

with his Lordship's Office, but contrarily prevent Disputes from appearing there.

To proceed to the second Head Propofed, I will recite a Passage out of the Fifth of *Nebemiah*, Governor under *Artaxerxes*, viz.

“ A N D there was a great Cry of the People, and of their wives, againſt their Brethren the Jews; for there was that ſaid, we our ſelves and our Daughters are many; therefore we take up Corn for them that we may eat and live.

“ Some alſo there were that ſaid, we have mortgaged our Lands, Vineyards and Houſes, that we might buy Corn becauſe of the dearth.

“ There were alſo that ſaid, we have borrowed Money for the King's Tribute, (or to pay our Taxes) and that upon our Lands and Vineyards; yet now our Fleſh is as the Fleſh of our Brethren, and our children as their children; and ſo we bring our Sons and our Daughters to be Servants: And ſome of our Daughters are brought into Bondage already. Neither is it in our Power to redeem them, for other Men have our Lands and Vineyards.

“ And I was very angry when I heard their Cry and theſe Words; then I conſulted with myſelf, and I rebuked the Nobles of the Rulers, and ſaid unto them, Ye exact Uſury every one of his brother. ——— And I ſet a great Aſſembly againſt them, (Mob ſome calls it;) ——— and I ſaid unto them, we, after our Ability, have redeemed our Brethren the Jews, which were ſold unto the Heathen, and will you even ſell your Brethren, or ſhall they be ſold unto us? ——— Then held they their Peace, and found nothing to answer. Alſo I ſaid, it is not good that ye do; ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God, becauſe of the reproach of the heathen our enemies?

I likewiſe, and my brethren, and my ſervants, might exact of them money and corn; I pray you let us leave off this uſury. Reſtore, I pray you,

to them, even this day, their land, their vineyards, their olive-yards, and their houses, also the hundredth part of the money, and of the corn, the wine, and the oil, that ye exact of them.

“ Then said they, We will restore them, and will require nothing of them; so will we do as thou sayest. Then I called the priests, and took an oath of them, that they should do according to this promise. Also I shook my lap, and said, So God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise, even thus be he shaken out, and emptied.”

The Justice done the Poor in this Passage far exceeds what is aimed at in this Motion. There cannot be the same Arguments used against us, as might and no doubt would have been in this mighty degenerate Age, had we petitioned for Relief in a full and similar Case.

It is to be feared too many of our Rulers have an eye to make a Prey of these poor People, because an Opinion seems to be propagated, that it is Criminal to cut a Tree down off the vacant Lands. Whether this Notion took its Rise from the great Men's making Tar and Turpentine on vacant Lands, which is a quite different Case, or from the Motive's above mentioned, I would advise no honest Man to suffer such an Opinion to take Place with him; for the Thing is so inhuman and base, that you will not find a man but he will deny and clear himself, or hide such a Design as long as he can, which must proceed from his Conceptions of the Heinousness thereof.

Who can justify the Conduct of any Government who have countenanced and encouraged so many Thousands of poor Families to bestow their All, and the Labour of many Years, to improve a Piece of waste Land, with full Expectation of a Title, to deny them Protection from being robed of it
all

all by a few roguish Individuals, who never bestowed a Farthing thereon?

And, 3dly, That this has been the Sense of all the British Legislations; and that the contrary Doctrine is as contrary to Nature and Justice as the Story of the Dog in the Manger. To evince this a little, requires to be said no other than the constant Instructions to all his Majesty's colonies, though grossly abused; such as Head Rights, the Cultivation Clause, in all our Patents ——— and the Necessity of applying for an Order of council to obtain any larger Grants. Nothing is more hurtful to the Common Wealth, than for individuals to hold unreasonable quantities of lands, and rent them out to the Poor. A Traveller may know when he rides through such Lands, by the bad Husbandry and discontented Looks of the People. These Sentiments of Justice are so natural, that they strike every Man in the same Light, and it is to be hoped will do so for ever.

A S E R M O N.

GEN. 49th Chap. Verses 14, 15, and 21.

Iffachar is a strong ass, couching down between two burdens.

And he saw that rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant; and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant to tribute.

Naphtali is a hind let loose: he giveth goodly words.

WE find it very usual in the Old Testament by the figure of a beast to point out the Image of a people.

The text under consideration, is perhaps as apt and lively a representation of Iffachar's character, as any in the whole Bible, or any people whatsoever; and may serve to discover the people of Iffachar's character down to this day.—
They

They were a tribe of Israel,——and an inactive people towards the good of posterity and mankind in General; they loved rest and present ease more than liberty,——and choosed to be Slaves rather than exert themselves to maintain their liberties.——He saw the land was good, and rest was pleasant to him; he bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant to tribute to pay heavy taxes.——We have many such Issachars in this day.——Our text is a prophesy in the present ~~text~~,——a thing usual in the Hebrew writing ~~it~~——it is Jacob foretelling the character of Issachar, and the contrary character of Naphtali.

Jacob is the first that is mentioned in scripture who preached to asses; but many have been thus employed since his time.——This is a most shameful monosyllable, when applyed to reasonable creatures; ——men endowed with reason and understanding to degenerate so basely; what a falling off is here!

