A

SEQUEL TO,

OR

A CONTINUATION OF

THE

MEMOIRS

PREFIXED TO THE WORKS

Of the late

REVEREND AND LEARNED

GEORGE BINGHAM, B. D.

OR

A Defence of the Conduct

OF

HIS SUCCESSOR,

THE PRESENT INCUMBENT OF

LONG-CRITCHILL,

WITH

MORE-CRITCHILL

annexed,

Against the unfounded Insinuations conveyed to the Public, through the channel of these Memoirs.

ADDRESSED TO

THE CLERGY

Of the County of DORSET,

BY THE

SUCCESSOR.

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———*if this counsel, or this work be of Men, it will come to nought: but if it be of GOD, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against GOD.* Acts. 5. 38. 39

REVEREND BRETHREN,

I trust that the propriety of my addressing you on this occasion will strike you most forcibly if you will only have the goodness to turn to page 64. of the Memoirs; where you will find the following words:———"The "young Clergyman, the intended Rector above "alluded to, was ordained Priest on Trinity-"Sunday 1803: but it does not appear that he "is in possession of the Rectory, tho' presented "by his own Mother, and tho' the time "stipulated by the present Incumbent has been "so long expired. The Clergy of the County of "of Dorset *are alarmed* at this circumstance; and "many of them who had intended to educate "their children in the clerical profession, have "turned their thoughts to another way of life."—

And truly my Brethren, just cause is there for you

your alarms. if half of that which the Author of the Memoirs has boldly insinuated againſt me, be true. But, I thank GOD, my character is not *quite so notorious* as it is therein represented to be.

In defence therefore of my unjustly attacked Reputation, I *pray* you, that *you wou'd hear* me *of your clemency, a few words.*

Far ought it to be from me, my Brethren, to arrogate to myself any plea or pretence to exemption from such attacks as these. when *good men*, nay; the very *best of men* have been, in all ages of the world, liable to them. And conscious as I am of my great unworthineſs to be the Succeſſor of ſo reſpectable a Man as the late Rector of theſe Pariſhes; yet am I verily perſuaded that, solely to the kind deſignation of that Providence who *regulateth all events*, both great and small, and who ruleth over all the earth, *be the people never so impatient* do I owe it, that my *lot has fallen in so goodly an heritage.* Nor can I, my Brethren, accuse myſelf, from the first offer of my ſervices to the Patroneſs, to hold thoſe Livings

for

for her Son (now the Reverend) William George Milner Sturt, to this moment, of my having acted in any way or manner that can give me the least cauſe for self-condemnation: but, on the other hand, I can boldly and manfully declare, that I have plainly seen, and can clearly trace, through each progreſſive step of this transaction, the hand of a good and a kindly directing Providence.

Words are wanting, my Brethren, to expreſs the gratitude I feel, and have ever felt towards the Beſt of Beings, for his having raised me to so honorable a ſtation: and for his having, by a ſeries of events (to me clearly providential) continued me in the poſſeſſion thereof much longer than I could, *ab origine*, have expected.

But notwithstanding, my Brethren, the *Mens conscia recti* has thus, throughout this transaction, pervaded every part of my conduct, and will doubtleſs continue to be my firm ſupport from within againſt every wanton or even malicious attack upon my Reputation; yet ought I not to be wholly indifferent to the World's Opinion. It

It may be convenient, my Brethren, in order to render this just and public Vindication of my much-injured Reputation clear and intelligible, to treat of my conduct, First, as it respects my Negotiation with the Patroness; and Secondly, as it has regard to my Resignation. And the necessity of this distinction is obvious, for the Author of the Memoirs represents me (p. 64) as *having stipulated to give up* at the end of *two years*; and in p. 65. I am accused of not having yet *made the Livings void by my cession.*

First then of my Conduct as it respects the Negotiation or Treaty with Mrs. Sturt, the Patroness.

Pressed forward by a conviction of that mutual attachment and affection which had long subsisted betwixt myself and the Inhabitants of the Parish of Long-Critchill with More-Critchill annexed, whose Minister I had been from the Year 1787, I wrote, immediately on the demise of Mr. Bingham, [Oct. 11th. 1800] to the Patroness, Mrs. Sturt, (the sole surviving

ſurviving Truſtee under the Will of the late Humphry Sturt Esq.) and requeſted that ſhe would do me the honour to appoint me in the room of the deceaſed Rector. Her Anſwer informed me that ſhe deſigned thoſe Rectories for her Son William.

