at least, to spend the little Substance you have, in the wide World, for want of his Commendatory-Letter to another Place. — *mene huic confidere Monstro?*

Long may your Lordship live, and see many happy Days, to reform these Abuses in the Church, and vindicate your own Honour from all injurious Imputations; for it is a Slander and Reproach that falls ultimately upon you, when Men shall dare to say, that any of your Officers take *exorbitant Fees*, and that a large Sum must be paid for a Licence, which the Books, we call our Directories, tell us, || *ought to be dispatch'd gratis*, and (except for the Stamps, I suppose) *without demanding any Money* :

† Vid. *Tale of a Tub*.

|| Vid. *The Clergyman's Vade mecum*. p. 51.

Money: And a Derogation to the Episcopal Power, we conceive it is, to pretend, that the Force of a Licence, *under the Hand and Seal* of a Bishop, dies with him, or upon the Change of an Incumbent; when all his other Actions are authoritative, and stand good after his Decease.

We know however the Falshood of this Suggestion from the last recited Canon, for the * *exhibiting of all Faculties at the first Visitation after the Bishop's Accession to his Diocess*: Nor should we grudge any Money (cost they what they will) provided we could surmount other Difficulties as easily, and evade their many *Contrivances* to detain us from them.

1. How long a time may be requisite for the *Probation* of a Curate, before he be thought *warrantable* for a Licence I cannot tell, my Lord; but were I allowed to guess, I should think a Month or two enough, in all Conscience, to give the Parish a Specimen of his Diligence, and Dexterity to serve them. I wish however, that there were some certain Term stated; because, I can easily fancy to my self the Uneasiness of a long Probation, and have known some, that, after a *small Course*

* Vid. Can. 137.

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Course of two or three Years Tryal of this kind, have been dismiss'd at last for a pretended *Insufficiency*.

2. What Obligations a Licence lays upon the Minister, to maintain his Curate, in case of Poverty, or Super-annuation, I know not. The Bishop of *Worcester* takes notice from *Lyndwood*, † that those, who give Titles to others, as their Assistants, or Curates, are bound to maintain them, if they want. They are bound indeed, in point of Conscience, when the other have expended the Years of their Strength in their Service, to see that they want not, in the Winter of old Age; but I am appriz'd of no human Law that can compel them to it, nor can I perceive, in the present Form of Licences, the least Clause, or Hint, or Tendency that way. And yet *this* has been urg'd in Excuse for denying *Nominations*, and modest Men have declin'd their Pretensions to them, for fear of seeming to entail a future Charge upon the Incumbent, from a Shame of being thought liable to Poverty, and thereby burthensome to him; and have rather chose to stand to his Courtesy, than bring him under any uneasy Obligation; tho' they themselves were the first that liv'd to rue it.

3. But

† Vid. *Duties and Rights of Par. Cler.* p. 131.

3. But of all the *Stratagems* to prevent the obtaining of Licences, commend me to that of entring *Caveats* against one another's Curates; a *Project* of vast *Contrivance*, and worthy the *renowned Head* that first invented it. By this means, 'tis easy to see, that if there be but *Confederacy* enough among the Incumbents, and *Corruption* enough in the Officer that receives them, the whole *Body* of Curates may be *demolished* at once. "Tis but
 " changing Hands, my *caveating* yours,
 " and your *caveating* my Curate, and then a
 " *Fig* for the Canons, that require them to
 " be *licenc'd Preachers*.

I have such a Dread, my Lord, of a Bishop's Censure and Displeasure, such a Commiseration for him that lies under any causeless Suspicions, and such a Detestation of the Man that unjustly occasions them, that I cannot forbear saying, — too great Caution can hardly be us'd, how we receive an *Accusation against a Brother*; and that some Reasons at least ought to be exhibited along with the Caveat before we admit such a *Blot* upon his Reputation, and such a Step to his future Preferment. Things of this Nature ought not to be jested with: Nor may any Secretary wantonly stigmatize a Clergyman's Character, and without the Bishop's

shop's Cognizance and Approbation, lay an Imbargo upon him (as we may justly call it;) when the angry Resentment, or crafty Contrivance of any Man *whatever* comes to request it of him. Some Suspicion should be had (for Conscience is not always the Motive) of the Temper and Design of the Party informing; some Provision made (for the Accused is not always Guilty) for the necessary Vindication of the Party inform'd against; and no general Suggestion should be admitted, much less suffered to lie dormant against any Man, without specifying his Crimes in a proper Declaration.

Acts xxv. 'Tis not the Manner of the Romans, says the

16. Governor Festus, to deliver any Man to die, before he, which is accused, have the Accusers Face to Face, and have Licence to answer for himself, concerning the Crime laid against him: And a Presumption, St. Paul makes it, of his Innocence, before the Governor Felix, that the proper Evidences, and such as had given Information against him we may suppose, had

Acts xxiv. chose to be absent; They cannot prove the
16. things whereof they accuse me, says he, for if they could, they ought to be here before thee, and object, if they had ought against me.

I will not say, what Temptation we are under to wish the old Roman Government
reviv'd

reviv'd among us, that no Man may be accus'd, or censur'd, or condemn'd without a fair Hearing; but I cannot but lament our want of true *Roman* Courage, and the *sordid Pusillanimity*, which a continued Oppression has subjected us to, when we suffer such Usage to pass upon us tamely, and without any Manner of Resentment. The Man that lies under a *Caveat*, lies under (as I apprehend the thing) the Frowns and Displeasure of his Bishop, under a Note of some Infamy among his Brethren, under the Condition of his good Behaviour to keep the *little Matter* he has, and under an utter Incapacity to accept of any thing better; for come never so many Offers, and *Presentations*, the poor Creature is performing his *Quarentine*, and must not stir.

But in the Name of God, my Brethren, how long shall we brook all this? And when at last shall we see a Period put to our Patience, and their ill Treatment of us? Our Patience provokes their ill Treatment of us, and perhaps it might be some Restraint upon them, but barely to see that we had once the Courage to remonstrate. Remonstrances of a proper kind, tho' they may not relieve our Sufferings, will however ease our Consciences, and stand Monuments of their Oppression,

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and *Protestations* against our Wrongs. In the Name of God I call upon you again, my Brethren and Companions in Tribulation, awake from this Lethargy, and consider a little, what it is you can promise yourselves from such unreasonable Tameness. Those, that call themselves your Masters, have no Authority over you, nor any claim to your Obedience; but what your Sloth, and Indolence, your visionary Fears, and long-continued Passiveness has given them. They found their Dominion upon your Cowardice, and make a Property of you, because you have not Hearts to resist.

Could you mollify their Tempers by Compliance, or cause them to *deviate* a little into better Usage of you by Subserviency, much might be said for your Behaviour; but 'tis a wise Maxim of the Polititian, and too much verified in your Case; *inaximo si gli huomini, credendo con la humilita a vincere la Superbia.* — Ask but your own Experience, what have you got by all your Servility, and abject Carriage? Have they not despis'd you the more, the more you seem'd to reverence them? Have they not grown haughty upon your Submissions, and oblig'd you to keep a greater Distance, in Proportion as they saw your Fears increas'd their Awfulness? Have

Have they, in the mean while, either lessened your Labour, or increased your Salaries, or ascertained your Tenure of them? *They bind heavy Burthens, and grievous to be born, Mat. and lay them on your Shoulders; but they themselves will not move them, (except in the light Work of preaching now and then) with one of their Fingers.* They join Church to Church, and Parish to Parish, and accumulate to themselves large Revenues, in different Diocesses, you must be fob'd off with just what they please, and your Wages beat down to the *uttermost Farthing.* They take care to qualify themselves according to Law, and to omit nothing that may secure their Title to their Preferments; you must be left to hold your *All* at their Mercy, and not so much as a Licence from a Bishop allow'd you, for fear of some *Tack* or Incumbrance upon them.

All the *Fastnesses* you had against them they have pre-occupied, and by one Contrivance or another, broke down the Fences of the Laws: Nay, the Laws which were designed for your Benefit, they have perverted to a contrary Purpose, and turn'd your own Artillery upon you: *Remember this therefore, Isa. xlvii. and shew your selves Men: for otherwise, you cannot be Men.* While you court Slavery, and desire to live in Subjection to those,

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that have no Right to rule over you; while you court Dependence, and are willing to be in other Men's Power for a Maintenance, which with a little Pains you may secure to your selves, against all Contingences; while you court Danger, and chuse the Risque of being undone, by the Malice, or Madness of a fickle Temper, when you have it in hand to fortify your selves against it; while, with Solomon's Sot, you lie down, as it Pro.xxiii. were, *in the midst of the Sea, and upon the top of* 34, 35. *a Mast: they have stricken us, saying to your selves, and we were not sick; they have beaten us, and we felt it not: When shall we awake? we will seek it yet again;* you quite un-man your selves, and lose for that time, some of the first Essentials of Humanity, Caution, and Thought, and Self-Preservation.

The only way then to recover *this*, and re-gain the Possession of what you have lost, is to stand to your Privileges, and make your Basis of this Resolution, "*Never to serve in the Capacity of Curates, without a proper Faculty, and Designation from the Bishop.*" Combine but in this Design, and they must come up to your Terms. You have their Idleness, as well as Multiplicity of Livings, for your Security, that they cannot do without you. You have the Statutes of the Land,

as

as well as Constitutions of the Church, obliging you to insist upon it. You have the Laws of Mercy, and Justice to you, and yours, as well as Dictates of common Prudence, calling upon you, not to give up a Point, whereon the *whole* depends; and, what is more affecting still, you have the Prospect of too many Shipwracks before your Eyes, ever to trust to the Incantation of fair Promises, that endanger your Safety. As therefore you tender your own Preservation, the Quiet of your Consciences, and the Welfare of your Families; and are desirous to approve your Subjection to the Government, and canonical Obedience to your Bishop, trust Providence, rather than serve in any illegal and unworthy Manner. At the worst, you have Hands to labour with, as well as had *St. Paul*, and the primitive Christians. There is no Crime in following secular Employments, so long as you cannot be admitted to officiate in *your own*, without the Violation of many Laws, both Civil and Ecclesiastical: Nor will any Bishop be so severe, as to put in Execution such Canons, as were only design'd for wilful Apostates, against those, who, by Conscience, or Indigence, are compell'd to relinquish their Vocation. But however this happen, learn but of the great Exemplar of

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Suffering in your Profession, this one momentous Lesson, “ *In whatsoever State you are,*
 Phil. iv. “ *therewith to be contented; to know how to be*
 12. “ *abased, and how to abound; everywhere, and*
 “ *in all things, to be instructed, both to be full,*
 “ *and to be hungry; both to abound, and to suffer*
 “ *need; and then, you may sing with a*
 Thorn at your Breasts, and bid Defiance to the Spight of ill Fortune.

This Advice, I thought convenient, to leave with my Brethen, considering their unhappy Circumstances, before I proceeded with your Lordship, to the fourth, and last thing, we think we have a Right to, IV. But shall have less Reason to enlarge upon, *viz.* Justice, and Equity, when we appeal, upon any *Point of Grievance*, to our *Spiritual Governors*; and Mercy, and Lenity, when at any time we have offended.

