

FROM the nature of the transactions in which Barillon was employed, we have little reason to suppose him a man of very rigid virtue. We have known foreign ministers, as well as those of our own country, capable of very base actions: and is it not more probable, that Barillon might charge money in his accounts as paid to SYDNEY, which in fact never was paid to him, but put into his own pocket, than that a man of SYDNEY's noble birth, high spirit, and inflexibility of temper, should be prevailed on to take money from the court of France, at least for any unworthy purpose?

THE sentiments advanced by SYDNEY, in his celebrated "Discourses concerning Government," are such as must naturally render him odious to a despotic court like that of France. He was the determined assertor of the rights of human nature,

nature, against every species of despotism ; and has therefore ever been an object of aversion to the advocates for tyranny. And of the particular hatred of the French to the character and principles of SYDNEY, we have a striking instance related by Lord Moleworth, in the preface to his Account of Denmark. ‘ At the ‘ time,’ says he, ‘ when Mr. ALGERNON ‘ SYDNEY was ambassador at that court, ‘ Monsieur Terlon, the French ambaf- ‘ fador, had the confidence to tear out of ‘ the book of mottoes, in the King’s ‘ library, this verse, which Mr. SYDNEY ‘ (according to the custom allowed to all ‘ noble strangers) had written in it :

—‘ *Manus hæc inimica tyrannis*

‘ *Ense petit placidam sub libertate quietem.*—

‘ Though Monsieur Terlon understood not ‘ a word of Latin, he was told by others ‘ the meaning of that sentence, which he

‘ con-

‘ considered as a libel upon the French government, and upon such as was then setting up in Denmark by French assistance or example.’

If one French minister’s hatred to the person and principles of SYDNEY, could lead him to testify his animosity against him in this open and indecent manner, what reason have we to suppose, that another French minister might not be capable, of inserting SYDNEY’s name in the list of French pensioners, and of introducing a passage or two in his letters to countenance the imposition, with a view of injuring his memory and character?

THAT SYDNEY possessed a warm, an ardent attachment to the liberties of his country, is evident from the whole tenor of his life, and of his writings; and hard must it be if the reputation of such a man could be blasted, by the unproved assertions

assertions of a foreign minister. Surely such a life as that of SYDNEY, supported by his admirable writings²², and sealed with his blood, are more than sufficient to counterbalance such evidence against him, as that contained in the papers of Barillon, as published by Sir John Dalrymple! A great part of the life of this illustrious man was spent in defending the cause of public liberty, by his pen, and by his sword; and when his steady adherence to the same principles at length

²² The writer of the "Memoirs of ALGERNON SYDNEY," prefixed to the 4th edition of his works, observes, that "his DISCOURSES CONCERNING GOVERNMENT alone will immortalize his name, and are sufficient to supply the loss of Cicero's six books DE REPUBLICA, which has been so much regretted by men of sense and probity. In short, it is one of the noblest books that ever the mind of man produced; and we cannot wish a greater, or more extensive blessing to the world, than that it may be every where read, and its principles universally received and propagated."

brought

brought him to the scaffold, “ he met
 “ death,” to use the words of bishop
 Burnet on the occasion, “ with an uncon-
 “ cernedness, that became one who had
 “ set up MARCUS BRUTUS for his pattern.”

HAVING said thus much in justifica-
 tion of lord RUSSEL and Mr. SYDNEY, I
 shall readily acknowledge, that the charges
 against Montague are better supported:
 for letters are produced from him, which
 countenance the assertions of Barillon.
 But it cannot be expected of all the indi-
 viduals of which any party is composed,
 that they should be men of rigid and
 inflexible virtue. And whatever disadvan-
 tageous ideas we may be led to form, from
 the papers published by Sir John Dal-
 rymple, of some individuals professing pa-
 triotism, we shall not be led by them to
 entertain more honourable ideas of regal
 virtue; or find any new reasons for put-
 ting

ting confidence in princes. On the contrary, Charles II. will be an immortal evidence of what mean, base, and dishonest arts, the Sovereign of a great People may be guilty²³.