He was a numerous tribe, far too many to be so mean spirited.——A nation of slaves is a kingdom of asses; ——it is dishonourable rest and disgraceful pleasure that is established upon the ruin of the common weal.

What does these burdens mean, which Issachar couched down so decently under? Civil and religious slavery no doubt. Strange, that such a number of Rational creatures should bear two such insupportable burdens!——Ah, I had forgot that they were asses; ——for, to be sure, no people of any rational spirit could endure such grievous bondage.

But who need wonder at Issachar's mean spirited condition, when many of those who have the light, and sit under the teaching of protestant and reformed ministers, have tamely couched down under these two burdens of civil and religious oppression.——Indeed this slovenly character too
well

well fits all Europe.——I wish it was gone out of the world.

A horse is a generous animal ; tractable, but not abject ;——so obedience to just laws, and subjection to slavery, is two very different things ; the first characterizes a people wise and good, the latter base, mean spirited and servile.——It is understanding that makes men good subjects——Ignorance makes them slaves.——A strong ass, in the original word, denotes strength, but implies leanness.——And truly all those who submit to slavery are poor. We have not a ~~man~~ of his motion ;——~~he~~ was strong, but not active to assert his rights and privileges.

Rest was pleasant to him ;——and thus it happens now, we sit still at ease, trusting to the good of the land, and concluding, every one, I can live out my time in peace and quiet ;——forgetting our posterity, and mourning not for the afflictions of Joseph.

When men thus degenerate, ~~they~~ will always find some ready to fix burdens on them ; for slavery don't come in a day, it is a work of time to make men perfect Slaves.

Indeed when men are conquered and overpowered, and forced to submit to bondage, it is no crime ; but when through laziness, and love of a little ease they give up the publick welfare, they are unworthy of the protection of Heaven for rejecting its Government, and giving way thus by little and little.

It is wonderful to think what custom will do ; it is called second nature, and justly so, for thro' long use and habit, men will stoop to, yea help to fix on, their own burdens.

Iffachar stooped down ; he well deserved a heavy burden for his meanness ;——it is a just reward :——for such as do not value freedom and liberty, before a little present ease, deserve to be slaves.——They are blessings too valuable to

be enjoyed without care and industry to maintain them.

Providence has ordered slavery to prevail on such as certainly, as cold and darkness does in a winter's night, that they who make no industry, must lay cold and grope in the dark.

It is amazing to think how creatures, of the same frame and constitution, endowed with the same power and capacities, should become so submissively the slaves of others.

When all the faculties, and passions are engaged in pursuing their various and proper objects, according as nature directs and requires, it will be a miracle if men do not jostle themselves clear of unreasonable burdens.——And any people or nation who have a true sense of property and liberty will be zealous to establish them for posterity, and seek to propagate them both at home and abroad.

These two burdens, civil and religious oppression, are laid on by the power of princes and the power of priests.

In the burden of civil oppression is contained so much as the prince and his officers have need of for all the purposes of their pride and ambition;—to which passions there is no end, but will comprehend Item for every thing a man possesseth.

And in the burden of religious oppression is contained so much as the priest-hood have need of for the same purposes;——whose pride and cruelty exceed that of princes.——In nations where it has had a growth, and where it prevails, such as in Popish countries, where this burden contains in it Item for all things in heaven and in earth, here you must believe nothing contrary to the judgment of the church;——but must believe almost every thing else, however absurd,——the Bible only is excluded out of this heavy burden.

And in case any prove refractory, there is the inquisition, which has many spurs for such asses; and they may kick and spurn as they will, but may

as well think of bringing Rome to London as to think to throw of this burden.

Here is dungeons, where light or sun-shine never enter.——The very pictures of the mansions of the dead;——tortures; which furies in council only could contrive, are here the sad monitors of obedience to miserable mortals. Strange, that nothing else could be contrived to convince the consciences of men to believe the truth but what is fit for the most stubborn and slothful animal.——Can bodily torture convince the mind? Can hunger and pain reconcile contradiction?—Kind Jesus, this was never thy contrivance, whose law is love; whose conduct is all mercy.

How can kingdoms bear such a yoke? how can millions of reasonable creatures submit to such unreasonable slavery?

It must have cost much time and pains, and that too by help of some infernal spirit, to deprive men thus of their sense and reason;——the human mind is also subject to sad depravity to submit to such abject bondage and slavery.—Can it be natural to men thus to degenerate into a state of brutal stupifaction? So many millions of rational beings, endowed with moral capacities, having the full exercise of the corporal functions, to submit to be treated like brutes, what a shocking consideration? Could they not have freed themselves, by making use of those powers the author of nature hath endowed them with? Ah no! not now.——They have lost their guide, reason; that guide of mankind is enslaved, and held himself a captive by servile superstition.

But there is some original cause for this degeneracy from the pure principles of nature. The leaders of the people cause them to err;——Reason is duped by the passions;——for those who have address enough to command the one will also overcome the other; and when men's eyes are put out, they grope in the dark.

dark. ————— Oh what can possess men in sacred offices thus to play the devil with their fellow creatures!