I immediately had recourſe to the Pariſh-Regiſter; and having from thence infered the neceſſity of ſome one's holding them for him, for a ſhort time, on account of his Minority; I wrote again, offering my ſervice, to take them in truſt for him: and I withal aſſured the Patroneſs that I would faithfully reſign them in her Son's favour whenever, after two years, he ſhould be found qualified to ſucceed to them.

I need only add here that the Negotiation went on for a conſiderable time exactly to my wiſhes.

But needleſs will it be, my Brethren, to trouble you with every minute circumſtance that occured during the Treaty; ſuffice it that I dwell only on the moſt marked features of it.

But

But I muſt not omit to inform you that from my firſt onſet in this buſineſs I had laid it down as my invariable maxim that I was to hold the Rectory of Long-Critchill with More-Critchill annexed, for the Patroneſs' Son, W. G, M. Sturt, *nominatim*' and *for him only*: from that principle I determined never to deviate, and from that principle I never did deviate; for I made it my *general* rule throughout my correſpondence on that ſubject, ſo to keep alive and inculcate the idea of my holding *for him* and *for no other*, that though I could not poſitively affirm that *no* letter eſcaped me without my having adverted to the terms, yet can I ſafely declare that *ſcarcely any did*.

I muſt not, my Brethren, with-hold it from you that, about a week previous to the Lapſe, a circumſtance occured which created in me no leſs aſtoniſhment than diſſatisfaction; for it amounted, in my opinion, to a Prohibition of my ever poſſeſſing thoſe Rectories: and as ſuch I treated it; for I wrote immediately to the Patroneſs, and lamented the neceſſity I

was

was under of giving up all my pretenſions, if terms, other than thoſe which I had invariably inculcated, were perſevered in.

I remarked in my Anſwer, that I was concerned at what ſhe had propoſed; and that "I ſaw clearly there was no chance, nor even "a ſhadow of a chance of my being Mr. B———'s Succeſſor.

I am here willing and deſirous of making every poſſible allowance for the Patroneſs; who was probably totally unacquainted with the nature of holding Livings. But as it has ever been my invariable maxim to ſet up TRUTH as my *Polar-Star*, and as conſequently I ſhould not feel juſtified in omitting a circumſtance of this importance, during my voyage through this troublous ocean on which I am now embarked, I truſt that the Patroneſs will pardon my having here adverted to this æra of the negotiation.

From that period I conceived that an end was put to the Treaty; and I thought no more

of the

of the Rectory of L--C— with M–C— annexed.

But wonderful, my Brethren, are the ways of GOD; whose good Providence not unfrequently brings about Events at a time when they are least of all expected; and when *Means*, the best calculated to effect their *Ends*, cease to operate. I shall illustrate this great Truth by the following fact.

Two days before the Lapse-day, (or, on thursday *April* 9th. 1801) the late Mr. Dean of Winbourne, Steward to Charles Sturt Esq. the present Possessor of Critchill, and the late Member of Parliament for Bridport, came to me with the following message from Mr. C. Sturt:—— *viz.*—that he (Mr, C. S.) was extremely mortified that his Mother had not yet presented a Clerk to the Rectory of L— C— with M – C— annexed; and that if I would immediately, without loss of time, wait on his Lordship the Bishop of Bristol with a Presentation from him, to hold those Livings for his Brother William, I need only send my

Servant

Servant to Mr. Dean's in the Evening, and the Preſentation ſhould be there in readineſs for me.

This plan it was conceived, if it did not fix me in poſſeſſion, was at leaſt well calculated to prevent a Lapſe.

In the Evening I ſent my ſervant according to the appointment: but, inſtead of a Preſentation from Mr. C--S—, I received a letter from Mr. Dean, purporting that Mr. C--S--- had, on his arrival that day at Brownsea-Castle, found a letter from his mother, wherein ſhe had aſſured him that ſhe had over-night ſent a Preſentation to his Lordſhip the Biſhop of Briſtol in my favour, to hold the Rectories for her Son William.

