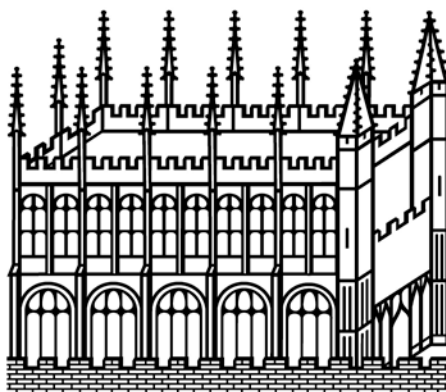




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THE TRIUMPH OF ISRAELITES OVER MOABITES,
OR PROTESTANTS OVER PAPISTS.

A

S E R M O N

PREACHED AT

GREAT TOTHAM in ESSEX,

On MAY 5, 1763.

Being the Day of

PUBLICK THANKSGIVING

FOR THE

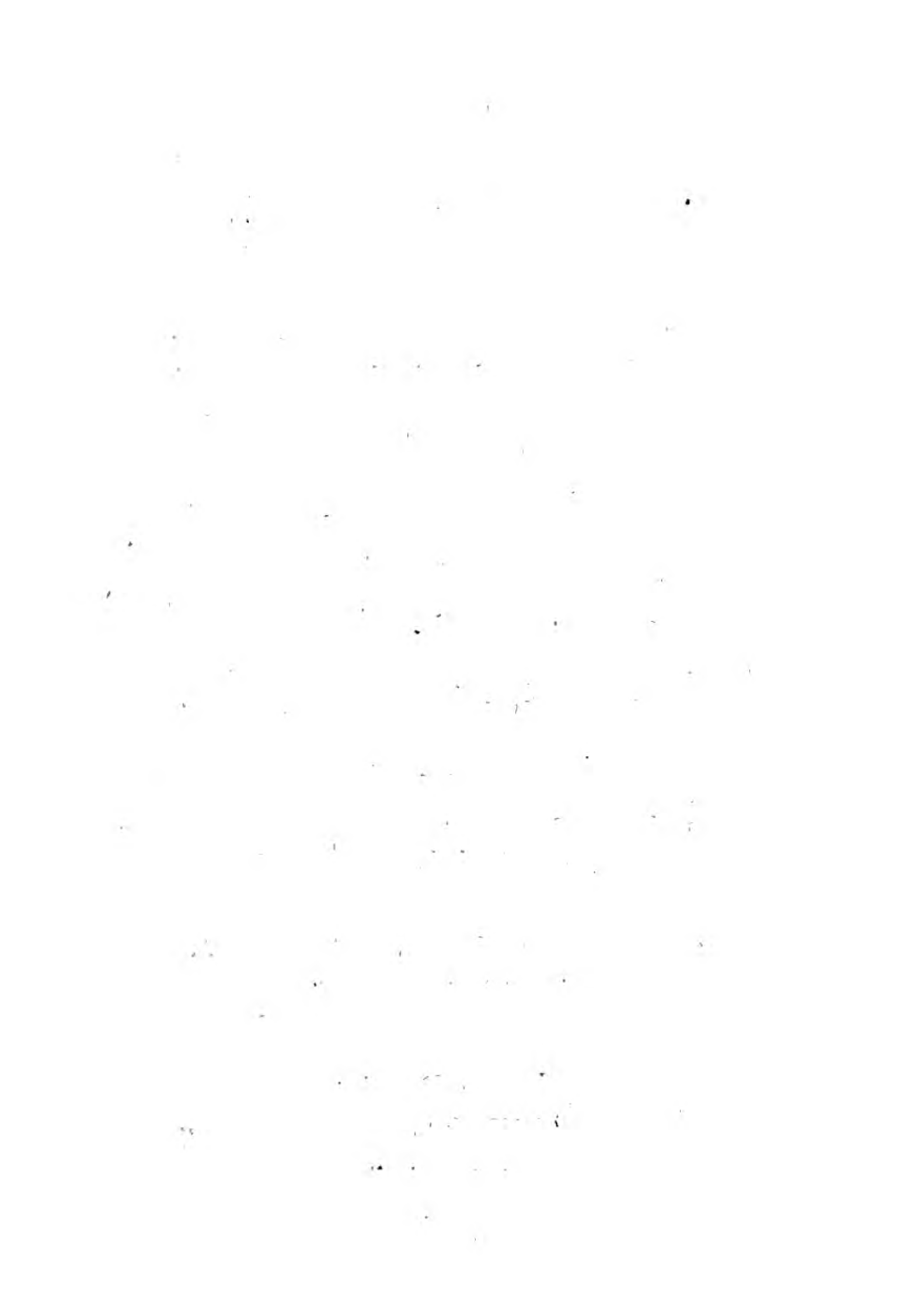
P E A C E.

By GRIFFITH WILLIAMS, M. A.
VICAR of the said Parish.

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IS A I A H xxv. 10.

For in this mountain shall the hand of the Lord rest, and Moab shall be trodden down under him, even as straw is trodden down for the dunghill.

WHAT is observable in these words, and applicable to the present occasion is this, that God's protection of his faithful people, and destruction of their enemies are here foretold, for the joy and consolation of all men everywhere, who in heart and life are true worshippers of him. His protection of his people is signified in the first part of the text,—“ In “ this mountain shall the hand of the Lord “ rest”—that is, his power and providence, and gracious presence shall be with his people to defend them, and take care of them.

