

Given by the General
Court to the Revd
Mr Joseph Mose
Pastor of the Church
in Dorch. Village.

The following
Mr. COLMANS

ELECTION SERMON

On Wednesday, May 28th. 1718!

Hannah Putte

Thos. G. Smith

Bought Dec. 20th 1836

Massachusetts.

At a COUNCIL held in, the Council
Chamber in Boston, upon *Thursday*
May 29. 1718.

Ordered, 211100 .13M

THAT PENN TOWNSEND
and ABINGDON DAVEN.
PORT Esqrs; give the Thanks
of the *Board* to the Reverend
Mr. BENJAMIN COLMAN for his
Sermon preached Yesterday before the
GENERAL ASSEMBLY, and desire
a Copy thereof in order to its being Printed.

J. WILLARD *Secr.*

*The Religious Regards we owe to
our COUNTRY, and the Blessing
of Heaven allured thereunto.*

A SERMON

Preached before His Excellency

SAMUEL SHUTE Esq;

His MAJESTY'S COUNCIL, and
the ASSEMBLY of the PRO-
VINCE of the *Massachusetts-Bay*
in NEW-ENGLAND, May 28.
1718.

Being the Day for the ELECTION
of His Majesty's Council there.

By BENJAMIN COLMAN A.M.

Pastor of a Church in Boston.

Nec sibi, sed toti natum se credere Mundo

BOSTON in N. E.

Printed by *B Green*, Printer to His Excel-
lency the GOVERNOUR and
COUNCIL. 1718.

To the Honourable
Sir WILLIAM ASHURST Kt.
 AND
JOHN BARRINGTON SHUTE Esq;



HAVING in the following *Discourse* presumed to mention your Honourable Names, as distinguish'd among the Generous *Friends* and *Patrons* of my dear Coun-

try, to whom should I now Inscribe it but to *Your Selves*, if indeed it may be seemly and excusable to tender You such a note of respect and gratitude.

THE *Subject* is such as must needs be acceptable to worthy and *Superior Persons*, born and rais'd for the good of others, whose Ambition it is to be *extensive Blessings* to the World, and who like the *Orbs of Light* that roll over us are dispensing their benign Influences to *distant Regions*.

GRATITUDE to our *Benefactors* is one of the first points of Justice and Honesty: But if a *private Benefit* and *personal Obligation* demand a most grateful Acknowledgment, how much more those of a common and *pub'ick* nature to a *People*; which like the *light* and *rain* of Heaven are of unknown extent, and of inestimable price.

I OWE this Duty therefore to my *Country*, to render You the best and most public *Thanks* I am able for all the *Services* and *Benefits* You have done it, and to ask your continued kind concern on all Occasions for a *PROVINCE*, whose distinguishing *Loyalty* and dutiful Affection to the *KING's* most *Excellent Majesty*, and the *Protestant Succession* in His *Illustrious House*, has already commended it unto your just and noble Regards.

I hope You will have the *Prayers* of an Obliged pious People, and that *their* GOD will think upon You for Good according to all that you have done, or may yet do for them ; and which is much more, according to all you may have done, or shall do, for *the Religious and Civil Interests* of GREAT BRITAIN, where it has pleased the DIVINE PROVIDENCE to make You some of the Ornaments and Blessings of your Age.

THAT You may *still live so*, is the Prayer of

GENTLEMEN

Your most Humble

Obliged and Obedient

Servant

Benjamin Colman.

Boston in New-
England, June
4. 1748.

AN ELECTION SERMON.

NEHEMIAH V. 19.

Think upon me, my GOD, for Good; according to all that I have done for this People.

A VERY short, but a very serious, pathetic and pleasant *Prayer* this. Happy the man that is able to make it, and happy the People among whom there are many that can solemnly make it. It is an *Appeal* to God respecting the faithful love and religious regards we bear to our *Country*, and to the Interests of God in it. It is a lifting up our hand to Heaven, and swearing by Him that liveth and ruleth there, and to him to whom we owe and shou'd bear true Faith and allegiance for ever and ever; that in our respective places we do and will live and act for Him and his People. It is in effect to say (and how awful is such an *Oath* to God) so think upon me my God for Good, as I think upon this People with a sincere desire of their Good. Who of us now dare assume the Words before the LORD, our King and our Judge? And yet who of us is there that may be Excusable before him if we are not

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not

not able to do it ? The man whose Conscience tells him that he bears an honest heart to his Country and the Religion of God in it, he may humbly make the *Prayer* and take the Comfort of it.

LET us now consider the *Man* that first made it, the *Time* and the *Occasion* of his making it, and then the *Prayer* by it self.

1. THE great & good *Man* that made it was *Nehemiah*, who was twelve years *Governour* of *Judea* under *Artaxerxes* King of *Persia*. He was a very pious and excellent Ruler, a *Man* that came to seek the *Welfare* of the *Children* of *Israel*. His whole story discovers a very deep *Tincture* of serious *Piety* in his *Soul*, that he was a man of much *Devotion* and very frequent and solemn in *Prayer*. The spirit of *Moses* and *Joshua* and *Samuel* and *David*, and of *Jehoshaphat*, *Hezekiah* and *Josiah* rested upon him in this respect.

WE may profitably observe what bro't him to his Government, and with what *Disposition* of *Mind* he came, and on what *Motives*. He came not for *Honour*, or *Riches*, for he had eno' of these before, and knew, when he had eno', and had a heart large eno' not only to use 'em for his own *Comfort*, but to spend 'em for the public *Good*. He had been the *Kings Cup bearer* ; an Office of high *Honour* and great *Favour*, and the *Profit* was to be sure equal to the *Dignity* of the *Post*. By this he stood in the *Presence* of the *King*, and attended at his *Table*

Table in the Month of his Waiting, and gave the Wine into his Hand.

NEITHER did he come to enjoy Ease and Pleasure. He might have had more of these at the Court. They that dwell in Kings Palaces go in soft Cloathing, live sumptuously and fare deliciously every day. The danger there is of surfeiting in soft pleasures. It may be that *Nehemiah* the rather left it for that Reason. And for what, in Exchange, did he forsake the Voluptuous scene? for *Jerusalem* in its Ruines! and the Remnant of the Captivity in great affliction and Reproach? This was what well became his Vertue and Devotion. He preferred the very dust of *Zion* to the Gardens of *Persia*, the broken Walls and Gates of *Jerusalem* to the Palaces of *Shushan*. He had rather come to repair these than to dwell at ease in them.

IN a word, as the Case was truly Extraordinary, and so the Reason of *Nehemiah's* seeking the Government of *Judah*, even the Melancholy account that was given him of the present State of *Jerusalem*; so in a very Extraordinary manner he prepared himself for the service of his Country; He sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted and prayed to the God of Heaven; and his most excellent Prayer which he prayed on this Occasion is recorded in the first Chapter of this Book. Now it must be acknowledged that the like Solemnity is not necessary in every Commission for the Govern-

ment of a *Province*; No, far otherwise; it may be much rather esteem'd a Circumstance of life calling for a devout *Thanksgiving* to God: But only let there be an Acknowledgement of the Divine Providence governing our Changes and chusing for us our respective Offices; let us have a sense of our Dependance on God, our Obligations to him and our Accountableness, and let us be humbly seeking his Presence, Influence and Help always, without which we shall never discharge the Duties of the most Inferior Trust.

BUT so much for the *Person* here praying, *Nebemiah*, the Excellent Governour of poor *Judea*; "Who in my Eye (says a late pious Expositor) tho' he never wore a Crown, nor commanded an Army, nor conquer'd any Country, nor was fam'd for Philosophy or Oratory; yet being a pious praying Man and a singular Servant of the Church of God in his day, was really a Greater Man and more Honourable, not only than any of the *Roman* Consuls or Dictators, but than *Xenophon*, or *Demosthenes* or *Plato* himself, who liv'd at the same time the bright Ornaments of *Greece*."

2. LET us observe at what *time* & upon what *Occasion* it was that *Nebemiah* prayed the Words of my Text; It was some time after his arrival at his Government, and entrance upon the administration thereof. For as soon as he came to *Jerusalem* and had publish'd his Commission, he did instantly and with great Diligence apply

apply himself to the Work he came about, the Duties of his High Station. This he did with great Integrity and Honour: He did not lose a day in Diversions, but set himself to Business. He built the Wall of Jerusalem, and took care for the Replenishing the Holy City: He took the Number of his People, he redress'd their Grievances, and reform'd divers great Disorders and Abuses. He look'd to their Morals and led them in the Worship of God. He call'd 'em to those solemnities of Religion which their present State made suitable, even to Fasting and Prayer, and their Renewing their Covenant with GOD.

IN this pious and princely manner did his Zeal, Piety and Charity work, with unknown Industry and Labour. And it is scarce to be said in what his Vertue most appear'd, or in what Vertue he most Excell'd; whether in Generosity to the public, in Tenderneſs to the poor and needy, in Compassion to the Oppressed, in Courage toward the Rich and Great, the Rulers and Nobles; or in Indignation against the wicked, the sensual, the profane; the cruel and unjust man.