I am none of those, my Lord, that shall ever think I speak unwarrantably, when I call the Bishops of our Church, the *Rulers* and *Governors* of it; when I declare, that their Order and Authority is of *Divine*, and *Apostolick* Institution; when I extend their Inspection to the greatest of the Laity, as well as the meanest of the Clergy; and endeavour to persuade Men, that neither the Power of the Magistrate, nor the Liberty of the People is
 any

any way infringed by the Exercise of that Authority, which is given them for *Edification*, and not for *Destruction*; that they call themselves, for this * Reason, “ *Ministers*, not *Magistrates*, “ and their Rule, *Canons*, not *Laws*; and that “ they claim not *Dominion*, but *Direction*; and “ *spiritual Discipline*, not coercive *Jurisdiction*.” So far am I from thinking that there is any thing comparable in a *Presbyterian Parity*, that I readily give in to St. Cyprian’s † Sentiment, viz. ‘ that as a Flock cannot be ‘ fed without a Shepherd, nor a Ship steer’d ‘ without a Pilot, nor a Multitude kept in or- ‘ der without a Governor; so neither can a Church be manag’d, and preserved in due Regularity, without the Care, and Superintendency of a Bishop.

For this Reason, no doubt it is, that St. Paul Tit. i. 5, reminds Titus, whom he had left in Crete for ^{Sc.} that Purpose, to ordain Elders, i. e. Bishops, in every City; and gives him so many Rules about the Choice of such Persons, as were fit to serve in that Order: And for the same Reason, I suppose, it is, that the || Council

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of

* Vid. Dr. Hare’s Visit. Sermon, p. 45.

† Ut pascendo Gregi Pastor, ut Gubernando Navi Gubernator, ut Plebi regendo Rector redderetur. Cypri. Ep. 58.

|| Conc. Chal. Can. 25.

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of *Chalcedon* calls upon *Metropolitans*, not to defer the Ordination of Bishops above three Months, except some invincible Necessity require a longer Stay, upon pain of canonical Censures. The Office indeed was thought so essential to the well-being of the Church, and the Presidence of a pious and prudent Person, invested with all proper Authority, so necessary to *set things in order*, and to preserve Peace and Unanimity among the Clergy; that it was always accounted a great Grievance, and very bitterly complained against, when *Sees* were kept vacant, beyond the ordinary Limitation of time. For tho' there was all along such an Officer, as we † call the Guardian of the Spiritualities in the Vacancy of the *See*, yet his Office being only *pro hac vice*, and his Avocations elsewhere; there was not supposed in him either that Care, or Concern for the Diocess, as might be expected from a *stated* Bishop; and therefore the People were never satisfied with his Administration, till they got one.

... Cou'd it be suppos'd indeed, my Lord, that all those, who are bound to tell others their
Duties,

† The African Code calls him Intercessor; and orders him to provide a Bishop for the vacant See within a Year; or otherwise, to be turn'd out of his Office, and another placed in it.

Duties, would certainly *do* * their own ; there would be less need of any such Office in the Church, as that of Bishops, who are to inspect, and govern, to visit and reform those that *they* set over others : Or cou'd it be imagined, that a good Agreement would always continue between Men of the same Calling, and Fraternity ; there wou'd be no Occasion for that troublesome part of the Episcopal Office, the hearing, and determining such Differences, as happen among us. But since there will be Failings too frequent among the Clergy, too great a Neglect in some, and too great Disorder in others ; even St. † *Jerome* observes, that there is a Necessity of a superior Order to Presbyters in the Church of God, *ad quem omnis Ecclesie Cura pertineret* ; And since *it is impossible but that Offences should come* (for a *religious Habit* gives no *Sanctity*, nor is it any *Amulet* against Pride, Envy, and Covetousness, those angry Passions that sow the Seeds of Contention among us) there is a farther Necessity for this *Person of superior Order*, to take upon him the Decision of Controversies, and Suppression of such Quarrels, as arise among the Sons of the Church, *co-equal*
in

* *Duties and Rights of Par. Cler.* p. 5.

† *Hier. Comment. ad Titum. Epis. ad Evagr.*

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in themselves, but *subordinate* to him; for that very purpose. ‘ On *this*, in a great Measure (as the same Father * notes) the Peace and Safety of the Church depends; but take away *this*, and all runs to Ruin and Confusion.

What I have to observe to your Lordship then, upon this Subject, is,

1. The *Interposition* of Bishops, in Relation to Controversies that may happen among their Clergy? 2. The Clergies Right, even in the meanest of them, to *appeal*, and expect *Justice*, and *Impartiality* from them; together with, 3. The Unreasonableness of some Prejudices, that may possibly hinder, and obstruct it.

I. ‘ So great was the Character, and Reputation of the † primitive Bishops, and such the entire Confidence Men generally repos’d in them for their Integrity and Justice, that they were commonly appeal’d to, even by the Laity, as the best Arbitrators of Differences, and the most impartial Judges of the common Disputes, that happened among them. *Sidonius Apollinaris* often refers to this Custom. *Sinesius* calls it part of his own Episcopal Function: And *Possidonius*, in his

* Adver. Luciferian.

† *Bingham's Orig. Eccl. V. I. p. 112.*

‘ his Life of St. *Austin*, tells us, that he often spent all his Morning, and sometimes the whole Day fasting, and hearing Causes; which, tho’ it was a great Fatigue to him, he was the rather willing to bear, because it gave him frequent Opportunities of instilling the Principles of Truth and Virtue into the Minds of those, that resorted to him.’ And if so much Time and Pains was expended in adjusting Controversies between the Laity, a Business that Bishops had no express Call and Command upon them to do from Scripture, there is no Room to doubt, but that, in Differences which happened among the Clergy, their Zeal, and Diligence was much greater, not only to determine them, before they went to any considerable length, but to suppress them in their very first beginning.

St. *Paul* seems a little warm, and resents it, as an Injury done to the Wisdom, and Integrity of their spiritual Rulers, when he expostulates with the *Corinthians* in this manner, *Dare any of you, having a Matter against another, go to Law before the Unjust, and not before the Saints? Know ye not that the Saints shall judge the World? Know ye not that we shall judge Angels? How much more things that pertain to this Life. Is it so, that there is not a wise Man among*

1 Cor. vi.
1, &c.

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among you? Not one, that shall be able to judge between his Brethren? But Brother goeth to Law against Brother, and that before Unbelievers. Whereupon he gives this Direction, If then ye have Judgments of things pertaining to this Life, set them to judge, who are least esteemed in the Church. This I conceive to be spoke by way of Irony, as if the Business of arbitrating between Man and Man, upon any point of worldly Difference, were a Matter of such Facility, that a Person of the meanest Capacity in the Church, was sufficient enough to do it; and therefore he adds, *I speak this to shame you.* But * others have taken the Word ἐξουσιάζουσιν in a quite different Sense to the common Version, for *Persons best qualified by their Wisdom and Authority to take upon them to be Judges, and to end Controversies among the Brethren; and such, questionless, were Bishops.* However this be, 'tis certain, that in the subsequent Ages of the Church, many † Canons were founded upon this very Passage, prohibiting Clergymen, upon peril of Deposition, to appeal to any temporal Judicature, or even to a general Council, before they had

* *Lightfoot.* and *Lud de Dieu* in 1 Cor. 64.
 † *Con. Const. Can. 6. Cod. Can. Afr. Can. 104.*

had first applied to their Diocesan. ‘ If any
‘ Clergyman have a Controversy with ano-
‘ ther, let him not leave his own Bishop, says
‘ a † *Chalcedonian* Canon, and make Applica-
‘ tion to secular Judicatures ; but first, lay o-
‘ pen his Cause before his own Bishop, or
‘ let it be tried by Referees, chosen by each
‘ Party, with the Consent of the Bishop, and
‘ let him, that does otherwise, be liable to a
‘ *Canonical Censure*.

Whether our *Ecclesiastical Courts*, as they are now managed altogether by Lay-Officers, may not properly be called *secular Judicatures* ; whether a Clergyman is not expressly forbid by this Canon, as well as the above-cited Scripture, to implead his Brother, upon any Matter of Difference, in *these Courts* ; and consequently, whether such an Impleadance may not be called both a Violation of God’s Commands, and a Breach of his Canonical Obedience to his Bishop, are Questions, that I would leave with some of my *litigious Brethren* to consider. To me it seems evident, that the Apostle places the whole Distinction in *Persons*, and not in *Causes* ; and therefore he opposes *the Saints* to *the Unjust*, and *Unbelievers* : By Parity of Reason, I cannot but think,
that

† Can. 9.

that the Persons who make up such a Court, as a Clergyman may, with a safe Conscience, in Cases of private Discord with a Brother, apply to, must be *Ecclesiasticks* themselves (and such were all Chancellors, and other chief Officials, before *Henry* the VIIIth's Time) unless we can suppose, that the Bishop's Seal and Commission can alter both the Quality of Men, and the Nature of things.

But be that as it will, this cannot but appear to your Lordship, that the Arbitration of Differences between contending Clergymen, was always part of the Episcopal Function, personally executed, and referred to no Deputy whatever. *St. Paul*, when he instructs

1 Tim. iii. *Timothy how to behave himself in the Church of*

15. *God*, orders him not to appoint an honest and discreet Official, to take from him the Burthen of a troublesome Office, when his *Ephesian* Clergy should come to complain against

1 Tim. v. one another; but himself to receive the Ac-

19, 20. *cusations against Elders*; himself to proceed judicially before two or three Witnesses, and himself (if Occasion were) to give them publick Rebuke, or pronounce the Sentence of *Excommunication*. ' This, says † *Bishop Bedel* in his Defence, is one of the most essential Parts
' of

† Vid. *his Life*, p. 92.

‘ of a Bishop’s Duty. He can no more de-
‘ legate this Power to a Layman, than he can
‘ delegate a Power to baptize or ordain;
‘ since Excommunication, and other Censures
‘ are a suspending the Rights of Baptism,
‘ and *Orders*: And therefore the judging of
‘ these things can belong only to *him*, that
‘ had the Power to give them; and the de-
‘ legating that Power to another, is a thing
‘ null in it self.

How it is I cannot tell, but the † Lord
Bacon seems somewhat malevolent in his Con-
jecture, ‘ that Bishops, when they gave them-
‘ selves too much to the Glory of the World,
‘ and became Grandees to Kingdoms, and
‘ great Councillors to Princes, did then de-
‘ legate their proper Jurisdiction, as a thing
‘ of too inferior a Nature for their Great-
‘ nefs.’ The Bishops of our Church, who
have been as liberal as any in their Concessi-
ons of this kind, have nevertheless reserv’d
to themselves this Branch of their ancient Au-
thority, the Power of || pronouncing the Sen-
tence of Deprivation, or Deposition against
their irregular Clergy, but I find no Provision
made

† Vid. *Considerations for the better Establishment of
the Church of England*, p. 10.

|| Vid. Can. 122.

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made, in the Canon, for the Bishop's hearing the Cause before he pronounces Sentence, (tho' one should think *that* were reasonable) on the contrary, the *Chancellor*, or any other Officer of *fit Jurisdiction*, is to expedite the Cause by *Processes*, and other *Proceedings*; and when all *Matters* were ready for *Sentence*, the Cause tried, and the poor Man (if he is a poor Man indeed) certainly found guilty; the Bishop is brought in, with his proper Complement of *Prebendaries*, or grave *Ministers*, to be the *Finisher* of the Law, and pronounce Sentence, in a Matter he knows nothing of, but merely by *hear-say*: A Power, I think, that may as well be given up, with the rest; to let those, who have the *Honour* and *Privilege* of *trying*, have, along with it, the *harsher* and *more invidious* Work of *Sentencing* likewise.

