

A
Thanksgiving Sermon,

PREACHED AT ST. LUCIA,
THE SUNDAY AFTER THE
H U R R I C A N E

IN OCTOBER, 1780,
On Board his Majesty's Ship VENGEANCE,
Capt. HOLLOWAY;
AND BEFORE
COMMODORE HOTHAM.

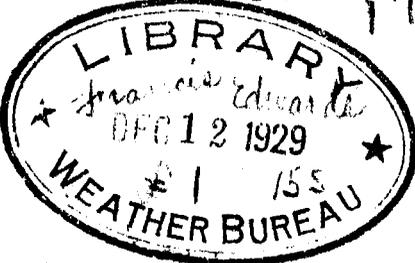
BY THE REV. P. TOUCH, A. M.
Late Chaplain of his Majesty's Ships, Alcide and Egmont.

———Venti, velut agnive facto,
Quà data porta ruunt, et terras turbine perflant,
Incubère marì, totumque à fedibus imis
Unà Eurisq; Notusque ruunt, creberque procellis
Africus, et vastos volvunt ad litora fluctus!
Insequitur clamorque virùm, stridorque rudentum!
Eripiunt, subito, nubes, coelumque diemque,
Teucrorum ex oculis!—ponto nox inoubat atra!
Intenuere poli, et crebris micat ignibus æther!
Præsentemque viris intentant omnia mortem! &c.

VIRG.

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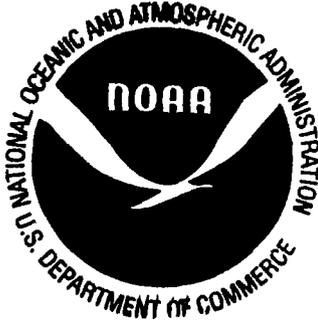
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A N

A P O L O G Y

T O T H E P U B L I C.

THE following sermon goes to the press much against my inclination. Indeed it hurts my feelings, as a man of education, that I am hurried by my friends into the public presence, with a performance of so little merit—of so old a date—on a subject so trite—and at a time when I can but ill afford such an expence of character as it will cost me among the learned, the accurate, and the sentimental part of my readers.

But, as I have not the smallest view of profit or popularity by it, as my only real motives

~~motives for printing it, are a regard for the~~ advice of my friends, and for my own private character; I hope the public will pardon its imperfections.

I am lately informed, by the first naval authority, "That my name is not to be found on any of the ship books belonging to his Majesty's ship *Vengeance*:" and, therefore, that it is become a doubt, whether I had ever, as I have positively asserted, in my late memorial to the Lords of the Admiralty, officiated as chaplain on board of that ship?

This very unexpected piece of intelligence could not but astonish and pain me. I mentioned it to some gentlemen of spirit and discretion, and they insist upon it, "That the only satisfaction which I can give to their minds upon this point; and the most compendious, and effectual method which I can take to vindicate my veracity to their Lordships of the Admiralty, is, to publish immediately this sermon, and to preface it with as much of the narrative part of my memorial to their Lordships, as is necessary to convince the world, that I assert nothing but truth, and

“ and that I claim nothing but what I be-
 “ lieve to be my right.” †

In my memorial to the Lords of the Ad-
 miralty, I have represented, “ That in con-
 “ sequence of an order which I obtained
 “ from their Right Honourable Board, I
 “ sailed passenger with his Majesty’s ship
 “ Ramillies, in the summer of 1780, to
 “ join my ship the Alcide, at that time with
 “ the Leeward Island fleet, under Lord
 “ Rodney: that the Ramillies, in her way
 “ to Jamaica, landed me at Barbadoes, from
 “ whence I went, in the Endymion, to St.
 “ Lucia: That on my arrival there, I was
 “ immediately sent for from his Majesty’s
 “ ship Vengeance, on board of which Com-
 “ modore Hotham had his pendant, and
 “ had been left by lord Rodney, with the
 “ command of the squadron in those seas,
 “ till his Lordship’s return from America,
 “ for which he had lately sailed with the
 “ grand division of the fleet, among which
 “ was my ship: That there being at that
 “ time no chaplain belonging to the Ven-
 “ geance, I acted in her, as such, by parti-
 “ cular desire (I could not otherwise) from
 “ the Sunday preceding the hurricane of
 “ October, 1780, till the spring of 1781,

“ or

† assigned for Money Douer.

vi A N A P O L O G Y

“ or about six months, when she sailed for
“ St. Eustatia and England.”

This is what lies asserted by me, on the table of the Right Honourable Board of Admiralty, from whom I cannot doubt of receiving speedy justice. It is what I now, in public, assert, notwithstanding the omission of the purser of the Vengeance, and what I do not think, any person in London will afterwards, pretend, for their sinister purposes, to call in question: especially, when I here appeal, with a certainty of their assent, from my knowledge of their honor, to every officer of the Vengeance (even purser and all) for the truth of my assertion. Let me extend this appeal to every one of those brave men, under their command who heard me preach this sermon, with the most serious attention.

And here let me embrace this first opportunity, which I have ever had in public, of thanking the Commodore, the Captain, and every officer, and every private man, whom God hath preserved alive unto this day, for all the personal civilities which I have received from them, and for that strict decorum,

TO THE PUBLIC. vii

decorum, that manly gravity, and dutiful attention, with which they always behaved, during the whole of divine service.

I cannot think of them and allow myself to part with their idea, without bowing down before that throne where mercy sits exalted, and praying, in the most fervent manner, to the Almighty, for the temporal, spiritual, and eternal welfare, of their persons and families! Wherever they are, “ May the God of all grace, who hath called us unto eternal glory, by Jesus Christ, make, and keep them for ever, perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in them that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ.”

