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A

CHARGE,

DELIVERED TO

THE SCOTCH EPISCOPAL CLERGY

OF

THE DIOCESE OF ABERDEEN;

AT THEIR ANNUAL MEETING, ON WEDNESDAY THE 20TH OF
AUGUST 1806,

AND

PUBLISHED AT THEIR REQUEST.



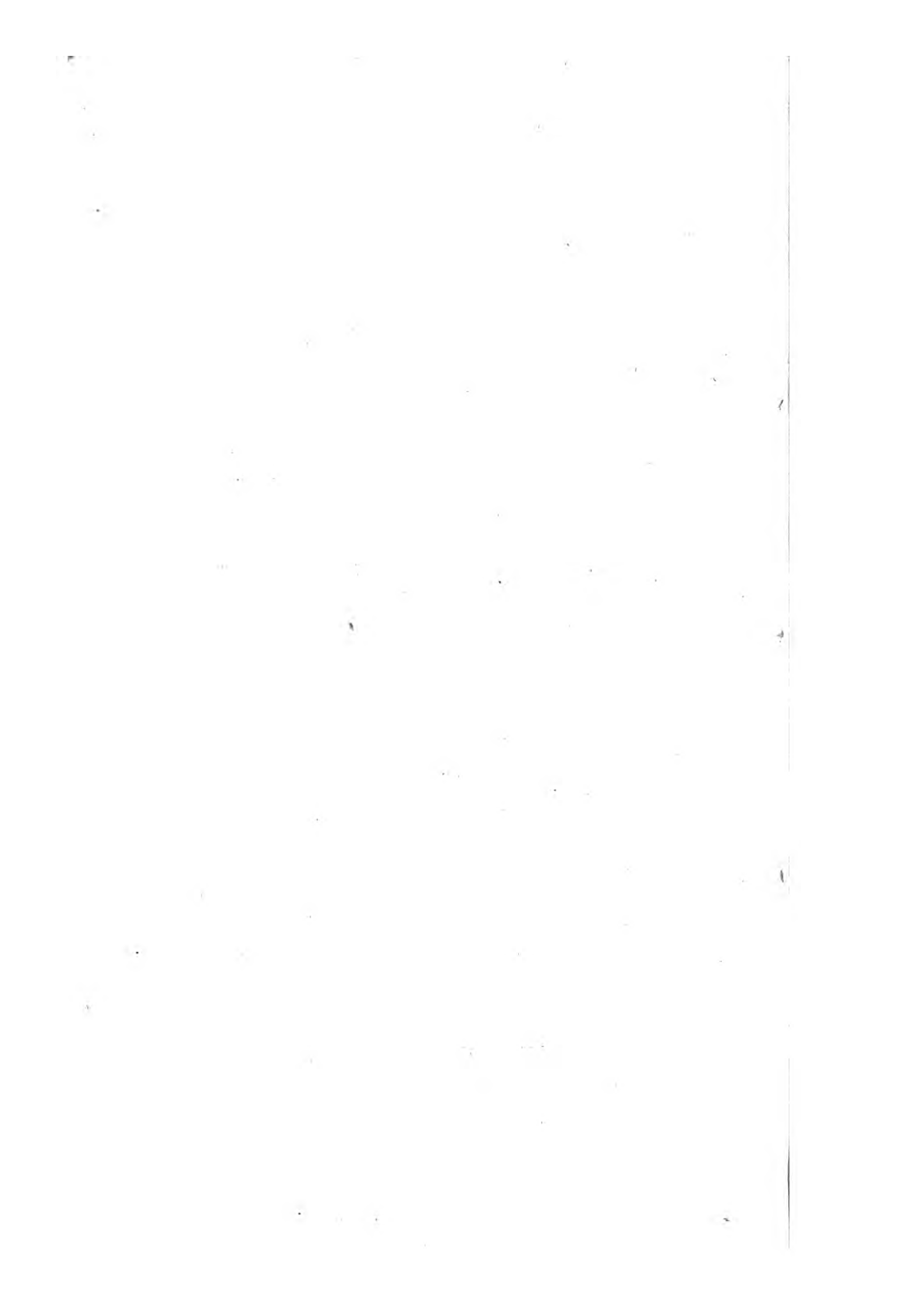
BY

THE RIGHT REVEREND JOHN SKINNER,
THEIR DIOCESAN.

Aberdeen :

PRINTED BY J. CHALMERS AND CO.

1806.



P R E F A C E.

*IN the life of the late Dr. Horne, the much loved and respected Bishop of Norwich, it is mentioned, to the praise of the Scotch Episcopal Church, that "from the present circumstances of its primitive orthodoxy, piety, poverty, and depressed state, he had such an opinion of it, as to think, that, if the great Apostle of the Gentiles were upon earth, and it were put to his choice, with what denomination of Christians he would communicate, the preference would probably be given to the Episcopalians of Scotland, as most like to the people he had been used to *." The likeness which the venerable prelate had in his eye, arose from the picture he had been drawing of that pious and orthodox, though poor and depressed, portion of the Catholic Church which subsists in this country, under the primitive form of Episcopal Administration. Its depression and poverty have been obvious for more than a century past, and through all that trying period, its pious*

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* See *The Life of Dr. Horne*, (p. 153) by the Rev. William Jones, M. A. F. R. S. of whom the following character is given by Bishop Horsley, in a most seasonable Charge to his Clergy in the year 1800—"Of that faithful servant of God, I can speak both from personal knowledge, and from his writings. He was a man of quick penetration, of extensive learning, and the soundest piety. And he had, beyond any man I ever knew, the talent of writing on the deepest subjects to the plainest understanding."

resemblance of the apostolic pattern has been no less conspicuous. It is only within the last twenty years, that the protestant Bishops in Scotland have been permitted to appear in their proper character, as possessing the whole spiritual powers of those, their predecessors in office, who, in consequence of the Revolution in 1688, were deprived of all legal authority, and temporal jurisdiction. During the term of years above-mentioned, the author of the following CHARGE has been in the practice of annually delivering something of the same kind to the Clergy with whom he is more immediately connected; and he has no doubt of their doing him the justice to say, that the great object which he has ever recommended to them, has been the giving their people such sound instruction as might teach them how to “fear God, and honour the King;” to be good Christians, as the best means of being made good subjects. In performing this agreeable part of his Episcopal duty, he had the satisfaction to find, that the CHARGE which he delivered this year, was considered by his Clergy as peculiarly suited to the present state of the small Ecclesiastical Society to which they belong, increased as that Society has lately been, by the accession of several most respectable Clergymen, both of English and Irish Ordination.

*Viewing the subject of it in this favourable light, and with that kind indulgence, which the labours of their Bishop have ever experienced from the Episcopal Clergy of the Diocese of Aberdeen, they joined in requesting him to
allow*

*allow the following CHARGE to be published ; and though it was not drawn up with any view of being committed to the press, he has yielded to their request, by consenting to the publication of it. In giving this consent, as a small token of the respect which he bears to his Clergy, he has also shewn a proper deference to the opinion of three of his Right Reverend Colleagues *, who were present at the delivery of what is contained in the following pages, and had the goodness to express their approbation of it in the warmest terms of brotherly kindness. Their presence on this occasion was in consequence of the appointment of a general triennial meeting of the Clergy of the Scotch Episcopal Church, which was to be holden immediately after the annual Synod of those of the Diocese of Aberdeen ; and to the object and design of this general meeting, the Author was anxious to apply more particularly the concluding part of his CHARGE, as expressive of his fervent wishes for the success of a most charitable and benevolent Institution †.*

ABERDEEN, SEPTEMBER 6. 1806.