The destruction of their enemies is implied in the latter part—“ Moab shall be trodden “ down under him, even as straw is trodden “ down for the dunghill.”

I. God's protection of his people. This includes their temporal, spiritual, and eternal deliverance from "all things that offend, and "from them that do iniquity, be they men "or devils," Matth. xiii. 41. As to their temporal deliverance, to which this day's solemnity chiefly confines my discourse, this promise or prophecy of it has been fulfilled on many occasions, and will be still fulfilling to the end of the world. It has been made good divers times, and in various instances to the people of God in this land, not to mention at present any other. The overthrow of the Spanish Armada in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, which was an attempt of the Papists against the people of God, the true Protestants, who are the primitive church of Christ revived, professing the very same religion that he has left us in his written word. The discovery of the gun-powder treason, another attempt of the Papists against us. The frustrating, by the glorious revolution, the design of the Papists to deprive us of our religion and liberties in King James the 2d's time. The quelling of one rebellion in 1716, and another in 1746; both of which had been contrived and fomented by the Papists against us. And in the late war, the effectual check that

that was given to their designs of invading us, notwithstanding all the mighty preparations the French had been making for that purpose. These are manifest instances of God's deliverance of his church and people in this land, from their blood-thirsty enemies the Papists, who constantly exercise their barbarity in one shape or other against Protestants, wherever they have power to do so: for proof of this, to go now no farther back than the last war, in the management of which they would take no example of humanity from their truly brave and generous conquerors, but murder and base cruelties have been their general practice towards English prisoners, and for no cause but meer hatred to Britons and Protestants in general. From God's protection of his people, which is the first point implied in the text, I pass on to

The IId—his destruction of their enemies implied in these words—" Moab shall be
 " trodden down under him, even as straw is
 " trodden down for the dunghill."—In which
 " words are to be considered, " The persons
 " here signified." " The notion by which
 " their judgment is expressed." " The cer-
 " tainty

“ tainty of their judgment, and by whom it
 “ is to be inflicted.”

1. The persons here signified, are all those who ever have been, or ever will be enemies to God and his faithful people, in any age or part of the world. Moab is the name here given them; because the Moabites were inveterate enemies to the Israelites, who at one time were the only people of God, and the only Protestants in the world, protesting against the idolatry of the Heathens round about them, as the true Christians do now against the idolatry of Papists and Heathens, and I may add, of Arians also, whose unscriptural distinction of supream and inferior religious worship, makes these last as arrant idolaters as the other two, that all along have founded their idolatry on the very same distinction. The Moabites were indeed allied to the Israelites, being the posterity of Lot, Abraham's nephew, but having degenerated from the faith of their father Lot, and falling into idolatry, they became the greatest enemies of the Israelites, as appears from the whole story of Balak King of Moab, Numb. xxii. &c.

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The Moabites were once conquered by David King of Israel ; but after some years they recovered their freedom, and it does not appear from history, that they were totally subdued, much less destroyed by the Israelites, to whom there was an express command given " not to distress the Moabites," Deut. ii. 9. Therefore we may conclude, that by Moab in the text, are meant all the enemies of God's people, whatever name or nation they are of. It is very certain, that tho' God may suffer such enemies to go on prosperously a great while against his true church and people, yet, beside the signal support and protection he oftentimes gives them in their conflicts thro' this world, he will triumphantly appear at the Last Day for the full and final deliverance of them, and destruction of their enemies. When Christ the head of his church shall appear in this world the second time without sin, Heb. ix. 28. then shall his and their enemies be made to feel the strokes of his vengeance, so as never to be able to rise again to molest his faithful people. " Moab, which " is a type of the enemies of God's people, " shall be trodden down under him, as straw " is trodden down for the dunghill." And
this

this is the notion by which God's judgment is expressed :

Which is the Second thing to be considered—" Moab shall be trodden down."

The phrase of treading down, or treading under foot, implies such severe taking of revenge, as reduces the enemy to a broken shattered condition. A full conquest of enemies is often thus expressed in scripture, as in Isaiah x. 6. where " God sends the Assyrian " against the people of his wrath, to tread " them down like the mire of the streets." And in Isaiah xxvi. 5, 6. " God, says he, " bringeth down the lofty city, and lay- " eth it low, the foot shall tread it down, " even the feet of the poor, and the steps of " the needy." The utter and final overthrow of Satan is thus expressed in Rom. xvi. 20. " The God of peace shall tread Satan " under your feet," that is, under the feet of God's church and people, who quit themselves like men in his cause, and thro' faith in Christ are strong and stedfast to resist the devil, knowing that such resistance will make him flee from them, Jam. iv. 7. and that ere long they shall have him under their feet, and

and for ever triumph over him. As for those who are not God's people but his enemies, viz. idolaters, profane swearers and cursers, sabbath-breakers, disobedient to lawful authority, murderers, whoremongers and adulterers, thieves and covetous, false witnesses and lyars, and such like: these do not tread down satan, but satan treads them down under his feet; being his willing slaves (for he could not force one of them) he leads them captive wherever he pleases; by holding up to one man an opportunity of gratifying his pride, lust, and wantonness; to another an opportunity of drunkenness and revellings; to another of cheating and thieving, he draws them after him into a habit of sinning, and by that chain (for habit is the only chain of sin) he drags them into everlasting misery: he first tempts them to disobey God, and if they comply with his suggestions, and persist in their disobedience, he then accuses them before God, as fit persons to be damned together with himself and his fellow-rebel angels.