Interest, sordid self-interest is the cause; ————— the clergy, instead of pointing out the way of righteousness, do treat their congregations like asses, and keeps them in ignorance. ————— But who gave them that right and such preeminence; are not all men equally free; hath not God of one blood made all the kindreds of the earth. But thoughtless mortals gave up their privileges through indolence and inactivity. ————— In Popish countries, where men are no sooner out of the hands of their nurses than they fall into the hands of the priests, whose leading maxim is to keep them ignorant, and abjectively submissive to all authority, ————— how can they understand their interest. But them who first gave up those privileges, justly deserve to bear a heavy burden.

But Italy and Spain are not the only places where people believe absurdities; ————— in a land where freedom has been the privilege and boast of every subject, we may, perhaps, find plenty of asses. ————— You will say, not in America, a land renowned for all sorts of liberty; ————— A nation to which there is none equal upon the face of the earth, as we know of. In some provinces in America this may have been the case; ————— but we, in North-Carolina, are not free; ————— yet to the king, or to the plan of our constitution, nothing can be laid that tends to effect our Liberties. ————— But we have sold that liberty which our ancestors left us by this constitution to such men as have not the least pretensions to rule over us.

Are we free while our laws are disapproved of by nine tenths of us? ————— Are we free while it is out of our power to obtain one law that is our choice? ————— Take out our oppressors themselves, and many of our laws are disagreeable to the inhabitants to a man: And worse than all
this,

this, for bad as our laws are, the practice of them is worse, and our oppressors have got out of reach of them.

Kings who rule arbitrarily, generally claim their authority by some indefeasible right or other;—but those oppressors of ours have no other claim but a sale we have voluntarily made to them of our liberty.—But this was an unlawful bargain of sale; a drunken bargain.

Ye who, like Issachar, for the love of ease, or the gratification of some sordid passion, have sold your liberties, and submit to burdens, as unnatural as they are unreasonable,——your character is drawn, in the text, to that of asses.—And worse than asses you are, who thus give up the cause of your country either to civil or religious dominators.

What a different sound has the character of Naphtali;——Naphtali is a hind let loose; he giveth goodly words; he was an assertor of liberty.—God give all men a knowledge of their privileges, and a true zeal to maintain them.

Issachar, I wish thy children had all died in the first generation;——for thy offspring is too numerous; they are in church and state; whoever will attend any place of concourse will find many of thy descendants so stupid, that they every day bring themselves under burdens they might easily prevent.

Some burdens are fixed on us by former generations, that the most industrious cannot get clear of now.—Heaven grant us help in this case.

But shurely we live under a government where grievances will be considered if faithfully represented;——and it is our own fault if we bear burdens. The bondage is heavy, and the cry has been loud; but proper means of redress is by too many neglected.—It is to be feared we are not all prepared for deliverance; for if we do not apply for it earnestly, we do but groan like asses, and do not bestir ourselves.

I shall

I shall now consider some grievous oppressions that we labour under.

2dly, Shew the reason and cause thereof;—and,

3dly, Consider a method to have them removed.

First, The Publick taxes is an unequal burden on the poor of this province, by reason the poorest man is taxed as high as the richest. Allowing the taxes to be all necessary, yet there ought to be some regard had to the strength of the beast; for all asses are not equally strong. We ought to be taxed according to the profits of each man's estate. And as we have no trade to circulate money, this tax ought to be paid in country produce. There would be men enough to be found to fill all posts of office for a salary paid in produce, as any man can afford to officiate in an office for country produce as well as to farm or follow any other calling, the chief of which bring in nothing else.

This is a grievous burden on the poor, as matters have been carried on, for money is not to be had: And when a poor man's goods is distrained, the practice has been to take double, treble, yea ten times the value has sometimes been taken away.— And if they complain, they are not heard; if they resist, they are belaboured like asses.

Merciful Lord, would any people rise in mobs to disturb a peaceable nation if they could help it! Who is more ready than the poor to venture their lives in time of war for the safety of the nation? nay it is pinching hunger and cold, brought on them by abuse of officers, that is the cause.

A few men may rise in a riot without a Cause; and disaffected lords and great men may have such ambitious views, encouraged by some enemy prince;—but for the generality of the poor of a Province to rise, there must be some cause; I dare say there always is a grievous cause.

Neither is it any reflection on the king, to say, the poor are oppressed; for he don't make our laws:—'Tis the subjects themselves, like the

the fish, devouring one another, with this difference, we are devoured by law.

The narrow limits of our inferior court's jurisdiction, and likewise of a single magistrate, is a grievous burden on both poor and rich; and more so as we are obliged to see lawyers; and in their demands they have got above the law, and have monopolized the whole power of the Courts into their own hands. Our burdens exceeds Issachar's; for truly we may be said to labour under three, —the lawyers use us as we do our stocks, they kill one here and there, or pluck us well, and then let us run a while to feather again.

