

room. These were the people who considered mirth to be only made for reprobates, and cheerfulness of heart denied those who are the only persons that have a proper title to it.

The author of 'The Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence, 4to. 1693,' speaks of "the force that a loud voice and a whining tone, in unbroken and smothered words, have upon the Presbyterian rabble; that they look not upon a man as endued with the Spirit of God, without such canting and deformity of holiness. A person that hath the dexterity of whining, may make a great congregation of them weep with an ode of Horace, or an eclogue of Virgil; especially if he can but drivel a little, either at the mouth or eyes, when he repeats them. And such a soul may pass for a soul-ravishing spiritualist, if he can but set off his nonsense with a wry mouth, which with them is called a *grace-pouring-down countenance*. The snuffling and twang of the nose passes for the gospel sound, and the throwings of the face for the motions of the Spirit." But we shall now proceed to give some extracts from this book, with the pious hope that the ludicrous instances cited will stop those who are getting into this way, and prevent any set starting up in future, to act their parts in this manner, viz: in giving us a torrent of words, and but a drop of sense:—

Mr. W. Guthrie, of Fenwick, hath a printed sermon full of curses and imprecations: 'Will you gang, man, to the cursed curates? Gang! and the vengeance of God gang with thee; the devil rag their hearts out of their sides.'

Mr. Kirkton, lately, in the church he possesses at Edinburgh, began his sermon thus: 'Devil take my soul and body!' The people starting at the expression, he anticipates their wonder with this correction: 'you think, sirs, this is a strange word in the pulpit, but you think nothing of it out of the pulpit; but what if the devil should take many of ye when ye utter such language?' Another time, preaching against *cockups*, (part of the head-dress, we suppose,) he told, 'I have been this year of God preaching against the vanity of women, yet I see my own daughter in the kirk even now, have as high a cockup as any of you all.'

Mr. Kirkton, preaching in his meeting-house on the Castle Hill of Edinburgh, adduced several instances of the poverty of the people of God; amongst others he had this remarkable one: 'Brethren, (says he) critics, with their frim frams and whytie whaties, (trifles) may imagine a hundred reasons for Abraham's going out of the land of Chaldaea; but I will tell you what was always my opinion—I believe Abraham, poor man, was forced to run out of the land of Judea, for debt.'

One Fraser, of Bray, preaching at a conventicle in the beginning of king James' reign, began his discourse thus: 'I am come here to preach this day, sirs, in spite of the curates, and in spite of the prelates their masters, and in spite of the king their master, and in spite of the Hector of France, his master, and in spite of the Pope of Rome, that's both their master, and in spite of the devil, that's all their master.'

Mr. Areskine, praying in the Tron church, said, 'Lord have mercy on all fools, and idiots, and particularly on the magistrates of Edinburgh.'

'I have,' says the author, 'often heard blind Mr. Best, at Utrecht, use this expression in his prayers: 'O Lord, confound that man of sin, that child of perdition, that Anti-Christ, the Pope of Rome: thou must confound him, thou shalt confound him—good Lord, I will have you confound him.'

CHARLES II.

The poet Waller, in a letter to St. Evremont, relates a dialogue between Charles II. and the Earl of Rochester, which shows the tenor of their manners. Waller says, "Grammont once told Rochester that if he could by any means divest himself of one half of his wit, the other half would make him the most agreeable man in the world. This

observation of the Count's did not strike me much when I heard it, but I remarked the propriety of it since. Last night I supped at Lord Rochester's with a select party; on such occasions he is not ambitious of shining; he is rather pleasant than arch; he is, comparatively, reserved; but you find something in that restraint that is more agreeable than the utmost exertion of talents in others. The reserve of Rochester gives you the idea of a copious river that fills its channel, and seems as if it would easily overflow its extensive banks, but is unwilling to spoil the beauty and verdure of the plains. The most perfect good humour was supported through the whole evening; nor was it in the least disturbed when, unexpectedly, towards the end of it, the king came in, (no unusual thing with Charles II.) 'Something has vexed him,' said Rochester; 'he never does me this honour but when he is in an ill humour.' The following dialogue, or something very like it, then ensued:—

The King.—How the devil have I got here? The knaves have sold every cloak in the wardrobe.

Rochester.—Those knaves are fools. That is a part of dress which, for their own sakes, your majesty ought never to be without.

The King.—Pshaw! I'm vex'd!

Rochester.—I hate still life—I'm glad of it. Your majesty is never so entertaining as when—

The King.—Ridiculous! I believe the English are the most intractable people upon earth.

Rochester.—I must humbly beg your majesty's pardon, if I presume in that respect.

The King.—You would find them so were you in my place, and obliged to govern.

Rochester.—Were I in your majesty's place, I would not govern at all.

The King.—How then?

Rochester.—I would send for my good Lord Rochester, and command him to govern.

The King.—But the singular modesty of that nobleman.

Rochester.—He would certainly conform himself to your majesty's bright example. How gloriously would the two grand social virtues flourish under his auspices!

The King.—O, *præca fides!* What can these be?

Rochester.—The love of wine and women!

The King.—God bless your majesty!

Rochester.—These attachments keep the world in good humour, and therefore I say they are social virtues. Let the Bishop of Salisbury deny it if he can.

The King.—He died last night. Have you a mind to succeed him?

Rochester.—On condition that I shall neither be called upon to preach on the 30th of January or the 29th of May.

The King.—Those conditions are curious. You object to the first, I suppose, because it would be a melancholy subject; but the other—

Rochester.—Would be a melancholy subject too.

The King.—This is too much—

Rochester.—Nay, I only mean that the business would be a little too grave for the day. Nothing but the indulgence of the two grand social virtues could be a proper testimony for my joy upon that occasion.

The King.—Thou art the happiest fellow in my dominions. Let me perish if I do not envy thee thy impudence!

"It is in such strain of conversation, generally, that this prince passes off his chagrin; and he never suffers his dignity to stand in the way of his humour."

This showing is in favour of Charles, on whose character, as a king of England, posterity has long since pronounced judgment. A slave to his passions, and a pensioner to France, he was unworthy of the people's "precious diadem." He broke his public faith, and disregarded his private word. To the vessel of the state he was a "sunk rock," whereon it had nearly foundered.