

---

A  
SERMON,

Preach'd on

*Tuesday, July the 7<sup>th</sup>. 1713.*

Being the

THANKSGIVING-DAY

For the

General Peace.

---

A  
S E R M O N

Preach'd at

*HAZELINGFIELD,*

In the County of *Cambridge,*

On *Tuesday,* JULY 7. 1713.

B E I N G

The Day Appointed by Her Majesty's  
Royal Proclamation for a Publick  
Thanksgiving for Her Majesty's  
GENERAL PEACE.

---

By *W. LAW*, M. A. Fellow of *Emanuel*  
College in *Cambridge.* *K*

---

*A Modest Man would never meddle with another's Bu-  
siness; a Prudent Man would never interpose in  
things above his Reach; but least of all would any  
Loyal Subject entrench upon Cæsar's Right.*

*Mr. Chisull's Serm. at Hertford-Affizes.*

---

*London:* Printed for *Richard Thurlbourne*, Bookseller  
in *Cambridge*; and Sold by *R. Knaplock* at the *Bishop's*  
*Head* in *St. Paul's Church-yard.* 1713.

Epist. to TITUS, Ch. 3. Ver. 1.

*Put them in mind to be subject to  
Principalities and Powers.*

**M**Ankind are at once the most glorious and most contemptible part of the Creation, both better and worse than the Beasts that perish. If you consider them under the Influence of Religion and the Order of Government, it is their distinguishing Glory; if as revolting from God, and rebelling against their Prince, it is their peculiar Shame. So that they are not more honourable in Privilege than disgraceful in Conduct.

And as there has been no great Dispensations of Heaven, but vast parts of the Creation have been displeas'd at them, so are there no important Administrations of earthly Governours, but numbers of their People are uneasy under them. Did ever Prince fight in his Peoples Defence, but many would reproach the Defender? Nay, who ever made a publick Peace, when all his Subjects would thank him for it? Alas! so rebellious and

B

froward

forward are Mankind, that rather than want an occasion of Disorder, they'll turn furious against their own Protection, and have no Patience to be bless'd. But we shall less wonder that a Prince can't save his Kingdoms without angering his Subjects, if we consider that the very Redemption of the World rais'd Parties of Malecontents, and set Creatures against their Creator. But altho' I can't but observe how equally averse we are to the Government of God and his Vicegerents, yet the Words of my Text lead me to speak of the Duty we owe to the latter, and to *put you in mind to be subject to Principalities and Powers*. The Words are deliver'd in general; from which I might justly take occasion to state the nature of our Duty to Government, and shew you how in most Cases it must be active, but in all passive: But seeing we are most apt to turn Seditious when any great Affair of Government is carrying on, and seeing we are this Day met to give God Thanks and Praise for as glorious a one as ever besel these Nations; I can't think it improper to shew you what Behaviour would be most likely to keep up in us a true Spirit of Loyalty on such occasions. I shall therefore shew,

I. That every good Christian and Loyal Subject must have a care of Examining too nicely the Affairs of his Prince.

II.

II. That if a Wise-man was pretty sure that some parts of the Publick Administrations would admit of better Management, yet should he be very careful how he express'd such Sentiments; and in such cases, never suffer the Wisdom or Care of the Government to be the common Topicks of Reflexion.

III. I shall point out the Reason why this Duty is now so much transgressed by us.

IV. I shall make a general Application of what has been said, to the happy Occasion of this Day's Solemnity.

I. I am to shew that every good Christian and loyal Subject must have a care of examining too nicely the Affairs of his Prince.

Curiosity is a Privilege of rational Beings, and a necessary Principle to engage them in searching after Truth, conducting all the Parts of Life clear of Sin and Folly: But 'tis a Misfortune common to this and all other excellent Endowments, that the Abuse of them is attended with the most dangerous Consequences. When the Faculties bestow'd for the Advantage and Ornament of Life are employ'd to Purposes very distant from the Design of Providence, they are always the Occasion of Mistakes and ill Conduct. And when the natural desire of Knowledge, which

B 2

should

should be turn'd to the good Management of that Station in which every Man is plac'd, is misapply'd to Enquiries, in which we have neither Obligation nor Abilities to be inform'd, besides the Neglect of that part committed to us, the Mistakes we cannot but fall into about them, will be the natural Causes of the greatest Disorders in practice. An imprudent Curiosity is the common Fault of Mankind; the most lofty and excellent things have not escap'd its Influences; nor is Heaven so high as to be free from the bold Attempts of vain and rash Speculations: much less are the Powers below secure from Examination and Censure. It cannot therefore be unnecessary or unreasonable to direct this Principle of humane Nature, and shew how dangerous it is to examine too nicely into the Affairs of our Prince.

This will appear from these four Considerations:

1. From the Danger of becoming too wise in our own Conceit ever to be thankful.

2. The Danger from our Ignorance.

3. The Danger from our Passions.

4. The Danger from Party.

1. By this Practice there is Danger of our becoming too wise in our own Conceit ever to be thankful for any thing.

It has been a common Observation, that several, by searching into the Laws of Nature, and canvassing the Works of the Creation

ation, have almost banish'd all Reverence to the Deity; and by too forward Advances in Philosophy, have engag'd themselves in dangerous Scruples concerning the Attributes of God.

Others pretending Reason to be their Guide, and clear Idea's the only Ground of Assent, have been so full of their own Abilities, that they would not allow God to be able to inform them, but have rais'd the Prerogative of Reason, till Revelation has had no Authority with them.