A

Thanksgiving Sermon, &c.

P S A L M cxvi. 12—17.

What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me?—I will offer unto him the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord.

TAKE it, on the whole, in either the military or the moral part of it, and we cannot find upon record a character, merely human, more amiable and more exemplary than that of David. For, whether we mark his conduct as a man or as a monarch—as a patriot or politician—as a father—a husband—a friend—or as a saint—or as a hero, we feel, with admiration, his striking excellence. Through every scene of life, through every vicissitude of situation, from the day on which God “took him from the sheep-folds, from following the ewes great with young, and brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance;” and from that memorable period, till “he died in a good

B

“old

“ old age, full of days, riches and honour;” there is a propriety and spirit, a piety, a virtue, and dignity in all his actions, which are worthy of “ the man according to God’s own heart.”

Did not works of necessity and mercy call to day for your speediest attention, I could proceed here, and with pleasure delineate the whole life of David. But, as your Bibles are at all times open, and thank God, “ in a known tongue” for your perusal; permit me to refer you to them at an hour of more leisure, for their edifying and entertaining history of this royal soldier. Only allow me to beg of you when you read, or reflect, or converse on it, to feel, as men, for his frailties; as warriors, to imitate his valour; as subjects, his loyalty and LOVE of COUNTRY; and, as persons professing godliness, to cultivate in your minds, and practise in your lives, those just and rational, those serious and exalted sentiments of religion, which proved in David the source of a thousand pleasures, and inspired him to a conduct which always hath been, and always will be honoured with the approbation of God and man.

Of the many excellent lessons which his life and inestimable writings afford us, there is one which, on this occasion, claims our particular attention. It is,

His

His great gratitude to God, after any signal deliverance from an impending judgment of heaven, and for all God's benefits towards him.

After speaking of that, I shall remind you of a few considerations, calculated to enkindle in our hearts a similar, if possible, a superior gratitude to God, for the superior mercies which he hath graciously vouchsafed us.

And, I shall conclude all with an application suited to our text, and to the occasion of our being once more assembled together "in the land
"of the living, and in the place of hope."

First, I am to remind you of David's great gratitude to God, after any signal deliverance from the impending judgments of heaven, and
"for all God's benefits towards him."

This pious prince believed, what I presume every man present does, that there is a God. A God who created, animates, fills, and upholds the universe. A God of infinite wisdom, omnipotent power, and unbounded goodness; ruling over all, through all, and in all; without whose permission or direction, nothing can happen "in
"the armies of heaven," from the elements of nature, nor "among the inhabitants of the earth." And therefore, when Providence held out "the terrors of the Lord" before him; when he saw, as we did in the past week from this ship,

that " the judgments of the Almighty were come abroad the earth," David, as I pray God all of us may, " learned righteousness." He wisely considered every tremendous evil, every distinguished distress, every awful dispensation of heaven, such as war, earthquakes, and hurricanes, as messengers sent down from the omnipotent Governor of the world, and the divine Guardian of human happiness, to speak, as in thunder to his soul; to rouse up to action his sleeping virtues; to re-animate, from their languor, his graces; or to correct, with a paternal severity, some gross national, or domestic, or personal guilt.

In consequence of this religious, and indeed rational interpretation of Providences, we never find David repining, nor murmuring, raging nor blaspheming, in even the most trying and tragic scenes of life: but, " as one that is dumb, he " opened not his mouth," for he knew " it was " the doing of the Lord;" of that God " who " is righteous in all his ways, and just in all his " judgments." He, therefore, " as in dust and " in ashes," humbled himself immediately before the Almighty, and in the most ardent language of penitence and of prayer, deprecated the divine displeasure, and prayed without ceasing, " with " all prayer and supplication," till he obtained " some token for good," that is, some reasonable evidence that his God was appeased,

This devotional conduct of David pleased God. By such a conduct he became the favourite of his Maker, the glory of his people, and the terror of his foes. It was by the uniform practice of this singular piety; that he was delivered out of all the dangers and distresses of his life—that he obtained a full and final deliverance from all the cruel and long-continued persecutions of Saul—that he escaped from the vengeance of Achish—that he became a great king—that he was “invincible in arms;”—that he obtained from God the removal of a very terrible pestilence from his people—that he was pardoned his connection with Bathsheba, and the death of Uriah—and it was by his faithful perseverance in this religious conduct, that, previous to his composition of the thanksgiving psalm now before us, the Almighty preserved him, by the arm of his omnipotence, from being dethroned by his son Absalom, and slain by that hoary rebel Ahithophel—the FRANKLIN of Israel.

Gratitude is a generous, pleasing passion, and beats high in every good heart. When its object is merely human, the sensibilities which it inspires are sublime; when its object is God, our hearts feel as if touched with a live coal from the altar of heaven. To what a height then of holy transport must this passion have been elevated, at the period we preach from, in the soul of David? A soul of such a warm virtue

virtue—of such a quick sense of goodness—and so full of spiritual animation !

When he sat down to compose this beautiful, sacred song of praise, it would seem, indeed, as if he had been so overpowered by gratitude, after a retrospective view of all God's goodness to him, as to be, for some time, at a loss for language to express his exquisitely lively sense of it. And even when (the high tide of his emotions subsiding a little) he attempts to pen down, or speak aloud his grateful feelings, we think we see the royal hero, as if no sublunary being could adequately assist, raising up his soul to God, and his eye to angels, that, from the contemplation of the one, and the example of the other, he might be inspired to acknowledge, as he wished to do, the many marvellous mercies, and very signal deliverances, which he had received from heaven.

