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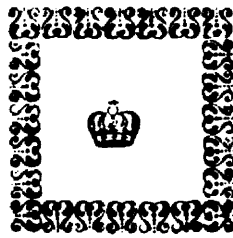
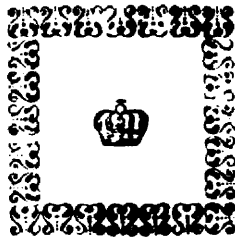
O R,

Weekly Essays.

O N

Sundry Important S U B J E C T S.

More particularly adapted to the PROVINCE of NEW-YORK.



Ne quid falsi dicere audeat, ne quid veri non audeat.
CICERO.

N E W - Y O R K :

Printed (until tyrannically suppressed) in MDCCLIII.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

THE Reader will find many typographical Errors in the ensuing Preface, which were not amended pursuant to the Author's Corrections of the Press:---For which, the Necessity to which he was reduced, by the Arts and Influence of his Adversaries, by applying to the most inartificial of the Occupation, will, he hopes, be a sufficient Atonement.

I. R.

THE PREFACE.

CONSCIOUS of the most disinterested views, and animated with the laudable motive of serving his country, a Writer unacquainted with the ingratitude of mankind, would have flattered himself that at least his design, however unskillfully executed, would have met with universal applause. But vain and delusive are all such expectations. Inflexibly attached to their idol opinions, the vulgar are alarm'd at the remotest attempt to expose their chimerical Notions; and wholly swayed by an inordinate confidence in their leaders are impatient of desires, unfriendly to their repose and dissipating their golden visions. Knowledge, 'tis true, has charms divine, and unspeakably amiable. But from the dreary vale of ignorance, to the summit of wisdom, rugged, tedious and intricate is the passage. To those who are wont to take things upon trust, thought and reflexion are painful and laborious. The bare apprehension of being found in the wrong, continues the Lethargy, and that perpetuates the error. Of this I was not insensible, when I undertook these *weekly reflections*; and therefore the popular combustion at my endeavours to rouse them from their stupidity, was to me no disappointment.

The bulk of mankind hath, moreover, been taught to revere the most superstitious trumpery, as matters of eternal moment; and to substitute a number of idle fantastic ceremonies, in the room of substantial virtue, and the immutable duties of morality. Those corporeal and mechanical operations, having in process of time, acquired the reputation of religion, whoever prints his pen against the former, is supposed to aim at extirpating the latter. This vulgar error is ever encouraged and riveted, by crafty and ambitious Ecclesiastics; who using the words *Clergy* and *Religion*, as terms synonymous, never fail to raise a clamour against the man, who presumes to detect the fallacy, or disclose their iniquities. Impious and sacrilegious wretch, who with unhallowed hands ravishes from the devout believer, his principal consolation and support! What an hostile direction of his favourite idol! How unwelcome the news, that all his hopes are delusive, and the basis of his joy a bubble! How disgustful the information, that the Deity insists on having the heart; and is more delighted with the observance of one precept, than the celebration of twenty festivals! Whoever therefore hopes to combat vulgar opinions without some degree of vulgar uproar, might as well expect to find devotion in an atheist, or a whole Corporation without a single sycophant.

The prejudices of education are next to insuperable; and a custom once prevalent, is seldom examined or discarded. To the generality of mankind, we may apply the observation of *SEXTUS EMERICUS*, *They follow the usual ways of life without thought or reflection*: The greatest absurdities require by length of time a venerable deference; and the most ridiculous customs assume the semblance of natural reason. 'Tis manifest, says *AGATHIAS*, *that whatever law or institution hath obtained thro' a long course of time, the people will certainly cry it up for most excellent and equitable; and if any thing be attempted contrary to it, this they reject as ridiculous, and unworthy of all credit and allowance*. Nor less just is the remark of *EURIPIDES*, *that the traditions which are received from our parents, and which are grown up with us, no reason can confute, no strength of wisdom over-rule*. Let but a Nurse or a priest implant the seeds of superstition in a tender mind, and 'tis great odds, but they take root beyond the power of the wisest Philosopher to eradicate. 'Tis in reality so common for men, inured to an opinion from their infancy, to retain it to their dying hour without any examination; that to find a person of an ingenuous temper, and open to conviction, is one of the rarest rarities in the world. On the experience of this truth, was founded that excellent remark of *TULLY*. *Some persons says he, are tied and restrained to their notions, before they are capable of judging what is best; and afterwards in the weakest part of their age, either following the opinions of some friends or captivated with the speech of the first master they have heard, they give their verdicts on points which they do not in the least understand, and being*
carried

carried with the violence, as it were, of a tempest, to some particular doctrine or tenet, they treat of it as if they were hugging a Rock to save their lives. The same illustrious Philosopher adds a little after, I know not how it comes to pass that most men had rather continue in an error, and quarrel and fight in defence of an opinion which they have once embrac'd, than to examine without obstinacy or partiality, what is deliver'd with argument on all sides. Cic. Part. Quest. Lib. IV, Ch. III.

SUCH is the case with dignified persons, that the elevation of their rank, necessarily subjects them to publick observation and remark. Besides the envy natural to mankind, which induces them to watch their superiors with an eye of censure, the interest which every individual has in the conduct of men in office, engages the whole community to survey their actions with the most jealous scrutiny. Thus the exalted criminal, even tho' his person be secured from the just revenge of an injured people, must unavoidably feel that remorse to which every man, who has the least sense of honour, is exposed, from a consideration of his being obnoxious to public annihilation, as well as public abhorrence. Nor is even the bright dignitary exempt from the most odious imputations in the exercise of his office. While he is subject to the prejudices of his observers, or his own unavoidable imperfections, he must in a great measure (bating the upbraidings of conscience) share the same fate with the Villain in Authority. For as envy on the one hand, is always ready to charge him with imaginary faults, so on the other, his most inevitable lapses are, thro' the necessities of society, too often converted into imputable transgressions. Whence both the one and the other, must naturally tremble at the appearance of a writer, independent in his spirit and free in his disquisitions. And to this cause may be ascribed the discontentance, my papers have met with from some persons of eminence.

FAR from inconsiderable is the number of those, whose influence is founded on the stupidity of their admirers. The duration of their importance like it's commencement demands implicit faith, and ready acquiescence. To think for one's self, is striking at the root of their superiority; and endangering a dominion, acquired by imperious distate and universal submission. The object therefore of furious malediction be the insolent author, whose writings tend to abridge their authority, by promoting liberty of thought, and an uncontracted enquiry.

BUT notwithstanding, my well meant labours have, by the rage of party, - been most tyrannically suppressed, and even my own Printer, both deterred and allured from publishing unpalatable truths, I doubt not that when the storms of political rage are overblown, and the heat of bigots subsided, the following sheets will appear a monument, of my supreme affection for my country.

THE treatment I have met with from, my Printer, is so singular as was perhaps never experienc'd by any author whatever. That the reader may judge for himself, I shall relate the matter with the utmost plainness and simplicity: About two Months before he dropt the *Reflector*, I heard it confidently asserted by some gentlemen of figure, that the paper would not continue beyond the year, and as they at the same time owned they thought the author capable of prosecuting it for any time, I suspected their intentions of using foul play with his Printer. Upon this I apply'd to Parker, and acquainted him with what I had heard: He declared there was no foundation from any thing he had ever said, for such an insinuation or my apprehensions; and promised to proceed in the publication, at least till the first day of June next. I replied that in case it proved prejudicial to him, I should not insist on his printing it after that time; and in case he should sustain any considerable disadvantage by continuing it, I was willing he should desert sooner, provided he gave me timely notice, that I might prepare for the conclusion. For this he gave me his word. Upon examining the proof of the last *Reflector* I found at the end of it, an advertisement of the Printer's, signifying that the paper had now been carried on for a year; and that if any of the subscribers were inclined to prolong their subscriptions, they must pay off their arrears and subscribe anew: As no subscriber had engaged for any determinate period of time, this notification seem'd only calculated to remind those, who had threatned to withdraw their subscriptions at the end of the year, that now was their time. I therefore obliterated the advertisement, and the Paper appeared without it. Notwithstanding which I was repeatedly told that the Boy who carried about the *Reflector*, had demanded the subscription money, declaring they were to expect no more. On the Monday following I called upon the Printer, and expostulated on his ungenerous conduct: At first he denied, but afterwards acknowledged his promise; and that he had been threatned with the loss of the public business if

(3) P R E F A C E.

he continued the publication of my papers. Tho' this was no excuse for his astonishing deportment, it shewed that some of those who ought to be the guardians of our liberties, were ready to become the authors of our vassalage, when ever a spirit of freedom interferred with their politics. But the *Printer's* neglect of giving me notice, admits of no possible palliation especially as he had been resolved to discontinue the printing of the *Reflector*, at least a month before he finally drops it.

SUCH insidious and indirect practices to suppress the truth and prevent animadversion, are a melancholly omen of the declension of our public spirit, and a most flagitious encroachment on the rights of a people, boasting of their liberties, and exulting in the privilege of appealing to the public. In short to such a latitude have they carried their consummate effrontery, that, with a little variation, I may adopt the memorable account given by Tacitus of the pestilent tyrants of his time. "Mighty surely was the testimony which we gave of our patience; and as our Fore-fathers had beheld the utmost consummation of liberty, so did we the beginnings of bondage, since thro' the dread of baneful inquisitors, we were bereft of the common privilege of publishing our sentiments. Nay, with our utterance, we had likewise lost our memory, had it been equally in our power to forget, as to be silent." *Quid* (a) *ultimum in libertate esset, ita nos quid in servitute, adempto per inquisitiones, & loquendi audiendique commercio, memoriam quoque ipsam cum voce perdidissimus, si tam in nostra potestate esset oblivisci, quam tacere.*

AS I have always professed a religion, consisting solely in the pure and unadulterated revelation of *Jesus*, I give my self no concern at the rage and resentment of those, who preach for *doctrines, the commandments of men*. If a person cannot be a Christian without believing, what the great author of christianity never thought proper to make a part of it, I am content to live without the character, choosing rather, with a set of sound principles and a good heart, to pass almost for any thing, in the opinion of our downright Priests and their enslaved devotees. Whence it is, that as on the one hand, the fiercest rancor of designing Ecclesiastics, and obdurate Bigots could never ruffle my temper, or disturb my repose; so on the other hand, I reaped an inward satisfaction, from their most zealous declamations, their most ardent and tremendous anathemas; inasmuch that their curses might truly be said to be converted into blessings. I was convinced that the craft could not but be sensible of the truths contained in my reflexions; as they were enforced by reasons sufficiently cogent: Nor upon any other principles, could I account for all their senseless noise and incoherent cant. For the prejudices of mankind are so prevalent and forcive in favour of the Clergy, as alone to be proof against the weight of common argument: And therefore when the cloth declares open war against an author, it generally argues something excellent, or, as they would term it, extremely dangerous in his writings. For this particular, I might perhaps be charged with self applause, had I not always contented my self with being known by no other name, than that of the *Reflector*. But even were that the case, no man is so perfect as to be absolutely free from imperfection. I have beyond dispute my prejudices, as well as other men, and perhaps some of them relate to my self as an author, and the clergy: But if I have, they are of their own raising. Besides, the more I over-rate my own judgment, the more I resemble themselves, who to use the Apostles words are, "presumptuous, self-willed, and speaking of things that they understand not." 2. Pet. 2.

RESPECTING my papers on the *venerable rite*, which it seems have given most offence, they establish the following immutable and eternal truths. That tho' the order is of *divine* institution, and therefore to be greatly revered; many of it's members are the most abandoned of the species, and therefore to be equally abhorred. That reverencing the function, as salutary to religion, and the civil interests of communities, we should hold in supreme indignation, every ecclesiastical Hypocrite, who beneath the outward habiliments of sanctity, conceals a heart, base, depraved and corrupted. That the best of the cloth, are like the rest of men, weak and fallible; and that hence we are under the most indefensible obligations, while the *Al-verbum sacerdotis*, that contradicts both, and bids defiance to common sense. That it ill befits those

(a) *Tac. Hist. Agricol.*

(4)
P R E F A C E.

those sanguinary and implacable disputants, who could never yet agree among themselves, to assume dogmatical dictatorial airs, and exact an implicit belief of positions, alike repugnant to reason and revelation. That an inordinate veneration for Priests as such, and exclusive of intrinsic merit, is baneful to vital piety, as tending to make the vulgar consider a blind devotion to the Clergy, as essential to, or at least a considerable part, of christianity : And that the plain and amiable religion of Christ, hath by the voluminous rubbish, and pious villainy of ecclesiastics been so mangled, disfigured and contaminated, that it is at present no where to be found pure and genuine, save only in the volume of inspiration itself. That *there* of consequence, it is to be studied with the most awful reverence, for the sublimity of it's doctrines, the lowliest adoration to our beneficent Creator for that ineffable gift, and the keenest abhorrence of the said villainy and rubbish, that are pretended to be founded upon it, tho' evidently subversive of, and more derogatory to, it's native excellence, than atheism itself.

ONE paper in particular on the subject of religion, administered to intemperate bigots extreme dislike. It was entitled, " primitive christianity short and intelligible ; modern christianity " voluminous and incomprehensible." This was preposterously construed as a latent attempt to discredit religion itself, by insinuating it to be the bare artifice of priests, and a confused jumble of discordant and contradictory principles. What some are pleased to call by the venerable name of religion, was, I confess intended to be thereby disgrac'd and ridiculed. My design was to stigmatize all religious systems composed by devout knaves, and impiously pretended to be revealed by the supreme wisdom, and contained in his sacred word. It was to shew the folly and wickedness, of confiding, with respect to so momentous an affair as religion, in a pack of consecrated impostors, who have divided christians into numberless sects and parties ; and to maintain their absurd and fantastic, their horrible, and superstitious, their unscriptural and diabolical systems, have deluged the world with blood and slaughter. It was more particularly intended to dissuade men, from an inordinate devotion to any religious hypothesis framed by the passion, the ignorance or craft of Monks and Visionaries, while they have an opportunity of consulting the Bible itself, and the promise of the holy spirit *to lead them into all truth*. My reason for enumerating so many of the divisions, into which christendom hath been unhappily multiplied, is therein explicitly declared as designed, " to teach us to be less attached to any party, and to seek for true religion " where alone it is to be found, in the pure and genuine oracles of truth and inspiration." And that there is but too great a necessity for recommending the salutary truths contained in that paper, and especially at the conclusion, will appear by the following collections from some of the most eminent writers among the clergy, the majority of whom, had they lived in popish countries, one would not have scrupled to pronounce arrant Papists.

