



The Lay-Man's Sermon upon the Late Storm

THE

Lay-Man's

SERMON

UPON THE

LATE STORM;

Held forth at an Honest

Coffee-House-Conventicle.

Not so much a Jest as 'tis thought to be.

Printed in the Year 1704.

NAHUM. I. III

_The Lord has his way in the whirle-wind and in the Storm,
and the Clouds are the Dust of his Feet._

This Text is not chosen more for the Suitableness to the present Callamity, which has been the Portion of this Place, than for the aptness of the Circumstances, 'twas spoken of God going to Chastise, a Powerful, Populous, Wealthy and most reprobate City.

Nineveh was the Seat of a mighty Empire, a wealthy Encreasing People, Opulent in Trade, Flourishing in Power and Proud in Proportion.

The Prophet does not seem to deliver these words, to the _Ninevites_, to convince them, or encline them to consider their own Circumstances and repent, but he seems to speak, it to the _Israelites_ inviteing them to Triumph and Insult over the Heathen adversary, by setting forth the Power of their God, in the most exalted Terms.

And that this is a just Exposition of this Text, seems plain from the words Imediately going before, _the Lord is slow to Anger, and Great in Power and will not at all acquit the wicked_. These words could have no Connexion with the Text, tho' they are joyn'd with them in the same Verse, if it were not meant of his being slow to Anger, to his own People, and Terrible to the Heathen world, and this being spoken as an Expression of his being not easily provoked as to his Church, the Subsequent part of the Verse tells them how his power and Vengeance is matter of particular Satisfaction to his People as being exercis'd in Revenging the affront put upon his Glory by his Enemies, _God is Jealous, and the Lord Revengeth, the Lord Revengeth and is Furious, the Lord will take Vengeance on his adversaries and he reserveth wrath for his Enemies_. Tis plain this is meant of his Enemies, but as if brought in with a Parenthesis, tis spoken for the comfort of his Church, the Lord is slow to Anger as to them, and to lift up their hearts in a further confidence that their Enemies are all in his hand, he goes on discribing the Terrors of his Judgement.

The Lord has his way in the whirle-wind and in the Storm, and the Clouds are the Dust of his Feet. Eloquent Flourishes upon the Omnipotence of God.

The short Exposition I shall make of the words, Tends only to remind

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us that the whirl-wind and Storm which are here made use of, to express the Magnipotent power of God are acted by his Direction, _he has his way in them_, it may note indeed the Invisible secrecy and swiftness of his providences, but to avoid long Paraphrases, I confine my self to my own Construction, as that which, as it is a just inference from the matter of the Text, so 'tis most suitable to the design of this discourse.

And as this Sermon may be a little Immethodical, because I purpose to make it almost all Aplication so I shall advance some Conclusions from the Premises which I lay down, as the Geneuine sence of the Words.

1. The Omnipotence of God gives Christians sufficient ground to Insult their Enemies, _wherefore do the Heathen Mock thy People and say unto them where is now your God? Behold our God is in the Heavens, and doeth whatsoever he pleaseth_; as the Prophet _Elija_, Banter'd the Heathen Priest of _Baal_, with the Impotence of their Gods, Cry aloud for _he is a God, either he is talking or he is Pursuing, or he is in a Journey, or Peradventure he Sleepeth and must be awakned_, so he insulted them about the power of the true God, _let it be known O Lord says he this day that thou art God in Israel_.

2. As God in all the works of his Providence, makes use of the subserviency of means, so the whole Creation is Subordinate to the Execution of his Divine will, _the Clouds are the Dust of his Feet and he rides upon the wings of the wind_, the most Powerful Elements are so subjected to his almighty power that the Clouds are but as Dust under his feet, tis as easy for him to Govern and mannage them; as it is for a man to shake off the Dust from his feet, or he can as easily subdue the fury of them as a man Tramples the Dust, they are small and Triffling things, in his Eyes.

3. The ways of God are unsearchable, the Methods of his Providence are secret and powerfull; his way is in the whirle-wind, and in the Storm, tis invisible and iresistible, invisible as the wind, and iresistible as the Storm.

But waving these and abundance more usefull observations which might be justly drawn from so rich a Text, I shall proceed upon one which tho' it favours something more of private authority, and I have not so Authentick Opinion of the Learned Commentators, on my side, yet I shall endeavour not to Merit much Censure, in the Improvement of it, even from those who perhaps may not joyn with me in the Exposition.

