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L E T T E R

T O T H E

R E V E R E N D

Dr. *Henry Sacheverell.*

On Occasion of his Sermon, and
late Sentence pass'd on him
by the Honourable House of
Lords.

By a Cambridge-Gentleman.

Perfius. Satyr 4.

— *Nemo in Sese tentat descendere, nemo.*

Virgil.

— *Motos præstat componere fluctus.*

Rawson, J.

L O N D O N :

[1710]

Printed for *John Morphew* near Stationers-

AC911.0710.036

STATE

DEPARTMENT OF
THE STATE

TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE LAND OFFICE
AND TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT
FOR THE PURPOSE OF

RECORDING

IN THE YEAR 1900

BY THE

STATE DEPARTMENT

S I R,

THE great and unusual Joy your Friends have express'd at the *mild Censure* you have met with from your *Honourable Judges*, is a plain Indication, either that they expected, or that you deserv'd somewhat worse, since what is inflicted on you is look'd upon as an Escape, or a *Reward* rather than a *Punishment*.

But, Sir, whatever favourable Constructions they who wish you well may put upon it, I crave Leave to say, That there is not that great Cause of Exultation, that *they* may credulously imagine, since *the Articles* exhibited against you were voted *to have been made good*, and you have been Convicted, found Guilty, and Sentence has pass'd on you.

If it was a *gentle Sentence*, as indeed it was; is it fit that the Government be insulted, and Bonfires and Illuminations made, and Bells rung, as if a Peace had been actually concluded with *France*? Your warm *Partisans* have forgot, that 'tis not unlikely that their riotous and tumultuous Proceedings (aggravated no question abroad) may have retarded *that*

great Blessing we so much want and pray for, and which is of much greater Consequence, than the greatest Success, that could attend either *you*, or *your Cause*.

Instead of *those Thanks* which were so justly due to that *Noble and Venerable Body of Men*, that *consider'd* your Profession with *tender Compassion*, and has only hinder'd you from doing Mischief to your self for Three Years, and condemn'd your *hot Sermon* to those Flames it so nearly resembled : Instead of those Thanks we have had *Murmurings and Complainings in our Streets*.

And yet I never could hear any *One Man* justify that *famous Performance* ; they who spoke most softly of it, confess, there are many unguarded and unwary Expressions in it. Others that speak plain, say, It is a very poor, and mean, Immethodical Composition, faulty in Grammar and Stile, void of a Christian Spirit, and foreign to the Business of the Day. Your obstinate Defence of it since, is a Proof of the Haughtiness and Stubbornness of your Spirit, that will yield nothing to the united Judgement of the *House of Commons*. And your undaunted Behaviour under your Prosecution, which your Friends, no question, call by the Name of Resolution and true
Courage,

Courage, is a farther Proof, that there is somewhat in your Temper that ought to be humbled, which I believe is hardly yet done. And yet, if the Truth could be known, I believe it is no small Mortification to you, to be shut out of *the Pulpit*, in which you must not for some time at least dictate, and domineer at that imperious rate, you have hitherto done. If this Check upon you may teach you Modesty and Humility, and let you into a better Acquaintance with your self, this will be a happy *Impeachment* for you. If by this Means, you may learn, That *in your Name* a great Controversy has been managed, but that *you* are not *that Great Man* you may think your self, but that those very Men who have stood *by* you and *for* you, and have put Words into your Mouth, (which some say they could hardly persuade you to speak) even *these Men* have but a small Value for you, and think you Considerable on no other Account, but as it falls out, that you have been the *late Representative* of their Party, and are a *good Organ* to convey their Sense to the World.

I am, Sir, so well acquainted with *their* Sentiments, that I dare tell you this for a Truth: Otherwise the *drinking your Health*

had not been the *Shibboleth*, by which a Man was to be distinguished, nor had there been *so many Pictures* of you, and so much Contention which was taken from *fine* Mr. Gibson's Original. I will not call you *a Tool*, for I know you will take *that* unkindly; but I will call you *an Instrument* of your Party, by which they have thought fit to take the exact Height and Depth of their Cause. And now you have done their Business, Time will discover whether they will lay you aside.