DOWELL declares (a) that the rules of the heathen for interpreting their divinations, are the proper means for understanding the prophecies, which would have been for the most part unintelligible without them.

THAT (b) St. Paul borrowed his notions of predestination from the *Pharisees*, and they from the *Stoics*.

THAT (c) under the old testament, they made use of *one* among other bodily helps, to obtain the prophetic spirit.

THAT (d) the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles and Martyrs, and even the blessed Virgin herself, are now in slavery to the devil, and may be relieved by the prayers of the living from their disquietudes.

THAT (e) God is as it were the pupil of the clergy.

THAT (f) the principal end of the institution of the Lord's Supper is the preservation of the Priest's authority ; and that the reception of the elements, is no otherwise necessary to the remission of sin, than as it obliges us to depend upon the consent of the priest, who alone can give

(a) Dowell's 2d. letter about going into orders.

(b) Prolog. ad Stern p. 147.

(c) De Jure laic. sacerdot. p. 359.

(d) Epistolary discourse p. 257. 258.

(e) In his vindication of the defence of the deprived Bishops, lect. 34.

(f) Premonition to the epistolary discourse.

(5) P R E F A C E.

give us the elements, and who alone can oblige God to ratify in Heaven what is transacted by them on earth.

RAEVE maintains that (g) the divinity of the scripture can be proved by the testimony of lying spirits. For the sceptics are not to be convinc'd of religion upon speculative principles, but when a proof is brought from the confession of lying spirits, *this gains them*.

LESLAY is of opinion, that (h) a contradiction is the best proof of a divine revelation. ----- For if it be not a revelation, it must be an invention of some one or other; but if it be a contradiction, it could not be an invention, for who would invent a contradiction?

Dr. SACHEVARELL, (thro' whose sides the Church was so sorely wounded) affirms (i) that every one who wishes well to the Church, ought to hang out the bloody flag and banner of defiance, against the Dissenters.

That (k) we may retain blessed advocates in Heaven, to plead in our defence.

That (l) a Bishop ought to be honoured as God.

That (m) the Dissenters are hardened in their sins, beyond the power of grace and repentance.

That (n) the low church-men are trimming villains, who are not, and by their principles are obliged not to be, Christians.

HERCUL asserts that (o) the scriptures are so contrived by the will of God, that they should afford occasions for heresies.

That the church of Rome (p) is not only a true church; but that it has glaring advantages, which other churches want.

That (q) priests have a power not only to judge when we are clean; but to put away our uncleanneſs; as lords forgive debts of money, so they forgive debts of sin.

That (r) God was pleased artificially to conceal many things in the prophetic writings, least Satan coming to the knowledge of them, should endeavour to prevent or obstruct the fulfilling of them, or enervate the certainty or demonstration of them, after they were fulfilled.

That the priest is an advocate, mediator, negotiator, representative, vicegerent, mandatory interpellant between God and man, in their spiritual addresses to, and negotiations one with another; and that he stands and acts as mediator between both parties, as it were in the middle line of conversation, and in the very centre of communication between them.

Dr. SOUTH says, that (s) God seemed to have espoused to himself the Jews, a cross, odd, untoward sort of people, upon the very same account that SOCRATES espoused XANTIPPE, only for her extreme ill conditions, above all he could possibly find, or pick out of her sex.

That (t) the Bible is a mysterious, extraordinary, and of late, much studied book; and which perhaps, the more it is studied, the less it is understood, as generally finding a man cracked, or making him so.

That (u) the incarnation is as it were to cancel the essential distance of things, to remove the bounds of nature, to bring heaven and earth, and which is more, both ends of a contradiction together: Were it not to be adored as a mystery, it would be exploded as a contradiction.

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(g) *Regves dedication to his apology of the antient Fathers.*

(h) *Socinian controversy discussed*, Dial. 1. p. 24.

(i) *Political Union*, p. 23.

(k) *Faſt Sermon at Oxford, June, 1702.* p. 14.

(l) *ib.* 201.

(m) *Rights of the Church of England, in the Remarks*, p. 10.

(n) *Character of a low Church Man*, p. 21.

(o) *Apol. Vind. of the Church of England*, p. 67.

(p) *Preface to reformed Devotions.*

(q) *Two Treatises*, p. 118. 209.

(r) *Apol. Vind of the Church of England*, p. 63.

(s) *South's Sermons*, Vol. 1. p. 539.

(t) *Sermons*, Vol. 2d. p. 467.

(u) *South's Sermons*, Vol. 3d. p. 370.

(6)
P R E F A C E.

N^Y₂, maintains that (w) God, who judges what is good and best unerringly, does not always choose the best.

It is asserted by Dr. SWADDLIN, that (y) every tittle of the liturgy of the Church of England, was penned by the dictate of the *Holy-Ghost*; and that he should think himself accursed, if he was not able to maintain it.

Bishop BEVERIDGE, is of opinion that, (z) that is most true of God, which seems the most impossible to us.

That (a) he believes the doctrine of original sin, because he must of necessity believe it, whether he will or no, for if he could not believe it, he should have the more cause to believe it.

SPARROW, conceives that (b) heaven itself waits the sentence from the priest's mouth, and God himself follows the judgment of his servant, the priest.

Bishop WOMACK, (c) declares that the Lords and Commons, have as much share in making laws, as a beggar has in his alms. and

COLLIER affirms that (d) every priest is one of the principal ministers in God's kingdom, to preside in his worship, publish his laws, pass his pardons, and represent his person.

ACCORDING to the opinion of some Philologists, Man has no innate ideas; but his soul is a meer *Tabula rasa*, susceptible of any impressions: And indeed what horrible characters have not been stamped on this *Tabula rasa*! Our nurses, at the same time, impress our minds with the greatest horror, for *Raw-head and Bloody Bones*; and the most awful respect for his Reverence. Nor are the signatures of either, craked without considerable difficulty. It requires the exertion of our reason, to be convinced, that the existence of the goblin is only imaginary; and the extraordinary sanctity of the parson, for the most part, as fictitious. But reason being rather a faculty, which mankind have a power of employing, than a quality which all men actually exert, the *Priest* and the *Fantom*, keep possession of most minds, to the end of the chapter. Nor is the delusion, wholly owing to a total inactivity of the rational powers. For, when the understanding begins to expand, it is again misguided by a fresh train of levinical juggles. Our new-blown reason, is taught to see invisible qualities, and to read a compulsion that hath no existence. The parson is sent as the plenipotentiary of heaven; and the Deity is only to be propitiated, by humouring his Ambassador. This is more or less the devout fraud, of the Ecclesiastics of all nations; nor ought the pious Mr Hicks, to arrogate to himself, the honour of the invention; that "the priest is an advocate, mediator, interpreter, &c." It is a piece of divinity, that was known to all the priests on the globe, long enough before he was accoutred in his spiritual crape. Nay, it is not even an improvement upon an old invention; but vastly inferior to what their pagan *Reverences*, taught their flocks, concerning the man of God, some centuries ago. His predecessors of *Pegu*, were much better advocates for the Church. There, instead of *negociator*, &c. the priest is greater than his deity. When the people enter the temple, they salute the preacher first, and then the sun. Behold how this humble Levite, hath degraded the sacerdotal dignity!

THE *Phœnicians* were obliged to prostitute their daughters to *Venus*, before they gave them in marriage. In honour of their Idol *Dercetis*, they abstained from fish, which was nevertheless devour'd by the priests, with a truly orthodox stomach. One might from this infer, that the clergy were less devoted to *DERCETIS*, in order to be more ardent in their homage to *Venus*. I cannot however learn, that they fancied themselves *fasting*, while they gormandiz'd on fish. That seems to be a piece of Theology of a more modern contrivance.

THE empire of *China*, abounds with temples and monasteries, replenished with a multitude of idols, which their priests feed with the smoak of their cookery, while themselves gluttonize

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(w) *System of grace and freewill, a visitation Sermon.*

(y) *Sermon*, D. 147.

(z) *Beveridges thoughts*, p. 52.

(a) *ib.* 55.

(b) *Sermon of Absolution* p. 15.

(c) *Shore's way to a lasting settlement*, p. 24.

(d) *Colliers view of the immorality of the Stage.*

(7) P R E F A C E.

on the meat. Their clergy exercise such high dominion over their gods, that in virtue of their *divine right*, they whip and flog them, whenever they disappoint their expectations; that is to say, as often as his Reverence is detected in a fib, by the laity. But amidst all their religious trumpery, every man may be of what sect he pleases, without the least inconvenience from penal laws; which is more than can be said for some countries of greater humanity, and better breeding.

In divers parts of the *East Indies*, they have a wooden *Idol*, which must annually impregnate the most beautiful virgin, in order to preserve uninterrupted, the succession of the clergy. For this purpose, the damsel is conducted into the temple, which being darkened, one of the function, as *agent, factor and viceregent* for the *Idol*, performs the spiritual generation.

The people of *Bengal*, are liberal of their homage, in proportion to the deformity of the *Idol*. But in the priests perquisite for officiating at the marriage service, they out-match all the *Hickneys* in *Great Britain*. The ceremony is performed in standing water, in which the priest and the bridal pair hold a cow with her calf by the tail, and pour water upon them: Then he ties the cloaths of the bride and bridegroom together, and walking round the cow and calf, they are joined in the bands of holy wedlock. But mark the epilogue of the comedy: The parson has both the cow and calf, for his fee!

The inhabitants of *Basnagar* are taught to cut their flesh, and stab themselves in honour of their *Idol*. Their method of paying their vows is, by suffering the priests to lift them up by both shoulders, with sharp hooks, fastened to the yard of a mast. This ceremony is continued till the mast is discolour'd with blood; and then the worshipper being let down, is so hoisted to thank the *Idol*, for his most gracious and merciful acceptance of his sacrifice.

The *Japanese*, are told by their clergy, that there are various *Puraifses*, to which each particular god carries his own worshiper. So infatuated with this imaginary happiness, are the credulous laity, that multitudes drown themselves; and others break their necks, by precipitating themselves from high towers, to which they are stimulated by their spiritual overseers, to whom this holy suicide proves an immense treasure.

In such high esteem are the *Bramans*, or *Brachmans* of *Malubar*, that his Majesty will not converse with his new-married consort, till one of the chief *Bramans*, hath had the first night's lodging. Nor are his subjects less ambitious, of having the same ceremony performed upon their brides, by some holy fumbler of inferior rank. Surely was this operation a part of our modern systems, no Prime-minister need ever to be at a loss for a standing army.

THO the clergy in these parts, are by no means chargeable with broaching such shocking impieties, yet the necessity there was for a paper of spirit, and inculcating principles of liberty civil and religious, appeared in the most glaring colours, by the compositions of my antagonists. For in vain was it to object, against my handling the subjects I usually made choice of, that none amongst us maintained the positions I contended; while the public papers defended, or rather pretended to defend them, with reiterated fury. Nay, I must own, that at my first entering on my design, I did not myself imagine, we were so over run with superstition in religion, and servility in politics, as was afterwards manifested by the wretched performances of my opponents. I knew indeed that we abounded with bigotry, with rigid and incorrigible bigots. I was also sensible, that we had those pitiful animals, who bring themselves forward to cringing and abasement, imagine the human race created for beasts of burden; and a few divinely commissioned, to mount, to spur, to whip, and gallop them. But that these deluded creatures, were either so numerous, or so impudent, would to me have appeared incredible. Not long however had I continued my reflections, before I found them advancing desires, that would have puzzled *Spain* or *Portugal* to rival. For did I touch on the absurdity of the magistrate's interfering in matters of religion; and vindicate the unalienable rights of conscience; up started some furious papistical bigot, proclaiming the bondage of our minds, and lavishing his praises on persecution, and the necessity of enlightening the mind, by tormenting the body. Did I ridicule an indiscriminate reverence for the clergy, without a proper regard to personal merit; there instantly appeared a priest ridden scribbler, roaring for *Jura divina*, and insisting on the insupportable helliness of every blockhead in *Fluck*. Was I engaged in demolishing the horrid and impious desires of passive obedience and non-resistance, the public was told that mankind were born with yokes and fetters; and that the original equality and independence of the species, was a chimera in politics

(8)
P R E F A C E.

politics, and blasphemy in religion. Nor sooner did I endeavour to draw the lovely features of liberty, and the hideous deformity of vassalage, than some dirty slave or other plumed himself on retailing collections from the most stupid advocates for despotic rule, and the divine right of royal villainy. Nay to such incredible lengths did they carry their detestable tenets, as even to impeach the principles, upon which is founded the glorious and never-to-be-forgotten revolution. A revolution, to Britain, the source of infinite blessings, and a constitution never to be parallel'd. A revolution destructive of a arbitrary sway, and restoring expiring liberty to her pristine vigour & renown: A revolution, in fine, imparting life, health and joy to three kingdoms, drooping beneath the tyrannous rod of an infatuated monarch, trampling on law, and meditating the ruin of his people.

WHILE I was thus violently attacked in the *Mercury*, there appeared a paper in my vindication in the *New-York Gazette*, in answer to an arrogant lucubration of a reverend divine, by an author who subscribed himself *Philo-Reflector*. The piece was wrote with great spirit, and accordingly gave high offence. What rendered it peculiarly galling, was it's being founded on truth. The consequence was, the city appeared in an uproar, about the danger of this execrable writer; who stood convicted of the unpardonable crime of speaking the truth, and threatening destruction to priestly dominion and priestly imposture. In revenge for his blasphemous assertions, about twelve of the subscribers for the *Gazette* withdrew their subscriptions, and changed their Printer. A most unanswerable argument of *Philo's* heresy; and their neverfailing resource when ever reason was against them! The Printer being thus intimidated, refused the insertion of any thing in my favour; and thus for a season died the valiant *Philo*. As for the printer of the *Mercury*, his press had long before been inaccessible to me, or my friends. This generous author, to whom I am under the greatest obligations, was not however thus to be vanquished. A magnanimous mind may be overpowered, but cannot be subdued. Was he debarred a hearing in the weekly papers, he appeared in a pamphlet, intitled. 'The Craftsmen, a sermon from the Independent Whig, suitable to the peculiar malignity of the present day; with a preface exposing the artifices of our priests and craftsmen, by the author of a late paper, signed *Philo-Reflector*.'

