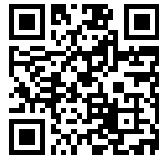


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# STRICTURES

On an ANSWER to the

*Pietas Oxoniensis :*

By THOMAS NOWELL, D. D.

PRINCIPAL of St. MARY-HALL, K

AND

PROFESSOR of ORATORY, in the University  
of OXFORD.

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By No METHODIST.

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Εκ του σου στοματος κρινω σε.

NOV. TEST.

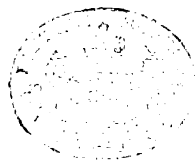
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## STRICTURES, &c.

**S***SIX* Students, *said Rumour*, were expelled *St. Edmund-Hall*, in the University of *Oxford*, for being over religious: 'tis impossible, *replied Candor*, I thought the same. The Fact however soon became notorious, found its way into the Public Papers, and was made the Subject of many wretched Rhimes: I therefore believed it; but not in all its Circumstances. I could not believe that the most grievous Part of the Charge, on which those Students were expelled, was meeting in a private House; and without Uproar or Disturbance, for their mutual Edification, reading and expounding the Scriptures.

After some Time, came out an Account of the Proceedings against those Gentlemen, under the Title of *Pietas Oxoniensis*, written with a Degree of Spirit; and, as some have thought, with no small Portion of

Spleen, Had the Author not raked into private Characters, with which the present Case was not in the least Degree connected, in order to pick up some of the Extravagances of Youth, and hold them out to public View; had he kept more closely to the Point intended, the Defence of those expelled Members, his Performance would have appeared with greater Credit. Among such a number of Young Men, just broke loose from the Trammels of School, and become in some Measure their own Masters; it is rather Matter of surprize, to see so much Order and Decency kept up, as is observable in the Universities, than of Exclamation, that there is not more.

That Author's Representation of Facts was such as I neither expected, nor could altogether believe; I attributed much to Partiality in Favour of the Young Men, something to personal Pique against the Judges (I ask the *Answerer's* Pardon) the *Visitors*, and something to his seeming Attachment to a Sect; and resolved to suspend my Judgment 'till I had heard the other Side; especially,

as

as I was informed, a compleat Answer to that Pamphlet was now upon the Anvil; at which, Two Professors, and at least Four Heads of Houses, besides Two or Three more of inferior Note, have for more than Four Months past been working Day and Night.

At last, the much expected Performance, the *Grande Opus* makes its publick Appearance, with laboured Step and due Dignity; ushered into the World by a Vice-chancellor's Imprimatur, and bearing in Front, the respectable Name of *Thomas Nowell, D. D. Principal of St. Mary-Hall, and publick Professor of Oratory, in the University of Oxford.* I could easily have believed, that a Head of a House had a principal Share in this Composition, from certain Characteristick Marks, I forbear to mention: and as *Dr. Nowell* is desirous to take the whole Honour of it to Himself, whatever private Reasons I may have to think otherwise, I will, in the Sequel of these Remarks, consider the Bantling as his own. To which I mean not to give a regular Answer: that is left to the Author of the Performance, which called down the  
**Doctor's**

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Doctor's Resentment: it rests upon him to disprove the *Answerer's* Charge against him, for Misrepresentation of Facts, Misquotation of Authors, &c. The sole Design of these Pages, is to prove from the Doctor's own Representation of Facts, that the Six Students of *St. Edmund-Hall* have been cruelly treated, and were unjustly expelled. I know nothing of the Young Men; I know nothing of the State of the Case but what I collect from the *Pietas*, and the *Answerer* of it: I will suppose every Thing to be true that the Doctor has asserted, and *out of his own Mouth convict him*. The Reader will not expect, in the Work of a few Hours, any Thing regular or laboured; the Remarks, with which he is presented, occurred to me on a cursory Reading; I dare say most of them occurred to other impartial Readers as well as myself; and I flatter myself, that every unprejudiced Person will acknowledge the Force of them. Indeed the Doctor had much better have taken the Advice of a sober Friend, and let Matters rest as they were, than have given the Advantage he has done against Himself and Brethren, by a weak and impotent Defence.

Our

Our Author's first Attack upon *Pietas* is for his Presumption in dedicating to the Chancellor of the University: "Which, says he, is just like the dutiful Addressees of the Old Puritans to the King, while they were meditating the Destruction, both of his Person and Government." \* Yes, just as much alike as the modern Methodists, whose Views and Labours all the World knows are confined solely to religious Matters, are like the Old Puritans, who used Religion merely as a stalking Horse to their Designs against the State; or as the present *Earl of Litchfield* is like the sober, temperate *King Charles*. But to leave the Doctor's Similies, proceed we to consider his Account of the Assessors, Three of whom were in Friendship with *Dr. Dixon*: — and from thence it is inferred, they could entertain no unjust Prejudices against Methodism; nor be supposed to stretch the Arm of Justice, too far against the Avowers of what they deemed Methodistical Principles. Soft and fair, good Doctor: Tho' those Gentlemen may live in Friendship

\* P. 4.

with



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with Dr. *Dixon*, yet I see no Reason on that Account, why their Spleen and Prejudice against Religionists may not have drawn them into an Error of Judgment; and I call that Act of Expulsion by no harsher Name: for the Vice-Chancellor is an honourable Man; so are they all, all honourable Men.