We must make these men subject to the laws, or they will enslave the whole community.— General and private musters are also an unnecessary burden, especially in our large counties, the out sides of which have to ride from thirty to fifty miles; and the out sides of a county contain more than the heart. Going to one of these musters generally costs a whole week's labour.—And on the whole, costs the counties at least a Thousand Pounds each. A general muster is one week's loss in a year, which is one-fiftieth part of the year.—Four private musters one week more, which is one twenty-fifth part.—Working on the roads and attending courts, will soon reduce it to one-twelfth part of our time.—And of what service is all this cost attending the militia law? It serves to bring custom to a few Ordinary-Keepers, and for a day of gaiety and feasting to a few individuals, who have been vain enough sometimes to publish such a day's diversion in distant Gazettes.

With what indignation must a poor ass read such a paragraph of such vain boasting of such a crowd of poor asses, faint with hunger, cold and thirst, laying out two or three nights by a fire in the woods, to perform this journey; destitute even of a great coat or a blanket; and of no use under the sun but to make a show of grandeur to
a few

a few who, perhaps, are the most unworthy in the county.

This excess has not been practised perhaps in many counties;—But it is not amiss to check it, lest it should grow, and you be tied neck and heels for the least affront, and made to ride the wooden mare.—It is enough to make a freeman's flesh creep to read this law;—which might be more tolerable, were the people allowed to choose their own officers.—It would be needless to mention every circumstance of oppression in this, which is yet but the civil burden.

Next comes the religious;— In this many conscientious good men are debarred from the privilege of serving the publick.—Our ancestors secured us so well from this burden, that it is even a shame to see how we have let those laws creep in over us; which could not be done but under colour of our consent.

In Britain, the clergy endeavour to make us believe that tithes and church-rates are of divine institution. This pretended right of demanding church dues, more than the secular power gives, is treating men like asses. Indeed it is depriving them both of their money and senses at the same time. Though men of any religion obey the laws when once made, yet they cannot believe the church has any other claim but what the Magistrate gives her;—yet, when they pay, they will both think and say they are ill applied, and the king is badly informed.—Christians, though they may bear burdens, when they can obtain no redress, yet they are worse than asses thus tamely to consent to creating of them;—and when they know they cannot be created without their consent.

To think the posterity of a people, whose fathers had purchased them a freedom with the price of their blood and fortunes, that they should
basely

basely sell that freedom for a pot of ale, and a shake of the hand, in flattery and deciet, is a most shocking consideration.

What a weak religion must it be, that needs any thing to support it but what proceeds from voluntary consent and good will. It is strange that the Christian religion cannot maintain its ground by the same means that it gained it.

I was educated myself in the principles of the church of England, and have duly examined most other dissenting sects, and I can't say any of them is sounder or freer from error in their principles than she.——But this maintaining of the clergy, by establishment, suppose it don't corrupt a true minister, yet it is the very cause that makes ordinary wicked lazy men creep into orders, purely for a livelihood or office of profit, to get gain in an easy any lazy way.

And as to the different sects, I look upon all of them to have been by good men at first;——and we see they all degenerate in time as well as she.

These different sects and opinions are a balance to the sad depravity which the human mind is subject to; for had nature allowed it to have been possible for any one sect to have been so established by Law, as to have been wholly secured from the Attacks of, and from being exposed by, dissenting sects,——no absurdity in the world but could have been imposed on the human mind.——Neither do I know that it is an article of the church of England to force a maintenance for their Clergy; or that it is in any of their creeds, but rather a practice of Rome, kept up by the carnal men among them.——And I make no doubt but there is carnal men enough among the rulers of any of the dissenting sects to carry a majority among themselves to have the same establishment, could they persuade or have interest enough in the state to do it.——So that while I expose this antichristian practice, I would

I would not be understood to strike at the church of England more than any other that might have power to force the same maintenance.

When the Scriptures is given to make the man of God perfect, do not any sect whatsoever accuse them of imperfection when they make other fences against error, which are accounted more fit to guard men against heresy, than the scriptures themselves ?

What occasion to introduce any other System of Religion either with or besides the scriptures, if they be sufficient to make men perfect in all things pertaining to godliness ?——Do men think they can express themselves more intelligibly than the holy spirit, or commend the truth more clearly to other men's conscience ?

2dly To proceed to the second head ;——
The reason of all civil and religious impositions hath been the slothfulness of the people,—— who act like great men who commit the care of their estates to stewards. Such men as are intrusted by the community with their privileges, if they be not wise and good, will sell them, or give them away. And one cause of our complaints is, that we look not to our Business ourselves ; but think, as soon as we have elected civil or religious governors, we may fall asleep in pleasure, indolence and inattention.——When they degenerate into Tyrants, as much of the blame lays on the community as upon them ;—— for had those who employed them watched over them as they ought, and given them timely admonition, they might have prevented them from ruining both their own souls as well as the publick interest.

The indolence of a people is a temptation to governors to turn usurpers.——In a free country like ours, where assembly-men are voted by a free Election, and are not to be perpetual, it would be easy to have all the laws agreeable to the body of the people. We loose our liberty by

not asserting it properly.——It serves no purpose to cry out against government and officers if we don't properly bestir ourselves.

One reason why we have so few men who concern themselves properly in maintaining our rights, is a very capital error that prevails among most dissenting sects, that this is a business that belongs to the world.