In conſequence of this avowal, I went the next morning to Briſtol; where I found that the Preſentation had been received by the late Lord Biſhop of Briſtol, (now of Hereford.)

The following ſtatement of ſome matters that aroſe during the day which I ſpent at the Palace at Briſtol, will tend to evince the uniformity and conſiſtency of my conduct.

I aſſured his Lordſhip, in the preſence of Mr. Chancellor Baugh, that, as I had engaged in thoſe Rectories to hold them for Mr. W. G. M. Sturt, a Minor, it was much my wiſh that his Lordſhip would make a record thereof in his Dioceſe-book; in order that there might be no impediment in the way of my Reſignation, whenever the Minor ſhould be qualified to ſucceed to them. I moreover remarked that, as Mrs. Sturt had preſented me to hold for her Son without having required any legal Security, or indeed any Security at all beyond my bare word, expreſſed to her by letter, I conceived it to be but right that I ſhould, after my Inſtitution, give her the ſtrongeſt poſſible aſſurance of the purity of my intention reſpecting my future Reſignation: and I withal asked his Lordſhip what would be the handsomeſt plan to adopt. His reply was,—"in caſes of holding "for Minors, I have no objection to a Bond of "Reſignation."

Availing myſelf of this ſanction, ſhortly after my Inſtitution I wrote to the Patroneſs, and informed her that I was deſirous of making her every

every poſſible return for the handſome manner in which ſhe had preſented me to the Rectory of L--C-- with M--C-- annexed; and as my Dioceſan had no objection to my giving a Bond of Reſignation, there ſhould certainly be no objection to it on my part. If therefore ſhe would order her Solicitor to draw a Bond, ſetting forth that I held the Rectories for her Son W. G. M. Sturt, a Minor, under any penalty ſhe choſe; I would cheerfully ſign it. To this letter (which was ſent by the Poſt) no Anſwer whatever was ever received.

From thence then it was fair in me to preſume that the Patroneſs was perfectly ſatisfied in reſting the whole on my Word and Honour, which I had repeatedly pledged to her by letter.

Another Remark, my Brethren, I muſt not with-hold from you, as it will afford at leaſt a *preſumptive* proof that I did not take to the Rectory of L--C– with M--C-- annexed under any *absolute or unconditional* promiſe of reſigning them; as the Author of the Memoirs ſeems to inſinuate.

After my Return from Briſtol [where, *by the bye*

bye, I was not inſtituted, becauſe his Lordſhip had left his official seal in London] I received a letter from the Patroneſs dated April 20. 1801. in which ſhe gently upbraided me for my not having written to her ſince my viſit to Briſtol: adding withal that I had found time to write to her ſon Charles; for he had ſhewn her my letter. She farther remarked that my letter to him amounted, in her opinion, to a full proof that ſhe had accommodated herſelf to my plans, and that ſhe had done for me every thing according to my wiſhes.

That I did not write to Mrs. S— from Briſtol is certain; and the reaſon was that I waited 'till I could aſſure her of my Inſtitution, which I did not receive 'till afterwards; and that by the hands of his Lordſhip's Commiſſary at Blandford: And that I *did* write to Mr. C. Sturt in the way and manner ſhe had deſcribed, is no leſs certain.

Can it then, my Brethren, for a moment be believed that, under the impreſſion of any illegal promiſe, or the pledge of any clandeſtine ſecurity, I could poſſibly have written in that ſtyle and manner?

——————*credat Judæus Apella,*
Non ego.——————————

[But

But as I am anxious, my Brethren, not to leave you in the poſſeſſion of only a *preſumptive* proof of my integrity during this Negotiation, I ſhall proceed to give you a more satisfactory teſt.