† “What passed between Mr. *Higson* and the Principal, before he had made his Complaint to the Vice-Chancellor, what may be Mr. *Higson*'s natural Disposition, what Disorders of Body or Mind he may have laboured under, or what Differences may have subsisted between him and the Principal, are Secrets, *say you*, which I have no Right to pry into, as they no way relate to the present Question.” Think you not If Mr. *Higson* be of a proud or passionate Temper, if at Times he labour under Insanity of Mind, if Animosities have subsisted between the Principal and him; can neither, nor all of these be supposed to influence Mr. *Higson*'s Conduct in this

Affair? And, if so supposed, will they not, so far relate to the present Question?

How mighty scrupulous of prying into Secrets are you become, since your impudent and impertinent Enquiry how some of those expelled Members subsisted, and by whose Means they were supported at the University!—Supposing any of them were supported by the Benevolence and Generosity of a Nobleman, who was in his Time an Ornament to the University, and now lives in the Discharge of every moral and religious Duty; who, like the great Author of his Religion, takes every Opportunity of doing Good: tell me, learned Doctor, does that reflect any Disgrace on them? If in a liberal Pursuit of Learning that illustrious Person maintained two or three young Men of religious Principles and sober Lives, with a View in Case they were found qualified for Holy Orders, of benefiting Society by the Acquisition of so many valuable Members in the Character of good Parish Priests, Characters of great Consequence, and, I am sorry to say, but rarely found; pray Dr. *Nowell* what is that to you or me? Give me leave to re-

tort the unhandsome Question upon you, and ask, When a certain Friend of yours, came down from the Mountains of *Wales*, how he was supported at the University? And how, by shuffling and shifting from Party to Party, by every mean Art of Ter-giverfation he became the important Thing he is.

As to the Chicane of distinguishing between the judicial Capacity of the Vice-Chancellor, and his visitatorial one †; it is a poor poultry subterfuge, and weak must the Cause be, that is forced to have Recourse to it. The Vice-Chancellor and his Assessors sat in Judgment upon those Six Culprits, charged with high Crimes and Misdemeanors, Articles of Accusation being regularly exhibited against them, by the Rev. Mr. *Higson*: Witnesses were examined on both Sides, the young Men were at length found Guilty, and Sentence pronounced upon them by the Vice-Chancellor, in a Manner as strictly judicial as could be. Consider this, and be ashamed of your Academical Distinctions.

Having thus removed a little Rubbish from the Entrance, I come now to the general Charge, contained in Four Articles of Accusation, which I will examine separately and fully, in the Order in which the Doctor has presented them.

Article the 1st. Accuses "*James Matthews, Thomas Jones, and Joseph Shipman,* of being bred to Trades, and the Three last mentioned Persons, as also *Erasmus Middleton,* and *Benjamin Blatch,* of being, at the Time of Entrance in *St. Edmund-Hall,* and also at present, destitute of such Knowledge in the learned Languages, as is necessary for performing the usual Exercises of the said Hall, and of the University §."

This Article contains two Charges; one, of their being bred to Trades; the other, of their being very illiterate. The Doctor tells us indeed ||, that "their being bred to Trades, was not charged upon them as a Crime." Why then does it make so capital a Figure in the First Article of Accusation?

§ P. 18.

|| P. 50.

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§ P. 11

And why does the Vice-Chancellor, in pronouncing Sentence upon them, repeat it? In Truth, Doctor, you may if you please, shelter yourself in your Distinctions, and tell us \*, "the Accusation of some of them being bred to Trades, would have had no Weight with you, had it not been connected with the 2d. Article, viz. that they were totally illiterate, and incapable of performing the Statutable Exercises of the University and Hall." But what Weight will this subtle Distinction have with any impartial Person? If they really were so very illiterate as is represented; what does it signify to what Cause such Deficiency in Literature was owing, whether to their natural Stupidity, or to their Idleness and Dissipation, or to the Want of a more early Education? In good Truth, the last, which is the Cause assigned, every candid Person will judge to be in their Favour. To grant then all that the Answerer can reasonably ask, or I with any Propriety allow; I will suppose, that their having been of Trades would not have been considered

considered to their Disadvantage, if not connected with their Deficiency in Literature; and so the whole Charge contained in this Article rests "on their being so destitute of Literature, as incapacitated them for performing the necessary Exercises of the University and Hall." And the Doctor himself doth hereby acknowledge the other Part of the Accusation, invidiously, or unnecessarily, introduced.

What the *necessary* Exercises of the Hall are, I will not pretend to say; but it seems they had Learning enough to procure them Admittance in the Hall, and to enable them to perform the necessary Exercises of that Hall for two Years; or the Principal and his worthy Vice-Principal would never have suffered them to continue there so long. To the Vice-Chancellor, however, *undoubted* Visitor of the Hall, and his Assessors, it appeared otherwise—*for*, it appeared to them, that those Students could not construe the Greek Testament and the University Statutes. Gentlemen Visitors, as Heads of Houses, you ought to know, and I do know, that if all Academicks were

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were to be expelled from their respective Houses, who could not construe the Greek Testament and University Statutes, both Colleges and Halls would be much more empty than they are.