“ What, saith he, shall I render unto the
 “ Lord,” what language, what love, what honors,
 “ for all his benefits towards me? How precious
 “ have been thy thoughts, O God, unto me!
 “ The sum of them how exceeding, how in-
 “ effably great! Give ear, O ye heavens, and
 “ I will speak! And hear, O earth, while I pro-
 “ claim the praises of my God.

“ From the earliest period of my being, my
 “ God hath been with me, and distinguished
 “ me, in a very remarkable manner, by ten
 “ thousand expressions of his loving kindness
 “ and

“ and tender mercies. He spoke me from no
 “ thing into existence, and curiously wrought
 “ me in the lowest parts of the earth! The ever-
 “ waking eye of his providence watched over
 “ my substance, yet being imperfect! In his
 “ book all my members were written; and, in
 “ his good time, he formed and fashioned them,
 “ by the hand of divine wisdom. Soon as he
 “ brought me to the world, and presented me
 “ on the stage of time, I found myself encircled
 “ in the arms of a fond mother, and every thing
 “ provided for me, which could make this new
 “ state of being prove pleasing! Through all
 “ the years of my helpless infancy, through all
 “ the years of my thoughtless childhood, the
 “ same good God watched over, cared for, and
 “ preserved me from the numberless perils, and
 “ the numberless evils to which my inexperience
 “ and folly exposed me. Early in my youth I
 “ was very highly favored “ above my fellows,”
 “ in matters of religious and eternal moment.
 “ My God not only blest me with parents, who
 “ taught me religion by precept, and endeared
 “ it to me by example; but he also sent me his
 “ prophets and his priests to unfold to me all the
 “ mysteries, and display all the wonders of his
 “ law.

“ It was my God who formed me by his
 “ Power, and inspired me by his Spirit, for war.
 “ It was my God, who led me up to the martial
 “ field; who, always covered my head in the
 “ day

“ day of battle ; who honored me with the shield
 “ of his falvation ; and crowned my arms with
 “ laurels and glory.

“ And though pestilence and famine, though
 “ rebellion, and very often family and personal
 “ distrefs, have threatened me with the ruin of
 “ my felicity, empire and fame, yet, at every
 “ fuch crisis, hath God graciously interposed,
 “ and, now, he hath scattered from before me
 “ ALL my enemies, and put an end to all my ad-
 “ verfities ! In health and peace, in ftability and
 “ triumph hath he feated me on my throne ;
 “ that throne to which I have been exalted by
 “ his goodnefs, and on which I reign, eftablished
 “ by his omnipotence !

“ What fhall I render unto my God for all
 “ thefe his benefits towards me ? An hecatomb
 “ of bullocks from my pastures, or of he-goats
 “ out of my folds ? But every beaft of the foreft
 “ is God’s, and the cattle upon a thousand
 “ hills : befides, fuch lifelefs and irrational ob-
 “ lations are not what the Lord requires. Whofo
 “ offereth praise glorifies God ; and the man
 “ who ordereth his converfation aright, presents
 “ the moft pleasing facrifice to the moft High. I
 “ will therefore offer up the facrifice of thank-
 “ giving to my God ; I will call upon the name of
 “ the Lord with my whole heart ! a heart glowing,
 “ in all her powers, with a fenfe of his infinite
 “ goodnefs ; a heart where my Saviour and my
 “ God,

“ God, shall, for ever, reign and rule unrivalled ;
 “ where, henceforth, nothing carnal nor criminal shall inhabit, and whence nothing shall
 “ proceed but flames of devotion, ejaculations
 “ of prayer, and hallelujas of praise.

“ In my closet and solitudes, I have already
 “ begun this sweet and sacred employ. In my
 “ family, and among my select friends, “ the
 “ excellent ones of the earth,” it is the subject
 “ of my discourse, and my delight. But, as
 “ the manifold deliverances, which the Almighty
 “ hath wrought for me, have been as public as
 “ they are amazing ; and as to public ordinances
 “ and temple services, God hath promised his
 “ more immediate presence and peculiar
 “ blessing, I will pay my vows unto the Lord,
 “ in the assembly of his people ; I will this day
 “ go up to his holy temple, and in the presence
 “ of men and angels, honor him with my
 “ loudest praises ; proclaiming what he hath
 “ done for his anointed, even for his servant
 “ David.”

This, my brethren, is a short sketch of David's
 gratitude to God. And is there a heart, in this
 place, of any pious or generous principles, which
 does not approve of David's conduct in this
 grateful resolution ? It cannot be ; why then let
 you and I “ go and do likewise.” And if
 greater mercies call for greater gratitude, which
 surely they do, how should we, this day, lift up

our souls, and all that is within us, to offer unto our Saviour and our God, the sacrifice of our gratitude, “for all his benefits towards us?” And, in a very particular manner, for his late miraculous salvation of us in this ship, a salvation from a death of horror here, and, Sirs, of many of us, perhaps, from eternal condemnation hereafter!