From the fulness of the punishment that God will execute upon the enemies of him and his people, let us consider,

3dly, The certainty of this judgment,
 “ Moab shall be trodden down under him.”

That this is certain appears from hence, that God can and will do so. He can do so, tho’ they be fortified with never so many advantages, for what can be too hard for him who made all things? Therefore God that made them can destroy them. “ Who, says he, “ would set the briars and thorns against me “ in battle? I would go through them, I “ would burn them together,” Isa. xxvii. 4. A numerous host of enemies can no more stand before him, than briars and thorns before a consuming fire. Another argument that God can, is that he has done so. “ I “ destroyed the Amorite, says he, before my “ people Israel, whose height was like the “ height of cedars, and he was strong as “ oaks, yet I destroyed his fruit from above, “ and his roots from beneath,” Amos ii. 9. When Pharaoh oppressed the Israelites, God trod him down, and destroyed him in the red sea. In avenging his people’s quarrel, nothing has been able to stand before him.

Hence we may conclude, that he will do so still, for these following reasons,

1. Be-

1. Because of his invariable justice. God is one, and always consonant with himself; what he has done, he will do so still, for his justice is the same that ever it was, and his power the same; therefore in all his dispensations he is one, that is, ever like himself, as ready to take vengeance of the insolencies of men now as formerly; "He is always of one mind, and who can turn him?" Job xxiii. 13.

2. Because of the suitableness between sin and punishment. God's enemies trample all that is sacred under their feet; therefore God treads them under foot. They despise God, and every thing relating to him, his day, his name, his word and commandments, his ministers and his people, therefore God despises them, pours contempt upon them, and confusion upon all their concerns.

3. God will tread down his enemies, in order to vindicate his holiness, and undeceive headstrong sinners, who usually grow hardened in their sins if they find every thing goes well with them. The world, that is to say, those persons who are concerned for no other world but this, have a notion, that nothing can make them happy but what makes them

opulent and great. In their opinion, even wicked and unjust doings, if prosperous, are good and right. If such men are to appearance befriended by providence, and succeed beyond expectation, they begin to have other thoughts of themselves than their neighbours have of them. When "the workers of wickedness are set up, and they that tempt God are delivered," (Mal. iii. 15.) "they imagine that God is such an one as themselves," (Psal. l. 21.) and approves of their ways, otherwise he would not, as they think, be so kind to them, as to let them live and prosper, after they have for many years abused his holy name, by daily cursing and swearing, and obstinately persisted in breaking his other commandments as well as the third: God will therefore tread them down, and they will find themselves mistaken, when they read their sins in their punishment; when the "blaspheming tongue that was set on fire of hell," (Jam. iii. 6.) shall want a drop of water to cool it; when the body, the instrument of the soul's rioting in filthy lust and drunkenness, shall be raised out of the grave "to shame and everlasting contempt," (Dan. xii. 2.) Then will God effectually tread down
Moab,

Moab, viz. his enemies who would not have him to rule over them, Luke xix. 27.

4. God will tread down his enemies, to make a distinction between the righteous and the wicked, “ between those that serve him, “ and those that serve him not,” (Mal. iii. 18.) His enemies, those that serve him not, shall see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven, and themselves thrust out; Lazarus in Abraham’s bosom, and themselves in the burning lake. Then they shall change their note; then shall their odious blasphemy and ribaldry be driven back again down their throats; then shall they be forced to say with Pharaoh—The Lord is righteous, and so are his people, but we and our associates are wicked, and therefore deservedly wretched and contemptible.

There is another reason why God will tread down his enemies, viz. to beat down their pride. For it seems, “ the ungodly is “ so proud that he careth not for God, neither is God in all his thoughts,” (Psal. x. 4.) All wicked people are proud; proud towards God, but oftentimes mean and servile to men. God will give a check to the insolence of those
who

who abuse their power, and think they may do as they please, when they have no hindrance or rub in the way. " They do evil " because it is in the power of their hands, " (Mic. ii. 1.) they covet fields and houses, " and other men's properties, and take them " away by violence and dint of power," ver. 2. Neither honour nor honesty is to be had of them; they will do whatever they have a mind to, right or wrong, only because they have power in their hands. Such exactly was the behaviour of the French towards our fellow-subjects in America; in the midst of peace they perfidiously committed hostilities upon our defenceless people near the Ohio river, whom they attacked without any warning or declaration of war, and drove them out of their houses and possessions: which treachery and violence of the French, gave rise to the last war. But God has been pleased to put a stop to their power and pride; and as they had unjustly deprived others of their lands, and would have proceeded to further encroachments, so a great part of their own territory and its inhabitants, have, by the blessing of God upon our arms, been reduced to the obedience of our Sovereign. Thus has the Lord God restrained those by
acts

acts of his providence, whom no restraint of conscience, solemn oaths and treaties, could prevail upon to stand to their agreement.

Thus has the Almighty trodden them down whose boundless ambition would fain tread down all others. “ He has broke the power
“ of the ungodly and malicious, and helped
“ the injured to their right, that the man of
“ the earth be no more exalted against them,”
Psal. x. 20.