It is just thus in Politicks; many amongst us have been so long ballancing Kingdoms, and searching into the Constitutions of Nations, they see so clearly into the Interests and Designs of Princes, and have such sure Foresight into the Events of Things, that they are too wise to credit our own Administrations, or have any Value for the Wisdom of the Government. They are resty and unruly, bold and disloyal in their Expressions; and are always ordering things better than their Governours have done: They busy themselves in spreading troublesome Reports, starting new Dangers, and in making the greatest Security look doubtful: They pretend that the Interest of the Nation is at their Heart, that they see impending Ruin, and are therefore forc'd, by all the Eyes of natural and civil Duty, to give the Alarm. Whereas the only Reason is, the Men are

Politicians, and full of Affairs of State; they have often settled the Interest of *Europe*, and are only angry because their own Scheme is neglected. We naturally admire our own Product; and be it ne'er so monstrous, it is still the Favourite Issue. This makes us turbulent and uneasy, when things are not squared according to our own Plan, and the least Deviation from such imaginary Lines is thought sufficient matter of Complaint. Thus do we sit in Judgment upon the Prerogative, arraign the Royal Power, and condemn an Authority that has no Superior but that of Heaven.

A little Smattering in any Knowledge makes People positive and dogmatical; and, instead of forming any Soundness of Judgment, fills them with assuming Airs and headstrong Passions. But this is no-where more observable than in the Application of our Minds to Matters of State: Put but any jealous Surmise in our Heads, and all the Wisdom and Integrity of the Government will afford us no Satisfaction; the little Dose of Politicks works us up into imaginary Fears, and we can have no Rest for our mighty Knowledge of things. Let us but read a Map, and measure the Situation of Kingdoms, and then we are the only Judges of the Balance of *Europe*. It is such Knowledge as this that makes up the Wisdom of our modern Politicians. Do but trace their Uneasiness.

ness to its first Cause, and you'll find it all owing to some groundless Whimsy that they imbib'd by chance. We may charge most of our Political Disorders upon this Temper of Mind. We turn our Heads to the Affairs of Nations, draw up bold Schemes of our own, and then contend as stiffly for them as if the Government was upon our Shoulders. It is hard to say, whether this Practice be more common or more abominable; the meanest Mechanick dares pretend to be wiser than his Governours, and censure the Proceedings of Crown'd Heads. No one's Abilities are so mean, but he can shew you some Fault in the Ministry, or some unhappy Step in Her Majesty's Government, tho' in truth he be no more a compleat Judge in these Matters, than of how much Rain would be best in every Season.

But 'tis to no purpose to tell them the difference between Prince and People, that there is a sacred Reverence due to all the Royal Administrations; for, alas! their Heads are so turn'd with imaginary Draughts, and they have been so long accusom'd to be free with the Regal Power, that they look upon it to be as much their Business, as to settle their private Accounts. The little pittance of Knowledge which they have pick'd up, serves only to fill their Heads with empty Cavils, and just qualifies them to raise an Objection. And yet they are so full of their mighty Discoveries,

coveries, that they will neither be easy themselves, nor suffer other People to be so. For, as their Ignorance hinders them from forming right Judgments, so will their Pride make them adhere to them: And then no sooner does the Government differ from them, but they are for making all differ from it. They then pretend to be good Patriots, to awake a dreaming People, and are able to demonstrate, that the whole State is in danger: Whereas the bottom of all this Remonstrance and Complaint is only this, that they are so full of their own Management, as to believe themselves either more faithful or more skilful than those who sit at the Helm. And that this is likely to be the Effect of a familiar Examination of our Governours Conduct, will appear if we consider,

2. That the Subject is in the greatest Danger of being led into Mistakes concerning them, because they are generally ignorant of the true Designs of their Governours, and the true Springs and Reasons of their Actions.

A little Consideration on the Nature of Government, will easily convince us, that the Subject is generally unqualify'd to judge well of the Conduct of their Governour. Those whom Her Majesty has not entrusted with any part of Her Authority, are excluded from the Secrets of State, kept at a distance from the Springs of Government, and conse-

consequently are under a natural incapacity of judging of it exactly. They see things only in part, consider their expediency with some particular Regards, and then break out into indecent Behaviour because the Government is wiser than themselves. And yet that which seems not so convenient to them, in that view which they are able to consider it, may appear the most necessary and desirable to those whom Wisdom and Integrity have recommended to an higher Station. For, private Persons take their views from wrong Points, and are placed at such a distance from the Object, that they can hardly forbear judging of it otherwise than it is in it self. And there may be things of the greatest Moment and Reasons of State, which lye open to those entrusted with it, which yet to the generality of Mankind must be as invisible as those Guardian Powers which carry on the Course of Nature. And as there are many Scenes of Providence, which to our short knowledge of things may seem grievous, and make us almost doubt of the Goodness of God, which if we were thoroughly inform'd of the Design, End and Necessity of them, would make us confess and adore that unerring Wisdom, which ordereth all things for our good :

So, in human Administrations, we are apt sometimes to wonder at the Methods of our Governour, and begin to question either his  
 Wisdom

Wisdom or his Care. We don't know the meaning of this Step, or what's the design of such an Expedient, and that disturbs both our selves and others, with strange Conjectures, fearful Prospects of imaginary Dangers. Whereas did we but see into the true State of things, and had more extensive Views, our rude unmannerly Cavils would be chang'd into Sentiments of Love, Reverence and Admiration.

But if it be thus very dangerous to concern ourselves deeply in these Matters, because it's almost impossible but our Judgments must be weak and ill-grounded, it is still of worser Consequence, because these Mistakes will be heightened and enlarged,

3. By the prejudice and violence of our Passions.

The Affairs of State are a large field of Gratification to ungovern'd Minds, there is something to strike in with all our Passions, and catch every false bent of our Souls. Are we Self-conceited or Ill-natur'd, what more delightful Topick than to censure the Wisdom of the Government, and raise discontent among the People? 'Tis a sweet Indulgence to such a Temper to proselyte the Multitude and head a Party of Malecontents. To wrangle and find fault are things pleasant to our Corrupted Natures, but to disgrace the Management of Princes, and prescribe to whole Councils of State, is the highest Satisfaction

faction of an ungovern'd Mind. Are we disaffected to Men in Power and Authority, what more plausible pretence than for the Nations good to calumniate and reproach their most glorious Undertakings? To conjure up monstrous Fears, and scatter base Jealousies under the wisest and safest Protection? To be a Proficient in such Mischief as this, is like sharing the Government, and swells People with their own Authority. A Man grows great in his own Eyes by setting himself against the supream Power, and deems it no small Grandeur to be thus undutiful. To find out a blemish in a glorious Character, and fix ill Conduct upon renown'd Administrators, is pleasure and satisfaction to ambitious Spirits. It carries a semblance of Wisdom to see farther than our Governours, and of great Integrity to undeceive a blinded People.

