

A
DISCOURSE

ON

Government and Religion ;

DELIVERED AT

GRAY, (Maine.)

JULY FOURTH, 1810 ;

AT THE

CELEBRATION

of

AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

—*********—
By ELIAS SMITH.

—*********—
“ I have this day set thee over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to root out, and pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.”
—————

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1810.

AN APOLOGY.

1. As the substance of this discourse was delivered without any writing, many *particulars* are here mentioned, not named, when it was delivered.

2. As some may think this discourse somewhat severe upon kings and priests of modern times, this may be a sufficient apology for it, that it was the authors design, not to lop the limbs of the old *Political* and *Ecclesiastical* TREE of tyranny any more ; but to pluck it up by the roots, which will save the trouble of lopping *new sprouts* every year.

3. There is no doubt but many will *prove* that they do not like this ; but this will be an *apology* for writing in such a manner that some will not like it ; that the author did not know how to write the *truth* concerning *government* and *religion*, in any other way—and if any convince him that these things are not true, he is willing to be taught the right way.

4. A few short pieces here, have been published before, and are again inserted ; because it is the best I know upon the subject.

5. Above all other apologies for this, the *hope* and *belief* that it will be a benefit to the “ *common people* ” is the greatest encouragement to send these things into the world.

DISCOURSE, &c.

Respected Friends and Brethren,

THROUGH the good hand of our God upon us, we are all kindly preserved to see the day in this year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and ten, which brings to our minds the Day, when FIFTY FIVE MEN, in the name of the people of the *United States*, declared these States free and independent of all foreign powers whatever. This bold and wise step, which has been followed with blessings innumerable;—blessings enjoyed by no other nation on earth;—blessings which could never have been enjoyed, had we stood connected with those powers who are now involved in war, and verging on ruin. Were we at this time allied to England or France, their *prosperity* or *adversity* must unavoidably be ours. Though many have wished for an alliance with England *offensive* and *defensive*; and though the plan was laid for that purpose, yet the snare is broken, and we are escaped; our help is in the name of the Lord. There are at this time but two of the States, where a *majority* are against the measures of the general government; and without doubt, the time is near when that *small number* will be less. It is with pleasure we behold

one of the *fifty five* who signed the *Declaration of Independence*, now commander in chief in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts ; and while we see him there, we rejoice to see him the same firm friend to the people, that he was, when he and others pledged their all to defend the declaration which they had made. With all these things in our view, in our possession, is there any duty for us to perform, to God or man ? There certainly is. Who shall instruct us in this ? Shall we go to the school of moralists ? Shall we look to *kings* or *bishops* ; the *decrees* of *popes* or *councils* ? No. We will look to the KING of *kings* for direction in a matter of such *importance*.

This ~~HE~~ has given us in the following words :

MATTHEW XXII. 21.

“RENDER THEREFORE UNTO CESAR THE THINGS WHICH ARE CESAR’S ; AND UNTO GOD THE THINGS THAT ARE GOD’S.”

These words were spoken by Jesus Christ on a very singular occasion. The disciples of the Pharisees, with the Herodians, (men who shaped their religion to the times) tempting him, asked him the following question : “ Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cesar, or not ? ” He told them to shew him a penny. When it was brought, he said, “ Whose is this image and superscription ? ” “ They say unto him Cesar’s.” “ Then saith he unto them, *Render therefore unto Cesar the things which are Cesar’s ; and unto God the things that are God’s.*” The whole amount of this piece of *hypocrisy* in his adversaries, as I understand, is this : They meant to entangle him. He told them he did not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil it.

Had he preached obedience to the Roman law, this would be rejecting Moses' law. If he preached against paying tribute, he would have been complained of as an enemy to the Roman government which the Jews were then under. Their receiving and circulating Cesar's money was an acknowledgment of Cesar's government; this being the case, his reply to them, shewed to them that he was blest with wisdom from above. In these words he says to this amount: if you own this is Cesar's money, or money belonging to the government; if the government which protects you, calls for their own, which you are favored with, give it up when it is called for. If God requires only his own, and nothing but what is reasonable, give him the glory due to his name.— When the government requires that only of you, which you may do, and at the same time render to God the things that are God's, be always ready to do both. Should the government under which we live require that of us which God has forbidden, it would be very wrong to obey,— where the government only requires what is in harmony with what God has commanded, it is sin not to submit.

These words contain two things:

I. *Our duty to the Government.*

II. *Our duty to God, with our duty to the Government under which we live.*

I. *Our duty to the Government.*

Here are two things to be described,

1. *The Government.* 2. *Our duty as subjects.*

The word Government, has an extensive meaning, for it includes all who have any controul over others, whether good or bad; whether God

Christ, angels, devils, good or bad men ; or a government of laws, whether right or wrong. At this time, it is my design to describe governments that have been, which are wrong ; and a government, or constituted authority, which we ought to obey, and which we may obey ; and at the same time, render to God the things which are God's.

There are several kinds of government in the world at this time, and it is proper to notice them in a few words ; that we may know which is the one for us to submit too.

Some writers tell us there are only *three kinds of government* in the world ; *Monarchy, Aristocracy, and Democracy* ; there are, strictly speaking, only two, a good and bad. There is not, and cannot be but one *good government* ; there are many that are bad, this we are certain of from what follows under such governments. “ From the creation of the world down to the flood, including a term of *sixteen hundred and fifty six years*, and for several generations following, there was no government among men that we have an account of, excepting *Patriarchal* ; which consisted in the authority that the head of a family had over his dependants ; consequently about one third part of the world's age ran down, without any such *government* as that which the other two thirds have made such a bustle about. *Nimrod*, the great grandson of *Noah*, had more ambition and address than his cotemporaries, by which means he established a supremacy over them. “ He was a mighty hunter before the Lord.” He hunted men and reduced them to his will ; and by force and fraud, turned the mild *Patriarchal* governments into a *consolidated, energetic Monarchy* ; and fixed his em-

porium at Babylon, seven years before a like *government* was founded in Egypt.

On the first introduction of *Monarchy*, the spirit ran with such velocity, that a king was found in almost every village. Joshua destroyed about *thirty* of them; and Adonibezek cut off the thumbs and great toes of *seventy* more. In the midst of this rage for empireal dignity, the Almighty God set up a government on earth, over the Israelites, unlike all that had been on earth before. God was the sole founder of it. This government was founded in the *twenty fifth* century, from the creation of the world, and was an ecclesiastical political institution. The subjects of this government, received all their laws, both civil and religious, directly from God. The Israelites, however, by their apostacy, had their government turned into a qualified Monarchy; next split, and formed two kingdoms; and after passing through many changes, were driven from their land, and became extinct as a body politic, about sixteen hundred years after this establishment.

While the Israelites were passing through their various changes, other nations were not idle. As far as the cruelty of monarchs; the fraud of demagogues; the din of war; and other evils would admit of, the nations were labouring to find out that *scheme* of government, which would give legislators and magistrates power enough to do good, and yet have the power so counterpoised, that those in the possession of it could *do no harm*. For this purpose, *Monarchies*, *Aristocracies*, and *Republics* were all put to the experiment, and passed through their *rises*, *advances*, full glories, declines, and overthrows.

From the destruction of *Troy*, a few fugitives, with *Eneas* at their head, fled to *Tiburn*, and laid the foundation of that government, (*Rome*) which in time gave law to the world. The *Chaldean*, *Medo-Perſian*, and *Grecian empires*, one after another became prostrate, and *Rome* having passed through six or seven changes in her government, rose to the summit of Empireal dignity with *Augustus Ceasar* at her head, in which time *Christ* was born to rule all nations.

