



A
S E R M O N

PREACHED AT CAMBRIDGE,

BEFORE HIS EXCELLENCY

THOMAS HUTCHINSON, Esq;
GOVERNOR:

HIS HONOR

ANDREW OLIVER, Esq;

LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR,

THE HONORABLE

HIS MAJESTY'S COUNCIL,

AND THE HONORABLE

HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES,

OF THE PROVINCE OF THE

Massachusetts-Bay in New-England,

MAY 29th. 1771.

BEING the Anniversary for the ELECTION of HIS MAJESTY'S
COUNCIL for said PROVINCE.

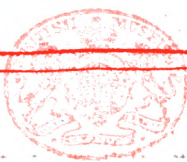
By *JOHN TUCKER*, A.M.

Pastor of the First Church in NEWBURY.

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Governor, and the Honorable His Majesty's Council.

MDCCLXXI.



Province of MASSACHUSETTS-BAY.

In COUNCIL, May 30. 1771.

ORDERED, That HARRISON GRAY,
GEORGE LEONARD, and BEN-
JAMIN GREENLEAF, Esquires, be a
Committee to wait on the Rev'd Mr.
JOHN TUCKER, with the Thanks of
this Board for his Sermon preached
Yesterday, before his Excellency the
Governor, and the General Assembly,
being the Day for the Election of His
Majesty's Council ; and to desire a
Copy thereof for the **P**ress.

THO'S FLUCKER, Sec'y.



AN ELECTION-SERMON,

I PETER II. 13, 14, 15, 16.

SUBMIT yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake : Whether it be to the King as supreme ; or unto Governors, as unto them who are sent by him, for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well.

For so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men : As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.



THE great and wise Author of our being, has so formed us, that the love of liberty is natural. This passion, like all other original principles of the human mind, is, in itself,

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perfectly

perfectly innocent, and designed for excellent purposes, though, like them, liable, through abuse, of becoming the cause of mischief to ourselves and others. In a civil state, the genius of whose constitution is agreeable to it, this passion, while in its full vigor, and under proper regulation, is not only the cement of the political body, but the wakeful guardian of its interests, and the great animating spring of useful and salutary operations; and then only is it injurious to the public, or to individuals, when, thro' misapprehension of things, or by being overbalanced by self-love, it takes a wrong direction.

CIVIL and ecclesiastical societies are, in some essential points, different. Our rights, as men, and our rights, as christians, are not, in all respects, the same. It cannot, however, be reasonably supposed, but that this useful and important principle, must, in its genuine influence and operation, be friendly to both: For although our Saviour has assured us, his kingdom is not of this world; and it be
manifest

manifest from the Gospel, which contains its constitution and laws, that his subjects stand in some special relation, and are under some peculiar subjection to him, distinct from their relation to, and connection with civil societies, yet we justly conclude, that as this divine polity, with its sacred maxims, proceeded from the wise and benevolent Author of our being, none of its injunctions can be inconsistent with that love of liberty, he himself has implanted in us, nor interfere with the laws and government of human societies, whose constitution is consistent with the rights of men,

CHRIST came to set up a kingdom diverse, indeed, from the kingdoms of this world, but it was no part of his design to put down, or destroy government and rule among men. He came to procure liberty for his people, and to make them free, in the most important sense, yet not to exempt them from subjection to civil powers, or to dissolve their obligations to one another, as members of political bodies.

As to things of this nature, all ecclesiastical constitutions and laws, as coming from GOD, must leave men just as they were; because all civil societies, founded on principles of reason and equity, are, as well as the peculiar laws of Christianity, agreeable to the Deity, and certainly, intimations from the all-perfect mind, cannot be contradictory.

THESE things, seem not to have been rightly apprehended, and well understood by men, at all times and in all places. The Jews, some of whom were early proselyted to the christian faith, had imbibed high notions of their liberty, and superiority to all others, as the peculiar people of GOD; and were loth to own subjection to the Romans, as a civil state, when they were actually under their dominion. And some converts from among the Gentiles, tho' they had not these national prejudices, yet from their subjection to Jesus Christ, as their King and Ruler, and, as 'tis probable, from mistaking the meaning of some apostolic declarations, asserting their

their freedom, as christians, disclaimed likewise all human authority over them.

MEN of this cast, gave no small trouble both to Church and State, in the early days of the Gospel. Of such the Apostle Peter speaks where he says—*They despise government : Presumptuous are they. Self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.* †

SUCH men as these, and their seditious, turbulent behaviour, I doubt not, this same Apostle had in view, when he delivered the instructions in my text, by which he endeavoured to guard christians against their evil practices.

BUT, as all authority, demanding submission, and all submission, due to such authority, are likely to be best understood, by having these things reduced to their first principles ;—by having the foundation of such authority fairly produced, and its just boundaries, which must be the measure of submission due to it, clearly marked out : And as such submission is most likely to be duly yielded,
by

† 2 Pet. II. 10.

By having the reasons and motives thereof plainly exhibited, so these are things which seem here aimed at by the Apostle. *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the King as supreme; or unto Governors, as unto them who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.*

IN these words he gives us a compendium of civil government; representing its origin and great design; that submission, or obedience, which is due to it; and the true principles from which such obedience should flow.

UPON this general view of the subject, it is obvious, that if handled with any degree of propriety, it may offer useful instructions, both to Rulers, and those under their government.—A modest attempt to do this, will not, it is hoped, be disagreeable

disagreeable to this respectable audience, by whom I ask to be heard with patience and candor.

THE FIRST thing offered to our consideration is, the ORIGIN of civil government, from whence all authority in the state must take its rise. And this is said to be from man. *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man, &c.* More intelligibly, perhaps, it might be rendered, "to every human institution or appointment." And this may be justly understood, as having respect to every kind of civil government, under whatever form it is administered:—It is the ordinance, — the institution or appointment of man.