We may observe in the text that the Prophet does not say Moab shall be trodden down under Israel or any other nation, but under him who was mentioned before, *viz.* under the Lord : “ he shall tread down Moab under him
“ even as straw is trodden down for the dung-
“ hill :” which is not to be understood as if God should do it immediately by himself without the use of what are called second causes, that is, without employing men or some of his other creatures to do it, but that those who shall do it, will be instruments only in God’s hands by which he executes his vengeance on his and his people’s enemies, he being the first cause and chief agent in it, and consequently, that all the glory and praise is due to him only.

only. To make this plain, I shall prove briefly these three particulars.

1. That it is God who gives wisdom and counsel in our undertakings. 2. That it is God who gives courage and strength to put our designs in execution ; and as he gives them, so he also takes them away when he pleases. 3. That it is God who gives success to our enterprizes.

1. It is God that gives wisdom and counsel. This King David acknowledges, " The Lord " teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers " to fight," Psal. cxliv. 1. Other generals have their council of war to advise with, but God gives wisdom and counsel from himself to all that fight under him. As long as God endues men with counsel and wisdom, they cannot but prosper in every thing they undertake ; but when he is pleased to take away their wisdom and to befool their counsels, how quickly are they snared in the work of their own hands, Psal. ix. 16. This made David pray against the counsel of Ahitophel — " Lord, turn the " counsel of Ahitophel into foolishness." 2 Sam. xv. 31. And it is for the same reason that in the

the prayer used in our church, in the time of war and tumults, we pray that God would confound the devices of our enemies. It is but fit to pray against an adversary, that is always intriguing and aiming at our destruction. It is a christian duty to beg of God deliverance from such hands as are ready to fall in fury upon us. Safety to ourselves, families, and country, and success in a just cause was all that we prayed for ; and as we have prayed, so the Lord has heard us. 2. As wisdom and counsel in the management of military affairs is from the Lord, so is also courage and strength. “ The God of Israel is he that giveth strength
 “ and power unto his people,” Psal. lxviii. 35. So King David thought in the day that the Lord delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and says “ Thou hast girded me with
 “ strength unto the battle, them that rose up
 “ against me hast thou subdued under me,” 2 Sam. xxii. 40. We see it is God who gives courage ; it is he also that takes it away when he pleases ; so we read in Isa. xix. 16, 17.
 “ And in that day shall Egypt be like unto
 “ women, and fear because of the shaking
 “ of the hand of the Lord of Hosts, which
 “ he shall shake over it ; and the land of Judah shall be a terror to Egypt ; every one
 “ that

“ that maketh mention thereof, shall be afraid
 “ in himself.” To the same purpose ’tis said
 in Amos ii. 14, 16. “ The strong shall not
 “ strengthen his force, nor the mighty man
 “ deliver himself, but he that is courageous
 “ among the mighty shall flee away naked in
 “ the day of battle, saith the Lord ;” as much
 as to say, the stoutest shall find his heart fail
 and sink within him, and will run away leav-
 ing his armour and weapons behind him.
 Lastly, God does not only give courage, but
 also success to our enterprizes, and victory in
 battle. So Solomon says, “ the battle is not
 “ to the strong, nor the race to the swift,”
 Eccles ix. 11. that is, the strongest are not al-
 ways sure to get the victory, nor the swiftest
 to get the prize ; but in all these cases God gives
 such an issue as he thinks fit ; and blessed be his
 name for it, there has neither wisdom nor cou-
 rage been wanting among us in this last war ;
 the management and issue of which, has been
 so successful and glorious as to exceed even the
 most sanguine expectation.

Having explained all the parts of my text,
 I shall apply what has been said to the purpose
 of our assembling here this day.

From

From the foregoing observations on the text our thoughts are easily led to form a comparison between the Moabites and our enemies the French. The Moabites were idolaters, so are our enemies ; the French are Papists, and the Papists are idolaters ; and as they are idolaters they are God's enemies as well as ours. The Papists are enemies to God, because they do not worship God at all. He is not worshipped in a Popish Mass-house. 'Tis reported that in a neighbouring town there is such a house ; now, out of duty to God, and love to your souls entrusted to my care, I am bound to tell you that God is not worshipped in it at all : for he declares he will not be worshipped after the manner of the Papists. His first commandment is, " Thou shalt have no " other gods but me"—or besides me, or along with me. His second commandment is,—Thou shalt not make to thyself graven images or likenesses of any creatures whatever ; thou shalt not bow down to them nor worship them, under any notion or respect whatsoever. Any kind or any degree of worship, inward or outward, which is used as an act of religion, to any except the one living and true God is idolatry. This commandment brings it so low as meerly bowing to an image ; God counts

even that to be an act of religious worship, otherwise he would not have mentioned it, and he forbids it as no other than abominable idolatry. They who travel through France, and other Popish countries, will see enough of this bowing down to the Host, and to the image of the Virgin Mary, with a little Jesu in her arms; set up at gates and publick places in their churches, towns, and villages. It signifies nothing what the cringers and kneelers to images, do think or intend in their hearts; they break this commandment by only seeming to worship them; it is the outward shew or appearance of ascribing divine power to an image, or likeness, that is here forbid. Ignorant and illiterate persons are capable of passing a judgment upon outward appearance, and by the help of this commandment, they can easily confute a Papist, notwithstanding all his sophistical distinctions and evasions. They can tell him that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, chose to be cast into a burning fiery furnace, rather than fall down to the image which Nebuchadnezzar had set up, for they knew that falling down to it, or before it, was, in the sense of this commandment, owning it to be God, and serving it as such, Dan. iii. 18. All may see, who are not blinded by interest

terest and party attachment, that it is the safest way not to have any thing to do at all with images in religious worship, that it is dangerous to use them either as objects or means of worship ; God, who knows men's hearts, declares in this commandment, that such as do use any outward form of respect, address, and worship towards them, do in reality hate him who is the only true God, and therefore do not worship him at all ; for none that hate God can worship him. The Papists are equally guilty with the Moabites, in contravening and opposing the spirit of these two first commandments. Both had fooled away the notion of God's true being, and then they lost the sense of what is true devotion and worship towards him.

