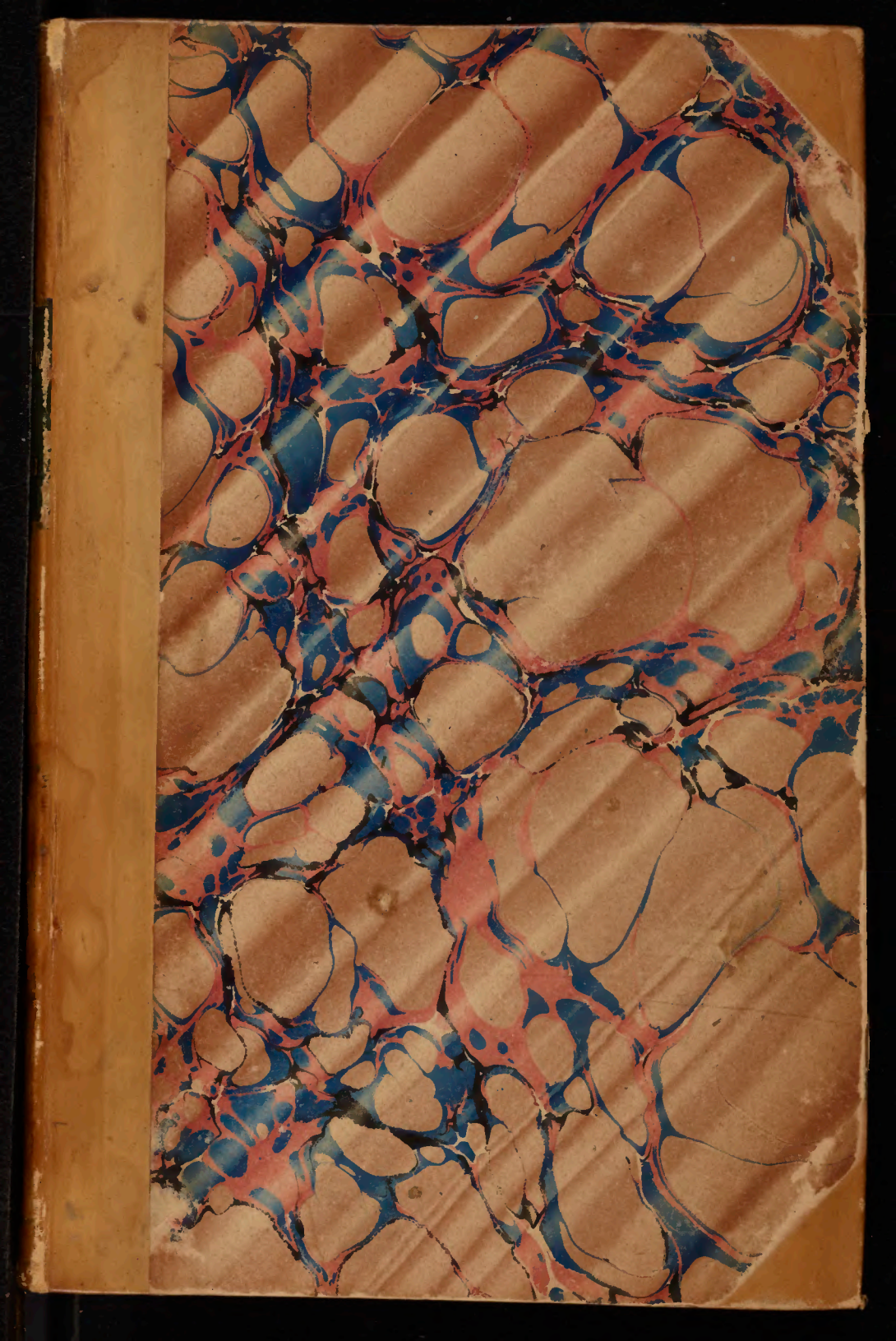

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Mayhew on Charles I.

~~Non Resistance~~

1750

A

DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

Unlimited Submiſſion

AND

Non-Reſiſtance

TO THE

HIGHER POWERS:

With ſome REFLECTIONS on the RESISTANCE made to

King CHARLES I.

AND ON THE

Anniverſary of his Death:

In which the MYSTERIOUS Doctrine of that Prince's Saintſhip and Martyrdom is UNRIDDLED:

The Subſtance of which was delivered in a SERMON preached in the Weſt Meeting-Houſe in *Boſton* the LORD's-Day after the 30th of *January*, 1749 | 50.

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Publiſhed at the Requeſt of the Hearers.

By JONATHAN MAYHEW, A. M.
Paſtor of the Weſt Church in *Boſton*.

Fear GOD, honor the King. Saint PAUL.

He that ruleth over Men, muſt be juſt, ruling in the Fear of GOD. Prophet SAMUEL.

I have ſaid, ye are Gods— but ye ſhall die like Men, and fall like one of the PRINCES. King DAVID.

Quid memorem infandas cædes? quid facta TYRANNI
Effera? Dii CAPITI ipſius GENERIQUE reſervent—
Necnon Threïcius *longa cum veſte* SACERDOS
Obloquitur——
Rom. Vat. Prin.

BOSTON, Printed and Sold by D. FOWLE in Queen-ſtreet; and by D. GOOKIN over-againſt the South-Meeting-Houſe. 1750.

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PREFACE.

*THE enſuing diſcourſe is the laſt of three upon the ſame ſubject, with ſome little alterations and additions. It is hoped that but few will think the ſubject of it an improper one to be diſcourſed on in the pulpit, under a notion that this is preaching politics, inſtead of CHRIST. However, to remove all prejudices of this ſort, I beg it may be remembred, that "all ſcripture — is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for CORRECTION, for inſtruction in righteouſneſs." * Why, then, ſhould not thoſe parts of ſcripture which relate to civil government, be examined and explained from the deſk, as well as others? Obedience to the civil magiſtrate is a chriſtian duty: and if ſo, why ſhould not the nature, grounds and extent of it be conſidered in a chriſtian aſſembly? Beſides, if it be ſaid, that it is out of character for a chriſtian miniſter to meddle with ſuch a ſubject, this cenſure will at laſt fall upon the holy apoſtles. They write upon it in their epiſtles to chriſtian churches: And ſurely it cannot be deemed either criminal or impertinent, to attempt an explanation of their doctrine.*

IT was the near approach of the Thirtieth *of* January, *that turned my thoughts to this ſubject: on which ſolemnity the* ſlaviſh *doctrine of paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance,*

* 2 Pet. iii. 16.

is often warmly asserted; and the dissenters from the established church, represented, not only as schismatics, (with more of triumph than of truth, and of choler than christianity) but also as persons of seditious, traiterous and rebellious principles—GOD be thanked one may, in any part of the britiſh *dominions, speak freely (if a decent regard be paid to those in authority) both of government and religion; and even give some broad hints, that he is engaged on the side of Liberty, the BIBLE and Common Sense, in opposition to Tyranny, PRIEST-CRAFT and Non-sense, without being in danger either of the* baſtile *or the* inquiſition :—*Though there will always be* ſome *interested politicians, contracted bigots, and hypocritical zealots for a party, to take offence at such freedoms.* Their *censure is praise:* Their *praise is infamy—A spirit of domination is always to be guarded against both in church and state, even in times of the greatest security; such as the present is amongst US; at least as to the latter. Those nations who are now groaning under the iron sceptre of tyranny, were once free. So they might, probably, have remained, by a seasonable caution against despotic measures. Civil tyranny is usually small in its beginning, like "the drop of a bucket," * till at length, like a mighty torrent, or the raging waves of the sea, it bears down all before it, and deluges whole countries and empires. Thus it is as to eccleſiaſtical tyranny also,—the most cruel, intolerable and impious, of any. From small beginnings, "it exalts itself above all that is called GOD "and that is worshipped" † People have no security*

* Isai. xi. 15. † 2 Thes. ii. 4;

against

againſt being unmercifully prieſt-ridden, *but by keeping all imperious BISHOPS, and other CLERGYMEN who love to "lord it over God's heritage," from getting their* foot *into the* ſtirrup *at all. Let them be once fairly* mounted, *and their "beaſts, the laiety," ‡ may* prance *and* flounce *about to no purpoſe: And they will, at length, be ſo* jaded *and* hack'd *by theſe reverend* jockies, *that they will not even have* ſpirits *enough to complain, that their* backs *are* galled; *or, like* Balaam's *aſs, to "rebuke the madneſs "of the prophet."* ‖

"THE myſtery of iniquity began to work" † *even in the days of ſome of the apoſtles. But the kingdom of Antichriſt was then, in one reſpect, like the kingdom of heaven, however different in all others.—It was "as a "grain of muſtard-ſeed."* * *This grain was ſown in* Italy, *that fruitful field: And though it were "the leaſt "of all ſeeds," it ſoon became a mighty tree. It has, long ſince, overſpread and* darkned *the greateſt part of* Chriſtendom, *ſo that we may apply to it what is ſaid of the tree which* Nebuchadnezzar *ſaw in his viſion—"The "height thereof reacheth unto heaven, and the ſight thereof "to the end of all the earth—And THE BEASTS OF "THE FIELD have ſhadow under it."* *Tyranny brings* ignorance *and* brutality *along with it. It degrades men from their juſt rank, into the claſs of brutes. It damps their ſpirits. It ſuppreſſes arts. It extinguiſhes every ſpark of noble ardor and generoſity in the breaſts of thoſe who are enſlaved by it. It makes naturally-ſtrong and great minds,*

‡ Mr. *Leſlie.* ‖ 2 Pet. ii. 16. † 2 Theſ. ii 7. * Mat. xiii. 31.

feeble

feeble and little; and triumphs over the ruins of virtue and humanity. This is true of tyranny in every ſhape. There can be nothing great and good, where its influence reaches. For which reaſon it becomes every friend to truth and human kind; every lover of God and the chriſtian religion, to bear a part in oppoſing this hateful monſter. It was a deſire to contribute a mite towards carrying on a war againſt this common enemy, that produced the following diſcourſe. And if it ſerve in any meaſure, to keep up a ſpirit of civil and religious liberty amongſt us, my end is anſwered.—There are virtuous and candid men in all ſects; all ſuch are to be eſteemed: There are alſo vicious men and bigots in all ſects; and all ſuch ought to be deſpiſed.

"To virtue only and her friends, a friend;
"The world beſide may murmur or commend.
"Know, all the diſtant din *that* world can keep
"Rolls o'er my grotto, and but ſooths my ſleep."

POPE.

Jonathan Mayhew.

Concerning Unlimited Submiſſion and Non-Reſiſtance to the *Higher Powers.*

ROM. XIII. 1.——8.

1. *Let every ſoul be ſubject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be, are ordained of God.*

2. *Whoſoever therefore reſiſteth the power, reſiſteth the ordinance of God: and they that reſiſt, ſhall receive to themſelves damnation.*

3. *For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou ſhalt have praiſe of the ſame:*

4. *For he is the miniſter of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the ſword in vain: for he is the miniſter of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil.*

5. *Wherefore ye muſt needs be ſubject, not only for wrath, but alſo for conſcience ſake.*

6. *For, for this cauſe pay you tribute alſo: for they are God's miniſters, attending continually upon this very thing.*

7. *Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; cuſtom, to whom cuſtom; fear, to whom fear; honour, to whom honour.*

IT is evident that the affair of civil government may properly fall under a *moral* and *religious* conſideration, at leaſt ſo far forth as it relates to the general nature and end of magiſtracy, and to the grounds and extent of that ſubmiſſion which perſons of a private character, ought to yield to thoſe who are veſted with

 authority.

authority. This muſt be allowed by all who acknowledge the divine original of chriſtianity. For although there be a ſenſe, and a very plain and important ſenſe, in which Chriſt's *kingdom is not of this world*; † his inſpired apoſtles have, nevertheleſs, laid down ſome general principles concerning the office of civil rulers, and the duty of ſubjects, together with the reaſon and obligation of that duty. And from hence it follows, that it is proper for all who acknowledge the authority of Jeſus Chriſt, and the inſpiration of his apoſtles, to endeavour to underſtand what is in fact the doctrine which they have delivered concerning this matter. It is the duty of *chriſtian* magiſtrates to inform themſelves what it is which their religion teaches concerning the nature and deſign of their office. And it is equally the duty of all *chriſtian* people to inform themſelves what it is which their religion teaches concerning that ſubjection which they owe to *the higher powers*. It is for theſe reaſons that I have attempted to examine into the ſcripture-account of this matter, in order to lay it before you with the ſame *freedom* which I conſtantly uſe with relation to other doctrines and precepts of chriſtianity; not doubting but you will *judge* upon every thing offered to your conſideration, with the ſame ſpirit of *freedom* and *liberty* with which it is *ſpoken*.

