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A  
S E R M O N

Preach'd *Decemb. 2.* the first Sunday  
in Advent, 1722.

In the Parish Church of  
*POTTERSPURY* in *Northamptonshire*,

U P O N T H E  
Augmentation of that poor Vicarage,

By the Royal Bounty of

Q U E E N *A N N E*.

Occasion'd by a Legacy of Two Hundred  
Pounds thereunto Bequeath'd

By Mrs. *A L F O R D*,  
a Pious Widow lately Deceas'd.

---

By *EDWARD COOKE*, M. A. Vicar of the  
same, and of *Eston Neston* in the same County,  
and Chaplain to the Right Honourable *Sophia*,  
Lady Dowager *Lempster*.

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L O N D O N :

Printed for *JOHN WYAT* at the *Rose* in *St. Paul's*  
Churchyard. MDCCXXIII.





LUKE I. part of the 46 and 48 Verses.

*My Soul doth magnify the Lord.  
For he hath regarded the low estate of  
his handmaiden.*



**T**HIS is that divine Hymn of Thanksgiving which the Blessed Virgin sung, when she receiv'd the glad some Tidings of becoming the Mother of the Son of GOD, and giving Birth to the Saviour of the World. Tho' she was of the Royal Line and Stock of *David*, yet was that Family at that time entirely gone to decay, and reduc'd almost to the last extremity, when the nearest in Blood was a poor despis'd Virgin.

But that which hath determin'd me at present to the choice of these Words, and I hope without any Injury offer'd unto them, is the late Augmentation of this Poor Vicarage with two Hundred Pounds, by the Royal Bounty of Queen *Anne*, occasion'd by a Legacy of two

Hundred Pounds thereunto bequeath'd by Mrs. *Alford*, a Widow lately deceas'd; which excellent Matron, to all other Virtues, added a large and diffusive Charity; remitted her Treasure to the other World, and secur'd a Reversion there, where she was sure her Money put out, at long run, wou'd turn to the best Account. For the only Way to render perishable Goods eternal, is to secure them in Heavenly Acts of Charity and Mercy; our Treasure laid up there, neither Violence, nor Fraud can take from us, nor Time, nor Misfortune destroy.

*My Soul doth magnify the Lord.*

*For he hath regarded the low Estate of his Hand-maiden.*

As this Hymn was sung by the Blessed Virgin to give Praise and Glory to God, in that he had been pleas'd to exalt her of low Degree; so may this Church, with humble Pre-  
sumption, make use of the same, to express her Thanks to the same Fountain of all Power, and Author of all Good, for being thus regarded in her indigent and destitute Condition; for being thus distinguish'd by the Alms and charitable Benevolence of the Liberal and Merciful; for being thus enrich'd by the Royal Bounty.

*My Soul doth magnify the Lord.*

*For he hath regarded the low estate of his Hand-maiden.*

The mean Endowments of our Parochial Cures is well known to proceed from those Depredations that were made on them by the Monasteries

nasteries in former Ages. The numerous Grants of impropriated Livings to those Monastic Foundations, is the principal Cause of all our Wants. Those sacrilegious Nurseries of Ignorance and Sloth, had made entire Havock of the Church of God, and laid waste his dwelling Places.

Thus this Living was usurp'd and alienated from the Parish Priest, and appropriated to enrich a Cell of Monks; being granted away by *Richard II.* to a Convent of *Carthusians* near *Coventry*, dedicated to *St. Anne*. By which means the Parochial Rector for ever after became Vicar, or Perpetual Curate, with a poor pitiful Stipend, who originally was the true Proprietor of the whole. And at the Reformation it was again granted away by *Henry VIII.* to one *John Clark*, a common Trooper, to him and his Heirs for ever, for the Service by him done in taking Prisoner *Lewis de Erliding*, Earl of *Longueville*, a Traytor to the Crown. This *John Clark* had also at the same Time the Honour of Knighthood conferr'd upon him. But that Family has long since been entirely reduc'd, the last of them being buried at the Charge of this Parish, as most of you here remember. An Argument to confirm the Observation that has been frequently made, how unprosperous such Alienations have often prov'd, and what a secret Curse they have deriv'd upon the Possessions of those that have revell'd in the Spoils  
of



of our Church, and triumph'd in the Contempt and Misery of the Parochial Clergy.