In the days of those kings, the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which will stand forever. This kingdom or government of *Christ*, is radically different in its structure from all the governments that ever were upon the earth. The laws of *Christ* extend to the heart, and take cognizance of every mental exercise. The laws of state do not. The government of *Christ* admits of the sufferings of an innocent person for the guilty. Not so in other governments. In the government of *Christ*, forgiveness of sins, and the resurrection of the dead, are discovered and secured. This, philosophy and state policy could never bring to light. In this government, the *penitent criminal* is pardoned, while the impenitent is punished. Quite otherwise with the laws of men. The kingdom or government of *Christ* is not bounded by territorial limits,—oceans,—or lines of latitude, *but ruleth over all*,—including and favouring all saints of all denominations, in all parts of the world, who, nevertheless are not freed from their allegiance to any good government where they reside ; but are under obligation to all the just laws thereof, and exposed to all their penalties, if they transgress. On the ascension of *Christ*, he left some

authority with his disciples to exercise among themselves ; which extends no farther than a declaration of *who* and *what* they fellowship, and *who* and *what* they do not. He has not left any power among the saints to *impose fines*, or *inflict corporeal punishments* on any man, though the most abandoned. The claim of the *pope*, therefore, and of all *diocesan* or other *religious courts*, to dethrone kings, or punish heretics, is a criminal usurpation."

This is a concise history of governments, particularly of *Monarchies*, from the days of Nimrod to the reign of *Augustus Cesar*, who ordered all the world to be taxed to him. Whoever reads the history of the rise and fall of *Monarchies*, with the *cruelties*, *oppressions*, *wars*, *bloodshed*, *famines*, and all *other evils*, which have been their constant attendants, must be convinced that there is something wrong in such governments ; the governments themselves, are the wrongs. Men have *tried*, and *tried* in vain, to make *Monarchies* better ; but it never has, nor never will be done. *Monarchy* is the will and power of one, without the many. It is a government of man, and not a government of laws. It is resigning that to *one* which heaven has given to *all*. It is giving all the *right* and *liberty* to one, and depriving all the rest of that which God has given to all. This at once sits a tyrant over a nation of slaves. *Aristocracies* differ nothing in nature from *Monarchies*. This is the will of a few, instead of one, and leads to bondage, and all the evils which are found in *Monarchies*.

Many think that the old Roman empire has been overthrown for centuries past, but this is a mistake ; it is now standing, and that city to this

moment rules over the kings of the earth. There is no person in any country, friendly to Monarchies, but is friendly to the Roman government, under the Pope. The ancient form of government, by which Rome ruled the world, has been long laid aside, and the world has been ruled by the *mother of harlots*, who has weakened kings, with the contents of her *golden cup*, and managed them at pleasure, dethroning them, causing a king to hold the stirrup for the Pope, hold his horse's bridle, kiss his great toe, lay under his table, while he ate his dinner, stand at his door four days in the cold, to humble him, before he would restore him to his kingdom. All this has been done in *Rome*. The *Pope* came to this power in the following manner.—Constantine the Roman Emperor, built the city, Byzantium, and called it *Constantinople*, after himself, and removed the seat of government from *Rome* to that city, which gave the bishops of Rome an opportunity to increase in power and dominion, till at last the Roman bishop declared himself, *universal bishop*, and sole emperor of the old *Roman empire*. He wore two swords, to shew that he had temporal and spiritual power on earth, over all kings & bishops, and called himself *Christ's Vicar*, another God upon earth, and for many years, *kings, princes, bishops, and millions besides*, thought all this was true. A large part of Italy was till within a few months the *Pope's territory*, and some part of it was exempt from all human laws whatever, so that all the *rogues* and abominable wretches of every description, who could reach that spot, called the *asylum*, were out of the reach of any human authority, which made the seat of this beast the

centre for all the ungodly *Clergy*, where they could enjoy the benefit of clergy, which was to commit wickedness, and escape punishment from men.

This government has received an awful shock within a few years from the *French Emperor*, who has took away his dominion, to consume it to the end. He has made the Pope *tremble* and flee ; has bound him in chains, and proved to the world that the *thunder* of the pope's excommunication is nothing but a noise. It is not likely that the days of prosperity will ever again return to a long list of popes in Rome.

That the old Roman empire has stood under the popes till within a short time, and ruled over the kings of the earth, is evident from this : in all countries where a set of men are found called the *Clergy*, there we find a lamentation among them on account of the adversity of the pope, and catholic clergy. For many years the clergy in this and other countries, were heard to pray for the fall of Babylon, or the papal power ; but since it began to fall, as their prayers are answered, they have left off ; and now lament, saying, alas, that great city by which we were made rich.— Notwithstanding the catholic clergy were an abominable set of men, practising all kinds of wickedness, under the name of the ministers of God ; pretending to pardon sins ; pray souls out of purgatory, and robbing the people of their money ; yet when they had blood to drink, and were imprisoned in the *churches*, *beheaded*, or *banished*, for their wickedness, &c. Dr. *Osgood*, in his *David's lamentation* over them, said that the government of France had put to death *twenty four thousand*

gospel ministers ; just like himself, I should suppose. The *Clergy* have for many years been dressed in black, and are *now* dressed in mourning from Paf-samaquoddy to Georgia, as well as in various parts of Europe. They have delivered several funeral sermons on the occasion ; Dr. Osgood's at Cambridge, and Mr. Parish's election sermon, may be taken as samples, with some of Dr. Dwight's poetical dirges to be sung at the funeral of Popery. The clergy appear alarmed, and no wonder, the vial is poured out upon the seat of the beast, and they gnaw their tongues for pain.

In all Monarchical governments for ages past, there has been something *invented, encouraged, established, and forced* upon the people without their consent, calculated to keep them in bondage and ignorance, and to raise a set of idle masters over them, called *religion*. This has ever been a curse to mankind ; for whatever is called religion, which is dependent on *kings, emperors, or bishops*, for its existence, is not the true religion, and is therefore an injury, and not a benefit to society. That Religion which is upheld by human laws, is **IDOLATRY**. The first religious establishment in the world, was in the first kingdom in the world, at Babylon. Nimrod established the kingdom, and Nebuchadnezzar, established an Idolatrous worship in that kingdom.

The account of this establishment is recorded in Daniel iii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, "Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was three score cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits ; he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the

governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up."

Here is a pattern of a religious establishment which has been followed in all ages, down to this day, and in almost all countries.

1. The king invented the worship; and respect to the image, was respect to the king; for when they bowed to his image, they obeyed him. This is the case in the present day; the king commands, and we must obey.

2. The *Princes—Governors—Captains—Judges—Treasurers—Counsellors—Sheriffs*—and all the

rulers of the provinces were at the dedication, to sanction what the king had commanded.— What the king commands, and all the great men in the kingdom approve of, it is thought must certainly be right. If the rulers have believed, this is enough with many.

3. The worship being appointed by the king, and approved of by all the great men in the kingdom, the people must be driven to obedience, if they are not voluntary in their submission. Obedience or death, at a certain time. They shall attend public worship once in so many months, or be fined. They shall have preaching three months out of six, or pay a fine, or be imprisoned for not paying the ministers tax, &c.

4. This established Idolatry, was not constant, but at stated times,—when they heard the sound of all the musical instruments. Such a kind of worship is carried on to this day, when the *bell*, calls them together, they must wait till they hear the sound of the *flute, harp, clarinet, bass viol, organ, and fiddle* ; then all must begin the *service* as it is called ; all must worship in appearance, for the space of an half hour or more, then all are dismissed, the worship is over for that week, unless they should happen to hear the sound of the musical instruments again before another week.

5. All who refused, were to be burnt alive, for their disobedience, if fire would burn them.

This is a sample of all *religious establishments*, in all kingdoms, down to this day. How many innocent men and women in England, France, and other countries, have been burnt alive, because they would not worship the image which the king had set up, and the rulers acknowledged ! O that America was clear of such *Idolatry* !

6. Notwithstanding all this, there were some whom the king could not command ; and those he could not punish. He cast three into the furnace, and they came out unhurt. This led him to a *toleration act*,—they may worship their God, and none shall speak amiss of him ; if they do, they shall be cut in pieces, and their houses made a dunghill. This has been done in several kingdoms. In England when they could not, by *imprisoning, burning, hanging, drowning*, nor any other way, prevent the dissenters from worshipping God contrary to law, they then passed the *toleration act*, that they might worship in another way ; but they must pay tithes of all they possess, for the support of the *Clergy* of the *established, idolatrous religion* of the kingdom, of the protestant name, Episcopal form, with the king for the head of the church, and the Lord Archbishop for his *head*, to conduct him in leading strings as he shall please to direct. We need not look far to see all these things in *miniature* at least, if not in full length.