INDEED there are some things here recorded of this most Excellent Governour, which tho' they were truly Glorious in Him, yet strictly are not to be bro't into Example. Particularly we are told in the Verses just before the Text, *that from the Time he took the Government He did not eat the Bread of the Governour.* He

He was not chargeable to 'em as his Predecessors had been. He serv'd 'em for nothing, he was so rich and they so poor, and his heart was as big as his purse ; nay he made his servants work for the public *Gratis*, whereas *the servants of the former Governours bare rule over the people* ; squeezing them with one pretended Perquisite or another. But *Nehemiah* was too much a Father to his People, and a *Fearer of God* to allow this. He neither durst do it nor was he Inclin'd to do it.

YET he kept the *Table* of a Prince, while he wou'd not require or accept the Bread of the Governour. There were at his Table daily an hundred and fifty of the Jews and Rulers, besides Strangers ; and accordingly there was daily prepar'd for him one Ox and six choice Sheep ; with Fowls in some proportion, and once in ten days store of all sorts of Wine ; and yet for all this he did not require the Bread of the Governour, because the Bondage was heavy upon the People.

NOW I say this is not to be bro't into Example to oblige Governours in other places and times, and not in like Circumstances, to do the like. No, It wou'd be very vain and ridiculous to pretend it. All that a Governour or Ruler is to learn from this Noble spirit and action is this, to be Generous, to be tender of a People, to consider his own and their Circumstances ; to moderate his Desires after Gain, not to extort and squeeze himself, nor to let any that are under him do so.

NEHE-

NEHEMIAH had the Heart of a Christian, (for the Godly are just alike under both Testaments) and who can read the Record of his noble Deeds without remembering the Words of our Lord Jesus which he spake, It is more blessed to give than to receive. *Act. 20. 25.* It argues a more blessed Disposition, and infers a more blessed State.

AFTER all, Few Governours are rich like *Nehemiah*. He had amass'd great Riches in the Persian Court, and had been wont to live magnificently. And now he piously (and I had almost said profusely) spends it in the Service of the poor afflicted Church. He liv'd of his own in great State and Expence, for he had (he knew) wherewith to do it. And blessed be God, Our Circumstances are not like those of the Remnant of the Captivity. We are poor eno' 'tis true, but not like them ; nor are our Spirits lowr'd like theirs with our Condition. Look on us, and judge how poor we be ! Look on our Cloathing, our Furniture ; our Tables ; our Children ; and if it were not for shame I had said our *Balls*, and say if we be Poor ! Judge by our Idle hours and Idle Expences ! if we are rich in these we must not be poor only to the State and Church. We are well able to do much more than ever we yet have done for the honourable Support both of the Magistracy and the Ministry, and should be never the poorer for it.

AND so much for the time wherein *Nehemiah* utter'd this prayer, a prayer which every
now

now & then we find him repeating, and always beautiful in him because seasonably utter'd.

3. I COME now to consider the Prayer by it self: *Think upon me my God for Good, according to all that I have done for this People.*

IF ever the words can become a Mortals mouth they became his. We must put an humble Christian sense upon 'em, which excludes Boasting. Here's nothing in 'em but what is modest, lowly and abasing before God; Nothing Vain-glorious, but altogether gracious and devout. He could comfortably remember what he had done, and pray over it; and he knew how to pray, was us'd to it, even to remember God of his Covenant Faithfulness and promised Mercies.

HERE Observe,

1. THE happy *Freedom* and Confidence with which he addresses God. *My God.* He claims, he pleads an Interest in him, a Relation to him. *My God, whose I am and whom I serve.* By God he rul'd, and for him only; by his Word and according to his Will, and for his Glory.

2. HIS Request. *Think upon me.* In which I wou'd remark two things, his Modesty and his Faith.

First, THE *Modesty* of his Petition. He asks to be tho't upon. Bestow a kind tho't upon me, my God. That shall be eno' to me, if my
God

God will but think upon me ! that shall be my pay and my exceeding Great Reward for all my Services to the Public. He look'd for no Recompence from men, nay some of them it may be might think, speak and reward to him Evil for Good ; but if God will remember his Good Deeds and not blot them out, he desires no more.

AND yet it is a Great thing that *Nehemiah* asks, and what the Greatest and best of men are not worthy of. What, for the Great GOD of Heaven to bestow a Tho't upon man that is a Worm, and the son of man that is a Worm ! When we consider his Heavens,— *Lord what is man* that thou art mindful of him ! Yet many O Lord, and wonderful are thy Tho'ts to us-ward ! It is a Request meet for a *Favourite* to his Prince. *Let my Lord remember his Handmaid.* If he says, I'll think of you, I'll remember you, it is eno'.

Secondly, THE *Faith* of this prayer is remarkable. *Nehemiah* believed in God, and trusted that he wou'd remember him for Good. He comforted himself thus, My God thinketh on me. He came to God believing that he is a Rewarder. He believ'd that his God would think upon him ? 1. for Good. 2. according to all his Good Deeds.

1. FOR Good. Such are God's Tho'ts ; *thoughts of Good and not of Evil.* Think upon me my God, but not to mark my sin. No, for then
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who cou'd stand? let these be blotted out for ever & cast away." Remember them no more. But if there has been any thing ever done in sincerity let my good God remember it. *According to thy Goodness remember me, for thy mercy sake ; O Lord.*

THINK upon me my God and assist, encourage, protect, succeed and prosper me. Think upon me and accept me in my desires to serve thee and thy people : Let me find Grace in thy sight. Think upon me to remunerate as thou plearest, of thy free Grace, rich bounty and sovereign Mercy : Bless me my God, both in Temporals and Spirituals, but especially the latter.

2. ACCORDING to his *Deeds*. Without good works done by us we may not presume to look that God will ever think of us for good. For we may know then that there is neither any good thing wro't in us, nor in reserve for us. Yet our best Doings can never merit any Favour from God. ' The Reward is not of debt, but of Grace altogether. If *Abraham* our Father were justified by Works, he had whereof to glory. He believed in God which justifieth sinners, and his Faith was counted to him for Righteousness. Yet his Faith wro't in his Works, and by Works his Faith was made perfect. In like manner *Nehemiab* claim'd nothing as of debt, but manifestly asks all of meer Grace,—Think upon me, my God. Indeed he expresse the Conscience he had of his own Sincerity before God, and his Faith in the Promise

Promise and Righteousness of God. He spake upon the Principle which David lays down, *Psal. 18. 24,—28. With an upright man Thou wilt shew thyself Upright, with the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure, and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward.* This is the equal and righteous Rule of God's Government and Judgment.

BUT this excellent man is yet more particular and exact in his Petition. 1. He speaks of *all* that he had done. 2. he speaks of it as *all* done for *this* People.

1. THERE was a great deal that he had done; and *all* in a very small space of time: *All that I have done.* God will remember *all* the Good we do. No one thing, not the least, sincerely meant to his Glory shall be overlook'd by him. A Book of Remembrance is written by him. What we forget he keeps in mind. Of *all* not the least shall be forgotten; No not a cup of cold water to one of his. 1 Sam. 26. 23. *The Lord render to every man his Righteousness and his faithfulness.*

BUT what *all* is this which poor, wretched, imperfect men may presume to speak of before God? A poor *all* at the best! defective and defiled by Sin! less than nothing in the Eyes of a Good man, whose Desires so vastly exceed his attainments. What have we ever done meet for the Great and Holy God to think upon! When ye have done *all* say, We are

Unprofitable servants. Lord, remember not the defects & the defilements of my best Deeds! Judge me not according to the little that I have done. And yet Comparatively one Man does a great deal more Good in the world than many others. Some do a great deal of evil here, and some if not so much hurt yet very little Good, but even in Comparison of those that do good among men some vastly excel. *I laboured more than they all.* As the Stars are not all of one Magnitude and brightness, so neither are all men Equal. Let us compare our selves with our betters, and think what abundance of Good some others have done more than we have. Let us consider in particular *Nehemiah's* excellent spirit, diligence and labour, and comparing him with most other men, we may allow him to say,—Think upon me, my God, according to all that I have done.

2. IT was all done *for this People*, and therefore what God he knew wou'd think upon.

THIS people ? why what People was it ? the poor Remnant of a miserable Captivity ? a people that were not now a Nation, nor scarce a Province ! and in great affliction and reproach. Chap. 1. 3. *These feeble Jews* ; as their Enemies call'd them with much Contempt. Chap. 4. 2. *The Bondage was heavy upon them*, as *Nehemiah* himself says in the words before my Text.