To appear importantly uneasy, to be frightened at the Publick Administrations, and seem burthen'd with National Care, has help'd many Man to make a figure. Who has not seen a sort of People that forgetting every natural Duty of Life, every Office of their own Province continually fretting at the Powers in being? They may rage and resent and it's the Patriot Spirit; be turbulent and and uneasy, and it's State-Wisdom; be malicious and ill-natur'd and it's true Integrity, and defame the Government for meer National Safety.

Thus

Thus may all our base Passions be here display'd under specious colours, and we may get Reputation and Credit for daring to be Wicked.

It is an easie thing to contrive Schemes to advance ourselves, and then call every thing that obstructs them, Popery and Slavery. To abuse and disgrace the Government, because we have no private Ends that we can make of it. *Jezebel* with a feign'd Piety proclaim'd a Fast, but it was for *Naboth's* Vineyard; so many amongst us publish pretended Concerns for the Nation's Safety, but were there not some fruitful Vineyard which they wanted, they would no more appear in the Care of their Country, than *Jezebel* in the Cause of Piety. But as this meddling with the Affairs of State, is likely to be thus dangerous and sinful from the force of our Passions, so shall we find a much greater Danger still to come, if we consider,

### 3. The Biass of Party.

Besides the common violence of our ordinary Passions, there are Men who have got a set of Passions to indulge, which have no foundation either in Nature or Reason, but are the result of factious Principles. They have added to the common Corruptions of human Nature, sown fresh Seeds of Vice, and acquir'd new ways of Sinning. They are trained up by the force of Principle and the instinct of Party, to reject every thing that's

that's Good, question every thing that's Sacred, cavil at every thing that's Wise, and reproach every thing that's Honourable. They are bred up in Doctrines that are so adapted to our Corrupted Passions, that they raise a kind of Enthusiasm in the dullest Mortals, those that would have scarce warmth enough from Nature to raise one vigorous Passion, are by this Spirit thrown into unnatural Heats, and rais'd above themselves. They are no longer what Nature design'd them, but by an envenom'd Temperament breath forth nothing but heat and fury. Hoisted by strange starts of Violence, they become the sport of Passions, and describe a Life less amiable than Storm and Tempest.

The Whispers of this Party-Spirit rouses their attention like the Voice of an Oracle, they listen with eagerness, and obey with fury.

It sits superiour in their Souls, commands the springs of Action, and gives direction to every Power of Nature. Neither their Eyes, nor their Ears, nor their Thoughts have any freedom, but in spite of all the common Sense of Mankind, they must See and Hear, Dream and Rave, just as this Spirit pleases to direct them. They must Love as it Loves, Fear as it Fears, and follow its Guidance thro' all the blind Mazes of Error and Distraction. It's most extravagant  
Humours

Humours are dearer to them than the Doctrines of Life, and they embrace with fierceness every ridiculous Whimsie that has its Stamp. If it's raised by this Spirit they fall down and worship it, the dear notion lies warm at their Hearts, and they'll spare no pains in its defence. There is no putting the Principles of Religion or Conscience in their way, they drive on triumphant in Zeal, harden'd against all Advice, and deaf to the very Thunder of Heaven. They run into every shape of Madness, and jump at any new Absurdity that this Spirit can instruct them with. It can make them rail and cry out at the greatest Blessings, and murmur at the saving hand of Providence, nay, such is its Power, that under its influence they will hug their Misfortunes, contend for Ruin, and pant after the severest Curses.

It is not what Religion commands, what Loyalty requires, what Honour teaches, or what the Publick Good calls for, but what will gratifie the furious Spirit, that engages their Zeal, and keeps up their Passions.

A Fanatick Impetuosity has usurp'd their Souls, and then no wonder that the Government is too Wise and Sober to be admir'd by them.

A Soul thus destroy'd by seditious Schemes, is not to be affected with the Goodness or Necessity of any thing; the dear Faction is more precious than Life, more fear'd than  
 God,

God, more honoured than the King. 'Tis a miserable Sight to behold a rational Creature thus over-run with Wildness, falling out of his own Sphere, devoid of Rest, and perverse to every Blessing of Life. His Soul that should be putting on the Ornaments of a meek and quiet Spirit, is labouring in impertinent Care, studying Disorder, and enflaming Animosities and Discontent.

But here I must beg leave to observe, that these are now a-days our blest'd Political Reformers, that cry out of a greatly falling State, just as the dizzy Head fancies all swims round about it. These are our warm Students in State-Affairs, that would have us fear as much the Blessings of Peace, as the Miseries of a Plague; but their Judgments may then be admitted for good, when the Blind can see and the Deaf hear.

For, alas! such deluded Biggots can no more relish the Happiness of a well-order'd State, where Truth, and Peace, and Justice flourish, than Slaves to Sin could taste the Felicity of Heaven. The Faculties must be prepar'd, the Senses in tune, and irregular Desires dropp'd, before we can enjoy the Happiness of any State. And as the Beatifick Vision would be matter of Torment to impure Spirits, so may the glory of a prosperous State cast gloom and despair on its factious Members. Let them therefore be ashamed of such visible Grimace as to charge their  
feditious

seditionous Resentments upon their Care for the Publick, when 'tis too notorious, that they are almost distracted at the common Prosperity, and ready to gnash their Teeth to see us Flourish in spite of all their wicked Endeavours to the contrary.