What a variety of names and forms have been invented to keep up the credit of such establishments in different kingdoms. *Hierarchies, Ecclesiastical courts, Inquisitions, Rubrics, Consistories, Canons, Creeds, Covenants, Platforms, Systems of Divinity, Confessions of faith, Popes, Cardinals, Jesuits, Clergy* in the Romish Idolatry. *Patriarchs, Clergy* in the Greek Idolatry, Lord Archbishops, Archbishops, Bishops, Rectors, Rural deans, Curates, Primates in the English Idolatry, *Reverends, D. D's, Trinitarians, Professors &c.* in the American Idolatry ; all these things sanctioned by the king, and the rulers of the people, for *our holy religion*, the religion of our fathers ; a religion

which led them to *whip some, imprison some, banish some, and hang some* ; besides taking property by force to support priests who ride upon a government where such things are sanctioned by law. The men called teachers in this religion, may with propriety say of this establishment as Demetrius did of his shrines : “ *By this we have our wealth* ;” for when their annual income stops, they preach no more there ; but if that goes on, they will preach (or read) if there is not more than one to hear.

In all *Monarchical governments*, there are three things to awe the people into subjection to tyrants :
1. The King. 2. The standing Army. 3. The Priests.

Before we describe the government of this Country, a government which is the delight of all the sons of Liberty, and the terror of *civil and ecclesiastical tyrants*, we will present a Picture of these three things, to tyrants and people, at this time, when a free people are triumphing over the plans of open and secret enemies, who have endeavoured to overthrow a *free government*, and establish tyranny in its stead.

The PICTURE, is this :—Two companies standing in sight of each other, one large, the other small. The large containing every profession useful to society ; the other small, wearing marks of distinction, appearing as though they did no labour, yet in rich attire, glittering with gold and silver, while their plump and ruddy countenances, prove them persons of leisure and riches.

The *large* company standing at a distance from the *small*, thus addressed them :

“ Why do ye stand thus apart from us ?—Are not ye of our number ?”

“ No (replied the other) ye are *the people* ; but we are quite a different order ; we are a *dignified and privileged class* ; we have separate *laws, customs and rights* peculiar to ourselves.”

People. “ And what species of labour is it, that ye have a share in performing in this society of ours ?”

Privileged Class. “ None : we are not made to labour.”

People. “ How then have ye acquired your wealth ?”

Privileged Class. “ By taking the pains to govern you.”

People. “ To govern us, to be sure ! a pretty kind of *governing* truly ! We have the toil, and you the enjoyment ; we produce, and you spend ; wealth flows from the sweat of our *brows*, and you engross it to yourselves. Go, ye *dignified and privileged*, who are not of *the people*, go and form a nation apart, and govern yourselves.”

Privileged Class. [*speaking among themselves, said*] “ to mix and place ourselves on a level with the *common people*, would be beyond all measure degrading and vilifying. What ! are they not born to serve us ? and are we not men of a totally distinct blood and superior pedigree ? And the *civil governors* said, the people are *mild and tractable*, and naturally *servile*, we must speak to them in the name of the *king* and the *law*, and they will shortly return to their duty. *People* ! It is the *royal will and pleasure* of our sovereign lord the *king*, he commands, and graciously ordains.”

People. “ The king has no will or pleasure of his own, in his political capacity, independent of the safety and welfare of the people ;—he can

neither command nor ordain but according to the sovereign voice of the law, under which, like ourselves, *he is a subject.*"

Civil Governors. "The law calls upon you for submission."

People. "The law is a general will ; and a reformation of abuses is our will."

Civil Governors. "Ye are in that case, a rebellious people."

People. "NATIONS never revolt ; tyrants only are rebels."

Civil Governors. "The king is on our side, and he enjoins you to submit."

People. "KINGS cannot be separated from their respective nations, of which they form a constituent part or member. The king of ours cannot, of course, be on your side ; ye can, therefore, have nothing but his bare shadow to substantiate your pretensions."

"Then the *Military Governors* advanced, and said, the people are timid ; let us threaten them ; there is no way of bringing them to obedience but by force. *Soldiers chastise this insolent rabble !*"

People. "Soldiers, are not we all of one kindred, and children of the same national family ? Will ye strike your own brethren ? If *the people* be destroyed, who will support the army ?" And the *soldiers* grounding their arms, said to their chiefs, "we too are a part of *the people*, shew us the enemy."

"Then the *Ecclesiastical Governors* said ; there is now but one resource left. *The people* are superstitious ; we must awe and intimidate them with the names of God and religion."

Priests. "Our dearly beloved brethren ! our faithful children ! God has specially commissioned us to govern you."

People. "Produce the patent of his commission."

Priests. "Ye must have faith ; reason bewilders and leads men astray."

People. "And would you govern without recourse to reason?"

Priests. "God is the God of peace ; religion enjoins you to obey."

People. "Peace naturally supposes justice ; and obedience implies the observance of an acknowledged and pre-existing law."

Priests. "Men are only sent into this world for trial and suffering."

People. "Shew us then an example by suffering yourselves."

Priests. "Would you live without God or kings?"

People. "We wish to live without tyrants."

Priests. "Ye cannot do without *mediators* to *intercede* and act in your behalf."

People. "Ye *mediators* with God, and with kings ! ye *courtiers* and *priests* ! your services are too expensive ; henceforth we mean to take the management of our affairs into our own hands."

Then the privileged class exclaimed, "*We are lost, it is all over with us ; the people are enlightened !*"

"And the people replied ; no, no, by being lost, ye are saved ; for, since we are enlightened, our power shall not be abused ;—our desires extend not beyond our just rights. Resentment it were impossible not to feel, but we shall now bury it in the grave of oblivion ; we were slaves, we can now command ; but, our will is only to be free, and by willing it, we are so."

Although the above Picture was originally designed for the *Europeans* ; yet it may with pro-

priety be hung up in the *parlours* and *cottages* in America, as a warning to *tyrants*, and encouragement to *the people*, to remain free while they are so.

Having given a short description of *Monarchies*, with the things contained in them, under the names of *Aristocracies*, *Hierarchies*, *Consistories*, &c. we now proceed to a short description of the government of this country; a country of which we may say, "the lines are fallen to us in pleasant places, and we have a goodly heritage."

Our government is a *Republican*, or *Democrati- cal* one, in the full sense of the word; which means a *government* of the people, and not of *one* or a *few* of the many. The People first chose the government; next they adopted it, and last of all they are determined to retain and defend it; though many without and within this government are opposed to it.

Until the fourth of July, 1776, which is thirty four years ago this day, these States were *British colonies*, under the controul of a *foreign, despotic, ecclesiastical, tyrannical* Power. And had it not been for the Declaration of Independence made and acknowledged by Britain on that day, by fifty five men, in the name and behalf of an whole nation; a day which we now rejoice to mention; we should this day, instead of rejoicing as free-men, been a nation of slaves, groaning in bondage at home, confined in prisonships, or bleeding in the field of battle, to gratify the pride and ambition of a few who think themselves born only to rule. With what propriety did the Congress of these States appeal to the Supreme Judge of the world, for the rectitude of their intentions, when they withdrew their allegiance from the king of

Britain, and declared themselves free and independent States ! Who can forbear to rejoice in that event, and in the consequences of the same, which have come to the people at this day.

The words used to describe the Constitution of our Republican government, are words of music ; instead of his *sacred majesty*, or his *holiness the pope*, are these words :

“ WE, THE PEOPLE of the *United States*, in order to form a more perfect union, establish Justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of Liberty to ourselves, and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,” viz.

“ All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives. The House of Representatives shall be composed of members chosen every second year, by THE PEOPLE of the several States,” &c.

“ The executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his office for the term of four years.”

“ The Judiciary powers of the United States shall be vested in one supreme court, and in such inferior courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish.”

“ Congress shall make NO LAW respecting an ESTABLISHMENT of RELIGION, or prohibiting the FREE exercise thereof ; or abridging the FREEDOM of Speech, or of the PRESS ; or the right of THE PEOPLE peaceably to assemble, and petition the government for a *redress of grievances*.”