It has been said, that Sir John Dalrymple's publication has afforded much subject of exultation to the sons of venality, who are desirous of seeing all pretensions to patriotism placed in an unfavourable light; and who are glad of an opportunity of insinuating, that they have not a much better opinion of the patriots of the last age, than of those of the present. But the reality of the existence of public spirit in this country, does not de-

²³ Charles II. was eminently profligate as a private man, as well as in his character as a prince; and yet, to the memory of this unprincipled tyrant, a new and pompous statue has lately been erected in the Royal Exchange.

pend merely on a **RUSSEL** or a **SYDNEY**, dear as those names deservedly are to us. Our annals are adorned with the names of illustrious men, who may be ranked with the most celebrated patriots of antiquity. If **GREECE** produced an **ARISTIDES**, a **TIMOLEON**, and an **EPAMINONDAS**; **ROME** a **FABRICIUS**, a **CATO**, and a **BRUTUS**; **ENGLAND** has also produced her **WENTWORTH**²⁴, her **ELLIOT**²⁵, her **HAMPDEN**, her

²⁴ **PETER WENTWORTH** was a member of the house of commons in the reign of queen Elizabeth. He was a man of a most undaunted and incorruptible spirit, and defended the rights of the subject with more vigour than any other man in that reign. He appears to have had more just and enlarged notions of liberty than any of his contemporaries. He was three several times committed to the Tower, for the freedom of his speeches in parliament.

²⁵ **SIR JOHN ELLIOT** was one of the most able and active leaders of the opposition to the tyranny of James the First and Charles the First. He was an eloquent,

her LUDLOW, her ANDREW MARVEL, and her GEORGE SAVILE.

AMONG the many attempts which have been made by superficial modern wits, to throw an air of ridicule upon the love of freedom, it has lately been represented, by some writers, as a propensity which was chiefly found among the low, the vulgar, and the illiterate. These sublime geniusses have discovered, that the love of liberty is a passion suited only to rude and uncultivated minds. But the truth is, that among those who, in different ages of the world, have rendered themselves most conspicuous by their zeal for public freedom, there have been many who were possessed of every quality of the head, and of the heart, that could render them ornaments eloquent, incorrupt, and independent senator; and died in a confinement, which was solely brought upon him by his manly and steady adherence to the principles of a free constitution.

of human nature. And it is observable, that three of the greatest men which this country has produced, were not more distinguished by the force of their understanding, their extensive learning, and the splendour of their genius, than by their ardent zeal for the liberties of their country. I mean SELDEN, LOCKE, and MILTON.

THE name of SELDEN is universally celebrated for his various and profound erudition; and, in the character of an English senator, he exhibited the strongest attachment to the rights of the subject, and defended them with a degree of ardour, which caused him to be more than once imprisoned by an arbitrary court. As to Mr. LOCKE, who was one of the most virtuous men, and one of the greatest philosophers of the last age, his Treatise on Government, and Letters on Toleration, will ever be a lasting and honourable memo-

memorial of his sollicitude to promote the cause of civil and religious liberty. And of our immortal MILTON, one of the most sublime poets who have appeared among mankind, it has been justly said, that “the darling passion of his soul was “the love of liberty;” and at the close of his life, he frequently expressed to his friends his entire satisfaction of mind, “that he had constantly employed his “strength and faculties in the defence of “liberty, and in opposition to slavery.”

No age ever abounded more than the present, with men who affect to ridicule all who profess an affection for their country, and a zeal for its honour and its interests. They are so far from being animated by any such generous sentiments themselves, that they cannot even form an idea of the possibility of their existence. But it is certain, that no man can

be truly virtuous, who does not love his country, and who is not solicitous to promote its felicity. It was the observation of lord Delamer²⁶, a virtuous nobleman.

²⁶ Sir John Dalrymple observes, (vol. II. p. 339.) that there are, in the cabinet at Kensington, letters from the lords Delamer, Stamford, and Brandon, “making apologies to the Prince (of Orange) for their want of speed in joining him (after his landing): offences, however, which he never afterwards forgave.” But it is not very probable, that lord Delamer could delay to join William after his landing, in such a manner as to excite a degree of resentment in him which never subsided; when it is supposed, that his lordship was one of the original projectors of the Revolution; and when it is certain, that this nobleman, with the lords Halifax and Shrewsbury, was sent by William, on the 17th of December, 1688, with a message to King James to remove from Whitehall. King William also made lord Delamer a privy counsellor, chancellor and under-treasurer of the exchequer, and lord-lieutenant of the county and city of Chester; and in 1690
created

nobleman who had a considerable share in bringing about the Revolution, that “ there never yet was any good man, who had not an ardent zeal for his country.”