And as to the University Exercises, I am sorry to inform you, that an under-graduate may perform them without being able even to read Greek. At the great Examination, in order to proceed to the Degree of A. B. all the Classical Learning required, is to be able to construe one Greek Book and two Latin ones; and the Custom of the Place while I resided there (and I am informed, those Matters still move on in the same drowsy Channel) allowed the Candidate himself to fix on the Three Books in which he chose to be examined; *Epicætetus*, for Instance, if he pleased, *Eutropius*, and *Cornelius Nepos*. Books, let me tell you, much easier than the Greek Testament, and the unclassical rum Latin of the University Statutes. We will suppose, according to your Representation, that those young Men could not construe the Greek Testament and the University Statutes; yet, are you Prophets enough to say, they would not be able

able to construe these Books two Year hence, which would have been as soon as they had occasion to be put to such Trial, in order to proceed to the Degree of A. B. And as to the Degree of L. L. B. in Case they chose to proceed in that Line, I forbear to say, how little Learning is necessary to qualify them for it. Leaving the Doctor to consider at leisure, the Weight of the Charge contained in the foregoing Article, I hasten to consider the Substance of the Next.

Article the 2d. Declares \* “ that *Benjamin Kay, James Matthews, Thomas Jones, Thomas Grove, Erasmus Middleton, and Joseph Shipman*, are Enemies to the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of *England*; which appeareth either by their preaching or expounding in, or frequenting illicit Conventicles, and by several other Actions and Expressions, contrary to the Statutes of the University, and the Laws of this Realm.”

The whole Substance of the Charge brought against them in this Article is,

\* P. 19.

“ that



“ that they preached or expounded in, or frequented illicit Conventicles.” Now “ the Meetings that these Gentlemen attended, *says the Doctor*, were certainly Conventicles, being private Assemblies for the Exercise of Religion; and they were illicit Conventicles, there being more than Five Persons assembled there, besides those of the same Household.” Was this, Sir, really the Case, it would be a very hard Case; how hard, I will undertake to explain to you. Suppose yourself, Mrs. *Principal Nowell*, that Mirror of *Knighthood* Sir *Thomas Mundy*, my Lady *Mundy*, your Neighbour over the Way Mrs. *Betty Horsfeman*, and Mr. *Welling* of *St. Edmund-Hall*, should go and drink Tea with the Vice-Chancellor; and instead of a Pool at *Quadrille*, Mr. *Welling* should propose the Reading a Chapter in the Old Testament; and Mrs. *Principal Nowell*, for the Edification of Mr. *Welling*, and the rest of the good Company, should expound the Chapter about *Moses* and his brazen Serpent: it would be exceedingly hard, that the Two Principals should be expelled the University for this. But according to your Account of Things, this must have been

or

the Case, had the Rev. Mr. *Higson* lodged a Complaint against them :

“ *Pereat Mundus, fiat Justitia.*”

And this ought to be a warning to young Gentlemen, to be cautious how they meet together to read the Bible, or even talk on religious Subjects; for I know not how far that ugly Act of Parliament, on which the Doctor seems to rest the Force of this Article of Accusation, may be carried by the Stretch of visitatorial Power. But if the Act was exactly as the Doctor has represented it, the Case I supposed a real Fact, and I the Doctor's Advocate; I should urge, that the Spirit of the Act be considered, rather than the Letter: I should observe, that it could not be proved, nor even with Reason presumed, that either the Ladies or Gentlemen then present, met there to cook up Intrigues against Church or State; and therefore pray that in this Case the Laws might sleep, which we well know are rarely exerted against profest Conventiclers, when they are assembled

assembled merely for the Exercise of Religion.

But come, let us consider what this pinching Act of Parliament is: and I will take the Doctor's own Account of it, even of that Part of it, which he has charged *Pietas* with designedly omitting; \* that " Part which alone relates to the Point in Question: where it is Enacted, that if any Person above the Age of Sixteen, shall be present at any Assembly, Conventicle, or Meeting, under Colour or Pretence of any Exercise of Religion, in other Manner than according to the Liturgy and Practice of the Church of *England*; at which Conventicle, there shall be five Persons or more assembled together, over and besides those of the same Household, if it be a House where there is a Family inhabiting; or if it be in a House, or Field, or Place, where there is no Family inhabiting, then, when any five Persons or more are so assembled, every one shall be subject to the Penalty of Five Shillings for

\* P 33.

the

the first Offence, and Ten Shillings for the second."