These are only a few of the many good things contained in the Constitution of this REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT, where THE PEOPLE are considered as acting, instead of being their own worst enemies, not fit to govern themselves, &c. *Washington, Franklin, Jefferson, Madison, Langdon, Gerry,* and others, thought THE PEOPLE were capable of acting and choosing public men, as servants to act by their appointment, and to be recalled, when they found them acting contrary to the general good of the THE PEOPLE.

We read with peculiar satisfaction, the third article in the amendment of the Constitution of the *United States*; where it is said, "CONGRESS SHALL MAKE NO LAW RESPECTING AN ESTABLISHMENT OF RELIGION, OR PROHIBITING THE FREE EXERCISE THEREOF." Notwithstanding Dr. Morse is a *Federalist*, a *State priest*, an advocate for State religion; yet, he has made the following just remarks upon the Constitution of the United States:

"The Constitution of the United States provides against the making of any law respecting an *Establishment of Religion*, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. And in the Constitutions of the respective States, religious liberty is a fundamental principle. In this *important* article, our government is distinguished from that of every other nation, if we except France. Religion here is placed on its proper basis; without the feeble and unwarranted aid of the civil power, it is left to be supported by its own evidence, by the lives of its professors, and the Almighty care of its Divine Author." [See Morse's *Geo.* vol. 1. p. 268.

Who could have thought of such noble things!

from Dr. Morse! Compare this with one of his last sermons, his notes from Barruel, Ocean Massacre, plans to upset Religion, &c. &c. He speaks of it as an excellent thing for the Constitution of the United States, to provide against a law for religious establishments. He says, that "in the Constitutions of the respective States, religious Liberty is a fundamental principle." True, and what trouble has come on the people by not attending to this particular.

As the *Constitution* of the *United States* declares all men free, so does the Constitution of each State in the Union. In this particular, (says Dr. Morse,) "Our government is distinguished from that of every other nation." This witness is true; and though other governments in the world are called Republics; yet ours is the only one on earth, which is so in every sense. This is the reason our government does not shake, while so many others are shaking and removing, as things that are made. This is the reason why so many of the civil and ecclesiastical *nobility* are against it. Our government is in reality, what it is called—**A REPUBLIC.** There are many in this country, who would be willing to have a *Republican government*, if the same things were established by law, as are established in Monarchies. They would rejoice to have a Republican government, that would harmonize with the British government, where the people are divided into *Clergy* and *Laity*.

In consequence of being under such a government, the people of almost every State are free to act for themselves, in matters of Religion; and was each Constitution consistent with itself, and

with the Constitution of the United States, and were there no laws made contrary to the Constitution of each State, all would be free from that oppression which many experience in different parts of New England.

There is certainly a defect somewhere, or there would not be such complaints as are heard, particularly in Massachusetts. If the Constitution and laws of this State were in harmony with the general government, should we see men forced to pay a tax for the support of a minister of another denomination? should we see men deprived of their money by force? should we see their *horses, cows, sheep, swine, bibles, &c.* taken from them and sold at auction in this State, if the laws were in harmony with the general government? We should not. If the tree was good, the fruit would not be corrupt. I will here quote a few words from the Bill of rights, acknowledged by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In the second article, it is declared, to be, "The *right* as well as duty, of all men in society, publicly, and at stated seasons, to worship the Supreme Being, the great Creator and Preserver of the Universe. And no subject shall be *hurt, molested, or restrained*, in his *person, liberty, or estate*, for worshipping God in the manner and season most agreeable to the dictates of his own conscience, or for his religious profession or sentiments, provided he does not disturb the public peace, or obstruct others in their religious worship." This is exactly in harmony with the Constitution of the United States; this some of the citizens in this Commonwealth enjoy, and some do not. In all the seaport towns, the people enjoy this right, they are not molested, hurt, or

restrained, in their persons or property ; each one worships as he pleases, if he worships at all. Some in the country towns enjoy the same. The Quakers, and Shaking Quakers, are not molested or restrained in their persons or estates, though they are not incorporated. And their being unincorporated, is not used as an argument in favour of taxing them to the State Clergy. The Baptists, Methodists, Universalists, & Christians, who perhaps, taken collectively, are as good citizens as the others, are by law deprived of a privilege allowed to the citizens in the seaports, and to the Quakers, or Friends. The other *good citizens*, who are willing, and do give their money to support the government, must be taxed to the parish priest, whom they never hear ; may try to draw it out of the treasury, sue the town, be troubled with vexatious and expensive lawsuits, and then be frequently denied the right which others enjoy free from expense. They have their property taken from them by force, sold at auction, and some of them *imprisoned* ; because they plead for their right according to the second article of the Bill of rights. These things are unjust violations of the Constitution of this Commonwealth, and ought not to pass unnoticed. The people ought to remember, that when the Constitution of the United States was adopted, a new government was received, exactly opposite to the British government. They ought to remember, that when the Constitution of this Commonwealth was adopted, a new State government was adopted, upon a principle entirely different from that which leads to hanging and banishing those who worshipped God contrary to law.

The fact appears to me to be this, a new government is adopted, new laws are made as to things political ; and that the old laws concerning what is called *religion* stands, or new ones are made to enforce the old ones.

The same *Hierarchy* which was a part of the old colony government of Massachusetts, is now standing, and though it is left out of the Constitution, as an outcast, yet the Legislature has taken it in, and made provision for its existence, and the maintenance of those who build upon that foundation. When Dr. Morse said, " Religion here [in America, in Mass.] is placed on its proper basis ; without the feeble and unwarranted aid of the civil power, it is left to be supported by its own evidence, by the lives of its professors, and the Almighty care of its Divine Author," he surely did not mean the old *Hierarchy* of Massachusetts ; for if the civil power was to leave that, as the Constitution has, it would not be three months, (I conclude) before nearly every State priest would be out of employ ; for there are but few towns who like them well enough to support them. There is a law to oblige every body politic to employ one of them three months out of six, or pay a fine from 30 to 100 dollars for every such neglect ;—some parishes have them to save the fine, and some pay the fine to save money.—If there was no more in the laws of Massachusetts to support state priests, than there is in the *Constitution*, they would be like the fish when the rivers are dried up ; they would choak in the air.

To do justice to this part of my subject, and to my hearers, it is necessary to give a short description of this *Hierarchy*, with some of the laws made

to support it. Though this is not in the Constitution, yet it is in various parts of the body, and may be purged out by applying something to the seat of life,—It has broke out in several parts of the body, and though several pieces of *court plaster* have been applied, yet a cure is not effected, and never will be till measures are taken to drive it from every part of the body. The *Hierarchy* or *State Religion*, is this, according to the best understanding I have of it:—

A COMPOUND,—1. *Of good words.* 2. *Paganism,* 3. *Tradition.* 4. *Superstition.* 5. *Inequality.* 6. *Oppression.* 7. *Bondage.* 8. *Pride.* 9. *Gain to a few, and loss to many, with misery and destruction; upheld by human laws.*

All this I think can be proved from the laws now in force, and from the history of those who have been the advocates of this religion.

1. The first thing in this religion is *good words.* The law mentions a "*Supreme Being, worshipping God, Teachers of Religion, Lord's Day, Piety,*" &c. These are the good words and fair speeches, which deceive the hearts of the simple. Were a stranger barely to read these good words in the laws of Massachusetts, he would think himself among the most upright people on earth; but what must his mind be, when reading the *Paganism, Superstition, Inequality, Oppression, Bondage, Pride,* and all other things equally ruinous, which stand with these good words.

2. A second part of this compound, is *PAGANISM.* By this I mean, that which originated among those who worshipped idols.

Almost the whole of what was parish religion in *Rome*, in the days of *Numa*, is enjoined by law

in Massachusetts ; and is as much *paganism* under the name of christianity, as under the government of the Romans. People in general look at the name ; but let us look at the nature of this pagan part.

Parish Religion is a part of *paganism* ; it originated in Rome under Numa ; was brought into England from thence, and it was spread into this country from England. The word PARISH, signifies the precinct of a parochial church, or a circuit of ground inhabited by people who belong to one meeting-house, and are under the particular charge of its minister. [See Ency.] Every person almost in the state, has heard of the *parish*, and of the religion peculiar to it.

Where did these parish matters originate ? In Rome ; more than two thousand years ago. The Romans considered this kind of religion as an engine of government, and in all ages of Rome it has been practised with success.