And here I think I have a proper Opportunity of observing, and without Offence, I hope, with how much Injustice the Historians of those Times have ascrib'd to *Henry VIII.* the glorious Work of the Reformation. Many Parts of *Europe* at that Time, as well as this Kingdom were generally weary of the *Roman* Court and Church, and dispos'd to embrace those Doctrines which *Luther* and his Followers had universally spread thro' the Northern Parts. *Henry VIII.* was an Instrument only by chance, and possibly with little other View than to gratify his own insatiable Love of Power, Cruelty and Oppression. He threw off the Pope's Supremacy indeed, but it was only because it was a Clog upon his own Power and Passions. He retain'd every Corruption beside, and became a cruel Persecutor of the Church. The Returns that were made every Year from hence to the Court of *Rome* were scandalous and enormous to the last Degree : And such an extravagant and expensive Homage to *St. Peter's* Chair did deserve to be severely scourg'd. But a total Demolition of so many rich Abbies and Monasteries all to be swallow'd up in secular Uses, was a Punishment vastly disproportionable to the Offence. To reform the Religion and the Manners of those Places, nay, to have seiz'd the Lay Fees as a Forfeiture to the Crown, and to have restor'd the Tithes and  
Glebe

Glebe as the Patrimony of the Church, had been a glorious Work, and such as never can be enough applauded; but to lay them all waste, and seize their Revenues without Distinction, was such a Method of Reforming, as is not to be parallel'd in any Age or Country of the World, wherever Christianity has flourish'd. And we read how it succeeded with that Prince. For tho' he had enrich'd himself with the ample Spoils of the Church, and fill'd again those Coffers his Father had left him well stor'd, and he had long since emptied, yet he died as poor as any Prince who ever sat upon the *English* Throne. Thus the Curse began with him, and has been entail'd upon most that have shar'd in the Plunder of that universal Ravage.

The Returns that have been lately made of the Livings under Value, sufficiently prove how slender our Provision is: How great our Burden, and how slight our Reward. How painful and expensive the Discharge of our Ministry, under the greatest Discouragements of Want and Poverty. And yet we have the hard Fate still to be envied for our Riches, when we have not only a meaner Provision than perhaps any Clergy in *Europe*, but, even among the *Reform'd*, are possibly the worst endow'd with a Temporal Maintenance; tho' we can show more Labourers worthy of their Hire, than any other Church in the Christian World. Every Workman receives a due Recompence for his Labour, except the poor Ministers of Christ.

But



But tho' the Provisions of our Priesthood may not be so ample and splendid, nor dignify'd with such Honours, and Titles, and Immunities, as are and have been allotted to the Sacred Function in most Countries, where Learning and Humanity have flourish'd, yet let us not be wanting in a due Tribute of Thanks and Praise to the great Original of Goodness itself, in that he hath rais'd up *Kings to be Nursing Fathers, and Queens to be Nursing Mothers* of this our distressed Church.

Whatever Charities the superstitious Ages may boast of, yet the Princely Bounty of this is not to be parallell'd. A Bounty so noble and magnificent, and under so excellent a Regulation and Management, as within the compass of a few Years will make some amends for the Defect of the *Reformation*. It has been computed, that by the present Method establish'd within the Compass of one hundred Years, there will be few Livings left, but what will amount each of them to the competent Value of one Hundred Pounds a Year. Tho' there have been near four Thousand poor Benefices certified into the *Exchequer*.

But we have great Reason to hope that this blessed Work will be effected in a much less compass of Time, when the Prince that now happily fills the Throne, has given us the most tender Expressions of an affectionate Care for the Church of *England*, by his late gracious Answer to the Address of the *Governours for*  
*the*

*the Relief of the poor Widows and Children of Clergymen,* \* and by his honouring that Society with an especial Mark of Royal Favour †.

