

*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

your Age and Conscience, (the one Venerable, the other Sacred) Drudges to the Tyranny of Fanatick, Perjured Usurpers. 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 Fanaticks, persons not fit to be nam'd in such Courts, but in an Indictment. But, Sir, in the Instructions I here presumed to give to others, concerning what they should doe, you may take a Narrative of what you have done: what respected their Actions as a Rule or Admonition, applyed to yours is onely a Rehearsall. Whose Zeal in asserting the Ministeriall Cause is so generally known, so gratefully acknowledged, that I dare affirme, that in what I deliver, you read the Words indeed of One, but the Thanks of All. VVhich affectionate Concernment of yours for them, seems to argue a Spirituall sence, and Experimentall Tast of their VVorks, and that you have reaped as much from their Labours, as others have done from their Lands: For to me it seemed alwaies strange, and next to Impossible, that a man converted by the Word Preached, should ever hate and persecute a Preacher. And since you have severall times in discourse declared your self for that Government in the Church, that is founded upon Scripture, Reason, Apostolicall Practice and Antiquity, and (we are sure) the onely one that can consist with the Present Government of State, I thought the latter Discourse also might fitly addressse it selfe to you, in the 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,

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and answer persecuted Patience with the unexpected returns of Settlement; to remove our Rulers, and restore our Ruler; and not onely to make our *Exactors righteousnesse*, but, what is better, to give us Righteousnesse instead of Exaction, and hopes of Religion to a Church worried with Reformation; I believe upon due and impartiall Reflexion on what is Past, you now find no cause to Repent, that you never dipt your hands in the Bloody *High Courts of Justice*, properly so called onely by Antiphrasis; nor ever prostituted the Scarlet Robe to those Employments, in which you must have worne the Colour of your Sinne in the Badge of your Office. But notwithstanding all the Enticements of a Prosperous Villany, abhorred the Purchase, when the Price was Blood. So that now being priviledged by an happy Unconcernment in those Legall Murders, you may take a sweeter relish of your own Innocence, by beholding the misery of others Guilt, who being Guilty before God, and infamous before men, Obnoxious to Both, begin to find the first fruit of their sinne in the Universal scorn of all, their apparent Danger, and unlikely Remedy: which beginnings being at length consummated by the hand of Justice, the cry of Blood and Sacriledge will cease, mens 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 Addressse, contribute a Wish at least to your Happiness: But since we desire it not yet in another VVorld, 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 VVishes into Gratulations, and congratulating their Fulnesse, onely wish their Continuance.