THE paſſage read, is the moſt full and expreſs of any in the new-teſtament, relating to rulers and ſubjects: And therefore I thought it proper to ground upon it, what I had to propoſe to you with reference to the

† John xviii. 36.

authority.

authority of the civil magiſtrate, and the ſubjection which is due to him. But before I enter upon an explanation of the ſeveral parts of this paſſage, it will be proper to obſerve one thing which may ſerve as a key to the whole of it.

It is to be obſerved, then, that there were ſome perſons amongſt the *chriſtians* of the apoſtolic age, and particularly thoſe at *Rome*, to whom St. *Paul* is here writing, who ſeditiouſly diſclaimed *all* ſubjection to civil authority; refuſing to pay taxes, and the duties laid upon their trafic and merchandize; and who ſcrupled not to ſpeak of their rulers, without any due regard to their office and character. Some of theſe turbulent *chriſtians* were converts from *judaiſm*, and others from *paganiſm*. The *jews* in general had, long before this time, taken up a ſtrange conceit, that being the *peculiar* and *elect* people of God, they were, therefore, exempted from the juriſdiction of any *heathen* princes or governors. Upon this ground it was, that ſome of them, during the public miniſtry of our bleſſed Saviour, came to him with that queſtion—*Is it lawful to give tribute unto* Ceſar *or not?* * And this notion many of them retained after they were proſelyted to the *chriſtian* faith. As to the *gentile* converts, ſome of them groſly miſtook the nature of that *liberty* which the goſpel promiſed; and thought that by virtue of their ſubjection to Chriſt, the *only* King and Head of his church, they were wholly freed from ſubjection to any other prince; as tho' Chriſt's *kingdom had been of this*

* Matth. xxii. 17.

world,

world, in ſuch a ſenſe as to interfere with the civil powers of the earth, and to deliver their ſubjects from that allegiance and duty, which they before owed to them. Of theſe viſionary *chriſtians* in general, who diſowned ſubjection to the civil powers in being where they reſpectively lived, there is mention made in ſeveral places in the new-teſtament: The apoſtle *Peter* in particular, characterizes them in this manner—*them that—deſpiſe government—preſumptuous are they, ſelf-willed, they are not afraid to ſpeak evil of dignities.* † Now it is with reference to theſe doting *chriſtians*, that the apoſtle ſpeaks in the paſſage before us. And I ſhall now give you the ſenſe of it in a paraphraſe upon each verſe in its order, deſiring you to keep in mind the character of the perſons for whom it is deſigned, that ſo, as I go along, you may ſee how juſt and natural this addreſs is; and how well ſuited to the circumſtances of thoſe againſt whom it is levelled.

THE apoſtle begins thus—*Let every ſoul* * *be ſubject unto the higher powers*; ‖ *for there is no power* § *but of*

† 2 Pet. ii. 10.

* *Every ſoul.* This is an *hebraiſm*, which ſignifies *every man*; ſo that the apoſtle does not exempt the *clergy:* ſuch as were endowed with the gift of propheſy, or any other miraculous powers which ſubſiſted in the church at that day. And by his uſing the *hebrew* idiom, it ſeems that he had the *jewiſh* converts principally in his eye.

‖ *The higher powers:* more literally, the *over-ruling powers:* which term extends to all civil rulers in common.

§ By *power*, the apoſtle intends not lawleſs *ſtrength* and brutal *force*, without regulation or proper direction; but juſt *authority*; for ſo the word here uſed properly ſignifies. There may be *power* where there is no *authority*. No man has any *authority* to do what is wrong and injurious, though he may have *power* to do it.

God:

God : the powers that be * *are ordained of God* † ver. 1. q. d. " Whereas ſome profeſſed *chriſtians* vainly ima- " gine, that they are wholly excuſed from all manner " of duty and ſubjection to civil authority, refuſing to " honour their rulers, and to pay taxes; which opini- " on is not only unreaſonable in itſelf, but alſo tends to " fix a laſting reproach upon the *chriſtian* name and " profeſſion, I now, as an apoſtle and ambaſſador of " Chriſt, exhort every one of you, be he who he will, " to pay all dutiful ſubmiſſion to thoſe who are veſ- " ted with any civil office. For there is, properly " ſpeaking, no authority but what is derived from " God, as it is only by his permiſſion and providence " that any poſſeſs it. Yea, I may add, that all civil " magiſtrates, as ſuch, altho' they may be *heathens*, are " appointed and ordained of God. For it is certainly " God's will, that ſo uſeful an inſtitution as that of " magiſtracy, ſhould take place in the world, for the " good of civil ſociety." The apoſtle proceeds—*Who- ſoever, therefore, reſiſteth the power, reſiſteth the ordinance*

* *The powers that be :* thoſe perſons who are in fact veſted with authority ; thoſe who are in poſſeſſion. And who thoſe are, the apoſtle leaves chriſtians to determine for themſelves ; but who- ever they are, they are to be obeyed.

† *Ordained of God :* as it is not without God's providence and per- miſſion, that any are clothed with authority ; and as it is agree- able to the poſitive will and purpoſe of God, that there ſhould be *ſome perſons* veſted with authority for the good of ſociety : not that any rulers have their commiſſion immediately from God the ſupreme Lord of the univerſe. If any aſſert that kings, or any other rulers, are ordained of God in the latter ſenſe, it is in- cumbent upon them to ſhow the commiſſion which they ſpeak of, under the broad ſeal of heaven. And when they do this, they will, no doubt, be believed.

of

of God ; and they that reſiſt ſhall receive to themſelves damnation. ver. 2. q. d. " Think not, therefore, that " ye are guiltleſs of any crime or ſin againſt God, " when ye factiouſly diſobey and reſiſt the civil au- " thority. For magiſtracy and government being, as I " have ſaid, the ordinance and appointment of God, " it follows, that to reſiſt magiſtrates in the execution " of their offices, is really to reſiſt the will and ordi- " nance of God himſelf : And they who thus reſiſt, " will accordingly be puniſhed by God for this ſin in " common with others." The apoſtle goes on—*For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil.* † *Wilt thou then, not be afraid of the power ? Do that which is good, and thou ſhalt have praiſe of the ſame. For he is the miniſter of God to thee for good,* ver. 3d, and part of the 4th. q. d. " That you may " ſee the truth and juſtneſs of what I aſſert, (*viz.* that " magiſtracy is the ordinance of God, and that you " ſin againſt him in oppoſing it,) conſider that even " *pagan* rulers, are not, by the nature and deſign of " their office, enemies and a terror to the good and " virtuous actions of men, but only to the injurious " and miſchievous to ſociety. Will ye not, then, re- " verence and honor magiſtracy, when ye ſee the good

† *For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil.* It cannot be ſuppoſed that the apoſtle deſigns here, or in any of the ſucceeding verſes, to give the true character of *Nero*, or any other civil powers then in being, as if they were in fact ſuch perſons as he deſcribes, a terror to evil works only, and not to the good. For ſuch a character did not belong to them ; and the apoſtle was no ſycophant, or paraſite of power, whatever ſome of his pretended ſucceſſors have been. He only tells what rulers would be, provided they acted up to their character and office.

" end

" end and intention of it? How can ye be ſo unreaſona-
" ble? Only mind to do your duty as members of
" ſociety; and this will gain you the applauſe and
" favour of all good rulers. For while you do thus,
" they are, by their office, as miniſters of God, obli-
" ged to encourage and protect you; it is for this
" very purpoſe that they are clothed with power."
The apoſtle ſubjoins—*But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid, for he beareth not the ſword in vain. For he is the miniſter of God, a revenger, to execute wrath upon him that doth evil.** ver. 4. latter part. q. d. " But
" upon the other hand, if ye refuſe to do your duty
" as members of ſociety; if ye refuſe to bear your
" part in the ſupport of government; if ye are diſ-
" orderly, and do things which merit civil chaſtiſement,
" then, indeed, ye have reaſon to be afraid. For it is

* It is manifeſt that when the apoſtle ſpeaks of it, as the office of civil rulers, to encourage what is *good*, and to puniſh what is evil, he ſpeaks only of *civil good* and *evil*. They are to conſult the good of ſociety *as ſuch*; not to dictate in religious concerns; not to make laws for the government of men's conſciences; and to inflict civil penalties for religious crimes. It is ſufficient to overthrow the doctrine of the authority of the civil magiſtrate, in affairs of a ſpiritual nature, (ſo far as it is built upon any thing which is here ſaid by St. *Paul*, or upon any thing elſe in the new-teſtament) only to obſerve, that all the magiſtrates then in the world were *heathen*, implacable enemies to chriſtianity: ſo that to give them authority in religious matters, would have been, in effect, to give them authority to extirpate the chriſtian religion, and to eſtabliſh the idolatries and ſuperſtitions of paganiſm. And can any one reaſonably ſuppoſe, that the apoſtle had any intention to extend the authority of rulers, beyond concerns merely civil and political, to the overthrowing of that religion which he himſelf was ſo zealous in propagating! But it is natural for thoſe whoſe religion cannot be ſupported upon the footing of reaſon and argument, to have recourſe to power and force, which will ſerve a bad cauſe as well as a good one; and indeed much better.

" not

" not in vain that rulers are veſted with the power of " inflicting puniſhment. They are, by their office, " not only the miniſters of God for good to thoſe that " do well; but alſo his miniſters to revenge, to diſ- " countenance and puniſh thoſe that are unruly, and in- " jurious to their neighbours." The apoſtle proceeds —*Wherefore ye muſt needs be ſubject not only for wrath, but alſo for conſcience ſake*, ver. 5. q. d. " Since there- " fore, magiſtracy is the ordinance of God; and ſince " rulers are, by their office, benefactors to ſociety, by " diſcouraging what is bad, and encouraging what is " good, and ſo preſerving peace and order amongſt " men; it is evident that ye ought to pay a willing " ſubjection to them; not to obey merely for fear of " expoſing yourſelves to their wrath and diſpleaſure, " but alſo in point of reaſon, duty and conſcience: " Ye are under an indiſpenſable obligation, as *chriſtians*, " to honour their office, and to ſubmit to them in " the execution of it." The apoſtle goes on—*For, for this cauſe pay you tribute alſo: for they are God's miniſters, attending continually upon this very thing*, ver. 6. q. d. " And here is a plain reaſon alſo why ye ſhould " pay tribute to them; for they are God's miniſters, " exalted above the common level of mankind, not " that they may indulge themſelves in ſoftneſs and " luxury, and be entitled to the ſervile homage of their " fellow-men; but that they may execute an office no " leſs laborious than honourable; and attend continually " upon the public welfare. This being their buſineſs

and

" and duty, it is but reaſonable, that they ſhould be re-
" quited for their care and diligence in performing it;
" and enabled, by taxes levied upon the ſubject, effectu-
" ally to proſecute the great end of their inſtitution,
" the good of ſociety." The apoſtle ſums all up in the following words — *Render therefore to all their dues : tribute,* * *to whom tribute is due ; cuſtom,* * *to whom cuſtom ; fear, to whom fear ; honour, to whom honour*, ver. 7. q. d. " Let it not, therefore, be ſaid
" of any of you hereafter, that you contemn govern-
" ment, to the reproach of yourſelves, and of the
" *chriſtian* religion. Neither your being *jews* by na-
" tion, nor your becoming the ſubjects of Chriſt's king-
" dom, gives you any diſpenſation for making diſtur-
" bances in the government under which you live.
" Approve yourſelves, therefore, as peaceable and du-
" tiful ſubjects. Be ready to pay to your rulers all
" that they may, in reſpect of their office, juſtly de-
" mand of you. Render tribute and cuſtom to thoſe
" of your governors to whom tribute and cuſtom be-
" long : And chearfully honor and reverence all who
" are veſted with civil authority, according to their
" deſerts."

THE apoſtle's doctrine, in the paſſage thus explained, concerning the office of civil rulers, and the duty of

** *Grotius* obſerves that the greek words here uſed, anſwer to the *tributum* and *vectigal* of the *Romans* ; the former was the money paid for the ſoil and poll ; the latter, the duties laid upon ſome ſorts of merchandize. And what the apoſtle here ſays, deſerves to be ſeriouſly conſidered by all chriſtians concerned in that common practice of carrying on an *illicit trade*, and *running of goods*.

ſubjects, may be ſummed up in the following obſervations ; * *viz.*

THAT the end of magiſtracy is the good of civil ſociety, *as ſuch :*

THAT civil rulers, *as ſuch*, are the ordinance and miniſters of God ; it being by his permiſſion and providence that any bear rule ; and agreeable to his will, that there ſhould be *ſome perſons* veſted with authority in ſociety, for the well-being of it : .

THAT which is here ſaid concerning civil rulers, extends to all of them in common : it relates indifferently to monarchical, republican and ariſtocratical government ; and to all other forms which truly anſwer the ſole end of government, the happineſs of ſociety ; and to all the different degrees of authority in any particular ſtate ; to inferior officers no leſs than to the ſupreme :

THAT diſobedience to civil rulers in the due exerciſe of their authority, is not merely a *political ſin*, but an heinous *offence againſt God* and *religion* :

THAT the true ground and reaſon † of our obligation to be ſubject to the *higher powers*, is the uſefulneſs of

* The ſeveral obſervations here only mentioned, were handled at large in two preceeding diſcourſes upon this ſubject.