Christians is the light of the world——this is a most certain truth;——and when the state is deprived of the light of so many christians as is among dissenters, her light becomes almost quite darkness. For there is a certain proportion of christians in all ages who ought to be the light of the world, and to govern the churches. The government of their particular churches, set up among one another, is only helps to the government over the whole; and is no ways different in its nature. So that if it is necessary to choose christians to sit in synods, presbyteries, associations or yearly meetings, so it is necessary to have such in assemblies.

I shall now proceed to the 3d head, to consider of a method to remove these burdens.

When the time of an election comes on, and those men of the world, who rule by wealth, and whose business it is to corrupt their fellow subjects, and cheat them by flattery and corruption; out of their liberty come to ask your votes,——do you despise their offers, and say to them, Your money perish with you.

Can it be supposed that such men will take care of your interest who begin with debauching your morals, and ruining your souls by drunkenness?—Will that man have the least regard for your civil interest and property who first attempts to ruin your virtue?——What opinion must they have of such people, who, for a few days riot and
gluttony

gluttony will sell their liberties, but that they are asses, that want to be watered?

While men are thus slaves to their lusts, they will never be free. Men that do so easily sell their souls will not value their country.——Where there is no virtue, there can be no liberty;——it is all licentiousness. What Issachars are such People who gives their votes for a man who neither fears God nor loves mankind! who, by the very method that he pursues to obtain his election, deserves to forfeit the favour and esteem of all lovers of virtue and honesty. Whom can they blame for their oppression but themselves; their own hands do make the fetters by which they are bound. Those who lay out so much money upon an election, has it in their view to make you pay for it in the round.

Secondly, Forever despise that man who has betray'd the liberty of his constituents; this will lay a restraint upon the venal disposition of such as Incline to sell their country for Preferment. It would be a check to hinder them from going into the schemes of a Governor.——Never send those who depend on favour for a living, or on the perplexity of the laws, nor any who have ever discovered a want of good principles.

North-Carolinians, if you remain under these burdens, it must be your own faults;——you will stand recorded for asses to all generations if you do not assert your privileges before it is too late to recover them.

It is not disloyalty, nor injurious, to give Instructions to the candidates you choose, and take their solemn promise and obligation, that they will follow those instructions. This is far more noble than rioting a few days in drunkenness. Assemblymen are your servants, and it is but reasonable they be made accountable to you for their conduct.

Mark any clerk, lawyer or Scotch merchant, or any set of men, who are connected with certain companies.

companies, callings and combinations, whose interests jar with the interest of the publick good. And when they come to solicit you with invitations to entertainments, &c. shun them as you would the pestilence. ——— Send a man who is the choice of the country, and not one who sets up himself, and is the choice of a party; whose interest clashes with the good of the publick. Send a christian, or a man whom you think in your consciences is a real honest good man; ——— for this is the christian, let his belief, as to creeds and opinions be what it will.

Beware of being corrupted by flattery, for such men study the art of managing those springs of action within us, and will easily make us slaves by our own consent. ——— There is more passions than one that these men work upon; there is drunkenness, love of honour, flattery of great men, love of interest, preferment, or some worldly advantage. ——— They, by taking hold of these springs within us, insensibly lead us into bondage.

When any man, who has much of this world, so that his interest weighs down a great number of his poor neighbours, and employs that interest contrary to the principles of virtue and honesty, any person of the least discernment may see he is a curse to the nation.

When men's votes is solicited, or over-awed by some superiors, the election is not free. ——— Men in power and of large fortunes threaten us out of our liberty, by the weight of their interest.

North-Carolinians, Are you sensible what you are doing, when, for some small favour, or sordid gratification, you sell your votes to such as want to inflave your country? ——— you are publishing to all the world, that you are asses. ——— You are despised already by the sister colonies. ——— You are hurting your trade; for men of publick
generous

generous spirits, who have fortunes to promote trade, are discouraged from coming among you.

You are also encouraging your own assemblymen to enslave you; for when they, who are elected, see that those who had a right to elect them had no concern for their true interest, but that they were elected by chance, or power of their own, or some great man's interest, such men will be the more ready to vote in the assembly with as much indifference about the interest of their constituents as they had in voting them in.

You may always suspect every one who overawes or wants to corrupt you; the same person will load you with burdens. You may easily find out who was tools to the governor, and who concurred in past assemblies to lay burdens on us, the edifice, paying the troops, the associates salaries, &c. Send not one of them ever any more; let them stand as beacons; set a mark on them, that ages to come may hold their memories in obhorrence.

May now Carolina cry and utter her voice, and say, That she will have her publick accounts settled; that she will have her lawyers and officers subject to the laws.——That she will pay no taxes but what are agreeable to law.——That she will pay no officer nor lawyer any more fees than the law allows.——That she will hold conferences to consult her representatives, and give them instructions; and make it a condition of their election, that they assert their privileges in the assembly, and cry aloud for appeal of all oppressive laws.

Finally, My brethren, whenever it is in your power, take care to have the house of assembly filled with good honest and faithful men; and encourage and instruct them on all occasions: And be sure to let your elections be no expence to them.