When shall we see an End, my Lord, put to these Indignities, that are offered to your sacred Order, and the Bishops of this Land re-assuming such a Measure of their Power, as is necessary to the *edifying* and *good governing* of the Church? That their Enemies may not have it to reproach them with, that they *profess* one thing, and *mean* another, when they promise, at their Consecration, † to

maintain

† Vid. *Consecrat. Offic.*

maintain and set forward, as much as in them lies, Quietness, Love, and Peace, and themselves to correct and punish, according to such Authority, as they have by God's Word, and the Ordinances of this Realm; that the People may not be said to mock God, when they implore of him, at the same time, to give to all Bishops, the Pastors of his Church, that they may duly minister Godly Discipline, and use the Authority given them, not to Destruction, but to Salvation; and that we our selves likewise may not lose our Right of appealing, and the gracious Resource we promise our selves in the Bosom of our Bishop, by being referred to a merciless Court, and Brother sent to Law against a Brother, and that before Extortioners.

2. The Erastians, my Lord, have disputed the Sense of a Passage with us, wherein both the Bishop's Right to arbitrate, and our Directions to appeal, are equally comprized. The Words are these, *If thy Brother shall trespass against thee, go, and tell him his Fault between thee and him alone: If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy Brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the Mouth of two or three Witnesses every Word may be established: And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church: But if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee*

Mat.
xviii. 15
¶c.

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as an heathen Man, and Publican. The whole Contest arises from the Ambiguity of the Words *Brother*, and *Church*; by the former, they wou'd have us understand *any common Christian*, and by the latter, the *People in general*; whom they hereupon conclude to be authorized Judges in all Church-Disputes. The Context however determines the Sense; and the Occasion, upon which the Words were spoken, makes it appear, that *the Brother* signifies here none but the Apostles, and the Church, no other than the whole Synod or Assembly of them, met together, in a judiciary Manner, to determine Controversies. To this Purpose we may observe, that when our Saviour first began this Discourse, St. Mark tells us, that *he called the twelve unto him*. He called the twelve unto him, because there had lately been a warm Dispute among them upon the Point of Precedency in his Kingdom; and therefore he teaches them Humility first, by the Example of a little Child, and then directs them to a proper Remedy, when, at any time, such Differences should chance to arise, *viz.* a double Admonition first, and then an Appeal to the Church: *to the Church, i. e.* to the whole College of Apostles, or as many as could be assembled on such an Occasion; for nothing can be less probable, than

Mark ix.

35.

than that the *People* were to arbitrate Differences between the Apostles. The Apostles indeed were to preserve Peace among them, and were therefore impower'd to reprove, censure, and eject out of the Church, as they saw it requisite; but that the People were to sit Judges upon the *commissioned* Officers of *Jesus Christ*, and who, in the very next Verse, had the Power of the Keys entrusted with them, Mat. xviii. 18. is a little too gross.

The Truth is, the whole Passage related *then* to the Apostles only; but has *since* been made a general Rule for the Clergy, in like Circumstances, at all Times, to follow. The Apostles were separately all upon the same Level. Our Saviour does not allow so much as his own Relations to claim any Pre-eminence. When therefore any Difference should arise among them, he orders that such, as were not Parties in the Dispute, should form an Assembly, to arbitrate between their Brethren, and that their Decision should be authoritative. Bishops, in their Episcopal Capacity, are all co-ordinate, and equal. When therefore any Contention happened among them, the antient Manner was, to refer it to a Synod, (if Methods of Accommodation prov'd ineffectual) and their Determination was decisive. Presbyters, in their sacerdotal Ca-

capacity, are not inferior to one another. And therefore when Offences come, and a Presumption of Injuries perhaps on both sides attending them; the Complaint *lies* to the Bishop, and he, with a set Number of other Presbyters, makes up the Consistory, that hears and determines the whole Matter: So that, *the Church*, to an Apostle, was the College of Apostles; to a Bishop, is a Synod; and to a Presbyter or other inferior, his particular Bishop, with some *assisting Clerks*.

If this, my Lord, be the true Intendment of the Text, (as I conceive it may, and as the Practice of the primitive Church has best expounded it) not only our Right of *appealing* to the Bishop *only*, but the very Prescript Form, and Method of our proceeding therein, is of divine Institution and Appointment; and (whatever Alienation others have made of *theirs*) we must not, we dare not, go against it.

What Right we have to expect *Justice* and *Impartiality*, when we thus appeal, is founded upon one of the most *awful* Passages that ever I read in my Life. *St. Paul*, as I said before, after he had instructed *Timothy* how he was to *behave* to his *Clergy*, both in promoting *Merit*, and chastising *Guilt*; above all, with what *Caution* and *Circumspection* he

was

was to proceed against an *Elder*, that had an Accusation lodg'd against him, gives him this tremendous Charge: *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect Angels, that thou observe these things, without preferring one before another, or, as it is better render'd, without Prejudice, doing nothing by Partiality.* 1 Tim. v. 21.

Would not a Comment impair the Force and Energy of the Words, I could easily fancy to my self a great Apostle of the Gentiles, speaking to his new-appointed Bishop, in some such Strain as this. 'I, under God, have set thee over the Church of *Ephesus*, and committed to thy Care a large Province. Hereby thy Station in Life is raised, and the Weight of thy Charge vastly increased. Respect and Reverence attends thy Person, Rewards and Punishments, Censures, and Encouragements, are at thy Disposal, and an entire Submission waits on thy Decrees: For in making thee a Bishop, I have made thee a *Judge* likewise over thy Brethren, a Guardian of their Rights, and an Arbitrator of their Differences. Their Differences must come before thee; and in determining them, great Justice and Impartiality must be observed. Thou *must not countenance a poor Man in his Cause*, much less the Opulent and Great. Thou must guard therefore

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' therefore the Avenues of thy Soul, and
 ' fortify thy self against *Prepossession*, that
 ' those of an higher Degree may not run
 ' away with thy Esteem, those of a lower
 ' fall under thy Contempt: For he that
 ' * would be just, must harden himself against all
 ' the Impressions of Interest, tho' in that he may
 ' seem imprudent; against all the Impressions of
 ' Affection, tho' in that he may seem ill-natur'd;
 ' against all the Impressions of Benefits, tho' in that
 ' he may seem ingrateful; nay, against all the
 ' Impressions of vulgar Pity, tho' in that he may
 ' seem hard-hearted: He must render himself
 ' disengag'd from all the World, and from him-
 ' self above all; because Self undoubtedly is the
 ' greatest *Byass* to Partiality. The Office of a
 ' Bishop then, thou seest, not only advan-
 ' ces, but tries likewise, and indicates a Man.
 ' Thy Sphere is conspicuous, and thy Acti-
 ' ons are, as it were, upon a publick Thea-
 ' tre, where not only Men, but God, and
 ' Christ, and Angels are Spectators. Men
 ' may be impos'd upon by a specious Pretence
 ' of Zeal and Reformation, while Passion and
 ' Resentment lies at the Bottom of the Sen-
 ' tence! but to the Eye of him with whom thou
 ' hast

* Vid. Young's Serm. Vol. I. p. 204. of the Origin of human Judicature.

' *hast to do*, and to whom thy self must give
 ' Account, all the Secrets of thy Heart, and
 ' hidden Springs, by which thy Judgment
 ' moves, are open and laid bare. When
 ' therefore the Cause of thy Brethren comes
 ' to be heard, call to mind his awful In-
 ' spection, and *take great heed what thou dost*, 2 Chron.
 ' *for thou judgest not for Men, but for the Lord.* xix. 6.
 ' Above all, let no Man's Greatness influence
 ' thy Fear, no Man's Opulency bait thy
 ' Desires, no Man's Insinuations win upon thy
 ' Affection, to determine the Sentence before
 ' thou hast heard the Cause, lest these great
 ' Spectators of thy Conduct be affronted, God
 ' provoked, and Christ aggrieved, and An-
 ' gels asham'd at thy Prevarication. 'Twill
 ' not be long before this transitory Scene
 ' must shift, and all the *Insignia* of thy Of-
 ' fice, and Characters of thy Power vanish,
 ' and be laid in the Dust: Not long before
 ' all Distinctions must be buried, and Priest
 ' and Prelate, Curate and Incumbent promif-
 ' cuously appear together before another-
 ' guise Tribunal, the tremendous *Judgment-*
 ' *Seat of Christ*. Think therefore on that aw-
 ' ful Place, to make it an Emblem of thy
 ' Consistory; and as thou hopest *there* to
 ' see the Face of God in Mercy, to have
 ' the Sentence of Christ, and Testimony of

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' Angels in thy Favour, *accept no Man's Per-*
 ' *son* in Bar of Justice, nor do any thing of
 ' that Nature thro' Prejudice or Partiality :
 ' For 'tis not to be express'd, nor now con-
 ' ceived, O *Timothy*, what Confusion must
 ' cover thy Face, what Indignation must arise
 ' in thy Judge, what Consternation in the
 ' whole Assembly, when thou shalt be point-
 ' ed out for an Object of Scorn and Con-
 ' tempt, and the whole intelligent Creation
 ' given to understand, that a Bishop, and
 ' who himself was stil'd an Angel too ; a Bi-
 ' shop of the Church of *Ephesus*, that I
 ' planted and established so happily ; nay,
 ' a Bishop that derived not only his Pow-
 ' er from God, but his Ordination and In-
 ' structions from me, *who am less than the*
 ' *least of the Apostles, but have laboured*
 ' *more abundantly than any, did, thro' the*
 ' *Instigations of the great Men, or the Infi-*
 ' *nuations of some Flatterers, pervert Judg-*
 ' *ment, and, for all his Superiority of Parts*
 Mil.vi. 8. ' *and Preferments, forget to do Justice, and*
 ' *to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with his*
 ' *God.*

* ' *Qui Demissi in obscuro Vitam agunt, si quid*
 ' *Iracundia deliquere, pauci sciunt : Fama ac*
 ' *Fortuna*

Fortuna eorum pares sunt. Qui magno Imperio pradi in Excelso cetatem agunt, eorum facta cuncti Mortales novere. Ita in maxima Fortuna minima Licentia est; neque Studere, neque odisse, sed minime irasci decet; Quae apud alios Iracundia dicitur, ea in imperio Superbia, & Crudelitas appellatur. 'Tis for very good Reason therefore, that St. Paul requires of such, as are to be promoted to the high Station of Bishops, that they be no Strikers, no Brawlers, not unruly, not self-will'd, not soon angry; but meek, and patient, and gentle unto all Men: Because (next to a Bribe) I know of nothing that blinds the Eyes of the Wise, and perverts the Words of the Righteous, as does Passion, and an angry Resentment of some presum'd Affront. It magnifies every little Fault, and lessens every commendable Quality: It shuts the Ears against Complaints, hardens the Heart, and raises the Hand, and redoubles the Force of the Blow. Much Caution therefore should be used by those, who have the spiritual Sword committed to their keeping, how they draw it, and against whom they employ it. There's no throwing about Firebrands, Arrows, and Death, and then saying, Was I not in Sport? Nor can that Bishop ever be justified, that prostitutes his Power to his Passion, and makes the

1 Tim. iii.
 Tit. i.
 2 Tim. ii.
 24.
 Deu. xvi.
 19.
 Prov.
 xxvi. 18.

fearful

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fearful Sentence of Excommunication an Instrument to his private Revenge. ‘ His Advises,
 ‘ * says the above-cited Author, while he
 ‘ continues in this Temper, seem only Re-
 ‘ proaches; his Rebukes, Peevishness; and
 ‘ his Censures, Tyranny; like vitiated Oynt-
 ‘ ments, they have fum’d out all their heal-
 ‘ ing Qualities, and retain those only that
 ‘ fret and exasperate: And all the Terror
 ‘ implor’d from the secular Arm to enforce
 ‘ them, serve only to render both him, and
 ‘ them more contemptible.