As this nervous writer has so unanswerably defended me against the charges of infidelity, and with such masterly strokes, justified my reflections on the clergy, I cannot forbear in justice to him or my self, citing from his preface, the following animated extract, which is better than any thing I can deliver on the subject.

'As for his public antagonists (says he, speaking of the *Reflector*) I appeal to every man of a cool head and an honest heart, whether an author who from the subjects he chooses, and that invariable attachment to the prosperity of his country which shines thro' all his papers, hath given the most incontestible proofs of his devotion to the public, and veneration for religion, deserves those reiterated calumnies that are thrown out, or rather vomited against him. Calumnies for which there is not the least reason from any of his weekly Reflections. Aspersions compounded of falsehood and malice: Falsehood shameless, and incapable of blushing: Malice insatiate, and never to be glutted:--- And yet what arts, what insinuations, what preachments, what orthodox cursings, what pious maledictions, what bribing of printers, and what menaces with delivering him to the secular arm, in order to decry his writings, and render him odious to the people! One while he is an Atheist, then a Deist, then a Presbyterian, sometimes altogether, and then again, nothing at all. At the same time, all this contradictory babbling, and ghostly galconading, is disguised under a tender concern for religion, and to repel the baneful influence of his heretical positions. But if the christian religion is of divine authority, as I sincerely believe it to be, it wants not the arts of misrepresentation and obloquy to support and defend it. In dispensing his benevolent revelation, the Almighty hath not left himself without witness. The truth of Christ's mission is evinc'd by the most irrefragable proofs, the most illustrious attestations: It is demonstrated by prophecy and miracle, and sealed with the blood of those, who bore testimony to the resurrection of *Jesus*. What reason then, have those vociferous priests and their bigotted abettors, for all their consternation and alarm! Whence proceeds their asperity and rancour, but from a consciousness, that some of their pretensions are not warranted by the venerable dispensation, beneath which, they would impiously shield and shelter them! Indeed, the christian religion can never be endangered: We have the promise of unerring truth, that it shall continue to the end of the world, and that the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. But far different

(9)
P R E F A C E.

different is the case with priestianity : It is, as well it may be, in perpetual terror : How then must it tremble as soon as *common sense takes it by the collar* ! Hence the dread and timidity just commemorated. It is far otherwise with our holy religion. - Nor open attacks, nor secret machinations, (neither of which are chargeable on the Author I am vindicating) can shake it's immoveable and eternal basis. It hath the omnipotent, for it's author, and for it's foundation, a rock. Like all other truths, it brightens by examination, and derives new evidence from a free disquisition. Can reason startle at inquiry, or the word of God, fear the scrutiny of man ! It is a priestly forgery, which in all ages, hath endeavoured to represent religion and the craft inseparable, and to father all their villainous absurdities on Heaven. The gospel of *Jesus*, may bid defiance to all it's adversaries ; yea, even to carnal priests, it's most formidable, because it's most hypocritical adversaries. Deism hath done it notable service. When the arrogant claims, and dissolute lives of the clergy, had drove men into infidelity, infidelity attempted to disprove revelation ; and thereby extorted in it's defence, arguments nervous and insuperable. Dost a Deist write against Christianity, let the clergy, whose hire is worthy their labour, write back and confute him. If the gospel is incapable of a vindication, it deserves not to be believed ; if otherwise what hath it to fear ? But pains and penalties convince no man, or the Inquisition would be the most effectual proof. By that merciful dispensation, which was not given to destroy mens lives, but to save their Souls ; force and violence are disclaim'd, prohibited, abhorr'd. While religion has God for it's Author, it may safely defy the power of Earth and Hell : But priestcraft is utterly defenceless, save by lying and mobbing, sword and pistol : The former like the solid Oak, derides the storms of infidelity ; the latter like the quivering Reed, trembles at the most superficial investigation. Let therefore the clergy forbear their ungenerous slanders, against a writer, who not only believes, but vindicates christianity, and that too without fee or salary.'

HAD an Author of so fine a pen, met with free admission to any of the weekly papers, he had doubtless instructed the Province ; and put to flight, the confederate host of our *mercurial* vapourers. But as the faction who had constantly opposed me, made it their business to discourage him, he found it impossible to contend in private pamphlets, against a periodical paper, in which his adversaries every week circulated their jargon, at little or no expence.

Thus therefore stood the case at present : I could not answer the *Mercury* in the *Reflector*, without defeating the design of the latter, and transforming it into a paper, perfectly polemic. Nor indeed would the obscurity and barbarism of the dreamers in *GAIN*, have been any temptation to my entering the lists with them, except barely to confute their falsehoods, by which they imposed upon the ignorant, and in some measure, obstructed the influence of my speculations. The *New York Gazette* had been to me, and my well wishers, a *fountain sealed*, ever since the formidable appearance of *Philo Reflector*, a writer, save by tyrannic force, absolutely invincible. To his more *private Essays*, were opposed power and wealth, which discouraged his further progress in that way. Full scope therefore during this persecution, to the eloquent declaimers in *GAIN*. Embrace now, O ye advocates for superstition and thralldom ! Ye champions for gloomy impostors, and anointed banditti ! Embrace the favourable juncture, and lie without bounds, because ye can lie without refutation ! Slip not this golden season ; but slander, vilify, libel and stigmatize ! On the ruins of reason, erect the throne of ghostly domination, and to the abolition of christian charity traduce and malign the dissenters. Widely diffuse your pestilent principles, and triumph in your strength, for none can resist you ! They were not remiss in husbanding these halcyon days, of their empire over the Press. Their generous use of this advantage, shall be recounted in the sequel.

IN these calamitous circumstances there appeared a paper intitled the *Occasional Remembrancer*, set on foot to give my friends an opportunity of being heard. In this therefore I was determined to try my hand. As I knew one of the chief managers of the *Mercury* to be a Clergyman, I flattered my self that the sacredness of his function, would induce him to treat me with candour and humanity. Accordingly I wrote him a Letter, in the conclusion of which, I laid the foundation for a fair debate, and hoped that from the frankness of my declarations, a gentleman of his cloth would have engaged with temper, a person, who appeared so open to conviction, and so willing to embrace the truth whenever he was convinced of his error. The Letter was in these words.

A LETTER

(10)
P R E F A C E.

A LETTER to the Author of a Paper published in the New-York Mercury, No. 56. signed Z. &

Reverend S I R,

BEFORE I enter upon the more immediate consideration of your performance, I think myself obliged to thank you for acquainting the public of your being a Clergyman. I should take it extremely kind in all the gentlemen of the Cloth, who may hereafter honour me with their salutary instructions, would they in this particular, follow your useful example. For, it being impossible to distinguish my *clerical* from my *lay* antagonists, either by the piety or learning of their compositions, (both of which we might expect would shine with superior lustre in the writings of the former.) I might ignorantly be deficient in that respect which I should otherwise never fail to pay them. Besides, could I always be assured what came from the clergy, I should be apt to allow it some secret force and solidity, the non-appearance of which, I should be ready to impute to my own dulness of apprehension; whereas, when I find myself attacked by a *lay* brother, I am extremely apt to insist upon plain reason, before I alter my sentiments.

It must, however, be owned, Sir, that tho' you had not suggested yourself to be of the function, you have given us some strokes that would have rendered the matter too probable for a reasonable question. Your great zeal for *external religion*, and the *decoration of churches* (which you presumptuously stile *sacred edifices*, as if an attribute of the adorable deity could inhere in wood and stone) would have come with but an ill grace from a *layman*.

Your paper now before me was, it seems intended for a refutation of the *Independent Reflector*, No. 36 and 37, on the *absurdity of the civil Magistrate's interfering in matters of religion*. Whether you have in fact, confuted my arguments laid down in those papers, when you have not so much as mentioned one of them, must be submitted to the impartial public. But if you have been sparing of your reasonings, you have been exceeding copious in calumny and ill language. For proof of this I will cite your own words. "As to his sneers, malicious
" invectives, and scoffs, heretofore thrown out against the clergy, indiscriminately; although
" the public have been admonish'd that they were levelled at christianity itself, yet the animad-
" versions thereon, with a just severity, might seem to proceed with a less becoming grace from
" the clergy, than from gentlemen of the laity, who might have discerned the malevolence ex-
" tending to the disreputation and scandal of religion, which every good layman ought to resent;
" as he must esteem the institution of his blessed Redeemer, calculated and designed for purposes
" of the greatest importance, to the happiness of mankind; a subject too sacred for the Lampoons
" and scoffs of willing scriblers, &c."

As you speak of your antagonists at the close of the above passage in the plural number, and under the character of *willing scriblers*, I should not have thought myself concerned in the matter, had you not set out with a design of answering the *Independent Reflector*, who, I assure you, Sir, never conceived himself to consist of a *duality* of persons. But as you plainly intend me in your Introduction, I am apt to suppose that your great zeal for *external religion*, to which you are pleased to think me an enemy, has urged you in imagination, thus unmercifully to split me in *two*.

If you have not read my papers, Sir, you are really inexcusable for writing against them. If you have, you cannot be ignorant that this charge is absolutely groundless. I have been so far from throwing out *sneers and scoffs* against all the clergy of all denominations indiscriminately, that I have not only distinguished the good from the bad, or in other words, the clergy of *real piety*, from those whose religion is only *external*, and spoken of the former with as great honour, as of the latter with disgrace; but have moreover published a whole paper to prevent those very aspersions which tho' from time to time refuted, your reverence, hath here with singular confidence thought proper to resume. Nay, I challenge you, Sir, to produce one sentence out of all my writings, that will, agreeable to the rules of construction, and a proper regard to antecedents, support your calumnious accusation. Why the public has therefore been admonished they were levelled against Christianity itself, you and the rest of such *admonishers* can best account for. That "the institution of our blessed Redeemer is calculated and de-
" signed for purposes of the greatest importance to the happiness of mankind," I no more doubt

(11)
P R E F A C E.

doubt than I do my own existence. I esteem it the most inestimable blessing that Heaven ever bestowed on sinful men, and in proportion to my veneration for this sacred institution, is my abhorrence of priesthood, which has so villainously perverted and disfigured it. 'Tis you have been repeatedly told of your threadbare artifice of confounding the Gospel of the holy Jesus, with the arrogant claims, and sacrilegious superadditions of carnal priests; yet you still represent my detecting the latter as a design to undermine the former. A conduct this, beneath the character of one who ought to exhibit a superior degree of that charity so warmly recommended by Christ and his Apostles. A charity, not prompting men to expend their fortunes in the *decoration of Churches, and external religion*, but inspiring them with candour and ingenuity, and teaching them to put the most favourable construction on a person's words and actions. Of this charity I am sorry to see a gospel Minister so utterly destitute. For what reason have you, from any of my Reflections, for the above suggestion? And yet you either intended this passage, to persuade the public that I do not esteem the institution of our Redeemer so calculated and designed, or you inserted it without intending any thing by it. The latter I cannot well suppose, without disrespect to the venerable society whose missionary you are, and who cannot be presumed to keep in pay, a servant who writes without meaning. If you intended the former, it was incumbent on you to have cited passages from my papers, to support so malicious an insinuation. As I thus esteem the christian dispensation, a divine institution, so, as I have elsewhere said, am I equally convinced that the clergy are an order of men appointed by the blessed founder of our holy religion. Their commission is express to teach and baptize, and they have the promise of unerring Truth, that Christ will be with them in so doing to the end of the world. If I have asserted any thing, that in the opinion of men of candour and integrity is capable of a different interpretation, I am sorry I was not more cautious. I do therefore take this opportunity, in the most solemn manner to testify my belief of the divinity of the scriptures, and the divine institution of the Clergy; and if you, Sir, after this, shall insinuate the contrary, 'till you have reason for such insinuation from any subsequent expressions of mine, that will bear no other construction; I shall take the liberty, maugre your canonicals, to treat you as a wilful calumniator.

At the same time be pleased to remember, Sir, that in the above commission to the clergy, there is not a single syllable about fleecing the laity, or usurping temporal dominion.

That the institution of our blessed Redeemer is a subject too sacred for the lampoons and scoffs of wittling scribblers, I do as cheerfully agree with you, and shall always entertain a proper abhorrence of every Scribbler who makes it so. But this, again, I am at a loss to find the reason of your inserting in a paper against me, unless you intended by it to insinuate, that I had made it a subject for lampoons and scoffs. And if this was your design, you must again give me leave to charge you with wilful slander; and if you make any pretensions to good breeding, you cannot avoid either giving me satisfaction for the injury, by retracting the charge, or supporting it by quotations from the *Reflector*. Till either of which is done, you cannot escape being a second time detected for a calumniator.

Thus far, Sir, your paper, were your insinuations really founded in truth, hath not the least appearance of an argument, against what you set out with disproving; but would be equally pertinent on any other subject on which you had done me the honour to enter the lists with me. Whether the next passage draws nearer to the merits of the cause, will best appear by stating the controversy between us, and then producing your reasoning in your own words. The proposition which you oppose and I maintain in the *Reflector*, is the *absurdity of the Magistrate's interfering in matters of Religion*. The first argument you advance against me, runs thus. "But the numbers now before me, have opened the scene
" beyond all disguise, and plainly given the good people of this province to understand,
" that they are all alike insinuated, so far as they have a zealous concern for any thing what-
" soever of external religion, and think they promote their own and others welfare, by
" attending religious assemblies, contributing to the support of God's public worship, or
" ornament of those sacred edifices, which because set apart for the solemn rites of religion,
" for this relation to God, are justly esteemed his holy temples." Now, Sir, pray give me leave to ask you, whether, from the assertion of my having given plainly to understand, &c. a person who had not read the Numbers referred to, would not be led to think, that I had
actually

(12)
P R E F A C E.

actually said so? At least it would be thought I had plainly suggested as much: I must therefore insist, according to the laws of fair disputation, on your producing in your next, either the assertion or insinuation. Does my asserting, that the magistrate has no right to interfere in matters of religion, suppose that the people ought to have no religion, of their own chusing? Does it not plainly infer the contrary? Have I delivered a syllable about the people's being *infatuated*, or against their *promoting their own welfare*? Did I ever write about *external Religion*, which is a contradiction in terms? Have I not on the contrary, defined the Religion in which the magistrate has no right to interfere, to reside in the Heart? And has this any thing to do with the *decoration of holy edifices*?