"Hence, *you infer*, \* that all Conventicles, Assemblies, or Meetings, as described in that Act, viz. in 22 Car. II. Chap. 1. and not registered or recorded according to the Toleration Act, are illicit and prohibited. The Meetings therefore, which these Gentlemen attended, were certainly Conventicles, being *private Assemblies for the Exercise of Religion*." O! thou arrant Quibbler! I must admire thee, either at the Expence of thy Modesty or thy Sense. If you changed upon us Terms, so lately recited, designedly; I admire your Assurance: if they were inadvertently changed, as Head of a House, as public Orator of the University of *Oxford*, as chosen Champion of the Learned in this Cause, your Ignorance is inexcusable: in either Case your Conduct deserves severest Censure. The Words you have just now palmed upon us, neither convey the Spirit nor contain the Letter of

\* P. 35.

the Act of Parliament, on which you ground your Accusation. Observe the Part of the Act you have above quoted, where it is Enacted, "that if any Person above the Age of Sixteen, shall be present at any Assembly, Conventicle, or Meeting, *under Colour or Pretence of any Exercise of Religion.*" \* Now see, if those four Words, which you had unluckily omitted, do not spoil your clinching Syllogism. These four Words, Sir, if you have a Grain of Discernment, will explain to you, without further Comment, both the Spirit of that Act and the Occasion on which it was framed: and if you have a Grain of Honesty, you will acknowledge it. Assemblies, met purely and solely for the Exercise of Religion, were not the Object of this Act: but Assemblies met *under Colour and Pretence of the Exercise of Religion*, to frame Intrigues against the Establishment, both of Church and State.

So much for the Statutes of the Realm: according to which, unless you can prove

\* P. 33.

the

the Meeting at Mrs. *Durbridge's* absolutely and strictly illicit; and this, if I understand the Force and Meaning of the Act of Parliament, you have cited for that Purpose, you cannot do: I challenge you to justify the Expulsion of the young Men, who attended that Meeting, upon the Statute of the University; *de Conventiculis illicitis reprehendis.*

Article the 3d. asserts, "That the aforesaid *Erasmus Middleton*, is moreover an Enemy to the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of *England*, as appears by his officiating as a Minister in Holy Orders, altho' a Layman, in the Parish Church of *Chevely*, or in one of the Chapels of *Ease*, belonging and appertaining unto the said Church of *Chevely*, in the County of *Berks*, and Diocese of *Salisbury*."

It appears that the Act in this Article objected to *Erasmus Middleton*, was committed before he became a Member of the University of *Oxford*. This was observed in the *Pietas*: and what Reply does Doctor  
*Nowell*

*Nowell* make to it? Why truly, "that the Vice-Chancellor did not know it at the Time of his Admission, else he would not have suffered him to be matriculated." \* But does this Reply justify the Vice-Chancellor in expelling him for an Act, of which we may suppose the Culprit did not then know the Criminality, and of which a Man of common Candor would hope, would believe he had heartily repented; it not appearing that he has ever repeated the Crime during the two Years he has been Member of the University? You, however, expressive of as little Christian Charity as the Methodists themselves are taxed with; blush not to declare, you think that Offence so long ago committed, and so apparently repented of, "was a sufficient Reason for the Vice-Chancellor to remove him." † Let the impartial Publick judge between us.

The 4th Article runs thus, "The aforesaid *James Matthews, Erasmus Middleton, and Benjamin Blatch*, have behaved indecently to-

\* P. 44.

† P. 44.

wards

wards the said *Higson*, Vice-Principal and Tutor, either by neglecting to attend his Lectures, or misbehaving themselves when at them; or by going out of the University without his the said *Higson's* Leave, contrary to the Discipline and good Order of the said Hall."

In answer to this Charge, I can only say, that if by neglecting to attend their Tutor's Lectures, or even smiling at his Ignorance or Impertinence, in Case the Tutor be an ignorant or impertinent Man, (which I do not say is the Case with Mr. *Higson*, nor do I know that such is the Kind of Misbehaviour with which his Pupils are charged) if under-graduates so offending, incur the Punishment of Expulsion, Visitors in General will, I hope, be more compassionate than the late Visitors of *Edmund-Hall*, or I foresee what will become of the Pupils of more Halls than one.

These four Articles contained the whole of Mr. *Higson's* Charge against them: to which however, I find another added, that I suppose was started in the Course of their Exami-



Examination; and this is, "that they held and maintained Tenets contrary to the Doctrine of the Church of *England* \*."

The Author of the *Pietas*, hath very satisfactorily invalidated this Part of the Charge, and successfully retorted it upon the Visitors †. He has made so dextrous a Pass in the Case of *Barrett*, as their Champion has not been able to parry, though with a Feather plucked from the downy Wing of Dullness, he hath wrote *about it and about it*. It was by the Author of *Pietas* asserted, that Mr. *Barrett*, of *Caius College, Cambridge*, was expelled for holding Doctrines contrary to the Articles of Religion of the Anglican Church: and that upon Recantation of his Errors, he was re-instated in the University; and that those Doctrines, on acknowledgment of the Truth of which Mr. *Barrett* was re-instated in the Uni-

\* P. 33.