S E R M O N II.

NUMB. xxii. 21.—30.

And Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab.—And the ass said unto Balaam, Am not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden ever since I was thine?

TH E R E must be some matter of importance on hand, no doubt, when a man of Balaam's character is up so early.——The king of Moab had sent for him, promising him riches and honour on certain conditions, *to wit*, if he would come and curse Israel.

The leaders and teachers of people in all ages have been well disposed to serve men in power.——We have seen the leaders of divers sects of christians, who was lately employed the same way;——But it is necessary to know first what this curse meant.

The greatest part of states-men in almost every age meant no more by religion than to make it an engine of state-policy, or a tool of secular interest; for the common people will not always submit to the oppressive means of rulers, without the help or the influence of their own teachers.——And we must observe, that though Balaam seems not to have been of the same religion of the king of Moab, yet many, or the greatest part of Balak's subjects, might have been of Balaam's religion, which made it necessary for the king of Moab to apply to him.

Had we as many to instruct us truly, as in fact we have to seduce us, we should find things very different from what they are;——for when both the civil and religious rulers are engaged in one interest to seduce mankind, if the Almighty was not at the head of the administration,

tion, it is hard to say where the end might be.

Well, by the correspondence between the king of Moab and Balaam, we find the concern was about the growth and advances of an ignorant people, who had lately revolted from under their task-masters, the Egyptians.

Well, Balak, was it from thee, and thy prophet Balaam, that states-men have all learnt to apply to the prophets of all or any religion to curse and give a bad name to God's peculiar and chosen people; which all such are, who engage together to throw off the yoke of slavery, and are advancing from under Egyptian bondage to a land of freedom and liberty?

Whether they learnt it from thee or not, they have never failed to join in an alliance on such occasions.

Israel, no doubt, had a good name among the king of Moab's religious subjects; for such would naturally, from a love of liberty, incline to favour Israel, and encourage them in their journey, rather than hinder them. — Therefore there must be some method found out to give them a bad name. Sermons must be calculated to render them odious, before he could raise troops, or raise his militia against them. — This was the curse; Balak says, them whom thou cursest is cursed; — that is, give them a bad name, and preach against their proceedings, and all thy followers will engage with spirit and resolution against them.

Something like this we have seen in our day. Perhaps it happened with Balak (which obliged him to have recourse to Balaam) as it did with the officers of our province, in the case of the regulation, that was, that his own prophets, perhaps of the established religion, told him, if he would do justice, and act fair and reasonable with those people, he need not raise a man against them.

It

It is a wonder Balaam, who by all likelihood, was a dissenter, who generally are looked on to be more pious than those of an established religion, should thus fall; ——— but Balak tempted him with honour and riches. ——— A very strong temptation I confess, besides the novelty, for I suppose Balaam never received a letter from a governor before in all his life, nor ever had the honour to dine with one before.

Most people I find account Balaam a wizard or conjurer, rather than a good man; ——— for my part I see no reason from the Scripture account of him to think so, but that he had hitherto been a very good man. And though he was too far taken in this snare, yet he seems to have struggled hard, and stood to the truth, to the last, insomuch that he lost his preferment.

If Balaam must be accounted such, a very bad man, because he fell before this temptation, what shall we think of our modern prophets, who did not hesitate one hour, but joined with a much less temptation, (honour only, for I never heard of any money) and made no bones to curse, or give a bad name to a similar people; yea^d cut off some of their own members, and join with a set of under officers, whose actions and extortions the laws, though handled by themselves, have condemned; and were it possible to reach the Royal Ear, with our just cries against them, He would abhor and detest their wicked combinations.

Balaam, I confess, loved the wages of unrighteousness too much; his conduct with the Almighty seems to have been similar to some men who have too strong a desire after drink, or to gratify some other lustful passion, who will plead with conscience, and contrive a hundred ways to gain its consent. ——— I have heard a drunken man say, he has made excuses in himself to go out with his gun, and kept working all day in his mind, till he had got the tipping-house between him and home, when he has instantly got in a great hurry

hurry to get home by the dram-shop, and arguing, that now he really needed one dram;—has got so blinded by this time as, like Balaam, no more to see the angel that stood in his way.

We generally get in a hurry of business before we can lose sight or get shut of our guide. —Lo, Balaam gets in great haste, was up early, and saddled his ass.

And no doubt but his heart was full of the hopes of the rewards, full of great expectations, and perhaps was telling over in his mind what large sums of money he should bring home, and how he should be honoured by the princes of Moab; and, meditating, may be, what a pious work he would put the money to. —The Lord had given him leave to go, but no doubt he ought to have kept cool and resigned, and not have got in such a hurry, and filled his mind with such proclamations, that he could not see his guide that was to direct his steps. Well, he is so blind, however, that conscience was invisible to him; —when, on a sudden, the ass started back, and crushed his foot against the wall.

This ass seems to resemble the people over whom the prophets are wont to rule, who never are apt to start aside any more than asses, until the madness of the prophets become so visible, that forces one now and then to reprove them, who, perhaps, never opened their mouths before.