Romulus divided the city into thirty *Curia*, that is, Parishes. In each parish one man presided, or ruled, called Curio, or curate. Each parish had a temple and God. On certain stated days the law obliged the people to assemble at the public hall built for that purpose, and consecrated or dedicated, to the parish deity. The curate was elected by the parish ; his office was for life. His family were exempted from paying taxes, and bearing arms, supported by public funds, and honored with many privileges. [See Rollin's Reign of Romulus. Robinson's Researches.]

Though some pretended that this *Parish Religion* was divine ; yet the learned in Rome knew it was a cheat, and the theory of this Roman re-

ligion, established by law, was a theory of superstition, incorporated into civil government by *fraud*, and imposed on the Empire by *force*.

What is the difference between parish religion in *Rome, England, and Massachusetts*? There must be a *temple*, dedicated to God, they say; but afterwards, it is called and considered the minister's house; minister's church; and minister's parish, and tax. He is considered the *parish God*, for when he is gone, the door is shut; there is nothing to worship. Here the minister is settled for life; exempted from taxes, and so on. This is *paganism* under the name of Christianity; supported by the law of the State.

Another part of paganism, is a law to make people worship on a particular day, more than any other; this was an ancient law of Rome, and was a part of parish religion. Such a thing as binding men to observe one day, more than another, was never enjoined after the birth of Christ, till the reign of Constantine. Jesus nor his apostles never bound men to worship on particular days, but told every man to be fully persuaded in his own mind. Constantine undertook, influenced by the clergy, to make men religious once in a week, and from him it is handed down and is now a part of *State Religion*.

The following account of the law made by Constantine, concerning the Lord's day, is given in the *Encyclopedia*, in these words: "It was Constantine the great, who first made a law for the proper observation of Sunday; (or Lord's day) and who according to Eusebius, appointed it should be regularly celebrated throughout the Roman Empire. Before him, and even in his

time, they observed the Jewish Sabbath as well as Sunday ; both to satisfy the law of Moses, and to imitate the apostles, who used to meet together on the first day.

By Constantine's law made in the year 321, it was decreed, that for the future, the Sunday should be kept as a day of rest in all cities and towns ; but he allowed the country people to follow their work. In the year 538, the council of Orleans prohibited country labour ; but because there were still many Jews in Gaul, (or France) and the people fell into many superstitious usages in the celebration of the new Sabbath, like those of the Jews among that of the old ; the council declares, that to hold it unlawful to travel with horses, cattle, and carriages, to prepare food, or to do any thing necessary to cleanliness and decency of houses, or of persons, favours more of Judaism than of Christianity." [See Ency. article Sunday.]

If Jesus Christ and the apostles have not bound us to one day, the State has no right to do it. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind, is the declaration of Paul. This account proves, that a law to make men religious once in a week, so that the priest may get his money, is a part of paganism ; which originated in Rome where the parish law begun.

I believe it a duty to assemble together for public worship, on the first day of the week, but I do not meet on that day because Moses says, remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy ; if I did, I should meet the seventh day instead of the first. I do not meet on that day because the state law says so ; for if I did, it would be submitting to a part of state religion which is idolatry ; but I

follow after the example of Christ, the apostles, and primitive saints who loved the example of Christ so well, that they needed no law to bind them to meet once in three months, or pay a fine.

3. A third part of this compound is TRADITION. This means something unscriptural handed down from one generation to another, and believed and practised, because others have done it, and not because the Lord has commanded it.

Human doctrines and practices, are introduced and practised in this State, by the clergy; and multitudes of the people receive them as the commands of God, and at the same time they set aside the commands of God, to keep their traditions. The practice of sprinkling children, owning the covenant, as it is called, being propounded, their method of ordaining priests, thanksgiving and fast days, &c. are all unscriptural, & only the traditions of their fathers.

4. SUPERSTITION, is a fourth part of this awful mixture. Superstition, signifies ignorant worship; or manifesting respect to that which a person is ignorant of. This was the situation of the people in Athens, when they worshipped the unknown God. Paul told them they were too superstitious in all things.

The Samaritans were in the same situation. Jesus said, "ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship, salvation is of the Jews."

The greater part of the state religion worshippers are of this kind. This superstition seems to be entailed on the people. The priest to be acceptable to a parish, must serve according to ancient custom, or not be called by the parish. To be acceptable, he must read and practise to please

them ; if he does not he is sure to be turned away. In this way, *priest* and *people* remain ignorant of the right way. If a man preaches to this class of people what the new testament says, he is considered a *deceiver*, a *wolf*, an ignorant man, or idle ; turning the world upside down, and endeavouring to destroy all religion, &c.

Thousands think, if they go to their meeting-house once in each week, sit down when a few sing—stand up when the minister says his prayer ; sit, asleep or awake, while the parson reads, stand to hear the, “ now blessed,” &c. and attend to the common diversions of the week—pay their minister’s tax, and make a profession of State religion, all will be well.

5. **INEQUALITY**, is another part of this compound, called **RELIGION**. One article of their bill of rights declares, that all men are born free and equal ; this is true, and this is the nature of true religion. The second article declares all men equal and free respecting religion, and had it not been for this *state religion*, the laws of the state would have been in harmony with the second article of the bill of rights.

As it is a right which all men have to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences ; what business has any body of men on earth to enforce that right, or make laws to bind men to their rights ? do not men love their rights well enough to hold them without a law to oblige them to do it ? Is there any need of a law to make men use or enjoy their property ? surely no. All needful is, that others should not deprive them of that which they do not wish to be deprived of. This religion is exactly contrary to **EQUALITY**.

6. Another part of this State compound is, **OPPRESSION**.—The whole history of this *State Religion*, is an history of one party, oppressing another, and it is not possible, that any thing called *religion* can be established by law without oppression. This has been the case in Massachusetts ever since one denomination undertook by law, to rule others in matters of religion. How were the baptists fined, imprisoned, shut out of their meeting-house, tied at the publick post and whipped, for preaching contrary to law, and even banished, barely because they would not acknowledge that to be right, which by sad experience they knew was *oppression*.

How were the poor Quakers oppressed by this state religion. They were fined, imprisoned, banished, and hung; though they were industrious peaceable citizens. O how many peaceable men, and good citizens, have been devoured by this hateful monster; which the clergy are paying all attention too, *lest it die!!!!*

7. Another part of this monster called *religion* is, **BONDAGE**.—Any thing called religion, which tends to *bondage*, is contrary to true religion, which instead of bringing free people into bondage, gives liberty to those that are bound. This *state religion* gendereth to bondage; it entails bondage to posterity, and but few of the children of these captives, dare go one step beyond the bounds set by their fathers.

I will shew you in a few particulars, wherein this *Bondage* called religion, consists.

1. It binds all the people of a parish to meet in one place, whether it is any advantage to them or not. There are many people who really think

it wrong to meet any where excepting in the parish house ; and at any time excepting when the minister says they must meet.

How would these people feel if they were obliged always to go to one store to buy, whether the articles were good or bad ; and whether the man who attended was an honest man or a rogue. They would call it bondage indeed ; but, in matters of much more importance than these things, they are bound to attend in one place, let what will be *read* to them, and let the minister's character be ever so bad.

2. This state religion binds the people to certain things, and forbids an examination of their being right or wrong. The catechism, (which is a body of state religion divinity) must be crowded into the memories of children by their parents in early life, and enforced by the *awful presence of a priest*, once in so long a time, in what they call the house of God. This is training them up in bondage, that when they are old they cannot depart from it ;—like Peter, they find another has bound them, and many are led where otherwise they would not. Next to this shackle, they must own their *baptismal covenant* ; a yoke of bondage their parents put on them before they were capable of action ; and this yoke their parents think best for them to bear in their youth. After this they own the covenant, and become a member of the ministers church, which deprives them of all the mental liberty they ever had ; they must never learn any more ; but must dwell in this BASTILE the remainder of their days with the officer, (the priest) who keeps them. Besides this, they must be bound by law to a priest for life, they, THEIR children, their land, and all

they have, unless they move to another town where there is the same bondage. The *priest* they are bound to maintain so long as the breath of life is in him, whether he is useful or not; the *priest* is bound to them, and they to him, for life; he can go when he is determined on it; but the people cannot get rid of him, unless they give a large sum of money to him, to give up his good bargain, which he holds against them for life.