2. I mention, my Lord, the common Causes of Prejudice and Partiality, just as they occur to my Thoughts, without any hidden or oblique Intention; and therefore when I say, that Suggestions of Sycophants, and false Insinuations of Domesticks do often mislead great Men, and are another Obstruction to Justice; I mean not to impute any such Weakness to my REVEREND FATHERS IN GOD;

1 Tim.iii. (for if any Man know not how to rule his own
 5. House, how shall he take care of the Church of God.) To them, and to every one of them, I hope, I may apply with Justice, what Pliny says in Commendation of the Emperor Trajan. ‘ *Plerique Principes, quum essent Civium Domini,*

Domini, Libertorum erant servi: Horum Con-
 filiis, horum Nutu regebantur: Per hos audie-
 bant, per hos loquebantur: Tu Libertis tuis
 summum quidem honorem, sed tanquam Libertis,
 habes; abundeque Sufficere his Credis, si probi
 & frugi existimentur. Scis enim precipuum esse
 Indicium non magni Principis, magnos Libertos.

What I would observe to your Lordship then,
 is something relating to the Practice of the
 antient Church, before Whispermers and Tale-
 bearers had any Encouragement in it; and
 what Caution was taken, and Tendernefs
 shewn to the sacerdotal Character, in Mat-
 ters of Information, even where there was
 ground for some Suspicion, and a reasonable
 Presumption of Guilt.

'Tis an excellent Law that, which we
 meet with in the Jewish Policy, and was the
 Foundation of many subsequent Statutes, and
 wise Decrees in the Christian State, both
 Civil and Ecclesiastical. *One Witness shall not*
rise up against a Man, for any Iniquity, or for
any Sin, in any Sin that he sinneth: At the
Mouth of two Witnesses, or at the Mouth of three
Witnesses shall the Matter be established. And
if a false Witness rise up against any Man, to te-
stify against him that which is wrong: Then both
the Men, between whom the Controversy is, shall
stand before the Lord, before the Priests, and the
Judges

Deu.
 xxix. 19,
 15, &c.

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Judges which shall be in those Days ; and the Judges shall make diligent Inquisition ; and behold if the Witness be a false Witness, and hath testified falsely against his Brother, then shalt thou do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his Brother, so shalt thou put the Evil away from among you ; and those which remain shall bear, and fear, and shall henceforth commit no more any such Evil among you.

'Twas with some Regard to this, that St. Paul, mentioning to the Corinthians their ²Cor.xii. manifold Disorders, the Envyings, the Wrathes, and Strifes, and Backbitings, and Whisperings, and Swellings, and Tumults, that were among them, prejudicates no Man, as the Cause and Original of them ; but refers all Decisions and Arbitrations, 'till his coming among them ; and then, when every one had been summoned personally, and admitted to an im- ¹Cor.xiii. partial Hearing ; when in the Mouth of two ^{42.} or three Witnesses, as he tells them, every Word should be established ; those that were found guilty, he threatens, to use the Apostolick Rod against, and that he would not spare.

¹Tim. v. ^{19.} Against an Elder receive not an Accusation, but before two or three Witnesses, is his Injunction to Timothy, and an implicit Exclusion from every Bishop's Presence, (one would take it to be) of all backbiting, and whispering Sy-cophants,

cophants, that, under Pretence of *acquainting him with the State and Condition of his Clergy*, come with their *clancular Suggestions*, and little scandalous Informations against their Brethren, to curry Favour, and corrupt his Judgment and good Opinion of them.

Much care therefore was taken, in ancient Times, to enquire into the Characters of such, as were officious this way, before they were admitted to give Information, and strict Obligations laid upon them (if they would be so hardy as to *accuse*) to make good their Allegations. The Council of * *Chalcedon* decrees, *that Clergymen or Lay-men be not admitted promiscuously, and without Enquiry, to accuse other Clergymen, till their own Reputation has been examined.* If the Accusation was of a † private and personal Nature, it was immediately dismiss'd; but if of such a Nature as was to be admitted, the Informer was nevertheless concerned to look to his Proofs: For if he was ‖ absent on the Day appointed for the Hearing, his Accusation was deemed slanderous, and himself removed from the Communion for it: If he could

not

* Vid. Can. 21.

† Conc. Const. Can. 6.

‖ Vid. Afric. Cod. Can. 19.

not support his Articles, but fail'd in point of Proof, the * Laws of Retaliation took hold upon him, and the same Penalty was inflicted on him, that he thought to have brought upon his Brother, *that others which remain might bear, and fear, and commit no more such Villainy.*

The Truth is, my Lord, there are such hasty and vindictive Spirits among us, such a Difference in Humours and Complexions, such a Repugnancy in Opinions and Principles, such an interfering of Interests, such scrambling for Preferments, such Ambition of Applause, such Impatience of Rivals, and such an Emulation to rise in the Favour and good Esteem of those, we have marked out for Patrons; that the Freedom we publicly take with one another's Characters, is become the good Man's Sorrow, and the Scoffer's Jest: And hard would our Fate be, if our Actions bore not *elsewhere* a better Construction (I speak it with Concern, my Lord) than in the Mouth of a Brother. The Advice therefore, that the Son of *Syrach* gives a Friend, may not be unnecessary *at present* for a Bishop, to prevent Imposition, and too hasty Conclusions: *Admonish a Clergy-*

MAN,

Ecclus.
xix. 13,
&c.

* Conc. Const. Can. 6.

man, it may be he hath not done it: And if he have done it, that he do it no more. Admonish a Clergyman, it may be he hath not said it: and if he have, that he speak it not again. Admonish a Clergyman, for many times it is a Slander, and believe not every Tale.

3. This wise Son of Syrach, my Lord, has, in another Place, a Remark, which will help us to a fresh Cause of Prejudice, and another great Hindrance to Justice and Impartiality; and that is, the Meanness and poor Condition of the Appellant. *As a wild* Ecclus
Ass is the Lyon's Prey in the Wilderiness, so the xiii. 19,
Rich eat up the Poor. This he lays down for a general Proposition: And then, upon Complaint of Oppression or Wrong, his Observation is, that *when a rich Man speak, tho' he speak things not to be spoken, Men justify him; nay, every one holdeth his Tongue, in deep Attention to his Plea, and Admiration of his Eloquence; and look what he says they extol to the Clouds. But if the poor Man speak, they say, What Fellow is this? Tho' he speak wisely, he can have no place, and if he stumbles in the Vindication of himself, every one will help to overthrow him.* Whereupon he concludes, *that Riches are good unto him that has no Sin, or rather, he that has Riches, is reputed to have no Sin; and Poverty is evil, and it self alone*
 accounted

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accounted a Sin, in the Mouth of the Ungodly. *Questa e ordinaria* Miseria d'un Infelice, il non havere chi creda le sue Sciagure, per essergli apprestate della Mano d'un Grand, nel quale se stima impossibile l'iniquita.*

Bishops however are Persons too wise, to be carried away with the vulgar Opinion, or to estimate any Man's Probity by his Circumstances. They are *Fathers* alike to their whole Clergy : And however they may be allowed to glory in the Strong and Healthy, like other good natur'd Parents, they cannot but look upon any Maim, or Sickliness, or Imperfection in a Child, (and such is Poverty to their Clergy) with a more feeling Tenderness and Commiseration. To them it may be some Presumption too, that the poor Man has Right on his Side, as well as Trust in their Integrity, when, under such Discouragements, he dares to complain : For

Acts xxv. *I stand at Cesar's Judgment-Seat, where I ought*
 10, 11. *to be judged ; to the Jews have I done no Wrong, as thou very well knowest : If I am an Offender, if I have committed any thing worthy of Death, I refuse not to die : But if there be none of those things, whereof they accuse me, no Man may deliver me unto them, I appeal unto Cesar ;* is a Speech
 of

* Farr. Pollav. la Rete di Vulc. Vol. II. p. 326.

of St. Paul's, that proclaims his Innocence, at the first hearing, and indicates such a Confidence, in my Opinion, as could be guarded and supported by nothing else, but a *Conscience void of Offence towards God, and towards* Actsxxiv. 16.
Man.

4. *Let not my Lord be angry,* and I will but just remind him of another Infelicity attending us, which proves, on some Occasions, an Obstruction to Justice. The Difficulties we are under for want of Licences, the cruel Advantages taken against us on that Account, and the many Artifices employed to detain us from them, are a manifest Proof, that a *Defect of this kind* is our Misfortune, not our Crime, a Matter of Necessity upon us, not choice, and what Incumbents are *principally* chargeable with, not Curates. The harder still is our Fate, when the Imputation is turned upon us, and our Appeals denied Admittance, for want of a Qualification, that we can no more obtain, than we can remove Mountains.

'Tis sufficient for the Bishop's Information, one would think, that he knows such a Minister absents from his Living, and is not resident; that he knows such a Person officiates for him in the Capacity of a Curate; that he has been in *that Person's* Company,

O

and

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and received him *as such*, in the Course of his Visitations. The Intent of Licences is to notify to the Bishop, who is the *officiating Man* in every Parish, and if he has *this* from any personal Knowledge or Acquaintance with him, 'tis the same thing. To be told then, when a Curate in this Condition, under any inhuman Usage, flees to his Bishop for Succour and Redress, ' that *there* he can have ' no Shelter; that no Appeal lies, no Relief ' can be expected; but that he must e'en ' bear his Burthen as well as he can; must not be deem'd an Insult over Misery, (that may be too gross) but pardon me, my Lord, if I think it an Answer of transparent Partiality, and a kind of Finesse in Management, that I know not what to call. 'Tis certainly remitting him to God with a Witness, and teaching him this consolatory Les-

Pf. xlvi. son to some Tune, *O put not your trust in*
 2. *Princes, nor in any Child of Man, for in them is no Help.*

But I've done: and have mentioned these
 1 Cor iv. Lets and Impediments to Justice, *not so much*
 14. *to Shame*, as the Apostle speaks, *as to warn*
 my REVEREND FATHERS IN GOD;
 and to recommend to their Care the Reconciliation of Differences between contending Clergymen, before the Breach grows too
 wide,

wide, and an Inundation of Mischiefs breaks in upon it.

St. Paul, who was Master of every Episcopal Virtue, has set them a Pattern of this kind worthy their Imitation. Nothing certainly can be fuller of Tendernefs and kind Intreaty, than his Epistle to *Philemon*, wherein he recommends *Onesimus* (who some way or other had lost it) to his Favour and Confidence again. Observe with what Strains of Persuasion, and endearing Eloquence, the great Apostle writes. *We have great Joy and* Phil. v. 7,
Consolation in thy Love, because the Bowels of &c.
the Saints are refreshed by thee Brother, wherefore tho' I might be much bold in Christ, to enjoin thee that which is convenient, yet for Love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a Prisoner of Jesus Christ. I beseech thee for my Son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my Bonds, which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me; whom I have sent again: Thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own Bowels. Receive him not as a Servant, but above a Servant, a Brother beloved especially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the Flesh and in the Lord? If thou count me therefore a Partner, receive him, I say, as my self. If he hath wronged thee, or oweth

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‘ thee ought, put that on my Account. I Paul
 ‘ have written it with my own Hands, I will repay
 ‘ it : Albeit, I do not say to thee, how thou owest
 ‘ unto me even thine own self besides.