According therefore to my own private opinion of these words; I shall for the present occasion only Paraphrase them thus, that _the Lord has a way_ or an end _in the whirle-wind, and in the Storm_, nor is this a very unusual Method of expressing things in Scripture, where the way is Exprest, to signify the design, or end of a thing.

And from this Exposition I advance this head.

That as God by his power Governs the elements, so in all their Extraordinary Motions, they are in a Perticular manner acted by his Sovereignty. And,

2. When the Creation is put into any Violent or Supernatural Agitation, God has always some Extraordinary thing to bring to pass, _he has a meaning in all the Remarkables of Nature_.

3. We ought dilligently to observe the extraordinary actings of Providence, in order to discover and Deprecate the displeasure of Almighty God, Providences are never Dumb, and if we can not discern the signals of his Anger, we must be very blind. The Voice of his Judgements is heard in the Voice of Nature, and if we make our selves Deaf, he is pleas'd to make them speak the Louder, to awaken the stupified senses, and startle the world, which seem'd rather Amus'd than Amas'd, with the common Course of things. This I take to be some

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of the true meaning of the way of God, in the whirle-wind, and in the
Storm.

The design of this Discourse therefore, is to put the Nation in
general upon proper Resolutions; if we pretend to believe that there
is any such thing as a Collateral Sympathy, a Communication of
Circumstances, between a Nations Follies, and her Fate. Any Harmony
between Merit and Mischief, between the Crimes of Men and the
Vengeance of Heaven; we cannot but allow this Extra-Pulpit
admonition to be just.

And let not any man Object against this being call'd a Sermon, and its
being introduc'd from a Text of Scripture while the remainder of this
Discourse, seems wholly Civil and Political.

If all our Measures in Civil affairs were deduc'd as Inferences from
sacred Texts, I am of the Opinion the Text would be well improv'd, and
Publick matters never the worse Guided.

And for this reason, tho' the Subject be not Treated, with the Gravity
of a Sermon, nor in so serious a manner, as would become a Pulpit, yet
it may be not the less suitable to the occasion and for the manner, it
must be placed to the Authors account.

Besides the Title I think has provided for the Method and If so he
that expected it otherwise than it is tis his Fault, and not Mine.

The Term Sermon which is but Sermo, a Speech, may Justify all the
Novelty of my Method if those who find fault please to give themselves
leave to allow it, and since it has never profain'd the Pulpit, I
believe the Text will receive no Prejudice by it, I wish every Sermon
equally Improv'd.

And what tho' your Humble Servant be no Man of the Text; if he be a
Man of Honesty, he may have a hand in making you all Men of
Application.

In publick Callamities, every Circumstance is a Sermon, and every
thing we see a Preacher.

The trembling Habitations of an Unthinking People Preach to us, and
might have made any Nation in the world tremble but us; when we were
rock'd out of our Sleep as Children are Rock'd into it; and when the
terrible Hand of Sovereign Power rock'd many a wretch from one Sleep
to another, and made a Grave of the Bed, without the Ceremony of
waking in the Passage.

The shatter'd Palaces of our Princes Preach to us, and tell us aloud,
that without respect to Dignity, he is able to put that Dreadful Text
in Execution; That if a Nation does wickedly they shall be destroy'd
both they and their King.

The fallen Oaks, which stood before to tell us they were the longest
liv'd of all God's Creatures, Preach to us, and tell us that the most
towing object of humane Beauty and strength must lye humble and
prostrate, when he is pleased to give a Check to that Splendor which
was deriv'd from his Power.

The wrecks of our Navies and Fleets Preach to us, that 'tis in vain we
pretend to be wall'd about by the Ocean, and ride Masters of the Sea:
And that, if he who bestow'd that Scituation upon us thinks fit, he
can make that Element which has been our Strength, and the Encreaser
of our Wealth, be the Grave of our Treasure, and the Enemy of our
Commerce; he can put it into so violent Agitation, by the blast of his
Mouth, that all our Defence and the Naval Strength we have vallued our
selves so much upon, shall at once be swallow'd up in the Mouth of our
Friend the Sea; and we shall find our Destruction in the very thing
from which we expected our Defence.

