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TO THE REVEREND

THE MASTER, THE PRESIDENT, AND MR. STORY.



GENTLEMEN,

AS the period is arrived, when it is more agreeable to deliver our sentiments in writing, than by a personal attendance, we communicate to you the result of the journey to Weston.

Dr. T, who had long been greatly concerned for the state of the College, confirmed to the Gentlemen, deputed to confer with him, the approbation he had previously given of Mr. N's becoming a fellow. And they received from him every encouragement they could possibly expect. But they were sensible of the very infirm state of the Dr's constitution; and the inclemency of the season was alarming.—They were apprehensive of the event of his compliance with the cruel requisition of the Master, and his associates; and they determined to suffer a devolution of the fellowship, rather than urge his attendance at a scrutiny.—A sense of gratitude for past services; every principle of humanity admonished them not to hazard the health—perhaps the life of a most respectable and an aged Member; who, with our late excellent Master, had nobly signalized himself, in supporting the freedom of Gonyville-and-Caius, against the usurpations of its last tyrant.

We,

We, therefore, submit to the consequent evils of a devolution to the Master.—We have been witnesses to infringements on the privileges of the Fellows; we have seen the rights of the society attacked, in the most unconstitutional manner, to strengthen a party; and, *now*, a system of Collegedespoticism—founded on the dark principles of ignorance and servility—receives its establishment.

By the firmness of opposition, we have suspended, for a while, an event, as fatal, we apprehend, to the prosperity of the College; as to the happiness of its members.—It was our intention to prevent it.

To accomplish this, we adopted an expedient, of advantage to the second candidate in succession; and which promised, beyond every other, to restore peace to the society; and give stability to its interests.—We were desirous of, immediately, electing a gentleman, who has not reproached the conduct of a majority, that, lately, stood up in defence of the rights of their community---who is not likely to reproach them, for endeavouring to support the form of government, established by statute; and who has, on no occasion, behaved to them with contempt and insult.

Mr. N's candour, and discernment will lead him to suspend his judgement on points, which he has not maturely examined.

amined. We are persuaded, we shall never hear from him, the following declaration ---“ *Whatever I have formerly said of independance, I now disavow it all*.*” Such a declaration from a *Christian priest!*---the subject of a free state---supposes a mind prepared, ignobly, to receive the distinctions of monkish fervility.---Our acquaintance with Mr. N. is but slender; yet sufficient to induce us to believe, that he understands the noble privileges of tempered freedom---the root of every civil virtue---and that he feels the sentiment which it inspires---a happy pledge of an attentive concern for the interests of *this* society.

But his immediate election does not coincide with a plan of arbitrary government; and the reins of power, are, by the two faithful ministers, graciously resigned into the hands of their master. Such an act promises support to the pretensions of the President; and flatters the concealed design~~x~~ of his *dignified friend*, to which Dr. Smith is, yet, a stranger; and it is the last *consistent* service which *a Story* can do for the College.

From this manœuvre, every hope of enlivening the gloom of our retirement expires:---a new æra commences, the first act of which---in harmonious agreement with a series of unconstitu-

* Mr. Bond's declaration before Messrs. Smith and Bland in August last.

tional operations---furnishes a pledge of future discordancy.---
 The *Master's favourite* advances ; but, with ungraceful step.
 Against the combined efforts of *five* Fellows ; and the united
 wishes of *a majority*, he sneaks into the society, under his pa-
 tron's wing, supported by his *two* friends---*Par nobile fratrum*.

By this spurious introu^dction, the Master manifests his
 disregard to the interests of the College, to which he owes
 every service, which a sense of great, and numerous obliga-
 tions can suggest.----Mr. W. independently of his behaviour,
 and ductile qualities, is, on account of his preferment, and
 large expectations, ineligible ; according to the fairest con-
 struction of our statutes ; and all his juniors will suffer by so
 unjustifiable an interruption to their succession.

Gentlemen of fortune are inattentive to the concerns of
 eleemosynary institutions. If they live not in these retirements,
 they do not readily acknowledge any duties arising from their
 situation. Like those, whose implicit services are purchased
 by a master, they see, with indifference, infringements on
 the privileges of the Fellows. The^y laugh at the distresses of
 a few residents, struggling to maintain the freedom of their
 community ; and though no more than a single vote be re-
 quisite, they will not give it, to save the constitution of their
 College, from the hands of an imperial master---No *recent*
instance is wanted to confirm these facts.