THIS does not imply, however, that civil government is not from God; for thus it is sometimes represented, and is expressly said to be the ordinance of God. So St. Paul declares. — *There is no power but of God; The powers that be, are ordained of God. Who ever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God. †*

CIVIL

† Rom. XIII. 1, 2.

CIVIL government is not, indeed, so from God, as to be expressly appointed by him in his word. Much less is any particular form of it there delineated, as a standing model for the nations of the world : Nor are any particular persons, pointed out, as having, in a lineal descent, an indefeasible right to rule over others.

BUT civil government may be said to be from God, as it is he who qualifies men for, and in his over-ruling providence, raises them to places of authority and rule ; for by him *Kings reign* :—As he has given us, in his word, the character of Rulers, and pointed out both *their* duty, and the duty of those under their authority ; which supposes, not only the existence of civil government, but that it is agreeable to his will : And especially and chiefly, as civil government is founded in the very nature of man, as a social being, and in the nature and constitution of things. It is manifestly for the good of society :—It is the dictate of nature :—It is the voice of reason, which may be said to be the voice of God.

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It being only thus that civil government is the ordinance of God, there is no impropriety in asserting likewise that it is the *ordinance of man*. For though it is founded in the nature of man, and in the constitution of things, which are from God, yet nothing is plainer, than that it proceeds immediately from men. It is not a matter of necessity, strictly speaking, but of choice. This is the case, as to government in general :— This is most evidently the case, as to any particular form of government.

ALL men are naturally in a state of freedom, and have an equal claim to liberty. No one, by nature, nor by any special grant from the great Lord of all, has any authority over another. All right therefore in any to rule over others, must originate from those they rule over, and be granted by them. Hence, all government, consistent with that natural freedom, to which all have an equal claim, is founded in compact, or agreement between the parties ;—between Rulers and their Subjects, and can be no otherwise

otherwise. Because Rulers, receiving their authority originally and solely from the people, can be rightfully possessed of no more, than these have consented to, and conveyed to them.

AND the fundamental laws, which are the basis of government, and form the political constitution of the state;—which mark out, and fix the chief lines and boundaries between the authority of Rulers, and the liberties and privileges of the people, are, and can be no other, in a free state, than what are mutually agreed upon and consented to. Whatever authority therefore the supreme power has, to make laws, to appoint officers, &c. for the regulation and government of the state, being an authority derived from the community, and granted by them, can be justly exercised, only within certain limits, and to a certain extent, according to agreement.

To suppose otherwise, and that without a delegated power and constitutional right, Rulers may make laws, and appoint

point officers for their execution, and force them into effect, i. e. according to their own arbitrary will and pleasure, is to defeat the great design of civil government, and utterly to abolish it. It is to make Rulers absolutely despotic, and to subject the people to a state of slavery; because it will then be in the power of Rulers, by virtue of new laws and regulations, they shall please to make, to subvert and annihilate the present constitution, and to strip the subject of every kind of privilege.

THIS may be briefly evidenced by a single instance.

IT is essential to a free state, for without this it cannot be free, that no man shall have his property taken from him, but by his own consent, given by himself or by others deputed to act for him. Let it be supposed then, that Rulers assume a power to act contrary to this fundamental principle, what must be the consequence? If by such usurped authority, they can demand and take a penny

penny, by the same authority they may a pound, and even the whole substance of the subject, so as to make him wholly dependent on their pleasure, having nothing that he can call his own ; and what is he then but a perfect slave ? *

THIS, at first view, is manifestly inconsistent with all just conception of freedom ; and is the very essence of arbitrary and tyrannical power.

Now, all Rulers in a state, and all power and authority with which they are vested ;—the very being, and form of government, with all its constitutional laws, being thus from the people, hence civil government, is called, and with great propriety, the *ordinance of man*,—an human institution.

THIS

- * Men in society having property, they have such a right to the goods, which by the law of the community are theirs, that nobody hath a right to take their substance, or any part of it from them, without their own consent: Without this they have no property at all ; for I have truly no property in that, which another can by right take from me when he pleases against my consent. Hence it is a mistake to think, that the supreme or legislative power of any commonwealth, can do what it will, and dispose of the estates of the subject arbitrarily, or take any part of them at pleasure.

Lock on civil Government.

THIS is the case, as to the British government in particular, under which we have the happiness to live. Its constitutional laws are comprized in *Magna-Charta*, or the great charter of the nation. This contains, in general, the liberties and privileges of the people, and is, *virtually*, a compact between the King and them; the reigning Prince, *explicitly* engaging, by solemn oath, to govern according to these laws:—Beyond the extent of these then, or contrary to them, he can have no rightful authority at all.

IF the preceding positions, and the reasonings from them are just, the following things may be noticed, as deducible therefrom, or closely connected therewith,—That it is highly requisite, for the good of the state, that both Rulers and people be well acquainted with, and keep in mind the constitutional laws of government—Rulers, that they may be directed and guided thereby, and not depart from, or counteract the design of their institution, to the injury, or dis-

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quietude

quietude of the people.—And people, that knowing the bounds of submission, and the extent of their privileges, they may be guarded against transgression, and yield a ready and full obedience.

EQUALLY requisite it must be likewise, for the same end, that there be no mysteries in the governing plan.—That all laws and rules of government, be as plain as possible, and easy to be understood, to prevent contentious disputes between Rulers and their subjects;—to preclude the former, from tyrannical oppression, under colour of lawful authority, and the latter from rebellious disobedience, under pretence of privilege.

Now, it follows from what has been said, that as all disobedience in subjects, to constitutional authority, is rebellion against government, and merits punishment adequate to the crime, so all assumed power in Rulers,—not granted them by the constitution, is without just authority, and so far forth, can claim no submission.