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Our Seamen and Soldiers, whose Dead Bodies Embrace the English Shores, Preach aloud to us, that whenever we think fit to Embark them on any Design, which Heaven approves not of, he can blast the Embrio, and devour those People whose Hands are lifted up against Justice and Right.

Also they Preach to us, Not to build our hopes of Success upon the multitude of Ships or Men, who are thus easily reduc'd, and the Strength of a whole Nation brought to Ruine in a Moment.

These are the Monitors of our Missfortunes, and some of these admonitions would be well preach'd from the Mouths of those whose Talent as well as Office gives them reason to do it, and us to expect it.

But since the Sons of the Prophets have not yet thought it proper to enter very far into this Matter, not doubting but they will in due time find it as suitable to their Inclination as 'tis to their Duty,

In the mean time let us see if no uncommon Application may be made of so uncommon a Circumstance.

First, 'tis matter of wonder that any Man can be so senceless, as to suppose there is nothing extraordinary in so signal an Instance of a Supream Power; but 'tis much more remarkable that those who have Religion enough to own it a Judgment, are yet at a loss how to appropriate it's signification.

Every one thinks it to be a Judgment upon the Person or Parties they see touch'd with it. W---- the Carpenter was knock'd on the head with a Stack of Chimneys, and his wife saved; all the Neighbours cried out 'twas a Judgment upon him for keeping a whore; but if Stacks of Chimnies were to have fallen on the Heads of all that keep whores, Miserere Dei.

S---- was kill'd by the like Accident, and he must be singl'd out for Extortion; But think ye that he was a Sinner above all the Gallileans?

The Jacobites and Non-Jurants shall rise up in Judgment against this Generation, and shall condemn them, for they tell us, this Storm is a Judgment on the whole Nation, for Excluding their Lawful Soveraign, and Abjuring his Posterity: Upon this head they have been preaching up Repentance, and Humiliation to us; and some of them are willing to reduce all to a very practical Exhortation, and tell us, we ought to look upon it as a Loud Call to Restore the Right Owner (as they call him) to the Possession of his own again; that is, in short, to rebel against a Mild, Gentle, Just and Protestant Queen, and call in the Popish Posterity of an abdicated Tyrant.

These Gentlemen are Men of Uses and Application, and know very well how to make an Advantage of God's Judgments, when they serve their turn.

The Whigs and Occasional Conformists shall rise up in Judgment against this Generation; for they are sensible of the present severe Stroke of Providence, and think 'tis a mark of Heavens Displeasure upon the Nation, for the violent methods made use of by some People against them, for their Religion, contrary to their Native Right, and the Liberty of their Consciences.

Some think a general Blast follows all the Endeavours of this Nation against the Common Enemy, for their slighting and reproaching the Glorious Memory of the late King william, whose Gallant Endeavours for the general good of Europe, and of England in particular, were Treacherously thwarted and disappointed while he was alive, and are Basely and Scandalously undervalued and slighted now he is Dead; and

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of this sort I confess my self enclined to be one.

From these general Observations we may descend to particulars, and every one judges according to their own Fancy.

Some will have it, that the Slaughter and Destruction among the Fleet, is a Judgment upon them, for going into the Streights, and coming home again without doing any business; but those forget, that if they did all they were ordered to do, the Fault lies in those who sent them, and not in they that went.

Some will have the Damage among the Colliers to be a Judgment, upon those who have Engross'd the Trade, and made the Poor pay so dear for Coals; not enquiring whether those Engrossers of the Coals are not left safe on Shore, while the poor Seamen are drown'd, who know nothing of the matter.

'Tis plain to me, who ever are Punish'd by the Storm, we that are left have a share in the Judgment, and a Trebble concern in the Cause.

If it could be said that those who are destroy'd, or who have suffered the loss of Lives, Limbs or Goods, were the only People who gave any occasion to the Divine Justice thus severely to Revenge it self, then all admonition to the rest of Mankind would be useless, any farther than it directed them to be Cautious how they provoked him in like manner; but have we not all had a hand in the general provocation, though not an equal share in the general Calamity.

Sometimes the Judgements of Heaven, bear so much Analogy to the Crimes, that the Punishment points out the Offence, and 'tis easy to distinguish what it is the perticular hand of Justice points at.