BUT yet they were 1. *Gods people* ; and 2. *Nehemiah's own People.*

THEY

THEY were the Seed of *Abraham*, and beloved for their Fathers sake. When God first chose 'em they were the fewest of any people, and continued so for a great while after they were chosen, while other Families increas'd into Nations and Kingdoms round about them. What advantage then had the Jew? very much in their visible Adoption of God, and peculiar Separation for himself; He gave his Word unto Jacob, his Statutes and his Judgments unto Israel; he hath not dealt so with any Nation besides. For did God ever go and take him a Nation by like Temptations, signs and wonders? by a stretched out Arm and by great Terrors, according to all that God did for Israel in Egypt? Wherefore he well concludes that the Lord wou'd think upon him for Good according to all that he did for *this* people. For he cou'd plead with *Moses* respecting 'em, *Lord they are thy people, and thine Inheritance*; and he cou'd pray with *Asaph*, *Remember thy Congregation which thou hast purchased of old; the Rod of thine Inheritance which thou hast redeemed; this Mount Zion wherein thou hast dwelt*. What then tho' they were few in Number, poor and despised, Zion the Outcast whom no man regarded; yet were they still Gods small Peculiar upon Earth. What tho' the Church were now but as a few *Myrtle Trees in a Bottom*, as the Prophet saw them represented in Vision, yet the Son of God at the Head of his Angels there guarded and protected 'em.

BUT

BUT then, *this people* were this good Mans *own* people. *Jerusalem* was indeed waste and its Gates consum'd with fire, but it was still the place of *his Fathers Sepulchers*. He dearly lov'd his Country and the Religion of it, and did all that lay within his power for the Good of it.

BEHOLD then a noble and singular Instance of one that generously and religiously serv'd the Public ; 1. from a natural affection to it as *his own People*, 2. from a pious and devout Consideration of them as *the People of God*. His Relation to them, and their Relation to God, jointly Influenc'd him to all that he did for them. See Chap. 1. 10. *Now these are thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power and by thy strong hand* : and that parallel place, Chap. 13. 14. *Remember me O my God concerning this, and blot not out my good Deeds that I have done for the House of my God, and for the Offices thereof.*

SO copious, if not tedious, I have been in Opening the *Words* ; in excuse whereof I can only plead that the Meditation was too pleasant to me to restrain my tho'ts, and has seem'd to me too pertinent to the present Occasion to be suppress'd. Let us therefore make a close and serious *Application* of the whole to our selves in these two or three plain and short *Doctrinal Notes*.

I. THAT we shou'd do all that we can, every one in his place and according to his power & ability, for the Good of this People.

II. THAT more especially the Government over us are Indispensably bound to do so.

III. GOD will think upon all them for Good that do so.

I. THAT we should do all that we can, every one in his place and according to his power and ability for the Good of our Country. Let us Emulate Nehemiabs Piety in this Heroic Instance of it. And indeed this is the true Heroic Vertue & Piety, to endeavour in our places to deserve well of Mankind, and in the most extensive manner wherein we can to honour God in the world.

NO man is made only for *himself* and his own private affairs, but to serve profit & benefit others. We are manifestly formed for Society, and design'd by our Great Creator for a mutual dependance on and serviceableness unto each other here in the body. Both the Safety and the Pleasure of life depend upon our joint proposing and pursuing this design. As soon as we read but of *two* men in the world, we find that God expected the one should be the others Keeper. It were yet a *Cainish* temper to doubt or deny this Obligation. He was both a murderer and a liar that first deny'd this, and 'tis pity that he has left any Children behind him in his cursed Image. *Cain* flew in the face of God, and did violence to nature, did outrage to his own Conscience, when he ask'd— *Am I my Brothers Keeper?* Ignorant and impudent man! did he not feel that within himself, that he

he ought to be so. As *Cain* was of that wicked one, so is he of *Cain* who thinks himself not born for the Welfare of others, but meerly for himself and his own petty private and temporal Concerns. And like *Cain* he deserves to be cursed from the earth, and driven from the face of men, as well as hid from the face of God; a fugitive and a vagabond, and afraid of every one he sees. This is a due punishment of so barbarous a Principle. For as the man renounces others, so must they him; and while he declares that others must look for no Good from him, they may well apprehend all imaginable Evil and mischief from him, and he from them again. For his Principle runs him into all manner of Injustice and Injury, barbarity and bloodiness, as it did *Cain*; and the Earth cannot bear the monster, but cries for vengeance against him.

A mans private and domestic affairs are too *petite* to engross his noble Soul; they are too small and narrow a Compass for him to confine himself within. He is endow'd for much greater things, and he much debases himself if he do not think so.

BUT our *Country*, and the particular *Places* where we dwell, are ordinarily the bounds of our Influence. Especially is it so as to common and ordinary people, who are known only in their own Nei'bourhood, and find eno' near home to keep 'em imploy'd. And here prudence as well as charity teaches us to begin.

EVERY

EVERY one is to act *in his own place*, studying to be quiet and to do his own business, in the Relation Trust and Office which the governing Providence of God assigns him, and according to the Talents which the *great Lord and Master* has committed to him: But in his place he is to improve unto the utmost extent, the Powers which God gives him and the Opportunities which Providence presents him with, for the doing good in the world; Modesty and Prudence directing him and preserving him.

WHATEVER for *kind* and whatever for *degree* the Gift of our bountiful and gracious God be to us, so we must minister to the common Good, as good Stewards of the manifold Grace of God. For as there are many members in one body, and every member has its several place and service; so how many and various soever we be, we are at last but one Body, and all members one of another: and having Gifts differing according to the Grace of God bestowed on us, we must so minister in proportion and for kind, with diligence and chearfulness. To whom much is given of him God demands the more, and of every one according to *that* he has received; as the Husbandman looks to reap that which he sows, and in proportion to the measure sown.

IF a man receive *Wisdom* (and largeness of heart like *Solomon*) from the Father of light, he must be liberal and communicative thereof for the benefit of the world; as men do not light a candle and put it under a bushel, but set it on a

Candlestick and it giveth light to all that are in the room. If a man have *Learning*, and be able to speak or write well, he is to consecrate this also to the service of God and the world; whereby he may become the Father of an immortal Offspring, and teach the Generations to be born after his own decease. If a man has *Riches* and a heart to do good with it, he may be not only a Father to the Poor but to his Country also; defending it from dangers and redeeming it from misery. If a man have *Rule* and *Authority* it is given him immediately for the Public Service, for he is Gods Minister attending continually on this very thing. Or if a man has *Reputation* and *Credit*, and an *Interest* in those that have Power, this also is a happy Advantage to be improv'd carefully after the Example of *Esther* and *Mordcai* for the welfare of their People. Again, if a man have *Courage* and boldness of Spirit, or bodily Strength, let him not imploy it in injurious hectoring and brutal insulting his Nei'bours, but as the *Worthies* of *David* who so't immortal fame and got their Names enroll'd among the *first and second Three* by the Dangers which they fac'd in the cause of God and his Israel. 2 Sam. 10. 12. *Be of good Courage and let us play the Men, for our People, and for the Cities of our God.* Or again, if *Policy* and depth for Counsel be a mans Accomplishment, let him make good use of it, as *Hushai* did in defeating the subtle and pernicious counsel of *Ahitophel*, and for the preservation of his King & Country. But if a person have *Nothing* considerable in his
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own outward Circumstances or inward Endowments to distinguish him, yet if he have but an honest and willing Mind to do what he can, he will find many an Opportunity to serve the Public, and contribute to the weal of his Country. The meanest must not be discouraged, nor may be excused: he must not say of himself, *I am a dry tree*, a low and useless shrub; nor may others despise him as insignificant: for tho' he may not be likely to do much, yet God will accept his little, and it may prove a great deal more than he thinks for. Yea indeed a vast deal of good we sometimes see done by Persons of small powers, either natural or acquir'd, where there is but discretion and application. And this being in fact a matter of Experience does infer a strong Obligation upon all, and is a powerful Motive for the least to be doing what they can. For small Attempts and less Expectations have been sometimes crown'd with vast effects.

IF what has been already said be not sufficient to convince us of our Obligation to propose and pursue the common good of our Country, I appeal then to the *Conscience* of every man, Whether his own heart do not approve & applaud such a Disposition as very excellent in it self. What else can at present fully answer the End of thy Being, rational Endowments, and the Relation thou bearest to Mankind? can you be good, and just in your Place without it? can the Being and End of Humane Society be answer'd without it? is not this one point wherein men

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have

have preheminance above the beasts ? Nay is it not a kind of Instinct in Nature, which is unaccountable and irresistible ; a secret invincible affection to ones Country, as unto some natural Relation in blood ? and does it not afford a man a noble and lasting satisfaction if he has been honour'd to do it service ? is it not agreeable to *humane nature* to be generous, compassionate, obliging, grateful, beneficent ? and is it not the Image of the Great Creator instamp'd upon us, who is good to all and has a tender Care over all his Works ? “Nay are not the worst of men themselves ashamed to avow Self-interest as a Principle of their actions, as being conscious to themselves that it is the basest of all Principles ? The practice of benignity, of courtesy, of clemency (says *Dr Barrow*) do at first sight without the aid of any discursive reflection, obtain approbation and applause from men ; being acceptable and amiable to their mind as beauty to their sight, harmony to their hearing, fragrancy to their smell, and sweetness to their taste. It cannot be (says *Mr. Collier*) that God should give man *Solitary Principles* and yet intend him for Public Conference ? make his Interest depend upon Mutual Affection, and at the same time create him so as naturally to care for nothing but himself.