The ingenious Author of the *Christian Hero*,
 to shew the great Art and Elegance of this
 Epistle, has put it into a modern Dress;
 which I have chose to extract out of the ma-
 ny more Beauties, that are comprized in that
 excellent Piece.

SIR,

‘ I T is the deepest Satisfaction, that I e-
 ‘ very Day hear you commended, for
 ‘ your generous Behaviour to all of that Faith,
 ‘ in the Articles of which I had the Honour
 ‘ and Happiness to initiate you ; for which,
 ‘ tho’ I might presume to an Authority to o-
 ‘ blige your Compliance in a Request I am
 ‘ going to make to you, yet chuse I rather
 ‘ to apply my self to you as a Friend, than
 ‘ an Apostle ; for with a Man of your great
 ‘ Temper, I know I need not a more power-
 ‘ ful Pretence than that of my Age and Im-
 ‘ prisonment : Yet is not my Petition for my
 ‘ self, but in behalf of the Bearer, your Ser-
 ‘ vant *Onesimus*, who has robb’d you, and ran
 ‘ away from you ; what he has defrauded you
 ‘ of, I will be answerable for, this shall be a
 Demand

‘ Demand upon me ; not to say that you owe
‘ me your very self : I call’d him your Ser-
‘ vant, but he is now also to be regarded by
‘ you in a greater Relation, even that of your
‘ Fellow-Christian ; for I esteem him a Son of
‘ mine as much as your self ; nay, methinks it
‘ is a certain peculiar Endearment of him to
‘ me, that I had the Happiness of gaining him
‘ in my Confinement : I beseech you to re-
‘ ceive him, and think it an Act of Providence,
‘ that he went away from you for a Season,
‘ to return more improv’d to your Service for
‘ ever.

Such *pacifick* and *commendatory Letters* as these were very frequent in the primitive Church, and of great Use to the Purposes of suppressing Schisms and Divisions, and extinguishing the Flames of Contention amongst Brethren, before they came to be any Scandal to Religion, or Reproach to the Professors of it. Bishops, in those Days, were so far from thinking the *blessed Work of Peace-making* any Diminution to their Dignity, that their Dignity in a great measure consisted in it ; In-
somuch that * *Gregory Nazianzen*, in his Com-

* Vid. Naz. Orat. 21. in Laud Athan. Tit. 1.
p. 396.

commendation of *Athanasius*, tells us, ‘ that his
 ‘ Pains and Sedulity, in composing Differen-
 ‘ ces, and reconciling adverse Parties, was
 ‘ a more * advantageous Act of Charity to the
 ‘ Church, than all his other daily Labours and
 ‘ Discourses; more honourable than all his
 ‘ Watchings and Humi-cubations; and not in-
 ‘ ferior to his applauded Flights and Exiles.’

They accounted it therefore a ridiculous Piece
 of State, not to vouchsafe to be *Arbitrators*
 when they were appeal’d to; and a Temper,
 that favour’d of Inhumanity, if not of Irreligi-
 on, to sit unconcernedly by, and see *incens’d*
 Clergymen (to the Honour of Religion, and
 the good of their own Souls, no doubt) *tear-*
ing out one another’s *Throats* for Trifles; when
 a small Matter of Interposition, a short Que-
 Exod. ii. stion to the Aggressor, *Wherefore smitest thou*
 13. *thy Brother?* from the Mouth of Authority,
 would have stop’d their Fury, and prevailed
 for a Reconciliation.

The Nicene † Council very wisely order’d,
 that a Synod, or Set Number of Bishops
 should, twice a Year, in every Province, be
 conven’d, to compose Differences, and ad-
 just Quarrels, before they went too far.

The

* *Bingham Ant. Eccl. Vol. II. p. 359.*

† *Con. Nic. Can. 5.*

The † *African* Code determines the Number of these Bishops: Six for Priests, and three to take Information against Deacons. And 'tis much to be wish'd that some such Institution were in Force among us, that we might not be sent, from our Bishop's Eye and Observation, *to fight it out* in Ecclesiastical Courts; where we are sure to be led up and down in an enchanted Castle, as long as our Money or Patience holds out; besides the great Pleasure of seeing Lay-Officers wantonize with the sacerdotal Character, and the awful Sentence of Excommunication, sent lacqueying about the World to bring in Fees.

Hitherto, my Lord, we have considered our inferior Clergyman, as appealing to his Bishop, under some Circumstances of Distress, for Justice and Relief: But now we must take him under another View, and suppose him, for once, guilty of somewhat; his Cause heard, and himself convicted, and the Sentence just going to pass upon him. Yet still there is a reserv'd Right, that we think he has a Privilege to claim, And that is, V. a Right to the Mercy and Lenity of his Judge, even when he is chargeable with some Offence.

O 4

I rea-

† Afr. Cod. Can. 20.

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I readily subscribe, my Lord, to every thing that can be said in || Commendation of the Discipline of the antient Church, and to the yearly Complaint that is made in *ours*, for want of a Renewal, and Restoration of it. It's particular Severity against offending Clergymen neither disturbs, nor displeases me; nor am I sollicitous how soon its censures are reviv'd, provided they be distributed with an equal and impartial Hand. Let but then the Usurer and Stock-Jobber, the Fraudulent and Sacrilegious, the Perjur'd and Perfidious, the Pluralist, and Non-resident, the Briber, and Simonist, the Man of boundless Ambition, or insatiable Avarice, or supine Negligence, (for against all these are Canons and Injunctions to be found) take their Share in this *rigorous Discipline*; and, come when it will, we know before-hand where the grand Sweep must be. The inferior Clergy are exempted from most of these Sins, for they have it not in their Power to incur them; and as for the other Enormities they commit in common with their Brethren, I could easily

|| *Disciplina Custos Spei, Retinaculum fidei, Dux Itineris Salutaris, Fomes ac Nutrimentum bonæ Indolis, Magistra Virtutis.* Cypr. L. de Disc. & Hab. Virg.

sily, by an Induction of some Instances, shew your Lordship, whose *Scale* preponderates, were I at leisure now to make the Comparison, as, at one time or other, I shall think my self concerned to do.

What may help to give your Lordship's Thoughts another Turn ; may possibly be the many more Complaints, that are brought to you against the lower Clergy. But for this there is a visible Reason.

1. Their want of Licences gives every little Adversary, (and such they chance to make in the Execution of their Duty, oftner than any other way) an Advantage against them, which few are at a Loss how to make the most of. Men see what a slender Foundation the Curate stands upon, ' and therefore 'tis but making a bold Thrust at him, ' (says their Malice presently) and he must ' fall ; 'tis but sending a few Articles of Accusation to the Bishop, and that will do his ' Business.' Whereas the Minister is seated above the Impression of all such Malice. *He's in for Life*, the Parishioners know, and not removeable by Complaints : His Faults therefore are conniv'd at, because Informations are in vain. Besides that, he has something in Hand wherewith to bribe *the good Folk*, and purchase their Silence, which the poor Curate

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rate is destitute of. This is the true Reason of the Disparity: But a Reason, my Lord, that carries this Reflection along with it, that the more liable any Person is to be hurt by Malice, the more Malice is to be suspected in his Accusation; nor should any Man be deem'd *more culpable*, because he is *less* liable to maintain his Ground against Informers.

2. There is another thing, that may misguide us in our Estimation of the Clergy, and that is the Toleration, which our Laws, and the Credit, which the Vogue of the World has given to some of their Iniquities, and seems, as it were, to annihilate the whole Guilt and Deformity of them. Nothing is more infamous, for instance, than to *defraud the Hireling*, and *grind the Face of the Poor*; and yet, this is done every Day, in the Person of many a rich Incumbent, without Censure, without Reproach, nay, with some tacit Approbation of the Man's Frugality, and the seeming Countenance of the Law. Our Ecclesiasticks in *Change-Alley* may imagine perhaps, that there is no Enormity in *negotiating* their Money that way, and the Opinion of the World seems to grant it for them; but your Lordship knows very well that the Apostolical

* Apostolical Canons, the † Councils of *Nice*, and || *Eliberis*; the * first and second of *Arles*, the † first and third of *Carthage*, the || Council of *Laodicea*, and * *Trullo*, together with the Suffrages of great Authority, of † *St. Cyprian*, || *St. Jerom*, and too many more to enumerate here, utterly condemn it. The Defender of Pluralities did not think, whatever your Lordship may, that there was any Sin in feeding himself, and not the Flock; in accumulating Livings, and yet living upon none; but your Lordship remembers, that by the Decrees of many general Councils, and the Determination of Fathers, Casuists, and Divines, *Pluralities* are disallowed, and *Non-Residence* thought such a sacerdotal Crime, as was punished sometimes with Degradation. Consequently, if ever the *Godly Discipline* we are now speaking of, comes to be reviv'd, Offenders of this sort must be found out and punished, how high soever they may now carry their Heads, and swell with the World's Approbation and Applause.

To

* Can. Apost. c. 44. † Conc. Nic. c. 17. || Conc. Elib. c. 20. * Conc. Arelat. 1. c. 12. Arelat. 2. c. 14. † Conc. Carth. 1. c. 13. Carth. 3. c. 16. || Conc. Laodic. c. 5. * Conc. Trull. c. 10. † Cypr. de laps. p. 124. || Hieron. in Ezek. Cap. 18.

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To settle a true Estimate of the Clergy then, and to make our Computation just, we must take in the whole Compass of their Duty, and not confine our Thoughts to their *Personal*, but consider the *Functional* Transgressions likewise: consider, I say, that neither the Opinion of the World, nor the Dispensation of Laws can alter the Nature of things, that are criminous in themselves: And under this View, we shall see the Vices of the superior Clergy bearing down the Scale with a vast deal of overweight.

But be that as it will, we are now supposing our inferior Clergyman guilty, as I said, and committing himself to his Bishop's Mercy. The Question is then, how the Bishop is to *behave* upon this Occasion, and with what kind of Spirit he is to proceed against him. And a Question it is that I am the bolder to answer, because I intend to advance nothing in it, but what is the Sense and Determination of Scripture: Not to teach my *Rulers* their Duty, (I have not that Presumption) from whom I shall ever be ready, and have but too much Need, I am conscious, to learn my own; but to raise in my Brethren a Confidence in their Goodness, and a Spirit of Chearfulness and Alacrity, when they come before them.

None

None will deny I think, but that our blessed Saviour acted in the Capacity of a *Bishop*, and his Apostles were his *Clergy*, while he continued upon Earth. His Decision of the Controversy, that happened upon the Pretension of *Zebedee's Children*, is therefore Episcopal ; and his Discourse upon it a true Indication of the Temper, and Disposition of Mind, that best becomes a Governor of his Church. *The Gentiles exercise Dominion over them, but it shall not be so among you*, is a plain disclaiming of all Sovereignty, and limiting the Power of the Church to the Purposes of doing good. *He that will be Chief among you, let him be your Servant*, prescribes Humility and Condescension, as the only Christian Expedient to gain an Ascendency over others : And *the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister*, gives his own Example for a Proof, and, as it were, this Lesson and Invocation to all Bishops, *Learn of me, for I am meek, and lowly in Heart*. Mat. xx.
20, &c.