3. This is not the whole of the *Bondage* belonging to this ungodly mixture. Every town, parish, precinct, district, body politic, and religious society, is bound by *State law* to have a public protestant teacher of piety, religion and morality; three months in every six, or pay a fine, of not less than thirty dollars nor more than sixty for the first neglect, and for each and every like offence after the first, a fine not less than sixty dollars, nor more than one hundred dollars, with cost of prosecution, which money shall be disposed of for the public worship of God. This act is so unjust and contrary to the rights and liberty mentioned in the constitution of Massachusetts, that I think proper here to mention it and make a few remarks upon it.

It was passed March 4, 1800, and is found in Vol. 3, page 105, " *Be it further enacted*, that every corporate town, parish, precinct, district and other body politic or religious society aforesaid, is hereby required to be constantly supplied with a public protestant teacher of piety, religion and morality; and in defaults of being so provided and supplied, for the term of three months in any six months, such town, parish, precinct, district, and other body politic, or religious society, which

shall in the judgment of the court of general sessions of the peace for the same country be adjudged of sufficient ability to be so provided, shall pay a fine, for a first offence, of a sum not exceeding *sixty dollars*, nor less than *thirty*; and for each and every like offence after the first, a fine not exceeding *one hundred dollars*, nor less than *sixty dollars*; together with cost of prosecution; such fine to be recovered by indictment in the court of general sessions of the peace in the country where such delinquency may happen, and levied on the inhabitants composing such town, parish, precinct, district, and other body politic, or religious society, so delinquent, in the same manner as other fines are levied on the inhabitants of towns. And every such fine shall be disposed of, by order of said court, to the support of the public worship of God in such religious society in the same county, as, in the opinion of said court shall stand most in need thereof."

This law in the first place, contradicts all that is said concerning the rights and liberty of the people, and positively declares without reserve, that all towns, parishes, &c. shall be constantly supplied with publick *protestant* teachers of piety, religion and morality, and does not allow them to be without it any three months, out of six.

What an unreasonable law is this! What if the people cannot find such teachers as these? Must they pay a fine of 60 dollars? First the law says they must have public protestant teachers of piety, religion and morality. Where shall they be found? Not among the clergy; they have not entered any protest against the church of Rome; the clergy have submitted, and not protested;

and according to the above act, all the clergy ought to be dismissed.

After this act was passed, to be consistent, it should have said, "*And be it further enacted,*" that if the Supreme Being does not send as many public *protestant* teachers as there are towns, parishes, precincts, districts, bodies politic, and religious societies, that the commonwealth shall make up the lack.

This law gives no liberty to the people at all ; not even to judge of their abilities to employ an hireling. The court must judge of that, if they do not have a public teacher three months out of six. The law says, they shall pay a fine from 30 to 100 dollars, for such neglect. The law should not stop here ; it should have said, "*and be it further enacted,*" that every such teacher shall preach faithfully, and constantly three months out of six, or forfeit his salary and pay a fine not exceeding one hundred dollars, nor less than sixty." "*And be it further enacted,*" that every wicked, swearing, lying, drunken person, with all the *fearful, unbelieving, abominable, whoremongers,* and all *hypocrites,* whether priests, or others, shall repent of all such sins and turn from them, and live soberly, righteously, and Godly, in every three months out of six, after this law is published ; and for the first neglect, they shall forfeit all their estates, for the second neglect, they shall suffer six months imprisonment ; and for the third offence, they shall be hung by the common hangman as a warning to others."

The fact concerning this law as far as I can judge is this ; in this State, were a number of young men who had been sent to college to be

made up into ministers ; when they came out, they were such useless creatures, that the towns would not employ them ; on this account I conclude it was that this law was made. Like this ; a number of merchants have a cargo of bad Rum ; which cost them fifty cents per. gallon ; it is all their property, and will not sell ; the consequence of this is, they must be reduced at once to poverty, and come upon their friends for a living ; their friends to help them, and save their own money, being influential in the court, carry in a petition, that every town, parish, precinct, district, body politic, and religious society, shall purchase so much of the bad rum as shall include the whole cargo when equally divided among the people of the commonwealth ; or pay a fine not exceeding one hundred cents, nor less than sixty cents ; to be given to those men who are the owners of the rum.

Should such a law as this be enacted, the wickedness of it would be founded not only through the State but through the world ; but when a law of the same nature is passed, respecting men who find no employ, unless the people are drove to it ; the law goes down with the majority, who think it an excellent thing to have such a good government which drives them to make a debt and pay it. What would be the consequence of a law made for people to employ lawyers, physicians, mechanics, &c. three months out of every six, or pay a fine, not exceeding one hundred dollars, nor less than thirty ? *There would soon be rebellion in the State.* There would be the same injustice, and bondage in it that there is in this law to hire *priests.* The fact is, other men find employment,

as they are useful ; and were the clergy a useful set of men, there would be no need of a law to oblige people to buy them, as they would stinking Rum.

This is a short description of the bondage particular to State religion.

8. Another part of this State religion is, PRIDE. This is abundantly evident to all who look at the conduct of those who are the leaders in this state religion. Many who are members of these *state churches*, look down with disdain on those who know and love better things than state religion contains. The ministers of this religion are in general, with their families, patterns of pride to the whole parish, this cannot be denied. They have every advantage to be so. The people are by them kept in *ignorance, oppression and bondage* ; on these things the clergy set easy, while the people groan under them. The *pride* of the clergy leads them to think themselves above all excepting a few of the first people in the town. The *priest* through *pride*, thinks he must have the best house in the parish, the finest place in the temple, adorned, with silk hangings, cushings, tassels, eagles, or some other ravenous bird. In his dress he must excel all in fopery ; there is not such a company of fops in dress in Boston, as the *state religion clergy* ; see them in their *sanctums*, with their *surplices, bands, powdered heads or wigs* ; and their actions, which are in uniform with their dress. All this is encouraged by law, and poor people labour night and day to support them in it.

9. Another part of this state monster is, " GAIN TO A FEW, loss to many, misery and destruction. — This is at the bottom of all these things. Accor-

ding to the conduct of the *state clergy*; their gain is the principle object, in all they do; though they pretend a love to the people; yet when the salary stops, the fine gentleman is gone, without any regard to the flock he before pretended to love. These are the men who bite with the teeth, and cry peace, and he that putteth not into their mouths, they prepare war against him.

I do not think this religion is confined to Massachusetts. In Connecticut, it may be seen in a *full length portrait*; in Newhampshire, it is in *miniature*; in Vermont it lies with its face uncovered in a coffin, with a few dressed in black, weeping over its dead remains, like *Charlotte at the tomb of Werter*. It has entered Rhodeisland by a *permit only*.

This description of state religion and government must suffice at present. We proceed

2d. To mention the duty we owe to the government. "Render therefore to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's." Allowing that *state religion* is of God, this text ought to read thus: "Render unto Cæsar the things that are God's, and unto God the things that are Cæsars's." For instead of obeying God in matters of religion, if the state has a right to make religious laws, then our duty is to obey the state law, and not the law which God has given. Some will have it that the Magistrate is appointed to make laws to enforce the law of God. What weakness! A great king makes a law, and a little king another to enforce it! Where God commands, if we do not obey, *He* will punish, and not men.

There are several things included in our duty to the government under which we live.

1. The first is to *honor* and *obey* those in authority, who are just men ruling in the fear of God—men who love and recommend a republican government. Such are the Magistrates at this day, from the President of the United States, down to almost every Chief Magistrate through this country. There are but two Governors but are republicans—such are friends to the Constitution and union of the States. Paul tells us our duty where such men are in authority. Rom. xiii. 1, 2, 3—“Let every soul be subject to the higher powers. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Be afraid, for he beareth not the sword in vain.”

2. It is our duty to obey Magistrates, in every thing that is not in opposition to “rendering to God the things that are God’s.” Titus iii. 1—“Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work.”

3. It is our duty to pay tribute, or give part with the rest to support government, as we are sharers in the privileges of a good government. “Render therefore to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom. For for this cause pay ye tribute also; for they are God’s ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.”