As the Moabites had alienated themselves from the true God by their idolatry, and deviating from the religion which their ancestor Lot had professed ; so the Papists and others who use idolatrous worship in any degree, are said in Scripture to be " estranged from God ;" Ezek. xiv. 5. " and to go a whoring after their own " inventions ;" Psal. cvi. 39. by their setting up rival deities and competitors with him in religious worship. Of such sort of religion

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which men frame to themselves agreeable to their own fancies, and not according to truth, God says — “ in vain do they worship me, “ teaching for doctrines the commandments “ and inventions of men ; ” as much as to say, “ I will not be worshipped in that manner ; I utterly reject all co-partnership in my worship ; I am a jealous God, jealous of my honour, I will not give my glory to another, nor share it with graven images, or any creature whatsoever.” And yet for all that God can say, the Papists will do so ; they will give his glory to another ; they will have other gods besides him, or along with him ; they will have angels, saints, Virgin Mary, relicks, host, crucifixes, to have a part at least in their divine worship. I call the creed of Pope Pius, and the decrees of the council of Trent to witness this. Of such objects of worship, God says, — “ an abomination is he that chooseth you,” Isa. xli. 24. An abomination to the true God, are all those people who make use of such false gods in any degree of religious worship, either as intercessors, mediators, remembrancers, or helps in prayer ; their devotion is impious and profane, and therefore no worship at all to God. By acting in this manner, the Papists have renounced the true God, the God of

of the christians; they have transgressed his laws, changed his ordinance, broken his everlasting covenant, Isa. xxiv. 5. and so are at present entirely separated from him. The covenant being thus broke by them, they are at variance with God, and have so great dislike to his holy word the Scripture, in which the articles of that covenant between God and man are contained, that there does not seem in Papists, even here in England, the least desire of being reconciled to him: nor indeed can they ever be reconciled to him, nor admitted into his covenant in Christ, unless they entirely unpope themselves, deny infallibility to be in any but God alone, hold the Holy Scripture as the only rule of faith, acknowledge no other living guide than the Holy Ghost the Lord and giver of life, and unless they cease worshipping devils and idols, which St. John joins together, as being one and the same worship, Rev. ix. 20. While the Papists continue thus out of covenant with God, they are no more his people than the Moabites were. You see how exactly the comparison holds between the enemies of Israel and the enemies of Britain. The Moabites being idolaters, were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel. The French Papists being idolaters, are aliens from

from the true catholick church of Christ, the protestant church, so called from its protesting against superstition, and all idolatries, both Popish and Pagan, as the Holy Scripture also does. There is no other catholick church in the world but the protestant church, consisting of faithful people, worshipping God in spirit and in truth, according to the revelation he has made of his will. The Papists are not catholicks, but cacolicks. In our statute-laws they are not called catholicks, or Roman catholicks, but Papists. Likewise in the canons and constitutions and homilies of our church, they are called Papists, or Popish, or Romish, but never catholicks. They love to be called catholicks, a name which does not belong to them; and they hate to be called Papists, which is their true and proper denomination; for which reason every Protestant should take care to give it them, especially when speaking of them before some ignorant credulous people, who remember that the catholick church is mentioned in our creed, and whom the Papists therefore aim to seduce with the sound of the word catholick, and with their confident boastings, that they, and they only, are the catholick church; whereas

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in truth, they have not been of that church for about a thousand years past, viz. ever since the time that idolatry was introduced among them.

So far are the Papists from being catholicks, that they are not christians, but anti-christians; for they are strongly set against Christ and his gospel; they have degraded him into a more abject state than the Mahometans have done, by subjecting him to the command of a woman, viz. the virgin Mary, whom they call queen of heaven, and pray to her to command her son, thereby implying a denial that "all power has been given to Christ in heaven and in earth," (Matt. xxviii. 18.) and so destroying his kingly office. They usurp such power over his word the holy scripture, as to enslave it to the arbitrary interpretation, false glosses, and adulterated versions of the Pope, and his councils, thereby destroying Christ's prophetic office. They oppose the sacrifice of their own mass, to the true sacrifice of Christ; they rob him of the efficacy of his merits, by setting up the merits of men, and some of the vilest of men in conjunction with, if not in the room of his, thereby destroying his priestly office. As much as in them lies,