BUT while I am upon this head, proving our Obligation to a *General Kindness* and Public Spirit from the light of Nature, it may not be amiss to remark something of the noble sense that

that the *Romans* had in this matter. I will name three only, *Cato*, *Cicero*, and the Emperor *Marcus Antoninus* ; and add to them the Principles of the *Stoicks*.

CATO the Younger was an admir'd and celebrated lover of his Country, and a very faithful zealous assertor of the rights & liberties of it. *Plutarch* tells us among other things, that when his friends could not perswade him to stand for the *Tribune-ship*, yet when *Metellus* was put up from whom he feared danger to the State, he presently stood for the Place himself and carry'd it ; for the People look'd upon him (sayes the *Historian*) not as one that desir'd a favour of them, but one that sought it to do his Country a kindness, and that he might defend their Liberty and Government. Wherefore at another time when by his courage and wisdom in opposing *Clodius*, he had driven him out of Town, (he had made him appear so infamous) and *Cicero* came to thank him for it ; he answer'd, *Thank the Common-wealth*, for whose sake alone it is that I do every thing.

INDEED *Cicero* was of the same noble Spirit, and a like worthy Patriot to his Country. He was the man among the *Romans* that first had that singular Style of honour decreed him, *Pater patriæ*, the Father of his Country. A dignity preferable to the being born to Empire over it. And it is remarkable that *Cæsar* himself who had Sacrificed him to the Malice of *Antonius* for his own Advancement to the Imperial Chair, yet honour'd his Memory for his faithful Opposition

to him in that design : for *Cæsar* visiting his Dau'ters Son found him with a Book of *Cicero's* in his hand ; the Boy for fear endeavour'd to hid it under his gown ; which *Cæsar* perceiving took it from him, and after he had turn'd over a great part of it gave it him again, saying, My Child, this was a Learned man and a lover of his Country.

I will only add a saying of *Marcus Antoninus*, one of the best of the *Roman Emperors*. As you are a member of a Society, so every action of yours should tend to the benefit and improvement of it. So that when you do any thing that has neither immediate nor remote reference to general advantage, you make a breach in the common Interest, destroy the Unity of Public life, and are as really guilty of Seditious behaviour as a Male-content that imbroils the Government.

THIS Principle was well worthy of *Him* that was at the Head of the World, and indeed the Happiness and Glory of the *Empire* seem'd to expire in him. Such were the Principles of the *Stoicks*, " That we should love all Man kind heartily, solicit their Interests, bear with their Infirmities, and do no manner of injury to any man : " That a man should not think himself born for his private Satisfaction, but exert himself for the Public, and make his life as significant to the world as it is possible : " That the Conscience of a good action should content a man,

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man, without the prospect of fame and reward: that he ought never to be tir'd with the exercise of good nature, — but look upon a generous action as a reward to it self. These are some of the noble Sentences which we find in the writings of the *Stoicks*, which *Christians* may read with blushes, reflecting on their own defects in practice.

NOT but that the Precepts of *CHRIST OUR SAVIOUR* do far excel all that *Seneca*, *Cicero*, *Epictetus*, *Antoninus* or all the *Masters of Morality* have said on this Argument; and from hence it is that our Obligations rise higher than theirs cou'd to live unto the benefit of others. And as it much rather becomes me in this desk, so it should be much more acceptable unto a Christian Audience, to observe the excelling Institutions of the Gospel on this Argument. For we are instructed from the *Divine Oracles*, “To love our Nei'bours as our selves; “*Whatsoever we would that men should do to us to do the same to them*, and “as we have opportunity to do good to all men, especially unto the household of faith; “That we should deny our selves, and that *NONE OF US LIVETH TO HIMSELF*; “That no man should seek his own singly, but every man his brothers wealth; “That we look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others; “That we be kindly affectioned one to another in brotherly love, in honour preferring one another; “That nothing be done thro' strife and vain glory, but in lowliness of mind that each esteem other better than himself.

WHEN

WHEN I look over these *Superiour Laws of revealed Religion*, and contemplate the Divine Life of our SAVIOUR, and how his *Prophets and Apostles* excelled after him in a noble living to the Good of others, Temporal and Eternal ; it puts out all the *Lights of the Gentile world*, as the Stars do disappear at the rising of the Sun. The *Phylanthropy* of our Saviour was more than humane. It was a *God-like life of love to mankind*. No words can at all adorn the Pattern and the Precept of Goodness and Benignity which he has left us. And this is his Commandment that we love one another, that we love Man-kind as he has done. And among meer men who ever liv'd so entirely devoted to the good of others as the *Apostles of our Lord Jesus* ? The Spirit of Christ and his Glory rested on them, and they "sighted all concerns of their own, their "safety, their liberty, their ease, their reputation, their very lives, for the welfare of others; "even of those who did spitefully maligne, "and cruelly abuse 'em. And this they did on those Spiritual Principles, Reasons and Motives, which never enter'd into the Morals of the *Heathen*, but are peculiar to the Gospel of the Grace of God. Such was the life of the blessed Apostle St. Paul, whose Story well laid together affords many bright and shining Instances of a great and noble Soul, entirely formed by the love of God to seek the Weal of Mankind, private & public, present and future, with such a passion & courage, humility and meekness, disinterestedness and self-denial, as at once lets us into the defects and meaness of all the *Grecian*
and

and Roman Characters, || and shews that the Christian Principles if acted up to do produce a much more perfect Hero ; scil. A Man that does greater things for Mankind without noise and ostentation ; vain glory and worldly veiws : A Man that can act zealously and constantly for the good of the World, not only without the prospect of fame, riches, honours or authority ; but in the face of injustice, ingratitude, neglect, shame & suffering ; which was what the proud Roman Spirit cou'd not bear or submit to, but run 'em rather upon their Swords, as it did Cato, Brutus and others, not having the Christian Courage & Grandeur to suffer shame in a noble Cause, & not ingloriously run from it, when there remain'd only a Passive Testimony further to be born to it. In its Extremity they deserted it, having no sense of the Sovereignty of a Governing Providence which may if it pleases call us to Sufferings as well as to Action. And I wish that a sort of Christians would consider this, who in defiance to true reason as well as to their Saviour espouse the old Roman Notions of Greatness of Soul, and form themselves from Plutarchs Lives despising the glorious Records of the great and godly Men whose Story we have in the Holy Scripture, which were written for our Learning, and to form us to be Blessings in the world while we live, and blessed in the presence and favour of the Great G O D,

|| See the Christian Hero : written by Sir Richard Steele. An Argument proving that no Principles but those of Religion are sufficient to make a Great Man. Chap. 2. & 3.

the Supreme Governour of the world, when we die.

LET me therefore address *You*, who are a People of Religion by profession, That on the principles of Christianity you would conscientiously, in Obedience to the word of God, in Conformity to the Life of the Blessed Jesus and the bright Cloud of Saints that do encompass us, imploring and relying on that Grace of his, which is sufficient for you as it has been for others, proposing to your selves the Glory of God, the love of Men, both as to Soul and Body, the welfare of these Churches of Christ, the flourishing of true Vertue and Piety and the reverend worship of God in them, and in all your own Eternal Salvation, and the giving up your Account at last with joy ; — Let me (I say) beseech you every one, the greater and the less, to do all that you can for the good of this People.

LET the least & lowest, the poorest & the most obscure *Pray for their Country*. The weakest and the most infirm, the Women and the Children can do this. And your fervent Prayers may be very powerful & effectual for the obtaining the Presence and Blessing of God with your People. And God forbid that any of us should Sin against the Lord in ceasing to Pray for our Country. A true Spirit of Religion will make us to say with the sweet Psalmist of Israel, *If I forget thee, then let my tongue cleave to the roof of my Mouth*.

BUT especially let the *Ministers of Religion* spend themselves gladly in secret Intercessions, in private Studies, in public Labours, yea and in Sufferings

Sufferings too if called to them; not seeking our own profit but the profit of many that they may be saved; enduring all things for the Elects sake that they may obtain Salvation by Jesus Christ; Approving our selves as Ministers of God in Patience, — in necessities, — in labours, — by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness — by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, — by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left; by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report, as deceivers and yet true, as unknown and yet well known, — as poor and yet making many rich, as having nothing & yet possessing all things — : So let our Mouth be open to this People and our heart enlarged; that they may never be straitened in us how much soever they may be in their own bowels; and let us look for no other recompence from them but this, which we would wish from our Children into whom if we could we would infuse all that is good and pious and generous in our own Souls, that they also might have their hearts enlarged “to receive the Grace of the Gospel according to that fulness in which it is tender’d to them. (See 2 Cor: 6. 4, — 13.)

MIGHT we have this Wish, *My Brethren*, we should see you all gladly denying your selves for the Public good, improving your Interests for the service of your Country, venturing your Estates for it, yea running greater hazards than that, even to lay down your lives for the Brethren: as the Noble *Queen Esther* said, when she put her life in her hand for her people, *And if I*

perish I perish. Nor can a man venture his Name, his Estate, his Ease, his Life in a more glorious Cause, than for the defence of the Civil & Religious Liberties of his Country.