That God’s goodness to David was extraordinary, I have allowed, and have enlarged upon it. But give me leave to add, in the next place, that never could David, in any part of his life; never, indeed, could any sovereign or subject of the Jewish or the Gentile world, either before, during, or since that period, boast such a train, or quality of mercies, as have been the gift of God to our King, to our country, and to us; mercies both civil and religious, temporal and spiritual, many of them clearly demonstrative of the Almighty’s peculiar regard for us: and such mercies as have long exalted our empire above “the nations of the earth,” and made it the envy, the terror, and admiration of the world. And,

First. But, when the mercies of God, to his children of Britain, are to be the subject, where shall I *first* begin? They throng in thousands on the eye of memory! How transporting the view! And the enumeration of them would be inexpressibly pleasing: But, “who is sufficient for these things?” Who can count the drops

drops of the dew, or number the rain as it falls from heaven? The mercies of God to Britons, are not a theme for an hour on this deck, nor for our whole time and capacities in this life; but for an eternity in heaven: nor through eternity itself shall we be able to exhaust it. Such an enumeration, therefore, I presume not to attempt. Let me only beg the honor of your attention, while I select and set before you a *few* of the most striking and singular mercies we enjoy: that is, those mercies which distinguish us “from the kingdoms around us,” as we are christians, as we are protestants, and as we are free Britons. And

First, Of the mercies by which, as Christians, we stand distinguished from the Pagan, Mahometan, and Jewish part of mankind.

An enlightened British Christian, looking down upon the Pagan world, as it lies, even at this moment, “in the shadow of death”—“in the blackness of darkness;” while he is sitting under the full light of “the Sun of Righteousness,” with the road to virtue and to wisdom, to happiness and to heaven, pointed out clearly before him by the hand of revelation, reminds us of the parable, in which Abraham is represented, as in heaven, looking down upon Dives in hell. To justify this comparison, there is no occasion, even if time permitted us, to lead you back to former ages, or to carry you to distant

C 2

empires,

empires, and entertain you with a long or learned history of the nature and origin, the progress and unbounded spread of idolatry. Our own age, and to the great reproach of some people, from whom better things might be expected, our own islands, in *this*, and *other parts of our dominions*, afford us ten thousand living proofs, that there is not a greater difference between their climate and colour of body and ours, between their slavery and our liberty, between right and wrong, than there is, by God's distinguishing goodness to us! between the horrors of their idolatry, and the divinity of our holy faith.

In what an abyss of ignorance, righteous God! with respect to religion, are those, our pitiable fellow-creatures immersed! How ignorant of its very first principles! How lost to every idea of its light and salvation! Totally unacquainted with the nature and unity of the Godhead, they believe in a plurality of deities, and transfer the adoration, due only to the one great Supreme, to an innumerable crowd of idols and images, of things rational and irrational, animate and inanimate.

How shocking it is to the eye—and to the heart of Christian benevolence—to see those poor black men and women, falling down and worshipping the first tree to which they can run, in the hour of their danger or distress, and humbly and fervently “ beseeching for aid, that which is im-
“ potent

“ potent to save? praying for life to that which
 “ is dead! and addressing idols, which can nei-
 “ ther hear nor see, nor speak, nor set a foot
 “ forward!”

But, alas! they know not better; and very little better did even “ the mighty dead of
 “ them,” in the celebrated æras of Greece and Rome; nay, my brethren, nor the greatest and wisest of our own ancestors know. But thanks be to Almighty God, through Jesus Christ, it is otherwise, with you and me! In this sacred book before me, in this “ unspeakable gift” of God—this dear, divine treasure, of truth! of light! of life! and of love! hath that good “ God, who
 “ at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake
 “ in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,
 “ spoken, in these last days, to every Briton, by
 “ his Son, and by his apostles,” and by their successors, in the ministry of God.

From them have we received the most glorious and perfect, the most rational, endearing, and infallible testimony of God—of his existence and nature—of his attributes and perfections—of his creation and moral government of the world—of his creation of man—of the high station which he assigned to him, in the grand system of the universe—what is the end of his being—and his ultimate destination. From them we have received the most authentic and incontestable account of that marvellous and heart-captivating
 prodigy

prodigy of divine love, the redemption of mankind by Jesus Christ! by God manifest in the flesh! Enlightened by this heavenly teacher, the meanest subject of our empire can now clearly see, what all the optics of philosophy, in the zenith of its lustre, could never discern—what hath always and every where, “confounded the “wisdom of the wise” in the regions of Paganism.—We now see clearly and convincingly, what mode of worship is most acceptable and pleasing to the great “Father of the spirits of all “flesh:”—what an infinite atonement was found necessary to “justify the ungodly;” and *when* and *how*, and by *whom*, and *why*, it was made.

We now know that not only our souls are immortal, but that our bodies also shall be raised up again from death, and united with our souls, through all the periods of eternity.—We are now certain that there is a state of future rewards and punishments—an eternity of consummate happiness to the good, and an eternity of consummate misery and woe to the wicked, among us.—That, mean time, to assist and to encourage us in practising the precepts, and performing the duties of Christianity, our gracious God hath promised to our prayers, the aids and influences of his holy Spirit—his ministering angels—the salutary discipline of his providence—the preaching of his word—and the sanctified use of all his holy ordinances.

Could

Could we with the trumpeter of that angel who shall awake the dead to judgment, call up Socrates and Cicero from the chambers of the grave, and put this Bible into their hands, informing them what a revelation it contained; with what a mixture of astonishment and rapture! with what an intense avidity and eagerness! would they read, and study, and hang over it! till they were lost in a wonder—a gratitude—and adoration, something like that which we may suppose Enoch and Elias felt, when they were translated from the darkness of earth to the light of heaven—from the face of man to the vision and fruition of God. “What, therefore, should we render unto the Lord, for *this* with *all his other* benefits towards us?” We were like those learned Pagans, and like millions of mankind at this day, “sometimes darkæns, but now are we light in the Lord;” let us, therefore, * walk as children of light—in all goodness, and righteousness and truth, proving “what is acceptable to the Lord.”

II. Not only hath God in his tender mercies blest us with a revelation whose privileges excel, and whose lights infinitely outshine the dubious, infatuating glimmerings of the Pagan philosophy; but which is also a thousand times more comfortable and rational than the superstition of Mahomet, or even, the religion of Moses.