By

By accepting so humiliating a favour, the *Master's Fellow* does not disgrace the *fair* hand that confers it. But he evinces qualities on which we look with concern---a meanness of spirit; and a principle of avaricious accumulation. The latter indicates the spring of the machine; and each is a certain prognostic of its *passive* operations.

From an opposition of sentiments, and of conduct, endless dissensions must ensue. The groundless pretensions of physicians to College-preferment---supported by the Master, only to divide the friends of the opposition; and to strengthen a growing party---must lead to a termination, fatal to the prosperity of the College. In default of the votes of a majority, the power of presenting to our livings will be suspended, the succession to fellowships be interrupted; and the number of admissions be diminished---unless the President should adopt some *new* principles; or the *growing* powers of reason lead him to the conviction of the injustice of his pretensions.

Having been unsuccessful in our design of effecting Mr. N's immediate election; securing the freedom of our little state, and preserving its honour; nothing remains to be done, but to vindicate our conduct; and to guard the minds of succeeding candidates from the effects of misrepresentation.

We promise, therefore, an accurate delineation of the state of the College.—In the execution of this part of our plan; each transaction of the Master (which shall *speedily* be legible, if printed characters can make it so) will shew to the candid few, who may read the narrative, which party has acted on principles of duty; and merits approbation; or which has drawn upon itself disgrace.—The future members of this divided society may discern, from the perusal, the steps which have lead to a period, that threatens an alteration, in the form of our monastic government; by affording a play to the destructive passion of arbitrary power—a passion, encouraged by the papal institutions; but inconsistent with the principles of a seminary, founded to promote the noblest purposes—the advancement of learning, and the cultivation of virtue.

We shall be glad, if we can, yet, convince the Master, of the pernicious tendency of projects of *mimetic* despotism to debase the liberal sentiments of youth, who are to act under a free government. We do not despair of convincing the *physical student*, of the inconsistency of his pretensions with the institution of this seminary; the interests of which he is under the most sacred obligation to promote—assuredly we shall convince every other reader. We still indulge the doubtful hope of awakening *a spark* of sensibility in the breast of a man, who boasts, that “ he has had the Master’s
sanction

sanction for each of his anomalous performances," and, "that he has uniformly trodden in the Master's steps"—an awakened sensibility would reflect a lustre on the moral powers of human nature, if it could be so far improved, as to lead *a Story* to Melton, through the moistened path of *Attrition!*

Alas! *Gentlemen*, should we be unable to do for you, respectively, such christian services; the approaching reign will, probably, be distinguished by unconstitutional measures more numerous than those, that have disgraced the former period, and we shall expect to be harrassed by a variety of new manœuvres, and capricious evolutions. But do not mistake our characters; no treatment will induce us to enlist into your service; nor weaken the force of that liberal spirit, by which we have, hitherto, opposed the progress of your career, and whatever your passions may impel you to execute, you shall receive from us (all that monarchs have to bestow) our pity, our forgiveness, and our prayers.

Though often at the expence of an interruption in our happiness; and at the hazard of our good name, from the effusions of malevolence, our narrative will shew, that we have been ever attentive to discharge our duty, in a situation, to which a destiny severe confines us. And though we have been unsuccessful in the arduous attempt, of doing an *essential* service to the College; we experience no relaxation of that
intrepid

intrepid spirit, which has conducted us to this honourable period. And we receive a reward, of which disappointment cannot defeat us—we enjoy more than the tranquility of resignation. The consciousness of having, uniformly, acted from a principle of duty, diffuses over the mind, a serenity, a vivacity, unknown in a *superior station*, where the dark, and violent passions of *unlimited power*, and *implacable resentment*, spread an unvaried gloom around, though they be hid from public view, under the cautious semblance of *christian gentleness* and *charity*!

To men, whose moral powers are not debased by an indiscriminate regard to private interest, **PROBITY IS HAPPINESS**—That sentiment opens in the mind a source of enjoyment, superior to what a usurper feels, who has, successfully, invaded the rights of his peers; and whose victorious ensign is waved by the hand of **DISGRACE**.

We remain the faithful Friends,

Of the College of Gonville-and-Caius,

Dec. 9th, 1774.

J. SMITH,
S. REEVE,
J. F. SQUIRE.