* These were Bishop Macfarlane of Ross, Bishop Watson of Dunkeld, and Bishop Jolly of Moray.

† In the year 1793, the Bishops and Clergy of the Scotch Episcopal Church did form themselves into a *Friendly Society* (under the protection of an act passed in the 33d year of the reign of his Majesty, for the encouragement of such societies), and that for the sole purpose of raising and establishing a Fund for the relief of the Widows and Orphan Children of the Members thereof, and for the relief of such of the Members themselves as shall be in more indigent circumstances. A general meeting of the members of this society is holden every third year, for the election of a committee and office-bearers, to manage the affairs of the society.

A

CHARGE,

DELIVERED BY THEIR BISHOP

TO THE

EPISCOPAL CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF ABERDEEN.

My Beloved Brethren!

HAVING once more the pleasure of meeting you in this place, I cannot but readily embrace such a favourable opportunity of improving the connection that subsists between us: a connection, which, as it forms one of those peculiar marks of ecclesiastical character, whereby we are distinguished from the numerous sects that surround us, ought certainly to be improved by us, to all the wise and good purposes, for which the Christian ministry has been so happily delineated, under the two expressive denominations of *Bishops* and *Pastors*. Standing, as we now do before the present assembly, to exhibit a small, but faithful picture of this ecclesiastical arrangement, while the title of the office which I hold, evidently points to that *inspection* or *superintendence* in spiritual matters, which, in the

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church of Christ, has ever been assigned to it, so is the design of your department in the ministry, under the denomination of Christian *Pastors*, no less clearly shewn to be the feeding, nourishing, and keeping in the way of life, those several parts of the flock of Christ, which have been respectively *committed* to your care. This has always been the language of every sound, well instructed part of the christian church. It is the language of our church, in one of her public prayers, where she begs of Almighty God to “ send down the healthful,” that is, the refreshing, life-giving “ Spirit of his grace, upon our “ Bishops and Pastors, and on all Congregations *committed* to their charge *.” The committing these congregations, therefore, to the charge of their several Pastors, necessarily implies, a proper power and authority in the person who has thus *committed* them ; and plainly shews, that in so doing he has acted in consequence of a commission received by himself for that purpose. But the term *commission*, by the very derivation of the word, evidently refers to the idea of *mission* or sending ; and accordingly the original commission, from which is derived the whole spiritual power of the christian church, was given in these words, “ Go ye, and teach all nations † ;” thus combining the act of sending with the purpose for which these first teachers were sent ; and it was, no doubt, with a view to this *mission*, that the chosen Twelve were by their great *sender* named *Apostles*, that is, persons *sent*. Well then might St Paul, who was afterwards added to the number of Apostles, having been miraculously ordained and com-

* See the Morning and Evening Prayer for the Clergy and People.

† Matt. xxviii. 19.

commissioned by the “ Lord from heaven, appearing to
 “ him, and saying, Depart, for I will *send* thee far hence
 “ unto the Gentiles *;” well might he, I say, when en-
 couraging part of these Gentiles to call on the name of
 the Lord, that they might be saved, warn them at the
 same time of the impossibility of calling on that name for
 salvation in any other way but by the ministry of those,
 whom the Lord would send for that gracious purpose—
 send by his Apostles, even as they had been first sent by
 him. For, says this eminent Teacher of the Gentiles,
 “ How shall they call on him, in whom they have not
 “ believed? and how shall they believe in him, of whom
 “ they have not heard? and how shall they hear without
 “ a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be
 “ sent †?” Why not? some of our modern preachers
 will be ready to answer. We see nothing to hinder them,
 if they have only gifts and talents sufficient for the work,
 and can find people weak enough to hear and encourage
 them. Yet St Paul, we see, gives a very different account
 of the matter; and if he argued rightly on the subject, of
 which I should think there could hardly be a doubt, it is
 equally impossible for men to preach without being out-
 wardly sent, as to believe in a person, of whom they have
 never outwardly heard, just as we hear what comes from
 the mouth of a preacher.

Such is evidently the scope of the Apostle’s reasoning,
 in that admirable passage to which I have thus referred,
 as forming a suitable introduction to some farther obser-
 vations, which I wish to lay before you on this important
 subject. For surely nothing can be of greater importance

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* Acts xxii. 21.

† Rom. x. 14. 15.

to a clergyman, than to know precisely the footing on which he stands in the discharge of his official duty, and what right he has to exercise those ministerial powers which mark his character, as a commissioned servant of Jesus Christ. The necessity of this inquiry was never shewn in a more glaring light than at the present time, and in this very country; where so many are to be found assuming the ministerial character of their own heads, and in forms of their own devising, and whose conduct is at least so far consistent in preaching down those sacred rights, which are violated by their daily practice, and preaching up disorder and confusion, as the means of their existence. Were we to trace back the line of their succession as far as it would go, we should find that those, from whom it began, had no more right to ordain others, than they had to make a church, and a government to themselves, independent of Him who has all power in heaven and in earth, and from whom all ecclesiastical authority must be derived. Every ministry, therefore, that does not lead up to him, through his Apostles and their successors, is but a bold intrusion into the sacred office, an unwarrantable pretence to those rights which he made over to his appointed messengers, when he was pleased to send them, even as he himself had been sent, with power to do as he had done, and perpetuate the ministerial order in the same manner as he had begun it. This is the only way, in which it can regularly be carried forward, on the plan laid down by its divine Founder: and in these days of endless division, when schisms multiply on every hand, and missions are pretended from every quarter, it is surely no small recommendation of the spiritual society with
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which we are connected, that whatever may be its wants or defects of a temporal nature, none of its ministers can be said to preach, without being duly sent. What I have farther to say on this occasion, I would therefore wish to adapt more particularly to the peculiar situation in which we are placed, as belonging to a church divested of all legal support to its preaching from the state, yet holding a share of that apostolic mission, without which St. Paul declared, it was impossible that any man could preach, in the true Christian sense of that term.