As for the superstition of Mahomet, it is nothing but a quack compound of every thing that is blasphemous and absurd, ridiculous and execrable, in the Pagan, the Popish, and Jewish creeds—The many palpable lies, and contemptible, impious, silly ceremonies, the number of false traditions, and old wives fables, which fill his Alcoran, excite, equally, our indignation and pity.

In every age and nation, great names, plausible pretences, and external appearances, have a powerful effect upon all the ignorant, and weak, and versatile part of mankind. They could not, therefore, but operate successfully on men of such a cast of mind, as those Pagans were, who lived in the same place and period with this impostor—the darkest and most superstitious which our world ever saw. But even then, there was not a Pagan of any sobriety, or any moral taste, who was not shocked at the tenets of Mahomet. He early marked this, and painfully felt it; but determined at all events, to carry his point, he changed his weapons, and had recourse to the sword.

The mob was at his devotion, and this artful impostor knew well how to rouse them to enthusiasm. By a prostitution of language and conscience, peculiar to all ambitious spirits, he gave his sedition a popular name. “The cause of God,” “toleration,” “liberty”—the cant
to

to this day, of all malecontents and reputed patriots. He, then, called together this association of banditti, and, having wrought them up to a religious madness—a fury of temper fit for any crime, he put himself at their head, and forth they sallied upon the World—like the angel of destruction, with his baneful Genii, burning without distinction, and massacring, without mercy, all who refused his doctrines, till, at last they established by bloodshed and arms, a superstition, which they found it impossible to propagate, or support, by reason or common sense.

What a contrast is this, my brethren, to the genius of Christianity—and the first appearance of Jesus among men! When the angels of Heaven shone in their robes of glory over Bethlehem, and proclaimed in an anthem of gratitude to God, “Peace on Earth! and Goodwill towards Men!” But, what a contrast, indeed, in all things, is the monster we have mentioned with his heresies and contradictions, his pollutions—his fooleries and murders—to “The Lamb of God! the Prince of Peace—the *mild* and *divine* Author of our Faith!” to the truth, the reason and consistency—to the sublime morality—the endearing promises—and the glorious prospects of Christianity?

The gospel of Jesus is *like himself* perfect, converting the soul “by a sweet constraint—” his testimony is sure, making wise the simple—his

doctrines are evidently divine, “rejoicing our heart” his precepts “are pure” ennobling our nature—the worship *he* enjoins us is rational, void of all superstition—and the whole law of our religion is the law of beauty—harmony and love!

What, therefore, shall we render to the Lord, for this, with all his other benefits and mercies towards us—that we live in an age and country where Christianity is established, and that we were not born and brought up Pagans nor Mahometans—poor deluded men! who have nothing to shew them their way to their Supreme good and a happy eternity, but the dim and deceiving taper of superstition—let us offer unto him the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and call upon the name of our gracious Lord.—But this is not all Gods distinguishing goodness to us, my brethren—for not only hath our God, the father of mercies,—revealed himself to us, in another way and manner, than he hath done to those unhappy kingdoms of Idolatry and delusion, but, 3dly He hath also blest us with a more perspicuous—a more comprehensive, gracious and perfect revelation of his will, than any he hath ever granted to the Jews, although, once his peculiar people.

The religion of the Jews, or the law by Moses, was in its best days, no more than a partial, imperfect, temporary dispensation—a dispensation originally intended, and wisely suited,
by

by the Almighty, to the peculiar genius and spirit—situation—time—and other circumstances of the Jews—a dispensation says St. Paul, “ consisting in meats and drinks and divers washings and carnal ordinances” imposed, saith the Lord, on that “ stiff necked people” for the “ hardness of their hearts”—and, on account of their vicinity and propensity to the idolatries of the Heathen—to preserve them from the enormous guilt of idol worship, and keep up in their minds a constant and serious sense of the great and *only* true God. It was also meant to typify, every day before them, a more pure—spiritual, and perfect dispensation—“ the time of reformation” when “ a better covenant” established upon better premises should be introduced by the Messiah; who was at his coming, said Daniel. “ to cause the oblation and the sacrifice to cease.” They were to cease, because the law being only “ a shadow of the good things to come” an image of those things of which Christ was to exhibit the body, truth and substance, the reason of them would cease.

I might here give you, did time permit, a very particular and comparative view of the Mosaic and Christian dispensations, in order to shew you the pre-eminent excellency of the *latter*, which we enjoy from Christ Jesus, above the *former*, which the Jews received, by Moses. As a prophet he infinitely exceeded the dignity and merits of Moses; as a priest, the quality and

sanctity of Aaron; and as a king and priest, he infinitely exceeded Melchisedec both in point of purity and of power. But, for an ample and convincing account of this, allow me to recommend for your reading, the first ten chapters, and from the eighteenth verse of the twelfth chapter, of St. Paul's epistle to the Hebrews—where the Apostle, with his usual eloquence and abilities, gives you a perfect idea of the Jewish dispensation, and unanswerably proves the transcendent preference, which is due to the religion of Jesus.

After you have attentively read, and meditated on this, open his other epistles, and particularly that elegant and sublime one which he addresses to the Romans, an epistle so remarkably comprehensive, and instructing, that it is justly called “The Christian's confession of Faith” and “The key of the New Testament.”

In the first eleven chapters of this epistle, you will find a most masterly and ingenious discussion of this subject, which terminates as in that to the Hebrews, exceedingly in favor of Christianity. And, surely, it ought to do so. For as much as a substance is better than a shadow—as much as yonder sun outshines the morning star—as much as the mighty God excels angels—so much do the lights, the privileges, the honors and the blessings of the Christian, excel those of the the Mosaic, dispensation—even in its *best* days.