Mat. xi.
29.

St. Paul, next to his Master, the greatest Pattern of Episcopal Humility, assumes nothing to himself extraordinary, upon the Account of his more abundant Labours, much less his Station and Superiority over others. When Contention, and Debate arose in the *Corinthian Church*, about the Worth and Eminence

minence of their respective Teachers, 'tis with some Warmth and Indignation that he
 1 Cor. iii. asks them, *Who then is Paul, and who is Apol-*
 5, &c. *los, but Ministers by whom ye believed? I have*
planted, and Apollos watered; but neither he that
planteth, nor he that watereth is any thing, but
God that giveth the Increase. So far was he
from arrogating any illegal Power, or con-
cealing the Bounds of what was committed to
him, that we find him, twice in one and the
 2 Cor. x. 8. *same Epistle, telling these Corinthians, that*
 2 Cor. xiii. *the proper End of his Authority was for*
 10. *their Edification, and not for their Destruction:*
And that, when he came among them, his
 2 Cor. i. *Commission was not to exercise any Dominion o-*
 28. *ver their Faith, but to be an Helper of their*
Joy.

Nothing can certainly express more Ten-
 Heb. v. *derness and Compassion for those that are out of*
 2. *the way, than that Passage to the Philippians,*
where he laments at a Distance, and even,
while he writes, seems to mingle his Tears
 Phil. iii. *with his Ink; Many walk, of whom I have told*
 18. *you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they*
are the Enemies of the Cross of Christ; Than that
 Gal. vi. 1. *Direction to the Galatians, If any Man be o-*
vertaken in a Fault, ye, that are spiritual, restore
such an one into the Spirit of Meekness, consi-
dering thy self lest thou also be tempted; than
 that

that Engagement in behalf of *Onesimus* to *Philemon*, receive him as my self; if he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put it to my Account, and I will pay it. Philem. 17, &c.

With what Respect and Decency every Clergyman, nay even an offending Clergyman is to be treated, his Canonical Letters to *Timothy* and *Titus* are full of Instruction, *Rebuke* 1 Tim. v. 1. not an Elder, but intreat him as a Father, is a Precept of general Observation; but when such Rebukes became necessary, in what Manner were they to be performed? *In the Spirit* 1 Cor. iv. 20. of Meekness, (as he tells us frequently) and not in Lordliness over God's Heritage: For observe the Solemnity of the Charge! *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the Quick and the Dead at his appearing, reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all Long-Suffering, and Doctrine, i. e. with great Gentleness and Humanity in the Manner, and great Clearness and Conviction of Reason in the Matter of thy Reproofs.* Gal. vi. 1. 1 Pet. v. 3. 2 Tim. iv. 2.

To the *Corinthians* indeed, who, of all the Converts he had made to Christianity, seem to be most headstrong and unruly, he threaten'd sometimes to come with a Rod, and to use much Sharpness, according to the Power that Christ had given him. But it was the People's Fault, and (far from the Apostle's Inclination) that

1 Car. iv. 21. 2 Cor. xiii. 10.

2 Cor. x. that compell'd him to such Severity.
 10. They despis'd his Person, they denied his Authority, they challenged him, as it were, to do his worst (for that is the Meaning of 2 Cor. xiii. *their seeking a Proof of Christ speaking in him*)
 3. and therefore he laid some of the most contumacious of them under the fearful Ban of
 1 Tim. i. Excommunication ; of whom were Hymeneus
 20. and Alexander, as he tells Timothy, whom he had delivered unto Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme.

Delivering unto Satan was then a terrible Sentence indeed : No sooner was it pronounced, and the Person cut off from the Body of the Faithful, but * Satan, as the common Serjeant and Jaylor, seiz'd upon him ; and, either by actual Possession, or some other hideous Sign, made it appear that he was delivered over into his Power : And therefore we need less wonder that we find the Apostle threatning so oft, before he inflicts this severe Punishment ; and, in the Infliction of it, acting with so much Grief and Reluctancy ; in the Subduction of it, with such Pleasure and Self-Satisfaction. His Intercession for the Release and Absolution of the Person, that, by his Order, in a former Epistle, was thus

* Vid. *Cave's Primit. Christ.* p. 449.

thus delivered up for the Destruction of the Flesh, that his Spirit might be sav'd in the day of the Lord; is a lively Image of a tender and relenting Heart, Sufficient to such an one, says he, is the ² Cor. ii. 6, &c. Punishment which was inflicted of many. So that, contrarywise, ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such an one should be swallow'd up with overmuch Sorrow. To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: For 'tis not adviseable to keep him too long under the Censure and Chastisement of the Church, lest Satan should get an advantage of us, for we are not Ignorant of his Devises.

From this Account of St. Pauls Conduct we may draw this short Character of him, which answers the foregoing Question, and may be to others some small Instruction perhaps, in Matters of Ecclesiastick Jurisdiction, viz. That he was humble in Mind, tho' exalted in Station; an universal Lover of Souls, tho' a profess'd Detester of Sin; an Enemy to the Faults, but not to the Persons of Men; kind and courteous to all, but particularly respectful to those of the Sacred Function; prudent in mixing Mercy and Judgement, as their Cases requir'd; not proud of his Authority, tho' not insensible of it; not easily provok'd to inflict Penalties, not long to be intreated to remove them; griev'd when the Heinousness of the Crime

P

compell'd

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compell'd him to be severe ; but pleas'd, and never better satisfied, than when the Signs of a sincere Repentance justified his Commiseration, and enabled him to forgive.

In After-Ages, when such great Lights as *St. Paul* were withdrawn from the Church, and the State began to confer her Honours and Emoluments upon the Rulers of it ; Canons of great Rigour (to make the Distinction still more wide) were enacted against the lower Clergy. Things of an indifferent Nature were prohibited : And Censures against their Miscarriages were more severe than against any others. There was still, however, a Reserve of Mercy lodg'd in the Bishop, and a *discretionary* Power to mitigate, or suspend Penalties, as he thought fit. To this Purpose, that * Canon of *St. Basil*, which allows an excommunicated Lay-man to be restored to the Degree from whence he falls, but *not* a depos'd Clergyman, gives nevertheless this Admonition, 'Tis better to cure
 ' Men of their Sins by Mortification, and to
 ' execute the Canon only in Cases, where
 ' we cannot reach what is more perfect.
 ' For they, who have the Power of binding
 ' and

and loosing, says the last Canon of † *Trullo*,
 and are intrusted with the principal Pa-
 storship, must consider the Quality of the
 Offence, and the Disposition of the Peni-
 tent, and temper the spiritual Medicine ac-
 cording to *St. Basil's Rule*, viz. *to know*
both what is most strictly proper, and what is
practicable; and in Cases that will not admit of
what is strictly proper, to be content with the Forms
received by Tradition.

I have therefore often admired the Pru-
 dence and Moderation of our Church in this
 particular; been strangely taken with the
 Strength and admirable Contexture of these
 few Words, wherewith she concludes her Ex-
 hortation to her new-created Bishop, 'Be so
 merciful, that thou be not remis; so mi-
 nister Discipline, that thou forget not Mer-
 cy; that when the great Shepherd shall appear,
 thou maist receive an everlasting Crown of Glo-
 ry;' and have sometimes wondred (for I
 cannot suppose * *Lord Bacon's* Opinion to be
 true) why the Governors of our Church have
 entrusted this Discipline to the Management
 of such Hands, as make an Advantage in for-
 getting Mercy: Since thereby they have not

P 2

only

† Can. 102.

* Vid. Page 191.

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only parted with a considerable Branch of their Power, and a Power committed to them *only*, and not resignable to others, one would think : but have lost many a fair Opportunity likewise of endearing themselves to Mankind by † their paternal Tenderneſs, and of reconciling even diffident Humours to a good Opinion of Episcopacy it ſelf.

The Scripture Method of proceeding againſt Delinquents is certainly this, — firſt, private and gentle Admonition ; if that will not do, ſharper Reproofs ; if theſe prove ineffectual, publick Diſcountenance ; if this reclaim not, then Cenſures of a little more Severity : For much Deliberation muſt be taken, and many a Pauſe made ; the *Spiritual Sword* muſt, as it were, be brandiſh'd many and many a Time over the Head of the Offender, before it be permitted to *ſmite*. But when, inſtead of this, Men ſhall be harras'd in Eccleſiaſtical Courts for Trifles, whipt into an Excommunication before they know where they are, and hurried away to Priſon *without Bail or Mainprize*, for neglecting a Sentence, which others have made contemptible by their infamous Proſtitution of it : 'Tis no Wonder

† *Amari parens & Episcopos debet, non timeri.*
Hier. Ep. 62.

Wonder that their Passions be inflamed, and their Indignation sometimes goads on the little Wit and Learning they have, to find out Arguments and Invectives against that *sacred Order*, which they wrongfully account the Fountain and Original of so much Cruelty and Oppression. And to this very Reason the present Disgust against our Episcopal Form of Church-Government is chiefly imputable: Nor was it ever so popular, 'till the Administration of her Censures (especially that of Excommunication) came to be committed to Lay-Hands.

Let the Righteous smite me friendly, and reprove me, but let not their precious Balms break my Head: Psal. cxli. 5, 6.
 Whether this relate to the Jewish Church-Discipline or no, 'tis certainly a Lesson of wise Instruction to such as are intrusted with it *now*, to make Love the Principle of their Reproofs, and * Mercy the Measure of their Castigations: that those, who are subjected to their Government, may rejoyce, and even those, who take a contrary part, may be ashamed, when they see that, in all their Censures and Inflictions, they seek not *theirs*, but *them*; love Tit. ii. 8.
2 Cor. xii their 14.

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* Leniter Castigatus exhibet Reverentiam castiganti, asperitate autem nimia Incepcionis offensus nec Incepcionem recipit, nec Salutem. Prop. de Vit. Contempl. L. 2. C. 5.

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their Souls, hate only their Sins, and intend their Amendment, not their Ruin, or Grief, or causeless Defamation.

By this time, my Lord, I hope, I have, in some good Measure, absolved my Promise (tho' I fear I have wearied your Patience in doing it) of proving to your Lordship, from the Word of God, which is the Charter of our Privileges, from the Determinations and Decrees of antient Fathers, and antients Councils, from the present Canons and Constitutions of our own Church, and from the Reason and Nature of the thing itself, that the inferior Clergy of this Nation have a Right to their *Share* of Respect and Observation; a Right to a competent Maintenance for their Labour; a Right to a legal Security for that Maintenance; a Right to Justice and Impartiality, when they appeal to their Governors; and a Right to Mercy and Lenity, when at any time they have offended.

How grossly these Rights have been invaded of late, and what Miseries and Hardships have been ensuant thereupon, I have *more than suggested* to your Lordship's Observation. That these Miseries are Matters of Fact, and not the visionary Dreams of a disappointed Hope, or angry Resentment, or disorder'd Imagination

Imagination (as I expect to be told) I can evince to your Lordship by several Instances, and an Exhibition of such Cases, as I have made it my Business to collect; to which this Letter, as long as it is, will make but a reasonable *Preface*, when they come to be printed in one Volume. I am employing my Thoughts that way now : And hope, by the Convention of next PARLIAMENT, (from which the Nation may justly expect a Redress of all her *Grievances*) to have the Account ready, and submitted to the Consideration of the *Legislature* ; if the *great* and *wealthy* Clergy (as they like *this*) will but encourage the Work with their Subscriptions ; that a Book, too bulky for a poor Man to print, and so much to their immortal Honour and Renown, may not prove abortive, for want of a little Money to midwife it into the World.