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"As usurpation," says the great and judicious Mr. LOCKE, "is the exercise of power which another hath a right to, so Tyranny is the exercise of power beyond right, which no body can have a right to." And again. "Where-ever law ends, Tyranny begins, if the law be transgressed to another's harm. And whosoever in authority exceeds the power given him by law, and makes use of the force, he has under his command, to compass that upon the subject, which the law allows not, ceases in that, to be a magistrate: And acting without authority, may be opposed as any other man, whoby force invades the right of another."

AND tho' it may not always be prudent and best, to resist such power, and submission may be yielded, yet that the people have a right to resist, is undeniable; otherwise the absurd and exploded doctrines of passive obedience, and non-resistance, must be admitted in their utmost extent, and their consequences patiently borne. And it must be granted finally, that the people as well as their

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Rulers

Rulers, are proper judges of the civil constitution they are under, and of their own rights and privileges ; else, how shall they know when these are invaded ; —when submission is due to authoritative requisitions, and when not ?

BUT we are now to consider

SECONDLY, THE great design of Civil Government, and the end for which Rulers are appointed ; and that is the good of the community, or political body. — *Whether it be to the King, as supreme ; or unto Governors, as unto them who are sent by him, for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well.*

RULERS are not appointed, indeed, for the happiness of the people, exclusive of their own, as if these things were inconnected. But, as it would be unreasonable, that some should be advanced above their brethren, — be cloathed with authority, and honorably supported, merely for the sake of their own ease, dignity

dignity and grandeur, so it would be equally unreasonable, that Rulers should be slaves to the people, and watch and labour for their welfare, without sharing in it.

BUT the happiness of Rulers and of their Subjects, are not thus exclusive of each other, but perfectly coincident. They are both parts of the same body,—their true interests are interwoven, and their happiness inseparable. Rulers, acting agreeable to their institution, and attending on that very thing, are justly entitled to esteem and reverence, and an honorable support from the people, though these are not the things they ought to have chiefly in view.

THEY are to consider themselves as raised above their brethren, and invested with authority, for more noble and generous purposes ;—for the peace and wellfare of the Community, committed to their care : Hence it is said, of the civil Ruler, *he is the minister of God to thee for good.* †

† Rom. XIII. 4

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NOR

NOR can any other end be imagined, worthy of reasonable beings, why men should put themselves out of a state of natural freedom, and subject themselves to the authority and rule of others, but for their greater good ;—for the securing, more effectually, their just rights, liberties and privileges.

THIS is the great end of their forming into society ;—of their establishing certain laws, as the general measures of right and wrong, and giving power to some, to govern the whole community by such laws.

THIS being the design of civil government, good Rulers are justly considered as benefactors to the people. They are placed as watchmen and guardians over the state, whose special business it is, both in their legislative and executive capacity, to consult and promote its welfare. To curb and restrain the unrighteous and factious, from acts of fraud, rapine and violence, and to protect others in the peaceable enjoyment of their rights.

To

-To punish transgressors, —to relieve the oppressed, dispensing, with an equal and impartial hand, justice to all.

-FOR, it is necessary for the support of government, and that the great and salutary ends of it may be answered, not only that its laws be just, but that they be enforced by proper sanctions ; fitted to affect the human mind, and to engage obedience ; and that Rulers have power to execute such laws, in the punishment of evil-doers, and for a praise, —for the support and encouragement of them that do well.

FROM this view of our subject, it appears of high importance, to the good of the state, that they who are vested with power to make laws for the Community, as there shall be occasion, and to appoint officers for their execution, have qualifications answerable to their high places of power and trust. —That they be men of superior knowledge and wisdom ; —well acquainted with the civil constitution ; —with the just boundaries between

the prerogative of Rulers, and the liberties of the People, that their laws may be duly framed, and adjusted to the political system.—Men able critically to examine the complection of the state ;—to search out its disorders, and to apply proper remedies ;—Able to judge of the natural course and tendency of things, and to foresee, beyond what is common, the operation, and consequences of their own acts ;—how the rights of individuals—how the common good will be affected thereby.

THEY should be men of great ingenuity and candor ;—ready to receive light when offered,—to redress grievances, when convinced of them, and to amend, or repeal their own Acts, when found injurious, or not answering the good intentions designed. Pretences to perfect wisdom and knowledge, and inerrability of judgment, in civil, as well as ecclesiastical matters, ill become the highest mortal ; and are likely to produce unhappy effects, when found in Rulers, especially if accompanied with an obstinate adherence to their own measures.

THEY

THEY should be men of great goodness and benevolence of heart, who will naturally care for the welfare of their brethren, and treat them with condescension and kindness. Such a behaviour, corrected and managed by prudence, is perfectly consistent with their maintaining the dignity of their character, and will greatly endear them to the people. That council of the old men, to king *Rehoboam*, was wise and good, and agreeable to the sentiments and feelings of human nature. *If thou wilt be a servant to this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants forever.*†

Again, **RULERS** should be men free from a sordid covetous temper, which has self-interest like the pole star ever in view, and endeavours to steer all things by that direction. As they are designed to act for the public good, they should be men of liberal and generous souls;—ready to prefer the common safety and happiness, to their own private emolument.

THEY

† : *King. XII. 7.*

They should be likewise men of great resolution and firmness of mind;—not easily dismayed and overcome by difficulties, or intimidated by threatened dangers:—Able to maintain a calmness of mind, and to guide with a steady hand, in tempestuous seasons:—Able to bear with the unpolished plainness of some honest men, and with the weaknesses and follies of others:—Not apt, in a pet, to desert the common cause, and to sacrifice the public happiness to their own passionate resentments.