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they

they annihilate his function of Saviour of the world, and the only mediator between God and man. They offer also the like indignity to the Holy Ghost. They say, they use images, crucifixes, &c. as helps to their devotion and remembrance of God. But the Scripture, which always speaks contrary to Papists, says, "they forget God their Saviour, "by using images and likenesses to worship "him by," Psal. cvi. 20, 21. So that the use of them is not a help but a hurt to devotion; it is the Holy Ghost alone without the conjunction of any creature that helps our devotion, "for he helpeth our infirmities," Rom. viii. 26. it is his peculiar office to assist us in that respect, and to influence our addresses to God, that for matter and manner they may be agreeable to his will, by enlightening our minds, and purifying the thoughts of our hearts, without which we cannot be sincerely devout. The employing of pictures, images, crucifixes, &c. as helps of devotion, is substituting them in the room of the Holy Spirit. Papists have, as far as they can, rendered useless the function of our Saviour Christ: so they vacate the office of the Holy Ghost, by excluding him from assisting our devotion, and by giving that work
to

to images, crucifixes, and such like trumpery. This is that species of idolatry which is more particularly committed against the Holy Ghost. Tremble, O ye Papists, at the thoughts of sinning against the Holy Ghost, and repent if perhaps the impiety of your hearts may be forgiven you! Can such a set of people be called christians? No surely; they are anti-christians in as strict a sense as Mahometans, Jews, and Heathens are so. Do I say this of them? Gregory the Ist, one of their own popes, and according to them infallible, was of the same opinion, and said, that whosoever claimed the title of universal bishop is antichrist. The pope of Rome claims that title, and affects even higher titles than that; he is acknowledged to be the head and cement of the Papists; and if the head is antichrist, proved to be so by what has been said, the members and retainers to him, and hangers on him, must be antichristians. *Q. e. d.*

As the Moabites hated the Israelites and their worship, so do the Papists hate us and our religion; and if they had it in their power, would leave neither liberty nor property, nor life to any Protestant. Witness their plots and massacres in Ireland, France,

Piedmont, the Netherlands, and in England. Such horrid executions their priests and doctors count highly meritorious; Bellarmine a cardinal, and one of their casuists, says, that if it is possible to root out Protestants (whom he calls hereticks) without doubt they are to be destroyed root and branch: another of them advises Papists who dwell in protestant countries, as England, Saxony, and others, to be cautious in exercising this right, and not to attempt it if the Protestants are more powerful than they: in that case the Papists are to be quiet; and who does not thank them for it? but yet, even here in England, if any Protestant once seduced by popish priests, with their numerous aiders and setters, both men and women, should afterwards find to his cost what a wrong step he has made, and shew any inclination to leave them, they give him to understand, that they do not want ways and methods even in England, to quiet (as they call it) a troublesome person, and such they reckon any one who forsakes their party *. Their hands are indeed restrained from persecuting Protestants openly here in England,

* See Mr. A———d's motives for forsaking Popery, and re-embracing the Protestant religion, in which he had been educated. Sold by E. Comyns at the Royal-Exchange.

England, but their hearts always retain a secret rancour against them, and they are not secure from the private effects of their malice. “*Christiani ad leones,*” or what is tantamount, ever was, and ever will be the cry of Rome pagan or papal, until it be destroyed by fire suddenly in one hour, Rev. xviii.

The corruption of the Papists, and their cruelty towards Protestants, wherever they have power to exercise it, are all along described in St. John’s revelation. The Pope’s church is there stiled the synagogue of satan, where satan is worshipped and not God. Idolatrous worship is said in Scripture to be the worship of devils; the Psalmist, speaking of some of the Israelites, who had forsook the right way of worshipping God and turned idolaters, says of them, “that they worshipped the idols of Canaan, and offered their sons and their daughters unto devils,” (Psal. cvi. 36.) Protestants who turn Papists become idolaters; and if they have a family, they offer their sons and their daughters unto devils.

This is the sad condition of Papists here in England, whether profelites or not; for their
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spiritual state here is quite different from that of Papists abroad, for whose want of liberty of conscience, and free discussion of the holy Scripture, divine mercy will make allowance : here in England the Papists are wilfully ignorant, abroad they are not ; here they are willing to be deceived, abroad they are not ; here they are so determined upon their own and children's ruin, that they choose to have their understanding darkened ; they shut their eyes hard against the light that shines upon them from the holy scripture, and their ears against hearing it publickly read, and rightly preached and expounded in our churches.

Infinitely better is our spiritual condition, who continue firm and steady in the communion of our protestant church of England : for here we have our minds enlightened with the “ knowledge of the true God, and Jesus “ Christ whom he hath sent,” while many thousands of Jews, Turks, Heathens and Papists, do wander in the dark labyrinth of ignorance and error, superstition and idolatry. We have the privilege of entering into covenant with God thro’ Christ in baptism ; he on one part promising to be our God, and we on the other engaging to be his people, and
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to act as becomes that relation; and if we should happen to fail in our performance of any part of it, and do not obstinately persist in that breach of covenant, we then have a promise of pardon thro' Christ, upon our true repentance; and we receive the other sacrament, that of the Lord's-Supper, the memorial of Christ's offering himself a sacrifice for our sins, which is appointed for the renewal of our obedience to God: and to strengthen us in the same for the future, the assistance of the Holy Spirit is provided for us, and will be given us if we only desire it, and heartily pray to God for it. No Ave Maries, but this divine aid alone enlivening our faithful endeavours will render our sincere obedience in this life so far acceptable thro' Christ's merits, that we shall at our resurrection from the dead be admitted into the only good, polite, and desirable society which the universe affords, joyfully living together in the mansions of glory, and partaking of the pleasures which are at God's right hand for evermore. To a people having these privileges and glorious hopes, and such have all they who worship God in spirit, and as a spirit, for that is worshipping him in truth according to his own strict command, St. Peter might well address him-