When I call this a peculiar situation, it is not because there is any thing singular in our condition, as to matters of temporal or worldly concern; since there are multitudes of different sects in this, otherwise united, kingdom, enjoying as little countenance or support from the State as what we enjoy. Yet these are but *sects*, or parties led away by that *sectarian* spirit which delights in innovation, and in breaking off from whatever has been established, without the least regard to regular mission, or ecclesiastical authority. Widely different is all this from our principles, from every thing, which as a body, we profess or practise. Our church never broke off from any establishment, unless first from that of blinded heathenism, to receive the light of the gospel, and afterwards from that of Popery, on account of its unsufferable errors and corruptions. We are therefore no sect, according to the common contemptuous use of that appellation. What remains of the old Episcopal Church of Scotland has always been a distinct society; and, as we never formed a part of the present establishment of this country, we cannot in justice be said to have separated from it. It is this
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which constitutes the peculiar character of that ecclesiastical body to which we belong, that in its doctrine, its discipline, and in all the ordinary parts of public worship, it is the same as the church which is established by law in the far greater part of the United Kingdom, and differs from her in nothing, which can justly be said to affect the character of a church, unless we were to consider, as such, the want of that establishment. This, to be sure, makes a considerable difference in outward appearance, and with respect to those external marks of power, wealth and dignity, which yet are but appendages, like ornaments of dress to the human body, and nowise essential to its frame and constitution. The Christian church being, in its original nature and design, a spiritual Society, it is to its spiritual powers that we must look for a true knowledge of its genuine and legitimate character. All other marks of distinction may be usurped by a spurious offspring, assuming an authority, and titles of reverence, to which they have no more right than the world is pleased to allow them. But this serves only to shew, that there is a pure unsophisticated line of descent, in which we may trace the real features of the household of faith, those lasting lineaments, which prove its relation to the great “ Author “ and Finisher of our faith, of whom the whole family “ in heaven and earth is named.” It was he who sent his Apostles, even as his Father had sent him, to be the progenitors of this both earthly and heavenly race; a family to be first raised on earth, and afterwards in due time, exalted to, and perfected in heaven. To the Apostles therefore it is, that we must look back for the foundation of this spiritual building, of which Jesus Christ
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himself is the chief corner stone, that which keeps all the parts firmly compacted and joined together. From, and through the Apostles every part of this building must rise, and other foundation can no man lay, than that which Christ himself has laid in them. So justly was it observed, to the honour of the first Christians, that “they continued stedfastly in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread and prayers *;” not only in their doctrine, but also in their communion, in communicating with them, by partaking of the Eucharistic bread, blessed and sanctified by their prayers.

Now, what was the duty of those early Christians, is also the duty of these in latter times. But how can *they* continue in the communion of the Apostles, unless by holding communion with their successors in office, those who have derived their mission from the Apostles, even as they received theirs from Christ? It is evident, then, that an ecclesiastical succession from the Apostles, is not such a matter of indifference as some choose to represent it, nor of such doubt and uncertainty, as is often pretended, to justify that indifference. For surely that cannot be an indifferent or trifling matter, which was so carefully attended to, by the very first converts to the faith of Christ; neither can there be any doubt of his being both able and willing to fulfill the gracious promise made to his Apostles, when he declared that “he would be with them alway, even unto the end of the world;” which could only mean his being with their office, and those invested with it, to the very end of time.

In consequence of this divine assurance, we know how
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* Acts ii. 42.

wonderfully the primitive church was supported, in preserving the apostolic succession through no less a period than three hundred years of the most violent persecution, directed more immediately against those highest officers in the Christian ministry, who had succeeded to the Apostles in all the ordinary powers of their Episcopal superintendence. After the expiration of that severe and trying period, when the kings of the earth became defenders of the faith, and guardians of the rights of the church, particular attention was paid to the appointment of the Christian Pastors, especially of those of the highest order in the church, on account of the peculiar privileges, with which they were invested, and the trust which was necessarily reposed in them, for the continuance of their own, as well as of the other inferior degrees of the sacred character. Causes of a like kind would operate to the same effect in every national church, enjoying the protection of the secular arm, or as we now say, established by law.—As soon as a vacancy happened in any diocese or district of it, care would be taken to have it duly filled, and all the forms observed, which the law of the land, as well as the order of the church, prescribed in such cases. Even after the papal tyranny had overspread the whole western part of Christendom, and hardly any Bishop could be appointed there without the sanction of the See of Rome, still we see no danger of any interruption to the regular succession of those of the Episcopal order, when we consider, that the Pope himself rested all his pretensions to the supremacy which he had usurped, on his being the lineal successor of St. Peter, and would therefore take care that all the other *inferior* prelates, as he thought them, should de-

derive their powers from him through a channel equally regular and uninterrupted.

In full possession, then, of these spiritual powers, those Bishops, who joined in the great and good work of Reformation, had every right to strengthen their cause, by adding to their number others of the same principles with themselves; and in the southern part of this island, where the reformation was carried on in the most becoming and orderly manner, the Protestant church, having been very soon incorporated with the state, has ever since had the fullest assurance of a regular succession of Bishops, placed in their several sees under the immediate authority of the King. From the same pure and sacred source has our church derived her Episcopal orders; and the only difference, as I already hinted, which now subsists between the Episcopal Church of England, and that in Scotland, lies in this, that the former enjoys (and long may she continue to enjoy) what the latter has lost, the benefit of civil establishment. But the want of this privilege takes nothing from the inherent powers, nor makes any change in the essential character of a church; otherwise there could have been no church for the first three centuries after Christ, during all which time, there existed no such thing as a temporal establishment of it*.

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* The truth here asserted is very strongly expressed in a late number of a periodical publication, where the writer asks—"Will any man who pretends to believe in the divine right of Episcopacy, venture to assert, that when a presbyterian king procured an act to be passed for the alteration of church government in Scotland, the deprived Bishops, by this act, lost the spiritual authority which they obtained at their consecration? If their consecration was regular, not all the kings, nor all the parliaments of this world, could possibly subtract a particle of those powers which the Bishops derived solely from Christ, as the spiritual head of the church."—See the *Orthodox Churchman's Magazine and Review*, for June 1806, p. 456.

church to which we belong, being precisely the same, as to its form or polity, and its relative situation with respect to the government of the country, there can be no doubt of its possessing the same spiritual powers, by which the primitive church was enabled to hand down that system of ecclesiastical administration, which has since been established, and more or less amply endowed and supported, in almost every part of the Christian world. The want of such endowment and support, which we experience, has only reduced us to that state in which the church of Christ originally existed, and thereby obliged us to insist on this similarity of situation, more than perhaps would otherwise have been thought necessary. For so we may justly conclude, from a very common mode of arguing made use of by some, even of the most zealous writers of the church of England, whom we find bringing this forward often as the first, and always as a very prominent, argument for keeping in the communion of that church, that it is the church established by law, and for that reason entitled to attachment and respect from all good subjects: an argument, which were the opposite party ever to prevail there, as it did here, some more than a century ago, would, with no little triumph, be turned against the church, and made use of as a weapon to beat it down, almost with the same propriety as it is now used to keep it up. But surely, the church of England has no need to have recourse to such weak and dangerous expedients for its support, when there is so much firmer and safer ground, on which its defence may, and ought to, be rested. To that ground let its friends confine the stand they wish to make in its favour, to its constitution merely as a church, to its doctrine, discipline

cipline and worship, as conformable to the most pure and primitive standards. There they will find the strongest hold, whereby to retain the fidelity and attachment of its members; and if they think proper, as no doubt it is highly proper, to express the just sense which they entertain of the wisdom and piety of the legislature, in granting its countenance and support to such a pure, sound, and apostolic church, that is a consideration, which, no doubt, may be fairly used to enforce the duty of a steady adherence to it, from a principle of gratitude to the government, which has so liberally provided for its making a respectable appearance. Yet even this, and every such consideration, will always be but a secondary object with every sound, well-principled churchman; as in regard to the church in general, and to that part of it in particular with which he is more immediately connected, the first and most anxious wish of his heart will be, not so much for its outward dignity and splendour, as for its internal purity, its happy resemblance of the primitive model, its carefully retaining the apostolic doctrine and fellowship, and having those set over it for that purpose, who have been regularly called, and sent into it, even as the apostles themselves were sent by Christ.