WHAT then shal^l we think of that Meager, hungry, sordid, ill-favour'd kine, a vicious *Self-love*, *Self will* and *Self interest*, that devours all the goodly and the fat that comes in its way, and like a famine eats up a Peoples plenty & prosperity. God save us from this brand and bane of the latter days, those perillous times of which the Apostle spake so long ago and which we have seen come. 2 Tim. 3. 2, 3, 4. *For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to Parents, unthankful, unholy; without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good; traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of Godliness, but denying the power of it.*

THESE are the viprous brood of a base, private *Selfish Spirit*, and into the woful time of the reign of this wretched lust our days is cast. For with our own eyes we have lately seen the Apostles words fulfilled in the Character of a restless party in our own Nation, (a parcel of proud, fierce, false, perjur'd traitors; ungrateful, unnatural, hau'ty, heady, boasting, sensual men) who in the most perfidious & shameless manner have attempted, by secret Conspiracies and by open rebellions, to sacrifice the Civil and Religious

gious Interests of the Nation to their own private Interests. Nay indeed we have liv'd to see not only the Interest & Glory of a single Nation, a *Queen* and a *Ministry* then the Wonder & terror of the World; but also a Victorious & triumphant Confederacy, and the common Interest of all *Europe*, and which is more of God in the world, basely betray'd by a few *States-men* for their own advancement.

O inhumane and inglorious conduct, that has cover'd their Names with everlasting infamy! equally enemies in the end to themselves and to the Public! So may such selfish & treacherous men ever perish! but let them that love the People of God be as the Sun when it goeth forth in its strength.

THIS *Self-interest* (says Dr. Barrow) is the great Enemy to the Common-weal, which perverteth all right, which confoundeth all order, which spoileth all the convenience and comfort of Society. It is the chief spring of injustice, making men violate all laws and rules of Conscience; they falsify their Trusts, they betray their Friends, they supplant their Nei'bour, they detract from the worth and vertue of any Man, they forge and vent odious slanders, they commit any sort of wrong or outrage, they without regard or remorse do any thing which seemeth to further their design. From hence are those fierce Animosities, fiery Contentions, bitter Emulations, rancorous Grudges, calumnious Supplantings, perfidious Cozenages, outrageous Violences, factious Confederacies, seditious Murmurs,

Murmurings, tumultuous Clamours, which embroil the World in discord and disorder. *Thus He.*

O then that we could agree to banish it for ever from Christian Society, and root it both out of Church and State. Let us not harbour it in our own breasts, let us not suffer it in one another. Let us every one be Emulous who shall best love the Public, let us honour none that don't, let us love all that do. Let factions and parties cease among us, let us be grateful to all that seek our good, let us detest the vices that are destructive of a People; profaness, fraud, drinking, lewdness; let us abhor the principles of Libertinism on one hand, and of Slavery on the other; and let us put a special remark on the spirit of *lying* that began on t'other side the water in the late Reign, and by dint of slander overset the most generous and wise Ministry that ever a Nation was bless'd with, and whose Reputation was establish'd by a course of Victories scarce to be parallel'd in History; which lying spirit follows *party-men* every where, and assaults most the best Administration. Finally, let our holy Religion direct us in our principles, in our aims and in all our measures, and we shall do well: let us not be content to act from a meer humane vertue, but from a *principle of Grace* rooted deep in our Souls; that what we do for the Public may be indeed done for God, an offering to Him of a sweet savour.

THUS

THUS far I have run on, and yet have but hinted at what might have been said on the *First Proposition*, That we ought every one in his place, and according to his power and ability, to lay out ourselves for the Good of our Country.

I come now to the *Second*, which brings me yet nearer to the Business of the Day, and to the *Honourable Persons* who have called me now to speak before them.

II. *THAT more especially those in Government over us are indispensably bound to do what they can for the Good of their People.* We may suppose they have it more in their power to do us good, and it would be very hard to doubt their will and inclination. They if any are obliged to be Public blessings, and God and Man both do expect more of them than others: for surely they have more capacity and opportunity, and have also Sworn to do it. The People are their Charge and care, committed to them as a Flock to the *Shepherd*, to feed them according to the integrity of their hearts, and to guide them by the skilfulness of their hands. The Rulers of a People are their *Heads*, and accordingly are to think & see & speak for them. They are *Fathers*, and shou'd naturally and tenderly care for us with a Parental affection. Numb. 11. 12. *Have I conceived all this People? have I begotten them? that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosome, as a nursing father beareth his sucking child.* These Public Relations imply a singular trust, and infer a singular duty to the Public. Besides that

that Authority and Power enables a Man to do a great deal of good ; and is usually attended with riches and reputation ; and we ought to suppose with wisdom and knowledge ; all which procure Men more or less interest abroad and influence at home. Moreover, *Magistracy* is appointed of God for this very end, and the Oath of God is upon Rulers to intend the Public Good. There is no power but of God, and the Powers that be are ordained of Him ; and to Him they are accountable. They are rais'd by his Providence, and must themselves be govern'd in their high station by his Word, and rule for his Glory and the welfare of their People. Rom. 13. 4. *For he is the Minister of God to thee for good.* To serve hereunto is the true honour and noble pleasure of Life ; but the damage and mischief is infinite if the Ruler departs from this point, either by negligence or wilful abuse of his Power. The good Providence which is equally over us all, and which concerns itself for every Individual, and much more for the Body of a People collectively, immediately takes notice of the Indignity to Heaven and the Injury to Men: *What is thy Mother ? a lioness ? a She-bear,* that shou'd have been a Parent and a nursing Mother.

WHETHER we consider the *Ruler* in his Legislative or Executive trust, the making Laws or the seeing to the execution of them, he is in both a Servant to the Public, and is to have the weal of his People at heart. Both the Law-maker and the Judge are in the discharge of their
several

several trusts to promote the virtue and religion of a People, the public peace and prosperity, to defend the legal rights, liberties and privileges both civil and religious, to suppress vice & wickedness, to support learning, and the means of Education, which is for ever a principal Interest of any People. And the *Subject* is also obliged to obey and observe the laws in these cases provided, and to assist the Officers of Justice in a legal prosecution of the Transgressors of them.

IF therefore the *Question* be, In what *Instances* we would humbly supplicate and claim the faithful Care and Endeavour of all in power over us for the good of this People; holding ourselves in our respective places bound to serve under them & assist in the same noble design; I would name,

1. *THE reverend Worship of God among our People.* This was ever the first Care of the Godly Princes of Israel, from the days of *Moses* down to the Reign of good *Josiah*, and how pleasing to God and beneficial to the Public this pious care was, let the whole history of the Kings of *Judah* witness. The chief care of *Moses* was for the Tabernacle and Altar of God, and so was *David's* and *Solomon's* first Regard to the Ark & Temple; and the reforming Kings of *Judah* afterward, who were such Blessings in their day, and under whose Administration the lost glory and prosperity of the Kingdom recovered strangely from time to time, began their glorious Reigns with the Restoration of the Temple worship, reviving
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the pure Institutions of God, and destroying the Idols and the Groves. Wherefore,

YOUR first care for your People should be to see that God is with them and that they keep with God; and therefore that his holy Sabbath be sanctified, his Institutions adher'd to, his Sanctuary be set up and frequented every where, his Word be faithfully Preach'd, his Worship be supported, and his Ministers be comforted and honour'd in the discharge of their duty to the Souls of Men. This is the truest Charity to the Public, and the least Reverence to God that the Government of a People can express; and as the prosperity of a People depends on the favour and blessing of God, so it has been ever experienc'd that the keeping close to the Institutions of God respecting his worship, is the way to secure the Divine favour and blessing to a People; whereof the story of *Asa* and *Jehoshaphat* and *Hezekiah* are notorious and famous Evidence, and an Example to the Church for ever.

IF then (*our honoured Fathers*) you think in your Consciences that the Worship of God in these Churches, the Ministry of the Land and the Orders of Gods house here, are as near to the Rule of Gods word, and answer as well the Great Ends of Holiness and Devotion, if not better than what others may more esteem & prefer; then as you honour God and value the best Interest of this People, spiritual or temporal, abide by and adhere to the support and defence of those Methods of religious Worship which we are in.

BUT

BUT do it with Meekness and Charity; for your *Platform* pretends not to perfection, nor to impose an *Uniformity* on the Churches; which is neither necessary nor conducive to external Order nor unto Christian Unity, to peace, truth or vital Piety.

BUT if it might please the Government to go further into the Counsel, the expence & travel, for the Instruction of the *Natives*, the Mission of Ministers into the *dark & loose places* of the land, where the Inhabitants are averse to the Settlement of the Ordinances of the Gospel among them, and the assisting our *New Plantations* in their Infancy to have the Preaching of Gods word among them; I judge these would be so many acts of Piety highly acceptable to heaven, and from which under the blessing of Providence both Church and State would reap unknown Benefit.