TRULY, sir, when one considers your gross misrepresentations, he must acknowledge, that my treating you like a gentleman, is a convincing proof of my having more respect for your cloth, than for the person who wears it.

PRAY, do you imagine, that christianity requires for its support, the low artifices of obloquy and falshood? Is it not beneath the character of a christian, a philosopher, a gentleman, to revile instead of reason, and charge an adversary with what he never held?

You go on and say, "If external actions of this kind proceed from any sound opinions in religion, and are any ways serviceable to procure God's favour and blessing, or to improve the persons themselves in divine knowledge, faith and virtue, as the means of their greatest comfort in this world, and everlasting felicity in the world to come, it will be a direct refutation of my bold assertions," that *matters of religion relate to another world, and have nothing to do with the interest of the state, the first resides in the heart and consciences of men, and the latter in the outward peace and prosperity of the public*. Here, Sir, I admit your premises, but challenge you to prove your consequence. Your argument reduced to a syllogism, stands thus, external actions of this kind proceed from sound opinions in matters of religion, and are serviceable to procure God's favour and blessing, and to improve the persons themselves in divine knowledge, faith and virtue, as the means of their greatest comfort in this world, and everlasting felicity in the world to come,

T H E R E F O R E,

The magistrate has a right to interfere in matters of religion. The absurdity of this argument is demonstrable in a few words. For first the external actions which the magistrate is insisted upon to have a right to interfere in, are supposed to proceed from sound principles in religion, which no external interposition can insill. Secondly, it is not the magistrate's business to procure the felicity of his subjects in a future world, but only to consult their happiness in the present. And thirdly, the greatest part of all the magistrates in the world are infidels, and the promotion of infidelity, cannot procure the divine blessing. Pray, sir, how does it follow, that because external actions proceed from sound opinions in religion, and are any ways serviceable to procure God's favour and blessing, that therefore the magistrate has a right to obtrude it on the people? Is he appointed to improve his subjects in divine knowledge, faith and virtue; or to exercise the laws for their temporal wellbeing? Is the magistrate to direct the people how to procure the divine blessing, or are they to follow the dictates of their own conscience? Has a political ruler a commission to interpose in matters of religious speculation, which are only cognizable by the divine tribunal? Surely never was their more absurdity crowded in so small a compass!

INDUBED, was it possible for the magistrate to implant religion in the hearts of men, he should have my voice for so glorious an employment. But to expect that a magistrate can make any man conscientiously serve, praise, and adore the deity, and work in his soul a conformity to the divine will, in which true religion consists, is such nonsense as I never expected to hear from a christian clergyman:

I shall now beg leave to shew, that however your positions, in the paper under consideration, may tend to the advancement of priestcraft, and *external religion*, they do by unavoidable consequence, undermine the cause of christianity: And this I shall not do, after your reverend example by bare assertion, but by evident demonstration. For if the supreme magistrate hath a right to interfere in matters of religion, he has that right as supreme magistrate; and if so,
every

(13)
P R E F A C E.

every supreme magistrate has that right. The same right, therefore, which the *French King* has to establish christianity, or rather popery in *France*, the sultan has to establish *Alchamutanism* in *Turkey*; and the same right the sultan has to establish *Alchamutanism* in his empire, he has to abolish christianity in it, because the growth of christianity is inconsistent with the flourishing of *Alchamutanism*.

Again, if the magistrate has a right to establish any certain religion, and of consequence to punish all religions opposite to or destructive of the religion established, then were the apostles rightfully martyred, because they all taught a religion opposite to, and destructive of, the religion established; nor ought christianity upon this supposition to be ever propagated among infidels, because such propagation must unavoidably be wrong, as being opposite to what is right, to wit, the establishment of that religion where it is propagated, and to which it is repugnant. Nay, Sir, so noble a defender are you of the christian religion; that the consequences naturally flowing from your premises, justify the crucifixion of our Saviour, who taught a religion subversive of that established in the roman empire.

These, Sir, are genuine inferences from your assertions, and agreeable to these, you are obliged in *Turkey* to recognize the *Arabian Impostor* for the sent of God; in *China* to pay divine honours to *Confucius*; and in *Portugal* to worship Saints and Images. Nor perhaps, Sir would you, in *Rome* countries have any objection against embracing Popery, in as much as it is not only the Magistrate's religion, but has the additional advantage of being recommended by a vast number of *decorated Temples*, and all the pomp of *external religion*.

As I shall for the future have an opportunity to examine your charges against me, by the favour of the *Reverberator*, I should be glad, Sir, to enter with you into a previous stipulation to the following purpose. If you will soberly examine any of the positions in the *Independent Reflector*, with an apparent love for truth and religion, and only maintain the colour of an argument, I shall with the utmost respect embrace all your reasons, which I cannot clearly confute; and make a public recantation of every thing I have before advanced, and you have shown to be erroneous. And the like conduct I expect from you. Every proposition you urge, I shall allow its utmost force and energy; for to me it is perfectly indifferent what sentiments I entertain, after I am convinced of their truth. Whence I shall retract all my present principles, as fast as you prove them to be false; because, as nothing attaches me to them at present, but a persuasion of their verity, I shall as readily embrace their opposites, whenever I meet with preponderating evidence in their favour. But if your reverence shall again assert, that I have a design to bring the religion of Jesus Christ into contempt, without citing passages from the *Reflector*, to support the assertion, I shall beg leave to think you act beneath the dignity of your character, and shall scornfully despise and forgive you. While I am convinced of the absurdity of the Magistrate's interfering in matters of religion, I have an undoubted right to publish such my sentiments, as you, Sir, have an equal right to oppose them. But that I ought, therefore, to be charged with a design against christianity, I cannot reconcile to my notions of fair argumentation, or christian charity; especially as the consequences of my doctrines have a tendency directly the reverse, in as much as history and experience evince, that christianity has always flourished most where it had not the Magistrate on its side. You will not disbelieve me *reverend Sir*, when I declare it as my humble opinion, that christianity never has, nor ever will reap so much advantage from the Magistrate's interfering in religious matters, as it would from some of our spiritual overseers exhibiting as strong proofs of *internal piety*, and the *influence of the Spirit*, as they do of their zeal for the *decoration of Churches* and *external Religion*. That you in particular, Sir, may be an illustrious example of the former, is the wish that is wished you, by

Reverend S I R

Your Most Humble Servant,

The IND. REFLECTOR.

(14)
P R E F A C E.

His was a fair challenge, with all the genuine marks of an ear open to conviction. But so far was this canonical Author from accepting my offer; that he proceeded in his old way of confident assertion, and palpable falsehood, not only without answering; but without taking the least notice of the above Letter. Nor had I long an opportunity of expostulating on his unchristian conduct. For thro' the irresolution or corruption of the Printer and his various devices to embarrass the *Reverberator*, that paper was not continued beyond four Numbers.

Always supposing our selves as far from surpassing our neighbouring colonies, in piety as in knowledge, I should never have thought it necessary, in this province, to affect the espousing any religious party, in order to capacitate a man for a political Trimmer. A discovery of that kind, has however been made, by our professed connoisseurs in state intrigues. To cry aloud for the Church, is, of late, become a most finishing stroke in politics: Whence it happens, that many of our sagacious projectors, tho' they hold all christian denominations in equal contempt, find their profound system greatly improved, by throwing themselves, on all occasions, warm advocates for episcopacy, by this means promoting their interest, thro' a meer pretence of being Churchmen; and palming upon the ignorant, a feigned zeal in religious party, for true religion. So that while the clergy, with a sacred fervor, incessantly thundred out their anathemas against me, and delivered me over to satan, as unconvertible; my papers on the intended College rendered me equally obnoxious to some designing party politicians, who, tho' alike averse to the Clergy and Christianity, joined the general cry, and according to the mode, were ever ready to profess their zeal for the hierarchy, and damn the *Reflector*. Such palpable insincerity and tergiversation, could not but excite the mirth, as well as contempt, of observers. I have known Gentlemen, who, for many years before I appeared in Print, not only ridiculed the Clergy, but their very order, and even religion it self, and who carried their invectives beyond banter into seriousness and malevolence; and I have known the same Gentlemen, barely for the sake of strengthening the opposition to my Papers, contend and get drunk for Religion, profess the highest reverence for the sacred order of the priesthood, and not only testify their affection for the clergy in general; but at some times publicly commend those of the Cloth among us, whom, at other times, they have, in the frankest manner, vilified for blockheads and lampooned for knaves and scoundrels.

Risum tenetis Amici?

Nor can this conduct be accounted for, but upon their conviction that a reverence for men in holy orders, is by the vulgar, mistaken for real piety. It should not therefore seem strange, that our Politicians are, of late, so fond of being thought the bulwark of Episcopacy, and of revering its clergy, even tho' they care as little for the Church of England, and her priests, as for any other Church or ministry in the universe; or that they should endeavour to support her right to the superintendency of our future Accademy, upon the groundless supposition, of her establishment in this colony.

THE affair of the College, I considered as one of the most important matters, that ever fell under the consideration of our Legislature. It will either prove one of the greatest blessings, or an execrable source of the keenest and most complicated disasters. If it is constituted upon a foundation generous and catholic, there is nothing we can fall upon, that will spread more real felicity thro' the Province. But should it on the other hand, be made the tool of a faction, and an instrument in the hand of one sect, for the advancement of itself, and the oppression of the rest, what can we expect from the unbridled lust of bigotry and superstition, but either the deprivation or abridgment of our civil and religious liberties? Nor will our subjection and colony-relation to *Great Britain*, be a sufficient security against such unrighteous invasions, such horrible and multiplied calamities. We have indeed the highest reason to believe, that oppressions of this kind, would, at home, be blasted and discountenanced: But thither to transmit proper representations, is difficult, tedious and expensive. Inhuman persecutions have been prosecuted in the plantations, and prosecuted to astonishing lengths, before the wished-for redress could be obtained. I appeal to the bloody slaughter of the pretended Witches; and the cruel, the sanguinary severities against the Quakers in *New-England*.--- At present all protestant denominations amongst us, are secure in the enjoyment of their religious opinions. But should the government of the College, be surrendered

(15)
P R E F A C E.

to any tribe of bigots, God knows how long they will retain their rights and immunities. *A corrupt Tree, says the greatest authority, bringeth forth corrupt fruit.* An academy in so small a province as ours, will diffuse its influence over its whole extent. Every post of honour and profit, will naturally be engrossed by persons who have had their education at the public Seminary; so that nothing is more probable, than that the spirit of the College, will become the spirit of the Colony. Should therefore any particular sect be invested with the supreme rule in that Seminary, what can hinder their indoctrinating its youth in the contracted principles of their own party; and what could we expect from a Council and Assembly, under the influence of the same religious doctrines and persuasion, but a general establishment of themselves to the suppression of the rest; or at least, where, in those circumstances, will be the security of other denominations against those shocking and dreadful apprehensions? Once already we have been artfully tempted; but then we must yield to open, undisguised and irresistible power. This is the substance of my remarks, on that interesting subject. The erection of a College on a generous bottom I never opposed. So far on the contrary, from using any arts to obstruct such a laudable and necessary institution, that the pains I have taken to baffle the infamous purpose of subjecting it to the sway of a Juncio, is the greatest service I could have offered to the public, or a well constituted school, for teaching the liberal arts and sciences. Nay I have gone farther. I have exhibited a Plan to render it safe and prosperous; and I challenge the warmest of my adversaries, or any man in the province to evince his having thought more upon that topic, or done more for the design.

I HAVE been charged with the delay which has hitherto attended the erection of a College, with embarrassing the projectors, and inflaming the minds of the people against such a seminary. Against a free College against a College where the children of all protestant persuasions shall be admitted to a perfect parity of privileges against a College where superstition shall not make his gloomy abode, nor persecution unfurl his bloody standard, I have written not a word. Of the necessity of such a society, I entertain the most exalted opinion; nor does any man more ardently long, for so excellent an establishment. An undertaking so glorious, cannot be too vigorously prosecuted. If my adversaries mean by the charge, that I have prevented the execution of the before mentioned little dirty, contracted party project. I am so far from inclining to exculpate myself, that I wish I had still stronger reasons to flatter my self, with being the instrument of such extensive utility to my country. Those who were concerned in that ungenerous scheme, began the calumny of my aversion to the founding an academy, and tis' they who impute the delay of it to my papers, in order to raise against them the general odium, and weaken an influence repugnant to their iniquitous machinations. But at their door lies the slow prosecution of this momentous affair: For had they not attempted to ingross its Government into their hands, there would have been no ground for the opposition I excited; nor would the jealousies and bickerings now subsisting, have arisen amongst us. If a free constituted College is such a one for which alone we should wish, such as will be a real blessing to the Province, such a one as one for which the people are to be loaded with a general Tax. Then an opposition to a partial one was evidently requisite to expedite its progress; and to them only, who sung this whistle in the way, are to be ascribed the tardy proceedings and present commotions. It was a certain information of this narrow spirited and ignominious contrivance, that gave rise to my Reflections on our future seat of the Muses. Among all the persons nominated for Trustees, at a private convention, there were but three Gentlemen of the *Dutch Church*; and one of them residing so remote from *New-York*, that he could not be expected to have any considerable agency, in the regulation and government of the matter. All the rest were members of the Church of *England*, and most of them, tho' otherwise men of unblemished fame, utterly devoid of every qualification, to recommend them for such a trust, save only their notorious inflexible bigotry. Of such consisted the list. Their names I could mention, were it not highly improper under the disadvantageous character I have given them, and which I know they deserve. This hopeful Catalogue was presented to his late Excellency Gover. *Clinson*, with a request to incorporate them; but the spirit of party politics which has long been the bane, the curse and the infamy of the Province, proved in this case luckily auspicious, and rendered the project abortive. Unaw'd and unabashed to contrive it, and, since

(16)
P R E F A C E.