And if we will seek for a Perticular case, in which Heaven seems to have singled out this way of Punishment on the Nation, as best proportion'd to the general National Crime we are all guilty of? what seems more Rational than to Judge that tis a severe Animadversion upon the Feuds and Storms of parties kept up among us in this Nation, with such unnatural Heat, and such unaccountable Fury, that no man, who has the least Compassion for his Native Country, but must with more than Common Grief, be concerned for it, since unless some speedy course be taken to bring a general Composure upon the minds of Men, the general ruin seems Inevitable.

If the matters in Debate were of Extraordinary Consequence, there might be some pretence for Espousing contrary parties with unusual heat; but while the difference lies in small, and, in some cases, indifferent things, tis a most inexcusable Madness that the Feuds shou'd be run up so high, that all manner of Charity should Perish and be lost among us.

We have had an Extraordinary Bustle in the world about Moderation, and all Parties pretend to it, and now we are as busy about Peace, and every one lays in a Loud Claim to it.

I have seen, with some regret, the strange Mysterious Management of this Age about Moderation, and tho' some late Authors have Published that Moderation is a Vertue, It begins to be a question whether it is or no.

I wish some Body would make enquiry after the occasion that has brought this Blessed word into so much Contempt in the world; tis very hard that a word expressive of the most Glorious Principle in the world, should become the Brand of reproach, and a Badge of Infamy to Parties; be a Nick-name it self, and be Nick-nam'd on every side; and that at a time when the Vertue it self, is perhaps the only thing left in the world, that can preserve this Nation from Destruction.

'Tis too unhappy for England, that Men of immoderate Principles are

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so powerfull as they are. Let the Party be which it will, tis Destruction even to themselves, to run up all their Niceties and all their Scruples to the Extremes. Every Dispute becomes a Feud, every Spark a Flame, every word a Blow, every Blow, a Civil-War, and by this Intestine Confusion of Principles, Backt with the Passion and Fury of Men, this unhappy Nation is Subdivided into an Infinite Number of Parties, Factions, Intrests and seperate Opinions.

Every Man being thus bent upon the propagation of his own Notion, for want of this healing Spirit of Moderation, falls foul upon his Neighbour because he has not the same Heat, and if he finds him better Temper'd than himself, if he finds him less Violent, less Furious, than himself, he is Imediately Branded with the Scandal of Moderation.

Since then the Change of times has made this Practice, which in its very Nature is a Foundation of Vertue, become a Crime, Let us examine who are, and who are not Guilty of it.

For the Negatives of this Vice of Moderation they are something Easier to be discover'd than ordinary, both in Principles and in Practice; and, without the Scandal of a Censorious Writer, I may be allowed to say all the following Instances may stand clear of this Crime.

1. If Mr. Sachaverell, with his Bloody Flag, and Banner of Defiance, were Indicted for Moderation, I verily believe no Jury would bring him in Guilty.

2. If Dr. J-----ne, Author of the Character of a Low-Churchman, Mr. ----- Author of the New Association, if a famous Bishop who told us, 'twould never be well with England till all the Dissenters were serv'd like the Hugonots in France, if any of these were Indicted for Moderation, they might safely plead not Guilty.

3. If Sir John Friend and Sir William Parkins, had been only accus'd for Moderation, they had never been Hanged, nor Collyer and Cook had never absolv'd them at the Gallows without Repentance.

4. If he were Hang'd for Moderation, who ask'd the Question, whether if the Play-house in Dorset-Garden, were let for a Meeting-house, 'twould not do more harm than tis like to do as a Theatre, he would certainly Dye Innocently.

5. If Fuller had been Voted an Incurable Rogue only for the Vice of Moderation, I should have thought the House of Commons had done him wrong.

6. If the Councillors of the late King, such as Father P-----, my Lord S----- and all those that betray'd their Master, by hurrying on his ruin and their own. If those Gentlemen were Charged with Moderation, I doubt we should wrong them.

7. If some of the Members of our Late Convocation shou'd be accused for Moderation, I believe it might be no Difficult task to Vindicate them.

8. If this Crime should be Charged higher than we dare to mention, I am perswaded some Persons of Note would think themselves abused.

9. In short all those Gentlemen, by whatsoever Names or Titles Distinguish'd, who repine at the Settlement, who reproach the Tolleration, and who Blame the Queen for her promises of Maintaining it, these abhor the thoughts of this scandalous Crime of Moderation, and are as Innocent of it as the Child unborne.