I beseech you, Sir, to consider whether *such Sermons* as yours promote *Christianity*? And whether if the *Gospel* were to be put into the Hands of a learned Infidel, unacquainted with it; and after that, he were to read *your Sermon*, whether, I say, he would think that the *same Spirit* that dictated *one of them*, could reasonably be judged to have any Influence on *the other*? Whether by reviling and railing, with which your whole Sermon is stuffed, you are likely to reclaim Men that err? And whether you can have any Pretence to be *his Disciple*, *who when he was reviled, reviled not again*, much more when he was not reviled. The Angel contending even with the *Accuser of the Brethren*, (worse surely than the worst of *false Brethren*)

Brethren) *durst not bring a railing Accusation against him.*

And, *Sir*, give me Leave to observe farther, That Men who are truly good and pious, are not so solicitous about *external Things*; because Humility, Heavenly-Mindedness, the Love of God, and Contempt of the World, are *internal Virtues*, concealed from others, and are of much greater Consequence than those things you contend so warmly for. And I will add, That as Men abound in the *One*, they are commonly deficient in the *other*. This is a very manifest Truth, since I dare venture to tell you, That the Gentlemen of your Profession, most exemplary for their Lives and Conversations; are [generally speaking] famous too for *that Moderation* you detest and abhor. I well know, That you look upon *such Men* so far from being *Friends* of the Church, that they are commonly branded with the odious Name of *Betrayers* of it: But assure your self, if ever the Church should come into such Hands, it would encrease and enlarge it self [ay, and without a *Comprehension* too] and be more safe, than it would be in the Hands of *some*, who would daily *drink to its Prosperity* indeed; but would do little else for its Pre-

servation. If you think that by this I reflect on a *whole Body of Men*, you are mistaken; for I am satisfied there are excellent Men of *both Sides* [since we must have Sides.] But I must intreat you and your Friends to remember, that *all Goodness* is not confin'd to *them alone*; and that there are Men eminent for their Learning, Piety and Conscience, Honour and Probity, and for their Love to the Church too, that will not list themselves under your Banner. And it is *that narrow Spirit* [Popish in its Extraction] of condemning all Men who think not exactly as we do, that has kept Men otherwise very good, at a Distance from each other, and has kept the bleeding Wounds of *Christendom* open so long, that perhaps they scarce *now* can be heal'd.

If, *Sir*, I believed you to be under Affliction, I would not have given you the Trouble of *this*; for I think it ungenerous to insult the Miserable: But I am told, you are supported either by your Cause, or your Friends to that degree; that you are thought to look upon your self rather as an Object of *Envy*, than *Pity*. If *this* be the Case, I really have Compassion for you, and desire you to be more wise, than to prefer the being

Famous

Famous in your Generation, and the being Recorded in our Annals, to an *Impeachment by the Commons of Great Britain*, and a *Sentence pass'd on you by British Peers*. And tho' in *this Age* you have your Abbetors, as *Dr. Manwaring* had *the greatest in his*, yet perhaps *Posterity* may judge more impartially of our Affairs than the present Age will, and it may not be so favourable to your Memory, as you may be apt to believe.

'Tis true, you have *those* who do abet you, and *great Ones* too : But you have found more that condemn you, as great as *they*. And with reason too, since you (tho' not *intentionally*, I hope ; yet *accidentally*) have rais'd such a Spirit of Contention in this Nation, as no Tears are sufficient to lament. For, Sir, are not you the Cause that there is such a Ferment at present in every Order of Men, your own not excepted, that good Men, Friends to the Church and Constitution bewail it, and ill ones, Enemies to both, triumph at it ? That our Contentions were never carried so high, nor our Tumults so formidable, as at this time ; and it deserves your Consideration, whether it may not have some ill Effect on the *Present Negotiations of Peace* abroad, when it concerns us to
make

make the best Figure, that we should now be represented as a People divided at home.

And what, I pray, are we divided about? A Sermon, that no Question is now in divers Languages. *In Dutch*, that the *Holland Divines* may see our great kindness to *other Reform'd Christians*. *In French*, that the *Doctors of the Sorbon* and the *French Clergy* may see your noble Performance, much to our Honour, about which we have had so famous a bustle, and wherein in the *greatest Church* of the *greatest City* of *England*, and before the *greatest Magistrate* in *Europe*, this Nation is represented as a Nest of Hypocrites, False Brethren; and it is said, That *our National Sins* are Ripened to a full maturity; to call down Vengeance from Providence on a Church and Kingdom, debauch'd in its Principles, and corrupted in its Manners, and instead of the true Faith, Discipline, and Worship, given over to all licentiousness, both in Opinion, and Practice, to all Sensuality, Hypocrisy, Lewdness and Atheism. These, Sir, are your *Encomiums* on your fellow Subjects, and these are fine Complaints to be carried abroad; as also your notable *Collection of Blasphemies*, &c. most of which were unknown to 99 parts of 100 in this Kingdom, but now will be in all hands, for the

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the universal Emprovement of Mankind. It was observ'd of *Suetonius* and *Lampridius*, *Turpia dum narrant, docent*. *The bare Narration of base and filthy things teaches Men to do them*. I must tell you, *Sir*, that a truly pious Man would rather have chosen to be defective in some part of his Vindication, than to have sent such a load of Scandal thro' the Kingdom, the Publication of which has met with *that Censure* it deserv'd, from *the Honourable House of Commons*.