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created him earl of Warrington. Surely these are no evidences either of lord Delamer’s want of zeal in the promotion of the Revolution; or of any resentment of king William against him on that account. But it is true, that lord Delamer was too sincere a patriot to approve of all king William’s measures; and I have observed of him in another publication, which is not now reprinted, that he was not perfectly satisfied with the manner in which some points were adjusted at the Revolution. He appears to have wished for more retrenchments of the regal prerogative, and to have thought, that the liberty of the subject was not sufficiently secured and ascertained even under the new settlement. Mr. Granger says of him, in his Biographical History of England, that “ he was a man of a generous and noble nature, which disdained, upon any terms, to submit to servitude; and whose passions seemed to centre in the love of civil and religious liberty.”

It is, however, probable, that the declaimers against all pretensions to patriotism, have little more conception of the

IN the same publication I have also observed, that among the promoters of the Revolution, of inferior rank, but not of inferior merit, the Rev. Mr. SAMUEL JOHNSON, who had been chaplain to lord Ruffel, deserves to be particularly remembered. This gentleman published, before the Revolution, a number of pieces in support of the Protestant Religion, and the cause of civil liberty; and in particular, “An Address to the Protestants in king James’s army.” This is supposed to have produced a great effect on the minds of king James’s soldiers, and to have contributed much towards inducing them to abandon the royal cause. It was deemed a seditious libel; and Mr. Johnson suffered on account of it, with the utmost fortitude, a most rigorous punishment, which no court of justice, but one eminently infamous, could have inflicted on such a man. He was rector of Corringham, in Essex; and was much beloved and esteemed by his parishioners. His writings were supposed, by the Jacobites, to have

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the existence of other virtues, and believe all men to be actuated by motives of base and sordid interest. But he who labours to propagate the notion, that all men are more or less knaves, may reasonably be supposed to possess more modesty, than to make an exception in favour of himself. The man who draws general conclusions of this kind, must always find some evidence of the truth of them in his own heart. He judges of others by himself; and finding no honour, or virtue, contributed so much towards the Revolution, that, after that event had taken place, they attempted to assassinate him; and though they did not succeed in their design, he received from them two wounds in the head. He was a strenuous advocate for annual parliaments; and thought that, after the Revolution, sufficient care was not taken to guard against the danger of a standing army. His works were collected together, and published, in one volume, folio, in 1710.

tie, or public spirit, in his own breast, he at once concludes that they are to be found no where else.

THAT there have been too many men among us professing patriotism, whose conduct has sufficiently demonstrated, that they were utterly uninfluenced by any such noble principle, is a melancholy truth which we are forced to acknowledge. But surely it would be unjust to suppose, that because some men are insincere, therefore every man is a hypocrite. To imagine, that no man professes to serve the public without some indirect views of his own, is a sentiment, that, unless mankind are become wholly abandoned, must be false; and the propagation of which, if it were true, could not possibly answer any good purpose. Let us rather cherish the thought, that there are still men remaining among us, who would serve the public on the
purest

purest principles; and who have so just a sense of what they owe to the memory of their brave ancestors, of what they owe to themselves, and to their posterity, that they will defend their privileges as freeborn men at whatsoever hazard, and rather sacrifice their lives than submit to an ignominious state of servitude, should those who are invested with the reins of power ever form the iniquitous project of enslaving them.

BUT there is one observation, which may afford us some consolation, though there should in fact be but an inconsiderable portion of public spirit remaining among us; and though few should be found who would serve their country, unless they derived some benefit from it themselves. And that is, that it must be the INTEREST of the greater number, to make some stand against the approaches of despotism.

spotism. Many may derive a temporary advantage from a compliance with the ambitious designs of a prince, or of a minister; but it must ever be the interest of the bulk of the people to support their own privileges. The great danger is, lest they should not have a just sense of their value and importance, and of the necessity of guarding with the utmost vigilance against the encroachments of power.