10. Tis the Opinion of some People, That there are some of our beloved Friends in Scotland, may be Vindicated in this case, nay others are of the Opinion, tis not a National Crime in that Country, that is,

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'tis not a sin the Scots are much addicted to.

11. Lastly, Take our English Clergy in general, some are ready to say they have no great cause of Repentance for the sin of Moderation.

On the other hand, some People have so home a Charge of this Error laid upon them, that 'twill be very hard to clear themselves of it, and I am afraid they would be brought in Guilty by a Jury, almost without going away from the Bar. as,

1. Our Observator, they say, is Guilty of Moderation, with Relation to his Wit, and Especially as concerning his good Manners; I hope he wont be prosecuted for it the next Sessions, if he should, I doubt, 'twill go hard with him.

2. If our News-writers should be Indited for Moderation, as to Truth of Fact, I would advise them to plead Guilty, and throw themselves upon the Mercy of the Court.

3. Some of our Captains, they say, are addicted to Fight but Moderately; I hope all the rest wont be Infected, but I know not what to say to it.

4. Some of our Lawyers are apt to be very Moderate in their Justice, but being well read in the Law are cunning enough to keep off an Indictment, so there is no fear of them.

5. Some of our General Receivers, when they got the Publick Money in their hands, were apt to be very Moderate in paying it out again.

6. Some have been very Moderate in giving in their accounts too, as may appear in former Reigns, and perhaps in time to come too.

Some Moderately Wise, some Moderatly Honest, but most Immoderately addicted to think themselves Both.

Tho' I might be a little more serious upon the matter, yet this way of talking is not so much a Jest neither as it looks like; and has its Moral, in it self, which a wise man may see, and for the Fool tis no matter whether he does or no. Custome has prevailed upon us to such a degree, that almost in every part the very Practice seem a Scandal, and the Word passes for a Reproach.

To say, among the Sons of Levy, such a man is a Moderate Church-man is to say he is no Church-man, and some of our present Bishops from the Practice of Moderation have been boldly call'd Presbiterians in the Pamphlets of our less Moderate writers.

In short, 'tis hard to find any party or profession of Men among us, that care for the Title; and those who but Moderately espouse an Intrest, are generally suspected by those who are of that side, as Persons Favouring their Enemies.

These Moderate Men, said a Gentleman whose Gown and Band had given us reason to expect better Language, they will Ruin the Church, this Damn'd Moderation, says he, spoils all, we should deal well enough with the Dissenters, if it were not for these men of Moderation, they are worse than Dissenters, for they seem to be among us, and yet wont Joyn heartily to do the work.

Moderation seems to be cast off on every side, and is used as a Badge of reproach in every Class, or degree of Men in the world.

In the Church of England, 'tis call'd Low-Church.

In the Court, 'tis call'd whiggism.

In the Dissenters, 'tis call'd Occasional Conformity.

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In Parties, 'tis call'd Trimming.

In Religion, 'tis call'd Latitudinarian.

In Opinion, 'tis call'd Indifference,

In the Church of Scotland, 'tis call'd Prelacy.

While Moderation of principles seems thus the general Sin of Parties, Let them consider whether Heaven it self has not declar'd War against us all on this Head, and fill'd us with immoderate Judgements.

Where's all our prospect of success Abroad, or prosperity at home? Since our late Thanksgiveing for Victories, how has Heaven Treated us, but like a Nation, that being puff'd up and exalted with prosperity, began to slight Forreign Judgements, and leaving Providence to work by it self fell to making War at home with one another, as if we would prove that the Scripture was not true and that a Kingdom might stand tho' it were divided against it self.

How has Heaven declar'd that he is resolv'd not to bless this immoderate Generation? How has all their Measures been disappointed both abroad and at home, all their designes been blasted, and the Anger of Heaven so remarkably bent against them, that even the little success we have had, has been prescrib'd by Providence to those few hands who Act from Principles of Honesty and Temper, as if God did thereby point out to us who they are he delights to bless.

The D---- of M---- is a whig say some of our People who Hate all Moderation, he is so Dutchify'd, we shall never have any Good of him, why that may be, but yet you see there is not one Article of our Conduct has succeeded but what has been under his Mannagement.

And Heaven has declar'd so Eminently against all other Branches of our Affaires, that I wish I am mistaken when I say 'tis plain either he seems to mislike the Cause or the Persons employ'd, and that however severe he was pleas'd to Anminadvert upon the Publick affaires in the late Violent Tempest, it seems that for all this his Anger is not turned away but his hand is Stretched out still.