And, finally. It must be of great importance, to the good order and welfare of the state, that Rulers be men of distinguished piety and virtue, who will be likely to rule by example as well as law. It was an act of prudence, as well as piety in *Nehemiah*,—his appointing one to a place of high trust in government; † *because he was a faithful man, and feared God above many.* A firm belief of Revelation:—A strong impressive sense of the divine and everlasting things declared in the Gospel,—this will secure the

the good conduct of Rulers, especially when under temptation to do wrong, above every thing else. True religion enlarges, and strengthens the mind,—fixes deep in the heart, the principles of right action, and gives steadiness and uniformity of behaviour.

MEN of this character will act with fidelity and zeal in the service of the public, considering themselves as accountable to God, as well as to men. They look beyond the present state of things, and view their conduct as connected with futurities of a most interesting nature; and will aim at approving themselves, not only to the people, but to their own minds, and to God the Judge of all.

SUCH Rulers will best answer the great ends of their institution. They will be to the people, as the directing,—as the cheering and comforting light of the Sun.—As the refreshing rain,—as the firm, unshaken pillars of the state,—the shield of its defence and safety, and the source
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of constant blessings. Nor can they fail of engaging the esteem and love, and submission of the people.

WE may now in the **THIRD** place, consider that submission which is due to government; and take some particular notice of the nature and extent of it. *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man, whether it be to the King as supreme, or unto Governors, &c.* Similar to which is that of St. Paul, *Let every soul be subject to the higher powers.—Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, &c.*

THE duties of Rulers and Subjects are reciprocal, and mutually imply each other. If some are to govern, others are to submit to their government, and to be obedient to their authority; otherwise Rulers are but an empty name;—the constitution is dissolved, and anarchy ensues.

NOR is this submission due only to the Supreme Ruler, but to all in lawful authority

thority under him, down to the lowest officer in the state. Not only to the King, but to those who are sent by him, to carry on the various parts of the administration. Disobedience to inferior officers, while acting by lawful authority, is disobedience to the highest power, as it is by authority derived from thence, that all in subordinate places of civil trust, execute their offices. Submission is likewise due to all constitutional laws, whether, they suit the present interest of individuals, or not. A man is not to disobey a just law, calculated for the public good, because, in certain circumstances, it operates against his private interest.

UNLIMITED submission, however, is not due to government, in a free state. There are certain boundaries, beyond which, submission cannot be justly required, nor is therefore due. These limits are marked out, and fixt, by the known, established, and fundamental laws of the state. These laws being consented to by the governing power, confine, as well as direct its operation and influence, and
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are the connecting band between authority and obedience.

AND no wise and just Ruler, we may suppose, would aim at wantonly leaping over these bounds, and acting beyond them, as this would be, not only acting without lawful authority, and injuriously robbing the people of their rights, but would tend to create unhappy jealousies, and to stir up broils and contentions in the state, which might give him much uneasiness, if no worse consequences should follow.

It was a fine expression of a Spartan Ruler, and indicated the freedom and happiness of the state, who, upon being asked, "who governed at *Sparta*?" answered the laws, and the magistrates according to these laws." The constitutional laws of the state, are, properly, the supreme power, being obligatory on the whole community, — on the highest officer, as well as the lowest subject.

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HERE then, we have the just measure and extent of submission. It is due to all decrees and requisitions of the legislature, which are consistent with the known, and fundamental laws of the state, by which fundamental laws, the very law-making power itself is limited, and beyond which it cannot pass.

AND it seems immaterial, as to the present point, whether such authority in Rulers, and submission in subjects, result directly and wholly from the original constitution and frame of government, or from subsequent compacts between them, mutually agreed to.

ALL such compacts, whether under the name of charter-grants, or however denominated, must be supposed agreeable to the fundamental laws of the state, and grounded thereon. i. e. Such as the ruling power has authority to make, or enter into, and the people freely accept of.

UPON

UPON such agreement, a particular kind of government, in some respects new, may take place ; but, so far as it is new, or variant from the original constitution, this subsequent agreement between Rulers and people, ought to be the invariable measure of administration. — This bounds the authority of Rulers, and the submission of subjects. — The people, while they owe obedience, have an undoubted right to their granted, or stipulated privileges ; and may justly claim, and insist upon them, unless, by misconduct, they are forfeited.

UPON the whole therefore. Proper submission, in a free state, is a medium, between slavish subjection to arbitrary claims of Rulers, on one hand, and a lawless licence, on the other. It is obedience in subjects to all orders of government, which are consistent with their constitutional rights and privileges. So much submission is due, and to be readily yielded by every subject ; and beyond this, it cannot be justly demanded, because Rulers and People are
equally

equally bound, by the fundamental laws of the constitution:

THE state of the world, and temper of mankind, may render these observations necessary and highly important ;—important and necessary as a check upon Rulers of a despotic turn ; and a restraint upon the licentious among the people ; that neither, by breaking over their just bounds, may disturb the peace, and injure the happiness of the state.

FOR there have been Rulers, and may be such again, who look with wishful eyes on the liberties and privileges of the people. Who consider them as a prey, worthy to be seized, for the gratification of their pride and ambition,—of their cruelty or covetousness. Such, under one pretence or other, will be stretching and enlarging their power, and grasping at more and more, 'till, if not obstructed, civil government will be converted into absolute tyranny, and a free people into slaves.

A PEOPLE in love with liberty, and
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sensible of their right to it, cannot but be jealous of such Rulers ; and ought to be on their guard against unjustifiable and arbitrary claims. Tamely to submit, would be highly unworthy of them as free men, and shew they deserved the yoke, under which they so readily put their necks.

