The Epistle Dedicatory.

your Age and Conscience, (the one Venerable, the other Sacred) Judges to the Tyranny of Falsehood, Perjured Ulterers. The next attempt of this Discourse is a Defence of the Ministry, and that at such a time when none owned them upon the Bench (for then you had quitted it;) but when on the contrary we lived to hear One in the very face of the University, as it were in defiance of us and our Profession, openly in his Charge defend the Quakers and Fanatics, persons not fit to be named in such Courts; but in an Indictment. But, Sir, in the Instructions I here presume to give to others, concerning what they should doe, you may take a Narrative of what you have done; what respect their Actions as a Rule or Admonition, applied to yours is only a Rehearsal. Whole Zeal in altering the Ministerial Cause is so generally known, so gratefully acknowledged, that I dare affirm, that in what I deliver, you read the Words of One, but the Thanks of All. Which affectionate Concernment of yours for them, seems to argue a Spiritual fence, and Experimental Taft of their VWorks, and that you have reaped as much from their Labours, as others have done from their Lands: For to me it seemed always strange, and next to Impossible, that a man converted by the Word Preached, should ever hate and persecute a Preacher. And since you have several times in discourse declared your self for that Government in the Church, that is founded upon Scripture, Reason, Apostolical Practice and Antiquity, and (we are sure) the only one that can conflict with the Present Government of State, I thought the latter Discourse also might fitly address itself to you, in which you may read your Judgement, as in the other your Practice. And now since it has pleased Providence, at length to turn our Captivity, and answer persecuted Patience with the unexpected returns of Settlement to remove our Rulers, and restore our Ruler; and not only to make our excellent King confess, but what is better, to give us Righteousness instead of Exaction, and hopes of Religion to a Church worried with Reformation: I believe upon due and impartial Reflection on what is Past, you now find no cause to Repent, that you never did your hands in the Bloody High Court of Justice, properly so called only by Antiphrasis and superstitious Rex Rebe to those Employments in which you must have worn the Colour of your Sins in the Badge of your Office, But notwithstanding all the Encroachments of a Prosperous Villany, abhorred the Purchaser, when the Price was Blood. So that now being privileged by an happy Uncertainty in those Legal Murders, you may take a sweeter relish of your own Innocence, by beholding the misery of others, who being Guilty before God, and infamous before men, Obnoxious to Both, begin to find the first fruit of their Sinne in the Universe; for from all, their apparent Danger, and unlikely Remedy: which Beginnings being at length consummated by the hand of Justice, the ery of Blood and Sacrifice will cease, men's doubts will be Satisfied, and Providence Absolved.

And thus, Sir, having presumed to honour my first Essays in Divinity, by prefixing to them a Name, to which Divines are so much obliged. I should here in the close of this Address, contribute a With at least to your Happiness: But since we desire it not yet in another Wold, and your Enjoyments in this (according to the Standard of a Christian desire) are so compleat, that they require no Addition; I shall turn my Vithes into Gratulations, and congratulating their Fulness, only with their Continuance.