To continue this sacred mission from, and fellowship with the apostles, in that part of the united kingdom where our lot has fallen, has been always the object kept in view by the Bishops and Pastors of the now small, and for a long time, sadly depressed, portion of the church, to which we belong. and of which our predecessors in office had the charge committed to them on a larger scale, but in very arduous and trying circumstances. Yet under all the stages

of its depression, and through the various difficulties which it has had to encounter, the Episcopal succession has still been duly and regularly preserved in it; and by this means, through the blessing of God, has it been supported under its distinguishing character, as the venerable remains of the old Episcopal, and once established, church of Scotland.

To secure to it this honourable mark of distinction, by every means in our power, is a duty imposed on us, as a necessary consequence of the principles, which we profess, and from a becoming regard to that consistency between our profession and our practice, which we must ever be solicitous to maintain. The opportunities afforded us for that purpose, in the particular instance which I have now in my eye, will be proportionably interesting and acceptable to us, according to the state of our Episcopal College, the age, or natural infirmities of its several members, and the peculiar situation of any of those districts, into which our church is now divided. When some of our number have already reached almost the utmost period of old age, and others are considerably advanced in years, or not so strong in bodily constitution as might be wished, it becomes highly expedient to provide some additional strength to the succession of our Order, by admitting now and then a new member into our sacred College, especially when an opening appears for such admission, which requires the most respectful attention on our part, and has every claim to our serious consideration.

This, I have no doubt, will be readily acknowledged to have been the case of the Diocese of Edinburgh for some
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years past *, and more particularly so, since the late respectable accession to our communion, both of clergy and laity, within that diocese. There it is, that strangers, especially such as come from the southern part of the island, will be apt to judge of the character of our clergy in general, from what they see or hear of those who reside in our metropolis; and as the profession of Episcopacy necessarily implies connection with, or subordination to, a Bishop, he who, in that character, presides among clergy so respectable as their situation in the capital announces them to be, will himself, it may be hoped, be a clergyman highly respected, and known to possess the qualifications that are requisite for such a dignified and important station. That such a one has been found, I suppose, you are all well convinced, from what you may have heard of the character of the person, who now occupies the station to which I have been alluding; and it is therefore with the most heartfelt satisfaction that I embrace this opportunity of referring to the happy event, which took place at Dundee, in the month of February last †.

This

* Though one of our number, Bishop Abernethy Drummond, resides for the most part in Edinburgh, yet as a diocese of our church, he resigned the Episcopal charge of it some years ago.

† The Reverend Daniel Sandford, D. D. late of Christ Church, Oxford, having joined the communion of the Scotch Episcopal Church, and been duly elected by the Clergy of the Diocese of Edinburgh, was consecrated and appointed their Bishop, at Dundee, on the 9th of February, 1806, by Bishop Skinner of Aberdeen, Primus, Bishop Watson of Dunkeld, and Bishop Jolly of Moray; a measure, which has been highly approved in all parts of the kingdom, as likely to give farther success to the cause of Episcopal union in this country. Some of the venerable prelates of the church of England, have expressed their approbation of it in the warmest terms.

This was an event no less singular, than, we hoped, it was auspicious, being the first of the kind, which our church had witnessed, since she was deprived of her legal establishment, and which might therefore be considered as a presage of increasing union with that Episcopal church in the other parts of the kingdom, which, though happily established, and fully secured in the possession of what the Scottish Episcopacy lost, yet even now deigns to own ours as a sister church, professing the same faith, because using the same creeds, as well as subscribing the same articles of religion, and adhering, as far as circumstances will admit, to the same form of government and discipline, which distinguishes the united church of England and Ireland. It is thus only, in the doctrine and discipline, by which she is adorned, as a pure, protestant, Episcopal Church, that we can hope, or pray to be united with her. In the benefits of her legal establishment, the power, protection, and revenue, which she thereby enjoys, it is impossible for us to have any sort of union or fellowship with that church. The constitution of this part of the kingdom forbids it, and the act of Toleration passed in our behalf confirms the prohibition. Thus, fenced off by statutes, and legally set aside from any participation in the privileges of an established church, the nature of our situation can hardly fail to point out this as the necessary inference to be drawn from it, that we consider ourselves as a distinct society, and do not affect any closer resemblance of the church of England, than what the nature of our ecclesiastical polity prescribes to us, and a sense of duty therefore requires from us. By voluntarily subscribing her articles of religion, we have given an unequivocal
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proof of our agreement with her in doctrine ; and by adopting, with as little variation, as the present state of our church will admit, her “ Form of Consecration of Bishops, and Ordering of Priests and Deacons,” we shew an earnest desire to join with her in preserving these three apostolic orders, which our church has carefully retained, and, we trust, will ever hold in that “ reverend estimation,” which the church of England has declared to be justly due to them. With that church, therefore, we also fervently join in praying for her and our Bishops, Priests, and Deacons ; and in all our religious offices, we make use of every essential part of the forms which she has prescribed to the clergy officiating within the bounds of her jurisdiction, although, not being within these bounds ourselves, we certainly are not every where tied down to the *ipsissima verba*, the precise words and expressions, which she has adopted in her, on the whole, very excellent ritual. For as such in general we justly consider it, although there may be a few particular instances, in which we as rightly judge, it might be changed to the better, and in this opinion many of the most eminent divines of the church of England will readily agree with us. Some of them, indeed, I have heard expressing themselves to that effect ; discovering some degree of regret, that so much restraint should be imposed on them in their ministerial offices, yet hardly venturing to wish it were otherwise, lest things should be made worse by the removal of that restraint, and so letting loose the spirit of innovation, which, when once set a-going, is of all things the most difficult to be checked or kept within bounds.

Such being the danger, to which the church of England
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land would inevitably be exposed, were the least attempt to be made for an alteration in any of her public offices, we need not wonder, that under the present licentious desire of what might be thought ecclesiastical improvement, her best friends should be anxious to avoid any such discussions, as would open a door to all the wildness of religious speculation. But, as there is no danger of that kind to be apprehended in our small ecclesiastical society, into the service of which, it can hardly be supposed, that any person enters, but from conscientious motives, and with a laudable zeal for supporting that purely primitive system of religious truth, and christian unity and order, by which our church is distinguished, there can be no occasion for any such restriction among our clergy, as is found to be necessary under the legal establishment of the church of England; and as we compose, if not what is strictly a national, yet certainly a distinct and separate, church by ourselves, it is surely right and proper,—I may say, it is patriotic, to preserve some mark of distinction, whereby it may be known, that while we are shut out from all the advantages of civil establishment, we do not choose so to encumber ourselves with its inconveniencies, as if we still felt a hankering after it, and wished to keep ourselves in a state of preparation for it. To cherish any such worldly wish, or ambitious desire, would ill become the purity of our profession, the design of our holy and heavenly calling. We are, we must remain,—a church unestablished by law, tolerated only by the state, but otherwise unconnected with it, unsupported by it. The church of England, as to her outward situation, is the very reverse of all this. She is firmly established, amply endowed,