THERE seems to be one unhappy error, which has prevailed too much in the present age, as well as at former periods. I mean, an opinion which has been entertained, by many persons of considerable property, that it is their interest on all occasions to support the measures of government, on the supposition, that this is the best means of preventing any such civil dissensions, as would endanger the security of their own property. But the
truth

truth is, that the best method of rendering property secure, is for the members of the community in general to take every just, legal, and constitutional method of asserting their native rights. Under a despotic government no property can be secure; every thing is at the mercy of the prince, and his ministers. And in a limited government like ours, there cannot be a greater encouragement to the arbitrary views of those invested with the reins of power, than to see great numbers of the most considerable landholders, and wealthiest merchants and traders, ready to submit with tameness and fervility to all the measures of government, however injurious and oppressive. The consequence of this is, the ministry proceed to greater lengths than they would otherwise dare to do; and a great part of the nation may become so much exasperated,

tated, as to render some violent convulsions in the state almost inevitable.

THIS appears to have been in a great measure the case in the reign of Charles the First. That arbitrary prince and his ministers were encouraged in their mischievous designs, by the manifest want of public spirit in too many persons of rank and fortune; and the pusillanimity of the luxurious and wealthy brought on them that civil war, and those evils, which they so much dreaded; which would probably have been prevented by a more manly and patriotic conduct. The same causes will naturally produce the same effects at other periods; and the best method that the opulent can take of securing their property, is to oppose, in a legal manner, all those violent and unconstitutional measures of government, which have a natural

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ral tendency to exasperate the bulk of the nation.

As to those reflections which are often thrown out, whether with reason or otherwise, against individuals who are embarked in the cause of the people, it may be remarked, that it can never be admitted to be a just sentiment, that, in an opposition to an oppressive system of administration, we ought to act in concert with none but men of pure and virtuous principles. If this were to be admitted as an essential point, it would be impossible that any opposition to tyranny could be successful. It were, indeed, greatly to be wished, that all who engage in a good cause should be influenced by the most honourable and worthy motives; but this never can be universally the case. All large bodies of men must consist of persons of different characters, views, and interests;

terests; and those who would promote any great national design, must join with them without scrutinizing minutely into their various motives of action. The number of persons of pure and rigid virtue will ever be too inconsiderable to effectuate any great purpose, without the assistance of persons of more exceptionable principles and manners. A virtuous man will not join in any measures that his conscience disapproves; but, at a time of danger, no man scruples to receive assistance from persons whose conduct and character he may know to be censurable. He who is assaulted by a robber, or an assassin, never inquires into the character of the man who comes to his relief. And when our country is attacked by foreign enemies, or by those more dangerous ones at home, who would deprive us of our most valuable rights, it is the interest of all the classes of the
people,

people, without distinction, to unite in the most vigorous opposition to the common-enemy.

As it was the primary design of these pages to attempt a justification of those illustrious patriots, RUSSEL and SYDNEY; so it was intended by some of the preceding observations to shew, that no reflexions which have been thrown out against any persons celebrated for their patriotism, whether with or without foundation, nor any inferences which may be drawn from their conduct, should lead the people to decline a vigorous opposition to every species of oppression. RUSSEL and SYDNEY appear to have defended the cause of national freedom on the most virtuous principles: but even those men who have opposed an iniquitous administration from motives not of the most commendable kind, have yet been, often highly service-
able

able to the public. And whatever sentiments we may entertain of any individuals, who have been applauded for their public spirit, whether in antient or in modern times, it is still our interest and our duty to maintain, with firmness and with ardour, the rights of our country. Civil liberty will ever be considered, by generous and noble minds, as the greatest of all temporal blessings; our ancestors have acquired it for us at an immense expence of blood and of treasure; and if we inherit any portion of their wisdom, or of their virtue, we shall never suffer it to be wrested from us; but defend it against every attack, either of open violence, or secret corruption, with a zeal proportioned to its value and its importance.



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D I A L O G U E
B E T W E E N
T W O G E N T L E M E N,
C O N C E R N I N G

The late Application to Parliament, for
Relief in the Matter of SUBSCRIPTION
to the THIRTY-NINE ARTICLES and
LITURGY of the CHURCH of ENGLAND.