himself thus—"Ye are a chosen generation,
 " a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a pecu-
 " liar people that ye should shew forth the
 " praises of him who hath called you out of
 " darkness into his marvellous light," (1 Pet.
 ii. 9.) viz. the light of Christ's gospel, which
 the Papists have not, and do not generally de-
 sire to have. Hence it is, that like Paul when
 a persecutor, they are exceedingly mad against
 us, for refusing to plunge along with them in-
 to the blind implicit faith and darkness of Po-
 pery. It is of the essence of idolatry to
 hate the true worshippers, who worship God
 in spirit and in truth, as we Protestants profess
 to do. So Ahab the idolatrous king of Israel
 hated Micaiah the prophet of the Lord, 1 Kings
 xxii. 8. So Papists have more inveteracy
 against Protestants, than against Heathens, Jews
 and Turks. The Pope and casuists of his
 church do vent more bitterness and furious-
 ness, curses and anathemas, against the faith-
 ful people of Christ's church, than against all
 the world besides. Thus the Papists with
 their Pope are towards us what the Moabites
 with their Balaam were towards Israel. They
 have a mortal hatred to our faith, to our King,
 the defender of it, and to all who bear true
 allegiance to him. But by the blessing of God,
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they have been hitherto prevented from executing their wicked designs against him and his kingdoms. Their annual curses and excommunications solemnly uttered against us, do not hurt us, but themselves; “for he that dwelleth in heaven laughs them to scorn,” Psal. ii. 4.

Our popish enemies abroad, with the Pope’s blessing on their armaments, have not been able to invade us, and bring the horrors of war into our country, and our popish enemies at home have been forced to lie quiet; (for the Papists at home are in heart and principle, as much enemies to our King, religion, liberties and properties, as the Papists abroad are) but by the care and protection of Providence, neither one nor the other have had power to hurt us. And their power to hurt us will be still less, if, not omitting our thankfulness to God, we prudently improve the advantages we have gained over those inveterate enemies of our King and country, by the glorious victories we have in the course of the late war obtained both by sea and land, which brought forth the desirable peace we now enjoy. Notwithstanding the clamour raised against this peace, I have the satisfaction to assure

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you,

you, that the greatest part of our nobility and gentry, both in and out of parliament, do approve of it, and upon the whole think it to be a very advantageous one. What disposition those persons are of, and what views they entertain, who would have the war continued, themselves best know, and we also know, that if their wishes are according to their voices, they cannot without hypocrisy thrust their heads into a church on this day. But I hope they will give us leave to praise God for what we esteem a blessing, altho' they will not give us the pleasure of joining with us in the hearty acknowledgment of it.

They who are unwilling to pay their tribute of thanksgiving to God on this joyful occasion, must be insensible of the happiness which the whole nation enjoys under his present Majesty. By what we know ourselves, and learn from history, no nation in the world, not even the Jewish in its highest splendor, under the prosperous reigns of David and Solomon, could boast of the blessings we possess, flowing partly from our excellent constitution, and partly from our truly religious King, who would have all his people be the people of God, really as well as nominally; and they
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all would be so, if his own admirable example could prevail against ungodly customs and fashions, which are the strongholds of vice and immorality; a King, who governs us by the known laws of the land, who has not a thought or wish, but what tends to the good of his people; who extends his care to the remotest parts of the world, having given tranquillity not only to Europe, but to Asia, Africa, and America. May God grant him in health and wealth long to live, and see the good effects of his labours for the public welfare, by obliging our enemies to keep the peace they have made with us, which, we have now more reason than ever to think, is built upon a lasting foundation, by reason of the important acquisitions in America, which have very much reduced the French influence in that country.

May our enemies see that the Lord of hosts is against them; that they have provoked him to jealousy with their own inventions of images and relics, host and crucifixes; that these have no power to save them, when the Almighty thinks fit to interpose in behalf of those kings and states, who profess his holy and eternal truth, viz. the gospel of Christ in

its purity. In our former wars, we used to make alliance with one popish nation against another, which too much resembled the Israelites making alliance with the Egyptians; or Jehoshaphat king of Judah, who adhered to God's true religion, entering into a league with Ahab the idolatrous king of Israel; and we like him have been generally sufferers by such sort of confederates; we got little help, but much hurt by joining with them. But in the last war, God be thanked, we were connected with Protestants, having had no enemies but Papists, and we have prospered the better for it.

From the wonderful success that Protestants have had over Papists in the last war, at the beginning of which, the ruin of the Protestant interest was projected; and from the banishment of the Jesuits (whom the Pope acknowledges to be the chief support of his see) out of Portugal, France, and the Prussian dominions, we may hope to see a way opened for the free preaching of God's word, not only in America, but also in that part of Europe which is now popish. In every region where the Gospel of Christ has come, attended with the free enjoyment of his holy word
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and sacraments, which are the food of our souls, and nourish them up to eternal life, it has constantly brought to pass the downfall of popery, “that shameful thing,” Jer. xi. 13. that cannot stand before the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, Eph. vi. 17.