Since the public abhorrence, unwilling to confess it, the reality of this stratagem has, with unexampled confidence, been made a question in full companies, even by some of its first projectors themselves. My information is from a member of the Assembly, and the open declaration of another Gentleman, who had the honour to be on the list. Private as this affair was conducted, and doubtful as the verity of the fact may be thought, yet that there were clandestine designs to obtain the Government of the College is now apparent to the world.

(1) It is claimed by churchmen in the most undisguised manner in every company.

(2) The right of the Church of England, to its sole management has been repeatedly asserted in a certain public *News-Paper*.

(3) Upon what other principles but such a design, can we account for the acrimony of churchmen alone, against the papers I have published to shew the unreasonableness of ceding its Government to one party, exclusive of all others; or for their wrath and opposition to the free plan, I have exhibited for its constitution?

(4) Why are the original authors of this project so supine at present, but because the Assembly are determined (unless disappointed by some subsequent artifice) to constitute a Seminary ample generous and catholic?

(5) To what is owing the extreme disapprobation of one of the head masters nominated for the College, but their aversion to its free Government, and the disappointment of their narrow system?

(6) Why is a certain donation, so generously offered when the College was expected to be resigned to a party, now castigated and delayed, only because their title to its superintendency has been questioned, and unless aided by some fresh imposture, will now probably be rejected?

In short some gentlemen have been so sanguine in their claims, to the sole dominion over our intended Seminary, that besides all their curses bellowed against the *Register*, even some of the members of the Honourable House of Representatives, have not escaped their rancour and malice, for no other cause, than voting agreeable to their consciences, and the direction of their constituents. Because they gave their negatives to the continuation of the Excise Act, and the appropriation of 500 *£. per annum*, out of that fund, for the immediate constitution of the College, they have been charged with enmity to the undertaking and averse to the means of education. In justice therefore to those illustrious Patriots, I cannot help publishing the reasons of their dissent.

AFTER the province had by Lotteries raised the sum of *£. 3442 - 18.* for the use of a College, an Act was passed the 25th. of November 1751. to vest that sum in the eldest Councillor, the Speaker of the General Assembly, the Judges of the Supreme Court, the Mayor of the City of New-York, and the Treasurer of the Colony for the time being, and James Livingston, Esq. Mr. Benjamin Nicol and Mr. William Livingston as trustees, who were thereby appointed to manage that sum, or any lands and chattels which might be contributed to the College, and were thereby also enabled to receive proposals from any City or Town, desiring to have the College erected in any certain place.

On the 24th. of July, 1753. an Act was passed further to continue the duty of Excise, to the first day of November, 1767. By the second Section of this Act, 500 *£.* a year is, after the first of January, 1754, to be paid to the Trustees, mentioned in the first Act, "to be by them apportioned and distributed in salaries for the chief master or head of the "Seminary, by whatever denomination he may be hereafter called, and for such and so many "other masters and officers, uses and purposes, concerning the establishment of the said "Seminary, as the said trustees, shall from time to time, in their discretion, think needful." The third Section impowers the trustees, to apportion the salaries to the masters, and direct the payments, and the fourth enables them, "to ascertain the rates which each Student or "Scholar, shall annually pay for his education at the said Seminary."

When the question was put, whether the bill should pass, several Gentlemen of the house gave it a negative; but whether their characters deserved all that freedom, with which they have been handled, must be submitted to any man, who will impartially judge of the following reasons, of their dissent.

(17)
P R E F A C E.

(1) THIS act was virtually establishing a College, and resigning its management to gentlemen of the Church of England; there being among ten trustees, seven of that persuasion, and but two members of the *Dutch Church*, and one english presbyterian; which was thought to be a very unequal distribution of power, and would probably be displeasing to the body of the people, nine tenths of them being protestants, averse to an episcopal Government; and was moreover a plan, from which we had not the greatest reason to expect a catholic and free seminary, in a province consisting of such a variety of different religious denominations.

(2) BECAUSE they thought it highly expedient, before any public money was lodged in the hands of any set of men, to be disposed of in the institution of the College, to exhibit a compleat plan of its constitution, and the names of the persons, into whose hands it would be committed, and the laws by which they should, in their Government of it, be directed; copies of which ought to be delivered to each member, that in their councils, they might, in so important an affair, alter the manner of the commons in *Great Britain*, consult their constituents.

(3) BECAUSE no provision had hitherto been made for instituting grammar schools, to prepare our youth to be matriculated into the Seminary; so that unless a grammar school education was supported in the College, which would be improper and unprecedented, the institution of one, previous to such provision, would be a useless expence, unless an University, maintained at the charge of 500 *£. per annum*, without one student, could be thought reasonable in itself, or advantageous to the public. That no part of the money appointed by the Act, to be paid annually to the trustees, was to be appropriated for the establishing grammar schools, separate from the College, appears plainly from the Act..... The second Section enacts the 500 *£. per annum*, to be distributed in salaries for the officers of the Seminary. But what is intended by the Seminary, is explained by the preamble, which recites that. "Whereas it has been the intention of the Legislature for several years past, to establish a Seminary within this Colony, for the education of youth, in the liberal arts and sciences; and his Excellency the Governour, having been pleased to approve of the intentions of the General Assembly, to proceed upon that good design at this session, as signified by their Votes at their last meeting, pray, &c." That the intention of the Legislature was not to constitute grammar schools, but a College, appears from the Lottery act, and the journals of the house; and the intentions which his Excellency was pleased to approve, related only to the institution of a College, which appears manifestly from his Excellency's Speech, and the Votes of the general Assembly, so that if the word *Seminary* in the enacting clause, includes the same ideas which are annexed to it in the preamble, then it follows that the *Seminary* established by this act, is not a grammar school, but a *College*, and therefore they dissented.

(4) BECAUSE this act appeared to them a very imperfect institution of so important a design; it being deficient in the number and qualifications of trustees; in the sum to be annually expended upon it; in the encouragement of students; in not appointing the number of professors, nor the arts and sciences to be taught; in not incorporating the trustees, nor granting immunities to its officers and students, &c. &c. &c.

(5) BECAUSE they were charged by their constituents, to refuse their assent to any law, for investing public money into the hands of private persons, for a College, until the plan of its government and foundation, should be settled in the securest manner by an act of incorporation.

THE weight of these reasons, for refusing their voice in favour of that act, must be left to the public. For my part, I think they deserve our serious consideration, and that the dissent of those gentlemen, can by no means justify the dirty virulence and aspersion which, without the least reserve, have been thrown out against them. Such is the accursed spirit of party!... Possessed as a man may be, of every moral and genteel virtue and accomplishment, it is sufficient that he is of the opposition to expose him to all the defamation, and obloquy, that malice can contrive and utter. Slander is the never-failing portion of every man, who, in the conduct of public affairs, is inflexible to party, and obstinately adheres to the dictates of his conscience. Incursg'd therefore by the example of the best of men in all ages.

(18)
P R E F A C E.

I hope those zealous champions for freedom, whose names will be remembered by posterity, with the warmest Gratitude, will persevere in a stedfast resolution, to watch the conduct of this grand concern ; and oppose both the insidious and open attempts of every catal, that would enslave the Province, or in any degree, abridge the civil or religious rights of the people. Important and oppulent as this faction may be in the city ; they are, in the country, indigent and inconsiderable. The Assembly in our greatest security. The members appear disposed to a liberal and free constituted College. Those of the Dutch Church, can alone govern this whole affair ; and were they once sufficiently apprized of sinister views, and impressed with the importance and advantage of a free Accademy, and the destructive tendency of its opposite, we should have nothing to fear. We might on the contrary reasonably expect all those blessings, those numberless and ineffable blessings, which naturally result, from an universal glow of light and knowledge.-- Whatever denomination shall monopolize its government, will easily jockey all the rest of the province.--- Adieu then to liberty and peace ! Adieu to private freedom and public independence ! ---- But I have exposed it, I have remonstrated against it, till the Press was shut up. I shall therefore content my self with this prayer. *That GOD of his infinite mercy for Christs sake, may prevent it. AMEN.*

A PRINCIPAL reason of that unaccountable zeal in favour of a party Church College, is the odium, that has been generally raised against the Colleges in *New-England* and *New-Jersey*, by those who have found their interest, in the prejudices of the unthinking vulgar. This scheme, however, to those who are capable of reflexion, must appear somewhat unlucky in defeating it self, --- How far those nurseries of literature deserve the severe censure, that has been generally cast upon them, I will not take upon me to determine. Thus much indeed is undoubtedly true, that they favour too much of party ; and as far as they are culpable in this particular, they fall under the lash of my animadversions. It being therefore admitted, that the spirit of those Seminaries is too partial, and contracted, it is equally evident that they have an uncontrollable influence, in favour of the prevailing persuasions ; who tho' something different from each other, pass under the general appellation of dissenters. To the superintendency of the dissenting interest over those seats of the Muses, must we attribute the extensive sway of the congregationalists, and the incurable languor of episcopacy, in *New-England*. The youth, in the course of their education, suck in the dogmas of the former, with the readiest assent. An unlimited submission of their understandings to the judgment of their preceptors, is not only generally esteemed a principal ingredient in a docile genius ; but is also the natural consequence of the modesty of our tender years. Whence it is easy to conceive, that the teachers in those Seminaries being dissenters, the students must almost unavoidably grow up in the same persuasion. And in this manner is the irresistible authority of that party naturally accounted for. But inconsiderately to slide into the opinions of their superiors, is not the only weakness of youth : They are as eager in adopting their very prejudices. Whatever therefore is unpalatable to the instructor, disgusts the pupil : And hence the general disesteem of the Church of England, and her imbecillity, in the eastern Colonies. To reasonings of this kind our episcopalians are extremely attentive, when they militate against Colleges in the hands of other sects ; but to the same arguments, levelled against their scheme for a church College, they are incurably deaf : On the above reflections, is doubtless founded the disregard which not only the episcopalians among us, but also the lovers of liberty, in a great measure, entertain of those schools of science. Yet, with this difference, must their judgments, in this particular, be considered : Our churchman exclaims against the unequal distribution of religious liberty in *New-England*, and considers their Colleges as so many nurseries of spiritual tyranny unjustly calculated to raise the dissenting interest, and depress his brethren. He can even make a merit of his love of liberty, tho' his motives be no other, than the disadvantages of his sect. But how monstrously does he contradict his principles, when he hawls and bullies, when he swears and threatens for a party church College in this province ! What to him appears the height of oppression in another sect, is but a reasonable moderation in his own. And tho' he regards the partiality of the *New-England* and *Jersey* Academies, as an unwarrantable imposition on the Church of England, and her votaries, he is staunch for the same partiality in her favour in this province : But what imputation less severe, than that of an incorrigible blindness and insatiation, the conduct

(19)
P R E F A C E.

of such churchmen deserve, let the impartial world determine. Influenced in this affair by a generous disinterested and unbounded love for mankind, the real friend of liberty, equally abhors the impositions of every party ; and feels, with a sympathetic bitterness, the bondage of a fellow creature of whatever denomination: Nor does he view that freedom which he contends for, as beneficial to this or that sect, but diffusive of the most ample joy and happiness thro' the whole human species. To him must those dissenting Colleges be truly displeasing if their genius is too selfish and limited to consist with his exalted notions of liberty. 'Tis therefore be the task to inveigh against all foreign and intestine invasions, of the rights and privileges of human nature. But as to these matters, let the blind, the obstinate, the grovelling, and inglorious bigot, be dumb as silence itself ; least by opening his mouth, he pronounce his own shame. For while he is insisting on the injustice of a practice in one sect; how can he support in behalf of another, a claim, which if determined in their favour, would be productive of measures equally unjust ? If he thinks, that what is horrible and vicious in a dissenter, can to a disinterested spectator, possibly appear, comely and virtuous in a churchman, then indeed is he mistaken. Party-spirit is an heinous tantom, equally abhorrent to the peace of man wherever it resides. Nay, so extensive is its empire, as to encircle all denominations and diversities. Or does he imagine that the minds of all, but those of his own persuasion, are formed for servitude and oppression ? In this again, he is greatly deluded. It is not our being a member of any sect ; but our blind unreasonable attachment to it, that fits us for bondage. Let not therefore the slave to church party, complain of the spiritual enthralment of his brethren in the neighbouring Colonies. Let him join with me, in exposing every attempt, to raise a party college in this province.

SOME again pretend a necessity of rearing a Seminary amongst us, tinged with such a Spirit, to render it useful in opposing the prevailency of the dissenting interest, in the neighbouring colonies ; and from thence conclude, we ought in this, to have a church College. But how absurd and irrational this ! What, shall the dissenters of all denominations among us, feel the weight of crimes they have never committed ; and shall the sins of their brethren in *New-England* be visited upon them ! Were a whole family laid under the necessity, of compensating for the ill conduct of its members, all the innocent part of mankind would feel the dismal consequences, of a supererrogation in vice. That the church of England is depressed in one colony, is no reason for her riding triumphant in another upon the necks of those, who, never in the least, contributed to her depression. And yet, if like causes are productive of similar effects, nothing less is intended by erecting a church College in this province, in order to countervail the power of dissenters among our neighbours. If it be considered that the bulk of our inhabitants consist of dissenters, the claim in favour of an episcopal academy, will be a convincing proof, of the extravagant pretensions of bigotry, head strong and unbridled : To think of converting into a political engine, what is by a vast majority, designed for public utility, is indeed a piece of madness, that richly deserves Bedlam. But what characters shall we adapt to the conduct of those, who, tho' a small minority, would endeavour to accomplish so unrighteous a design, in order to oppress, enslave and harass those, who beyond comparison, exceed them in numbers ? To ask such a preeminency in this province as a boon, requires an abundant stock of assurance : But to claim it as a right, is the most consummate degree of insolence and effrontery.