In the mean time, because the See of *London* may not always have a Bishop, of your Lordship's *Candor* and *Condescension*, to receive the Sentiments, even of the meanest of the Clergy ; and that it may not seem an unnecessary Peice of Cruelty, to continue a Burthen upon Mens Shoulders, when means may be thought on, to alleviate at least, if not to remove it quite : I could not deny my self

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the Satisfaction of doing, at this time, my *last* Service to my Brethren, by suggesting to your Lordship's Consideration, such Remedies, as lie under the Episcopal Power of Application; with all ready Submission to the better Judgment of those in Authority, as well as Willingness to retract whatever Misconceptions, my Unacquaintedness with Schemes, or Ignorance of any other kind may have chanc'd to occasion.

I am for no Project, as I said before, my Lord, of any distant Speculation, but such as the Episcopal Power may in a great Measure put in Execution; and *that* certainly, in the first Place, is their own Residence and Visitation of their Diocesses.

So great was the Veneration that the primitive Christians paid to their Bishops, and so very beneficial was their Presence and Inspection accounted, that we find some of them talking of rather parting with the * Light of the Sun, than of losing their Company; and in mere Kindness to themselves, procuring Decrees that no Bishops should be permitted to † go to Court, unless they were call'd by the Emperor, or
went

* Vid. Chrys. Ep. 125. Tom. 4. p. 763.

† Conc. Sardic. c. 7, and 8.

went by Deputation from the Church, upon publick Business; that, even upon their own necessary Affairs, they should not be absent above * three Weeks, *thereby to grieve the Flock that was committed to their Care*; nor allowed to be translated, or removed to any other See, than what they first occupied (*at all, some † Canons say, but at least*) * without the Consent and Approbation of a Provincial Council.

After the Accession of worldly honour and the Erection of Bishopricks into Baronies (which at first was done for a † political End, more than any great Favour to the Church) Episcopal Residence was diminish'd, and a necessary Attendance on the King's Council or Parliament (whether * the Church reaps more

* Conc. Sard. 11, 12.

† Conc. Nic. c. 15. Conc. Sardic. 1, 2. Conc. Antioch. Can. 21. Conc. Conc. Carth. 3. c. 38.

* Conc. Carth. 4. c. 27. Episcopus de loco ignobili ad Nobilem per ambitionem ne transeat. — Sin id Utilitas Ecclesiæ fiendum poposcerit, Decreto pro eo Clericorum & Laicorum Episcopis porrecto, per Sententiam Synodi transferatur.

† *Will.* Ist. in the fourth Year of his Reign, brought Bishops and Abbots under the Tenure of Barony: but, at the same time, plundered the Revenues of the Church, and harras'd Ecclesiasticks very barbarously, as *Math. Paris* tells us. Vid. *Selden's Titles of Honour*, p. 578, and 580.

* Vid. *Defence of Pluralities*, p. 48.

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more benefit, than it suffers Detriment thereby, I shall not determine) left distant Dioceses destitute and obscur'd; whilst a whole Constellations of Bishops were shining altogether in this Town, or where ever the Court and Parliament was.

'Tis much to be wish'd however, that the Conventions of Parliaments were so fixt, and their Session so determin'd to the Dead part of the Year, that Bishops might have more Leisure to make *annual Visitations, as they were wont to do; and not leave an Affair of such vast Importance to the Churches Welfare, to be huddled over by their Arch Deacons; that, (how little soever they may mind their procurations and Synodals) have not that influence to animate the Clergy to their Duties, that Authority to enter into their Controversies, and that presum'd Impartiality to decide and determine them; as has he, who is seated in the highest Station, is the † Eye of the Church, and great Moderator among his Clergy; who has Rewards and Punishments in his Hand, and nothing from without, either to fear or hope for, that may warp his Judgment,

* Unusquisque Episcopus Parochiam suam omni anno semel circumeat. Conc. Calcuth C. 3.

† Τῆς Ἐκκλησίας ὀφθαλμὸς, *The Emperor, in the Sixth general Council, calls Bishops,*

ment, or influence him amiss in the Dispensation of them.

Were Visitations, my Lord, reduc'd to their Primitive Use and Religious Purposes, such is the Awe of a Bishop's Eye, and the commanding Influence of his Presence, as cou'd not but discover innumerable Abuses; and such the Authority wherewith he is invested, as could not but conduce mightily to amend them. † ' The Negligences and Irregularities of the Clergy, and all Crimes of the People that are proper for the Ecclesiastical Tribunal, might both effectually, and compendiously be rectified, and we, in this Sense, become a truly reform'd Church, if Bishops would but exert themselves, in some Proportion to the Value of the Souls, and the Weight of the Office that is committed to them.

' *But have I conceived all this People? (may a Numb. xi. Bishop say with Moses) have I begotten them? 12. &c.*
' *That thou shouldest say unto me, carry them in thy Bosom (as a nursing Father beareth the Sucking Child.) I am not able to bear all this People alone, because it is too heavy for me'. Gather then unto me some Elders (may I presume to answer with God) whom thou knowest to be*
Elders

† Vid. Comber on the Office of Consecrat. p. 467.

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Elders of the People, and bring them unto the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and I will take of the Spirit, which is upon thee, and will put it upon them, and they shall bear the Burthen of the People with thee, that thou bear it not thy self alone. It matters not much, whether the first * Institution of the antient Chorepiscopi (or Suffragan Bishops, as they were called in our Church) was in Imitation of these Elders, or of the seventy Disciples, whom our Lord chose. Their Business was to superintend the Churches of the Country, that lay more remote from the Bishop's Residence ; and such as he himself could not visit in Person.

The Visitation of a Diocesis is of the same Consequence, and Necessity still. And therefore, in Cases of Infirmary, or old Age, on Occasions of Absence, or Attendance elsewhere, and in Dioceses of too large a Compass, for one Man singly to inspect ; 'tis much to be wish'd (and in this I have the Happiness to agree with the † Defender of Pluralities, my Lord) that his MAJESTY, and the REVEREND PRELATES, ' would revive ' the Order of *Suffragan Bishops* among us, to
' supply

* Vid. *Cave's Prim. Christian*, p. 142.

† Vid. p. 48.

‘ supply the Want of Episcopal Function
‘ in those Diocesēs, that are depriv’d of the
‘ Benefit of their proper Bishops. And for
‘ this there needeth no new Law or Canon,
‘ because they have always been in use, not
‘ only in the Primitive Church, but in the
‘ Church of *England* likewise, before the Re-
‘ formation, even in the most corrupt Times
‘ of Popery, and are confirmed at this
‘ Day still, and entirely settled by an Act of
‘ Parliament made in the * Reign of *Henry*
‘ VIII.

I cannot however so well agree with him
in this other particular, ‘ that there is an
‘ † equal Necessity for Priests to be Non-
‘ resident, that there is for Bishops; or that
‘ either the Rules of Religion, or the Laws
‘ of the Church, allow them to have the
‘ Administration of more Parishes, than one.’
I know but two Reasons that can be brought
in excuse for Pluralities, and thereby to ju-
stify the Generality of Non-Residents (for
Attendance on Kings or Convocations was
always an allow’d Case) *viz.* The want of
a sufficient Number of Clerks, and the want
of a sufficient Maintenance in our Churches.
For

* *Twenty sixth of Hen. VIII.*

† *Vid. Defence of Plural. p. 23, 24.*

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For the former of these, I think there can be no Pretence, where there is such a visible Redundancy among us, and such bickering and scrambling for every little thing that falls; and the latter, I am confident, is nothing but *Pretence*, because 'tis notorious, that the Livings, which the Pluralists catch at most, and have chiefly now in their Possession, are some of the Wealthiest in the Nation.

The Rules of Religion require Personal Service, and oblige those *that live by the Altar, to wait on the Altar*; where the original Word *αγορεύειν* signifies *residing*, and is used by no meaner Persons than *Chrysostom*, and his great Imitator *Theophylact*, to the Purpose I am now speaking of. The Laws of the Church relating to this Matter, are most of them comprized in the Sense of the Council of *Mentz*, that *one Man's holding of many Benefices, is a very mischievous thing to the Churches, because one Man can't duly perform the Offices which are required in several Churches, and take that Care of their Concerns which is necessary*. Nay the very Laws of the Land, and that famous Statute of 21 *Hen. VIII.* wherein the Pluralists place their Confidence, was originally intended to prevent Pluralities, and oblige to Residence; however the many Proviso

Proviso for Persons qualified for Dispensations has destroyed the Force of it; Tho', in * some Mens Opinions, these qualifying Clauses are, by the Act of Uniformity, which was subsequent to them, quite repealed.

But be that as it will, at our *Ordination* we promise most solemnly, in all Points to take care of the People that shall, at any time, be committed to our Charge. At our *Institution* to any Benefice, there is a certain and particular People appointed to us, and we undertake the *Cure of their Souls* without Restriction, or Reserve. If then our Faith given, in express Words, to God and his Church can bind; if Promises made at the Altar do oblige; and if a Stipulation, in Consideration of which, Orders are given, and Institution granted us, is sacred; if the Word of God, in short, is our Rule, and the Decrees of the Church our Directory; (however *dispensing with a Law* may take away the *Penalty* of Non-Residence) our *Obligation* in point of *Conscience* to reside upon our Livings, and to feed the Flock ourselves that is committed to our Charge, is still the same, as if there were no such Dispensations at all: Unless we can suppose that

* Bishop Burnet in his *Past. Care*.

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that a Man can discharge a Duty of this kind by a Proxy, as well as personal Attendance, and that the † Honour of Religion, and good of Souls is promoted, and the Peace of his own Mind secured, the one way as well as the other; which few Men, I believe, before the *famous* || Defender of Pluralities, ever had the Confidence to maintain.

But I enter into these Arguments no farther, than barely to shew your Lordship, how, by doing no more than what the Church has made their Duty, our Superiors may redress a great many of the Grievances we complain of. Wou'd but Bishops then reside in their Dioceses as long as they could, and to the very last Day, that their Attendance in *Court* or *Parliament* would allow them; would they employ that time in visiting every where, and discovering the State and Condition of their Clergy more narrowly; or were but Incumbents made, for the future, to abide in their Parishes themselves, and reduc'd to one Benefice only, *with Cure of Souls*, except where its Revenue is too mean for any tolerable Subsistence, (which might easily be done, if either ARCHBISHOPS, who
have

† Vid. *Duties and Rights of Par. Cler.* p. 219.

|| Vid. p. 167.

have the Power of Dispensation, would deny their Faculties, or his SACRED MAJESTY his Confirmation of them) 'tis not to be imagined, what an Alteration, for our Advantage, would ensue.

Under the Bishop's Eye, every thing would revive and be invigorated. Learning would flourish, and Industry be rewarded. Merit be drawn out of its Obscurity, and Vice, and Ignorance flie, and shroud their Heads in Corners. At the Bishop's Visitation, Complaints might be heard, and Differences determined; Licences called for, and the Mystery of *not having them* discovered; the Value of each Living stated, and the Assistant's Salary proportion'd, and ascertained to him. And in this Distribution of things, there would be less Room for Insolence or Oppression; each Man would have a Settlement of his own, and live independent.