Let the late happy events be matter of rejoicing and encouragement to the faithful people of God every where, especially to those who living in popish countries, have not bowed the knee to Baal, God having reserved to himself thousands of such, even in those countries : whatever they suffer at present, and a great deal they do suffer in one shape or other, from popery’s persecuting rage, where, alas ! its power is equal to its rage, yet let them not despond, but comfort themselves, that a time of refreshing will assuredly come from the Lord, Acts iii. 19. Yea, that such sufferings are a presage of deliverance, and of their approaching establishment in the free exercise of Christ’s holy religion : Amen, “ Lord Jesus, come quickly ;” let truth at length prevail over falsehood, and cause the “ idols to be cast to the moles and to the bats,” Isaiah ii. 20. Such false objects or means of worship being fit only for those who love dark-

darkness rather than light. May this great blessing of general peace give joy to the whole world, not only by bettering its condition as to temporal concerns, but by being a means of spreading the glad tidings of eternal salvation from one end of it to the other, that all the kingdoms of this world may become the kingdoms of our Lord, Rev. xi. 15.

Upon taking a review of God's late doings towards us, we may say with the Prophet—"the hand of the Lord shall be known towards his servants, and his indignation towards his enemies," (Isa. lxvi. 14.) whose malice, if it had been suffered to fall in fury upon our land, would have been of all outward calamities the most grievous, worse than famine, worse than pestilence, as you may see in David's choice, 2 Sam. xxiv. 13, 14. We must be blind not to see the hand of God stretched out of late in our defence. We must be unreasonable as well as ungrateful not to confess his special providence directing our public affairs, and producing the series of deliverances and victories we have obtained in the last war; noble works which we have heard with our ears, but our fathers could not have told us of the like that happened in their days, or in the
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old time before them ; events that were confessedly uncommon, scarce expected by any, and despaired of by most people a few years ago. Let us therefore acknowledge, but with a deep sense of our own undeservings, that it was not our own arm that did such great things for us, but the Lord's right hand, and his arm, and the light of his countenance, because he had a favour unto us, and we had no merit to answer it. It is God who has trodden down his and our enemies, those Moabites, Papists, idolaters, under his feet, broken their measures, blasted their ambitious designs, and disappointed all their hopes. If we do not acknowledge this, we are worse than the Heathens, who always ascribed the success of their arms to their fictitious deities. Shall we Christians deny our late victories and conquests, gained through thousands of difficulties, and oftentimes with a handful of men against a very great number, to be the operations of God, the supreme contriver, mover, and director of them ?

Gratitude does not consist only in verbal acknowledgment of God's mercies. The tongue indeed must do its part, but that reaches no further than words. Something must be done

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as well as said. God's benefits to us are not words but deeds; and our thankfulness to him will be found short, if it reach not beyond words to deeds. To learn what is to be done by us, we must consider why God did suffer these popish enemies to rise up against us, and why he delivered us from them, by worsting them in the late war. 'Twas for our sins that we had enemies, and 'twas that we might avoid sin we are delivered from them. Every mercy as well as judgment has this voice—sin no more—do nothing wilfully that you know to be an offence to God. Deliverance from distress is given us for amendment. But if, instead of improving this blessing of peace now restored to us, to the glory of God, the good of ourselves and others, we abuse it to pride and vanity, luxury and riot, contempt of God, and neglect of holy ordinances, let us assure ourselves it will prove to us no blessing at all, but an aggravation of our guilt and misery, bringing heavier judgments, and raising mightier enemies against us, than we have hitherto felt. If we would be so thankful as we ought, we must not only cease to do what we know to be evil, but we must also learn to do well. The end of all God's mercies is to lead us to a penitent, virtuous, and religious

ligious life. This is the right giving of thanks, the best return we can make to God, and the best esteemed by him. This will render our thankfulness what it should be, persevering and perpetual.

Gratitude is not the business of a day, but of our whole life. The benefits of this peace are great, and probably lasting; why should our thankfulness be short-lived? but so it generally is; our affections are warm in entertaining a benefit that is new and fresh, but a little time cools them. We would probably have been otherwise affected, had we by our own experience known and felt the miseries which accompany that terrible sort of war, "war in the gates," Judges v. 8. an enemy doing "evil in our sanctuaries and habitations," Psal. lxxiv. 4. If the goods and properties of our protestant allies in Germany, and of our fellow-subjects in America, have been made a plunder, and their lands laid waste, at the same time that we have remained unmolested in our houses and possessions, are our thanks to be less, and of shorter continuance than theirs? We have not smarted at all, under the hands of our cruel enemies; the highest gratitude ought therefore to kindle in

our hearts towards our almighty Deliverer, who has scattered our enemies that delight in war ; and our zeal in serving him upon earth, should not end but with our lives.

We do not want arguments to enforce the duration of our thankfulness ; the intermission of our gratitude, and the omission of our service and obedience to God, will strip us both of the benefits of this honourable and advantageous peace, and of the hopes of the like happy deliverance from war for the future. God has indeed broken and trodden down our enemies for this time ; but if we forget his mercy, by obstinately persisting in irreligion and wickedness, using his great name oftener in curses and oaths, than in prayers and praises, dealing fraudulently and wrongfully by our neighbours, and living in rioting and drunkenness, chambering and wantonness, he will raise them up again, to chastise us for our offences. Altho' our arms have been victorious now, yet God the Lord of Hosts, and the only giver of victory, can infatuate our counsels, break our forces, and make us fall a prey to our enemies another time.