So fully bent were the advocates for a party seminary, upon their darling design, that they boggled not at the most dishonourable measures to obtain and secure it. At the expence of virtue and in defiance of truth, they exerted their utmost efforts, to debase and disparage the College of *New-Jersey*. They threw the reins upon the necks of their headlong passions, and misrepresented and vilified, with the most unbounded licentiousness. Amidst numberless proofs that might be assigned, it is sufficient to cite two passages from the *Mercury*. In No. 43. I find a letter, pretended to be written by a person in the interest of the College of *New-Jersey*, to his friend, which contains this false and scandalous calumny on the trustees of that seminary residing in *New-York*. " As to the College so long talked of at *New-York*, our trustees and friends there, being so numerous (having engaged the *Dutch* in our interest) will always have it in their power to prevent its being built." The other passage is extracted from a letter to the reflector published in the *Mercury* No. 69.

which

(20)
P R E F A C E.

which is the last public attack upon that Author, and imitably dull and stupid as it is, can boast one of our principal politicians in eminent station, for its honourable penit. The slander is couched in the following words.

"The general good of the colony does no longer appear to be the intent of your papers; but the advancing your own sect and party. Hast thou once in all thy writings taken notice of such of thy countrymen as have solemnly engaged as trustees, and otherwise, to support and promote the college in a neighbouring colony, in opposition to ours? No thou hast not." Would not any one imagine upon reading these extracts, that some persons in this province, had become trustees of the *New-Jersey College*, designedly to oppose the founding of one here? And can any thing be more false, insolent and cruel, than such an assertion? What other tendency can it have, than to render those gentlemen, obnoxious to the resentment, suspicions and jealousy of their countrymen? Such is the malice and blindness of party! I would desire no other advantage for refuting these calumniators, than the liberty of publishing the names of those gentlemen among us, who are trustees of the *New-Jersey College*. They are so well known to be hearty lovers of their country, men of estates, learning, sense and catholicism; that the bare mentioning them would pour contempt upon their enemies. They are in short what trustees of a College should be, men of a liberal education. Methinks were I to set about the ungrateful task of calumniating others, I would, for the sake of my cause, if I could not do it with truth, at least falsify with so much art, as not easily to be detected. But it is so peculiar to these *Mercurial Scriblers*, to want good heads as well as hearts, that there is scarce a fact they assert, which it is not in the power of most readers to disprove. Besides the absurdity of supposing any gentlemen of the characters I have described them to be, concerned in opposing the design of a College, for the instructing youth in the liberal arts and sciences in their own province, and for the advantage of their own children; who can believe that they should form themselves into a body for that purpose, so long before our establishment of one here. The *Charter* for the *New-Jersey College* passed the seals in the Year 1747, and the design to which these trustees were privy, was in agitation about three years before. Whereas our establishment, if we have any at all, cannot be carried higher than the 24th day of July, 1753; as appears from the words of the act, which in the 3d. Section, apportioning the quantum of the salaries of the officers, calls them, *officers of the Seminary hereby intended to be established*. They who would have this believed of the *New-Jersey* trustees, should therefore first prove them to be gifted with the spirit of prophecy, as they had engaged in that College, long before one was thought of in this province.

The truth is, and whoever is acquainted with those gentlemen, will be constrained to believe, that they became trustees of the *New-Jersey College*, without any party design, and with the sole motive of lending their assistance in the most generous manner, to the extensive propagation of sound literature. Their views were not stinted with some puny politicians to little county interests, nor with some, who think themselves vastly the superiors of the former, merely to the limits of this province, and who are therefore eaten up with a contracted zeal, for its contracted affair: But inflamed with an universal benevolence, consulting the welfare and strength of the british nation, and especially these remote parts of his Majesty's dominions, engaged for the general cause of truth, and sensible of the vast and extensive advantage of real learning, in advancing human felicity; they embarked in that public-spirited undertaking. Why in the name of wonder, shall a man be thought an enemy to one College, for befriending another? Is it impossible to make a donation to the University at Cambridge, but with a spirit of opposition to that of Oxford? But why should I confuse such egregious nonsense, such senseless and abominable fustian! And yet it has been, in one sense, the unhappy lot of the *Reflector*, to have only the vendors of such jargon for his opponents.----For my part I reverence the man, whose exalted designs extend to all mankind.----Every aid he affords for the promotion of true science is a proof of his benevolence and catholicism, to which no contracted stickler in the politics of one small province can ever pretend.

UNREASONABLE have been the disputes about the religious worship in the College.---- They have by one side been handled with great jealousy and ardour, and as they were one cause of the delay of that important affair, I cannot pass them over in silence. By some it has been strenuously asserted, that the religious establishment of the church of England in South
Britain

(21)
P R E F A C E.

Britain extends to the plantations, and hence, according to the modern logic, of the scriblers in the *Mercury*; it is argued that the prayers of that Church, ought to be the only formulary of prayer in the College.--- This gave rise to the paper, in which I have shewn the notion of a religious Establishment in this province, to be a groundless pretence. Had I laboured under a mistake, in that capital article, it became my adversaries to have undeceived me; and I should have been glad to have seen my arguments refuted. But without even attempting this, they stupidly continued, agreeable to the general stream of their conduct, barely to assert it, and, what never fail'd to impart strength to their assertions, reiterated their curses upon the *Reflector*. The model of an unexceptionable prayer, which I exhibited, was not intended as derogatory of the honour of the Common Prayer Book; but designed only to advance the true interest of the Academy. To calculate it for the use of the College, the english Liturgy must pass under some alterations, and receive no inconsiderable additions. And I insist that its introduction will go near to subvert the design. If this can be rendered evident, or even probable, methinks he ill deserves the name of a Patriot, or well wither to the College; who would stickle for the form of a prayer, at the expence of the absolute subversion of so laudable an undertaking. Let me for once take it for granted, that the sole view of instituting a public Seminary in this province, is for the general advantage of all its inhabitants. That it is not to strengthen and aggrandize, any particular religious denomination, or political cabal. That it is only to instruct our youth in the liberal arts and sciences. That the children of all protestants, at least, are equally to share its privileges and honours; and that it is forever to be supported, as it has been begun, with public monies. Is it not an undeniable consequence of so useful and honourable an institution, that every thing relative to its Government, should be directed and established in a correspondence with such a design; and that to insist upon the introduction of what will be repugnant thereto, is contradictory and absurd? Now unreasonable as the objections of the Presbyterians, Independents, Quakers and other Dissenters may be thought against the Book of Common Prayer; nay, tho' I should admit that the Church of England is established in this colony, and that it is the right of that Church to be the sovereign arbiter in this affair, yet would it by no means follow, that the Liturgy ought to be established in the College. The probability of its proving detrimental to its interest, is with every impartial man, a sufficient reason to exclude it; and that so it would prove, is beyond doubt; it being unquestionably true, that all the english Dissenters, as well as dutch Presbyterians, do in fact disapprove the Common Prayers, and that they constitute at least nine tenths of the inhabitants of our province. Hence the popular aversion to a Seminary using those Prayers, will be necessarily raised! The inevitable consequence of which will be, so small a number of Students, that perhaps we may, after its constitution, be under the necessity of passing a Law, to compel the education of youth, or restrict them from getting it in any other province. The objections against the Liturgy it is said are ridiculous: For argument sake I will admit it. The prayers are excellent, and the language, for the time they were drawn up, strong and elegant. But the truth of the fact, is the sole thing to be considered; and would not the persons who, rather than submit to any other form of prayer, equally good, and thereby sacrifice the prosperity of the College, and peace of the province, be alike ridiculous, alike bigots, and besides virtually enemies both to the College and the Colony?

I HAVE also heard it objected, that dissenters of all denominations, would as little approve any other forms of prayer, as those of the Church of England.--- For my part, I do not think any Dissenters, not even the Quakers, (who of all Christians are the most averse to rites and ceremonies) however warmly they might oppose forms in church-worship, would carry their aversion so far, as merely on account of a form of prayer in the College, to deny their children the means of education. With respect to the Presbyterians, they all have forms, especially for covenant acts; as in Baptism, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, Marriages, Ordinations, &c. The French use their formulary of public prayer every Sunday. The Dutch are less attached to theirs, nor are they constantly used, except by the less skillful of their Clergy. Besides, no presbyterians can cordially acquiesce in the ceremonies in the Church of England, and especially the imposition of their forms. The English Presbyterians have moreover particular exceptions to the Liturgy. Nor will the generality of the Dissenters, ever be brought to a hearty approbation and encouragement of our College, if the common Prayer

(22)
P R E F A C E.

Book is introduced for its religious worship: And that this will fatally affect that Seminary, is to me very apparent. For let us consider our situation. At *New-Haven*, to the eastward, the College is under the government of congregationalists. The old building was erected in 1716. Their Library is well chosen, and consists of near three thousand Volumes. They have besides, many costly Instruments, for mathematical and philosophical experiments. Not long since they raised a splendid (I dare not say a superb) brick building at the public expence, one hundred feet long, and forty feet deep. It is under the guardianship of a colony, fully able, and warmly bent upon its support and encouragement. It has a President and three Fellows; and contained, for several years past, about one hundred Students. It is now in a very flourishing condition, and under its present powerful patronage, must continue to flourish. The Presbyterians in *New-Jersey*, have an ample Charter for another; and are about erecting the Fabric. Their College has been opened several years past, consists at present of three score Students; and to promote and exalt it, the managers are emulous and indefatigable. They have amassed by Lottery and presents, a fund of about three thousand pounds, besides a considerable number of Books. It is but lately they prevailed upon the colony of *Connecticut*, to permit them to raise by a Lottery, near 2000 £.

They have already sent two Gentlemen to great Britain, to implore the assistance of the Church of Scotland, and the dissenters in England; and will probably receive large benefactions, as did the congregational Colleges in *New-England*, in their Infancy, even from public-spirited Gentlemen of the established Church in south Britain. It appears therefore highly probable, that the College of *New-Jersey*, will soon be sufficiently endowed; and, in process of time, flourish as much as that in *New-Haven*. Beset with such potent rivals, and the generality of our own people, affected to the Government of both; it highly becomes us, in good policy, to constitute ours, on a basis sufficiently generous to obviate all the objections, naturally arising against a party College. Besides, as the concurrence of our Assembly, is absolutely necessary for its endowment, and but few of the members are Churchmen, far will they be, from establishing an episcopal College: Especially when it is considered, that the unavoidable consequence of voting for so injurious a project, will expose them to the resentment of their constituents; and throw the whole Province, into general confusion, discontent and animosity. There is one argument for introducing the Church Form, which I should not have attempted to expose, did not every little Bigot, hand it about, as of prodigious and unanswerable weight. It is nothing less, than that if our Accademy is subjected to an episcopal Government, it will probably receive large donations, from Gentlemen of the established church in England. But what will a Seminary without Students, though richly endowed, avail us? Will a sumptuous edifice, a copious Library, a vast apparatus of instruments, with a number of Officers, maintained at the general charge of the colony, promote the interest and welfare of its inhabitants; while they view it with indignation, and groan under the Taxes imposed for its maintenance! In short the general good of the province, must be *supremely* consulted. Every thing repugnant to that, will inevitably prove detrimental to the College, and is for that reason undoubtedly to be rejected. The prosperity of this design, depends not on foreign aids. We are ourselves sufficiently wealthy to support it. Nor if it is freely constituted, will it want a support. And why such a constitution, would not be encouraged by charitable donations beyond a contracted party one, is to me utterly incomprehensible. To the latter indeed, the bigots of the same party may contribute, but all other persuasions will refuse it their munificence; while the capacious and ample constitution I have recommended, is open to the Benefactions of all sects, and will be the peculiar pupil, of men of sense and freedom, in every part of the world. Gentlemen of distinguished characters and polite nurture, are, among all persuasions, intirely untainted with the little bigotry and party-spirit, so peculiar to weak minds and the populace. And from such it is, that we have reason to expect the largest donations. The principal patrons of the congregational Colleges at *Cambridge* and *New-Haven*, were members of the church of England. Among those of the former, I find *St. John Maynard*, *Mr. Gale*, fellow of *Magdalene College Oxford*,

Oxford, Mr. *Wharton*, a member of Parliament and brother to the Marquis of *Wharton*, and even Mr. *Kenslem Digby*, a Roman Catholic. And among those of the latter, general *Nicholson*, Sr. *Isaac Newton*, Sr. *Richard Blackmore*, Sr. *Richard Steel*, Dr. *Barnet*, Dr. *Woodward*, Dr. *Hully*, Dr. *Bensly*, Dr. *Kennet*, Dr. *Edwards*, Mr. *Wrighton*, and the late Bishop of *Cloyne*, whose single present in Books of 1000 Vol. (260 of which are in Folio) are valued at 400 £. sterling, besides a considerable landed estate at *Kheas-Island*. If therefore the less liberal principles of those Seminaries, was not an objection, sufficient to restrain the liberality of those Gentlemen, who were of quite different persuasions, surely the catholicism of ours, will make it the subject of the most exuberant bounty of all sects.