endowed, and strictly incorporated with the state.— Ought there not, then, to be something exhibited on our part, as an acknowledgement of this undeniable difference? Is it not very suitable to that modest, unassuming character, under which, I trust, we will ever wish to appear, that there should be some peculiarity in our public service, more than our national dialect or pronunciation, to shew, that, though it be the Prayer Book of the Church of *England* that is before us, it is the *Scotch* Episcopal Church, to which we belong; that poor, but primitive, that unprotected, yet uncorrupted church, which, for more than a century past, has wrestled through evil report, and good report, “persecuted, but not forsaken, cast down, but not “destroyed,” and which still subsists in christian purity, blessed both with truth and peace? Is it not then highly becoming, that all this should be had in grateful remembrance both before God, and among men; and besides the little variations from the English service, chiefly verbal, at which I have already hinted, as indicating our right to be considered as a distinct and peculiarly situated church, the remains of that, which was once the establishment of Scotland, what can be better adapted to such a pious and good end, than the continued use of that venerable badge of distinction, so well known in this part of the kingdom, under the title of the *Scotch Communion Office* * ?

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* If it be a natural, and I hope, pardonable weakness, in the members of the Scotch Episcopal Church, to feel some satisfaction in reflecting, that their's was once the reformed, established church of the land in which they live, let them also be allowed the privilege of preserving the remembrance of this mark of distinction, by using the only reformed liturgy, which was ever sanctioned by royal authority in this part of the kingdom, and with respect to which, the Bishops of Scotland

Every person acquainted with the history of this office knows, that, in its original state, having been formed after the model of what is called the first reformed Liturgy of Edward the Sixth, it was revised, approved and strongly recommended to the Scottish church by some of the fountest, and most learned divines of the church of England. From a due regard to this recommendation, as well as from a just sense of its intrinsic merit, as keeping close to the primitive pattern of the Eucharistic Service, the office, to which I allude, has been, and now is, very generally used in the church, to which we belong, being in its present form and order perfectly agreeable, not only to the sentiments which we entertain on the subject of the Eucharistic Institution, but also to those of the most approved ritualists of the church of England *. Viewing it

delivered their opinion, very plainly, in these terms—" that a Liturgy made by themselves, and in some things different from the English Service, would be most acceptable to their countrymen, whom they found very jealous of the least dependence on the church of England."

* As such we may surely reckon, not only those pious and learned divines, by whom the first reformed Liturgy of Edward VI. was drawn up, some of whom afterwards suffered at the burning stake, rather than conform to the errors of Popery, but also their venerable and worthy successors, in the service of the English church, Andrews, Laud, Heylin, Mede, Taylor, Bull, Johnson, and many others, who have written in defence of those very doctrines, which form the distinguishing character of the Scotch Communion Office. Of living authors, we need only name the present Archdeacon of Salisbury, than whom, the church of England cannot boast a more zealous son, and indefatigable servant, who, in the *Appendix to the Guide to the Church*, vol. II. p. 414. London, 1799—after mentioning the idea entertained by the Church of England, on the subject of the Eucharistic sacrifice, immediately adds, " Such is the idea, which the Scotch Episcopal Church has upon this sacred subject, which, by forming her Communion Service upon the model of that set forth for the use of the Church of England, in the reign of Edward VI. still keeps closer to the original pattern of the primitive Church, in the celebration of this service, than the Church of England now does." As the last,

it in this light, and as a very proper mark of discrimination, whereby the condition and character of the Scotch Episcopal Church may be justly ascertained, we certainly with the office in question to be retained in this church, as a most edifying part of our public service on those solemn occasions, which call our people to the Christian altar.

To those clergymen, however, of English or Irish Ordination, who have already joined, or may hereafter join, our communion, we are equally willing to make every allowance that may be due to their desire of continuing in the use of the office, to which they have been accustomed, founded, no doubt, on the supposition of its including all that is requisite to the due celebration of the Altar Service, and perhaps on the preference given to it for the same reason, by the people under their charge. In either of these cases, where we see clergymen conscientiously discharging the duties of their office, and doing all in their power for the comfort, and edification of their people, God forbid, that we should throw any bar in the way of uniting such pastors, and such flocks, to that part of the fold of Christ, which we have been appointed to watch

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but not the least of the authorities that might be brought forward to the same purpose, we may add that of a most respectable prelate, one of the brightest ornaments of the present English bench, who, writing lately on this subject to a clergyman of our church, expresses himself thus, " With respect to the comparative merit of the two offices, I have no scruple in declaring to you, what some years since I declared to Bishop Abernethy Drummond, that, I think the Scotch Office more conformable to the primitive model, and in my private judgment more edifying, than that which we now use: insomuch, that were I at liberty to follow my own private judgement, I would myself use the Scotch Office in preference. The alterations which were made in the Communion Service, as it stood in the first book of Edward VI. to humour the Calvinists, were in my opinion much for the worse."

over. Though residing for some time in this part of the kingdom, and desirous, while they remain here, to be regularly employed in the way of their profession, such clergymen may yet have the prospect of returning to the church, in which they received their orders, and being more useful there than they could be anywhere else:— or, though resolved to remain, as long as they live, in the service of the Episcopal church of this country, they may yet feel a strong inclination, from the force of habit, as well as conviction, not to deviate in the least from the forms of the church of England, though completely removed from the sphere of her jurisdiction. In every such circumstance, we must respect the conduct which is influenced by pure, unblameable motives, and be glad to find clergymen acting in a conscientious manner, so well disposed to co-operate with us for promoting the good of the church, and so advancing the common cause of evangelical truth, and ecclesiastical unity.

Yet this is a co-operation, to which the Bishops of our church are still better entitled, and have reason to look for it in a more complying uniform manner, from the clergy ordained by themselves, and for the sole purpose of serving the church in which they have received their orders. Indeed, as their services cannot be legally offered, we may believe they will as little be accepted in any other part of the kingdom. By the very act of toleration, the clergy ordained among us are expressly declared to be “incapable of taking any benefice, curacy, or spiritual promotion, within the church of England as by law established.” They are, therefore, to all intents and purposes to be considered as solely and entirely *Scotch Episcopal Clergy*.
Assum-

Assuming the appearance of another character, and wishing to pass as ordained in England, by a strict observance of all the forms prescribed by the English Ritual, can serve only to expose them to ridicule, as affecting to disown the church to which they properly belong, and shewing themselves ashamed, as it were, of their connection with it. What else can be said of that silly affectation, which, if allowed to prevail in the minds of our clergy, might tempt them to relinquish the use of our truly primitive Communion-Office, for no other reason, but because it is *Scotch*, and has been found fault with by some, who either know nothing about, or are evidently prejudiced against it * ?

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* This is too plainly the case of the author of a small pamphlet, which, though written by an English-ordained clergyman, has been published under the strange looking title of "*An Apology for continuing in the communion of the Church of England*," when in fact, says an able reviewer of it, "the Author's Apology is *not* for his continuing in the communion of the Church of England, but for his *refusing* to be in communion with the Episcopal Church in Scotland, which we have very high authority for considering as herself in communion with our church." See the *British Critic* for May, 1806, the conductor of which work is known to be a most respectable dignitary of the church of England, and in this number of it we have an ample refutation of Dr. Grant's "Apology," and a complete answer to all the objections which he has brought forward, to the union of the Episcopalians in Scotland. Such is the opinion of that highly distinguished prelate to whom we have already alluded, and by whose permission we are at liberty to give the following copy of a Letter, addressed by his Lordship, to Dr. Grant, on the subject of his "Apology."