When therefore they court us out of love to our selves, to quit the mean serenity of Peace for the glorious noise of War, we shall bid them look at Satan raging with despair and anguish at the sight of Man in Paradise, and remember that their care for us, is like that Hellish Kindness which perswaded the happy Innocent to eat in order to be a God. I have now shewn how dangerous it is for private Persons to meddle with the Affairs of Government, from several Considerations: *First,* Because such a Practice is apt to make us too wise in our own Conceit, ever to be thankful: *Secondly,* That there is Danger from our Ignorance. *Thirdly,* From the Prejudice of Passions. *Fourthly,* From the Biass of Party. This was the first thing I propounded.

I come now to my 2d general Head; namely, to shew that if a Wise Man was pretty sure that some parts of the Publick Administrations would admit of better Management, yet should he be very careful how he express'd his Sentiments in such Cases, and suffer neither the Wisdom, nor the Care of the Government, to be made the Common Topicks of Reflection.

We

We have shewn how very Dangerous it is for private Men to concern themselves in Matters of State, because they lye under so many Incapacities of making right Judgments. But however, let us for once suppose them as Wise as they are in their own Eyes, and that they really see farther into things than those that sit at the Helm, yet is it unjustifiable to expose the Failings and lessen the Credit of the Royal Protection.

I shall shew the Sinfulness of this Practice, upon these Two Accounts,

1<sup>st</sup>, As it's a Breach of Humanity.

2<sup>dly</sup>, As it's Destructive of the Ends of Government.

1<sup>st</sup>, As it's a Breach of Humanity.

It is an indispensable Gospel-Duty, that we speak Evil of no Man, but with a kind Concern conceal the Slips and Infirmities of our Neighbour.

If then this Charitable Tendernefs be due to the meanest Peasant, and we can't expose his Weakness without a Breach of Duty; how much more is such Behaviour due to the Sacred Person that represents the Authority of Heaven?

If Charity must think no Evil, but bear all things, believe all things, hope all things, and endure all things; can Loyalty be less patient, less humble, less easie, or less submissive? It would be strange Madness to imagine that those in Authority are debarr'd the

Treatment, to which the rest of Mankind are entitled by the Laws of Humanity ; or that what is Sinful towards our Neighbour, is not more exceeding Sinful when acted against our Sovereign. The Eminence of Station to which Princes are exalted, and the numerous Advantages owing to their Protection, require so great degrees of Respect and Reverence, that to publish their Miscarriages, is worse than exposing a Father's Nakedness. And he that dares think of such Persons but as other Men, is scarce less absurd, than they who held them to be real Gods.

To do to others as we desire to be us'd our selves, is one of the Fundamental Articles of Natural Religion ; and upon this Principle it is, that all Mankind lie under an Obligation to mutually conceal and pass by Infirmities and Miscarriages.

It is impossible in any Station of Life to be free from them, and unless mutual Forbearance, charitable Construction, and a forgiving Temper concur to heal the Breaches that human Infirmary is always making in the social Duties, Society could never have been maintain'd, or the Comforts of it enjoy'd by Mankind.

Now in the exalted parts of Life, the greatest Difficulties are found, to exercise the Wisdom, Courage and Integrity, of those whom Providence has placed there. And  
accord-

accordingly the greatest Abilities can no more be supposed to be free from Miscarriages in those nice and important Affairs, which belong to the highest Station, than meaner Capacities in a lower Scene. And therefore to watch the Steps of the Magistrate, and remark his Slips with a malicious Care, is against the Common Laws of Humanity.

But how much higher does it make these Duties of Love and Respect arise, when we consider our Prince as receiving his Authority from God, and commission'd to govern in his Name? For, can we imagine that God's Vicegerent, to whom he has committed the Protection and Government of part of the Creation, may be treated with the least degree of Disrespect? Sacred is the Person, and inviolable his Power, who is so immediately the Minister of God, the great and awful Instrument of Providence for the good of Mankind. And we might as humbly pretend to find fault with Providence it self, and question the Justice and Wisdom of God, when our Condition is not so good as we could wish, as to make bold with his Representative, and censure every Action of his which we Judge not for our good. Thus to insult the Throne, is building a second *Babel*, and will be accounted War with Heaven.

2dly, This practice of Disparaging the Government, is Destructive of the Ends of Government.

One great support of Authority, is the respect which the Persons, who are invested with it, maintain in the Opinion of Mankind. Now personal Excellencies and Abilities as naturally make them considerable, as notorious failings, and follies bring them into Contempt. 'Tis therefore an Injury very difficult to repair, to expose the ill Conduct of any one, because it either villifies the Wisdom, or brings in question the Honesty of the Accused, and deservedly leaves upon the Authors of it, the Character of bad Christians, and bad Neighbours. But when the Conduct of Princes is assaulted with Censure and Reproach, those concerned in it, must be accounted the worst of Subjects: Because the Supream Authority by such Practice is weaken'd, and its Commands received with Disrespect.

The Authority of Princes, 'tis true, is founded in their Commission from God, and Obedience is a necessary Duty of the Subject: But this Obligation cannot be supposed to have a greater Influence in this Case, than in other instances of Christian Duty; and therefore unless the Majesty of Princes be guarded by some other Fences than this, Rebellion may sometime or other prove as ordinary and common, as the Breach of any  
Duty

Duty of the Gospel. The Laws indeed of all Government, provide against Disobedience by the greatest Penalties, and Princes have in their Hands sufficient Power to inflict those Punishments; but if the Spirit of Censure, and Calumny, and seditious Remonstrance against them be rais'd, and diffuse its self thro' the Body of the People, the Hands of the Prince must be too weak to execute the Laws upon such numerous Offenders. The Authors therefore and Encouragers of bold and slanderous Reflections upon their Rulers, take the readiest way to ruin their Authority, endanger their Persons, and bring the Calamities of War and Bloodshed upon a Nation. And altho' they do not take up Arms against their Governors, yet are they the Encouragers of Faction, the Trumpeters of Sedition, and the Authors and Maintainers of that Fire, which unless fed by the fuel of Defamation and Libel, would neither at first have broke out into a Flame, nor continued Raging to the Desolation of the Publick. Surely therefore they are without Understanding, that thus work Wickedness, that labour to betray their Fellow-Subjects into Ruin and Misery, and make Profelytes to Rebellion; that sow the Seeds of Disquiet, and work up Mens Minds into such imaginary Fears, till they Dread their own Sovereign in Peace, more than the cruellest Enemy in War. But perhaps a Person can plainly demonstrate, that