ON the other hand. There are found among the people, persons of a querulous and factious disposition.—Ever restless and uneasy, and prepared to raise and promote popular tumults. From the meer love of wrangling, or from ambitious views,—to rise from obscurity, to public notice, and to an important figure, they find fault with Rulers, and point out defects in the administration.—Small mistakes are magnified. — Evil designs are suggested, which, perhaps never existed, but in their own heads. They cry up liberty, and make a mighty stir to save the sinking state, when in no danger, but from themselves, and others of a like cast.

THERE are ambitious and designing men, in the state, as well as in the church ;

church ; and there are fit tools to serve the purposes of both. As some make hereticks in the church, and raise an ecclesiastic posse to demolish them, chiefly with a view to render themselves distinguished, as sound in the faith ; so others make traitors in the state, and raise the popular cry against them, to gain to themselves the name of Patriots.

THE wise and prudent will make a pause, before they enlist under such political zealots. They will judge for themselves of the faulted conduct of their Rulers. They will make reasonable allowances for human frailties, and be as ready to yield submission where it is due, as to defend their liberties where they are in danger.

WE proceed now in the LAST place.— To take notice of the principles from which submission and obedience to government should flow. And these are, a sense of our duty to God, as well as to civil Authority, connected with, and animated by a sense of liberty.

Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake.—As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.

TRUE religion:—A sacred reverence of the Deity:—The love of virtue and goodness, are as necessary to make good subjects, as good Rulers: And a spirit of liberty is requisite, to render obedience true and genuine both to God and man.

EVEN the supreme Ruler of the world, is not a despotic, arbitrary Monarch, nor does he require obedience by meer authority. His sacred laws,—all framed agreeable to the perfect rectitude of his nature, and resulting from his infinite goodness, and righteousness, are wisely adapted to the human system, and calculated for its good.

THEY recommend themselves to the reason of our own minds, and manifestly tend to our happiness:—We see our interest as well as our duty in them, and that these are closely connected.

AGREEABLE

AGREEABLE to the nature and tendency of these divine mandates, the obedience God requires of us, is not that of slaves, to a tyrannical master, but that of children, to a wise and benevolent father. It must be *free*,—a matter of choice, and not of force, driving us on against a reluctant mind.

LIKE to this, is the obedience we owe to civil government. Supposing its laws founded, as they ought to be, in reason and equity, and calculated for the good of society, they demand our approbation. And being under their authority, as members of the political body, both duty and interest require our submission.

BUT as all earthly Rulers, as well as all human institutions, may be supposed to be imperfect ; and submission may be required, inconsistent with our just rights and privileges, there is a liberty, of a somewhat different nature, respecting civil government, we have a claim to, and which should have influence on our conduct, i. e. a liberty to withhold, as well as to yield submission.

FOR, even a christian people, who, from their character, as servants of God, are bound to submit to the higher powers, and to obey Magistrates, are not, out of courtly complaisance to their Rulers, or from a mean, timorous, and slavish temper, to resign up their just rights, when imperiously demanded, or craftily sought after. Remembering they are freemen and not slaves, they should act as *free*.

THEY have an undoubted privilege to complain of unconstitutional measures in government, and of unlawful incroachments upon their rights ; and may, while they do it with becoming decency, do it with that noble freedom and firmness, which a sense of wrong, joined with the love of liberty, will inspire.

EVEN under great and manifest oppression, a prudent regard to their own, and the public safety, may forbid, indeed, violent means of resistance ; but should never lead them, tamely to yield to unlawful claims.

CHALLENGING

CHALLENGING their right, and pleading for it, tho' this should not prevail to the immediate redress of grievances, yet may be of high importance, to keep alive,—to cherish and strengthen,—not a spirit of faction and discontent, but that spirit of liberty, which is, as it were, the *animating soul* of a free state ;— which being once gone, every thing valuable will become an easy prey, and a state of abject slavery ensue, to live in which, may be far worse, than to be *free* among the dead.

BUT still, on the other hand :— While a people consider themselves as *free*, and are zealous to maintain their liberty, they should remember also their subjection to civil authority, and to God, the righteous Judge of all ; and be careful not to carry liberty beyond its just bounds :—Not to use it for a cloke of maliciousness :—Not, under colour and pretence of this, to refuse just obedience ;—to be disorderly, factious and tumultuous. As the servants of God, and accountable to him, they should render unto all their dues, and seek,

not only their own, but the welfare and happiness of all.

WOULD people, in general, possess their minds of such sentiments, and act under their direction and influence, how much would this tend to the peace and happiness of society ! Many groundless and unreasonable complaints, from restless and ambitious, or from ignorant and peevish men, would be discountenanced and suppressed, and the community, by a general steady course of well-doing, would, agreeable to the will of God, put to silence the ignorance of such foolish men.

AND in case of real and grievous oppression from unrighteous Rulers, such principles as these, would be likely to produce the most happy effects. They would unite the members of society, as one body.—They would guard them against rash and unlawful measures of defence ;—lead them to such as are prudent and justifiable ; and engage them to act with that determined resolution and firmness, resulting from reason and

and virtue, which is most likely to hold out, and to prevail, in time, over every species of injustice and oppression.

AND would both Rulers and Subjects imbibe such sentiments, and, under their direction and influence, discharge with fidelity the duties of their respective places, what a prosperous and flourishing condition might they hope for !

THE springs of government, acting with vigor, and under a right direction ; and the members of society, yielding a correspondent and uniform submission, a general harmony and happiness must ensue.

THE political state would be like a body in full health. The constitutional laws, preserved inviolate, would, like strong bones and sinews, support and steady the regular frame. Supreme and subordinate Rulers duly performing their proper functions, would be like the greater and lesser arteries, keeping up their proper tone and vibrations ; and justice, fidelity, and every social virtue, would

would, like the vital fluid, run without obstruction, and reach, refresh, and invigorate the most minute and distant parts : While the multitude of subjects, yielding, in their various places and relations, a ready and chearful obedience, would, like the numerous, yet connected veins, convey back again the recurrent blood, to the great fountain of it, and the whole frame be vigorous, easy, and happy.