From this signal Evidence of Royal Clemency and Christian Charity, we have the Comfort to see, that the Defender of our Faith places the Glory of his Reign, not only in securing our Religion at home, and supporting it abroad, but in continually favouring its Growth, *by comforting all her waste Places, and making her Wilderness like Eden, and her Desarts like the Garden of the Lord,* Isa. LI. 3.

And as a farther Proof, of this, I only beg leave to refer to those several Acts of Parliament that have been past in Favour of the Church since his Majesty's happy Accession to the Throne. Some Account whereof may be seen in those excellent *Monitions* and *Advices*, which our Right Reverend and most worthy Diocesan deliver'd to his Clergy, at his primary Visitation, held in the Year 1720.

B

Tho'

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\* I take this dutiful and loyal Address very kindly, and shall depend upon the Assurance you give me. I am sorry there shou'd be any need of such a Corporation in the Church of England. But since there is but too much Occasion for it, you may be assur'd, that so charitable a Design shall always have my Protection and Encouragement.

† A Largeſs of 500 l.

**Tho' this Diocese in Proportion, hath fewer insufficient Livings than any other within the two Provinces, yet it hath had the Favour to share in the Royal Bounty, in a more extraordinary manner perhaps than any other. Several of its poor Benefices having been already augmented upon the Score and Title of private Benefactions. || And now that this despoiled Church hath also tasted the Royal Bounty by the Favour of a private Benefactor, let us join in Thanksgiving to the Lord our God, for this particular Vouchsafement of his Love to us. As the tender and compassionate Disposition of Souls thus piously fram'd, thus kind and merciful will be had in everlasting Remembrance before God, so it ought not to be bury'd in Oblivion by us, who partake of the Benefit thereof.**

*My*

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*|| The Vicarage of Cransley by a Gift of a Fee Farm Rent and Tythes, to above the Value of 200 l. by John Robinson, Esq; The Vicarage of Woolaston by a Gift of 200 l. by the Honourable Thomas Wentworth, Esq; The Vicarage of St. Peters in Irtlingborough, by a Gift of 200 l. by the Honourable Thomas Wentworth, Esq; The Vicarage of Little Addington, by a Gift of a Portion of great Tythes to above the Value of 200 l. by the Reverend Dr. Henry Saunderson, Rector of Achurch. The Vicarages of Raunds and Pitchley, and the small Rectory of Kettering by the Contributions of 200 l. to each by private Benefactors. The small Curacy of Eye near Peterborough, &c. All which Cures have had the private Contributions doubled by the Royal Bounty. And we hope many other Augmentations are now depending, as particularly at Rockingham, by the Beneficence of the noble Patron the Earl of Rockingham, and the Vicarage of Potterspury, by a Legacy lately left by a pious Widow, Mrs. Alford; to which is added a like Sum of 200 l. by the Governours of the Bounty of Queen ANNE.*



been surprizing in the World. He is the wise Orderer and Disposer of them all, so that not one of them are the Effects of blind Chance or surly Fate, but the Results of his infinite Wisdom and Goodness. Every Thing is by his Appointment and Permission, who directs, governs and disposes of all Occurrences to the greatest and best Ends, his own Glory, and the Good of those that love and serve him. Be the Chain of second Causes never so long, yet he holds the first Link in his own Hand, and conveys his Power through them all to their last Effects. There is not the least Spire of Grass that springs out of the Earth, nor the least Atom that plays and wanders to and fro in the Air, nor any Motion of any Creature, but the Almighty Power of God is to be seen in it. As his sacred *Fiat* is the Prolifick Principle of all Productions, so no Creature is able to perform any Operation, but as it doth receive Power from God, together with Properties, Qualities, Motions and Inclinations, guiding and directing it to those several Ends and Uses, whereby to serve the Glory of their great Creator and Sovereign. For he is above all Things by his Essence, goes thro' all Things by his Providence, and is in all Things by his Presence. We are all at the Disposal of his Will, and our present and future Condition fram'd and order'd by his free, but just and wise Decrees. As an infinitely wise Being, he  
works



( II )

works every thing by Methods most becoming his unerring Wisdom. And as irresistible in his Power, he carries every Thing to the Accomplishment of his own irrevocable Decrees, thro' all Difficulties that encounter it. For he is Infinite and Immense in Himself, Absolute and Supreme in his Authority, Universal and Unlimited in his Dominions, and Admirable in his Works.