4. It is our duty to speak well, and not evil of the rulers, and so encourage others to obey; and with speaking well, we are to lead quiet and peaceable lives, in all godliness and honesty. Our duty to magistrates, is confined to civil matters, not to religious. This is a matter between God and each individual which the magistrate is not

to concern with. How beautiful would the government of this State appear, if every law was in harmony with the second article of the Bill of Rights ! if each man acted his mind in religious affairs, as he does when he carries his vote for Governor, Senator, Representative, &c. How well it would be for the State, if ministers were chosen by the people from year to year, as magistrates are, instead of being crowded on them for life by a small majority, and entailed on one half of a generation who had no hand in settling them ! What figure would this State make among the nations, if they were to elect a Governor for life, and when they wished to be clear, give him several hundred dollars to give up his seat ! We should be considered a race of *idiots*. How much nearer wise men are those, who will bind themselves, their children, and estates to support a priest for life, barely because they are pleased with him when he is first settled among them ? I pray God the day may come, when this *tyrannical practice*, belonging to the *old British hierarchy* may come to an end, and that men may be as free in things religious, as in things political. These things are a part of *George's government* left in this country when he withdrew his troops from our shores, and ordered them to the other side of the Atlantic. This *Hierarchy* is left to be overcome by little and little, and will finally be dissolved, and "leave not a wreck behind."

II. *We now proceed to speak of our duty to God, in connection with our duty to the government under which we live.*

I consider that all required of us by our Creator, is included in the word RELIGION. There is, perhaps, at this day, no one word more used by all classes of people, than this word. Some say, *Religion* is an imposition on the people. Some say, *Religion* is coming to nothing. Some say, *Religion* is any thing people wish to make it. Some say, all sorts of *Religion* are true. Some say, all sorts of *Religion* are false. Some say, all sorts of *Religion* are useful. Some say, *Religion* will stand and prevail through all the earth, being not only independent of government, but above all earthly power whatever. In a certain sense all this is true. There is one kind of religion which is an imposition; that kind is what the whig party please to make it. All the different shapes it has appeared in are equally hurtful, and *that kind* of Religion will come to nothing, for it is vain religion, which people of unbridled tongues befriend. True religion will stand forever, and spread through the world. *This Religion* is described in the following words. James i. 27—"Pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father is this; to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Though the word *Religion* is frequently used, it is but little understood by many. This word is taken from the Latin *religio*, and is derived, according to *Servius*, and most modern grammarians, from the word *religare*, "to bind fast." According to this meaning of the word, it denotes that obligation which we feel on our minds, from the relation in which we stand to some superior power. Whatever God requires men to believe and practise, is

religion, or something binding, which we ought to obey. To know what God requires of us, or what is binding on men, is to know what God has spoken to us by his Son—Him we are to hear in *all* things. Magistrates have nothing to do, as to directing us how we must worship, any more than they have to direct us how and when to eat, drink, or sleep ; or how men shall cultivate their farms, or do any other kind of business. There are but two grounds of action—*force* and *choice*. *Force* is not the true ground of action. This has been tried and proved for hundreds of years past. “ Human power over religion and conscience, is iniquitous in every form. If it is exercised by a State, it is *civil tyranny* ; if by a Council or a Synod, by one Ecclesiastic or more, it is *ecclesiastical tyranny* ; if by a parent or master, a guardian or a tutor, it is *domestic tyranny*—the same thing in different hands. Jesus foretold, that such an unnatural dominion would be exercised under the sacred name of the *service of God* ; and time hath fully verified the prediction. The long reign of the Church of Rome, gave this exercise of power a full opportunity to display itself in every light, and in all its possible effects. And negligent to a degree must that person have been, who, at this age of the world, and with the history of so many centuries before his eyes, is not able to determine what dominion over conscience can, and what it cannot do. It can *mask, divide, degrade,* and destroy the human species ; but it cannot support true *religion*, and it utterly destroys the credit of it. Three great errors constitute the core of this *excrescence* ; three errors introduced into the healthful christian body by the intemperance of a

few in remote parts of the globe, and matured in times of thick universal darkness. The *first* is, that the care of souls doth not lie in souls themselves, but in extrinsic hands to whom Almighty God hath committed the trust ; as if there were any principle stronger than self-love, as if any foreign *trustees* would take more care of the soul, than the soul would of itself. The second is, a something *deep* and *mysterious* in religion, inaccessible to the eye, and inevident to the understanding of ordinary men, and yet so essential to their *participation* of the benefits of religion, that they cannot be saved without believing it. This exhibits a revelation *unrevealed*, and prepares the mind to grovel in credulity. The *third* is, the affixing of guilt to errors of the mind. The *first* sinks the bulk below *manhood*, and raises the *few* above it. The *second* oppresses the degraded *bulk* with intolerable burdens, and elevates the rest into the condition of *privy counsellors* of heaven in private, and representatives of *prophets*, *apostles*, and *princes*, and even the king of kings himself in public. The *third* strips the slaves of the reputation of real virtue, and ascribes to them imaginary crimes, which attributes become reasons for their lords to inflict punishments on them. All dominion over conscience, includes some degree of these errors ; different ages and different churches exercising such power, are to be placed in different stages of the corruption ; and the Spanish *Inquisition* is nothing but the consummation and perfect ripeness of the system."

When men undertake to make others religious by force, they by this say, that God who commands, employs them to enforce what he re-

quires. This is tyranny. In this country, the great body of the people are *convinced*, that such power is wrong; and that as *religion* is a matter between God and individuals, the government has nothing to do with it. This is most beautifully expressed in "An act for establishing RELIGIOUS FREEDOM, passed in the Assembly of Virginia, in the beginning of the year 1786," which is to this amount:

1. That as God the governor of the Universe, has left the mind free, and chose not to spread truth by force, when it was in his power to do it; of course every attempt to enforce any thing upon men, under the name of Religion, is tyranny, and a departure from the rule which God has given men to act by.

2. That force has established false religions all over the world down to this day.

3. That our civil rights have no dependence on our religious opinions.

4. That it is time enough for the rightful purposes of civil government, for its officers to interfere when principles break out into overt acts, against peace and good order; and finally that truth is great and will prevail, if left to herself; that she is the proper and sufficient antagonist to error, and has nothing to fear from the conflict, unless by human interposition disarmed of her natural weapons, free argument and debate; errors ceasing to be dangerous when truth is permitted freely to contradict them.

These things are worthy of being preserved in letters of Gold before every man's eyes.

The New Testament contains all that is binding on men; all contrary to this is wrong. This is generally acknowledged, though but few make it

their only rule. It is but a few years since the common people were allowed to have this rule. The clergy thought it would give the people too much liberty, and when John Wickliff wrote his translation of the Scriptures, *Henry Knighton*, a canon of Leicester, thus spake against him: "This master *John Wickliff*, translated out of Latin into English, the gospel, which Christ had entrusted with the *Clergy* and *Doctors* of the Church, that they might minister it to the *laity* and *weaker* sort, according to the exigencies of the times, and their several occasions; so that by these means the gospel was made *vulgar*, and laid more open to the *laity*, and to every *woman* that could read, than it used to be to the most learned of the *clergy*, and those of the best understanding; and so the gospel *jewel*, or *evangelical pearl*, was thrown about, and trodden under foot of *swine*." The historian from whom this extract is taken, adds in a note on the above, "It is one of the *nostrums* of the Romish church, that the faithful, whom they in contempt call *laity*, or the ignorant, have nothing to do to examine any doctrine in particular, from its *causes* and *grounds*, and thereby to search out what is true or false; but that this they must leave to the *clergy*, whom they style the *masters* and *doctors* of the church, whose property they say this is." It was decreed in a synod held at Thoulouse, A. D. 1228, "We forbid that a layman be permitted to have the books of the Old and New Testaments; unless perhaps some one out of devotion desires to have the *Psalter* or *Breviary* for divine offices, and the hours of the blessed Virgin; but even these they may not have translated into the vulgar tongue."