I CLAIM a right to detect every scheme that tends to the elevation of one sect, upon the ruins of another. Such was that put in practice, by the vigorous advocates for high Church; when the propriety of introducing an english Minister, into one of the dutch Churches of this City, afforded matter of public conversation and enquiry. The visible decay to which those Churches, no less venerable for their purity in doctrine, discipline and worship; than their antiquity in this province, were subject, raised the most communitating sentiments, in the breast of every lover of virtue and true religion. Their once crowded Assemblies, now scarcely existed, save in the sad remembrance of their primitive glory: Their youth, forgetting the religion of their ancestors, wandered in search of new persuasions; and the most diligent labours of those who were set over them, proved ineffectual, to attach them to the profession, in which they were educated. These indeed were circumstances, woful and distressing! This a state boding nothing less than a final, tho' gradual dissolution! Nor unknown was the cause of this melancholly declension. In all the british Colonies, as the knowledge of the english tongue must necessarily endure, and instead of declining, will naturally become more perfect and improved; so every foreign Language, however generally practised and understood for a time, must, at length, be neglected and forgotten. Thus it is with the dutch tongue; which, tho' once the common dialect of this province, is now scarcely understood, except by its more ancient inhabitants. It has also been observed, that the Churches have kept exact pace with the language, in its retrograde state: So that there is no room to doubt the decay of the former, was caused by the disuse of the latter; and that both the one and the other, will in process of time, sink into perfect oblivion. To retain the use of the dutch Language, the greatest pains have not been wanting. They have had well regulated free schools, richly supported by their Churches; and yet maugre their utmost efforts, parents have found it in a great degree impossible to transmit it, to their children. Whence it is generally feared, that the very next Generation will scarce furnish one person in this city, except their Clergy, well acquainted with that tongue. To prevent therefore the ruin of the dutch Churches, common sense pointed out the absolute necessity, of disuniting them from the Language, by translating their public acts of devotion, and worship into english; or the speedy introduction of the present translations now used, by several of their Churches in *Holland*. Nothing being more certain, than that the celebration of divine service in an unknown tongue, would, in a protestant country, prove as disgustful, as it would be unprofitable. I should have imagined, that nothing could be objected to the immediate execution, of so necessary and obvious an expedient. No sooner however was it proposed, than the sticklers for high-church, raised a general cry upon the occasion. Mean and ungenerous were the arts used by them, to discredit the proposal. Recourse was had to their old practice, of reviling and calumniating the Presbyterians; who were charged with a design no less wicked than false, and impossible, of seizing the dutch Churches, and converting them, and their congregations, to their own use. Nay, so fashionable was the practice of falsifying for the Church, that with an assurance unparallel'd, the dutch were told to their faces, that they were not Presbyterians. The effrontery with which the assertion was repeated, pressed conviction upon the ignorant. Whence it is common to hear the more illiterate members of the dutch congregation disown themselves to be Presbyterians, and even insist on their being Episcopalians. These artifices were ingenuously detected by *Philo Reflector*; whose remarks on this subject, compelled those high-flyers to play a different game. Ashamed to persist any longer in obtruding so flagrant a falsehood, and bent upon supporting a wall of partition between the english and dutch Presbyterians; they at confidently denied the former to be such, as they have for thirty years past impudently abused them under that name.--

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Not to dwell upon the shocking wickedness, and absurdity of such a conduct ; who cannot see that the grand design, was to prevent the introduction of the english Tongue into the dutch Churches ; lest the discriminating badge with the vulgar, the difference of language, being removed, a coalition might ensue, and Presbyterianism by that means be strengthened and supported ; while the augmentation of the *English* by profelytes from the *Dutch* church, would be in a great degree interrupted. How inconsistent this with the gospel dispensation ! How much estranged from the practice of christian charity, are those, who instead of promoting a harmony between sister churches, would endeavour to prevent it, even at the expence of the final destruction of one ! Had they no sinister views, far would they be from endeavouring the ruin of a Christian Church, sound in the faith, edifying in its worship, and well policied in its Government. But so determined are they on advancing the interest of their own party, that to accomplish the downfall of the dutch Congregations, it would to them be a trifling peccadillo, could they by that means, secure the grand object of their wishes.

From the extinction of those Churches in this City, they had also reason to expect a considerable addition to their own. Whatever is modish, captivates juvenile understandings ; and the Church of England, might for that reason, expect a further accession of the dutch youth. The sticklers for the hierarchy, do not value themselves more upon their orthodoxy, than the fashionableness of their profession ; and setting themselves up for patrons of true taste in religion, they would doubtless glean all those among the dutch, who are fond of being reckoned among the beau monde. But after all, what great reason have the serious part of the dutch Congregations, to confide in the friendship of those, who thus artfully endeavour to disperse and diminish them ? What opinion can they entertain, of the honesty of men ; who to prevent their coalition with a sister church, are pressing them on to unavoidable destruction ? Should the use of the dutch Language, be continued, it would necessarily be productive of the latter ; while the introduction of the english tongue, would have no tendency to terminate in the former. If there is no affinity between the english and dutch Presbyterians, this change can never effect the so much apprehended union ; but would rather give the Church of England an opportunity of encreasing her numbers, by putting in her claim of sister-hood to the dutch Churches. This affinity is a matter, that a certain Gentleman in Black, has, without blushing, laboured to persuade the female part of the dutch Congregation to believe, and doubtless with that view. But is it not easy to observe, that a greater stress is laid upon the importance of continuing the use of the dutch Language, than any Language can possibly deserve ? Would the profession of the dutch Church be less orthodox, their worship less edifying, and their discipline less sound, were their services performed in English ? Or can the same thoughts, which delivered in one Language, are acceptable to the Almighty, displease him when expressed in another ? The truth is, those who oppose the introduction of the english tongue into one of the dutch Churches, are convinced that the different Languages, are the only Criteria to distinguish them from each other ; and this is evident from their fear, that the use of the same tongue, will naturally produce an union. But tho' this is far from being a necessary consequence ; yet surely it cannot be so destructive of the interest of the dutch Churches, to coalesce with a sect with whom they perfectly agree in doctrine, worship, and Government ; as to follow the advice of those, who, by endeavouring to dissuade them from introducing the english language evidently meditate their dissolution.

WHAT I have advanced on this Topic, may perhaps be considered as a design to induce a coalition, between the english and dutch Presbyterians. But so far am I from desiring such an event, that I am convinced nothing can tend so much to maintain our freedom and independency in religion, as our division into a variety of sects. My sole aim is, to make all protestant denominations, support a mutual harmony ; and not prefer the certain ruin of one, to the fear of its union with another.

NEVER was there such a conjunction of scurrilous scriblers, as disgorged their venom, in the *New-York Mercury*. 'Twas to them a matter of perfect indifference, to write the truth, or circulate the most notorious falsehoods. Nay, as tho' they imagined it would not beseeming character, to convey reality, thro' the chunnel of that paper ; the reader is referred to the before mentioned Preface of *Philo Reflector*, for a Catalogue of seventy six Lies, invented and published by them, in less than six months ; since which they have, I suppose, at least doubled the

(25)
P R E F A C E.

the number. As with such calumniators, it is impossible to carry on a controversy; so is it beneath the dignity of an Author, to vouchsafe them a serious answer. Hence I have all along suffered them, to roar, and lie, and rave and slander, with the most unruffled tranquillity, and sovereign disdain. Indeed to their very iniquities, am I beholden for a useful lesson. They have taught me to prize, as a treasure inestimable, the consolations arising from the testimony of a good conscience; which are not only able to support, but to solace and delight, amidst the vilest detamations and the rankest ingratitude.

BUT, as some have ill-requited and treated me with obloquy; by many have I been encouraged and applauded. The former I pity and forgive; as I thank and esteem the latter. Nor will, I presume, my correspondents be disgusted, it, while I declare my self affected with the warmest gratitude to them all, I remember the name of SHADRACH PLEBIANUS, with peculiar veneration.

BOUNDLESS and uncontroled, was the rancour that appear'd against the Presbyterians: They were branded with the most opprobrious names, vilified in the most scurrilous terms, and persecuted with the most vindictive fury: The division in their congregation, was magnified, misrepresented, and made matter of triumph: Their clergy personally libelled, and injuriously defam'd: The principal members of their church in this city, treated as enemies to their country; and the body of the people, as an insignificant rabble. And yet this denomination, constitutes the most considerable part of the province; and for unshaken loyalty to his Majesty, and affection for our glorious constitution, may vie with any sect in the nation.

UPON reading all this fiery rage, that was so plentifully vomited against whole congregations of christians; the following questions will naturally occur to the unprejudiced reader.--- What provocation was given? Was the *Reflector* a presbyterian? Or if he was, had all the people of that persuasion deputed him, as their head and viceroy? Did he defend presbyterianism to the confusion of high-church? The provocation that was given, is hitherto amongst the arcana of nature. The *Reflector* has declared himself attached to no denomination; and expressly wrote against presbyterians. The moravians he has as expressly vindicated, against the aspersions of their enemies; by which he has spoiled above fifty Sermons, that might otherwise have been ended as they were begun, with sense and moderation. And for thy farther satisfaction, courteous Reader, he declares that he neither is, nor ever was attached to presbyterianism. To the trumperies of human, artificial, political and corporeal religions, he is still less addicted: He hopes himself inshort to be, what no high-church-man as such ever was, nor from the nature of the thing can possibly be; that is a christian. A party that wants no establishment for its support; but ever flourished most, when it had establishments to encounter; and ever decayed and languished, when by the secular arm, vindicated and aggrandized.

IN a very short compass shall I commemorate the clamorous Trumpeters of the *Coffee-House*. The critics of this class have given an irresistible proof, that the cessation of my weekly labours, is greatly detrimental to the cause of orthodoxy. For had the *Reflector* continued his speculations a few months longer, he had been in a fair way, of qualifying one half of the cobblers in town, for the office of Vestrymen.

UPON his worship as a gentleman of signal renown, I shall beg leave to be a little more prolix. It is Mr. Addison if I remember right, who says that he admired an Author for such a temper of mind, as enables him to bear undeserved reproach without resentment, more than for all the wit, of any the finest satirical reply: In conformity to that celebrated genius, I shall evince myself so far from an inclination of returning his Worships asperity, with heat and virulence; that I am determined even to vindicate his laudable, tho' perhaps mistaken zeal, from the censures that have been passed upon it. I had it seems unwarily insinuated, that he had been in some instances, a little too remiss in the execution of his office; which, after due consideration of his well-known activity for the public good, must have appeared an impossible supposition. For it must be acknowledged, that when there appears, throughout the whole course of a man's conduct, a steady uniformity in advancing the common weal; and he is, in a single instance, clearly proved to be delinquent; such instance is not to be believed in opposition to the whole current of his former demeanour; because that would be like crediting one witness in contradiction to manifold and accumulated evidence. My offence being thus clearly proved, his
resentment

(26)
P R E F A C E.

resentment cannot be thought excessive. 'Tis true, the word *Rascal*, is not quite so courtly a phrase, as might have been expected, from a gentleman of his delicacy, and refinement. But he wisely considered, that was the language at Court, always adapted to the nature of things; and strictly descriptive of all who frequent it, the term had long since obtained a currency, from the very propriety of diction. It happened, I own, somewhat unfortunately, that this emphatic epithet was not only bestowed on the *Reflector* himself, but on two gentlemen by name; who for any thing appearing to a superficial thinker, might be very innocent, amidst all that Writer's unparalleled enigmities. But this arises from not adverting to his worship's reasoning, which must unavoidably flash conviction, on the dullest understanding; and was comprized in the following syllogistic form.

FIRST and self-evident principles, being in all fair ratiocination, *en for granted*; the *Independent Reflector*, must, by way of postulate, be admitted a *Rascal*; and then the syllogism will run thus.

Every man suspected for the Independent Reflector, is a Rascal;

But A. & B. lie under that suspicion; The conclusion is apparent,

NOR can it be esteemed an immoderate ardor, that he should afterwards recommend it to the *Grand Jury*, to indict for libelling, an author, who had already, been thus logically convicted of *Rascality*. The Lawyers indeed, it is said, maintain, that to call a man a *Rascal* is no slander; whence they infer (I presume they never practise upon the inference) that to be a *Rascal*, is no crime; for in such case the words, if true, would subject the person spoken of to punishment, and then the action must necessarily lie, the injury being manifest.----- Hence one would conclude, that what was not criminal, could not be the object of an indictment. But as among courtiers, there are various kinds and degrees, and some are preferred for merit, and others for a job; some remarkable for the internal coolness, and others for the exterior dimensions, of their heads; so among *Rascals*, there may be a twofold division of *Rascals* punishable, and *Rascals* indictable. If a magistrate, for instance, should sign a Muster-roll by one half deficient of its complement, such a one I take it, is a *Rascal punishable*. But should another man presume to relate the fact, him I conceive a *Rascal indictable*. So those who about the Year 1734, attempted to enslave their country, are to be ranked with the *Rascals punishable*. But the poor Printer, who, by alarming his fellow subjects, saved us from the meditated bondage, proved to be a *Rascal indictable*. Thus again, if a person should accept an office, after previous promise to the grantor to omit certain things, which by the nature of the office, he was obliged to do; he would fall within the meaning of a *Rascal punishable*. But should an honest indigent Cartman, endeavour to earn his bread on a papistical holy-day; I would call him a *Rascal indictable*. These examples I think clearly settle the distinction; and shew that *every Rascal* is not to expect impunity, barely because *some Rascals* claim an exemption from punishment.

THE public was told by a foul-mouth'd doggerel poetaster in the *Mercury*, that I should die on the 30th, of *November* then next. Being doubtless no stranger to the measures, which had antecedently been concerted with my *Printer*, he was enabled to prophesy, with great confidence of success. As I am determin'd never to deviate from the truth; I must own his prediction, hath been punctually accomplished. Nor should I have regretted my exit, had I been left to die a natural death. But to be barbarously murdered, is enough to make a Spirit grumble, even in the *Elysian* fields. I have however one advantage, over the rest of the dead. I have robb'd the clergy of a funeral Sermon, by thus making and publishing my own. There is another particular, in which I claim the superiority over my *brethren defunct*. They stand no chance of leaving their graves, till the day of judgment; while I want nothing but a skilful honest *Printer*, for a compleat and vigorous resurrection.

THE reason of this preface's appearing so long after the discontinuance of the *Reflector*, 'tis perhaps, not improper, to lay before the reader. Having no prospect of getting it published in this city, after such ample proofs of the integrity of our *Printers*; I dropt, for a while, all thoughts of the matter. But as my adversaries, not content with their flagrant oppression, began to vaunt of their tyrannical influence, I resolv'd to apply to *Boston* or *Philadelphia*. No opportunity seasonably presenting, I was discouraged from any farther attempt: But meeting at length with the present, I greedily embrac'd it, and after finishing two sheets, went on with the work, as the *Printer* proceeded in the impression.

(27)
P R E F A C E.