And as God hath an absolute Power and Dominion over every Person, over every Nation and Kingdom of the Earth, so hath his Power and Sovereignty in no one Instance been more remarkably display'd than in the wonderful Deliverances he hath frequently vouchsaf'd this Church. Who, as supreme Director of all its Concerns, hath supported, strengthen'd and establish'd it upon such lasting Foundations of Peace and Truth, that as no Opposition from without, so no Corruption from within hath been ever able to dissolve it. But it shall remain (we hope) in the same unalterable Security, *as long as the Sun and Moon endure*. For we have our Lord's own express Promise, that *the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it*. Nor do we err, I hope, in presuming that Promise may be expressly applied to our Church. Since it is both in Doctrine, Discipline and Worship, the best and purest Church upon the Face of the Earth. For certainly that Church  
will

will ever have the Protection of Heaven, that is most accommodated to the whole Design of the Gospel in bringing Souls to Heaven. And tho' God may suffer Heresies and Schisms to be in it, yet that has been only, that they that are approv'd might be made manifest. And as superstitious and schismatical Opinions have prevail'd, he hath been pleas'd constantly to raise up great and good Men to defend her. Thus the Orthodox Faith is still triumphant amongst us; for tho' the Truth has been often driven from one Corner of the Kingdom to another, and been hunted like a Partridge upon the Mountains, yet like its great Author, *It goes through the midst of those Crowds and Multitudes that are gather'd together to destroy it, and so passes by.*

What therefore are all those Commotions and Disturbances that have been rais'd in Prejudice thereof; but as so many Springs and Machines in the Hand of Providence to be mov'd or turn'd either Way, for the better carrying on God's eternal Purposes and Decrees? For he often makes the greatest Malice and Disorders of Men, subservient to the Orders and Counsels of his gracious Mercy.

And tho' the Reasons of his Particular Dispensations be impenetrable to our vain and fruitless Enquiries, yet are all his Distributions to Mankind, full of the *Riches of his Goodness,*

*ness.* For he hath all along delighted to show his Power in Effusions of Mercy. Such therefore as is his Power, such also is his Goodness.

God's Goodness and Kindness is testified to us in so many Particulars, that when we wou'd reckon them up, they are more in Number than the Sand. God made us with no other Design than that we should be happy. He constituted Paradise for our Use, and when we had forfeited that, he invited us to an higher Region of Blifs and Immortality. Not that our Happiness can profit God, but he is good, and delights to do us good. As he is the Author of our Being, so is he the Author of our Well-being. *As it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves,* so it is he that spreads our Tables and fills our Cups: His Blessings are our daily Food, his Corrections our Physick.

Who can express the Bounty and Munificence with which the Lord of the Universe hath provided for the Sustainence, Convenience, Relief, and even Delight of his Creatures? With what amazing Condescension hath he supplied the general Needs of Men, succour'd the Weak and Helpless, protected and vindicated the Oppress'd, and seasonably encourag'd and rewarded the Good? What  
Sup-

Support and Comfort hath he afforded many of us in the Night of Affliction, and Gloominess of Despair?

His Mercies are more than we can number. The Sum of them is unmeasurable. They supply us with what ever we need, and relieve us in all our Fears. The Mercies of Creation and Production, and the Blessings of Immunity and Protection, which are alike continued, and usual to all, deserve a Thanksgiving of a whole Life. But how can we enough extol the great Riches of the Divine Goodness, when we consider the Favour and Privilege which is granted unto us of having his Laws to rule us, his Word to instruct us, and his Spirit to guide us. If we sadly reflect what wou'd have become of us had we been born under the Dominion of the *Turk*, or in some Parts of *America*, where the Light of the Gospel hath never approach'd, can we be unmindful and unthankful for so inestimable a Blessing?