‘ REV. SIR—It has long been my opinion, and very well known, I believe, to
 ‘ be my opinion, that the laity in Scotland, of the Episcopal persuasion, if they un-
 ‘ derstand the genuine principles of Episcopacy, which they profess, ought, in the
 ‘ present state of things, to resort to the ministry of their indigenous pastors.
 ‘ And clergymen of English or Irish ordination, exercising their functions in Scot-
 ‘ land, without uniting with the Scottish Bishops, are in my judgement, doing
 ‘ nothing better than keeping alive a schism. I find nothing in your Tract to
 ‘ alter my mind upon these points. You are in a very great mistake in supposing,

It is with extreme reluctance, that I have touched on this unpleasant subject ; but compelled, as I feel myself, by a sense of duty, thus to state my opinion to the clergy, with whom I am more immediately connected, it is in the pleasing hope, that all of them, whether of Scotch or English ordination, will see the propriety of not abandoning any religious rite or practice, on such light grounds as mere levity of principle, or a mean compliance with the fashionable taste of the times.

After what I have done, and said, and written, to promote the cause of Episcopal union in this country, surely no person will suppose, that I would be unfriendly to any concession that is right and reasonable, for accomplishing so desirable an object. Those clergymen and their congregations, who have already united themselves with our church, have as yet, it may be presumed, seen no ground to complain of any breach of our articles of agreement, which, I am sure, have been, and it may be hoped, will be, most faithfully observed on our part. And as to those, who
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“ that the dissenters in England are required to subscribe any one of our 39 articles, previous to their Chapels being licensed.” I send a copy of this letter to
‘ Bishop Skinner at Aberdeen.

‘ I am, Rev. Sir, your very faithful Servant,

(Signed)

‘ S. ST. ASAPHENS.’

St. Asaph, November 11, 1805.

A clergyman of the diocese of Dunkeld, intends to publish, in a few months hence, a new edition of the *Scotch Communion Office*, with a prefatory Discourse on the doctrine of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, laid down in that office, and shewn to accord in every respect with the doctrine of the united church of England and Ireland ; containing also, a complete illustration of the whole office, after the manner of Wheatly, Shepherd, &c. and a Collation of all the Communion Offices that have been used in Great Britain, since the reformation, as drawn up some years ago by the then Lord Bishop of St. David's, now of St. Asaph.

are still standing out against such agreement, the only reason which I know for their doing so, is not so much their being dissatisfied with the terms, as the want of a due attention to the importance of the measure, and that fatal spirit of indifference, which now prevails so much in matters of religious concern, especially among those, whose example has more influence, than it surely ought to have in such cases *. This, I am afraid, will be often found to produce a most unhappy effect in keeping back even some of the clergy from pursuing that plain, straight course of professional duty, which is so clearly marked out to them in the rules of the church, and the obligations which they came under, when solemnly set apart to its sacred service. Let those, however, who see these things in a juster light, go on with their joint endeavours, under the aid of divine support, to teach their people the good, and the right way, in which they ought to walk; and let that
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* In the cases here referred to, applications have been made in various ways, for the purpose of exciting some degree of attention to the true nature of Episcopal principles, and to the effects which these principles might be expected to produce in Congregations belonging to, what are called English Chapels, and thus professing to be of the Episcopal persuasion. But arguments, on such topics as these, are offered in vain, to minds wholly occupied by the cares and concerns of this world. No access can be found to points of religious inquiry, where the thoughts are, without intermission, directed to the pursuits of business, the calls of pleasure, and that endless variety of engagements, which serves to keep religion, and every thing connected with it, at a convenient distance. Hence it is, that with these worldly objects perpetually in view, the precepts of christianity are regarded in no other light, than as guides to a few social duties, or guards against those breaches of moral honesty, which by wounding the reputation would cut off all prospect of rising to eminence in any favourite rank of life. This being with many the sole end of living, we need not wonder, that any form of religion is embraced which they find most likely to promote that end, and whether they profess to be of this church, or that church, being a matter of perfect indifference, little care will be taken to make their practice consistent with their profession.

discretionary power, which our church has given, to use either the Scotch or English form in the Communion Service, be always exercised in such a manner, as is worthy of the character which her clergy ought to maintain; evincing at the same time, a proper sympathy for her peculiar situation, a prudent zeal for her credit, and support, and a becoming regard to those venerable principles, by which, in this country, she is so happily distinguished.

I ought now to make an apology for taking up so much of the time, that may this day be necessary for another purpose; an apology which is chiefly due to my Right Reverend Colleagues, who, I hope, will have the goodness to accept it, and to the rest of the clergy here present, who are not under my immediate charge. Yet, having trespassed thus far on your patience, I will still beg leave in a very few words, to call your attention to the obvious disparity between the relative merits of the subject, which has now been discussed, and of the business in which we are about to be engaged, when we leave this house. The former refers to matters of the first and highest importance, while the latter embraces objects only of secondary, and far inferior consideration. For as such, even I, with all my connections in that way, and the feelings naturally excited by them, will ever esteem the interests of a family, in things temporal, when compared with those interests of the Household of Faith, which are eternal. This striking difference, I hope, we shall ever keep in our view, and not allow our thoughts to dwell so much on provision for our *Widows* and *Orphans*, as to interfere with the care which we ought to bestow on our spiritual concerns, the duties of our sacred calling,

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as stewards of the mysteries of God. Let that holy and heavenly calling have always the first place in our hearts, and its great and good design be the object of our fervent affection. This will prevent any warmth of discussion on things of subordinate value, and enable us to proceed to the arrangements we have to make, in that cool and cordial manner, which becomes the *Friendly Society* whereof we are members, and will tend to produce a mutual, pleasing confidence in one another—all of us, I hope, being deeply impressed with a just sense of our entire dependence on that gracious Lord, who spoke thus to his faithful people of old, and still speaks so to his servants now—
“ Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them ; and
“ let thy widows trust in me *.”