The times, *Sir*, no doubt are very bad, (and when were they not *so*?) And perhaps in times of *War* are more apt to be so, when there is not that leisure to attend to *Civil Affairs*, as in time of *Peace*. But sure we are not in the very dregs of time We have many Pious and Excellent Men, and there are divers that have true Christian Spirits. Witness, *The Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign parts* *The Numerous Charity Schools* *Religious Societies* *Societies for Reformation of manners*, late undertakings all; the last of them indeed a great Eye sore to many, who will not reform themselves, and care not that others should be reform'd.

Besides, Can you, *Sir*, offer an higher Indignity

dignity to our *Excellent Queen*, (to whom you pretend to owe so much Honour and Duty) than to insinuate, tho' she must be allowed to be one of the brightest Examples of Piety and Virtue that ever shone upon the English Throne, that the Times are so very bad under her Administration? Is it not a plain intimation, that *her Majesty* does not discharge her Duty? Whether *that* be so very agreeable to your solemn Professions of Respect and Loyalty, I leave to your own Consideration. As also, what you can say for your self for reflecting on *the Ministry*; is it not an oblique Reflection on their *Royal Mistress*?

By the word *Volpone* (a word born upon the *Stage*, and which should never be brought into a *Pulpit*) you are Universally thought to mark out one of the ablest and Wisest Statesmen, that perhaps any Age has produc'd. I will not Name *him*, that I may not help forward your Scandal; but shall tell you, That I have read that *Queen Elizabeth* said of *her Lord Treasurer Burleigh*, That he was not only *her Treasurer* but *Treasure* too — and *our Queen* may say as much of *Hers*.

One might justly wonder what should be the occasion of the Present rage against *the Ministry*,

Ministry. Have not our Councils and Arms prosper'd in such a manner, that Posterity will scarce look upon our late Successes to be Credible? What has not been done that should be done, and what has been done that should not? Is not the Government mild and gentle? You know it experimentally. Where is the Man that can say, he has been *unjustly* or even *hardly* us'd? Why then must we have such inflaming Harangues? Is this a proper Season, when every Heart and Hands ought to be United against the *Common Enemy*? Is *this* a time for private Quarrels, when we have an Adversary ready to take all possible Advantages of our disagreement? Could you not have suspended your Resentments till the *Preliminaries had been sign'd*? Why have you chose such a *Crisis* as *this* to divide us? The *French* themselves could scarce have wish'd for *any thing* more favourable to *them*.

What Reparation are you, *sir*, able to make the Nation for all the damage it may have received on your account? What amends can you make to the *City of London* for all the mischief has been done in it, and the great Expence it has been put to for your sake? What satisfaction can you give to great

Numbers of particular Persons, who have suffer'd so severely by the late Rabbles? These things, Sir, should afford matter of Repentance to you, since you was the unfortunate Cause of all this and more?

'Tis reported, that you are retreating to *your College*. If so, 'tis very well; especially if you carry back with you a Spirit, different from what you brought from thence. . . . I suppose you are not to be told, that you are to be *shewn at Oxford*, as one of the Rarities of *that Univerſity*, and that *Pilgrimages* may be made thither by some of your *late Adorers*. But if your Mind be Vain, and blown up with the Acclamations of the People, if you Value your self for being pointed at (for pointed at you must be for certain) than indeed *The Impeachment* may turn your Head, or doe worse for you; and *Impeachment* may be added as a new disease in the *Bills of Mortality*.

Sir, I am no Enemy to your Person, and have a sincere respect for your Profession. If there has been a little too much *Asperity* (to use your own Word) Remember you have us'd enough of that to an *Archbishop*, and almost to every one that has come in your way, in your late *Satyr*, for *such* it was ra-

ther than a *sermon*. Remember, that if any deserve a rough Treatment, it must be *those* that treat others roughly. And amongst all the Compliments and fine things you are carefs'd with, it may be serviceable to you, to have a plain Friend *to tell you the truth*. If what I have here said, may any way contribute to this good purpose, then what is here written, is not written in vain.

I wish you, Sir, a good journey to *Oxford*, and hope your Conduct there will be such, as not to expose your self to any more Publick or Private Censures. I hope your name, will not be so much as mention'd in your *Theater* or *Schools*, for the greatest kindness your Friends can do you is, to endeavour to have all that is past, forgot; since a Wise and good Man would above all things dread making a noise in the World; but when he has unfortunately done so, he stands oblig'd to allay it as fast as he can.

If ever, Sir, you come to think calmly, you will find that *Men of Temper* always do most good in the World, to themselves, and others too. That hot Men, that will make no Allowances for Times and Seasons, and Mens Prejudices and Mistakes, inflame Man
kind

kind, and are unfit to manage Affairs of Importance. If ever you reflect on this as you should do, you will thank those who advise you to moderate Counfels, and amongst the rest

Sir,

Your humble Servant

London, April
the 19th. 1710.

A. B.

Faint **N** **I** **S.**

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