“ If the SCRIPTURES be the rule of my faith, indeed and not in
“ words only; how can it be so, if I be not to judge for myself,
“ what is in it, and what is not? For, if the DETERMINATIONS
“ of others, are to bind me up, or tie me down, to such a par-
“ ticular INTERPRETATION; then, it is not the Scripture
“ which is the rule of my faith; but those DETERMINATIONS
“ of others.”

Bishop Hoadly.

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VOL. II.

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DIALOGUE, &c.

Mr. FRANKLAND, Mr. HANMER.

FRANKLAND,



S it is not long, my dear friend, since you arrived out of the country, I should be glad to learn from you, what are the sentiments of the generality of your neighbours, relative to the scheme lately set on foot, of petitioning to

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parli-

parliament for some relief, in the matter of subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles, and the Liturgy of the church of England.

HANMER. In truth, Mr. Frankland, the generality give themselves very little concern about it. For though we compliment the land of our nativity so far as to stile it a Christian country, yet there are comparatively few to whom religion is in any degree an object of attention.

FRANKL. I believe there is too much justice in your observation; and I am sensible, that many of those who do appear to be in some degree influenced by religion, are far from having imbibed rational or consistent sentiments concerning it. But I wish to know, what is the idea entertained concerning the petitioners and their design, by those who do pay some attention to such matters, and with whom you have conversed?

HANM.

HANM. They are considered by many as a pragmatistical set of people, who aim only to disturb the peace of the church, in order to establish their own notions, in preference to those which have been long established by lawful authority; but others think more favourably of them, and wish that their endeavours may be attended with success.

FRANKL. The gentlemen, who have embarked in this design, are far from having any desire to impose their sentiments upon others. They are only solicitous, that they may not be obliged to subscribe a set of articles drawn up by fallible men, and which do not appear to them to be sufficiently supported either by scripture or by reason.

HANM. It may be so; but if you will allow me to give you my own sentiments, as well as those of my country neighbours,

I must observe, that I do not see why articles which have been so long established, should now be either altered or abolished.

FRANKL. As to the length of time during which these articles have subsisted, that consideration cannot be admitted to be an argument of much weight. If such reasons had prevailed at the time of the Reformation, that event could never have taken place. The superstitions of the Romish church had been established much longer than the articles of the present church of England. But no length of time can sanctify error, or justify the continuance of unjust and unchristian impositions.

HANM. Admitting the justice of your observations, it does not appear to me, that the business of subscription to the thirty-nine articles, is a matter so important as some people seem to apprehend.

FRANKL.

FRANKL. To you, who are a layman, it may appear so ; and others, I believe, are of your sentiments in this respect. The laity are under no obligation to subscribe the articles, and may, therefore, be little affected by grievances that may seem to concern the clergy only. But the point is, whether it be not a real hardship, that all the clergy of a national church should be obliged not only to subscribe thirty-nine articles of faith, many of them on abstruse and controverted points ; but also solemnly to declare, their unfeigned assent and consent to **ALL** and **EVERY** particular contained and prescribed in the book of common prayer ; though it will be acknowledged, by the generality of candid and inquisitive persons, who are conversant with such subjects, that there are many very exceptionable particulars in that book, excellent as other parts of it undoubtedly are ?

HANM. You speak, Mr. Frankland, as if the clergy were obliged to subscribe to the articles and liturgy. But you should remember, that no man is compelled to subscribe either.

FRANKL. It is true, he is not. After having been educated for a clergyman, if he has any objections to subscription, he has liberty to shift for himself in what way he can. If he can get any other employment, he may; and if he cannot, the church will give him leave to starve without. But it should be considered, that this is too strong a temptation for ordinary virtue; and it must not be expected that the majority of the clergy, or those educated for that profession, can be entirely free from human frailties. After a man has gone through a tedious and expensive course of education, to qualify him for a particular profession, he may find it difficult to with-

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stand the temptation of complying with a subscription which he does not approve, when that is the only method by which he can be admitted into the profession for which he was intended, and which may be the only one in which he can have a rational prospect of succeeding.

HANM. Those who do not approve of the terms required by the church, may join themselves to the dissenters, and officiate as ministers among them.