As God pass'd by many Forms of his Creatures to make us little lower than the Angels, so hath he pass'd by the fallen Angels to make us Heirs of Salvation. Who then can express the loving Kindness of the Lord, who upon Earth hath utter'd many a doleful Groan, that hath shed many a dismal Sigh for our Madness and Folly, and at last with his own pre-

precious Blood aton'd for our accumulat-  
ed Guilt? And has been ever since incef-  
santly labouring to have our Infirmities  
excus'd, our Sins forgiven, our ill Habits  
rooted out, and our Malice and Perverse-  
ness cur'd.

And after an Enumeration of all these  
Prodigies of Mercy and Loving-Kindness,  
I have no Occasion to instance in any other,  
but only to congratulate each other, on Ac-  
count of the Felicity we enjoy, in not only  
being born and bred Christians, but in be-  
ing born and bred within the Pale of that  
Church, which is the most Orthodox in  
its Doctrine, the most Regular in its Di-  
scipline, and the most Grave and Solemn in  
its Worship, of any Church in the whole  
Christian World, however insufficient in  
many Places her Revenues may be.

*But my Soul doth magnify the Lord.  
For he hath regarded the low estate of  
his Hand-maiden.*

And so I proceed in the Second Place,  
to shew, That at all Times, and in all  
Places, we ought to have a constant Re-  
gard to God, and a perpetual Sense of him  
upon our Minds, as the Author and Pre-  
server of our Life and Being, on whose Fa-



our we rely for all the good Things we hope for, and by whose Grace we enjoy whatever Good we at present possess.

There is scarce any Man that is not entirely stupid and regardless, but must have observ'd besides the common Effects of God's universal Care and Bounty, wherein he equally shares with all his Fellow-Creatures, some particular Expressions and Testimonies of Divine Favour dispens'd in an especial Manner to himself alone. Every Man's Experience will inform him, that he hath receiv'd many such Benefits from an Hand invisible indeed to Sense, yet easily discernible if he do but attend to the Circumstances wherein, and to the Seasons when they come. Since then there is no Man that hath not had, one Time, or other Occasion of God's especial Favour and Assistance, surely he cannot be otherwise than infinitely oblig'd to return a grateful Affection to him, not only as to a common Benefactor, but as to his particular Friend and Patron.

As Christianity represents Almighty God in his Nature and in his Doings, more lovely than any other Way of Religion hath done or can do, so it proportionably raiseth our Obligation to love him. The serious Belief and Consideration therefore of those Excellencies

cies which are in the Divine Nature, ought not to be terminated in meer Speculation, but must derive an Influence upon our Hearts and Affections. When therefore, God discovers those Attributes which represent him great and powerful, good and merciful to the Sons of Men, let us present him with such separate and peculiar Testimonies of our Regard, as are due unto him, who is so transcendently August, and so inimitably Holy.

Thus when God gives us signal Demonstrations of his Almighty Power and incomprehensible Wisdom, we may learn to trust in him at all Times, to repair to him in the Times of Need and Necessity, and serve him faithfully in Expectation of his Favour and Affection. For we cannot but ever remember with Joy and Delight, that we have always found in God a generous Propensity to pity the Miserable, unspeakable Kindness to help the Unworthy, and omnipotent Power to rescue the Perishing from the Jaws of eternal Ruin.

God is the Sum of all our Happiness, and the End of all our Desires. Let us then turn all our Affections towards him, and abound in devout Acknowledgments to the supreme Pattern of all Glory and Perfection,

from whom all created Goodness is deriv'd, and by Conformity to whom it is to be measur'd.

This is all the Return that we weak and dependent Creatures are capable of making to the supreme Lord and Governour of all Things. And therefore he is graciously pleas'd to accept of this as a sufficient Reward for all the Benefits he hath done unto us. Our Goodness extendeth not unto the Lord All-sufficient in Heaven: *Neither can man be profitable to God, as he that is wise may be profitable to himself.* But tho' we cannot make any Return to God for his Benefits, yet thankful to Him for them we can be, and most inexcusable are we if we neglect so to do.