† Some ſuppoſe the apoſtle in this paſſage inforces the duty of ſubmiſſion, with *two* arguments quite diſtinct from each other ; one taken from this conſideration, that rulers are the ordinance, and the miniſters of God, (ver. 1. 2. and 4.) and the other, from the benefits that accrue to ſociety, from civil government, (ver. 3, 4, and 6.) And indeed theſe may be diſtinct motives and arguments for ſubmiſſion, as they may be ſeparately viewed and

of magiſtracy (when properly exerciſed) to human ſociety, and its ſubſerviency to the general welfare :

THAT obedience to civil rulers is here equally required under all forms of government, which anſwer the ſole end of all government, the good of ſociety ; and to every degree of authority in any ſtate, whether ſupreme or ſubordinate :

(From whence it follows,

THAT if unlimited obedience and non-reſiſtance, be here required as a duty under any one form of government, it is alſo required as a duty under all other forms ; and as a duty to ſubordinate rulers as well as to the ſupreme.)

AND laſtly, that thoſe civil rulers to whom the apoſtle injoins ſubjection, are the perſons *in poſſeſſion* ;

and contemplated. But when we conſider that rulers are not the ordinance and the miniſters of God, but only ſo far forth as they perform God's will, by acting up to their office and character, and ſo by being benefactors to ſociety, this makes theſe arguments coincide, and run up into *one* at laſt : At leaſt ſo far, that the former of them cannot hold good for ſubmiſſion, where the latter fails. Put the ſuppoſition, that any man bearing the title of a magiſtrate, ſhould exerciſe his power in ſuch a manner as to have no claim to obedience by virtue of that argument which is founded upon the uſefulneſs of magiſtracy ; and you equally take off the force of the other argument alſo, which is founded upon his being the ordinance and the miniſter of God. For he is no longer God's ordinance and miniſter, than he acts up to his office and character, by exerciſing his power for the good of ſociety—This is, in brief, the reaſon why it is ſaid above, in the *ſingular* number, *that the true ground and reaſon*, &c. The uſe and propriety of this remark may poſſibly be more apparent in the progreſs of the argument concerning reſiſtance.

the

the powers that be ; thoſe who are *actually* veſted with authority. †

THERE is one very important and intereſting point which remains to be inquired into ; namely, the *extent* of that ſubjection *to the higher powers*, which is here enjoined as a duty upon all chriſtians. Some have thought it warrantable and glorious, to diſobey the civil powers in certain circumſtances ; and, in caſes of very great and general oppreſſion, when humble remonſtrances fail of having any effect ; and when the publick welfare cannot be otherwiſe provided for and ſecured, to riſe unanimouſly even againſt the ſovereign himſelf, in order to redreſs their grievances ; to vindicate their natural and legal rights : to break the yoke of tyranny, and free themſelves and poſterity from inglorious ſervitude and ruin. It is upon this principle that many royal oppreſſors have been driven from their thrones into baniſhment ; and many ſlain by the hands of their ſubjects.

† This muſt be underſtood with this *proviſo*, that they do not groſly *abuſe* their power and truſt, but exerciſe it for the good of thoſe that are governed. Who theſe perſons were, whether *Nero*, &c. or not, the apoſtle does not ſay ; but leaves it to be determined by thoſe to whom he writes. God does not interpoſe, in a miraculous way, to point out the perſons who ſhall bear rule, and to whom ſubjection is due. And as to the unalienable, indefeaſible right of *primogeniture*, the ſcriptures are intirely ſilent : or rather plainly contradict it : *Saul* being the firſt king among the *Iſraelites* ; and appointed to the royal dignity, during his own father's life time : and he was ſucceeded, or rather ſuperſeded, by *David, the* laſt *born among many brethren*—Now if *God* has not invariably determined this matter, it muſt, of courſe, be determined by *men*. And if it be determined by *men*, it muſt be determined either in the way of *force*, or of *compact*. And which of theſe is the moſt *equitable*, can be no queſtion.

It was upon this principle that *Tarquin* was expelled from *Rome*; and *Julius Ceſar*, the conqueror of the world, and the tyrant of his country, cut off in the ſenate houſe. It was upon this principle, that king *Charles* I, was beheaded before his own banqueting houſe. It was upon this principle, that king *James* II. was made to fly that country which he aim'd at enſlaving: And upon this principle was that *revolution* brought about, which has been ſo fruitful of happy conſequences to *Great-Britain*. But, in oppoſition to this principle, it has often been aſſerted, that the ſcripture in general (and the paſſage under conſideration in particular) makes all reſiſtance to princes a crime, in any caſe whatever—If they turn tyrants, and become the common oppreſſors of thoſe, whoſe welfare they ought to regard with a paternal affection, we muſt not pretend to right ourſelves, unleſs it be by prayers and tears and humble intreaties: And if theſe methods fail of procuring redreſs, we muſt not have recourſe to any other, but all ſuffer ourſelves to be robbed and butchered at the pleaſure of the *Lord's anointed*; leſt we ſhould incur the ſin of rebellion, and the puniſhment of damnation. For he has God's authority and commiſſion to bear him out in the worſt of crimes, ſo far that he may not be withſtood or controuled. Now whether we are obliged to yield ſuch an abſolute ſubmiſſion to our prince; or whether diſobedience and reſiſtance may not be juſtifiable in ſome caſes, notwithſtanding any thing in the paſſage before us, is an inquiry in which we are all concerned; and this is the inquiry which is the main deſign of the preſent diſcourſe.

Now

Now there does not ſeem to be any neceſſity of ſuppoſing, that an abſolute, unlimited obedience, whether active or paſſive, is here injoined, merely for this reaſon, that the precept is delivered in *abſolute terms*, without any *exception* or *limitation* expreſly mentioned. We are enjoined, (ver. 1.) to be *ſubject to the higher powers*: and (ver. 5.) to be *ſubject for conſcience ſake*. And becauſe theſe expreſſions are abſolute and unlimited, (or more properly, general) ſome have inferred, that the ſubjection required in them, muſt be abſolute and unlimited alſo: At leaſt ſo far forth as to make paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance, a duty in all caſes whatever, if not active obedience likewiſe. Though, by the way, there is here no diſtinction made betwixt active and paſſive obedience; and if either of them be required in an unlimited ſenſe, the other muſt be required in the ſame ſenſe alſo, by virtue of the preſent argument; becauſe the expreſſions are equally abſolute with reſpect to both. But that unlimited obedience of any ſort, cannot be argued merely from the indefinite expreſſions in which obedience is enjoined, appears from hence, that expreſſions of the ſame nature, frequently occur in ſcripture, upon which it is confeſſed on all hands, that no ſuch abſolute and unlimited ſenſe ought to be put. For example, *Love not the world*; *neither the things that are in the world*; † *Lay not up for yourſelves treaſures upon earth*; * *Take therefore no thought for the morrow*; ‖ are precepts expreſſed in at leaſt equally abſolute and unlimited terms: but it is generally allowed that they are to be underſtood with certain reſtrictions and limitati-

† 1 John ii. 15. * Matt. vi. 19. ‖ Matt. vi. 34.

ons;

ons ; ſome degree of love to the world, and the things of it, being allowable. Nor, indeed, do the *Right Reverend Fathers in God*, and other *dignified clergymen* of the eſtabliſhed church, ſeem to be altogether averſe to admitting of reſtrictions in the latter caſe, how warm ſoever any of them may be againſt reſtrictions, and limitations, in the caſe of ſubmiſſion to authority, whether civil or eccleſiaſtical. It is worth remarking alſo, that patience and ſubmiſſion under private injuries, are injoined in much more peremptory and abſolute terms, than any that are uſed with regard to ſubmiſſion to the injuſtice and oppreſſion of civil rulers. Thus, *I ſay unto you, that ye reſiſt not evil ; but whoſoever ſhall ſmite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other alſo. And if any man will ſue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke alſo. And whoſoever ſhall compel thee to go a mile with him, go with him twain.* † Any man may be defied to produce ſuch ſtrong expreſſions in favor of a paſſive and tame ſubmiſſion to unjuſt, tyrannical rulers, as are here uſed to inforce ſubmiſſion to private injuries. But how few are there that underſtand thoſe expreſſions literally ? And the reaſon why they do not, is becauſe (with ſubmiſſion to the *quakers*) common ſenſe ſhows that they were not intended to be ſo underſtood.

But to inſtance in ſome ſcripture-precepts, which are more directly to the point in hand. — Children are commanded to obey their parents, and ſervants, their maſters, in as abſolute and unlimited terms as ſubjects

† Mat. v. 39, 40, 41.

are

are here commanded to obey their civil rulers. Thus this ſame apoſtle — *Children obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honour thy father and mother, — which is the firſt commandment with promiſe. — Servants, be obedient to them that are your maſters according to the fleſh, with fear and trembling, with ſingleneſs of your heart as unto Chriſt.** Thus alſo wives are commanded to be obedient to their huſbands — *Wives, ſubmit your ſelves unto your own huſbands, as unto the Lord. For the huſband is head of the wife, even as* CHRIST IS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH — *Therefore, as the church is ſubject unto Chriſt, ſo let the wives be to their own huſbands* IN EVERY THING.† In all theſe caſes, ſubmiſſion is required in terms (at leaſt) as abſolute and univerſal, as are ever uſed with reſpect to rulers and ſubjects. But who ſuppoſes that the apoſtle ever intended to teach, that children, ſervants and wives, ſhould, in all caſes whatever, obey their parents, maſters and huſbands reſpectively, never making any oppoſition to their will, even although they ſhould require them to break the commandments of God, or ſhould cauſeleſly make an attempt upon their lives? No one puts ſuch a ſenſe upon theſe expreſſions, however abſolute and unlimited. Why then ſhould it be ſuppoſed, that the apoſtle deſigned to teach univerſal obedience, whether active or paſſive, to *the higher powers*, merely becauſe his precepts are delivered in abſolute and unlimited terms? And if this be a good argument in one caſe, why is it not in others alſo? If it be ſaid

* Eph. vi. 1, &c. † Eph. v. 22, 23, 24.

that

that reſiſtance and diſobedience to *the higher powers*, is here ſaid poſitively to be a ſin, ſo alſo is the diſobedience of children to parents; ſervants, to maſters; and wives, to huſbands, in other places of ſcripture. But the queſtion ſtill remains, whether in all theſe caſes there be not ſome exceptions? In the three latter, it is allowed there are. And from hence it follows, that barely the uſe of abſolute expreſſions, is no proof, that obedience to civil rulers, is, in all caſes, a duty; or reſiſtance, in all caſes a ſin. I ſhould not have thought it worth while to take any notice at all of this argument, had it not been much inſiſted upon by ſome of the advocates for paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance: For it is, in itſelf, perfectly trifling; and render'd conſiderable, only by the ſtreſs that has been laid upon it for want of better.

THERE is, indeed, one paſſage in the new-teſtament, where it may ſeem, at firſt view, that an unlimited ſubmiſſion to civil rulers, is injoined.— *Submit your ſelves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's ſake.*†— To *every ordinance of man.*—However, this expreſſion is no ſtronger than that before taken notice of, with relation to the duty of wives — *So let the wives be ſubject to their own huſbands* — IN EVERY THING. But the true ſolution of this difficulty (if it be one) is *this:* by *every ordinance of man*, * is not meant every command of the civil magiſtrate without exception; but *every*

† 1 Pet. 2. 13.

* Literally, *every human inſtitution, or appointment.* By which manner of expreſſion the apoſtle plainly intimates, that rulers derive their authority *immediately*, not from *God*, but from *men.*

order of magiſtrates appointed by man; — whether *ſuperior* or *inferior*: For ſo the apoſtle explains himſelf in the very next words — *Whether it be to the king as ſupreme, or to governors, as unto them that are ſent*, &c. But although the apoſtle had not ſubjoined any ſuch explanation, the reaſon of the thing itſelf would have obliged us to limit the expreſſion [*every ordinance of man*] to ſuch human ordinances and commands, as are not inconſiſtent with the ordinances and commands of God, the ſupreme lawgiver; or with any other higher, and antecedent, obligations.