† I wish this little GOLGOTHA Party do not themselves fall under the Censure of the University Statute, "de Conventiculis illicitis reprimendis."—Qualia, says that Statute, censenda sunt, in quibus contra Doctrinam vel Disciplinam ecclesie quicquam deliberatum sive gestum fuerit.

versity,

verity, were the very Doctrines, for the Avowal of which the six Students above mentioned were expelled *Edmund-Hall*.— Can Dr. *Nowell* deny the Fact to be fairly stated? He dares not, he cannot. Instead of that, he tells us, that certain Persons disapproved the Proceedings of the University against *Barrett*. Yes, and certain Persons have disapproved of the Proceedings of the Visitors against these six Students of *St. Edmund-Hall*. But does the Disapprobation of particular Persons disprove the general Sentiments of each University, touching the Points in Question, in the respective Cases? I humbly conceive not: and I hold it cruel, very cruel, to inflict the severe Sentence of Expulsion on any one, on account of his private Opinion in so dubious disputable Points: or, as Dr. *Nowell* himself acknowledges them to be, *abstruse and difficult Points*. And here, good Doctor, give me Leave to pleasure you with a Quotation from your own Labours\*.

“ The Points, ‘ say you to the Author of *Pietas*,’ which you pronounce so confidently

\* P. 69,

upon, (the Disposition of the Words I must observe, Mr. *Professor*, is not very oratorical) are generally acknowledged to be abstruse and difficult Points: and wise and good Men have always differed about them. Less Confidence therefore, and more Charity, would have better become you." Pray Sir, who may be said, 'to pronounce most confidently;' he, who asserts such and such Doctrines to be the undoubted Doctrines of the Church of *England*, or he, who by an arbitrary Stretch of Power expels from the University those who assert it? Who of the Two is most justly chargeable with *Confidence*: to whom does the Censure of *want of Charity* most strictly appertain?

Do not, dear Doctor, pore over *Strype* and *Burnet* for Extracts: and bring us Commentaries, and Glosses, and Expositions of the Articles, the Rubbish of dusty Shelves; to evince the Eterodoxy of the Tenets avowed by those young Men: but compare their Tenets with the Articles themselves. Or since you seem afraid to do that, why did you not more closely attend the Author of *Pietas*, while he entered into a Comparison

rison of them? Cavil as you will, several of the Doctrines you have condemned, in the Expulsion of those Students who avowed them, are so strictly conformable to the Articles of the Church of *England*, that you have strengthened the Plea of the Author of the Confessional, for a Reformation in our Ecclesiastical Polity: even while, in passing, you made some weak Attempts to expose the reasoning of that shrewd able Writer. But some of their supposed Tenets (I am guided by your own Minutes) were, I find by the Culprits, at the Time of Examination, denied: of holding which they were notwithstanding convicted, on the Evidence of that choice Character Mr. *Wellin* and Mr. *B——d*; which last Gentleman, I must inform you, was like some of the Culprits, formerly of a Trade: he served an Apprenticeship to an Apothecary and Surgeon, was afterwards Surgeon in a Regiment; but went into Orders, esteeming a Chaplainship in a Regiment, to which he afterwards succeeded, a much better Thing.

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Thus

Thus have I distinctly and minutely examined every Article of Accufation alledged againſt the fix Students expelled *St. Edmund-Hall*: and, in a few Hours, and a few Pages given, I am ſure, an impartial, and I truſt, a ſatisfactory Reply to a long and laboured Answer. The Merit of which, is aſſumed by Dr. *Nowell*: a Point which I am apt to think nobody will diſpute with him. I arrogate to theſe Pages Impartiality; becauſe I declare myſelf not only unconcerned in the Tranſaction, but unknown to, and unconnected with thoſe who were concerned in it. I ſeek not, in Order to juſtify my own Conduct, to miſrepreſent Facts, and blacken Characters, by malignant injurious Inſinuations. And leaſt of all do I ſeek to envelop the Affair in Clouds and Darkneſs, in Order to prevent the Public from ſeeing clearly, and judging fairly. The Doctor's Representation of Facts I have throughout admitted, and it was the Weakneſs, with which he maintained the Juſtice of the Sentence pronounced againſt the Culprits, that firſt offered it to my Judgment in ſo diſadvantageous Colours: I conceived

ceived it as severe, arbitrary, and oppressive ; I thought the young Men rigorously dealt with, and therefore took up a Pen in their Defence : *Humani nihil a me alienum putans.*

I will not affirm, that those young Men might not merit Reprehension. But are there no Degrees of Punishment? Was it necessary for the Visitors to proceed to the utmost Extremity on the very first Accusation? Might they not have confined them for a Twelvemonth to College, in the mean Time have employed them with Exercises that might have been of Service to them, and enjoined an absolute and implicit Obedience to their Tutor's Directions and Commands. And in future Failure of Compliance with those Injunctions, they might then for Contumacy justifiably have proceeded to Expulsion : which, as it is at present circumstanced, appears a Punishment that greatly exceeds the Offence. But the Doctor seems surprized \*, that the Author to whom he

\* P. 37.

