

principles, by the sacrifice of his cure, it could not be expected that a man of his high reputation and attainments, who had once been numbered with the kirk, could take so distinguished a station in the ranks of episcopacy, without exciting considerable odium amongst his former brethren, many of whom he esteemed and loved; and indeed it required all the protection of his high character, to shield him from the imputations to which he was liable; and all the support, which a consciousness of innocence and good intentions could bestow, to pursue his course with confidence, in a career at once so arduous and so invidious.

But there was another circumstance, which must have tended greatly to enhance his repugnance for this office. The warmest friends to the establishment of Episcopacy in Scotland must admit that the instruments selected for this purpose by Charles II. were but little calculated to carry on with success the difficult and delicate task which it involved. That was soon discovered by Leighton, who had come up to London for the purpose of consulting about the proposal which had been made to him. Nor was it till he had received a peremptory order from the king, requiring him to accept the Episcopal office, unless he thought it unlawful, that he at last reluctantly consented. The state of his mind at this time, and the views with which he entered upon the bishopric, will best appear from a letter still extant, to one of those friends in Scotland, who seems to have been offended with his promotion:—

“ My dear Friend,—I have received from you the kindest letter that ever you writ me; and that you may know I take it so, I return you the free and friendly advice, never to judge any man before you hear him, nor any business by one side of it. Were you here to see the other, I am confident your thoughts and mine would be the same. You have both too much knowledge of me, and too much charity to think, that either such little contemptible scraps of honour or riches sought in that part of the world, with so much reproach, or any human complacency in the word, will be admitted to decide so grave a question, or that I would sell (to speak no higher) the very sensual pleasure of my retirement for a rattle, far less deliberately do any thing that I judge offends God * * * * * And what will you say, if there be in this somewhat of that you mention, and would allow of reconciling the devout on different sides, and of enlarging those good souls you meet with from their little fetters, though possibly with little success? Yet the design is commendable, pardonable at least. However, one comfort I have, that in what is pressed on me there is the least of my own choice, yea on the contrary the strongest aversion that ever I had to any thing in all my life: the difficulty, in short, lies in a necessity of either owning a scruple which I have not, or the rudest disobedience to authority that may be. The truth is, I am yet importuning and struggling for a liberation, and look upward for it; but whatever be the issue, I look beyond it and this weary, weary, wretched life, through which the hand I have resigned to, I trust, will lead me in the path of his own choosing; and so I may please him I am satisfied. I hope if ever we meet, you shall find me in the love of solitude and a devout life.

“ Your unaltered Brother and Friend,

“ R. L.

“ When I set pen to paper, I intended not to exceed half a dozen lines, but slid on insensibly thus far; but though I should fill the paper on all sides, still the