And

And if in its *best* days, our Religion, so extremely surpasses that of the Jews—how infinitely must it be preferred to the superstition of their present Synagogue? for now they have subjoined to the law, as originally given to Moses, their Targum and Misna—their Talmud and Oral Law. These they implicitly believe in, and esteem it as if equally canonical with Moses and the prophets—though they know the latter to have been spoken by the inspiration of God's holy spirit—and cannot deny that the former are nothing but the compositions of their most degenerate Sanhedrims and Rabbies—compositions, replete with heresies, and false traditions—with blasphemies and ludicrous fancies—

This verifies St. Paul's observation, "That because of their unbelief" in Jesus, "blindness" "is inflicted, by God on Israel, and must continue, until the fulness of the Gentiles come in; and then (we rejoice in the thought!)" "all Israel shall be saved!" and, here my brethren, let pity shed a tear over the humiliating degradation, and judicial obduracy of these infatuated scattered tribes! let devotion lift up her eye to the God of Jesus and of Jacob, and implore of his infinite mercy, to shorten the melancholy night of their infidelity—to wake them by the trumpet of his gospel, from their present lethargy of soul—and "removing the veil" from
before

before their eyes, give them to see, savingly,
 “ the truth as it is in Christ Jesus” the true and
 only Messiah !

Mean time “ what shall *we* render unto the
 “ Lord for his revealing this divine truth” to *us*,
 with “ all his” other “ benefits towards us ?
 “ we will offer unto our God (that God who hath,
 “ by Christ Jesus justified us from all that guilt
 “ from which we never could have been justified
 “ by the law of nature nor of Moses!) we will
 “ offer this day the sacrifice of thanksgiving,
 “ and will call upon the name of the Lord”! and,

To give an additional fervor to our gratitude
 “ for all God’s benefits towards us”—we will,
 in the next place think, with adoration to Hea-
 ven, of another very distinguishing and memor-
 able mercy, which a good God hath graciously
 vouchsafed us—and this is—that by his kind pro-
 vidence, it has been our happy lot to be descended of
 Protestant parents---to have been educated in a
 Protestant country, and made members of a Pro-
 testant church, a church which is, and hath always
 been, the bulwark of the reformation, and which
 is, at once, the guardian and glory of Christianity.

Had we been unfortunate enough to have been
 Papists, instead of Protestants, and that we were
 not so, is intirely owing to the discriminating
 grace of the Almighty, inspiring the noble spi-
 rits of our Fathers; how shocking to our rea-
 son!

son! how painful to our humanity! what agony to our consciences! and, how fatal to our souls, must it have been? For every papist, like the images which he worships, has eyes, but must not see, he has ears, but he must not hear—he has a heart, but he must not understand—he has all his senses of body and faculties of mind—but he must not—he dare not—at the peril of his life and salvation—make use of them—but according to the directions of Holy Church, or the Pope, and his priests.—If *they* call virtue vice, and blasphemy piety; the poor laity must implicitly believe them to be so—for they must believe the church and the pope to be infallible—and therefore incapable of error—thus every Papist must be an anti-christ—for they are *obliged*, by *their religion*, to think and act diametrically opposite to the doctrinal and preceptive part of the religion of Christ.

St. John pronounces a most awful curse from God, upon all those who presume to add one word to, or take one word from his prophecy in particular, or the scriptures in general, and consequently upon all those who pervert and misinterpret—or totally cancel or contradict any part of them. But the church of Rome owns and avows that she does all this—Take a few instances of this, for it is only a few that your time allows me to offer you.

“ That

“ That God only is to be worshipped;”—She denies and worships images and idols.

“ That the sacrifice of Christ for the redemption and salvation of mankind was all-sufficient and perfect.” They deny—witness their doctrine of the mass—their prayers unto saints; and their purgatory—which they stole from the Jews, and they from the reveries of Plato.—Thus they make the passion of Christ of none effect, or if of any, to clear us only of original sin. They tell us, that “ although Christ did suffer for all men in general, yet every man must suffer for himself in particular.” And again “ the works of one man may satisfy the justice of God for another by his extra merits—That Christ *only*, is the judge of the quick and the dead”—they deny—and insist upon it, that the Pope is likewise so.

They teach the doctrines of free-will, and of justification by works—that many works done before justification are not sinful.—That works of supererogation deliver from the wrath of God as well as Christ. That the Virgin Mary and St. Francis were as sinless and immaculate as our Saviour was.—That infants who die before baptism are condemned of God—That the church hath power to change the sacraments instituted by Christ; and, that the authority of the church is greater than that of the Holy Scriptures—That the laity have no right to expound, nay, nor to
read

read the scriptures, except now and then *their* false translations of them—but, as much as they please, their (idolatrous) festivals, rosaries, legends, horaries and psalteries—that the scriptures are “ a leaden rule ”—“ a nose of wax,” and may be expounded in any manner and to any purpose, which the Pope and his church may find proper. This accounts for their doctrines of every kind; and among others, for that one of transubstantiation, in the sacrament of the Lord’s supper, which is a contradiction to our senses as well as our reason.