No invention has contributed more to diffuse knowledge of every kind, than the art of printing. When this first began, the *Clergy* were struck with consternation, and gnawed their tongues for pain on account of it. The illiterate monks declaimed from the pulpits, warning the people against the New Testament, as a book which is now in every body's hands, and was full of *thorns* and *briars*; and the vicar of Croydon in Surry, is said to have expressed himself to the following purpose, in a sermon which he preached at Paul's Cross, "*We must root out Printing, or Printing will root out us.*"

As the New Testament contains all needful for us to attend too, in things of religion, it is well to enquire after its contents. Does it tell us of a Roman Catholic *Bishop*, Episcopalian *Bishop*, or Methodist *Bishop* over all the rest, who must give up their judgment to him, and go where he directs? It does not. Does it tell us of the importance of the association of churches to make laws? No. Does it tell us of the importance of *creeds*, *platforms*, *disciplines*, &c.? No. Does it tell us of presiding elders, circuit riders, local preachers, class leaders, &c.? It does not. Does it tell us that God is partial, Christ given for a few, the spirit limited in its operations, the gospel confined to a few, and men condemned for impossibilities? No. Does it teach men to love Christ, and hate each other, or to be united to Christ, and divided among themselves? No, it forbids these things.

1. The New Testament teaches us the same God which we see in creation; a God with whom, there is no respect of persons; who is good to all; whose tender mercies are over all his works. A God who makes the sun to shine on the evil and

the good, and sends rain upon the just and the unjust. The God of the Gentiles as well as Jews. The same Lord over all, who is rich unto all that call upon him. The New Testament does not contradict the declarations of the heavens, which declare his glory ; but is in harmony with all the works of God.

2. The New Testament teaches us the extent of the *love* and *grace* of God to man ; it tells us that God, from love to the world, gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life ; that God is the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world ; that the *grace* of God which bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men ; that in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with him ; that God is long suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

3. The New Testament teaches us the fullness of Christ, and his readiness to receive all who come to God through him ; that he is exalted a Prince and Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins, and for God's salvation to the ends of the earth ; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of the people Israel ; the Mediator between God and man, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time ; the *propitiation* for our sins, and for the sins of the whole world. It declares that Christ invites all who *labour* and are heavy laden, to come to him for rest, and that he that cometh, he shall in no wise cast out.

4. The New Testament gives a glorious account

of the extensive operation of the spirit of God upon the minds of men in general ; in reprovng the world of *sin, righteousness, and judgment* ; in renewing those who turn at the reproofs of the spirit, comforting those who believe, leading into all truth, sealing believers, shewing them things to come, giving an evidence of future glory, and giving an evidence of a future resurrection to immortality, by dwelling in them in this life.

5. The New Testament gives us an account of the glorious nature of the gospel of the grace of God. It is called good tidings ; good news ; “good will towards men ;” nor are its blessings confined to any land, nation, tongue, or people. As it is suitable for all, so it is proclaimed to all. Jesus Christ commanded his disciples to go into ALL the world, and preach the gospel to EVERY creature, without any respect of persons whatever. He told them they should be witnesses of him in *Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria*, and to the uttermost parts of the earth ; and that *repentance* and remission of sins should be preached in all nations beginning at Jerusalem ; and Paul declared that the gospel was preached to every creature under heaven, according to the words of Christ ; and this gospel shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations. The New Testament declares the gospel to be everlasting.

6. The New Testament declares a *day of judgment*, and future life to all who obey the gospel, or render to God the things which are God’s.—The *last judgment* is most solemnly described, while life and *Immortality* are brought to light, and promised to all who by patient continuance in well doing seek for it.

7. The New Testament shews the state men are in, what is the cause of their *condemnation*, viz. that light is come into the world and men love darkness rather than light ; because their deeds are evil, and because they have not believed on the name of the only begotten of the son of God. It also shews what God requires of sinners, who are condemned to die. " Now he command all men every where to repent ;" testifying repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus, and promises pardon, peace, joy, support in this life, and life eternal hereafter to all who endure unto the end.

There is no duty we owe to God and Christ, but is plainly pointed out ; there is no duty to those in authority but is plainly described there, the *parent* is there taught his duty to his child ; the child his duty to the parent ; the husband is taught his duty to his wife, and the wife to her husband ; the master is directed, and the servant ; the rich and the poor are both instructed in their duty. We are there told our duty to our enemies, on all occasions. There we are told what our duty is, or what is binding on all men in all situations which they can possibly be in. To attend to this, is Religion not in theory, but in practice. Wherever these things are preached, believed and obeyed, there we see a part of the *family of heaven* with the elder Brother at their head, leading them on to a glorious crown. Never was there a time within the memory of the oldest man living when this *Religion* was proved excellent above every thing, than what it is at the present day, in various parts of the world, and particularly in this country.

Is there need of the laws men or the sword of *magistrates* to enforce these things? No! they crowd upon the minds of men in all nations, in a greater or less degree. These things are brought near, and the difficulty with men is, that they put these things from them, and thus judge themselves unworthy of eternal life. All called *religion* which needs human authority to support it, is weaker than the power which supports it, and therefore is not of God.

I shall close this discourse, with a few words upon the subject, and a short address to this *large, respectable,* and listening assembly.

The first part of this discourse, upon Monarchies, presents to our minds, a waste howling wilderness, a land of drought, serpents, and beasts of prey, with dead men's bones scattered all around. What scenes of distress, have we witnessed! What inequality, discord and confusion, with every evil work! While thousands to this day wander there; we rejoice, that it is our lot to travel safely through the whole unhurt, and find beyond it all, a fruitful field, a pleasant garden, where we set under our own vine and fig tree, and no one to disturb or make us afraid. We now know the nature and excellency of a Republican government, a government where each man is a free citizen equally interested in the blessing of a free government, where none are deprived of their right and liberty, unless by transgression they deprive themselves. Here the sound of his *sacred majesty* is not heard—the name of *his holiness* is not respected with reverence. The title of *lord arch bishops*, does not cause the ignorant to tremble while they are in the presence of *his grace*. The constitution

does not require every officer to be of the established church, to partake of the sacrament, or not be in office, neither are men imprisoned for not believing the Trinity, or because they think and act for themselves in matters of religion. "Happy is that people that is in such a case."

While we are freed from the commandments and doctrines of men, and are secured from oppression on that account, we rejoice to have the New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus, in our own language, and that by it we are taught our duty to God and man. Let us consider this as one of the rich blessings of heaven to man, and let us take heed thereunto as to a light which shines in a dark place, and which will continue to shine, until the day dawns and the day star arises in our heart.

While I look over this assembly, a variety of things crowd into my mind, and my eyes affect my heart. Would you my brethren, this day know whether our Republican Government is superior to that where the will of a single man is a law to the whole; contrast our situation at this moment with that of the people in Europe, where kings and emperors rule, and what will be the difference? There, the people groan, *being burdened*. There, the fairest young men are drawn by force to serve in ships of the line, to fall in the field of battle; to be stripped and buried with the slain. There, the widows are increased. There, the helpless orphans weep, and no one appears to wipe the falling tear; no kind father appears to afford them relief in their distress. How great is the distress of nations there, while they hear the confused noise of the warrior, and garments rolled in blood.

Not so in America. Here we enjoy peace and plenty ; our sons are as plants grown up in their youth ; and our daughters are as corner stones polished after the similitude of a palace.

This day while I speak to you, multitudes of freemen are upon the heights of Bunkerhill, enjoying that, which, perhaps some of you, on that same hill, fought for ; where many brave men were left dead upon the spot while fighting for their liberty, for their wives and children, and that we might enjoy the privileges which heaven has made us partakers of as a nation. What a day of joy is this to all Republicans throughout the United States of America ! My aged fathers, without any doubt you remember the distressing day when so many fell in different places in defence of their country ! Without doubt many of you were eye witnesses of those things. How large is your reward this day ! Rejoice in the Giver of all these blessings ! O may your last days be your best ! Ye that are in the morning of life, consider the privileges which are come to you, floating on the blood of those friends of liberty, who gave up their lives to obtain that which comes freely to you. Love your country—love the government. Above all, obey the Gospel—*render to God the things that are God's* ; believe on Him whom he hath sent. So you will be useful in life, happy in death. In this way we may hope for glory, honor, immortality and eternal life, under the government of Him, who has the government on his shoulder. To Him we owe ourselves—to Him be glory and honor, from angels and men, world without end.

AMEN.