Or what service were my weekly speculations, has been a trite question among my adversaries; who insinuate that they were productive of more pernicious, than salutary consequences. Their anonymous publication, gives me an advantage of doing my self justice on this occasion; which decency would have prevented, had the author discovered himself. I could urge the example of the finest genius, the deepest scholar, politest gentleman, and most eminent christian; the malice of whole enemies drove him into a necessary self-commendation; was it not the height of vanity to name him with so humble an author as the *Reflector*. Not to mention several useful laws, which have either passed the legislature, or been moved in the house of Representatives, to which my reflections gave rise, the reformation in the roads and city watch, the alteration of the Excise Laws, the reduction of copper half pence, and the diffusing a public spirit among people of all ranks and conditions; 'tis enough that I can, in some degree, boast the subversion, or at least obstruction, of the horrible plot to establish the party college above remembred. Nor much inferior is the pleasure I receive, from contemplating my instrumentality, in restraining, or debasing the overgrown power of priestcraft and bigotry, which had generally overspread the province, and grew daily more saliduous and rampant. And had not the tears of my enemies and the spite of malignants, frustrated my designs, by bereaving me of the liberty of the Press; the continuance of my papers, had furnished the public, with still stronger proofs of my unfeigned love for my country; and afforded me the satisfaction of serving it's interest, by many useful reflections; as may appear by the following List of subjects, on which I had written, and intended to write, in their order.

No. LIII.

ON the excellency of Trials by Juries; with the qualifications of jury men, and some directions for the better judging of written evidence, and the testimony of witnesses.

No. LIV.

A LETTER to the speaker of the general Assembly, on the importance of a free College; and the necessity of its immediate institution.

No. LV.

AN enumeration of sundry articles, to be inserted in an act, for the amendment of the law in this colony.

No. LVI.

FURTHER reasonings on credulity.

No. LVII.

A DISSERTATION on political trimmers in general; with an evolution of the little arts to gain popularity, practised by those of this province in particular.

No. LVIII.

REMARKS on the XXXIX Article of the instructions, to his late Excellency Sir DANVERS OSBORN.

No. LIX.

THE nature, end, and effect, of ecclesiastical establishments.

No. LX.

THE history and origin of the religious establishments in the City of *New-York, Westchester, Queen's & Richmond County.*

No. LXI

A DISPLAY of the consequences of the establishment in the several counties; with an expostulatory letter to the incumbents, proving their reception of the Tax, apply'd to that purpose from the Ministers and people of other congregations, to be not only inconsistent with the spirit of christianity; but even the principles of natural justice.

No. LXII.

THE several acts in support of the establishment impartially considered: Their true sense adjoined: And the arguments on which a late judicial decision was grounded, copiously examined.

No. LXIII.

THE Governor's right of induction; and the right of advowson or presentation in the people freely and impartially considered.

No.

(28)
P R E F A C E,

No. LXIV.

THE grand question about the means of evading the establishment and their legality, fairly stated and answered.

No. LXV.

A *SKETCH* for the farther security of records throughout this province.

No. LXVI.

OF persecution; with a succinct relation of the inquisitorial spirit of the dissenters, against the quakers in *New-England*.

No. LXVII.

AN argument proving the society for the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts, most grossly abused, by the settlement of their missionaries amongst *Christians* in the american plantations.

No. LXVIII.

THE fatal remissness in the examination and ordination of episcopal missionaries; with an idea or characteristic of a good missionary.

No. LXIX.

A detection of 39 most egregious falsehoods, in the accounts transmitted by the missionaries to the society.

No. LXX.

THE civil advantages arising to the french, from their indian missionaries.

No. LXXI.

THE importance of missionaries among our indians, religiously and politically considered.

No. LXXII.

THE necessity and advantages of the society's appointing lay-overseers of the conduct of their missionaries; to transmit accounts of their stations and conduct, agreeable to truth, and exempt from all priestly forgeries.

No. LXXIII.

A brief view of our public buildings; with a panegyric on our exquisite taste respecting architecture.

No. LXXIV.

OF informations by the Attorney General; with the necessity of an act of Assembly for their regulation and restraint.

No. LXXV.

AN essay on the nature, relations, and rights of colonies among the antients.

No. LXXVI.

THE right of this colony to be represented in an assembly, or provincial parliament.

No. LXXVII.

THE necessity of an established colony-constitution.

No. LXXVIII.

REFLECTIONS on the extent of english and british acts of Parliament.

No. LXXIX.

THE equal rights of british subjects in the plantations, to the privileges enjoyed by their fellow subjects in great Britain, asserted and vindicated.

No. LXXX.

THE extent of the power of the legislatures of the colonies.

No. LXXXI.

REMARKS on the legislative councils in the plantations.

No. LXXXII.

THE slavish and pestilent principles contained in a pamphlet, entitled *an essay on the Government of the colonies*, examined and refuted; with the propriety of calling the author to an account, for aspersing all the Assemblies on the continent; and endeavouring to undermine the very fundamentals of our constitution and liberties.

No. LXXXIII.

On Intemperance.

No.

(29)
P R E F A C E.

No. LXXXIV.

THE dangerous effects of an exorbitant popularity ; with reflections on the wisdom of the *Ostracism* amongst the Greeks, during their democratical state.

No. LXXXV.

THE extent of the northern limits of this province, argued against the encroachments of the French.

No. LXXXVI.

A DETAIL of the arguments in support of the claims of this colony to their Eastern boundary, against the provinces of *New-Hampshire*, and the *Massachusetts's Bay*.

No. LXXXVII.

THE importance of the Indian interest and trade : The causes of their decay, and the means of retrieving them.

No. LXXXVIII.

THE incredible villainies of ecclesiastics.

No. LXXXIX.

PROBABLE arguments that more lives are destroyed in this city, by pretended Physicians, than by all other causes whatever.

No. XC.

ON the defenceless state of the city of *New-York*, and our frontiers ; and a plan exhibited for the fortification of the former.

No. XCI.

REFLECTIONS on the dangerous vicinity of the French to the british Plantations on the continent ; and the necessity of their coalition for the general security of the frontiers.

No. XCII.

THE mischievous tendency of the conduct of former Governors, in delegating their power of appointing civil and military officers, to their creatures in the counties.

No. XCIII.

THE necessity of Commissioners in the counties to take affidavits, in causes depending in the supream Court.

No. XCIV.

ON the necessary qualifications of county-court Judges ; and the means of redressing divers irregularities, practised in the courts of common pless.

No. XCV.

AN antiparallel between the Apostles, and their pretended successors.

No. XCVI.

THE expediency of a new-Jail, in the city of *New-York*, for securing criminals, and the relief of insolvent debtors.

No. XCVII.

ON the spirit of persecutors ; and the rights and liberty of conscience.

No. XCVIII.

THE inconveniencies of the multiplicity of Market-houses in the city of *New-York*, and the advantages that would arise from a faithful discharge of the duty of a Clerk of the Markets.

No. XCIX.

ON our defect of public spirit : Its beneficial influences in *Philadelphia*.

No. C.

A scheme for erecting and supporting a Light-House.

No. CI.

THE mischievous consequences of our luxurious importation of indian and european goods.

No. CII.

ON the Fathers.

No. CIII.

CHARACTERISTICS of the qualifications of the trustees of the college, its President, Professors and Fellows.

No. CIV.

A SCHEME for the easy maintenance, and advantageous employment of the poor, in the city of *New-York*.

H

No. CV.

(30)
P R E F A C E.

No. CV.

The annual convention of the Presbyterians in provincial synods, politically considered.

No. CVI.

OBSERVATIONS on the public Lamps.

No. CVII.

An examination of the judicial right of the King in privy council, to correct the errors of, and receive appeals from, the courts of law in the plantations.

No. CVIII.

Of the importation of Negroes.

No. CIX.

REFLECTIONS on the present state of the chartered colonies, and their right to the powers of government, examined by the genius of the british constitution.

THESE are subjects of great moment ; and many of them, might have proved of singular service to the province. But we have lately gone into a fashion not only for tyrants to enjoin, and slaves to submit to. We do not examine public proposals, by the reason of the things ; but the persons who make them. A man of a generous, independent spirit, must be thrown into silence. A flatterer, a minion, or a sycophant, is entitled to a candid audience. Every member of the community, according to our notable system, hath no right to consult the interest of his country. It is his to approve, what is planned by proper authority. Or is he determined to prosper, let him secretly communicate his thoughts to those, who alone can give them a suitable sanction. Provided *they* are esteemed the original inventors, and carry off the applause, it may still succeed : Without this, inevitable ruin attends the project.

For my part, I never wrote for fame. To me it is perfectly indifferent who plans, or executes, or triumphs. I studied the public utility, and had no private views. Doth another make proposals of the same tendency ; the country is served, without my trouble. I care not who is the doer, so the thing be done. As the press therefore has been shut against me ; I should be glad to find the most important of the above topics, handled by those, who exercise such unprecedented dominion, over what ought to be equally common to every subject. By this they would convince the considerate part of mankind, that they had other views, besides popularity and self-interest. But while they can produce no instance of their promoting the public good ; nay, while like the dog in the manger, they will not suffer others to enjoy, what themselves are unwilling to use ; they must, in spite of all their sordid artifices, and high-flown protestations, appear to men of cool reflection, impudent pretenders to patriotism ; and irreconcilable foes to every writer, who dares to publish his sentiments, without adulation and servility.

AMIDST this unparallel'd encroachment on the rights of englishmen ; it is not, methinks, beneath the serious consideration of those few among us, who love our glorious constitution, and still retain the amiable sentiments of liberty ; to concert measures for procuring a printer, who will neither be intimidated, nor purchased, from publishing any thing, advance of the cause of truth and the common weal, consistent with law, and replete with a spirit inflexible, and never to be deterred.

A MIGHTY clamour was raised against me, under pretence that I transgressed the bounds of my design, in writing against the Church of England. Of the falsity of this charge, whoever reads my weekly productions with an unprejudiced mind, will be easily convinced : But to say something in vindication of my self ; I do declare that I never wrote a syllable with any view, of censuring the Church, as such : I have only exposed her unreasonable encroachments. When one religious persuasion, in defiance of the equal rights of the rest ; and in contradiction to the plain dictates of law and reason, openly advance a claim destructive of those rights ; to sit as a calm and unconcerned spectator, would, in a writer of my class, have been a treasonable neglect of the interest of the community. At this conduct indeed I took the alarm : It was my duty, my bounden, my indispensable duty : Had not the Church thought proper to insist on the sole and exclusive superintendency of our future Academy, my papers had, as to her, been silent as the grave. But when that unreasonable claim was loudly asserted, and, with an unblushing confidence, maintained by almost every man of the Church from the highest to the lowest ; when their claiming it in her right, and as appurtenant to her privileges, was a full removal of the objection, that it was not de-

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(31)
P R E F A C E.

manded by her, but some of her members: And when her pretended title in this particular, was proclaimed at the corners of the streets, in taverns and coffee-houses: What in the name of heaven, could prohibit me, as a writer in the public cause, to oppose the growing evil, with a spirit vigorous and undaunted! Had I not withstood the torrent of that prevailing error, a nursery of spiritual tyranny and party oppression, had perhaps e'er now, been rear'd up in the midst of us: Rear'd up as a pest to the community, and ever hostile to that precious equality, hitherto constituting our fecundity and lustre----As the bane of social happiness, of public glory, of heroic virtue and independence of sentiment----In a word, as eventually ruinous to our inestimable privileges, as well as presageful of perpetual and ignominious imposition on our posterity. And had such a gloomy, such a jesuitical project, been carried into execution, without my endeavours to repress it; then beyond question would every unhappy sufferer, have had sufficient reason to charge me with a neglect of my design, in which I declared, I would, "be ever ready to deliver my sentiments, on the abuses and encroachments of any sect of Christians, with the freedom and unconcernedness, becoming truth and independency."

Now is the above charge more false, than it is malicious. My papers have furnished the clearest evidence, that I am no sectary. Whence it is absurd to suppose, I could have been hurried by an intemperate zeal, to speak evil of any sect. I am a sincere professor of the religion of Jesus; and consider the several distinctions amongst Protestants as more or less convenient, but no ways essential. For this reason I can cordially give them all, the right hand of fellowship. I am convinced the benevolent author of the gospel dispensation, never designed that the trifling peculiarities of any of his followers, should render them obnoxious to the rest. I have therefore an equal regard for all those, who in his name, *worship GOD in spirit and in truth.*

YET should I be so unlucky as to see my professions of sincerity, in this particular, condemned or disbelieved; I shall not be at a loss to attribute it to the proper cause. When private views of ambition, and a lust for power, shut the eyes of mens understanding to every object, that has not charms to captivate those prevailing passions; the soul is lost to all generous and desultive sentiments. Hence doubtless those who labour for the public weal, must expect to demerit of such persons, the utmost detestation and abhorrence. Be it so: I repine not at my fate: I account it the greatest of blessings, to give those reason to hate me, who hate their country. To encounter the utmost rage of party; to expose the secret iniquities of pretended patriotism; to strip off the false covering of public virtue, from those, whose hearts feel not the least warmth in favour of their country; this, this is to me a crown, an immarcescible crown of Glory.

NAY so little do I esteem their favour; that I would rather spend one moment in the honest service of mankind, than bask eternally in the smiles and sunshine, of dignified villainy, and self interest in office.

LET not therefore those, who by the basest arts have put a stop to my writings, think they have subdued my spirit. In the cause of virtue and in defence of liberty, it shall continue stubborn and invincible. Let them rather remember, that unless they join with me in aspiring after the public good, they are *laying up wrath, against the day of wrath*, which is to come. I live in hopes to see the time when a printer, may be found among us, warm with the love of his country, a stranger to fear, and to bribery incorruptibly blind. Till then I shall continue a silent and vigilant spectator of their conduct; watching their steps with an indefatigable jealousy, and prying into the secret motives of their minutest actions. Time and strict enquiry will doubtless furnish me, with an abundant stock of observations; which, as soon as the press is open, I shall deal out with an unsparing hand for the benefit of my countrymen. Never shall I give over my design of serving the public, by freely communicating my sentiments, on persons and things. And that even my silence may be of general utility, I am preparing a History of this province and its politics; which I hope to have an opportunity of presenting to the world, when the press is restored to its former liberty, or I can make interest to induce an honest printer to settle amongst us.

New-York, January 19th 1753.

The Independent Reflector.