It is to be obſerved, in the next place, that as the duty of univerſal obedience and non-reſiſtance to the *higher powers*, cannot be argued from the abſolute unlimited expreſſions which the apoſtle here uſes; ſo neither can it be argued from the ſcope and drift of his reaſoning, conſidered with relation to the perſons he was here oppoſing. As was obſerved above, there were ſome profeſſed *chriſtians* in the apoſtolic age, who diſclaimed all magiſtracy and civil authority in general, *deſpiſing government*, and *ſpeaking evil of dignities*; ſome under a notion that *jews* ought not to be under the juriſdiction of *gentile* rulers; and others, that they were ſet *free* from the temporal powers, by Chriſt. Now it is with perſons of this licentious opinion and character, that the apoſtle is concerned. And all that was directly to his point, was to ſhow, that they were bound to ſubmit to magiſtracy *in general*. This is a circumſtance very material to be taken notice of, in order to aſcertain the

the ſenſe of the apoſtle. For this being conſidered, it is ſufficient to account for all that he ſays concerning the duty of ſubjection, and the ſin of reſiſtance, to the *higher powers*, without having recourſe to the doctrine of unlimited ſubmiſſion and paſſive obedience, in all caſes whatever. Were it known that thoſe in oppoſition to whom, the apoſtle wrote, allowed of civil authority in general, and only aſſerted that there were *ſome caſes* in which obedience and non-reſiſtance, were not a duty; there would, then, indeed, be reaſon for interpreting this paſſage as containing the doctrine of unlimited obedience, and non-reſiſtance, as it muſt, in this caſe, be ſuppoſed to have been levelled againſt ſuch as denied that doctrine. But ſince it is certain that there were perſons who vainly imagined, that civil government in general, was not to be regarded by them, it is moſt reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that the apoſtle deſigned his diſcourſe only againſt *them*. And agreeably to this ſuppoſition, we find that he argues the uſefulneſs of civil magiſtracy in general; its agreeableneſs to the will and purpoſe of God, who is *over all*; and ſo deduces from hence, the obligation of ſubmiſſion to it. But it will not follow, that becauſe civil government, is, in general, a good inſtitution, and neceſſary to the peace and happineſs of human ſociety, therefore there are no ſuppoſeable caſes in which reſiſtance to it can be innocent. So that the duty of unlimited obedience, whether active or paſſive, can be argued, neither from the manner of expreſſion here uſed, nor from the general ſcope and deſign of the paſſage.

And if we attend to the nature of the argument with which the apoſtle here inforces the duty of ſubmiſſion to *the higher powers*, we ſhall find it to be ſuch an one as concludes not in favor of ſubmiſſion to all who bear the *title* of rulers, in common; but only, to thoſe who *actually* perform the duty of rulers, by exerciſing a reaſonable and juſt authority, for the good of human ſociety. This is a point which it will be proper to enlarge upon; becauſe the queſtion before us turns very much upon the truth or falſhood of this poſition. It is obvious, then, in general, that the civil rulers whom the apoſtle here ſpeaks of, and obedience to whom he preſſes upon chriſtians as a duty, are *good rulers*, † ſuch as are, in the exerciſe of their office and power, benefactors to ſociety. Such they are deſcribed to be, thro'-out this paſſage. Thus it is ſaid, that they are not *a terror to good works, but to the evil*; that they are *God's miniſters for good*; *revengers to execute wrath upon him that doth evil*; and that *they attend continually upon this very thing*. St. *Peter* gives the ſame account of rulers: They are *for a praiſe to them that do well, and the puniſhment of evil-doers*. * It is manifeſt that this character and deſcription of rulers, agrees only to ſuch as are rulers in fact, as well as in name: to ſuch as govern well, and act agreeably to their office. And the apoſtle's argument for ſubmiſſion to rulers, is wholly built

† By *good rulers*, are not intended ſuch as are good in a *moral* or *religious*, but only in a *political*, ſenſe; thoſe who perform their duty ſo far as their office extends; and ſo far as civil ſociety, as ſuch, is concerned in their actions.

* See the marginal note, page 6. See alſo the marginal note, p. 7.

and

and grounded upon a preſumption that they do in fact anſwer this character ; and is of no force at all upon ſuppoſition of the contrary. If *rulers are a terror to good works, and not to the evil* ; if they are not *miniſters for good to ſociety*, but for evil and diſtreſs, by violence and oppreſſion ; if they *execute wrath upon* ſober, peaceable perſons, who do their duty as members of ſociety ; and ſuffer rich and honourable knaves to eſcape with impunity ; if, inſtead of *attending continually upon* the good work of advancing the publick welfare, they *attend* only upon the gratification of their own luſt and pride and ambition, to the deſtruction of the public welfare ; if this be the caſe, it is plain that the apoſtle's argument for ſubmiſſion does not reach them ; they are not the ſame, but different perſons from thoſe whom he characterizes ; and who muſt be obeyed according to his reaſoning.—Let me illuſtrate the apoſtle's argument, by the following *ſimilitude :* (it is no matter how far it is from any thing which has, in fact, happened in the world.) Suppoſe, then, it was allowed, in general, that the *clergy* were an uſeful order of men ; that they ought to be *eſteemed very highly in love for their works ſake* ; † and to be decently ſupported by thoſe whom they ſerve, *the labourer being worthy of his reward.* * Suppoſe farther, that a number of *Reverend* and *Right Reverend Drones*, who *worked not* ; who preached, perhaps, but *once a year*, and *then*, not the *goſpel* of Jeſus Chriſt ; but the *divine right of tythes* ;— the *dignity of their office as ambaſſadors of Chriſt*, the equity of *fine-cures*, and

† 1 Theſ. v. 13. * 1 Tim. v. 18.

a *plurality of benefices* ;—the excellency of the *devotions* in *that prayer book*, which ſome of them hired *chaplains to uſe for them* ;—or ſome favourite point of *church-tyranny*, and *antichriſtian* uſurpation ; ſuppoſe ſuch men as theſe, ſpending their lives in effeminacy, luxury and idleneſs ; (or when they were not idle, doing that which is worſe than idleneſs ; ſuppoſe ſuch men) ſhould, merely by the merit of *ordination* and *conſecration*, and a *peculiar*, *odd habit*, claim great reſpect and reverence from thoſe whom they civilly called *the beaſts of the laiety* ; ‖ and demand thouſands *per annum*, for that good ſervice which they — *never performed* ; and for which, if they had performed it, this would be much more than a *quantum meruit* : ſuppoſe this ſhould be the caſe, (it is only by way of *ſimile*, and ſurely it will give no offence) would not every body be aſtoniſhed at ſuch inſolence, injuſtice and impiety ? And ought not ſuch men to be told plainly, that they could not reaſonably expect the eſteem and reward, due to the miniſters of the goſpel, unleſs they did the duties of their office ? Should they not be told, that their *title* and *habit* claimed no regard, reverence or pay, ſeparate from the *care* and *work* and various *duties* of their *function* ? And that while they neglected the *latter*, the *former* ſerved only to render them the more ridiculous and contemptible ?—The application of this *ſimilitude* to the caſe in hand, is very eaſy. —If thoſe who bear the title of civil rulers, do not perform the duty of civil rulers, but act directly counter to the ſole end and deſign of their office ; if they

‖ Mr. *Leſlie*.

injure

injure and oppreſs their ſubjects, inſtead of defending their rights and doing them good; they have not the leaſt pretence to be honored, obeyed and rewarded, according to the apoſtle's argument. For his reaſoning, in order to ſhow the duty of ſubjection to the *higher powers*, is, as was before obſerved, built wholly upon the ſuppoſition, that they do, *in fact*, perform the duty of rulers.

If it be ſaid, that the apoſtle here uſes another argument for ſubmiſſion to the *higher powers*, beſides that which is taken from the uſefulneſs of their office to civil ſociety, when properly diſcharged and executed; namely, that their *power is from God*; that they *are ordained of God*; and that they *are God's miniſters*: And if it be ſaid, that this argument for ſubmiſſion to them will hold good, although they do not exerciſe their power for the benefit, but for the ruin, and deſtruction of human ſociety; this objection was obviated, in part, before. † Rulers have no authority from God to do miſchief. They are not *God*'s *ordinance*, or *God*'s *miniſters*, in any other ſenſe than as it is by his permiſſion and providence, that they are exalted to bear rule; and as magiſtracy duly exerciſed, and authority rightly applied, in the enacting and executing good laws,—laws attempered and accommodated to the common welfare of the ſubjects, muſt be ſuppoſed to be agreeable to the will of the beneficent author and ſupreme Lord of the univerſe; whoſe *kingdom ruleth over all*; * and whoſe

† See the margin, page 10, note †. * *Pſal.* ciii. 19.

tender

tender mercies are over all his works. † It is blaſphemy to call tyrants and oppreſſors, *God's miniſters.* They are more properly *the meſſengers of ſatan to buffet us.* * No rulers are properly *God's miniſters*, but ſuch as are *juſt, ruling in the fear of God.* ‖ When once magiſtrates act contrary to their office, and the end of their inſtitution; when they rob and ruin the public, inſtead of being guardians of its peace and welfare; they immediately ceaſe to be the *ordinance* and *miniſters of God*; and no more deſerve that glorious character than common *pirates* and *highwaymen.* So that whenever that argument for ſubmiſſion, fails, which is grounded upon the uſefulneſs of magiſtracy to civil ſociety, (as it always does when magiſtrates do hurt to ſociety inſtead of good) the other argument, which is taken from their being the ordinance of God, muſt neceſſarily fail alſo; no perſon of a civil character being *God's miniſter*, in the ſenſe of the apoſtle, any farther than he performs God's will, by exerciſing a juſt and reaſonable authority; and ruling for the good of the ſubject.

This in general. Let us now trace the apoſtle's reaſoning in favor of ſubmiſſion to the *higher powers*, a little more particularly and exactly. For by this it will appear, on one hand, how good and concluſive it is, for ſubmiſſion to thoſe rulers who exerciſe their power in a proper manner: And, on the other, how weak and trifling and inconnected it is, if it be ſuppoſed to be meant by the apoſtle to ſhow the obligation and duty of

† Pſal. cxlv. 19. * 2 Cor. xii. 7. ‖ 2 Sam. xxiii. 3.

obedience

obedience to tyrannical, oppreſſive rulers in common with others of a different character.

THE apoſtle enters upon his ſubject thus— *Let every ſoul be ſubject unto the higher powers; for there is no power but of God: the powers that be, are ordained of God.** Here he urges the duty of obedience from this topic of argument, that civil rulers, as they are ſuppoſed to fulfil the pleaſure of God, are the ordinance of God. But how is this an argument for obedience to ſuch rulers as do not perform the pleaſure of God, by doing good; but the pleaſure of the devil, by doing evil; and ſuch as are not, therefore, *God's miniſters*, but the devil's! *Whoſoever, therefore, reſiſteth the power, reſiſteth the ordinance of God; and they that reſiſt, ſhall receive to themſelves damnation.* † Here the apoſtle argues, that thoſe who reſiſt a reaſonable and juſt authority, which is agreeable to the will of God, do really reſiſt the will of God himſelf; and will, therefore, be puniſhed by him. But how does this prove, that thoſe who reſiſt a lawleſs, unreaſonable power, which is contrary to the will of God, do therein reſiſt the will and ordinance of God? Is reſiſting thoſe who reſiſt God's will, the ſame thing with reſiſting God? Or ſhall thoſe who do ſo, *receive to themſelves damnation! For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good; and thou ſhalt have praiſe of the ſame. For he is the miniſter of God to thee for good.* ‡ Here the apoſtle argues more explicitly

* Ver. 1. † Ver. 2. ‡ Ver. 3d, and part of the 4th.

than he had before done, for revereing, and ſubmitting to, magiſtracy, from this conſideration, that ſuch as really performed the duty of magiſtrates, would be enemies only to the evil actions of men, and would befriend and encourage the good; and ſo be a common bleſſing to ſociety. But how is this an argument, that we muſt honor, and ſubmit to, ſuch magiſtrates as are not enemies to the evil actions of men; but to the good; and ſuch as are not a common bleſſing, but a common curſe, to ſociety! *But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid: For he is the miniſter of God, a revenger, to execute wrath upon him that doth evil.* † Here the apoſtle argues from the nature and end of magiſtracy, that ſuch as did evil, (and ſuch only) had reaſon to be afraid of the *higher powers*; it being part of their office to puniſh evil doers, no leſs than to defend and encourage ſuch as do well. But if magiſtrates are unrighteous; if they are *reſpecters of perſons*; if they are partial in their adminiſtration of juſtice; then thoſe who do well have as much reaſon to *be afraid*, as thoſe that do evil: there can be no ſafety for the good, nor any peculiar ground of terror to the unruly and injurious. So that, in this caſe, the main end of civil government will be fruſtrated. And what reaſon is there for ſubmitting to that government, which does by no means anſwer the deſign of government? *Wherefore ye muſt needs be ſubject not only for wrath, but alſo for conſcience ſake.* * Here the apoſtle argues the duty of a chearful and conſcientious ſubmiſſion to civil go-

† Ver. 4th. latter part. * Ver. 5.