2. LET Moral Vertue, Sobriety & Purity, Justice and Righteousness, be a special part of your Care for us. Righteousness exalteth a Nation; but Sin is the reproach of any People, *Prov. 14. 34.* The formal and solemn worship of God is but a mockery of the *Holy One*, where vice & wickedness is not discountenanced and suppressed. The Sword is put into the Ruler's hand to be a Terror to evil doers, and a protection of the virtuous and pious: *Rom. 13. 4.* He is a revenger to execute wrath upon them that do evil, but do that which is good and thou shalt have praise of the same. Wherefore as you would seek the good of this People, save 'em from Self-destruction,

on, and from the Judgments and wrath of God. Exert the power with which God has arm'd and honour'd you against Vices and Immoralities which pollute a land & provoke the Divine anger. Let the Laws in force against profaness, cursing and swearing, & Sabbath-breaking be openly reverenc'd and zealously executed; and so the Laws against unchastity and uncleanness, and drunkenness; as well as those against unrighteousness and dishonest practices. For these vices sap the foundation of society, peace, safety & mutual comfort; and are therefore so vehemently abhorred and forbidden by God, who has given us his laws for our good. And for the maintaining the honour of those immutable laws of Justice and Charity, whereby the peace, rights, purity and good Order of Mankind are preserved, God has made Government & Magistracy a universal & perpetual Ordinance among men: Wherefore let Justice have a free Course and be impartially administred, and let virtue and goodness have your Countenance and be recommended by your good Example; for the virtue of a People is everlastingly necessary to their happiness. This was the great Good that *Nehemiah* did for his People; he not only built the wall of Jerusalem and led them in the solemnities of Religion, in fasting and prayer and renewing their Covenant with God; but he set himself to *reform their manners*, and particularly express'd his zeal against those that profaned the Sabbath and defiled themselves: for which two things especially he begs of God to remember him for good.

Chap. 12. v. 22, 31.

3. AS you would consult and pursue the true and lasting Good of the *Province*, and particularly the Vertue and Morals of this People, *Let the Invaluable Privileges which we enjoy by the Royal Favour, and the CHARTER in which, they are granted and secured to us by the best of Princes, be a special Object of your watchful care.* By this we enjoy great quietness, and very worthy fruits we reap continually from this Grace of the Divine Providence unto us ; and we ought to accept it always and in all places with all Thankfulness unto God and the King. This Day is a witness to you, in the whole solemnity thereof ; of the Privilege God has put into your hands to chuse from among your Brethren Men of Piety and Vertue, Wisdom and Understanding, Integrity and Justice ; Men of a Public Spirit and lovers of their Country ; without whose advise or consent not a Judge or a Magistrate can receive a Commission for the Peace. He that estimates not our Charter Privileges must be either very Ignorant of the Interests of this People, or very unfriendly to them. He that is Inimical to the one, must be greatly so to the other. We have those that envy us our Advantages, and are striking at our *Charter* on any trivial pretence and foreign occasion ; but God has hitherto guarded it, and raised up *Generous Friends* whom he has spirited to stand up in the defence of it in time of danger, among whom the Names of A S H U R S T and S H U T E will always (I trust) be had in Remembrance by an obliged and grateful People ; whose God requite to 'em all

all the kindness & affection they have shown us.

TRULY, might it become me to speak my tho'ts freely before my *Superiours*, there is no Expence should be esteem'd too much which may be at any time necessary for the defence of the *Charter*. And I hope the Loyalty and Fidelity of this People to *His Majesty's* Government; will ever be such and so conspicuous as to render us not unworthy of the Continuance of his Royal Favour to us.

4. IN the next place I would humbly recommend *the honourable and careful support of Learning* among this People. It is *this* that has honour'd us among the *Provinces*, and been the support of that Religion and vertue which is left among us. Our wise and pious *Fathers* in the Settlement of the Country planted *Schools* as well as Churches in every Town. Religion and Learning were their equal Care; and I trust will be their Children. Hence it is that they have left an Instructed Seed as at this day. That happy foundation the COLLEGE, supply'd from the *Grammar Schools* thro' the *Province*, has not only sent forth a number of worthy men for the Pulpit, but also for every Chair of honour in the Government. Not only have our Churches had a succession of *Pastors*, but the State also of *Judges* and *Counsellors*, and some most Excellent *Governours* have our *Provinces* seen, the fair Sons of that beautiful *Academy*. And whatever Decays the *Province* languishes under in other respects the College seems to renew its Youth, and
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has been sending out of late a vigorous Issue, who in brightness of Parts, and also in Vertue promise to excel. And now we have the Joy to come before You, *our civil Fathers*, as the Sons of the Prophets once did to *Elisha*, saying, Behold now the Place is too *strait* for the increas'd numbers of your Sons! will you please to enlarge the House for them to dwell in? We trust you will kindly answer so reasonable, so welcome a desire; and most readily build on a Foundation which our Fathers laid and which our God has signally blessed. For what Parents are there that being able, do not naturally delight thus to settle their hopeful Progeny!

BUT, *my Fathers*, what signifies a College if there be not a previous care about inferiour Schools, in your several Towns? Let these live I beseech you; let'em be worthily supplied and decently supported; let not the Law in that matter be any where scandalously evaded. If our Schools languish so will the State & Church too. We shall soon grow an Irreligious and a contemptible People if we decay in good Literature. The Education of our Youth is of the last Importance to our future flourishing in vertue, in piety, in arts, in riches, in wisdom and reputation. What had we been at this day if it had not been for the pious care of our *Ancestors* in this matter? and what will our Posterity become if we degenerate from them in this point? What will the Government become? and what the Ministry? We shall have no *strong Rods* to bear rule, nor *able Ministers of the New Testaments*.
Nor

Nor will the world believe that we are the Sons of *New-England*, whose distinguishing Character among the Plantations has been *Sobriety, Modesty and Literature*. But we have found so much the Benefit of Learning that I will not give my self leave to doubt of your faithful care for it. So let your Love abound in knowledge and in all judgment.

5. THE present Necessity and strait loudly calls upon you to shew your regard to the Public in consulting the *flourishing of Trade*, to find out a just Medium of Exchange, to redress the miserable fall of Money, & the extravagant prices of all the necessaries of life in proportion thereunto; to give a better reputation to the *Province Bills*, and to prevent every man extorting upon his Nei'bour in raising the prices of his own Ware; which like a great many little runs of water unite at last in one mighty overflowing stream, and sweep away as a flood the small Salaries you allow your poor *Ministers & School-masters*; and not them only but all the faithful and honourable Servants of the Public in the State likewise; while what we call a *hundred Pound* is really but as *seventy*, if so much; and in effect proves the same injury to the Receiver as the *unjust Stewards* treachery did to his lord; who when he ask'd the debtor, How much owest thou unto my lord, and he said, an hundred measures of oyl; he said unto him, take thy bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.

I know well that the *Public* are very Innocent of this wrong, which has been a great while growing

growing by degrees upon us, and I think has risen from the gross want of a Public Spirit in private persons; every one sacrificing the common good (and in the end his own and his Childrens welfare) to a little present gain. Every body foresaw what it would bring us so many years ago, and this day Sixteen years you were faithfully warn'd by a *venerable Servant of God* yet alive with us, and present before the Lord at this time, || that you would not go on to endanger the *Province* || *Dr. Increase Mather.* by sending all the Money in it away from a private narrow Self-seeking Spirit. And now I should not have presum'd to have gone into a particular of this nature before this *Honourable Audience*, if it had not been to bewail the lamentable want of a generous regard to the Public good in our *Trade and Merchandise*; and to drop a tear over an *impoverish'd Country* that has sold it self from a *private Spirit*; all men seeking their own only. And now this private Spirit grows manifestly upon us from year to year; every body raising the price of their own Commodity, and those the Necessaries of life more than the Superfluities; and every body acting by one common rule of Mutual Oppression, namely *to get what they can*, without any conscientious tender regards to the rule of Justice and Mercy, at least in the present distress. And I would in particular offer it to the Consideration of my People, Whether the poorer *Trades-men* among us are not too much oppressed in the payments that are now in use. They are

forc'd to take half in Goods when they need it not for their Families, and so are led to go above their degree in cloaths, and to take unnecessary furniture for their houses ; and what must be the End of this at long run but great damage, not to say ruine, to the Publick ?

TRULY I fear, unless it pleases God to rebuke this private Spirit among us, that in a little time the *oppression of our Poor* may come to be near as great as that of the *Jews*, whereof there was so great a cry made in our Context, whose sufferings *Nehemiah* did as well set himself to redress, as he did the Sabbath-breaking and impure mixtures. The *Poor* had run themselves in debt for corn that they might eat and live ; they had mortgag'd their lands, their vineyards and houses to buy bread ; they had borrow'd money for the Kings Tribute, to pay their taxes ; by which means they and their children were bro't into bondage, and it was no ways in their power to redeem themselves. When *Nehemiah* heard this his Anger was very great at the Oppressors. He rebuk'd 'em, he call'd a *General Assembly* to redress the wrong. He reason'd the case with 'em and convinc'd 'em by his Arguments. He press'd 'em to release their poor debtors, and never to exact again upon them in like manner. He got a promise of 'em, he made 'em swear it, and then he bound 'em by a Curse to keep their Oath ; He shook his lap and said, — So God shake out every man from his house and from his labour, that performeth not this promise ; even thus be
be

be shaken out and emptied :— And all the Congregation said Amen, and praised the Lord : And the People did according to this promise.