For all the Evils in the World can show nothing baser or more unworthy than a fordid Disingenuity. Ingratitude provoketh above all Offences whatsoever. Let us then be sensible of the Benefits we receive from God, so as by a right value and estimation of them, to understand how far we are oblig'd unto Him. No Man can truly value the Blessings of God, but he that acknowledgeth that they might very justly have been denied him. And no Man can be sufficiently thankful for them, but he that  
confesses

confesses that they are undeservedly bestowed. Let us therefore love and praise God for all the particular Vouchsafements of his Love to us. And because every Day supplies us with fresh Experiments and new Motives of his Love to us, therefore all Love, all Glory be to Him.

And now, as our grateful Returns are first to be made to Almighty God, from whom alone Happiness and Comfort immediately stream, and *who is the Author and Giver of every good and perfect Gift*; so, in the next place, ought we to pay all suitable Thanks and Respect to those Persons whom God hath distinguish'd as the Instruments of conveying any Mercy to us.

Charity was our Lord's own Commandment. Nor did he think it enough to lay down the Precept; but hath likewise in his own Person given us a living Pattern, and familiar Example of it. For it was his own constant Employment here on Earth; His favourite Virtue that he chiefly delighted in. For did not he, as at this Time, divesting himself of the brightest Glories, the Joys and Felicities of his celestial Kingdom, willingly stoop down to assume the Garb of a Servant, and to be cloth'd with the Infirmi-

firmities of frail Flesh, to show his extensive Compassion to Mankind ?

In the original Donation of Things, the Supreme Lord and Proprietor of the Universe hath purposely so shar'd his Distributions, that the Abundance of some might be a Supplement to the Want of others. We are all Members of the same Body, and therefore ought to have a Fellowfeeling of the Sufferings of any other Part or Member of the same Body. He that is Master of many Thousands, in strictness of Speaking, is but a Minister of God's Providence, and a Steward of the Creation. No Man is so far Proprietor of what he possesses, as not to be accountable to the great Donor.

Blessed, therefore, are they who, having it in their Power to do well, have out of their Abundance supplied the Exigences of those that are in Want and Distress : That as just and faithful Stewards have given to their Fellow-Creatures, according to their several Needs, their Portion in due Season and in full Measure.

As a true Principle of Charity is that Qualification of the Mind, which of all others is most grateful and acceptable to God, so there are none so sure to receive Mercy from  
from



from God at the final Day of Retribution, as those who have eminently guided their Life and Practice by it. For *when the Son of man shall come in his Glory*, says our Blessed Saviour, *before him shall be gather'd all Nations. And he shall set the Sheep on his Right Hand, and the Goats on his left; and shall say unto them on his Right Hand, come ye Blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepar'd for you from the Foundation of the World. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat, I was thirsty and ye gave me drink, I was a Stranger and ye took me in, naked and ye clothed me; I was sick and ye visited me, I was in prison and ye came unto me. Forasmuch as ye have done these things to one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Matt. 25. 31, &c.*

Then will God, *who is not unrighteous to forget the labour of Love, nor unmindful to reward it*, remember this good Deed which his pious Servant, this Charitable Widow, hath now done for *the House of our God, for the Offices thereof. Nehem. 13. 14.*

When after her long Ruine in the Dust, She shall be raised unto the Resurrection of the Just, and translated into the heavenly

venly Sanctuary, there to receive an Inheritance that fadeth not away, for her Zeal for God's Glory, and for her noble Compassion to set up this House of God, and to repair the impoverish'd Estate thereof. There to be plac'd amidst Triumphant Saints and Angels, near to that glorious Queen, whose tender Regard for the Poverty and Distress of the Christian Priesthood, whose Royal Care for the Honour of God and Religion; in short, whose unbounded Charities, and unblemish'd Virtues entitle her to the brightest Crown, and to the chiefest Seat amongst those happy Souls, who were the Lights and Ornaments of the several Ages they liv'd in.

And in the next Place, no small Acknowledgments are to be paid to that accomplish'd Person, who was the first Author and continual Promoter of this pious Benefaction, the worthy Mr. *Sharp*. The Respect I owe to his Modesty, will not suffer me to do Justice to his distinguish'd Character, otherwise than by wishing him all those Blessings, such a disinterested Benevolence, and such an unaffected Goodness deservedly entitle him unto, that is, the Rewards of both Worlds, Prosperity and Salvation.