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vernment, from the nature and end of magiſtracy as he had before laid it down, i. e. as the deſign of it was to puniſh evil doers, and to ſupport and encourage ſuch as do well; and as it muſt, if ſo exerciſed, be agreeable to the will of God. But how does what he here ſays, prove the duty of a chearful and conſcientious ſubjection to thoſe who forfeit the character of rulers? to thoſe who encourage the bad, and diſcourage the good? The argument here uſed no more proves it to be a ſin to reſiſt ſuch rulers, than it does, to *reſiſt the devil*, that he may *flee from us*.* For one is as truly the *miniſter of God* as the other. *For, for this cauſe pay you tribute alſo; for they are God's miniſters, attending continually upon this very thing.* † Here the apoſtle argues the duty of paying taxes, from this conſideration, that thoſe who perform the duty of rulers, are continually attending upon the public welfare. But how does this argument conclude for paying taxes to ſuch princes as are continually endeavouring to ruin the public? And eſpecially when ſuch payment would facilitate and promote this wicked deſign! *Render therefore to all their dues; tribute, to whom tribute is due; cuſtom, to whom cuſtom; fear, to whom fear; honor, to whom honor.* ‖ Here the apoſtle ſums up what he had been ſaying concerning the duty of ſubjects to rulers. And his argument ſtands thus — "Since magiſtrates who execute their office well, "are common benefactors to ſociety; and may, in "that reſpect, be properly ſtiled *the miniſters and ordi-* "*nance of God*; and ſince they are conſtantly employed

* James iv. 7. † Ver. 6. ‖ Ver. 7.

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" in the ſervice of the public ; it becomes you to pay " them tribute and cuſtom ; and to reverence, honor, " and ſubmit to, them in the execution of their re- " ſpective offices." This is apparently good reaſoning. But does this argument conclude for the duty of paying tribute, cuſtom, reverence, honor and obedience, to ſuch perſons as (although they bear the title of rulers) uſe all their power to hurt and injure the public? ſuch as are not *God's miniſters*, but *ſatan's* ? ſuch as do not take care of, and attend upon, the public intereſt, but their own, to the ruin of the public ? that is, in ſhort, to ſuch as have no natural and juſt claim at all to tribute, cuſtom, reverence, honor and obedience ? It is to be hoped that thoſe who have any regard to the apoſtle's character as an inſpired writer, or even as a man of common underſtanding, will not repreſent him as reaſoning in ſuch a looſe incoherent manner ; and drawing concluſions which have not the leaſt relation to his premiſes. For what can be more abſurd than an argument thus framed ? " Rulers are, by their office, bound " to conſult the public welfare and the good of ſo- " ciety : therefore you are bound to pay them tribute, " to honor, and to ſubmit to them, even when they " deſtroy the public welfare, and are a common peſt to " ſociety, by acting in direct contradiction to the nature " and end of their office."

THUS, upon a careful review of the apoſtle's reaſoning in this paſſage, it appears that his arguments to enforce ſubmiſſion, are of ſuch a nature, as to conclude only in favour of ſubmiſſion *to ſuch rulers as he himſelf deſcribes* ;

i. e.

i. e. ſuch as rule for the good of ſociety, which is the only end of their inſtitution. Common tyrants, and public oppreſſors, are not intitled to obedience from their ſubjects, by virtue of any thing here laid down by the inſpired apoſtle.

I NOW add, farther, that the apoſtle's argument is ſo far from proving it to be the duty of people to obey, and ſubmit to, ſuch rulers as act in contradiction to the public good, † and ſo to the deſign of their office, that it proves *the direct contrary*. For, pleaſe to obſerve, that if the end of all civil government, be the good of ſociety; if this be the thing that is aimed at in conſtituting civil rulers; and if the motive and argument for ſubmiſſion to government, be taken from the apparent uſefulneſs of civil authority; it follows, that when no ſuch good end can be anſwered by ſubmiſſion, there remains no argument or motive to enforce it; if inſtead of this good end's being brought about by ſubmiſſion, a *contrary end* is brought about, and the ruin and miſery of ſociety effected by it, here is a plain and poſitive reaſon againſt ſubmiſſion in all ſuch caſes, ſhould they ever happen. And therefore, in ſuch caſes, a regard to the public welfare, ought to make us with-hold from our rulers, that obedience and ſubjection which it would, otherwiſe, be our duty to render to them. If it be our duty, for example, to obey our king, merely for this reaſon, that he rules for the pub-

† This does not intend, their acting ſo in *a few particular inſtances*, which the beſt of rulers may do through miſtake, &c. but their acting ſo *habitually*; and in a manner which plainly ſhows, that they aim at making themſelves great, by the ruin of their ſubjects.

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lic welfare, (which is the only argument the apoſtle makes uſe of) it follows, by a parity of reaſon, that when he turns tyrant, and makes his ſubjects his prey to devour and to deſtroy, inſtead of his charge to defend and cheriſh, we are bound to throw off our allegiance to him, and to reſiſt; and that according to the tenor of the apoſtle's argument in this paſſage. Not to diſcontinue our allegiance, in this caſe, would be to join with the ſovereign in promoting the ſlavery and miſery of that ſociety, the welfare of which, we ourſelves, as well as our ſovereign, are indiſpenſably obliged to ſecure and promote, as far as in us lies. It is true the apoſtle puts no caſe of ſuch a tyrannical prince; but by his grounding his argument for ſubmiſſion wholly upon the good of civil ſociety; it is plain he implicitly authoriſes, and even requires us to make reſiſtance, whenever this ſhall be neceſſary to the public ſafety and happineſs. Let me make uſe of this eaſy and familiar *ſimilitude* to illuſtrate the point in hand — Suppoſe God requires a family of children, to obey their father and not to reſiſt him; and inforces his command with this argument; that the ſuperintendence and care and authority of a juſt and kind parent, will contribute to the happineſs of the whole family; ſo that they ought to obey him for their own ſakes more than for his: Suppoſe this parent at length runs diſtracted, and attempts, in his mad fit, to cut all his children's throats: Now, in this caſe, is not the reaſon before aſſigned, why theſe children ſhould obey their parent while he continued of a ſound mind, namely, *their common good*, a reaſon equally concluſive for

for diſobeying and reſiſting him, ſince he is become delirious, and attempts their ruin? It makes no alteration in the argument, whether this parent, properly ſpeaking, loſes his reaſon; or does, while he retains his underſtanding, that which is as fatal in its conſequences, as any thing he could do, were he really deprived of it. This ſimilitude needs no formal application —

But it ought to be remembred, that if the duty of univerſal obedience and non-reſiſtance to our king or prince, can be argued from this paſſage, the ſame unlimited ſubmiſſion under a republican, or any other form of government; and even to all the ſubordinate powers in any particular ſtate, can be proved by it as well: which is more than thoſe who alledge it for the mentioned purpoſe, would be willing ſhould be inferred from it. So that this paſſage does not anſwer their purpoſe; but really overthrows and confutes it. This matter deſerves to be more particularly conſidered.—The advocates for unlimited ſubmiſſion and paſſive obedience, do, if I miſtake not, always ſpeak with reference to kingly or monarchical government, as diſtinguiſhed from all other forms; and, with reference to ſubmitting to the will of the king, in diſtinction from all ſubordinate officers, acting beyond their commiſſion, and the authority which they have received from the crown. It is not pretended that any perſon beſides kings, have a divine right to do what they pleaſe, ſo that no one may reſiſt them, without incurring the guilt of factiouſneſs and rebellion. If any other ſupreme powers oppreſs the people,

people, it is generally allowed, that the people may get redreſs, by reſiſtance, if other methods prove ineffectual. And if any officers in a kingly government, go beyond the limits of that power which they have derived from the crown, (the ſuppoſed original ſource of all power and authority in the ſtate) and attempt, illegally, to take away the properties and lives of their fellow-ſubjects, they may be *forcibly* reſiſted, at leaſt till application can be made to the crown. But as to the ſovereign himſelf, he may not be reſiſted in any caſe; nor any of his officers, while they confine themſelves within the bounds which he has preſcribed to them. This is, I think, a true ſketch of the principles of thoſe who defend the doctrine of paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance. Now, there is nothing in ſcripture which ſupports this ſcheme of political principles. As to the paſſage under conſideration, the apoſtle here ſpeaks of civil rulers in *general*; of all perſons in *common*, veſted with authority for the good of ſociety, without any particular reference to one form of government, more than to another; or to the ſupreme power in any particular ſtate, more than to ſubordinate powers. The apoſtle does not concern himſelf with the different forms of government. † This he ſuppoſes left intirely to human prudence

† The eſſence of government (I mean *good* government; and this is the *only* government which the apoſtle treats of in this paſſage) conſiſts in the *making* and *executing of good laws* — laws attempered to the common felicity of the *governed*. And if this be, *in fact*, done, it is evidently, in itſelf, a thing of no conſequence at all, what the *particular* form of government is;— whether the legiſlative and executive power be lodged in *one and the ſame* perſon,

prudence and diſcretion. Now the conſequence of this is, that unlimited and paſſive obedience, is no more enjoined in this paſſage, under monarchical government; or to the ſupreme power in any ſtate, than under all other ſpecies of government, which anſwer the end of government; or, to all the ſubordinate degrees of civil authority, from the higheſt to the loweſt. Thoſe, therefore, who would from this paſſage infer the guilt of reſiſting kings, in all caſes whatever, though acting ever ſo contrary to the deſign of their office, muſt, if they will be conſiſtent, go much farther, and infer from it the guilt of reſiſtance under all other forms of government; and of reſiſting *any petty officer* in the ſtate, tho' acting beyond his commiſſion, in the moſt arbitrary, illegal manner poſſible. The argument holds equally ſtrong in both caſes. All civil rulers, as ſuch, are the *ordinance* and *miniſters of God*; and they are all, by the nature of their office, and in their reſpective ſpheres and ſtations, bound to conſult the public welfare. With the ſame reaſon therefore, that any deny unlimited and paſſive obedi-

ſon, or in *different* perſons; — whether in *one* perſon, whom we call an *abſolute monarch*; — whether in a *few*, ſo as to conſtitute an *ariſtocraſy*; — whether in *many*, ſo as to conſtitute a *republic*; or whether in *three co-ordinate branches*, in ſuch manner as to make the government *partake* ſomething of *each* of theſe forms; and to be, at the ſame time, *eſſentially different* from them *all*. If the *end* be attained, it is enough. But no form of government ſeems to be ſo unlikely to accompliſh this *end*, as *abſolute monarchy* —— Nor is there any one that has ſo little pretence to a *divine original*, unleſs it be in this ſenſe, that God *firſt* introduced it into, and thereby overturned, the common-wealth of *Iſrael*, as a *curſe* upon that people for their *folly* and *wickedneſs*, particularly in *deſiring* ſuch a government. (See 1 *Sam.* viii. chap.) Juſt ſo God, before, ſent *Quails* amongſt them, as a *plague*, and a *curſe*, and not as a *bleſſing*. *Numb.* chap. xi.

ence to be here injoined under a republic or ariſtocraſy, or any other eſtabliſhed form of civil government; or to ſubordinate powers, acting in an illegal and oppreſſive manner; (with the ſame reaſon) others may deny, that ſuch obedience is enjoined to a king or monarch, or any civil power whatever. For the apoſtle ſays nothing that is *peculiar to kings*; what he ſays, extends equally to *all* other perſons whatever, veſted with any civil office. They are all, in exactly the ſame ſenſe, the *ordinance of God*; and the *miniſters of God*; and obedience is equally enjoined to be paid to them all. For, as the apoſtle expreſſes it, *there is* NO POWER *but of God:* And we are required to *render to* ALL *their* DUES; and not MORE than their DUES. And what theſe *dues* are, and to *whom* they are to be *rendered*, the apoſtle *ſayeth not*; but leaves to the reaſon and conſciences of men to determine.

THUS it appears, that the common argument, grounded upon this paſſage, in favor of univerſal, and paſſive obedience, really overthrows itſelf, by proving too much, if it proves any thing at all; namely, that no civil officer is, in any caſe whatever, to be reſiſted, though acting in expreſs contradiction to the deſign of his office; which no man, in his ſenſes, ever did, or can aſſert.