FRANKL. They would not, perhaps, find that so easy as you imagine. There are at least as many brought up in the dissenting academies for the ministry, as can procure a comfortable subsistence from the voluntary subscriptions of the dissenters; who are obliged by law to pay as much as others to the established clergy, and consequently have the less to spare for their own ministers. There is, therefore, very little
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room among them for such as have been educated at the universities, and who afterwards find, that they cannot conscientiously comply with the terms of subscription required in the church. I know a gentleman, who was some time settled among the dissenters as a minister, a man of parts and learning, of amiable character, of good address, and an elegant preacher; and who yet has quitted the ministry for a secular employment, because he could not procure a tolerable maintenance as a divine.

HANM. There may be hardships with respect to some individuals, in the requisition of subscription to the articles and liturgy, and yet insisting on such a subscription may be advantageous upon the whole.

FRANKL. I do not see that there are any advantages procured by the imposition of sub-

subscription, which are in any respect sufficient to balance its disadvantages.

HANM. Is not subscription to the articles necessary to preserve an uniformity of opinion among the clergy?

FRANKL. It is certain, that preserving an uniformity of opinion is one of the chief purposes, for which subscription was professed to be originally imposed; and it is equally certain, that this purpose has not been answered by it. Is it not notorious, that notwithstanding the articles, there has been a great diversity of sentiment, upon important points, among the clergy of the church of England? Of this the numberless treatises in controversial divinity, written by clergymen of the established church in opposition to one another, are an incontestable evidence. And very few thinking men among them will ever refer to the articles as a proof of
any

any contested point. They know that men of sense, and such as have a just reverence for the scriptures, as a divine revelation, require better and more satisfactory proof. And as to unity of opinion, it is not I believe to be found even among the present defenders of subscription. Are Dean Tucker, Dr. Randolph, Dr. Ibbetson, Dr. Halifax, Mr. Samuel Roe, Mr. Toplady, and Mr. Madan, all of the same sentiments with respect to the doctrines of original sin, free-will, justification by faith, and predestination? Those who know them, I apprehend, will hardly suppose that they are: and yet they are all extremely zealous to support the same articles.

HANM. Well, but I would ask, whether every society has not a right to make laws for the regulation of its members? and
whether

whether the society itself be not the sole judge of the propriety of those laws?

FRANKL. Every society has, undoubtedly, a right to make laws for the regulation of the conduct of its members; but laws for the regulation of mens ACTIONS, and laws for the regulation of their BELIEF, are very distinct things.

HANM. Granted: but has not every RELIGIOUS society a right to inquire, from those who are admitted into it, some account of their religious sentiments? and do not even dissenting congregations, as well as established churches in other countries, require some test of this kind?

FRANKL. It does not necessarily follow, that because a practice is very general, it must therefore be consonant to reason. There is, however, a material difference between requiring some account of the faith of those who are admitted into the church,

church, and insisting upon their subscribing implicitly a long list of articles, ready drawn up by others. As to the Dissenters, many of them, like Christians of other classes, have been too ready to aim at imposing their own sense of scripture upon others; but their ministers, even when they make formal confessions of faith, at their ordination, are permitted to deliver their sentiments in their own words. To the honour of some dissenting ministers, it should also be remembered, that, from a conviction of the evils which have arisen in the Christian world, from the imposition of human creeds and articles of faith, they have, at their ordination, refused to make any particular enumeration of their opinions; contenting themselves with making a solemn declaration of their belief in the scriptures as a divine revelation, and of their resolutions to study these
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these sacred writings diligently, to teach the people committed to their care what shall appear to them to be the real doctrines of the gospel, and to endeavour to regulate their own conduct by its precepts. And this has been considered and admitted, by some of the most eminent men among the Dissenters, as a good confession.

HANM. If it be so, I must still ask, whether those who drew up the articles and liturgy, subscribing to which is now so much complained of, were not men eminently distinguished for piety, learning, and zeal for the Protestant religion?

FRANKL. They were, and I honour their memory. But though good and excellent men, they were but men, and therefore liable to error. Even Cranmer and Ridley, two of the most eminent of the reformers, sullied their characters in being concerned in the burning of Joan Bocher and George
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Van Parre for heresy. Allowances ought to be made for the age in which they lived, and the prejudices in which they had been educated. But still this transaction alone is sufficient to prove, that great as their merits were in other respects, they were not infallible; and, consequently, that we are under no obligation to submit implicitly to their opinions. Those who could suppose the burning of heretics to be justifiable, may surely be considered as liable to other errors in matters of opinion.