A grate-

A grateful Return of Thanks is also due to the Executor, *Roger Price*, Esq; who might have strain'd his Power, in assigning the Money to any other poor Benefice, if he had not made a Conscience of pursuing the Intention of the Testator ; as well as the Words of the Will. For as Mrs. *Alford* made two Wills, the Nomination of *Potterspury* to the Legacy bequeath'd, expressly mention'd in the first ; happen'd thro' some Default to be omitted in the second. As this worthy Gentleman has been thus generous out of Principle, and good Design, such a Benignity of Nature claims our most ardent Wishes. May he therefore live long in the Enjoyment of all those Blessings, which Providence has bestow'd upon him, and his Virtues entitle him unto.

Nor must I omit to pay a just Tribute of Thanks to our Right Reverend and most worthy Diocesan, by whose generous Care and Labour this pious Work was brought to so happy a Conclusion. With what Eagerness he press'd forward to propagate and carry on this good Work to Perfection, I shall have little Occasion to relate, when his Zeal for the Advancement of God's Honour, and the Benefit of Mankind, when his Earnestness to embrace all Opportunities of performing Works of Charity and Compa-

D sion,

sion, which is his natural Disposition, his natural Affection, are so publickly confess'd and acknowledg'd by all his Clergy.

And I know no Requital will be more acceptable to him for this his pious Concern, for this his paternal Care for this *House of our God*, than that a due Sense of this Blessing should prove an happy Occasion of raising in all us that worship therein a more lively Faith, and a more fervent Devotion in the Union of Gratitude and Praise, bringing forth the Fruits of Righteousness and true Holiness. For the best Form of Thanksgiving is such as includes an Exhortation to Obedience, and the only wise Expression of Gratitude, is a Resolution and Endeavour of Amendment.

And here I shou'd conclude, but that there doth naturally arise from the Tenor of this Discourse, a Rule or Direction or two, by Way of Application to all the Rectors and Vicars of such Churches, whose Parochial Rights and Dues are either impropriated or converted to other Uses. In short, to all those that labour in the Vineyard, whilst others receive and enjoy the Rewards of their Hire.

Accord-

According to the Institution of the Law, *They which ministred about holy Things, liv'd of the Things of the Temple, and they which did wait at the Altar, were Partakers of the Altar.* Even so hath the Lord ordain'd that *they which preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel,* 1 Cor. ix. 13, 14. And in his Commission to the Seventy, he hath pronounc'd the *Labourer* to be *worthy of his Hire.* St. Luke x. 7.

But since God who hath the free Disposal of all Mens Estates, hath been pleas'd to permit so unequal a Distribution, such irregular Assignments, it ought to be our Duty to accommodate ourselves to his Allotments.

Let us therefore under this remarkable Disparity be resign'd and compos'd, and submit ourselves to the Conduct of Heaven. Let us be free from Disquiet and Impatience, from Anxiety and Eagerness of Spirit. Let us leave the Care of all Things to God, and rely with Confidence on him for merciful Supplies in all our Wants, for Support under all our Troubles, and for Comfort under all Sorrows. For he shall still survive as a Father for our Children, and as an Husband to provide for our Widows.

Having



**Having, therefore, this comfortable Assurance, let us use our utmost Endeavours in our respective Stations to promote God's Worship, and to extend his Glory. Let us be regular and assiduous in the Discharge of our Duty. Let us be vigilant, wise and innocent. Tho' our Cures be meanly provided, yet let them not be ill supplied. Let us not suffer our Lives to run down in Sloth and Indolence, tho' our Encouragements be small; nor content ourselves with low and obscure Performances, however low and obscure our Condition may be. Let us endeavour to adorn our Profession by our Practice, and remember the Holy Characters we bear, tho' we appear not in any of the State and Splendor of our Embassy.**

**Then however we may be contemn'd, we cannot be contemptible. Then, however, some may disregard our Persons, none will despise our Order.**

**F I N I S.**