

them out of their Hands; " but the Wicked shall fall into Mischief, i. e. into unavoidable Destruction, which is often their Case in this Life, and always in the Life to come. Then this necessary Caution is added, "Rejoice not when thine Enemy falleth, and let not thine Heart be glad when he stumbleth, &c. that is, please not thy self in his Destruction. Which plainly teaches us, that the Love of our Enemies is a Precept of the Law, as well as of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. †

THE Caution in our Text, I am sensible, must be taken in a qualified and limited sense, and there are several things necessary to be said to the right understanding of it, which I shall briefly mention. As

FIRST. IT is not unlawful for a People to rejoice when GOD has given them the Victory over their Enemies. 'Tis here supposed that our Enemies are unjustly so, that they without Cause rise up against us. *Solomon* can't be supposed to prohibit in an unlimited and universal manner Joy and Triumph at the Fall of our Enemies, this would be to contradict the Examples of the Church of GOD. It is so far from being sinful to rejoice at the Ruin and Downfall of an unreasonable and implacable Enemy, that 'tis our Duty to Praise GOD when we are able to set our Feet upon their Necks. Such Enemies are the Scourge of Mankind, and their Fall is a publick Good, a common Benefit. 'Tis indeed sad that any of the human Race should be thus pernicious and malicious to their
Fellow-

† It may be said, our Text respects only our personal Enemies: be it so; yet I think the Argument as strongly concludes against all Malice and revengful Delight in the Fall of our national Enemies, where the Guilt of Individuals is commonly less aggravated, as their Enmity is generally only the Influence of an ambitious Prince. Reasons of publick Safety may vindicate the Destruction of our national Enemies, which may not take Place in Cases of private Injury. But neither in the one Case, nor in the other, is Malice or a revengful Delight in our Enemies Fall to be accounted lawful: but are, in every Case, Violations of that Law of Charity, which GOD has established as the Basis of Order and Happiness throughout the Universe.