These shocking doctrines, my brethren, are a part, and but a very small part of the faith of a real Papist—and of the antichristian church of Rome—I may speak more of them, at another time. Let me only add at present, that Popery is nothing better than a jumble of heresies and blasphemies—absurdities and impositions—chimeras and nonsense—culled, by apostacy and Satan, from the groves of Paganism—from the apocrypha and legends of the Jews—and, from a few of the mystical, figurative, or ambiguous paragraphs of the canonical scriptures.—To almost every one article of our faith, and therefore, to almost every one *commandment* of God in the Old Testament, or *precept* of Jesus and his *apostles* in the New Testament, there are canons and decrees in this church of Anti-christ, standing in direct opposition, unrepealed, even at this day. Is this God’s chosen ! only ! Catholic ! holy

E

church !

church? Heaven forbid! till darknefs becomes light—till error becomes truth—till guilt becomes innocence, till the fynagogue of satan, my brethren, becomes the temple of the great God, yea, till hell becomes heaven! this mother of abominations, and bloody perfecutor of the “martyrs of Jefus,” will never have a right to be numbered among even the meanest of the churches of Christ.

What, therefore, shall we render to the Lord, for delivering our country—our fathers, and us their progeny, from the yoke of this spiritual tyranny, from the horrors of this dreadful superstition! we will offer to day, and while we have a being, the sacrifice of thanksgiving—we will call upon the name of the Lord, and implore his aid to enable us, to the end that we may be wholly free, and wholly his—to “deliver ourselves from the bondage of corruption, into “the glorious LIBERTY of the children of God!”

Oh LIBERTY! what good Briton exists who does not feel music in thy name, and associates the idea of felicity with its pleasing sound!—and this, not only when it is mentioned in its religious, but when it is understood in its civil sense?

But fifthly, such hath been the very distinguished goodness of our God to us—that, in order to
perfect

perfect our social and civil, as well as our moral and religious happiness—he hath, with his pure and primitive gospel, “ which is the law of perfect; spiritual liberty,” blest us with a system of civil government—a state, as well as a church constitution, which no age, nor nation hath ever equalled—and, which is, “ the law of a perfect “ civil liberty”—“ a constitution, so delicately “ poised between our sovereign and us, who are “ his happy and highly-favoured subjects—that, “ amidst all the agitations, which are the unavoidable attendants of liberty, the royal power, “ like an anchor which resists, both by its weight “ and the depth of its hold, insures a salutary “ steadiness to the great vessel of the state.” The supreme executive power possesses no dangerous prerogative—nothing that can affect the constitution of the empire, nor abridge, nor destroy any of our rights or liberties—any thing that can hurt our lives, persons, honor or property.

But, in France and Spain, how different the scene! There, their kings are tyrants, and their subjects poor oppressed slaves—there, a libel on government is punished as high treason—an association of factious men, are treated as rebels—a free, political conversation, proves for the most part fatal to the speakers. And a poor peasant, crushed out of his property, by a powerful oppressor, finds no relief from law. No rich, independent yeomanry there!—no trials by their peers or a

jury there! In one word, they are as miserable as a wretched constitution in church and state can make them—while, as free Britons, and as protestants, we are, or may be, as happy as an excellent—a matchless constitution in church and state can make *us*. What, therefore, shall we render unto the Lord for *this*, among his other inestimable mercies towards us? How warmly ought we to adore him for such a distinguished and admirable constitution? How heartily ought we to praise him, that we are the happy subjects of so good a king—a king who makes this our glorious constitution and law the rule of his conduct, the felicity of his people, the study of his life, and their freedom and privileges the glory of his reign?

But, from those public and more general testimonies of God's distinguishing goodness to us, as we are Christians, as we are Protestants, and as we are free Britons, I would beg leave to proceed to his more particular and private mercies to the commanders, the inferior officers, and the ship's company now before me.

I shall at present, pass over the innumerable mercies which we have long enjoyed from God, in common with our fellow-subjects—and all the signal blessings with which any of us may have been favoured—with respect to our birth---or rank---our time---our talents---our education---and all their concomitant advantages.

I will

I will but just remind you of the compassion and mercy of God manifested to you, in raising you up, when you have been laid low upon "the bed of sickness," in delivering you very often from dangers and distresses both by land and sea---at home and abroad---in society and solitude---by night and by day---and, particularly, in preserving you alive, perhaps without a wound, in the hours of battle---while thousands have fallen at your side, and ten thousands at your right hand. The mere mention of these mercies, will, I hope, awake in your souls that gratitude, which they once excited, or ought to have excited, and which will be always due for them.---

But,

My brethren--since I had the honor of preaching to you last Lord's day, it hath pleased Almighty God to alarm us with the most awful dispensation of his providence, that any of us have ever seen, a few days ago,

The Most High---"with clouds and storms,
Around him thrown, tempest o'er tempest roll'd
Majestic darkness! on the whirlwind's wing,
Riding sublime,"---"shook terribly the earth."

"And all faces," *even the bright and beautiful face of nature herself*; "gathered blackness," by land and by sea!

By land, what shocking scenes of destruction have some of us seen since that time! And what terrible
terrible

terrible horrors have we all heard of from the inland part of the island! there we may behold, as we have beheld here, the houses of every kind levelled with the dust! there, as here, we may see the old, and the young, the invalid and the man of health, promiscuously smothered in their ruins! while their surviving relations and countrymen stand pensive, in unutterable woe, around the desolated habitations --now become the tombs of perhaps, the beloved partners of their lives, or the sweet pledges of their conjugal loves---or the dear friends of their youth---or the darling woman of their heart! Many, and even some of them who are strangers in a strange land---have lost their all! and are, at this moment, without cloathing---without money---without friends---in bad health---and, I may add, without so much as the most common food!