O how they lov'd and honour'd the *Governour* for his Justice, impartiality, compassion and severity. They were some of the Nobles and Rulers that were in the fault, but he fear'd not to rebuke 'em for it ; which they themselves admir'd him for, while the poor were even ready to worship him, we may think. Both rich and poor joyn'd in praising God for such a *Governour*.

SUCH let our *Honourable Rulers* be exhorted from God to approve themselves unto this People ; and they shall be like *Nehemiab* the repairers of the breach, the restorers of paths to dwell in ; And like the venerable *Mordecai*, who knew no Interest of his own, nor fear'd any danger to himself, in the cause of his God and his Country-men, *You shall be accepted of the Multitude of your Brethren, seeking the wealth of your People, and speaking peace to all your seed, Esth. 10. 3.*

BUT before I finish this *Address* unto our Rulers, let me be permitted to leave with them a single Rule or *Caution*, and a double *Motive*.

THE Rule or *Caution* which I would commend to you in the fear of God is this, *That you take heed and beware of Covetousness ; that you be Men fearing God and hating Avarice.* This is the *Character* which the *Holy Ghost* has given of

a just and upright *Ruler*: for whatever a man's Accomplishments may be, if Covetousness bear rule in him, that man is not fit to bear rule over others. For a Gift blinds the eyes of the wise, and he that will take *bribes* can never be safe himself, nor any under him. It sinks a brave Soul into all that's mean and base, and betrays a man insensibly into the most unjust actions. I know that some of the *noblest Heroes & Patriots* that the English Nation has ever had, were a few years ago branded and blasted as persons of a sordid covetous Spirit: I suppose because they were not such men of leisure and luxury, vain-glory and extravagance as some others; who tho' they had hearts big eno' to spend for their own fame, yet had not heads strong eno' to think day and night for the Public good. But I have never been able to believe *those great Ser-vants of the Public* any more capable of injustice and bribery, than if I had heard want of courage and council imputed to 'em. It was the vile slander of those that envy'd their merit, and have since betray'd Europe. And I desire to thank God that I stand to day in the presence of a RULER, and *Rulers* who I believe heartily approve all that I can say in detestation of this ugly Vice of *bribery*. Particularly I do truly believe, that *Your EXCELLENCY* desires the Public weal of this People in all respects, and that as much is in your power so you are desirous to improve all your Interest at Home in defence of our *Charter Privileges*, and *those* secured to us by many happy subsequent Laws. And this

this Confidence in Your Excellency ought to en-
dear you to us, and must needs oblige us unto
all that Gratitude, Reverence and dutiful affecti-
on, which may ever make you easy and happy in
your Government. We trust that as you have
receiv'd the Congregation, the Government of this
great Province, so that you *will fudge Uprightly*.
It is a People worthy of your affectionate and
tender care ; for after all our poverty, and our
weaknesses and faults, we are a considerable In-
terest of the Kings Majesty, nor has He a more
dutiful and loyal People ; and it is a People of
God committed to you by the gracious Gover-
ning Providence of Heaven.

AND now that I have presum'd to name the
KING, how can I better illustrate the Subject
I am upon, or what like powerful and accepta-
ble *Argument* can I set before your Excellency and
his Majesty's Council, the Honourable House of
Representatives and all his Leige People, as his own
Illustrious Example, and generous extensive will
for the Good of his Kingdoms, and of all Man-
kind. This largeness of heart like the sand upon the
Sea-shore is the singular gift of Heaven, first to
a Prince himself and then to his People. And
blessed be the LORD our GOD who has delighted
in the Person of our rightful King GEORGE, to
set him on the British Throne ; and because the
LORD had a favour yet to us therefore made He
Him King to do judgment and justice. Now Regis
ad Exemplum : Let us imitate the best of Kings
and love our Country, and lay our selves out to
serve

J. J. P.

serve it. What vile degenerate heart is there that will not feel the Influence ! — And yet I have before nam'd an infinitely greater Example, scil. that of the *Great and Good GOD* by Whom he reigns, and of whom in his gracious and just Administration He is (by His grace) so bright an Image. *I have said ye are Gods, — then be Good to your People.*

MOREOVER, This day of our yearly Solemnity happily falling on the *Anniversary of the Birth of the KINGS most Excellent Majesty*, as it must needs add to the Public Joy, so let it make us Pray the more fervently for the long life and happy Reign of the King, and the best Blessings of Heaven upon the Head and Heart of their *Royal Highnesses the PRINCE and PRINCES of Wales*, and their *Illustrious ISSUE* ; that in long Successions they may ever reign in the hearts of all that have at heart the Interests of Justice and Piety, the Protestant Religion and the Liberties of *Britain* ; and be still unto such thro' the latest Posterity, as the KING is to us, *like the Light of the Morning and as the breath of our Nostrils.*

I have but one *Motive* more to urge you with, *my Honoured Fathers*, and it is a very *Melancholly* one, the mention whereof should be very affecting to us this day. It is this, *Your time of Public Action for the Service of God, your King and Country is very short.* We seldom come much into Public Service and influence, till we are descending

scending from the Hill of life to our graves. You must be working therefore the works of him that sends you while it is day, the night cometh. You have awfully seen this *dark year* that you must die like other men. No less than *four of His Majesty's Council* have we bury'd in this Town since the last *Election*, and I hear of no less than *ten of the House of Representatives* deas'd this last Winter, besides *a Generation of pious useful Men* thro' the Province, and mostly *Aged* persons, a great part of our glory and defence. It becomes me in this *Audience* and on this *Occasion* again to bewail those breaches on the Public, and to drop a fresh tear over the graves of so many worthy persons lately taken from our heads. And while we rise up and bless their Memory, let men in Public place hear the Voice of God more immediately directed unto them, and remember the Account they must shortly give every one of himself to God.

YOUR WINTHROP, and your HUTCHINSONS were sincere & hearty lovers of this People, & prov'd themselves so in the *Evil times* as well as the Good which have pass'd over us. And the Name of BELCHER ought also to be endear'd to us in all future times, for that one generous *Order* which he sent to his Son in *London*, when a black cloud was gathering over us which threaten'd our *Charter*. — “ I am just going off
“ the Stage (said he in his *Letter*) and may not
“ live to see the distressing Inconveniences of
“ such a loss ; yet I can't but be in pain for my
“ Country

“Country and People, whose prosperity has
 “been always dear to me. — I do therefore
 “with all tender Concern for the good of this
 “People recommend it to you that you improve
 “all the Interest you can possibly make to secure
 “our Charter privileges. Upon mature delibe-
 “ration my mind and desire is, that if there be
 “any rational prospect to preserve these Privi-
 “leges, you spare no Money to effect it. — It
 “matters little how your Endeavours may be
 “entertain’d by men, I am well satisfy’d you
 “will do what is pleasing to heaven. And if
 “Providence should honour you to be an In-
 “strument to lengthen out the Tranquillity of
 “this People, you will upon a just reflection
 “never repent it. And whatever the event
 “may be, I shall lay down my head in the
 “Grave in greater peace, under this sense that
 “I and mine have labour’d to our utmost in
 “this critical Juncture to serve the prosperity of
 “our Country.

THUS that *Letter*: And to it we very much
 owe the satisfactions we enjoy to day. I
 esteem the mention I have made of it the least
 piece of Gratitude and Justice due from me, as
 a lover of my Country; and if by it I may pro-
 voke to Emulation You that are my flesh; I
 mean all the Sons of *New-England*.

AND now to enforce all that I have said, I
 come to the third and last part of my Text,
 which is,

III. AN Assurance from GOD unto you, that *He will think upon you for good according to all that any of you have done or shall do for this People.* You may humbly look over it all, and then look up to Heaven with a lowly satisfaction, and say—*think upon me my GOD for Good.* God is not unrighteous to forget your work & labour of love. Act for his glory, in his fear, by his word, seek his conduct, regard his Judgment and depend on his reward.

HE will think upon you and *furnish* you for Service, while you think of Him and ask wisdom of him. He'll think upon you and *accept* your goodwill to his Name & People. He'll think upon you and *direct* an honest heart into proper and suitable measures ; for the way of man is not in himself. He'll think upon you & *protect* and *prosper* you, while you commit the keeping of your Soul to him in well-doing. As *Jehoshaphat* said to his *Judges*, Deal courageously & the Lord shall be with the good. He'll think upon you and *bless* you it may be in *temporals*, as he did *Solomon, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah* and others ; with riches and worldly goods, with reputation and esteem, honour and fame ; the love of them that are good and the ill word only of the vile and wicked ; besides the *Recompence* which is sure & certain in the *Resurrection* of the Just. Wherefore as *Azariah* said to *Asa* in a mighty Audience, — *Be strong and let not your hands be weak, for your Work shall be rewarded,* 2 Chron. 15. 7.