directed

directed his Answer, should consider Ex-  
pulsion as a severe Punishment, an igno-  
minious Sentence. I cannot however but  
join with him in thinking it a severe, a very  
severe Punishment; and Colleges as well as  
Universities cannot be too tender in inflict-  
ing it. The Infliction of it hath often  
robbed both Church and State of Members,  
that might have done ample Service to both,  
when Time and Experience had matured  
their Judgment, and given a Check to the  
Eccentricities of Youth and Passion; but  
who, cruelly robbed, by being thus ig-  
nominiously driven from the University, of  
every Means of retrieving their Character  
and exerting their Abilities, have languished  
away a useless Life in Poverty and Chagrin.  
And I am sorry to say with Truth, that irre-  
gularities in Youth are too often found con-  
nected with the highest Abilities, sometimes  
with the warmest and noblest Virtues: Vir-  
tues, which have their Foundation in the  
Heart, and do not result from selfish Mo-  
tives; the poor starved Offspring of cold,  
prudential, self-interested Minds. Not that I  
presume to say, the Six expelled Members of  
*Edmund-Hall* were ever likely to figure it in  
the

the Walk of Literature, or to shine forth as very blazing Ornaments either of Church or State. But, as was before observed, they might have proved good Parish Priests: a very respectable Character this, and they who have a just claim to it, a very useful Order of Men. And if instead of this, they should turn out a set of wretched Vagrants, Seducers of the weak and unwary, and Disturbers of the public Peace; I forbear to say, who will in strict Justice bear Part of the Blame.

Before I take my Leave of this Writer, I beg Leave to address to him two or three farther Remarks on certain detached Passages: which, without Regard to Connection, I shall offer in the Order in which they present themselves in the "Answer."

And 1st. Speaking of Methodistical Meetings, you tell us, "you are well acquainted with the Nature of these Meetings in General, and the Numbers which deserting their own Parish Church, flock together from all Parts of the Neighbourhood to attend them." I am as well acquainted with  
the



the Nature of those Meetings as you are; and I believe them not to be confined to *Oxford* or its Environs, but to be pretty General throughout the Country. And I do with you much lament them, but much more the Cause of them: of which if you be ignorant, I can in few Words point it out to you, the general Inattention of the Clergy.

But here I check my Pen, shunning with equal Caution the *Scandalum Magnatum, & Clericorum*. I will however venture to add, that if the Numbers of useless Clergy, as well such as are hived in the University, as those who, not having tasted the Circean Cup of Fundatorial Benevolence, associate in large Towns, were less; Methodistical Meetings would be more rare. But when committed to the Care of an Hireling, *who caret for the Sheep, because he is an Hireling*, the unshepherded Flock, according to the Poet,

*With wishful Eye look up, and are not fed.*

No Wonder, if they lie open to any Impressions that may be made by voluntier Preachers;

Preachers; who according to the best of their Abilities, mean as their Abilities may be, are ready to give them that Food and Sufstenance, their rightful Pastors will not.

But let me not, good Doctor, be misunderstood, or my Meaning misrepresented; do not fling out your Censures at me, as an Enemy to all human Learning, as endeavouring to decry what I might want Opportunity, or Ability to attain to. Tho' when met on equal Ground with such a Colossus in Learning as yourself, I feel and confess my own Littleness and Insignificance: yet, I thank Providence, my Friends, and the Means of a good Education at *Oxford*, I am just possess'd of Learning sufficient to enable me to know the Value of it, and to Love and Honour all who are possess'd of more. As such, Dr. *Nowell* hath an undoubted Right to my Esteem; and it is a thousand Pities he should sully all the Trophies he has won in the Oratorical Chair, by such a drowsy Performance as this I am poring over.

I seem to hear you say, why then those illiberal Reflections upon the University, its

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Members, and even the Education of the Place: \* Gratitude and Duty to *Alma Mater* ought to have inspired you with other Sentiments. This is the usual Language of Writers of your Stamp: but while you are talking of Reverence to that venerable and learned Body, will not common Sense evince it to be the little Catch of Self-Adulation: while under pretence of Reverence for the University, you are complimenting your important Selves, who form so consequential a Part of it. The stale Censure of Ingratitude and Disrespect to *Alma Mater*, with which every one is usually bespattered, who is hardy enough to say, her governing Drones do wrong; is a Scare-Crow I take this Opportunity of pulling to Pieces.

By the University, you do not mean the Buildings, you do not tax me with Ingratitude and Disrespect to the Stocks and Stones of the Place; you cannot intend so simply. By the University then, you must mean the Members: but it is odds, that one who has left the University more

\* P 148.