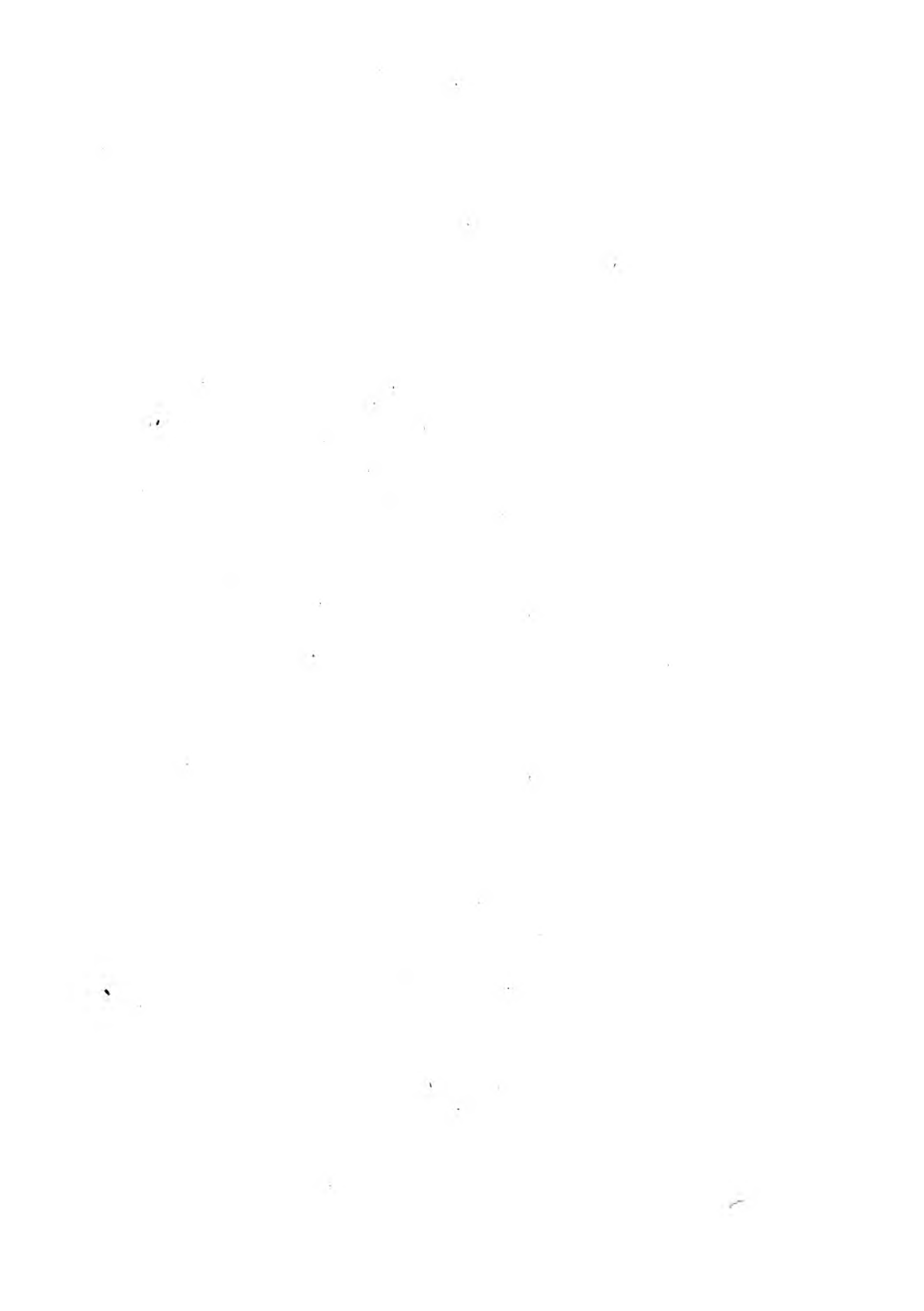
In him, then, let our hope and trust be securely placed, that so to him, to the adorable THREE in ONE eternal Jehovah, we may ever join with the church, both here and hereafter, in ascribing all glory, and honour, thanksgiving, and praise, henceforth and for evermore. Amen.

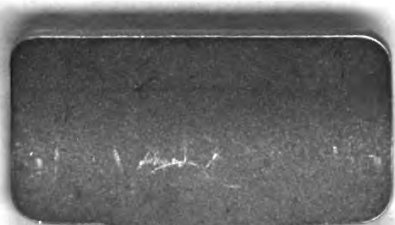
* Jer. xlix. 11.

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Which was used, after delivering the foregoing Charge.

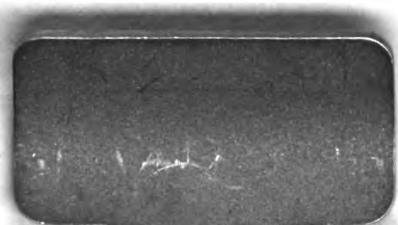
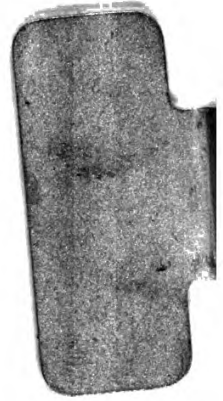
O holy and merciful JESUS, Son of God, and Saviour of the world, who hast declared, by thy prophet, “ how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace,” and hast assured us, by thy Apostle, that no man can preach, except he be sent—we humbly beseech Thee, of thy great mercy, to send forth into thy church such faithful and true pastors, as may feed thy flock, with that sound and salutary doctrine, which Thou hast provided for its everlasting support. May this be the never-ceasing study, the constant care of those thy servants here present, who are entrusted with a share of the ministry of thy word! Let them never be ashamed of thy gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation; but give them courage and strength to speak the word with all boldness, and teach thy people the good, and the right way. Enable us all, O gracious Lord, in the several stations which thou hast allotted to us, to make it our first and principal care, so to watch for the souls of those that are placed under our guidance and direction, that with joy, and not with grief, we may give an account of our charge, as stewards of thy holy mysteries: and O do Thou, the great Highpriest of our profession, so bless and sanctify all our ministrations, in that portion of thy holy church committed to our care, that, cleansed and purified as thy peculiar people, it may at last be presented to Thee, a part of thy glorious church, without spot or blemish, through thy all-powerful merits, O blessed JESUS, who, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, livest, and reignest, One God, world without end! Amen.