HANM. You speak, Mr. Frankland, of allowances to be made for the age in which the reformers lived. Was not that age a learned one?

FRANKL. It was, Mr. Hanmer, compared with that which preceded it. At the period of the Reformation ancient literature was much cultivated, and considerable advances were made in almost every

every branch of learning. But it is natural that the progress of truth should be gradual; and it was not probable, that men educated in a religion so corrupted as that of the church of Rome, should immediately shake off all their antient prejudices; nor have we any reason to suppose that they did.

HANM. Notwithstanding what you have advanced, it appears to me, that the removing subscription altogether, would introduce great confusion into the church. We might, perhaps, have different forms of prayer in different churches; at least, there would be room given for the admission even of Deists and Papists into the church.

FRANKL. As to new forms of prayer, nothing of this kind need be apprehended, unless they should be appointed by the governors of the church. The petitioners

do not decline the use of the present liturgy, though they may wish for a few alterations in some of the more exceptionable parts of it. They only desire to be excused from making a solemn declaration of their approbation of every part of it. With respect to Papists, if the oaths of allegiance and supremacy are not thought sufficient to exclude them, the petitioners are willing to make the most solemn renunciation of Popery that can be required of them ; and, with equal solemnity, are they ready to declare their firm belief of the divine origin of the Christian religion ; which must be sufficient to keep out Deists, so far as any subscriptions can do it. For, in truth, no subscription whatever can possibly exclude men of no principle, who will, for their own advantage, comply with whatever test can be proposed to them. It is one of the great evils

evils of subscription to creeds and articles of faith, that its chief tendency is to make men hypocrites. None are excluded by it but honest and conscientious men, who are on that account the best suited to the sacred office of the ministry. But, in fact, the power assumed of imposing human creeds and articles of faith partakes too much of the spirit of Popery, not to be flagrantly inconsistent in a Protestant church.

HANM. In what manner do you make that out, my good friend?

FRANKL. Why, in this manner: That it is a palpable absurdity for a church, which professes itself not to be infallible, to insist on an implicit assent to her articles of faith. If the church of England acknowledges herself not to be infallible, as she has always done in words, it follows that she is liable to error. On this prin-

ciple she should be a little more modest in her requisitions. A church, avowedly subject to error, should permit the members of her communion to examine for themselves. For, in the name of common sense, what difference is there between assuming infallibility, and requiring an absolute submission to her authoritative decrees in matters of opinion? If the scriptures are a sufficient rule of faith and practice, what right has any man, what right have any set of men, to impose their opinions upon others? If the sacred writings are in truth a divine revelation, they require no human additions: and it is a gross inconsistency, in a Protestant church, to insist on a subscription to human creeds and articles of faith from all the clergy of her communion. In this respect, the church of England exactly copies the church of Rome. The advocates for the

authority

authority of the latter say, "The Bible of
 " itself is not sufficient; you must add to
 " it tradition, and the decrees of the
 " church." And, in like manner, the
 advocates for the subscription imposed by
 the church of England, say, "The Bible
 " alone is not sufficient; you must add to
 " it the thirty-nine articles."

HANM. But surely, Mr. Frankland, if
 a subscription to the scriptures alone were
 sufficient, with the usual qualifications in
 other respects, to admit men into the
 ministry, we should often hear very con-
 tradictory doctrines from our pulpits.

FRANKL. Your articles at present un-
 doubtedly do not prevent this. Hear Mr.
 Romaine at one church, and Dr. Adams
 at another, or in the same, and do you
 not find them advancing the most contra-
 dictory sentiments; and it is the same
 with respect to many others of the clergy.

And, indeed, if I could admit, which I never can do, the right of the church to impose articles of faith, I think very plausible arguments might be urged against the present articles, without inquiring particularly into the truth of the doctrines contained in them.

HANM. Why, if the church had a right to require a subscription to articles of faith, what objection have you to the propriety of the present?