UPON that view of Civil Government we have now been taking ; and while feeling in our own breasts a warm sense of liberty, and the blessings of it, can we help dropping a tear over the multitudes of our fellow creatures, who are groaning under the iron yoke of tyranny and oppression—subjected to the arbitrary will of their imperious and despotic Lords,—and to all the wretchedness, which lawless pride and ambition ;—which wanton cruelty and unbridled lust can inflict upon them ?

How much to be pitied are such miserable objects !—How ardently is it to be wished

wished, that the principles of civil liberty may prevail through the earth, to the breaking in pieces the power of oppressors every where, and the restoring the oppressed to freedom and happiness !

FROM such scenes of human wretchedness and woe, we naturally reflect, with gratitude to heaven, on our own happy condition, as subjects of the British Empire :—A constitution founded in the law of God, and of nature ;—on the principles of reason and equity :—A form of government admirably contrived for the due support of authority, and the security of the rights and privileges of the people.

MAY this excellent constitution, formed and established by the experience and wisdom of ages, be preserved inviolate, the source of blessings to this and future generations : And his present Majesty, our most gracious Sovereign (whom may God long preserve) ever esteem it his glory, and find it his happiness, to reign over a free and loyal people.

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THE form of Government, in this Province, is similar to that of our mother country, so far as the circumstances, of a dependent state will admit ;—the legislative power being lodged in the hands of the King's Representative, — of his Majesty's Council, and,—of persons deputed by the people, to act for them, in General Assembly.

OUR Commander in chief, who is at the head of this legislative body, is not indeed, elected by ourselves, but appointed by the Crown ; which, perhaps, all things considered, is not to our disadvantage. The other branches of the legislature, being chosen by ourselves ; and consisting of those who are our neighbours and brethren,—this we esteem an important privilege, and great security of our invaluable liberties.

AND, as it was once promised as a blessing to the people of God, that their nobles should be of themselves, and their Governor should proceed from the midst of them, † so we are naturally led to view it, as a circumstance peculiarly favourable

† Jerem. XXX. 21.

yourable, that the Gentleman, now at the head of administration, is also from among our brethren ;—one born and educated in the midst of us.

For, while we feel in our own breasts, a warm affection towards him, as being our bone and our flesh, we persuade ourselves he must have a correspondent tenderness for us, and will naturally care for our state.

AND, tho' it has not been the standing custom of late, yet on this first public occasion, Your Excellency will permit me to address myself particularly to you, as an expression of dutiful respect, and to solicit your kind offices for this people.

WE congratulate you, SIR, on the honor done you by the great Ruler of the world, and by our most gracious Sovereign, in raising you to the head of this Government ; and we ardently wish your advancement may be to the honor of the crown, increasing the dignity of your own character, and—best welfare of this people. And tho' the present perplex

plex state of the Province, which keeps awake in our minds some gloomy apprehensions, may occasion anxiety and trouble to you, whose burden we wish not to see increased, we flatter ourselves, it may be in favor to this people, that in such an unhappy situation of affairs, the over-ruling Providence of God, has committed the reins of government to your hands.

THAT equable temper, and firmness of mind, with which the great Father of Spirits hath formed you ; and fitted you to bear, and go thro' difficulties ;— your superior acquaintance with our political constitution ; and the experience we have had of your wisdom, and fidelity in lower offices of government, which you have filled with honor to yourself, and to general satisfaction and applause, —these things naturally lead us to confide in you, and to hope for great and good things from you ; while your relation to us, as a native of the Province, and having a common interest with us, strengthens and confirms this confidence and hope.

WERE

WERE we able, SIR, so to influence your mind, as to make you partial in our favor, to the disadvantage of the crown, and of the true interest of Great-Britain, we would not attempt it—we do not so much as wish for it.

As becomes faithful subjects to our rightful Sovereign, we desire not, but that the royal prerogative be maintained in all the just extent of it. But, while you are true and faithful to his Majesty, you will be just to this people; and tender of those rights and privileges, to which they are intitled, as British Subjects, and by virtue of the Royal Charter; and be ready, we hope, to use your influence for their protection and defence, when in danger; and to preserve so invaluable an inheritance, for this and future generations.

SHOULD you fail of success in your friendly endeavours, yet such generous exertions, must give you an home-felt satisfaction of mind, while your succeeding, to the common good of this people, will lead them to bless you, as their
friend

friend and patron, and occasion the thanksgivings of thousands unto God.

YOUR full acquaintance, SIR, with the grounds, on which our illustrious ancestors left their native land, and, through many difficulties and hardships, made a settlement for themselves, and posterity in this country—your having been educated in, and so long approved of, their religious principles, and manner of worship—your own exemplary regard for religion; and the sense, we doubt not, Your Excellency has, of its high importance to the welfare of the people, assure us you will remain a particular friend to these churches; while a liberal and catholic disposition, will lead you to protect all honest and peaceable men in their just rights, and engage your endeavours to promote the interests of pure and undefiled religion.

NOR will we doubt, SIR, of your warm, and filial affection to that neighbouring *Seat of learning*, † where you yourself, among the sons of this country, received the blessing of a liberal education.

That

† Harvard-College.

That society will be cared for, and smiled upon by you. And may it flourish under Your Excellency's patronage, and continue an ornament to this land, and a rich blessing to Church and State.

It is our fervent prayer for Your Excellency, that you may have the divine presence and direction in your administration.—That by a faithful discharge of your important trust, you may engage the esteem and love of this people, —enjoy the smiles of your Royal Master, and the approbation of the supreme Ruler and Judge of all.