For the irresistible tempest, which tore up the trees of the forest with their roots, hath radically destroyed those lesser fruits of the earth which are the staff of life. But,

Tragic and terrible as this hurricane and earthquake proved at land, all must allow that it was no less so at sea.—When--frightened at the thunders of the Most High as he came down in judgment with the angels of his vengeance—we saw the sun---the moon---and the stars disappear---and the very heavens seemed to fly away with a great noise---When--the waters of the great deep rose up rapidly upon us, and “ had well nigh
“ overwhelmed

" overwhelmed our souls"---When--the waves
 were raging around us for entrance---When the
 windows of the firmament were opened *above us*--
 When--the pillars of the world were trembling
 below us---When the thunders and whirlwinds
 roared tremendously on every side of us---
 When the lightning and meteors, day and night,
 blazed unceasingly about us---When the vessels
 were dashing to pieces before and behind us---
 " When *this* noble, battle-wounded ship was strik-
 " ing upon *that* rock!---and the angel of death,
 " as he passed by, looked in upon us!"---and we
 saw all these dreary shores covered with wrecks---
 What anguish filled our souls! and, with what a
 torture of pain did the terrible prospects in our
 eye, and the ideas of our brethren's situation at
 sea, harrow up every feeling mind among us! The
 thoughts of being cut off at *once*, and for ever!
 in a foreign land---by an unavoidable and unna-
 tural death---from our country---from our pa-
 rents---from our wives---from our children---
 from glory and the conquest of Britain's foes---
 and from every thing that can make life desirable
 ---added, inexpressibly, to the other agonies of
 our souls---and " made each horror look more
 " horrible! but, my brethren, true is that say-
 " ing, man's extremity is God's opportunity."
 At this momentous and memorable crisis, our
 God heard the groans of our distress! and he
 graciously saved, and delivered us---and hath
 brought all of us in health and in peace unto
 this day!

On

On *this*, his holy day, have we therefore met together, to wait upon and worship---to magnify and bless, with the united ardors of our hearts, the great God of our salvation---the divine and almighty author of our miraculous deliverance. *Miraculous!* it certainly was—for, after every effort had been exerted---every mean had been used, for our preservation, which naval skill, and naval spirit could possibly exert---but all was in vain---and we had no hope---nature's great King commanded the winds and the waves to "be still," and they were still!

And here allow me to congratulate with all of you, officers supreme and subordinate, and with every single individual of the ship's company, upon the strength with which God strengthened your souls, during the whole of this trying scene.

From the supreme commander there is nothing so great in conduct or in courage which we had not reason to expect, from his many past displays of both---nor have our highest expectations been disappointed.

Very great eulogiums are due to the activity zeal, and spirit of the captain---and every other officer deserves the encomiums of praise.

And you, my brave men, who acted under their command, merit every compliment which we can bestow

bestow on an indefatigable attention, a chearful performance of your duty---a cool intrepidity---and a christian resignation to heaven, when every moment seemed big with your final fate.

In my sacred line, I could only pour out my soul for all of you, in ejaculatory prayer before that God whose "mercy rejoiceth against judgement" and who sits exalted to give to penitence, pardon and salvation.

Blended with the dying ardors of your repentance and devotions, they penetrated the heavens, and were immediately presented and pleaded upon by our divine advocate---they were graciously heard, and have been speedily and mercifully answered.

Now, my brethren, what shall we render unto the Lord for this wonderful salvation of us, and for all his other signal mercies and deliverances of every kind, of which I have reminded you! shall we continue any longer in sin when such grace does abound? Shall we go, when the ardor of our gratitude abates, and, thoughtless of this very striking and uncommon interposal of providence in our favor, return, the swearer to his blasphemies---the drunkard to his bottle---the man of criminal gallantry to his intrigues---or, shall any sinner, of any other passion among us, return again to the commission of his former vices---after being thus snatched by the arm of

F Omnipotence

Omnipotence from the jaws of death---and, it may be from the bottomless abyss of destruction! God forbid! sirs! that we should be so ungrateful to our greatest and best benefactor--- This would be a base return for all his loving kindness and tender mercies to us---and, it would argue that we were lost to all sense of our own temporal, and eternal interest.

In the hours of your fear and distress, without a doubt, all of you were full of devotional dispositions---and, it is natural to suppose, that most, if not all of you, resolved, that if God, then spared your lives, you would give up your immoral follies, and act a more rational and pious part, through every period of the future time for which you prayed. Well, God has, agreeable to your wishes and vows, spared and prolonged your lives---but pray remember that your vows are registered in Heaven---and that there are terrible threatenings in your bibles against the man who neglects to perform all such vows as you have made unto God---God will not be mocked---he has been ever since, marking all your thoughts, words and actions---he is, this day, marking the frame of your souls, while you are offering him the thanksgiving of your heart. He expects that you will immediately reduce your resolutions to practice---that is---that, as you were saved by his grace, ye will henceforth live to his glory---that you will lead

new lives---lives of sobriety, righteousness and godliness.

If thus you have resolved---and will thus reform and amend your hearts---your conversation and moral conduct, then, you may confidently depend upon it, that God will in all future trials, as he has in this, “ be your strength and your
 “ hope, and a very present help in every time of
 “ trouble.”---Then may we speak comfort to our souls, and, in an humble dependence upon that all-powerful being, who, on many extraordinary occasions, as well as this, has been our Saviour and our deliverer, take up that noble and heroic resolution of the royal author of my text,
 “ Though an host of foes were led against us, yet
 “ will not our hearts be afraid---though wars
 “ surround us on every side, yet will we put our
 “ trust in God---*We* will not fear, though the
 “ Earth be moved---though the hills be carried
 “ into the midst of the sea---though the waves
 “ thereof rage and swell and the mountains
 “ shake at the tempest of the same. For the
 “ Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob
 “ is our refuge !”

F I N I S.