But what has a Sermon to do to enquire, may some say, and if it had, how shall it make appear whether God is displeas'd with our designs or the Persons employ'd, with the cause or the Carryers of it on.

As to the cause, all men are Judges of the Justice of it, and all men know the Foot of the present Confederacy, at least our part must be Just as it is to Maintain our just Rights, Liberty, Trade and Religion.

It must then be the Persons, the R----s, the Sir G----s, G----ns, the R----ks of this War; that Heaven is resolv'd shall not be the men, whom he will honour with the Deliverance of his People.

All wise Princes in the world have made it a constant Maxim in their Governments, that when any of their great Generals prove Unfortunate, tho' never so wise, they lay them by, as Persons that God does not think fit to bless with success, and 'tis not needful to examine whether it were not their fault, but to be Unfortunate is to be told from Heaven, that such a one is not the Man, and a Nation ought to understand it so.

But sure when Heaven Singles men out by Crossing their attempts and Marks them for unfortunate, and we can give our selves good reasons why they are thus Mark'd by the Divine displeasure; when we can see their false steps, their General designes against God and their Countries Intrests, 'tis high time then for those who sit at the Helm

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of Government, to Change hands and put their affaires into such
Persons Conduct, against whom Heaven has not declar'd so plainly its
Displeasure, nor the Nation its Dislike.

Why shou'd the Queen be desir'd to Chain down her own Happiness and
the Nations Interest, to the Missfortune of a few Men. Perhaps God may
Bless the Fleet under one Admiral, when he will not under another. I
know nothing against Admiral Calleburgh, he may be an Honest and
worthy-man, and ready enough to Fight for the cause, for indeed most
of the Dutch Captains of Ships are so, but since Heaven has now
'twice refus'd to let him go, and driven him back again, if I were the
Governour of his Masters affairs, he should not be sent a Third time,
least we should seem obstinately to Employ somebody that God himself
had declar'd against and had three times from Heaven forbid to go.

I hope no Body will Construe this to be a Personal Satyr upon Myn
Heer Calleburgh, But take it among ye, let it go, where it Fitts
best.

If these are not the Generation of Men that must do the Nations
business, then 'tis plain our Deliverance will never be wrought while
they are employ'd; If God will not bless them he will never bless us
till they are dismiss.

I doubt not we shall be deliver'd, and this Nation shall yet Triumph
over her Enemies; but while wrong Instruments are Employ'd the work
will be delay'd. God would have a House built him But David was
not the Man and therefore the work was put off till Solomon was in
the Throne.

God would have Israel go into the Land of Canaan and possess it,
but those Generals and those Captains were not the Men; Moses and
Aaron, and the great Men of the Camp were not such as God approv'd
off and therefore Israel could not go over Joardan till they had
laid their Bones in the Wilderness.

England is hardly ever to pass over the Jourdan before her, till
these Immoderate Men of Strife and Storms are laid by.

If any man ask me why these men shou'd not perfect the Nation Peace as
well as other men? I do not say which Men nor who, but let them be
who the enquirer please, I answer the Question, with a question How
shou'd men of no Moderaion bring us to Peace.

How shou'd Men of strife bring us Peace and Union: Contraries may
Illustrate but Contraries never Incorporate; Men of Temper, are the
safe men for this Nation. Men of heat are fit to Embroil it, but not
to Cure it: they are something like our Sea Surgeons who fly to
Amputation of Members upon every slight Fracture, when a more proper
Application would effect the Cure and save the Joynt.

'Tis an ill sign especially for England when Wars abroad wont make
us Friends at home. Foreign dangers us'd to Unite us from whence Queen
Elizabeth, has been said to leave this Character of the Nation
behind her, that they were much easier to be Govern'd in a time of War
than in Peace.

But when This, which us'd to be the only Cure of all our diseases,
fails us, 'tis a sign the Distemper is Grown very strong, and there is
some more than usual Room for despair.

The only way left the Nation is to obtain from those in power, that
Moderation may cease being the pretence and be really the practice.

It would be well all men would at least be Occasional Conformists,
to this Extraordinary principle; and when there is such a Loud call to
Peace both from Heaven and from the Throne, they would do well to
consider who are the Men of Peace and who are not: For certainly those

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Immoderate Gentlemen, who slight the Proposals for a general Union of Charity, cannot pretend to be Friends to the present Intrest of their Native Country.