As the choice of his Majesty's Council, considering their weight and influence in government, is a matter of great importance to our welfare, the return of this Anniversary, in which this elective power is to be exercised, will mind us of the goodness of God, in still preserving to us our civil constitution,—the basis of our common freedom, and common happiness.

THANKS to indulgent heaven, that we are still, thus far, a free people, and

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in a capacity to consult, and act for the common good.

WITH gladness we see our political Fathers, the immediate guardians of our liberties, and whose happiness is the same with our own, assembled with their brethren in the house of God, to seek direction from him, in the momentous affairs of this day. Such an acknowledgement of the Deity, and of his superintending providence, well becomes us as a christian people.

THE Gentlemen, who are to be immediately concerned in this business, will be pleased to consider how weighty a trust is reposed in them by the community; and be solicitous to act a proper part. And, if what has been offered in this discourse, be agreeable to reason and the word of God, it may suggest some things that will be useful:

You are sensible, Honored Gentlemen, that it is a time of peculiar difficulty, with the British Colonies, in general, on this continent, and with this Province in particular.

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THE claims of prerogative, and the liberties and privileges of the people, engage our attention—engross our conversation, and agitate our minds with hopes and fears.

IT might be deemed arrogance in me, to pretend to run the line exactly between these, in reference to our present disputes, and to determine whether, or how far, prerogative has been overstrained, and whether, or how far, our constitutional rights have been infringed.

BUT this, all will allow me to say, that in such a time of perplexity,—of uneasiness, and distress, men of the best heads, and of the best hearts are to be sought for, to fill so important a seat in government, as that of the Council Board.

MEN of a benevolent, generous, and public spirit, who will care for the welfare of their brethren, and act above all sordid and selfish views.

MEN, best acquainted with our civil constitution, and the just boundaries be-

tween lawful authority in Rulers, and that submission in subjects which is due to it;

MEN of a cool and dispassionate temper, joined with great firmness of mind : — Able to weigh things with calmness, — to judge with impartiality, and to act with deliberation : And who, when satisfied what is right, and best to be done, will have courage to speak their minds, and to act a proper part : — Not apt to be wro't upon, and rendered ductile and obsequious by flattery. — Tempted by proffered favors, or awed by menaces.

COOLNESS of temper, and unshaken firmness of mind, often meet in the same person, and when under the direction of a wise and knowing head, and the influence of a good and benevolent heart, they must go far towards forming the great Statesman, and true Patriot.

MEN of a different cast, indeed, have sometimes, by a kind of lucky rashness, succeeded well in difficulties ; — just as an hurricane, when it happens to blow
the

the right way, may drive the Ship from rocks and shoals, and save the cargo ; yet these *Tornadoes* are not so eligible, as a more gentle and steady gale.

SUCH hot and passionate men are not fit to guide in difficult times. The populace, indeed, when fired by them with the same zeal, may sometimes admire and applaud even their rashest measures ; but when they come to cool, and see the ill effects of their ungoverned fury, they will be ready to sacrifice them to their disappointed hopes, and wish they had been guided by cooler heads.

Demosthenes and *Phocion*, were both Statesmen, and eminent Orators at *Athens*, but men of very different tempers. *Demosthenes*, full of fire, often urged the people to bold and daring enterprizes. *Phocion*, calm and sedate, persuaded to methods more practicable. Meeting one day, after having harangued the people ; says *Demosthenes*, — “ These Athenians, *Phocion*, will murder you, in some of their mad fits. The same, replied *Phocion*, may fall to you, if ever they come to be sober.”

BUT, with every other qualification, you will consider that of religion, as of great weight.—Religion,—in which is included the true fear of God, and a prevailing concern to be approved of by him. This raises the mind above the frowns, and smiles, and alluring blandishments of the world.—This takes hold on conscience, and powerfully seizes and governs the great springs of action in the soul ;—and is the strongest barrier against temptations to do wrong, as well as most urgent stimulus to right action.

AND you will keep in mind, Honored Gentlemen, that you are going to act, not meerly for yourselves, but for all your brethren.—That they have placed their confidence in you, and committed their interests into your hands.—That their eyes are upon you,—that the minds of the whole Province are turned towards you.—That the fate, not only of this people, but of the Colonies, in general, may have some dependence on the choice you make :—And above all, that you are under the all-seeing eye of God, and accountable to him for what you do.

MAY

MAY these considerations deeply penetrate and warm your hearts ; — cause you to lay aside all sinister views, and banish from your breasts a party spirit. — May they carry you above all personal connections, and private piques ; — collect and fix your thoughts to this single point, the public good ; and lead you sincerely to aim at it, by chusing such men as are best qualified for, and most likely to pursue it.

AND may he who standeth in the congregation of the mighty, and judgeth among the Gods, over-rule to the best purposes.

WHEN the weighty affairs of this day are over, and you proceed to business in your respective departments, you will remember, we trust, your continued connexion with your brethren, and the capacity in which you act, viz. as their Trustees, — as the Guardians of their liberties ; and do all in your power, consistent with your duty to his Majesty, to secure and promote their welfare.

SHOULD their just rights and privileges be invaded, (a case that may happen under the best constitution, as all men are imperfect, and liable to misconduct) it will lie with you especially, our Honored Fathers, to oppose such invasion ; and in every respectful,—in every loyal,—in every suitable and lawful way, to endeavour their protection and defence.

You will not, we trust, from sordid,—selfish, and lucrative views ; or from mean and cowardly fears, give up so rich a treasure, if unjustly demanded ; but with a manly, unshaken firmness, becoming freemen,—becoming freemen, conscious that they have right on their side, oppose, and continue to oppose, every attempt of such a nature ; and stand fast in that liberty, wherewith God, and the British Constitution have made us free.