than

than twenty Years ago, not only has no Acquaintance with; but not even knows any of the present Members: Pray, what Debt of Gratitude can such a one be supposed to owe the Members of the University; and with what Propriety, and with what Sense, do you accuse him of Ingratitude and Disrespect. I reflect on the many happy Hours I have passed in the University, with as much Satisfaction as you can do; the Friendships I contracted there were disinterested, and warm; the Respect I owe a worthy and diligent Tutor, for the Advantages I received from his Instructions, I with Gratitude acknowledge; I revere the Memory of a learned candid Governor; and I sincerely wish the State of the University was, what you, idly seeking, rather to conceal its Blemishes than reform them, would have the World believe it to be. Would you, as a leading Member of that learned and venerable Body, merit the Epithets you arrogate; have a little more Regard than you seem to pay at present to the Interests of Learning and Religion: take into Consideration, the great Object of the Place, the Education of Youth. Unite

with your Brethren; and try if a System of Education cannot be framed, better adapted to the present Modes of Time: get your Statutes new modelled; and adopt such only as may, and you can with Propriety require, to be observed. Let your publick Lectures be of such a Nature, as shall tend to promote Knowledge in the several Branches of Science on which they treat; let your Exercises preparatory to Degrees in the several Sciences of Divinity, Law, and Physick, tend *really* to qualify the Candidates for Degrees in the respective Lines; and let the general Exercises of the University conduce to form the Statesman and the Scholar. By pursuing such Measures as these, I will be bold to say, you will be more likely to lessen the Number of Conventicles, than by driving from the Walls of Science some well-meaning, but perhaps misguided Men, to preach and pray in Fields and Barns; lest they should set an invidious Example to the rest of their Brethren, by discharging the Duty of their Function too conscientiously, and preaching with too much Fervency and Zeal in their own Parish Churches.

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\* The next Curiosity I find in your Answer, is an Abstract of the Education of a certain great Dignitary of the Church; drawn up, as you inform us, with his own Hand, and at his particular Desire inserted in your 'Answer.' What was in the *Pietas* observed of that Dignitary, was not intended as any Reflection on him. Whatever slight Mention was there made of the Education of that great Man, or of the other great Men you think yourself, as Champion General, obliged to defend, was urged only to obviate the Charge which was brought against the six Students of *St. Edmund-Hall*, for having been of Trades, by producing similar Instances of Elopement from one Vocation to another, in the Characters of those illustrious Personages.

I am not surprized, that the eminent Dignitary alluded to, his Body labouring under great Infirmities, and his Mind perhaps sympathizing with it, should misinterpret the Mention made of him, as a Reflection on his Character; and so misinter-

\* P. 47.

preted,

preted, be affected by it. But had he then possessed in their full Vigour those great Faculties, for which he was once so eminently distinguished, he would have judged very differently of the trivial Observation in the *Pietas*: and have considered a Defence of himself equally unnecessary, and beneath him. And had he seen such a Defence, as this before us, in such an *Answer*, he would have been ashamed of it. Pray Dr. Nowell, what was the Charge? that he had studied Midwifry. And, pray, what was the Defence? that he had attended a Course of Lectures in Midwifry. And, pray Sir, do you know the Nature of a Course of Lectures in Midwifry? if you do not, I could tell you. I could prove to you, there is in a Course of practical Lectures in Midwifry, more dirty Work to pass through than is annexed either to the Business of a Weaver, Barber, or Tapster. Alas! that great Man stands not in need of such a Defence, or such a Defender. The rare Abilities he possessed, and the fair Train of Virtues he practised; plead for him more forcibly against any supposed or even real Insinuations to his Prejudice, than in this  
last

last Case his own Pen, or that of Dr. Nowell.

Mr. *Wellin's* Case contains something remarkable. I will not meddle with that Gentleman's Character any further, than as it relates to the Point in Question. It must be observed, he is the principal Evidence on which the Charge of Eterodoxy is alledged against the six expelled Students: an Evidence of little Weight, when we consider the Tenets of which Mr. *Wellin* himself was accused. What is the Nature of his Tenets, will be best explained by the Charge that was brought against him, importing what they were not. He is charged with professing his Disbelief of the Miracles of our Saviour and *Moses*.

\* "When this Circumstance, says Dr. *Nowell*, was mentioned by way of Recrimination, we applied to the Principal for the Truth of it." (a likely Man truly the Principal, to be acquainted with the private infidel Tenets of an under-graduate of his Hall) well,



what says the Principal? why, that he had nothing to alledge against Mr. *Wellin's* Character: nor had ever before heard him charged with Infidelity. *I'll take the Ghost's Word for a Thousand Pounds*—— when the Ghost speaks the Language I would have him. But when the same Ghost declared those Members, who were destined to Expulsion, to be exemplary in their Conduct for Sobriety and Regularity; the Ghost was a mere Cypher, and his Word not worth two Pence. Facts however appeared so strong against Mr. *Wellin*, that he was obliged to confess the Truth of the Charge; and to acknowledge, \* “ that he had made Use of certain Expressions tending to disparage the Truth of divine Revelation in General, and the Miracles wrought by *Moses* in particular.” However, he avers to Mr. Vice-Chancellor, that he was drunk when he said it. He accordingly is commanded to make a solemn Recantation; with which he complies, and assures the Vice-Chancellor and both the Proctors, that he is a sober Christian, and in every Ar-

\* P. 62.

ticle of Belief, a true genuine Son of the Church.