IF we calmly conſider the nature of the thing itſelf, nothing can well be imagined more directly contrary to common ſenſe, than to ſuppoſe that *millions* of people ſhould be ſubjected to the arbitrary, precarious pleaſure of

of *one ſingle man*; (who has *naturally* no ſuperiority over them in point of authority) ſo that their eſtates, and every thing that is valuable in life, and even their lives alſo, ſhall be abſolutely at his diſpoſal, if he happens to be wanton and capricious enough to demand them. What unprejudiced man can think, that God made ALL to be thus ſubſervient to the lawleſs pleaſure and phrenzy of ONE, ſo that it ſhall always be a ſin to reſiſt him! Nothing but the moſt plain and expreſs revelation from heaven could make a ſober impartial man believe ſuch a monſtrous, unaccountable doctrine, and, indeed, the thing itſelf, appears ſo ſhocking — ſo out of all *proportion*, that it may be queſtioned, whether all the *miracles* that ever were wrought, could make it credible, that this doctrine *really* came from God. At preſent, there is not the leaſt ſyllable in ſcripture which gives any countenance to it. The hereditary, indefeaſible, divine right of kings, and the doctrine of non-reſiſtance, which is built upon the ſuppoſition of ſuch a right, are altogether as fabulous and chimerical, as tranſubſtantiation; or any of the moſt abſurd reveries of ancient or modern viſionaries. Theſe notions are fetched neither from divine revelation, nor human reaſon; and if they are derived from neither of thoſe ſources, it is not much matter from *whence they come, or whither they go.* Only it is a pity that ſuch doctrines ſhould be propagated in ſociety, to raiſe factions and rebellions, as we ſee they have, in fact, been both in the *laſt*, and in the *preſent*, REIGN.

But then, if unlimited ſubmiſſion and paſſive obedience to the *higher powers*, in all poſſible caſes, be not a duty,

duty, it will be aſked, "How far are we obliged to "ſubmit? If we may innocently diſobey and reſiſt in "ſome caſes, why not in all? Where ſhall we ſtop? "What is the meaſure of our duty? This doctrine "tends to the total diſſolution of civil government; "and to introduce ſuch ſcenes of wild anarchy and con-"fuſion, as are more fatal to ſociety than the worſt of "tyranny."

After this manner, ſome men object; and, indeed, this is the moſt plauſible thing that can be ſaid in favor of ſuch an abſolute ſubmiſſion as they plead for. But the worſt (or rather the beſt) of it, is, that there is very little ſtrength or ſolidity in it. For ſimilar difficulties may be raiſed with reſpect to almoſt every duty of natural and revealed religion.—To inſtance only in two, both of which are near akin, and indeed exactly parallel, to the caſe before us. It is unqueſtionably the duty of children to ſubmit to their parents; and of ſervants, to their maſters. But no one aſſerts, that it is their duty to obey, and ſubmit to them, in all ſuppoſeable caſes; or univerſally a ſin to reſiſt them. Now does this tend to ſubvert the juſt authority of parents and maſters? Or to introduce confuſion and anarchy into private families? No. How then does the ſame principle tend to unhinge the government of that larger family, the body politic? We know, in general, that children and ſervants are obliged to obey their parents and maſters reſpectively. We know alſo, with equal certainty, that they are not obliged to ſubmit to them in all things, without exception; but may, in ſome caſes, reaſonably, and therefore innocently,

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reſiſt them. Theſe principles are acknowledged upon all hands, whatever difficulty there may be in fixing the exact limits of ſubmiſſion. Now there is at leaſt as much difficulty in ſtating the meaſure of duty in theſe two caſes, as in the caſe of rulers and ſubjects. So that this is really no objection, at leaſt no reaſonable one, againſt reſiſtance to the *higher powers*: Or, if it is one, it will hold equally againſt reſiſtance in the other caſes mentioned. — It is indeed true, that turbulent, vicious-minded men, may take occaſion from this principle, that their rulers may, in ſome caſes, be lawfully reſiſted, to raiſe factions and diſturbances in the ſtate; and to make reſiſtance where reſiſtance is needleſs, and therefore, ſinful. But is it not equally true, that children and ſervants of turbulent, vicious minds, may take occaſion from this principle, that parents and maſters may, in ſome caſes be lawfully reſiſted, to reſiſt when reſiſtance is unneceſſary, and therefore, criminal? Is the principle in either caſe falſe in itſelf, merely becauſe it may be abuſed; and applied to legitimate diſobedience and reſiſtance in thoſe inſtances, to which it ought not to be applied? According to this way of arguing, there will be no true principles in the world; for there are none but what may be wreſted and perverted to ſerve bad purpoſes, either through the weakneſs or wickedneſs of men.†

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† We may very ſafely aſſert theſe two things in general, without undermining government: One is, That no civil rulers are to be obeyed when they enjoin things that are inconſiſtent with the commands of God: All ſuch diſobedience is lawful and glorious; particularly, if perſons refuſe to comply with any *legal eſtabliſhment of religion*, becauſe it is a groſs perverſion and corruption (as to doctrine,

A PEOPLE, really oppreſſed to a great degree by their ſovereign, cannot well be inſenſible when they are ſo oppreſſed. And ſuch a people (if I may allude to an ancient *fable*) have, like the *heſperian* fruit, a DRAGON for

doctrine, worſhip and diſcipline) of a pure and divine religion, brought from heaven to earth by the *Son of God*, (the only King and Head of the *chriſtian* church) and propagated through the world by his inſpired apoſtles. All commands running counter to the declared will of the ſupreme legiſlator of heaven and earth, are null and void: And therefore diſobedience to them is a duty, not a crime. (See the marginal note, page 7.) — Another thing that may be aſſerted with equal truth and ſafety, is, That no government is to be ſubmitted to, at the *expence* of that which is the *ſole end* of all government, — the common good and ſafety of ſociety. Becauſe, to ſubmit in this caſe, if it ſhould ever happen, would evidently be to ſet up the *means* as more valuable, and above, the *end*: than which there cannot be a greater ſoleciſm and contradiction. The only reaſon of the inſtitution of civil government; and the only rational ground of ſubmiſſion to it, is the common ſafety and utility.. If therefore, in any caſe, the common ſafety and utility would not be promoted by ſubmiſſion to government, but the contrary, there is no ground or motive for obedience and ſubmiſſion, but, for the contrary.

WHOEVER conſiders the nature of civil government muſt, indeed, be ſenſible that a great degree of *implicit confidence*, muſt unavoidably be placed in thoſe that bear rule: this is implied in the very notion of authority's being originally a *truſt*, committed by the people, to thoſe who are veſted with it, as all juſt and righteous authority is; all beſides, is mere lawleſs force and uſurpation; neither God nor nature, having given any man a right of dominion over any ſociety, independently of that ſociety's approbation, and conſent to be governed by him—Now as all men are fallible, it cannot be ſuppoſed that the public affairs of any ſtate, ſhould be always adminiſtred in the beſt manner poſſible, even by perſons of the greateſt wiſdom and integrity. Nor is it ſufficient to legitimate diſobedience to the *higher powers* that they are not ſo adminiſtred; or that they are, in ſome inſtances, very ill-managed; for upon this principle, it is ſcarcely ſuppoſeable that any government at all could be ſupported, or ſubſiſt. Such a principle manifeſtly tends to the diſſolution of government; and to throw all things into confuſion and anarchy. —But it is equally evident, upon the other hand, that thoſe in authority may abuſe their *truſt* and power *to ſuch a degree*, that neither the law of reaſon, nor of religion, requires, that any obedience

or

for their *protector* and *guardian:* Nor would they have any reaſon to mourn, if ſome HERCULES ſhould ap-

or ſubmiſſion ſhould be paid to them; but, on the contrary, that they ſhould be totally *diſcarded*; and the authority which they were before veſted with, transferred to others, who may exerciſe it more to thoſe good purpoſes for which it is given.—Nor is this principle, that reſiſtance to the *higher powers*, is, in ſome extraordinary caſes, juſtifiable, ſo liable to abuſe, as many perſons ſeem to apprehend it. For although there will be always ſome petulant, querulous men, in every ſtate — men of factious, turbulent and carping diſpoſitions,— glad to lay hold of any trifle to juſtify and legitimate their caballing againſt their rulers, and other ſeditious practices; yet there are, comparatively ſpeaking, but few men of this *contemptible character*. It does not appear but that mankind, in general, have a diſpoſition to be as ſubmiſſive and paſſive and tame under government as they ought to be. ----Witneſs a great, if not the greateſt, part of the known world, who are now groaning, but not murmuring, under the heavy yoke of tyranny! While thoſe who govern, do it with any tolerable degree of moderation and juſtice, and, in any good meaſure act up to their office and character, by being public benefactors; the people will generally be eaſy and peaceable; and be rather inclined to flatter and adore, than to inſult and reſiſt, them. Nor was there ever any *general* complaint againſt any adminiſtration, *which laſted long*, but what there was good reaſon for. Till people find themſelves greatly abuſed and oppreſſed by their governors, they are not apt to complain; and whenever they do, in fact, find themſelves thus abuſed and oppreſſed, they muſt be ſtupid not to complain. To ſay that ſubjects in general are not proper judges when their governors oppreſs them, and play the tyrant; and when they defend their rights, adminiſter juſtice impartially, and promote the public welfare, is as great *treaſon* as ever man uttered; — 'tis treaſon, — not againſt one *ſingle* man, but the ſtate — againſt the whole body politic; — 'tis treaſon againſt mankind;— 'tis treaſon againſt common ſenſe;— 'tis treaſon againſt God. And this impious principle lays the foundation for juſtifying all the tyranny and oppreſſion that ever any prince was guilty of. The people know for what end they ſet up, and maintain, their governors; and they are the proper judges when they execute their *truſt* as they ought to do it;— when their prince exerciſes an equitable and paternal authority over them;— when from a prince and common father, he exalts himſelf into a tyrant — when from ſubjects and children, he degrades them into the claſs of ſlaves;— plunders them, makes them his prey, and unnaturally ſports himſelf with their lives and fortunes ——

pear

pear to diſpatch him—For a nation thus abuſed to ariſe unanimouſly, and to reſiſt their prince, even to the dethroning him, is not criminal; but a reaſonable way of vindicating their liberties and juſt rights; it is making uſe of the means, and the only means, which God has put into their power, for mutual and ſelf-defence. And it would be highly criminal in them, not to make uſe of this means. It would be ſtupid tameneſs, and unaccountable folly, for whole nations to ſuffer *one* unreaſonable, ambitious and cruel man, to wanton and riot in their miſery. And in ſuch a caſe it would, of the two, be more rational to ſuppoſe, that they that did NOT *reſiſt*, than that they who did, would *receive to themſelves damnation.*

And

THIS naturally brings us to make ſome reflections upon the reſiſtance which was made about a century ſince, to that unhappy prince, KING CHARLES I; and upon the ANNIVERSARY of his death. This is a point which I ſhould not have concerned myſelf about, were it not that *ſome men* continue to ſpeak of it, even to this day, with a great deal of warmth and zeal; and in ſuch a manner as to undermine all the principles of LIBERTY, whether civil or religious, and to introduce the moſt abject ſlavery both in church and ſtate: ſo that it is become a matter of univerſal concern.—What I have to offer upon this ſubject, will be compriſed in a ſhort anſwer to the following *queries*; *viz.*

For

FOR what reaſon the reſiſtance to king *Charles* the *Firſt* was made ?

BY whom it was made ?

WHETHER this reſiſtance was REBELLION, † or not ?

How the *Anniverſary* of king *Charles*'s death came *at firſt* to be ſolemnized as a day of faſting and humiliation ?

And laſtly,

WHY thoſe of the epiſcopal clergy who are very high in the principles of *eccleſiaſtical authority*, continue to ſpeak of this unhappy man, as a great SAINT and a MARTYR ?