Aware, as I am, of the extreme difficulty of eſtabliſhing by proofs the *negative*, after the *positive* side of the ſame queſtion has been boldly inſinuated to be true ; and no leſs aware that it is out of my power to commit to the Preſs at this time letters which have escaped from me above 3 years ago (and of which I poſſeſs only copies) I find myſelf driven to this alternative ; either to rest the principal evidence of my Integrity on my own Affirmation, or otherwiſe, to ſuffer the public mind to remain impreſſed by *false representations and exaggerated complaints* (p. 65.) Now as I cannot, my Brethren, acquiesce under the idea of the public mind being thus miſled, I ſhall have recourſe to my own Affirmation. But that Affirmation ſhall not be a mere *ipſe dixit*, nor even a *bold Inſinuation* ; for as I bear about me *the teſtimony of my Conſcience* that I have acted in *ſimplicity and godly ſincerity* through-

throughout this whole tranſaction, it ſhall be an Affirmation accompanied by an Appeal to the ALMIGHTY : in whoſe preſence I am, and on whom I now call to be my witneſs ; moſt ſolemnly and earneſtly beſeeching him that, at the laſt dread day, my ſentence of acquittal or condemnation may bear an exact *ratio* to the truth or falſehood by which I am actuated, when I declare ;—that " I never entertained an idea (and " conſequently never could have imparted one) " of holding the Rectory of L–C-- with M--C-- " annexed in any other way or manner than for " the Patroneſs' Son [now the Reverend] W. " G. M. Stûrt, *nominatim* "

I truſt, my Brethren, that you will acquit me both of wantonneſs and profaneneſs in having thus appealed to the Deity ; for ſurely we have authorities innumerable to juſtify ſuch Appeals, whenever the

——————*dignus vindice nodus*
Inciderit : ——————————

Juſt then as the remark of the Author of the Memoirs (p. 64.) may be, (and juſt it aſſuredly

is

is) viz. that *I ſtipulated not to be interrupted in my poſſeſſion during two years ;* yet do I truſt that I have made it appear that by no means juſt or well-founded is the idea meant to be conveyed to the Public by the next clauſe of the ſame ſentence, *viz.* that I promiſed an *abſolute and unconditional Reſignation* at the end of that period ; or indeed at all.

I ſhall now, my Brethren, proceed to the conſideration of my conduct as it reſpects my Reſignation.

On June 10th. 1803. Mrs. Sturt, the Patroneſs, firſt informed me that her Son had been ordained a Prieſt ; and that ſhe hoped there would be no impediment on my part to his succeeding to the Rectory of L—C-- with M--C-- annexed.

I replied that I had lately confered with a common friend of our's, and from him (who had himself held a Living for a Minor) I had been aſſured that it was an eſtabliſhed privilege, attached to the Holders of Livings for Minors, not to be interrupted in their poſſeſſion during the year that had commenced ; and that conſequently

quently I truſted that ſhe would not object to my availing myſelf of that privilege. And I farther remarked, that ſhe might fully rely on me when I aſſured her that *on or before the tenth* day of October next, my Reſignation ſhould, without fail, be sent to the Office of his Lordſhip the Biſhop of Briſtol, duly executed.

Accordingly on the seventh of that month my Reſignation was executed at Blandford before Mr. Monday, a Notary-Public; and immediately, at my ſpecial requeſt, lodged by his own hands, as far as I know and believe, in the Poſt-Office of that place. It was addreſſed to my Proctor, Mr. Porteus, the Secretary to his Lordſhip, the Biſhop of Briſtol. And when I aſſure you, my Brethren, that the Reſignation was drawn up in the usual form, it is almoſt needleſs for me to remark that it was *absolute, unconditional,* and consequently, to all intents and purpoſes whatever, as far as it respected myſelf, for ever *irrevocable.*

Having thus, my Brethren, redeemed the pledge which I had given for my making an absolute

folute Refignation of the Rectory of L-- C-- with M--C-- annexed, on or before the 10th of October, and fulfilled to a tittle all that I had in honour bound myself to do ; I left the Event in the hands of him to whom alone Events belong.

From this period I continued totally in the dark in refpect to what followed ; for though I daily expected to be informed, either by Mrs. Sturt or her Son, that his Inftitution had taken place, from no one Individual did I derive the leaft fource of intelligence.

Wearied at length by this ftate of fufpence in which I had fo long been held, on the firft of November, I wrote to Mr. Porteus, and begged to know of him what had been done in my bufinefs. His Anfwer follows :——

Gerard Street, Soho, Nov. 3. 1803.