the Government is not so Wise as it might be. What then? Is he by bringing down its Authority, and making People weary and impatient under it, as Dutiful as he should be? Is he not both by Birth and Condition a Subject, where then is his Duty in repining, or the Propriety of his meddling with the Administrations of Government. For, an entire Submission, an humble Acquiescence is as much his Duty, as 'tis that of his Prince to govern well. Loyalty and Obedience are but meer Names, if as often as we dislike we may reproach the Government. If every vain Dreamer may fancy strange prospects of Danger, and then accuse and asperse the present Safety. But he will say, how can any English Heart be unconcern'd, if he saw the whole Nation falling into Ruin: Alas! vain Man, how could any Christian Soul be unafflicted, if a Plague was sent amongst us? but must he therefore raise a Party against Heaven, and teach People to murmur at Providence? No, most surely. His Affliction must be exercis'd in a patient Submission, and his Mourning break forth in Humility. He must seek for Help, not by passionate Resentments, but in Meekness, by Supplications and Prayers, that God would please either to divert or sanctify the common Calamity. Thus must we obey both God and our Queen, if we desire to be either Religious or Loyal, Nothing belongs to us, but to  
act

act the meek and quiet part, and be calm and patient, if not thankful for every Method of Protection. For, no Mismanagement can cancel the Duties of Allegiance and Respect, or make it pardonable to speak Evil of such Authority.

But we are bound by the strictest Ties, as Men, Christians, and Subjects, to do all we can to keep both our selves and others from every disloyal Thought, Word or Action. For, it plainly appears, that to Disparage our Rulers and lessen their Authority, is a Breach of the Laws of Humanity, and Destructive to the Ends of Government. But I can't leave this Head, without beseeching many of us to look to ourselves in this Point. For, it must be spoken to our Shame, that there is nothing more common amongst us, than the Disparaging of Government. We fall rudely upon the Royal Administrations, and boldly question and dispute the Wisdom of every step of Government. Nay, we work our Brains, and are even uneasie, till we can make out a Fault. To study and expose Failings in the Publick Management, is as usual a Method of Signalizing our Sagacity, as 'tis for the Critick to labour at a fine Piece, till he has distinguish'd himself either by finding or making a Blunder. 'Tis a melancholy Task to describe the Workings of this base Spirit of State-Criticism. Whilst the Learned World has but here and there a

Genius that pretends he was made on purpose to find Fault with *Homer* and *Virgil*. The Political State swarms with an Infinity, that act as if they were Born for no other End than to speak Evil of Princes. It is now, that almost every third Person you meet comes loaded with Schemes and Demonstrations that the Government is contriving your Ruin, that you are lost to all Human Means, and that nothing but a Miracle can save you. They haunt and torment with new Discoveries, and will allow you neither Sense nor Reason, unless, with them, you'll despise the Wisdom, and distrust the Care of the Government. But let such Miscreant Heads tremble at impending Thunder; let them know, that he who is God above, is Prince below; and that to Reproach Her who Reigns on Earth, is to Insult that Majesty which Reigns in Heaven. Let them know, that to bear about Evil Reports, and raise Discontent in the Subject, is as far from true Loyalty, as carrying Arms, and heading Troops of Rebels; and that they who so resist, shall receive to themselves Damnation.

There are no Sins which betray a more profligate Mind, or call for greater Vengeance than our rude Insults, our seditious Behaviour towards our Sovereign. To lessen her Authority, to disgrace her Government, and teach her People to murmur against her, will, at the Day of Judgment, make us wish  
for

for *Mountains to fall on us, and Seas to cover us.*  
 "Twill be a sad moment when the Disorders of a Faction shall be laid to our Charge, when Troops of Malecontents shall make us answer for their Sins, and we must bear the Punishment of a Seditious Nation! when the great tremendous Judge of all the World shall lay before us our restless Heats, and rebellious Murmurings against our Governours! when he shall vindicate the Honour of injur'd Majesty, and lay to our Charge this sad Aggravation, that whatever we have done against our Prince, we have done it against him! Will it then be any Pleasure to remember the furious Scene of Life? Any Satisfaction to recollect the Triumphs of Iniquity? Will it then be any Joy to look back upon the passionate unruly Part we have acted, what Disloyalty we have taught our Brethren, what Trouble and Care we have occasion'd our Sovereign? Will it be any Comfort to review the fraudulent Arts of Faction, the deceitful Clamours of Party? No, no; as well might Satan rejoyce that he made War with Heaven, as such unhappy Wretches for carrying on a Faction against their Governours.

But seeing, as it plainly appears, the speaking Evil of Government, and censuring its Conduct, is so great a Breach of the Laws of Humanity, so inconsistent with the End of Government, and consequently so destructive to the Peace of Society, I shall

3. Enquire very briefly into the Cause of this so abominable Practice, and why it comes to be now the common Fault of almost all degrees of Men amongst us.

A little Observation on the Workings of human Nature, will inform us, that there are certain Vices, as well as Virtues, that hang together as it were in a Chain, and are link'd by an inseparable Union. Plant but such Roots, and you may depend upon your Fruit; for, neither Grapes grow on Thorns, nor Figs on Thistles. But if the Tree may be known by its Fruit, we need not look long for the Root of these rebellious Branches. They certainly spring from these two fundamental Errors, that have of late been improved and propagated with no common Industry and Artifice.

1. ~~That~~ Princes have all their Authority from the People.

2. That they may be resisted and depos'd upon occasion.

I shall not spend any time in proving the Falsity and Baseness of these Propositions, this being already as sufficiently prov'd, by many worthy Divines of our Church, as any Article of the Christian Faith: I shall only at present observe, how destructive they are to the Peace of Society, and how naturally they lead their Professors into rude, restless, and disloyal Behaviour towards Government.