IN a word, Think you as you ought of God and the Public, and God will think of you *tho' men forget and neglect you*, or *tho' they may censure and reproach you*, injure and abuse you. If worn out with *Age* you prudently withdraw yourselves, and receive an honourable *Quietus*, or if you are laid by before in displeasure or with flight, yet God will be with you in your easy recess. But above all *when you come to die*, and take the final leave (as in a little time you must) whether of a grateful or an ungrateful world; then God will think upon you, and the Conscience of a well spent life, a faithful Stewardship, shall brighten your last hours it may be, and be a blessed Earnest of the Joy of the Lord.

AND now,

1. LET this be a comfortable and encouraging Word to all such as love & serve their Country. Let the blessing of God ever come on that *Man*! may the Great GOD ever think upon him for good! and let all the People say, *Amen*. Let such a one know that however low or ill he may think of himself, yet God thinks well of him. Whether you ever appear a Servant of the Public, or if it be never known to men that you serv'd it, yet God knows and notices it. Be you Young and entering the world with good and generous desires to do good in it; Go in this thy might, — *the Lord is with thee thou worthy Man*! Or has God already put honour upon you, and call'd you forth upon the Public Stage; see to it that you serve your Generation according to the will of God; *do worthily in Ephratah, & be famous in*

in Bethlehem. Or be you quitting the Stage of action under the decays of age, God will still think upon you *in the time of old age,* & not forsake you *when your strength faileth.*

LET me present before you the Record of the Consolation enjoy'd by *three* brave & pious Men, the *one* laid by by Men, the *second* thrown by by Providence, and the *last* call'd to die suddenly after a life of Public Service to the *Israel* of God.

THE first was *Samuel*, whom the Lord called when but a child, and continued at the head of *Israel* unto old age; but when the People grew weary of him, and God bid him acquiesce and lay down, he did it gloriously after an unspotted Administration. He presented himself in a vast Assembly of *Israel*, and dar'd to say to 'em, *I am now old and gray-headed and my Sons are with you; and I have walked before you from my Childhood unto this day; Behold here I am, witness against me before the Lord and before his Anointed; Whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us; neither hast thou taken ought of any mans hand. And he said unto them, The Lord is witness, and his Anointed is witness this day, that ye have not found ought in my hand.*

THE second was *Job*, that perfect and upright man, who refresh'd himself in his ashes & boils when Providence seem'd to have thrown him by as a broken vessel; for his Righteousness he held fast and would not let it go; and his heart did not

reproach him within, tho' his ulcers were nauseous and painful without. He remember'd how he was wont to go out to the Gate, and when he prepared his seat in the street ; how when the ear heard him it blessed him, and when the eye saw him it bare witness to him ; how he delivered the poor that cryed and the fatherless, and how he brake the jaws of the wicked ; and he appeals to God if his step had turned out of the way, and his heart walk'd after his eyes, or any blot had cleaved to his hand. Thus his witness was in Heaven, and his record was on high.

THE third was Hezekiah that great and good King of Judah, who being sick unto death receiv'd a message from God to set his house in order ; upon which he was able to look up to God and say— *Remember now O Lord I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.* A mighty Prayer for a dying King ! happy the Ruler that can Pray thus in his last hours ! in such peace and comfort we have seen some of our faithful Rulers lately expire. And may the Consolations of God abound to all that survive in their Spirit.

2. WILL God think of Public Spirited Persons for good ? *then let it be a Rule and law to us to do so too.* It is but Justice and Gratitude in a People to remember and reward the Public Services & Benefits done them by any. Never let our Benefactors be forgotten by us. That Country little deserves any that is not careful and just to acknowledge and honour 'em. Who will think
upon

upon that People for good, who do not gratefully think on them that do 'em great and manifest kindnesse? Nay will God think upon 'em, to raise 'em up more friends?

THE *Rulers* of a People are the Judges of benefits or injuries done to the Public; and 'tis a matter wherein they ought to set themselves to judge calmly and impartially. And I am bold to say, they are not Public Spirited if they do it not. And if they judge in their consciences that great Good has been done to their Country by any Person or Persons, the Public thanks and regards (as the matter may require) are due to such Persons, be they of *our selves* or be they *Strangers*, by the strictest rules of honour and honesty, as well as wisdom and policy. This is an eternal Principle of truth, and rule of righteousness.

WHEREFORE let this People ever think of them for good who are honour'd of God to do 'em good. Be they *dead*? let their Names live with us: let them be had in everlasting remembrance: Do they yet *remain* with us? let us always think of 'em with love and honour, let us bless and pray for 'em, (*May they live and not die, and let not their Names be few*) and if need be let us stand by and defend 'em; accounting 'em among *the Good Men for whom one would even dare to die.*

BUT God forbid among us that base and hellish spirit, which we our selves have known in other Places wiser & greater than we, whereby the best *Friends* and *Servants* of the Public
have

have been by some factiously and maliciously defam'd, bely'd, revil'd ; and the vile slanders as easily taken up & weakly given into by others ; to the ruine of the Public, & to the grief & shame of good men that love it. Such was the guilt and wretchedness of *Israel* in the day of *Abimelech*, and the *Moral of Jothams fable* was to reprove and reproach the base ingratitude. Mind how he introduces it, — *Hearken to me ye men of Shechem that God may hearken to you!* — and how he closes it, — *Now therefore if ye have done truly and sincerely, if ye have dealt well with Jerubbaal and his house, and have done unto him according to the deserving of his hands* — . But was this only *Jothams* private resentment ? No, the Ingratitude was first to Heaven which had raised up *Gideon* for them, and the *Holy Ghost* speaks of it with indignation, *Judges 8. 34, 35. And the children of Israel remember'd not the Lord their God who had deliver'd 'em, neither shewed they kindness to the house of Gideon, according to all the Goodness which he had shewn to Israel.* — But far be any thing like this from this People.

ONCE more,

3. IF God will think of Public Spirited Persons for good ? then how do you think he will remember them for evil that hurt and injure his People ? and what a melancholly reflection does our Text lead them into, who are careless of doing anything for its good ?

WHAT is there for God to think upon, done by too many in the places and with the talents assigned them ? Go *wicked and slothful Servant,*
carry

carry thy Lord his Money, and tell him thou hast hid it in the earth, but that he has his own again, tho' without use or improvement: but tremble to think what you will hear from him again, *Take the unprofitable wretch away, and cast him into utter darkness.*

BUT the hurtful and injurious to his People, God will remember them to judge 'em: as *Nehemiah* imprecated against spiteful *Tobiah* & false *Samballat*, *Neh. 6. 14. My God think thou upon them according to their works, and on the rest that would have put me in fear.* These rest were from among themselves, baser to this good man than his *Samaritan* foes; for there were many in *Judah* sworn to *Tobiah*, (a thing most horrible to hear) and of them some *Prophets* and *Nobles* treacherously corresponded with him by Letters; Men that sily spake well of him to *Nehemiah*, and who as basely betray'd him to *Tobiah*. (See *Chap. 6. 17, 18, 19.*) Thus they vexed their good *Governour*, trying to dispirit him & weary him out. All their tho'ts were against him for evil, but his God tho't upon him.

IF any that hear me this day bear an ill will against this People, let me cordially advise 'em to forbear, and to fear to injure 'em; for God sees mischief and spite to requite it with his hand; he remember'd the children of *Edom*, their insult and cruelty in the day of *Jerusalem*. And we know the times when he suffer'd no man to do them wrong, yea he reprov'd Kings for their sake; and they that touched 'em touched the apple of his eye.

BUT

BUT is is time that I draw to a Close, and from all that has been said *let us be earnest, entreated, perswaded, exhorted, admonished to love the Religion and Liberties of our Country, and live as much as we can in our respective places to the glory of God and the benefit of Mankind.* Let us disdain to live useless, desire to be significant, and yet preserve humility and modesty which ever adorns them that excel. Let integrity and uprightness preserve us, and commend us to the favour of God. Let it content us to do good and not be seen by men, and look for our reward in the unseen glory honour and Immortality. Finally, let us refresh our selves with the frequent meditation of the glorious Rest into which our Fathers are enter'd, who with a pious zeal ventur'd and spent their lives and their estates to subdue this Wilderness for God, and laid the foundation of this our Zion thro' unknown difficulties, hardships and hazards. Let us recount to our Children the worthy deeds *they* did, and all the wonderful works God did for them : in what Spirit, to what end, in what manner, with what views they acted ; much the same with those which acted *Nehemiah*, on whose holy mind *the pure laws and worship of God lay uppermost* : And then let us contemplate how God own'd, protected and prosper'd 'em, how he drove out the heathen and planted 'em, how they got the Land by his arm and the light of his Countenance ; and so relying on the same grace and presence of God with us, let us tread in their steps and be animated with their Spirit, till we also are gathered to them in peace and honour.

AND now blessed be the Lord that hath given rest unto his People. — The Lord our God be with us as he was with our Fathers, let him not leave us nor forsake us. — Let your heart therefore be perfect with the Lord your God, to walk in his Statutes and to keep his Commandments. — And the Lord maintain the Cause of his People at all times, as the matter shall require.

F I N I S.