Revd, Sir,

In anfwer to your favour of the firft inftant, which I have this moment received, I beg to acquaint you that when my Lord Bifhop of Briftol paffed through Town, fome

time ſince, I made a point of informing him that I had received a letter from you, with the Reſignation of the Living of L--C— with M–C— annexed, duly executed by you : and I alſo reported to him the handſome manner in which you had been pleaſed to expreſs yourſelf on ſuch Reſignation. His Lordſhip's reply was, that he certainly ſhould not think of accepting your Reſignation, 'till he fully approved of the Papers which it would be neceſſary for Mr. Sturt to produce.

I called at Mrs. Sturt's houſe ſoon after I had ſeen the Biſhop of Briſtol. She was not out of her room : I was however introduced to her Daughter. To her therefore I reported how handſomely you had acted in the buſineſs, and informed her that you had ſent me up your Reſignation properly executed : but that his Lordſhip would not accept the ſame 'till ſuch time as her Brother's Papers were approved.

I of courſe thought that you would have heard from Mrs. Sturt in conſequence of the information I had communicated, or from her

Son

Son. In the courſe of a few days I ſhall hope to have it in my power to ſend you the Biſhop's determination.

I have only to add, that his Lordſhip ſeemed perfectly ſatisfied with your conduct in the buſineſs, as being much to your honour.

I am,

Rev. Sir, in much haſte,

your faithful and obedient ſervant,

THOMAS PORTEUS.

This letter will, no doubt, my Brethren, aſtoniſh you, as it opens a ſcene entirely new and by you unexpected. *

From this period nothing worthy of notice occured, 'till the Memoirs of the life of my late worthy Predeceſſor were laid before the Public.

* The Event announced in the preceding Letter, though not much expected by the Author of the Sequel, did not greatly ſurpriſe him ; for he had been informed near three months before, by a Layman, much connected with Mr. Sturt's Family, that it was by no means improbable, that Mr. S——'s Credentials would be inefficient. But the Author of the Sequel was determined that no information of this sort ſhould at all influence his conduct, or divert him from making his Reſignation in conformity to the aſſurances he had given in his Answer to Mrs. Sturt's letter of June 10th.

On my having perufed these memoirs, my honeft Indignation was neceffarily roused, and it imperiously dictated to me the absolute neceffity of my laying my defence before that Public whom the Author of the Memoirs had artfully endeavoured to *mislead by false representations and exaggerated complaints* ; (p. 65.). I therefore wrote to Mr. Porteus ; and having informed him how unmercifully I had been treated by the Author of thofe Memoirs, I requefted his permiffion to publifh the preceding Letter.

To this he readily acceded, as will appear by what follows.

London Dec. 16. 1804.

Rev. Sir,

Your favour of the 12th inftant I have juft received with a letter inclosed to my Lord Bifhop of Briftol, which I fhall forward to his Lordfhip by this Evening's Poft to Brighton. I am surprifed at what you mention refpecting the attack which has been made by the Editor of the Works of the Rev. Mr. Bingham. I can have no objection to your producing my Letter in which

which the receipt of the Resignation was acknowledged. Probably you will favour me with a copy of the letter, and direct it to me, under cover to my Lord Bishop of London, St. James's Square. I am really sorry that you should be so unpleasantly situated. In my opinion your conduct seems to have been *most truly honorable.*

I am, Rev. Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

THOMAS PORTEUS.

It is scarcely necessary, my Brethren, to remark to you, to whom, for the most part, Mr. Porteus is known, that he is a man most respectable, and in his official capacity well qualified to judge of a business of this kind. And you may believe me, when I assure you, that no one fact whatever, relative to my conduct as it respects my Resignation, has been unknown or concealed from Mr. Porteus; so that he is, in every sense, most competent to form a right judgment on the case before you.

As far then as it may be needful to satisfy you

you, my Brethren, of the purity and integrity of my conduct. I think I could close my defence at this place ; but since there are too many abroad in the world, of whom some, blinded by the darkness that is within them, cannot, and of whom others, biased by prejudices from without, will not, distinguish between Reality and Conjecture, Fact and Insinuation, Truth and Error ; I shall proceed to lay before you a still more powerful Evidence in my favour.

Hac non successit, alia aggrediemur via. TER.

The Testimony that I shall here adduce, and with which I shall conclude my defence, is no less than that of my Diocesan, the Honourable and Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Bristol.