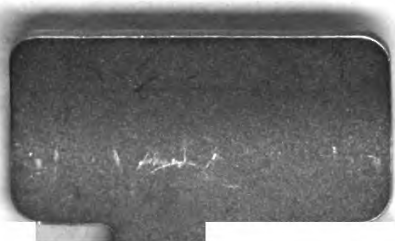


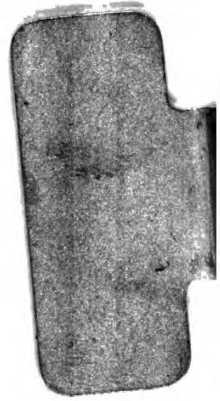




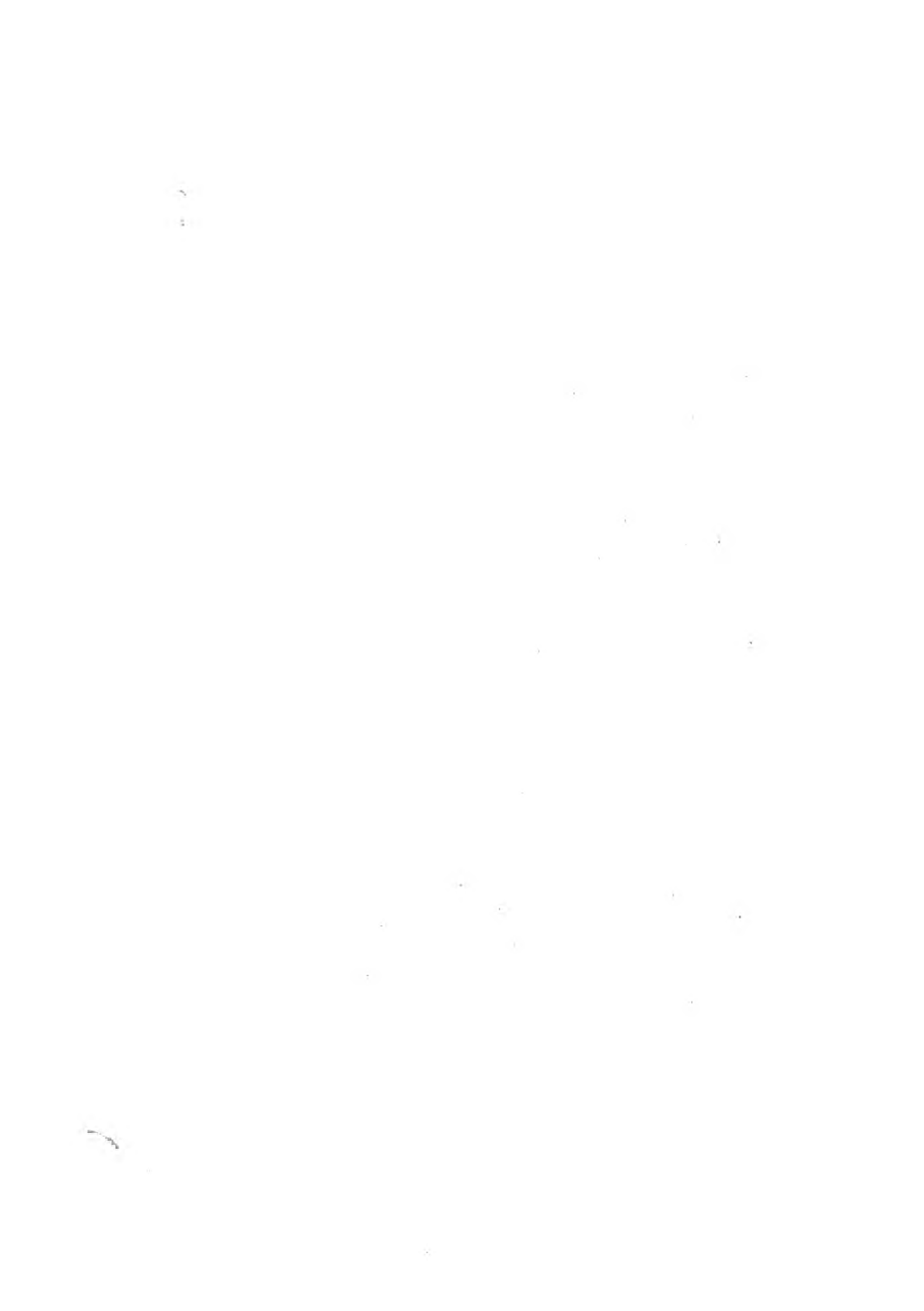


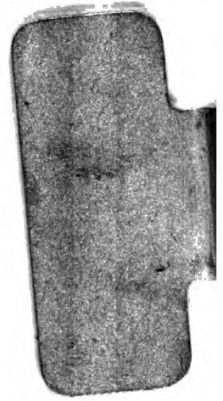


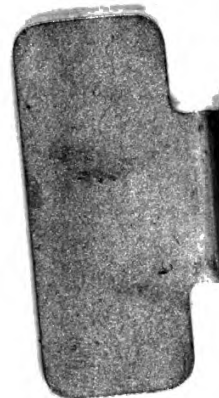


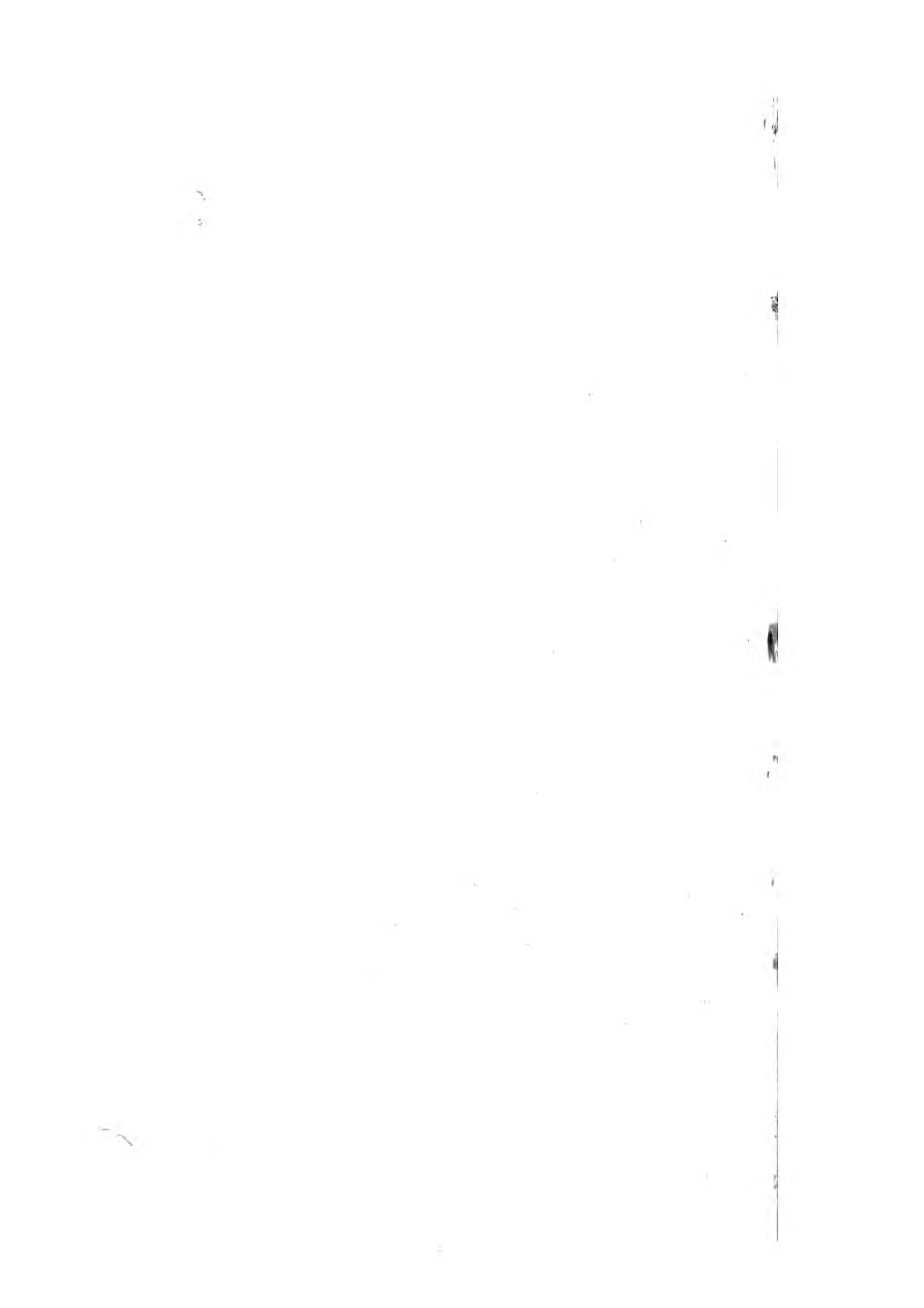












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