When the Lord opened the mouth of the ass to speak in human stile, one would have thought it would have frightened any man almost out of his senses. —But Balaam was not easily frightened; but he was for caining and killing her.

So when any poor ass now a-days opens her mouth in human stile, or by way of teaching and reprovng the rulers, they use him as Balaam did his ass, cane him with discipline, and threaten

N

him

him with excommunication as the pharisees did the man who was born blind.

And Balaam's asses spoke much like the complaints of an enslaved people.——Am not I thine ass?

Balaam had his ass saddled and prepared for mounting before he got on to ride; ——so likewise it requires some pains and furniture to prepare a people to bear a yoke of slavery.—— In the civil administration, their general cry is to maintain courts of justice.——In matters of religious concern, it is necessary to have the people well persuaded of the rights and importance of the clergy, and the divinity of creeds and canons of churches, before they will submit to be mounted and ridden like asses.

The Jure Divino of episcopacy and presbytery are pieces of furniture that prophets prepare for their asses.——And when once they can persuade the people they have power to make laws that binds the consciences of the whole community, they have the seat of their saddle made.

Then they must have a deal of straps, girths and other furniture, as well to bind it fast on as to sit easy, commodious and decent; ——besides, a staff in their hands to belabour such asses as start aside.

The discipline of churches, by which they issue excommunication and censures, resemble this staff; for it is evident, when christians begin to think for themselves, and question the infallibility of any of their laws or creeds, if they are ever so well convinced in their own minds, or if conscience stand ever so much in their way, as the angel before the ass, it is no matter of consequence to the prophets that rule them, they must suffer for their impertinence, and be belaboured for their disobedience.——And many complain as simple as the ass, ——are not we your asses?

There

There are some that start now and then, who continue on their way; they are ever crying out against degeneracy in churches and church governors, but continue good subjects, and bear all their impositions.———These are braying noisy asses its true, but they mean nothing.———If they are started now and then by conscience, God's messenger standing in their way, yet a degree of sound discipline, which may affect their reputation or worldly interest, will make them return to the old path, and say, are not we thine asses; and be ready to make some other apology besides the truth for their conduct?

The articles and creeds of some churches;—and the Confession of Faith and Order of Baptism among the Presbyterians;———and the book of discipline, fringed with Barclay's Anarchy of the Ranters, among the Quakers, are like the two great laps of Balaam's saddle;———all which is to be well girted on by the strong terms of words; agreement of the Westminster Divines;———authority of the wisdom of the truth, &c.———By such trappings as these, the clergy is supported; for they could not ride without their saddle.

Were the common people once to receive nothing as their creed but the Scriptures, the clergy would soon have no more authority than what their good service and good conversation procured them.———Good men will always respect them as long as they are examples of goodness, and condescend to men of low degree; but will laugh at clerical jurisdiction, and reject all religious dictators.

When mankind are once instructed in their natural and constitutional rights and privileges, they will not only complain, but struggle hard to get clear of oppression.

Wise men know what it is to obey just laws, but will never tamely submit to slavery and bondage; to submit to arbitrary government without resistance,

sistance, argues the want of a sense of the rights of human nature, and of our constitutions.

The first slavery that men are generally brought under, is that of the mind; for while the mind acts freely, and is kept clear of the chains of ignorance and prejudice, it would be very difficult to enslave them.——It therefore requires the aid of false Teachers to seduce mankind before a state can deprive them of their civil liberties and privileges. It is a most certain fact, though not often noticed, that the blending of civil and religious offices, sacred and secular things, has been an introduction to slavery in all nations where arbitrary government has been introduced.

When ministers assume the province of a magistrate, to make laws, and punish dissenters, they come lords over the people in a double respect;—then men will not dare to express the Truth; because of a double danger of being heartily cursed by the priest, and severely punished by the magistrate; the mind being thus cramped in her operations, turns servile in her affections; the consequence is ignorance and bondage.

This alliance also makes the teachers indolent in the discharge of the most material part of their duty; which is to instruct men in the Principles of knowledge, and free their minds from the power of ignorance.——This they cannot do without first teaching them the rights of private judgment, and the liberty they have of judging for themselves in all things which respect the conscience. But when their advantage does not rise from their instructing mankind, but in keeping them ignorant of their true interest, they will seldom be disposed to teach them what would soon let them into the secrets of their policy.——For did men understand their own liberties, the clergy would have no asses to ride upon to carry them to riches and preferment.

If

If mankind considered themselves equally concerned with what pertained to their conscience, and that they must answer for themselves in the day of judgment, they would never give consent to such an alliance, where the right of individuals to judge for themselves in matters of the last consequence is entirely taken away.

It matters not a pin what religion it is that is established; for if the civil power would make a law for circumcision, and annex emoluments to it, the prophets would train asses to submit to the slavery.

Even among dissenters, where the clergy get money only by voluntary consent, it is evident that too many men of hypocritical and corrupt principles do creep into these livings: And though many more make a pretty good figure of christianity in common calm times; yet when Balak tempts, or persecution threatens, they give way.