FOR what reaſon, then, was the reſiſtance to king *Charles*, made ? The general anſwer to this inquiry is, that it was on account of the *tyranny* and *oppreſſion* of his reign. Not a great while after his acceſſion to the throne, he married a *french catholic* ; and with her ſeemed to have *wedded* the politics, if not the religion of *France*, alſo. For afterwards, during a reign, or rather a tyranny of many years, he governed in a perfectly wild and arbitrary manner, paying no regard to the conſtitution and the laws of the kingdom, by which the power of the crown was limited ; or to the ſolemn oath which he had taken at his coronation. It would be endleſs, as well as needleſs, to give a particular account of all the illegal and deſpotic meaſures which he took in his adminiſtration ;—partly from his own natural luſt of power, and partly from the influence of wicked councellors and

† N. B. I ſpeak of rebellion, treaſon, ſaintſhip, martyrdom, &c. throughout this diſcourſe, only in the *ſcriptural* and *theological ſenſe*. I know not how the *law* defines them ; the ſtudy of *that* not being my employment ——

miniſters.—He committed many illuſtrious members of both houſes of parliament to the *tower*, for oppoſing his arbitrary ſchemes. —He levied many taxes upon the people without conſent of parliament ;—and then impriſoned great numbers of the principal merchants and gentry for not paying them.—He erected, or at leaſt revived, ſeveral new and arbitrary courts, in which the moſt unheard-of barbarities were committed with his knowledge and approbation — He ſupported that more than fiend, arch-biſhop *Laud* and the clergy of his ſtamp, in all their church-tyranny and helliſh cruelties —He authoriſed a book in favor of *ſports* upon the *Lord's day* ; and ſeveral clergymen were perſecuted by him and the mentioned *pious* biſhop, for not reading it to the people after *divine ſervice*—When the parliament complained to him of the arbitrary proceedings of his corrupt miniſters, he told that *auguſt body*, in a rough, domineering, unprincely manner, that he wondred any one ſhould be ſo fooliſh and inſolent as to think that he would part with the meaneſt of his ſervants *upon their account*—He refuſed to call any parliament at all for the ſpace of twelve years together, during all which time, he governed in an abſolute lawleſs and deſpotic manner—He took all opportunities to encourage the *papiſts*, and to promote them to the higheſt offices of honor and truſt — He (probably) abetted the horrid maſſacre in *Ireland*, in which two hundred thouſand proteſtants were butchered by the roman catholics.—He ſent a large ſum of money, which he had raiſed by his arbitrary taxes, into *Germany*, to raiſe foreign troops, in order to force more arbitrary taxes upon

upon his ſubjects.—He not only by a long ſeries of *actions*, but alſo in *plain terms*, aſſerted an abſolute uncontroulable power; ſaying even in one of his ſpeeches to parliament, that as it was blaſphemy to diſpute what God might do; ſo it was ſedition in ſubjects to diſpute what the king might do. — Towards the end of his tyranny, he came to the houſe of commons with an armed force, † and demanded five of its principal members to be delivered up to him—And this was a prelude to that unnatural war which he ſoon after levied againſt his own dutiful ſubjects; whom he was bound by all the laws of honor, humanity, piety, and I might add, of *intereſt* alſo, to defend and cheriſh with a paternal affection—I have only time to hint at theſe facts in a general way, all which, and many more of the ſame tenor, may be proved by good authorities: So that the *figurative* language which St. *John* uſes concerning the juſt and beneficent deeds of our bleſſed Saviour, may be applied to the unrighteous and execrable deeds of this prince, *viz. And there are alſo many other things which* king Charles *did, the which, if they ſhould be written every one, I ſuppoſe that even the world itſelf, could not contain the books that ſhould be written.* * Now it was on account of king *Charles's* thus aſſuming a power above the laws, in direct contradiction to his coronation oath, and governing the greateſt part of his time, in the moſt arbitrary oppreſſive manner; it was upon this account, that that reſiſtance was made

† Hiſtorians are not agreed, what number of ſoldiers attended him in this monſtrous invaſion of the priviledges of parliament—Some ſay 300, ſome 400: And the author of *The hiſtory of the kings of Scotland*, ſays 500. * John xxi. 25.

to

to him, which, at length, iſſued in the loſs of his crown, and of *that head* which was unworthy to wear it.

But by whom was this reſiſtance made? Not by a private *junto*;—not by a ſmall ſeditious *party*;—not by a *few deſparadoes*, who, to mend their fortunes, would embroil the ſtate;—but by the LORDS and COMMONS of *England*. It was they that almoſt unanimouſly oppoſed the king's meaſures for overturning the conſtitution, and changing that free and happy government into a wretched, abſolute monarchy. It was they that when the king was about levying forces againſt his ſubjects, in order to make himſelf abſolute, commiſſioned officers, and raiſed an army to defend themſelves and the public: And it was they that maintained the war againſt him all along, till he was made a priſoner. This is indiſputable. Though it was not properly ſpeaking the parliament, but the army, which put him to death afterwards. And it ought to be freely acknowledged, that moſt of their proceeding, in order to get this matter effected; and particularly the court by which the king was at laſt tried and condemned, was little better than a mere mockery of juſtice.—

The next queſtion which naturally ariſes, is, whether this reſiſtance which was made to the king *by the parliament*, was properly *rebellion*, or not? The anſwer to which is plain, that it was not; but a moſt righteous and glorious ſtand, made in defence of the natural and legal rights of the people, againſt the unnatural and illegal encroachments of arbitrary power. Nor was this a raſh

and

and too ſudden oppoſition. The nation had been patient under the oppreſſions of the crown, even to *long ſuffering* ; — for a courſe of many years ; and there was no rational hope of redreſs in any other way—Reſiſtance was abſolutely neceſſary in order to preſerve the nation from ſlavery, miſery and ruin. And who ſo proper to make this reſiſtance as the lords and commons ;—the whole repreſentative body of the people ; — guardians of the public welfare ; and each of which was, in point of legiſlation, veſted with an equal, co-ordinate power, with that of the crown ? † Here were *two* branches of the legiſlature

† The *engliſh* conſtitution is originally and eſſentially *free*. The character which *J. Cæſar* and *Tacitus* both give of the ancient *Britains* ſo long ago, is, That they were extremely *jealous of their liberties*, as well as a people of a *martial* ſpirit. Nor have there been wanting frequent inſtances and proofs of the ſame glorious ſpirit (in both reſpects) remaining in their poſterity ever ſince, — in the ſtruggles they have made for liberty, both againſt foreign and domeſtic tyrants. —— Their kings hold their title to the throne, ſolely by grant of parliament ; i. e. in other words, by the voluntary conſent of the people. And, agreably hereto, the prerogative and rights of the crown are ſtated, defined and limited by law ; and that as truly and ſtrictly as the rights of any inferior officer in the ſtate ; or indeed, of any private ſubject. And it is only in this reſpect that it can be ſaid, that " the king can " do no wrong." Being reſtrained by the law, he cannot, while he confines himſelf within thoſe juſt limits which the law preſcribes to him as the meaſure of his authority, injure and oppreſs the ſubject. — The king, in his coronation oath, ſwears to exerciſe only ſuch a power as the conſtitution gives him : And the ſubject, in the oath of allegiance, ſwears only to obey him in the exerciſe of ſuch a power. The king is as much bound by his oath, not to infringe the legal rights of the people, as the people are bound to yield ſubjection to him. From whence it follows, that as ſoon as the prince ſets himſelf up above law, he loſes the king in the tyrant : he does to all intents and purpoſes, unking himſelf, by acting out of, and beyond, that ſphere which the conſtitution allows him to move in. And in ſuch caſes, he has no more right to be obeyed, than any inferior officer who acts beyond his commiſſion. The ſubjects obligation to

legiſlature againſt *one* ;—two, which had law and equity and the conſtitution on their ſide, againſt one which was impiouſly attempting to overturn law and equity and the conſtitution ; and to exerciſe a wanton licentious *ſovereignty* over the properties, conſciences and lives of all the people:—Such a *ſovereignty* as ſome inconſiderately aſcribe to the ſupreme Governor of the world.—I ſay, inconſiderately ; becauſe God himſelf does not govern in an abſolutely arbitrary and deſpotic manner. The power of this Almighty King (I ſpeak it not without caution and reverence ; the power of this Almighty King) is *limited by law* ; not, indeed, by *acts of parliament*, but by the eternal *laws* of truth, wiſdom and equity ; and the everlaſting *tables* of right reaſon ; — tables that cannot be *repealed*, or *thrown down* and *broken* like thoſe of *Moſes*. —But king *Charles* ſat himſelf up above all theſe, as much as he did above the written laws of the realm ; and made mere humor and caprice, which are no rule at all, the only rule and meaſure of his adminiſtration. And now, is it not perfectly ridiculous to call reſiſtance to ſuch a tyrant, by the name of *rebellion ?* — *the grand rebellion ?* Even that——parliament, which brought king

to allegiance *then* ceaſes of courſe : and to reſiſt him, is no more *rebellion*, than to reſiſt any foreign invader. There is an eſſential difference betwixt *government and tyranny* ; at leaſt under ſuch a conſtitution as the *engliſh*. The former conſiſts in ruling according to law and equity ; the latter, in ruling contrary to law and equity. . So alſo, there is an eſſential difference betwixt reſiſting a tyrant, and rebellion ; The former is a juſt and reaſonable ſelf-defence ; the latter conſiſts in reſiſting a prince whoſe adminiſtration is juſt and legal ; and this is what denominates it a crime. — Now it is evident, that king *Charles*'s government was illegal, and very oppreſſive, through the greateſt part of his reign : And, therefore, to reſiſt him, was no more rebellion, than to oppoſe any foreign invader, or any other domeſtic oppreſſor.

Charles

Charles II. to the throne, and which run *loyally mad*, ſeverely reproved one of their own members for condemning the proceedings of that parliament which firſt took up arms againſt the former king. And upon the ſame principles that the proceedings of this parliament may be cenſured as wicked and rebellious, the proceedings of thoſe who, ſince, oppoſed king *James* II, and brought the prince of *Orange* to the throne, may be cenſured as wicked and rebellious alſo. The caſes are parallel.—But whatever *ſome* men may *think*, it is to be hoped that, for their own ſakes, they will not dare to *ſpeak* againſt the REVOLUTION, upon the juſtice and legality of which depends (in part) his preſent MAJESTY's right to the throne.

IF it be ſaid, that although the parliament which firſt oppoſed king *Charles*'s meaſures, and at length took up arms againſt him, were not guilty of rebellion; yet certainly thoſe perſons were, who condemned, and put him to death; even this perhaps is not true. For he had, in fact, *unkinged* himſelf long before, and had forfeited his title to the allegiance of the people. So that thoſe who put him to death, were, at moſt only guilty of *murder*; which, indeed, is bad enough, if they were really guilty of *that*; (which is at leaſt diſputable.) *Cromwell*, and thoſe who were principally concerned in the (*nominal*) king's death, might poſſibly have been very wicked and deſigning men. Nor ſhall I ſay any thing in vindication of the reigning *hypocriſy* of thoſe times; or of *Cromwell*'s male-adminiſtration during the *interregnum*; (for it is *truth*, and not a *party*, that I am ſpeaking

ing for.) But ſtill it may be ſaid, that *Cromwell* and his adherents were not, properly ſpeaking, guilty of *rebellion*; becauſe he, whom they beheaded was not, properly ſpeaking, *their king*; but a *lawleſs tyrant.* — much leſs, are the whole body of the nation at that time to be charged with rebellion on that account; for it was no *national act*; it was not done by a *free* parliament. And much leſs ſtill, is the nation at preſent, to be charged with the great ſin of rebellion, for what their *anceſtors* did, (or rather did NOT) a century ago.

But how came the *anniverſary* of king *Charles*'s death, to be ſolemnized as a day of faſting and humiliation? The true anſwer in brief, to which inquiry, is, that this faſt was inſtituted by way of *court* and *complement* to king *Charles* II, upon the *reſtoration.* All were deſirous of making their court to him; of ingratiating themſelves; and of making him forget what had been done in oppoſition to his *father*, ſo as not to revenge it. To effect this, they ran into the moſt extravagant profeſſions of affection and loyalty to him, inſomuch that he himſelf ſaid, that it was a *mad* and *hair brain'd* loyalty which they profeſſed. And amongſt other ſtrange things, which his firſt parliament did, they ordered the *Thirtieth* of *January* (the day on which his father was beheaded) to be kept as a day of ſolemn humiliation, to deprecate the judgments of heaven for the rebellion which the nation had been guilty of, in that which was no national thing; and which was not rebellion in them that did it—Thus they ſoothed and flattered their new king, at the expence

of

of their liberties: — And were ready to yield up *freely* to *Charles* II, all that enormous power, which they had juſtly reſiſted *Charles* I, for uſurping to himſelf.

THE laſt query mentioned, was, Why thoſe of the *epiſcopal clergy* who are very high in the principles of *eccleſiaſtical authority*, continue to ſpeak of this unhappy prince as a *great Saint* and a *Martyr?* This, we know, is what they conſtantly do, eſpecially upon the 30th of *January*; — a day ſacred to the *extolling* of *him*, and to the *reproaching* of thoſe who are not of the *eſtabliſhed church*. *Out of the ſame mouth* on this day, *proceedeth bleſſing and curſing*; † *therewith bleſs they their God, even* Charles, *and therewith curſe they* the diſſenters: And their *tongue can no man tame*; *it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poiſon.* King *Charles* is, upon this ſolemnity, frequently compared to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, both in reſpect of the *holineſs* of his life, and the greatneſs and injuſtice of his *ſufferings*; and it is a wonder they do not add ſomething concerning the *merits* of his death alſo— But *bleſſed ſaint* and *royal martyr*, are as humble titles as any that are thought worthy of him.

Now this may, at firſt view, well appear to be a very ſtrange *phenomenon*. For king *Charles* was really a man black with guilt and *laden with iniquity*, ‖ as appears by his crimes before-mentioned. He liv'd a tyrant; and it was the oppreſſion and violence of his reign, that brought him to his untimely and violent end at laſt. Now what of ſaintſhip or martyrdom is there in all this!

† Jam. iii. 8, 9, 10. ‖ Iſai i. 4.

What of ſaintſhip is there in encouraging people to *profane* the *Lord's Day?* What of ſaintſhip in falſhood and perjury? What of ſaintſhip in repeated robberies and depredations? What of ſaintſhip in throwing real ſaints, and glorious patriots, into goals? What of ſaintſhip in overturning an excellent civil conſtitution;—and proudly graſping at an illegal and monſtrous power? What of ſaintſhip in the murder of thouſands of innocent people; and involving a nation in all the calamities of a civil war? And what of martyrdom is there, in a man's bringing an immature and violent death upon himſelf, by *being wicked overmuch?* † Is there any ſuch thing as grace, without goodneſs! As being a follower of Chriſt, without following him? As being his diſciple, without learning of him to be juſt and beneficent? Or, as ſaintſhip without ſanctity? * If not, I fear it will be hard to prove this man a ſaint. And verily one would be apt to ſuſpect that *that church* muſt be but

† Eccleſ. vii. 17.