I might

I might appeal to universal Experience that such and such a Practice has always gone along with such a Set of Principles, and that they who have held wrong Notions of Sovereignty, have never fail'd to be as blameable in their Conduct. And tho' it often happens that People act short of good Principles, yet is it seldom or ever known they live better than they believe. For, as good Principles have the Corruptions of our Nature, the Solicitations of ill Men, and the Temptations of the Devil to contend with; so are all these on the side of bad ones, which makes their Influence too powerful not to be obey'd.

And as Experience testifies, that they who imbibe such absurd and unchristian Doctrines are always Despisers of Majesty, and averse to the meek and gentle Duties of religious Loyalty; so does Reason teach us, that such Behaviour is the natural and necessary Result of their Principles.

He that holds his Prince to have all his Authority from the People, must secretly deride the Name of Majesty, and laugh at the empty Title of Supream: For, what is it but Pageantry and Mock-Honour, for a Being to Lord it over his Masters, and pretend to govern them from whom he derives all his Power of Government? Was the Potter to make his Vessel to Supream Honour, and then call it his Sovereign Lord, he would just regard it as the Man esteems his Prince that  
he

he knows is but a Creature of his own. It is indeed absolutely impossible, in the very nature of things, to keep up any inward Reverence, or awful Regard for the Prerogative, whilst we derive it from so mean an Original. Such People may approach the Throne with Titles of Gracious Sovereign, and Serene Majesty, and be mighty dutiful so long as they shine with its Brightness, or govern under its Protection; but no sooner does the Being begin to act as if it was a Prince, or its Prerogative real, but the Pageantry is discover'd, the Plot unravell'd, and the Sceptred Majesty dwindled into a State-Machine. Thus a Person that believes Christianity to be founded on secular Policy, may be a great *Devoto* whilst he reaps the Benefits of its Influence; but no sooner does it clash with his Interest, and obstruct his worldly Designs, but he pulls off his Mask, and lets you know, that this or any other Religion has all its Obligations from the Consent of the People; that none ought to be encourag'd any longer than it's subservient to our Interest; and, that no one is oblig'd to serve God for nought. Thus do false Notions concerning the Origin of Religion and Government, equally destroy all true Piety towards God, and Loyalty towards our Prince. In either case we shall live as false as we believe; it being most certain, that every Error in Faith is a Foundation of erroneous Practice. If

we

we look upon Sovereignty to be only a State-Thing dress'd up with Grandeur to serve a Turn, a Contrivance of human Wit, our Obedience will rise no higher than Formality and Grimace, and we shall be only occasional Conformists to a little outward Ceremony: But we shall be Strangers to those Impressions of Awe and Veneration, that profound Respect and humble Deference which make up the Beauty and Comeliness of Loyalty. And indeed it would be very strange if we should not, that we should put a Being in a Station to execute our Orders, wait our Demands, and then be terrify'd with its Grandeur, that we should tremble at the Executioner of our own Pleasure, and dread a Power that is derived from us. This Doctrine makes Government, at the best, to be but a useful piece of empty Pomp, and exposes the submissive and gentle Virtues of Obedience as ridiculous and absurd. It digs up the very Roots of every dutiful Affection, and takes away the Foundation of all virtuous and Loyal Behaviour. They therefore that maintain it, ought no more to be entrusted with the Interests of Princes, than Atheists with the Care of Religion; when the latter can approach the Altar with Devotion, then may the former address the Throne with Loyalty.

The other fundamental Error which I am to take notice of, as having the same pernicious

cious Effect upon our Manners, is that of Resisting and Deposing our Prince. Now besides the Wickedness of this Principle, whenever it leads us into Action, it has this farther Aggravation, that it always keeps us in a base Temper, and ill-disposed towards our Governour. It is a Seditious Root, that is constantly shooting forth Branches of Perverseness, that overspreads the Soul with masterly and insulting Passions, and makes us incapable of performing an humble Obedience to our Sovereign. It is attended with a profligate Boldness, that's too proud to Obey, too hardned to Fear, and thoughtless enough to attempt any thing. It unprepares a Man for any thing that's Loyal, unhallows the Breast where it harbours, and spirits up Disorder and Rebellion. It's as contrary to a true Sense of Majesty, and the Dignity of Regal Power, as Darkness is to Light. The Prerogative has nothing of Grandeur or Authority, nor will any Ensigns of Majesty command an awful Esteem, when it's made the Duty of the Subject to be govern'd as they please. The Sacred Person is only cloath'd with Majesty, as with their Livery, and may be stript at their Discretion. According to this Tenet, Human Life may be compar'd to a Theatre, where the Majesty of Kings and Queens strikes no Terror on those that act the contrary part.

The Men of this Stamp can have no more Regard for their Sovereign than any other Person employ'd in their Service, they having nothing to ground their Respect upon, but the Judgment they make of his performing his part well; so that they can only love and respect him for the bulk of the Service he does them. He has no Title to his Place but Merit, and no Title to Merit but what they please to allow him. They are committed to his Care, just as a Servant is entrusted with the Government of his Master; so long as he strikes in with their Inclinations, and executes their Pleasure, he may be call'd Supreme, and sit in a Throne; but if he dares to reject their fantastick Designs, he may be brought as a Criminal to an ignominious Block, and fall a bloody Sacrifice to his offended Lords.

For, every Step of Government that does not gratify such People, puts them upon the thought of Change, or at least of reprimanding Majesty into better Behaviour. This discretionary Power keeps them always ready charg'd for Attack; they are tender of ill Usage, and ever dreaming of the Liberty of the Subject. By knowing they may Resist, they are always ready, and watching the occasion, and may be truly call'd a standing Army disciplin'd by Principle to awe the Prerogative.

This

This may suffice to shew how naturally these Principles dispose us to rude and insolent Behaviour towards Government.