————None but a true minister of Jesus Christ will venture their lives and fortunes for the sheep, or for their privileges and liberties; —————and this number is generally very small, while the others are very numerous, by reason they have so much encouragement; for there is scarce a man, of ever so mean a character, who assumes the prophet, but will find plenty of asses to answer his purpose.

But who would think that any of this character could be found in America, the very toast of nations for pretensions to freedom and liberty? —————Yet, true it is, herein we may find slaves in abundance; and more particularly in this province. Here we shall find men called freeholders, voting contrary to their consciences, bearing burdens like Issachar through their own sloth and want of spirit. —————Here we may find justices of the peace who dare not discharge their consciences, nor make use of their own judgments to administer justice, for fear of the power and frowns of lawyers. —————Here we shall find men

men called free-thinkers conforming to other men's creeds.—Here you may find oaths and tests imposed to keep conscientious good men from serving the publick.—And here you may also find many of the sons of Balaam to break the stubborn and perverse temper of untractable asses, having in custody all the trapping and furniture fitting to keep them in order.—Here you find some staggering under a burden of taxes;—Some under restraints not to speak, or even swear the truth; some with articles of religion, some with tests, some with creeds and covenants, and some with oaths; and upon the top of these burdens, in order to guide the asses, some of Balaam's children always sitting: Who, at every threatening of their tyrannical masters, after starting a little, returning and saying, Are not we thine asses, upon which thou hast ridden ever since we were thine?

The E N D.

P. S. There is one thing more that I think necessary to inform the publick of, which is this; When we were so discouraged and attacked by our officers, Scotch merchants and Balaams, as you may see before, and at the meeting of 21st of May, No. VII, We at that meeting came to a resolution, that if the governor was against us, and we could get no redress no way, we would, rather than rise in riots, agree not to go to law at all, but leave our Differences to arbitrations; and accordingly we had a subscription paper for that purpose: But when it was read, our opposers seemed to resent it as more criminal than all we ever had done before.—Howel, who waited on the Governor at Brunswick, had this paper with him; and as he was complaining of the court, &c. the governor says to him, Why does the people go to law one with another? if they get so little justice at the law, ca n't they leave their differences to arbitration.

Howel

Howel replies, We intend to do so, and have a paper drawn up for that purpose; which, if your Excellency pleases, you may peruse, and give it your approbation.—The Governor read it, and got in as great a passion with it as our officers did; and ordered Howel to burn it,——which I suppose he did; for it was never seen among us since.—But at our last sitting in Assembly, we having sent a bill to the lower house for a single justice to try Five Pounds and a Bill laying greater Penalties on lawyers for extortion, and for better explaining the former law in that case;—But as the bills were detained, the same expedient presented itself to the members, and a large number out of the house concluded to enter into such a resolution, to recommend it to their constituents not to trouble the law at all, and so starve out our adversaries, similar to the general resolutions of non-importation of British goods.—But many being taken sick, and the Governor dissolving them, every one being in a hurry home, I suppose it was forgot.

I being informed that the very same thing was on foot in several counties in Maryland, and on my relation of these motions with us, the Marylanders begged me to push that motion, for that if ever it took place in one province it would take immediately in all; for that the Oppression we sustain by the lawyers combinations, and usurpations over the law, and ingrossing the whole business of the courts into their own power, is one of the greater evils we labour under, and are in danger of; therefore I have accordingly added this to remind our members, and their constituents to give them in charge, not to forget this another time.

☞ The reader may easily observe, the foregoing piece to be an unfinished work, not only because the scene is not ended, but, even so far as we have gone, it is like a rich lady stripped of her rich attire and ornaments, and reduced to the

habit of a slave; or like a confused handful of rich kernels picked out of the sheels.—The occasion of which was the necessity we were in to pick out only the most material parts of what would have afforded a much larger and necessary piece, and that not only to save the expence, but, in reality, because we were pinched for time and opportunity.—So that we expect this affair will not end without further particulars worthy notice; which, perhaps, will be hereafter published with a second edition of this, with an addition of its ornaments and attire.

To fill up this last half sheet, we will add so much of a piece that our Governor sent to our last assembly as we can insert in it; which will show that our jealousies of the bad application of the publick money were well grounded; the piece is as follows, viz.

North-Carolina, Newbern, October 31, 1769.

THE Fact is too well known to admit of a Denial, that in a long Course of Years past, great Sums of the Public Money have been lost by the Negligence or Insolvency of Sheriffs, and other Collectors, with their Sureties.

And it is presumed, that in the same Course of Time, considerable Sums have sunk, after they were lodged in the Public Treasury, whereof no Account has hitherto been made.

A Law of this Province, lately passed will, if executed with Vigour, probably, in a great Measure, prevent, for the Time to come, the first of these Mischiefs; and a Law to prevent the latter, might be of great public Utility, for Mankind never part with their Money, either for private or public Benefit, so readily, as when assured that it must be honestly applied for the Purposes intended.

A constant, regular, plain, and uniform Method of keeping the Books of Accounts of the Public Revenue, and of stating and settling these Accounts, may prevent such Abuses, and make it extremely difficult, if not impracticable, to embezzle the Public Money.—