Some, that have considered the Grounds of the Contempt of the Clergy, have resolved the whole Matter into these two Causes, their *Poverty*, and their *Ignorance*; and as an Occasion of their Poverty they have supposed, that there is a *Superfatation* in the Church of *England*, or more Clergymen ordained every Year, than there is any Proportion of Maintenance, or Provision made for.

Q

Your

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Your Lordship, who has the Foreign Churches of his MAJESTY'S Dominions under your Care and Regulation; and, upon that Account, as well as presiding in the Metropolis of the Kingdom, holds more frequent Ordinations than any other Bishop, may be the best Judge of the Matter, from the Numbers you receive into the Service of the Church yearly, and the Colonies that you send abroad. But if there be any Truth in that Supposition, the Remedy is obvious. For it is but Bishops withholding their Hands now and then, an Ember-Week or two; and by this means, those that are planted in the Garden of the Church, may take root and grow, before others are crowded in upon them, to deface their Regularity, as well as steal away their Moisture.

Those that plead for the popular Elections of the Clergy (for learned Men are very much † divided in this Matter) among other Arguments drawn from the Reason of the thing (for both Parties claim the
Voice

† The Reverend Mr. Biigham, to whom the World is infinitely obliged (I wish it would reward him in some Proportion) for his learned *Antiquities of the Christian Church*, has taken no small Pains in clearing up this Controversy, and setting it in a true Light. Vol. II. p. 90, &c.

Voice of Antiquity on their Side) have these two, that are considerable to our present Purpose, *viz.* the Necessity of a good Understanding between the People and Minister, and the Manner of the Clergy's Maintenance, which formerly was by Lay-Contributions, and their Freewill-Offerings: The inferior Clergy, my Lord, are in some measure upon the primitive Establishment, in the Matter of their Maintenance, and it might not therefore be improper (if such a thing could be done without any great Disorder) to admit of the People's Consent and Approbation at least, in the Choice of the Curate or Reader, that is to officiate among them, that thereby they may be encourag'd to contribute more liberally to the Relief of his Necessities, and help out the *little Stipend* that the Minister gives him; all *refunding* of Gifts being utterly forbid, and private Stipulations to that Purpose declared *simoniacal*, and void.

The late Example which your Lordship gave of your great Zeal and Liberality for the *Augmentation* of poor Livings in this Diocess, commended by all, and imitated, I hope, by those of the like eminent Station in the Church, has suggested this Notion,
— That if such an Expedient (tho' in

a more private Manner perhaps) were put in Execution for the Benefit of Curates, and other Stipendiaries, that have not wherewith to maintain them above Contempt; it might be of singular Use not only to endear their Superiors to them, but to encourage their Labours, and support their Spirits likewise, under difficult Circumstances. How such a Design may most successfully be manag'd, is left to your Lordship's Judgment, and great Influence in the World: How grateful it would be both to God and Man, St. Paul, in his own Case, teaches us, *I have all, and abound; I am full, having received of Ephroditus the things which you sent, an Odour of a sweet Smell, a Sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God:* And how ill it would be in our wealthy Clergy not to encourage it, an early Canon of the Christian Church tells us, "That if any † Bishop or Priest do not supply any of the Clergy, if they be in Want; let him be suspended from Communion; and if he persist, depos'd, as one that murders his Brother.

Phil. iv.
18.

I know not, my Lord, whether I shall be thought Orthodox enough, in permitting poor Clergymen sometimes to mix in secular Employments,

† Can. Apoft. c. 51.

ploys, the better to maintain their Families, and improve their Condition in Life (tho' in that there is primitive Practice on my side) but I apprehend no Discourtesy would be done either to their Function, or their Fortunes, if the antient Custom were reviv'd of admitting none but Men in holy Orders to be Parish-Clerks; especially where the Place is considerable, and the Right of Election entirely in the Minister. 'Twould be a good Expedient this, to ease the Church of her many *Supernumeraries*, and to improve the Reputation and Decency of her Service; for I am at a Loss to know the great Propriety of making a Man the *Mouth* in all *Responses*, and *Præcentor* to a Congregation in the most sublime part of divine Worship, that can hardly read distinctly one Stanza perhaps of what he pretends to sing.

'Tis the want of Books, more than any Inclination to Idleness, I hope, that occasions our Ignorance; and the Meanness of our Dress many times, more than any remarkable Dulness of Conversation, that draws upon us Contempt in Company, and a preventing Derision of what we have to say. In this Place especially, my Lord, Men judge of Men by their Appearance; and the decent Apparel of the Clergy is found an excellent

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excellent Passport to give Sanction to their Words, as well as Reverence to their Persons. I should think it therefore no bad Policy to raise the Credit of the Priesthood, as well as an Emulation of Learning among us, if, to such, as have approv'd their Love of Letters to the World by any considerable Performance, a small Study of Books, well chosen and adapted to their Genius, were given by way of *Brabeum*; and to such, as are miserably tatter'd and threadbare (as too many Objects of this sort are seen in the Streets daily) a new Gown and Cassock, at certain Times, presented by way of *Cover from Contempt*, as well as Defence from the Injuries of the Weather. What Sum might be requisite to answer the annual Charge of this, might easily be computed, and found to be no great one; were I not willing to avoid entering into the particulars of this, or any other Scheme, and desirous rather to leave it to the Consideration of some of our *charitable and religious Societies*, who have not perhaps hit on this Notion for the Improvement of *Christian Knowledge*, or the *Advancement of Religion*, in all their Deliberations.

There is one Text, my Lord, that I have always took in a literal, however some Divines have thought fit to understand it in another

another Sense: *When thou makest a Dinner, call not thy Friends, neither thy rich Neighbours, lest they also bid thee again, and a Recompence be made thee. But when thou makest a Feast, call the Poor, and thou shalt be blessed, for they cannot recompence thee, but thou shalt be recompenc'd at the Resurrection of the Just.* If our Saviour's Practice may be an allow'd Comment upon his Words, and the Apostle's Doctrine about *Respect of Persons* happens to be true, my Acceptation is undoubtedly right: Nor will any Alms at a Gate, or Countenance shewn at a Distance, answer the Intent of a positive Command. The Reason is, because it is not the Dinner or Entertainment, be it never so good, that's so considerable; but 'tis the improving Conversation at Table, which, in a Man of fine Sense, and great Goodness, is like *Apples of God in Pictures of Silver.* 'Tis the Encouragement given to the poor Man, who makes it his Glory to be admitted to the Company of his *Betters*; and 'tis the Example set others how to treat him, whom Men of Superiority treat with such Respect, that gives Strength to the Precept, and Commendation to the Charity. The Application is obvious, and as every Bishop is given to *Hospitality,*

Luke xiv.

12, &c.

James ii.

2, &c.

Pro. xxiii.

11.

1 Tim. iii.

2.

† Hospitalitas usque adeo Episcopis est necessaria, ut si ab ea inveniantur alieni jure prohibeantur ordinari. Grat. Dist. 85.

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pitality, this Direction of our Lords points him out the fittest Objects of it.

There is only one thing more, my Lord, that among other Patrons, I would recommend to your Lordship's Consideration, as an useful Means to excite the Industry, as well as better the Condition of *inferior Clergy*; and that is, an equal Promotion of them, where their *Pre-tensions* to Preferment are equal with others. This I am sensible is an odd Proposal, and incompatible with the Methods now in use. 'Tis telling the World a kind of Paradox, that under the Inspection of so many vigilant Bishops, Learning should lie in Obscurity, and Merit be covered with Raggs. 'Tis telling Patrons, that, in disposing of Livings, they should break thro' every thing, the Sollicitations of the Great, and Importunities of the Bold, the Sense of Services, and Ties of Consanguinity, to come at the Man of *real Worth*, tho' he has never a Friend in the World to make Intercession for him. 'Tis telling the Clergy, that they ought to live well, and study hard, and stay at home, and wait the Issues of Providence, in an honest Execution of their Office, for Advancement; and not let fly their Ambition and Avarice (as the Manner of some is) like a ravenous Bird of Prey, at all sorts of Game: Lessons that sound well,

well, but will never be followed, so long as Men see that Merit is postpon'd, and Applications prove successful, and Interest guides the Hand in conferring Church-Promotions. *Pauci adeo † Ingenio valent, ut non turpe honestumque, prout bene ac secus cessit, expetant fugiantve: Ceteri, ubi Laboris inertia, vigilantia somno, frugalitatis Luxuria merces datur, eadem ista, quibus alios artibus affecutos vident, consecantur: Qualesque sunt illi, tales esse & videri volunt, & dum volunt, fiunt.* The Remedy to this Mischief therefore must chiefly be expected from the Care and Interposition of Patrons. If such as have the Disposal of Benefices, to which the *Cure of Souls is annexed*, did consider *this* as a Trust lodg'd with them, for which they must answer to God, and that they shall in a great Measure be accountable for the Souls, that may be lost thro' the bad Choice which they make, knowing it to be a bad one: If upon a Vacancy, they would fortify themselves against Applications, and attend only to the Merits of the Men they mean to present (tho' Poverty, where all other Considerations are equal, is allowed some Preference in a charitable Breast; and he, that has been faithful in little, may be Luke xvi. 10. presum'd, will be faithful in much too) then

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† Plin. Pan. ad Traj.

might we hope to find Preferments given at another Rate; and, from the Examples of such, as for their Labour and Learning, not their fawning and temporizing, have been taken notice of by worthy Patrons, see others emulous of their Glory, and studious to qualify, and distinguish themselves the like laudable way. “ But as long as the short † Methods of Application, Friendship, and Interest are more effectual to Advancement, “ than the long and hard way of Labour “ and Study; human Nature will always carry Men to go the surest, the easiest, and “ the quickest way to work; tho’ the Consequence of it must be, Envy and Strife, “ Faction and Cabal, and a confirm’d State of “ Idleness and Ignorance at last.

These Proposals, and whatever else of this kind has been offered in the Course of this Book, whether they be such as are most prudent and convenient, may probably be a Question; but it is none at all, whether some Remedies or other are not absolutely necessary, in a Case of such complicated Misery.

What has occur’d to my Thoughts, I have suggested to your Lordship; and in you, to the rest of my REVEREND FATHERS IN GOD; and

and that my Design in doing it may not be misconstrued, I desire to conclude in the Words of † *Hugo Floriacensis*, in the Prologue to his Book of the Sacerdotal Dignity, *Unde nunc deprecor venerabiles Præfules, & reliquos Sanctæ Ecclesiæ Prælatos, & Clericos simul Senatatos, qui hæc lecturi sunt; ne me præsumptorem judicent aut temerarium, quasi Ego eos in Cathedris Sedentes, & Divinæ Philosophiæ Arcana Scientes Superbe coner instruere. Non, quæso, ita Existiment, sed hæc pie & equanimiter legant, atque Suscipiant. Opto enim, ut & ipsi omnes venerabiles Patres, & Domini, me quotidie proficiant in Christo Jesu Domino nostro; & ut Ecclesiæ Sanctæ Corpus, eorum temporibus, ordine congruo Corroboretur, & firmo pacis fadere jugiter perfruat.*

I am,

My Lord, &c.

† Baluzij Miscel. L. 4. p. 11.

F I N I S.



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