These men, 'tis true, Cry out of the danger of the Church, but can they make it appear that the Church is in any danger from Moderation and Temper; can they pretend that there is no way to secure her, but by pulling down all that differ with them, no way to save her but by the ruin of her Protestant Brethren; there are Thousands of Loyal honest Church-men, who are not of this mind; who believe that Moderation and Charity to Protestant Dissenters is very Consistant with the safety of the Church and with the present general Union which they Earnestly desire.

As to Persons we have nothing to say to them, but this, without pretending to prophesy, may be safely advanced, that Heaven it self, has Eminently declared it self against the Fury and Immoderate Zeal of those Gentlemen, and told us as plainly as possible, unless we would Expect a Voice from on high, that he neither Has nor Designs to bless this Generation nor their proceedings.

When ever our rulers think fit to see it, and to employ the Men and the Methods which Heaven approves, then we may expect success from abroad, Peace at home, prosperity in Trade, Victory in war, plenty in the Field, Mild and Comfortable Seasons, Calm Air, Smooth Seas, and safe Habitations.

Till then we are to expect our Houses Blown down, our Pallaces Shatter'd, our Voyages broken, our Navys Ship-wreck'd, our Saylor's Drown'd, our Confederates Beaten, our Trade ruin'd, our Money spent and our Enemies encreased.

The Grand dispute in this Quarrelsome Age, is against our Brethren who Dissent from the Church; and from what principle do we act? it is not safe say they to let any of them be entrusted in the Government, that is, it is not profitable to let any Body enjoy great Places but themselves.

This is the Bottom of the pretence, as to the safety of it. These are the People who Cry out of the Danger from the Dissenters, but are not concerned at our Danger from the French; that are frighted at the Dissenters who as they pretend grow too Formidable for the Church, but are not disturb'd at the Threatning Growth of a Conquering Popish Enemy; that Deprecate the Clouds of whiggism and Phanaticism, but apprehend nothing of the Black Clouds of God's Threatning Judgements, which plainly tell them if they would suffer themselves to think, that there is something in the general practice of the Nation which does not please him, and for which the hand of his Judgements is extended against us.

These are strange dull-sighted men, whose Intrest stands so directly between them and their understanding that they can see nothing but what that represents to them; God may Thunder from Heaven with Storms upon Storms, Ruin our Fleets, Drown our Sailors and Blow us back from the best Contriv'd Expeditions in the world, but they will never believe the case affects them, never look into their own Conduct to see if they have not help'd to bring these heavy Strokes upon the Nation.

How many Thousands have we in England, who if the whole Navy of England had been at Stake; had rather have lost it than the Bill against Occasional Conformity; that had rather the French should have taken Landau and Beat the Prince of Hess Cassell, than the Queen should have made such a Speech for Peace and Union; that had rather the Duke of Bavaria should have taken Ausburgh, than that there should not have been some Affront put upon the House of Lords.

And if such Zealots, such Christian Furies are met with by Providence,

The Lay-Man's Sermon upon the Late Storm
and see both the Fleet and the Occasional Bill lost together is it
not plain, what Providence meant in it. He that can not see that God
from on high has Punish'd them in their own way and pointed out the
Crime in the Vengeance must be more blind than usual, and must shut
their Eyes against their own Consciences.

'Tis plain Heaven has suited his Punishment to the Offence, has
Punish'd the Stormy Temper of this Party of Men with Storms of his
Vengeance, Storms on their Navies, Storms on their Houses, Storms on
their Confederates_, and I question not will at last with Storms in
their Consciences_.

If there be any Use to be made of this matter, 'tis to excite the
Nation to Spue out from among them these Men of Storms, that Peace,
Love, Charity and a General Union may succeed, and God may Bless us,
Return to us and delight to dwell among us, that the Favour of Heaven
may Return to us, and the Queen who has heartily declared her Eyes
open to this needful happiness, may enjoy the Blessing of wise
Counsellors and Faithful Servants, that Constant Victory may Crown all
our Enterprizes, and the General Peace of Europe may be Established.

If any one can tell us a way to bring all these Blessed ends to pass,
without a General Peace of Parties and Interests at home, he is
wellcome to do it, for I profess It is hid from my Eyes.

FINIS.