FRANKL. I do not, as I intimated before, inquire now into the truth of the doctrines contained in them, however justly that may be questioned: but I think, that they may be objected to on this principle, that they do not appear to be agreeable to the sentiments of the majority of the present church of England. If the imposition of articles of faith were at all defensible, it is certainly reasonable, that they should
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be agreeable to the sentiments of the major part of the clergy of which the church is composed. We may admit, that the majority of the clergy, when the articles were first formed, really believed them to be scriptural. But if the clergy, two centuries after, change their sentiments, I do not see why they should adhere implicitly to the old articles; or why they should not be altered or removed, if the majority of the clergy judge them to be erroneous. And that these articles are not in general really believed by the major part of the clergy, appears to me extremely evident.

HANM. Whence can you infer this, as all the clergy must have subscribed these articles?

FRANKL. I infer it from the general tenor of their preaching and writings, from which, I apprehend, a much better

judgment may be formed of the real sentiments of the clergy, than from the single circumstance of their having subscribed the thirty-nine articles: which too many of them seem to consider merely as a matter of form, without complying with which they cannot be admitted into orders. It is manifest, I think, that the doctrinal articles of the church of England are calvinistical; the controverted points, perhaps, not carried to so rigid a height as some have supposed; but still upon the whole evidently calvinistical. But will any man who is much acquainted with the writings of the generality of our clergy, for many years past, and with the sermons that commonly issue from our pulpits, take upon him to affirm, that they are consistent with calvinistic principles, or conformable to the doctrines contained in the thirty-nine articles? I think

think it cannot be affirmed: and that, if we may be allowed to judge of the sentiments of the clergy from their preaching and their writings, by much the major part of them do not believe the articles. I speak not of the doctrine of the Trinity, but with reference to the doctrines of original sin, predestination, free will, and justification.

HANM. You would then, perhaps, wish to have a set of Arminian articles drawn up?

FRANKL. By no means: though I think they would be more consonant to the general sentiments of the clergy than the present. But if a set of articles were drawn up exactly conformable to my own sentiments, I would vehemently oppose the imposition of them; because I consider all impositions of human creeds and articles of faith as unjust and unchristian. And from what
I have

I have advanced on this subject, I only mean to draw this inference: that if the doctrines contained in the thirty-nine articles are evidently not conformable to the sentiments of the majority of the present clergy, the absurdity of continuing to impose these articles is greatly augmented by this consideration.

HANM. You observed, just now, that if a set of articles were drawn up, perfectly agreeable to your own sentiments, you would oppose the imposing them. From the manner in which you expressed yourself, I presume I may infer, that you do not believe all the doctrines contained in the thirty-nine articles?

FRANKL. I certainly do not. I have taken some pains to understand the principles of Christianity, as I sincerely believe it to be a divine revelation; and I have no bias to influence my mind the one way or
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the other ; and yet, so far as I can form any judgment upon the matter, many particulars, in the articles of the church of England, are utterly repugnant to the doctrines taught by Jesus Christ, and by his apostles¹. It is true, I have no right to impose my sense of scripture upon any other man ; but neither has any other man a right to impose his sense of scripture upon me.

HANM. Mr. Madan has just published a treatise to prove, that the thirty-nine articles are agreeable to the scriptures.

FRANKL. He has so ; but it appears to me, that there is not much more just reasoning in Mr. Madan's pamphlet, than there was honesty in the disposal of the

¹ Dr. Jortin says, " There are propositions contained in our LITURGY and ARTICLES, which no man of common sense amongst us believes." Tracts, Philological, Critical, and Miscellaneous ; by the late Rev. John Jortin, D. D. published by his Son, Vol. I. p. 419.

rectory of Aldwinkle. There is, however, an abundant share of bigotry; and this reverend author very confidently and modestly speaks of the petitioners, as “a set
 “of vipers in the bosom of the church,
 “who, in the shape of clergymen, would
 “KNAW OUT her vitals:” and very decently considers their meeting as “an
 “attack upon the Christian religion.”

HANM. I remember the transaction relative to the rectory of Aldwinkle, of which you speak. But Mr. Madan's conduct in that affair, however exceptionable, cannot invalidate the force of any thing that he may have advanced in support of the thirty-nine articles.

FRANKL. It is very true; it cannot. But when men, who are justly chargeable with such ACTIONS, take upon them to abuse others so grossly for a mere difference of OPINION, such transactions necessarily
 force