I have now gone through the chief part of my Design, and have laid before you the several Reasons why every good Subject should have a care of examining too nicely the Conduct of his Prince; 1. Lest he become too wise in his own Conceit ever to be thankful or pleas'd with any thing; 2. Lest he dislike things through his Ignorance, the Violence of Passions, or the Byass of Party. I have likewise made it appear, that though we could really discover a Flaw in the Conduct of our Governour, that to publish such Mismanagement, raise Discontent in the Subject, and lessen the Credit and Authority of our Sovereign, is a Practice wicked and abominable, contrary to the Laws of Humanity, and destructive of the Ends of Government, and the Peace and Welfare of Society. I have also enquir'd how the disparaging and speaking evil of Government, comes to be the fashionable Iniquity of these present Times, and have found it to arise from some rebellious Principles, concerning the Origin and Nature of Government.

I come now, in the last place, to make a general Application of what has been said to the happy Occasion of this Day.

As

As the best of Religions has been always either more or less rent with Schisms, so is it the common Fate of the best of Governments, to be weakened with Seditious. The happiest Institutions, whether Sacred or Civil, though never so divine and excellent, have been always, by numbers of People, oppos'd, accus'd, and condemn'd, with the most passionate Abhorrence. No wonder then that the same Spirit of Error should be discontent at the Blessings of Peace. A Peace! which nothing but the most consummate Wisdom, and laborious Care, bless'd with Providence, could have procur'd us. A Peace! which if we consider how much it was wanted, the most reasonable; if how little expected, the most joyful; if how well manag'd, the most profitable; if how much oppos'd, the most successful; that ever Nation had to glory of. A Peace! which restores us to all the Happiness which equitable Laws, a heavenly Religion, liberal Arts, a rich Soil, kind Climate, skilful Industry, and flourishing Trade, can give us. A Peace! whether we consider the Royal Heart that contriv'd and finish'd it, or the faithful Labours of her wise and trusty Ministers, has such endearing Circumstances, such matter for Joy and Gratitude, that it's amazing there should be any found so

D hardy

hardy as to cavil at it. But it is pretended, that the Terms are Disadvantageous, and that we had it in our Power to have made the Enemy submit to better. Now here let these knowing Men answer seriously to these Questions. Are they not of the number of those, who have been so long managing the Affairs of Nations, that they are too wise in their own Conceit to be pleas'd or thankful for any thing? That have concerned themselves so much with the Government, that they can't bear to be Governed? Are they not such, as being excluded from any share in the Publick Administrations, are under a natural Incapacity of seeing into the true state of Things? That from little Scraps of false Knowledge, take upon them to abuse Schemes contriv'd and manag'd with the highest Wisdom and Integrity? Or farther, Are they not of that sort, whose mutinous Passions will not suffer them to be easy and content, or approve things that are excellent? Are they not so fond of some imaginary Draught of their own, that they would rather sacrifice their Country, than have its Happiness owing to a contrary Scheme? Does not this make them unthankful under the greatest Blessings, repine at Happiness, and ready to curse a Protection that's thrust upon them? Have they not  
such

such Prejudice against Men in Authority, as may discolour their wisest Actions, and make them uneasy under their most prosperous Conduct? Or, lastly, Are they not deep in a Party, and so like or dislike, just as that Spirit directs them? Are they not forc'd by the Power of Principle, to refuse Happiness from such Hands, and condemn their Proceedings whether right or wrong? If these Men will say, they have neither Ignorance, Passions, or Party, to hinder them from being good Judges of these Matters, they can't expect to be believed; and so long as they are under such Impediments, they ought not to expect their Judgments should be regarded: Nay, they have no Right to any more Candour and Civility, than those, who either to advance fond Schemes of their own, or gratify their impure Lufts, dispute the Providence of God, and would perswade us to throw off the Burthen of Religion.

In short, either this Affair of Peace is manag'd to the best Advantage, or it is not; if it is, then let those who dare murmur at it, look to themselves: *Better were it for them that a Mill-stone were tied about their Neck, and they were cast into the Sea,* than to live disturbing Society, and preventing the Blessings of the Wisest Conduct. Thus to reward the Wisdom and

Care of our gracious Sovereign, to stand perversely bent against her Kindness, and not suffer her to make us happy, is a Practice that will sadly fill up the Measure of our Iniquity, and make our Condition like that of *Tyre* and *Sidon*.

And if it is not manag'd to the best Advantage, yet is it no less sinful, to reproach it, and teach People to be uneasy and restless under it. For, we have made it plainly appear under our second general Head, that to speak Evil of Princes, and weaken their Authority by blaming their Conduct, is a direct Violation of the Laws of Humanity, destructive of the Ends of Government, and the Peace of Society. So that if we should grant that which nothing but Ignorance, Passion, or Party would suppose, namely, that things might have been better ordered; yet those that are so undutiful as to accuse and expose them, are pronounc'd Sinners by the express Voice both of Reason and Revelation.

2. Does it appear that our rude disloyal Behaviour towards Government, censuring and abusing its Conduct, is owing to some fundamental Errors we are taught, concerning the Nature and Origin of Government, and Measures of Obedience to it; then let the Publishers of these fatal Doctrines

Strives seriously consider, what will be the Fruit of such guilty Labours, and what Reward they must expect in Heaven, for adding to the Corruptions of Human Nature, teaching Men to be Wicked out of Principle, and making that their Duty, which the Scripture makes Damnation. To spread abroad Doctrines that are inconsistent with any of the social Duties, is to contradict the Designs of Religion; but to publish Notions that take away the Authority of Government, and necessarily induce People to be Insolent, and mutinous under it, is exalted Villany.

But may those concern'd in that Wicked Cause, whither guided by Interest or Conscience, so at last learn to fear God, and honour their Queen, as neither to pervert his Words, nor attack her Prerogative. May they return to Christian Measures of Obedience and Submission to her, and with truly penitent and loyal Hearts, make publick Confession that they have Sinned against Heaven and Her, and are no more worthy to be called Her Subjects.