* Is it any wonder that even perſons who do not *walk after their own luſts*, ſhould *ſcoff* at *ſuch ſaints* as this, both in the *firſt* and in the *laſt days*, even *from everlaſting to everlaſting?* 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4. —But perhaps it will be ſaid, that theſe things are MYSTERIES, which (although very true in themſelves) *lay-underſtandings* cannot comprehend: Or, indeed, any other perſons amongſt us, beſides thoſe who being INWARDLY MOVED BY THE HOLY GHOST, have taken a trip acroſs the *Atlantic* to obtain *epiſcopal ordination* and *the indelible character*.— However, if theſe *conſecrated gentlemen* do not quite deſpair of us, it is hoped that, in the abundance of their charity, they will endeavour to *illucidate* theſe *dark* points; and, at the ſame time, explain the creed of *another of their eminent ſaints*, which we are told, that unleſs we *believe faithfully*, (i. e. *believingly*) *we cannot be ſaved*: which creed, (or rather *riddle*) notwithſtanding all the labours of the *pious* —— and *metaphyſical* Dr. *Waterland*, remains ſomewhat *enigmatical* ſtill.

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poorly ſtocked with ſaints and martyrs, which is forced to adopt ſuch enormous ſinners into her *kalendar*, in order to ſwell the number.

BUT to unravel this *myſtery of* (*nonſenſe* as well as of) *iniquity*, which has *already worked* for a *long time* amongſt us; * or, at leaſt, to give the moſt probable ſolution of it; it is to be remembred, that king *Charles*, this *burleſque* upon ſaintſhip and martyrdom, though ſo great an oppreſſor, was a true friend to the *Church*;—ſo true a friend to her, that he was very well affected towards the *roman catholics*; and would, probably, have been very willing to unite *Lambeth* and *Rome*. This appears by his marrying a true *daughter* of that true *mother of harlots*; † which he did with a diſpenſation from the *Pope*, that ſupreme BISHOP; to whom when he wrote, he gave the title of MOST HOLY FATHER. His queen was extremely bigotted to all the follies and ſuperſtitions, and to the *hierarchy*, of *Rome*; and had a prodigious aſcendency over him all his life. It was, in part, owing to this, that he (probably) abetted the maſſacre of the proteſtants in *Ireland*; that he aſſiſted in extirpating the *french* proteſtants at *Rochelle*; that he all along encouraged *papiſts*, and popiſhly effected *clergymen*, in preference to all other perſons, and that he upheld that monſter of wickedneſs, ARCH-BISHOP LAUD, and the biſhops of his ſtamp, in all their church-tyranny and diabolical cruelties. In return to his kindneſs and indulgence in which reſpects, they cauſed many of

* 2 Theſſ. ii. 7. † Rev. xvii. 5.

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the pulpits throughout the nation, to ring with the divine abſolute, indefeaſible right of kings; with the praiſes of *Charles* and his reign; and with the damnable ſin of reſiſting the *Lord's anointed*, let him do what he would. So that not *Chriſt*, but *Charles*, was commonly preached to the people. — In *plain engliſh*, there ſeems to have been an impious bargain ſtruck up betwixt the *ſcepter* and the *ſurplice*, for enſlaving both the *bodies* and *ſouls* of men. The king appeared to be willing that the clergy ſhould do what they would,—ſet up a monſtrous hierarchy like that of *Rome*,—a monſtrous inquiſition like that of *Spain* or *Portugal*,—or any thing elſe which their own pride, and the devil's malice, could prompt them to: *Provided always*, that the clergy would be *tools* to the crown; that they would make the people believe, that kings had God's authority for breaking God's law; that they had a commiſſion from heaven to ſeize the eſtates and lives of their ſubjects at pleaſure; and that it was a damnable ſin to reſiſt them, even when they did ſuch things as deſerved more than damnation.— This appears to be the true key for explaining the *myſterious* doctrine of king *Charles's* ſaintſhip and martyrdom. He was a ſaint, not becauſe he was in his life, a good *man*, but a good *churchman*; not becauſe he was a lover of *holineſs*, but the *hierarchy*; not becauſe he was a friend to *Chriſt*, but the *Craft*. And he was a martyr in his death, not becauſe he bravely ſuffered death in the cauſe of truth and righteouſneſs, but becauſe he died an enemy to liberty and the rights of conſcience; i. e. not becauſe he died an enemy to *ſin*, but *diſſenters*. For theſe reaſons

ſons it is that all bigotted clergymen, and friends to church-power, paint this man as a ſaint in his life, though he was ſuch a mighty, ſuch a *royal ſinner*; and as a martyr in his death, though he fell a ſacrifice only to his own ambition, avarice, and unbounded luſt of power. And from proſtituting their praiſe upon king *Charles*, and offering him that incenſe which is not his due, it is natural for them to make a tranſition to the diſſenters, (as they commonly do) and to load them with that reproach which they do not deſerve; they being generally profeſſed enemies both to civil and eccleſiaſtical tyranny. WE are commonly charged (upon the *Thirtieth of January*) with the guilt of putting the king to death, under a notion that it was our anceſtors that did it; and ſo we are repreſented in the blackeſt colours, not only as ſciſmaticks, but alſo as traitors and rebels and all that is bad. And theſe *lofty* gentlemen uſually rail upon this head, in ſuch a manner as plainly ſhows, that they are either groſly ignorant of the hiſtory of thoſe times which they ſpeak of; or, which is worſe, that they are guilty of the moſt ſhameful prevarication, ſlander and falſhood. —But every *petty prieſt*, with a *roll* and a *gown*, thinks he muſt do ſomething in imitation of his *betters*, in *lawn*, and ſhow himſelf a *true ſon* of the church: And thus, through a fooliſh ambition to appear *conſiderable*, they only render themſelves *contemptible*.

BUT ſuppoſe *our* fore-fathers did kill their *mock* ſaint and martyr a century ago, what is that to *us* now? If I miſtake not, theſe gentlemen generally preach down the doctrine of the *imputation of Adam's ſin to his poſterity*,

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as abſurd and unreaſonable, notwithſtanding they have ſolemnly ſubſcribed what is equivalent to it in *their own articles of religion.* And therefore one would hardly expect that they would lay the guilt of the king's death upon *us*, altho' *our fore-fathers* had been the only authors of it. But this conduct is much more ſurpriſing, when it does not appear that *our* anceſtors had any more hand in it than *their own.* — However, bigotry is ſufficient to account for this, and many other *phenomena*, which cannot be accounted for in any other way.

ALTHOUGH the obſervation of this *anniverſary* ſeems to have been (at leaſt) ſuperſtitious in its *original* ; and although it is often abuſed to very bad purpoſes by the eſtabliſhed clergy, as they ſerve themſelves of it, to perpetuate ſtrife, a party ſpirit, and diviſions in the chriſtian church ; yet it is to be hoped that one good end will be anſwered by it, quite contrary to their intention : It is to be hoped, that it will prove a ſtanding *memento*, that *Britons* will not be *ſlaves* ; and a warning to all corrupt *councellors* and *miniſters*, not to go too far in adviſing to arbitrary, deſpotic meaſures ——

To conclude : Let us all learn to be *free*, and to be *loyal.* Let us not profeſs ourſelves vaſſals to the lawleſs pleaſure of any man on earth. But let us remember, at the ſame time, government is *ſacred*, and not to be *trifled* with. It is our happineſs to live under the government of a PRINCE who is ſatisfied with ruling according to law ; as every other *good prince* will — We enjoy under his adminiſtration all the liberty that is proper and expedient

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for us. It becomes us, therefore, to be contented, and dutiful ſubjects. Let us prize our freedom ; but not *uſe our liberty for a cloke of maliciouſneſs.* † There are men who ſtrike at *liberty* under the term *licentiouſneſs.* There are others who aim at *popularity* under the diſguiſe of *patriotiſm.* Be aware of both. *Extremes* are dangerous. There is at preſent amongſt *us*, perhaps, more danger of the *latter*, than of the *former.* For which reaſon I would exhort you to pay all due Regard to the government over us ; to the KING and all in authority ; and to *lead a quiet and peaceable life.* ‡ — And while I am ſpeaking of loyalty to our *earthly Prince*, ſuffer me juſt to put you in mind to be loyal alſo to the ſupreme RULER of the univerſe, *by whom kings reign, and princes decree juſtice.* * To which king eternal immortal, inviſible, even to the ONLY WISE GOD, ‖ be all honor and praiſe, DOMINION and thankſgiving, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. AMEN.

† 1 Pet. ii. 16. ‡ 1 Tim. ii. 2. * Prov. viii. 15.
‖ 1 Tim. i. 17.

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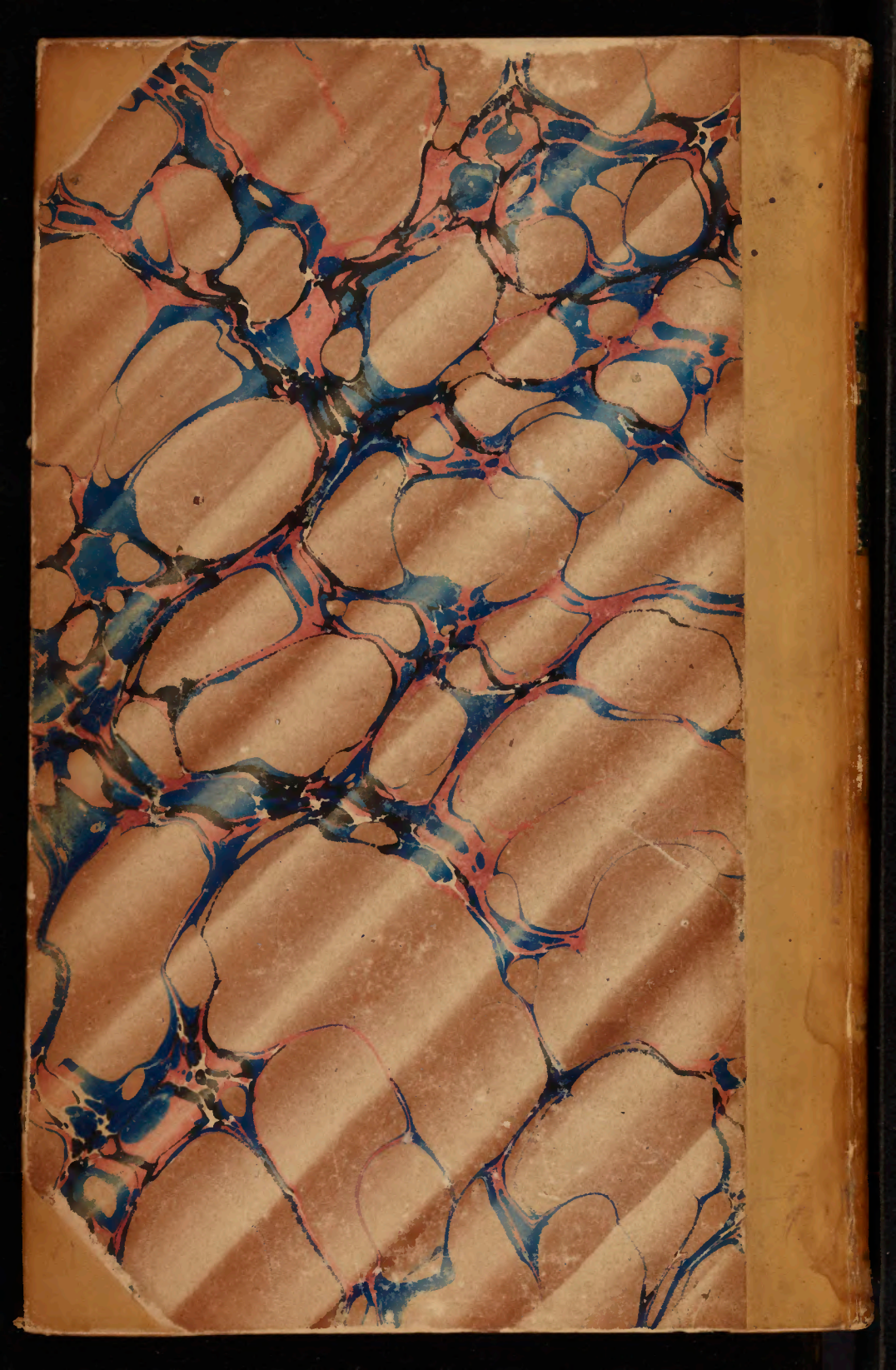
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