Now it appears, that several of the Tenets, with which the six expelled Members were charged, they at the Time of Examination absolutely denied: and that Mr. Grove, who pleaded Guilty of having held certain erroneous Doctrines\*, “after his Expulsion applied to the Vice-Chancellor to be re-admitted into some College or Hall, on Condition of making a Recantation of his Errors, and giving Security to the University for his future good Behaviour.” The Public will be obliged to the Doctor, if in his next Edition he will inform them, why Mr. *Wellin*’s Recantation was admitted, and Mr. *Grove*’s refused.

But leaving Mr. *Wellin* in peaceable Possession of his Reputation and Chambers; I am next to attend the Doctor, while with his usual Adroitness he clears the Vice-Chancellor of a Charge brought against him for a Breach of Promise. It is repre-

\* P. 66:

sented, that "the Vice-Chancellor had solemnly given his Word to the Principal, that unless the expelled young Men were received again into the University, none of the others should have Liberty to leave his Hall, and enter elsewhere \*." None of the expelled Students were re-admitted; yet had such other Members of the Hall, as desired it, Permission given them to Leave it, and enter elsewhere. This indeed has strongly the Air of a Breach of Promise in Mr. Vice-Chancellor: let us see how the Doctor brings him off.

The Vice-Chancellor, says he, denies having ever made such Promise in express Terms: he acknowledges indeed to have told Mr. Grove, "that he could not be re-instated, and that the other Gentlemen should not be allowed to leave the Hall for the present †." And "he (the Vice-Chancellor) has since called upon the Principal, and in my Presence questioned him in Relation to the Charge brought against him on this Head. The Principal's Answer was,

\* P. 65,

† P. 67.

that

that he understood the Determination of both the Petitions had been final." Excellent: that is, that neither the expelled young Men should be re-instated, nor the other Members of the Hall suffered to Leave it, and enter elsewhere. And does Dr. *Nowell* call this "defending the Cause of Truth," — and clearing "the chief Magistrate of the University of an Accusation so scandalously brought against him?" God help the Vice-Chancellor! and send him next Time he is embroiled, a better Cause, or an abler Advocate. Well, but the Doctor farther adds, "it was not in the Vice-Chancellor's Power to make the Promise he is charged with." Clinching indeed: he means not in his Power to keep it; that I have nothing to do with. But, pray Doctor, who, that has the Use of his Tongue, has not Power to make a Promise? and who will wonder, if a dignified Divine should break it?

Sixty dull Pages follow, on Points which, as I do not profess myself a Divine, I pro-

• P. 65.

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#### 44 STRICTURES ON, &c.

feels myself not bold enough to dispute with a Rev. D. D. Such a miserable Waste of Words as those Pages present, and so much fine Paper spoiled, I do from my Soul lament. In these Sheets, which make one Half of the Doctor's Performance, he has used his poor Endeavours to prove, that the Sense, in which he understands the Articles upon Free-will, Justification by Faith, Predestination, &c. is the true and genuine Sense they were intended to convey: and that the Meaning, affixed to them by the expelled Students, who in some Points differed from the Doctor's Opinion on those respective Articles, was consequently erroneous and false. But these, as the Answerer allows †, were doubtful, disputable Points: Points on which the Learned have been much divided. Was it not hard then to expel Six young Men for an Error of Judgment; and such an Error too, as even wise and learned Men may easily incur? Perhaps the Doctor would tell me, they were not expelled on this Article of

† P. 69.

their

their Accufation. I will ask, on which Article of their Accufation they were expelled: and, till that Question is refolved; I will fuppose on no one fingle Article, but on all together; according to the medical Maxim, *quæ non fingula, junctâ juvant.*

Though, as I have already professed myself no Divine, yet as a Man of plain Senfe, I will be bold to affert, that the Opinion of thofe young Men, on Juftification by Faith, good Works, and Predeftination, to which Dr. *Nowell* objects, is ftrictly, *literally*, agreeable to the refpective Articles. This the Answerer ought to have difproved: and could he have done it, he might in fixty Lines have effected what in fixty tedious Pages he hath laboured in vain to accomplifh. If Orthodoxy be different now from what it was in *Barrett's* Time, and the Articles be fupposed to have a general Import, other than what they *literally* imply: Dr. *Nowell* may be right, the young Men are not much wrong, and the Articles want Amendment.

## 46 STRICTURES on, &c.

One Remark more, dear Doctor, and then, Farewel. How could you be weak enough to presume, that the Sentiments of those *Piety-Men* on the Points of Election and Predestination, were inconsistent with their Notions of Repentance. How could you be idle enough, to employ ten or a dozen Pages, to prove that even the Elect might fall, and repent; and in Consequence of such sincere Repentance, receive a Portion of Grace, productive of good Works, sufficient to enable them to obtain their Salvation? all this is the Methodists Creed, as well as yours and mine. Disprove it if you can: and from their Champion's own Words, as effectually convict them of Inconsistency, as you have impotently attempted to do\*. If this exceed your Abilities, read your own precious Works, from Page 118 to Page 122, ('tis Punishment enough) see the Inconclusiveness of your own Reasoning, and humbly acknowledge,

*" Quam sit tibi curta supellex."*

\* P. 130.

F I N I S.





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4 AP 54

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\* P. 130.

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