But; Secondly, Have these Notions so pernicious Effects upon our Manners? Let this teach us to keep close to sound Doctrine, and exhort one another to preserve with Diligence, and profess with Boldness, those

those good old Principles of our Religion, concerning the Divinity of our Sovereign's Authority, and the absolute Passive Obedience we owe to Her. Since it appears, that these Doctrines are not only taught by the Holy Ghost, and the clearest Deductions of Reason, but are likewise of the last Importance to the support of Government, and the peace and welfare of Society. We indeed are sometimes told, that these things are State-Matters, which have nothing to do with Christian Duty, any farther than the Laws of the Land direct us; and that the Clergy go out of their Sphere, when they pretend to settle these Points. But I hope we shall have Sense enough to know, and Courage enough to assert, that we have Commission, nay, Command from Heaven, to charge it upon our Flocks, as they hope for Happiness, to be entirely Subject and passively Obedient to Government. For 'tis a moral Duty of immutable Obligation, founded in the Eternal Nature and Reason of things, and farther Established by the express word of God. Therefore the faithful Ambassador of Christ, will no more cease to maintain the Divine Authority of Kings, and the entire Obedience of the Subject, because they may be called Matters of State, than he will give up

up the Articles of our Faith, because some are pleased to call them Matters of meer Speculation.

Thirdly, Is this the Case with our Complainers, that they are uneasie at the Peace, because they can't help fancying some ill Consequences of it?

I ask, are they Sincerely willing to prevent them? If so, let them learn to be meek and lowly, and forbear to displease God, by disregarding his Vicegerents. For, whilst they break out into Murmurings and factious Complaints, and behave themselves with Ingratitude and Insolence towards our Sovereign, supposing things to be ever so well managed, they will bring a Curse upon them, and provoke Heaven to disappoint our Wisest Councils. So that if they should live to see any of those imaginary Ills befall us, which they now so vainly and wickedly presage; if the Peace should be less lasting, or less profitable, than our Good Queen imagin'd, not unto Her, not unto Her Ministry, but unto their sinful Ingratitude, and seditious Lives, must the Fault be laid. But if, on the contrary, we would all betake ourselves to sincere Repentance, and heartily endeavour to reform our Lives; would we but take a true care to recommend ourselves to the favour of God, by strictly dis-

discharging every Duty of the Christian Life, in every instance of Piety, Loyalty, Charity, and Temperance, this would be a good Foundation for a lasting Peace, and all other Blessings of Life. If there should be some failure of Wisdom in any proceedings of Government, yet if we behaved our selves under them, with Thankfulness and Humility, neither distrusting the Providence of God, nor disgracing the Conduct of our Queen, this would be a likely means to prosper our Designs, and have That supply'd by Divine Providence, which was wanting in Human Council. They therefore that by ungrateful rebellious Complaints, create a restless and undutiful Deportment in the Subject, are justly to be reckoned a Curse upon the Nation, and such as prevent the Blessings of the Wisest Management.

Fourthly, If it be always a Crime to speak Evil of our Governour, and cherish Discontent against Government, how much more Sinful is it against such a Governour, as our most Gracious Sovereign, and at such a Part of Her Government, as might endear the worst of Tyrants to our Affections? If we consider the Glories of her Reign, and review the Blessed Years, 'tis all but one uninterrupted Brightness. No Spirit of Tyranny, no hasty Projects,

Projects, no want of Care, no defect in Wisdom, no neglect of Holy Things, can cast the least Blemish on Her Conduct.

But Her Government, like that of Providence, has been a well-order'd Scheme of Management, where all things have worked together for our good.

Whilst War was necessary, we had all the Blessings which Victorious Arms could give; but as She sent out her Troops, not thirsty of Blood, or in love with Battel, but to compose Contentions dangerous to *Britain*; so no sooner had She Rival Princes in Her Power, but pitying the waste of every Nation, form'd them into Peace. She has now call'd home happy *Britains* from Seas of Blood, and Toils of War, Expence of Life and Wealth, to reap the solid Blessings of Peace, to grow Great in quiet, and enjoy the Friendship of every Nation.

And whilst thus the State thrives and triumphs under Her Protection, how does our Church rejoyce in her true Defender, whilst She sees her faithful Sons encouraged to be good, whilst to defend her Rights, is to obtain *ANNA*'s Favour? Whilst She sees the Princely Heart eager in the Cause of God, firm to the Faith, as undaunted Martyr's, zealous in Devotion, and both in Principle and Practice unchangeably

geably good! Thou Great, Dear Offspring of Great *CHARLES*, how does his Royal Virtues shine in Thee! Glorious in every Excellence, that can grace a Christian, adorn Government, and bless a Nation!

How strange is it, my Brethren, that She who has all along thus secur'd our Lives, Liberty, and Fortunes, She that has been thus true to every Duty towards God, so tender of every Right of Her Subjects, and so Hearty to our general Welfare, should need to entreat Her Subjects to be easie under Her Government, and not Reproach Her Care? Is it not enough of Shame, that we once reviled, persecuted and condemned the best of Kings, but we must repeat those Murmurs, and raise again those Discontents under a Government equally glorious? But as we have any fear of God, or expectation of his Judgments, let us return to a truly Loyal behaviour, and by better Obedience deliver our selves from the guilt of our Forefathers Rebellion. For, how can we tell where we shall stop, or to what Extravagance we shall not proceed, if Blessing and Prosperity can make us thus restless? O! therefore, let us cast out this Evil Spirit of discontent, and with Hearts truly pious and loyal, adore the Providence of God, and  
be

be thankful for the Care of the best of QUEENS, for this happy and honourable Peace. Let this important Blessing raise in our Soul such strong Sentiments of Joy and Gratitude, as may make us long, to make all the Returns we can, both to God, and our Gracious Sovereign.

Let our Souls magnifie the Lord, and our Spirits rejoyce in God our Saviour; let them praise the Lord for his Goodness, and continually declare this, and all other Wonders that he doth for the Children of Men; let us with united Voices, and united Hearts, beg of Heaven to bless Her Majesty with length of Days; and that finally, after this Life ended, She may be translated to a more glorious State, to live, rejoyce, and reign amongst the Thrones, Principalities, and Powers of Heaven. *Now to God the Father, &c.*

---

F I N I S.

28 00 69