On finding how unjustifiably I had been aspersed by the Author of the Memoirs, I wrote to his Lordship, and requested that he would do me the honour to exonerate me, as far as he could with a safe conscience, from the charge which had been imputed to me of my having attempted to prejudice his mind and to poison

his

his judgment, by groſs inſinuations and falſe repreſentations, calculated to preclude the Rev. G. W. M. Sturt from the poſſeſſion of L-- C-- with M-- C-- annexed.

His Lordſhip's Answer.

Brighton, Dec. 19, 1804

Rev. Sir,

Your two letters of the 10th. and 16th inſtant came to me here by yeſterday's Poſt, which will explain to you the cauſe of my ſilence.

If you think I can in the leaſt heal your wounded feelings by the following Declaration, you have my leave to make it public in whatever way you pleaſe:——that your conduct has been perfectly honorable in itſelf, and ſatisfactory to me, in the whole of the transaction to which you allude: that no repreſentation of your's has had the leaſt influence whatever in the line I purſued, reſpecting Mr. Sturt; and that I am at any time ready, but from feelings of delicacy towards Mr. Sturt and his Family, unwilling to declare the motives which alone guided me in the conduct I felt it my duty to adopt.

I am

I am, Rev. Sir,

Your's moſt faithfully

G. BRISTOL.

P. S. I have not the flighteſt objection to Mr. Porteus' allowing his letter (which I have ſeen this morning) to be publiſhed.

On this letter of his Lordſhip's it would ill become me to make any comment ; * and it would no leſs ill become me, if I paſſed by this opportunity of publicly thanking him for his handſome Atteſtation in my favour.

I here cloſe my Defence ; and I humbly truſt that it will convince you as well of the purity and integrity which actuated me during the negotiation, as of the fidelity and honour which regulated me in the act of my Reſignation.

To what period my poſſeſſion of theſe Rectories may be farther protracted, can only be known to

* For the Information of thoſe of the Laity into whoſe hands this defence may fall, it may be needful to remark, that a Biſhop who with-holds Inſtitution from a Clerk, is open to a *Quare impedit*. The idea therefore that his Lordſhip would have taken this decided part in conſequence of any *Inſinuations* whatever, is an abſurdity ; and alſo an inſult upon his underſtanding. His Lordſhip muſt then doubtleſs have had weighty and ſufficient reaſons for what he did.

to that gracious Being who has placed me in them.

It may be of long, or it may be of ſhort duration: but this point I have, (as you have ſeen my Brethren) put it wholly out of my own power to determine. If the former be the caſe, He will have the greater claim to my gratitude; if the latter, my cheerful ſubmiſſion will, I truſt, be (as I am ſure it ought to be) the conſequence.

Had the Author of the Memoirs kept before his eyes that admirable maxim of Ignatius (Χωρις τȣ Επισκοπȣ μηδεν ποιειτε) which his venerable Father has prefixed to his incomparable letter to Lindſey, he would have been well adviſed; and would not, aſſuredly, have exhibited to public view an Accuſation as unwarranted and unfounded, as it is extraneous and *irrelevant* to the buſineſs before him. But ſince it has been his pleaſure ſo to act, I ſhall take occaſion to aſſure you, my Brethren, that, *becauſe* I am not conſcious of ever having given him any *real* cause of offence, I can freely forgive both this and *all other* his wanton attacks upon my Reputation: and I pray Heaven to forgive him too.

I have

I have only now to expreſs my hope, that this my Defence may quiet the minds of *the many among you*, my Brethren, who have *been alarmed* at the *outrageousneſs* of my proceedings; and that it may be the happy inſtrument, in the hands of Providence, of winning over thoſe among you, who, having before deſtined your sons to the *clerical profeſſion*, and ſince, through the *notoriety* of my conduct, *turned your thoughts to another way of life*, to revoke your raſh resolutions.

Believe me, my Brethren, that I am actuated by the moſt perfect ſincerity and profound eſteem, when I ſubſcribe myself your faithful friend,

And Brother in Chriſt,

G. MARSH,

Rector of Long-Critchill, with More-Critchill annexed.

P. S. It is much the wiſh of the Author of the Sequel, that the Purchaſers of Mr. B——'s Works would do him the honour to affix this his Defence after p. 86. of the Memoirs; as it is but juſt that the Accuſation and the Defence ſhould be transmitted down to Poſterity hand in hand.

Simmonds, Printer, Blandford.