I MEAN not, Honored Gentlemen.—
I mean not, my respectable Hearers, to prove an Incendiary among you ; a character, under which, it seems, the
Clergy

Clergy of this country have been, tho' very unjustly represented by some, on the other side the water.

DEEPLY penetrated, as I am, with a sense of Liberty, and ardently in love with it; and tenderly concerned for the prosperity and happiness of my native land, I abhor a licentious and factious spirit;—I detest the baneful principle.

I HEARTILY wish the universal peace of societies, on the foundation of reason and righteousness. I wish, in particular, that all distrustful jealousies, with the grounds of them, between Great-Britain and these Colonies were removed.—That all unhappy disputes between them, were equitably and amicably settled.—That their former confidence in each other was fully restored.—I wish their connection with each other may be perpetual, and their happiness mutual.

BUT certainly, SIRs, it is not necessary in order hereto, that if our constitutional rights and privileges should be demanded, we

we should readily yield to the unrighteous claim.

SHOULD we thus meanly resign them up, and take, in exchange, the chains of slavery for ourselves and children,—could we forgive ourselves? Would our unhappy posterity forgive us? Should we not deserve the punishment, while we felt the guilt of assassins, for having stabbed the vitals of our country?

THE interior state of the Province, Honored Gentlemen, —the common prosperity and happiness of the people, are things that will lie near your hearts, and be cared for by you at all times. Their true welfare you will have in view, and endeavour to promote it, in framing any new laws, which the exigencies of the state may require; and concerting any farther measures that may be needful, for the suppression of vice and wickedness; and for the encouragement and promotion of Religion, in the knowledge and practice of piety and virtue: — For banishing idleness and luxury; —for encouraging labour, industry

try and frugality :—for the better cultivating and improving our lands :—promoting manufactures, and trade ; and for the general procurement of those things, which tend to make a people happy in themselves, and to establish and confirm their freedom.

AND of high importance it is to the good of the state, and worthy of your particular care, that the good and wholesome laws now in being, as well as others that may be enacted, have their full force and efficacy, according to the spirit and intention of them.—That Government be maintained in all the just extent of it, as a necessary restraint on the lawless and disobedient, and a protection and defence to others. Without this we cannot continue a free, nor be a prosperous and happy people. If our liberties are not wrested from us, in any other way, we shall soon destroy them ourselves, and prove tyrants and oppressors to one another.

THIS matter, I conceive, claims the attention, and is humbly offered to the consideration,

consideration, of the Honorable the Judges of our courts,—of his Majesty's Justices of the peace; and of all to whom the execution of the laws is committed:—of all persons likewise, who are specially appointed as inspectors of the morals of the people; whose business it is to make presentments of disorderly practices, tending to the dishonor of God, and to the disquietude and hurt of society.

IT is of great consequence to the public weal, that gentlemen in such stations, faithfully discharge the duties of their respective places, and that the laws have their free course, and proper operation. And it is certainly the duty of the people readily to submit to Government, in all the just extent and exercise of it; and under its due administration, to lead quiet and peaceable lives, in all godliness and honesty.

CIVIL government, my hearers, is one of the greatest outward blessings of which we are possessed. It is our protection from fraud and injustice—from rapine and violence. It is the security of
our

our lives,—of our properties, and of every thing that is dear to us in the world. It becomes us therefore, not only to submit to it ourselves, but to do all we can to maintain and support it.

WHILE we are zealous for liberty then, let us take care we do not despise government, and weaken the springs of it, by running into licentiousness, of which some seem not to be out of danger in the present day.

LET us, my Fathers and Brethren,—let us act as *free*:—Let us stand up for our just rights; but consider ourselves, at the same time, as servants of God; and submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake. Let us never use our liberty for a cloke of maliciousness;—never imagine, that under pretence of this, we can have a right to do wrong.

LET us, upon all occasions, discountenance, and endeavour to banish from among us, such licentious principles; and by well-doing, put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.

To

TO CONCLUDE. MAY this whole Assembly:—May the people of this Province in general, both Rulers and others, be concerned that they act a proper part, in the stations assigned them by Divine Providence; faithfully discharging the duties of their respective places. While fond of freedom, from the tyrannous and oppressive power of man, let us all see to it that we are free from a much more dishonorable, and destructive tyranny,—that of our own lusts, and of Satan, that great enemy to our highest and best interests. While we glory in the name of *freemen*, let us see to it that we are the *Lord's Servants*; and live in a willing and hearty subjection to his sacred laws and government.

THEN may we expect the smiles of that Almighty Being, whose favor is life. Then may we expect that, in his gracious and over-ruling Providence, he will scatter the dark clouds that hang over us, and make us yet a prosperous and happy people.—Then may we indulge the supporting, cheering hope, not only of seeing good days here, but of obtaining, thro' Jesus Christ, eternal peace and blessedness.

FOR

FOR, in a short time, we shall all finish our course in this world. In a few days, —a very few, we shall be called off this stage of action.—Our relation to civil society will soon cease.—Our connection with one another, and with this world, will be dissolved.—Presently we shall all, however distinguished in this life, stand upon a level before our common Judge, to receive our final sentence and reward.

O! how happy for us, if having maintained our integrity, and conducted well thro' this tempting, and ensnaring world, we then receive that supporting,—that life-giving sentence,—*well done, good and faithful servants!*

WITH what unutterable joy shall we be filled;—with a joy inexpressibly greater,—more noble, and excellent, than can arise from the greatest honors and riches of this world, if then we are admitted, with all the virtuous and good, into the full and glorious *liberty* of the Sons of God!

WHICH may God, of his infinite mercy, grant, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord.

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