

THE BISHOP OF SALISBURY'S REPLY.

Dear Sr

You may justly wonder that I should have hitherto delayed writing after I had received so long a letter from you in matters that were of much importance, both in themselves & in relation to you-

I do not wonder that when you wrote me so long an account of so many things that you forgot some- one was a direction how I might write to you that has put me to some trouble in my thoughts. I was in doubt whether the ordinary way was safe & I did not know of any other till within this week your brother asked my man if I was to write to you in answer to yours & told him how to convey it, so this has put an end to that difficulty ; the other was that you did not tell me how farre you allowed me to speak to the person concerned, but since you had not limited me I reckoned that you left me to my own discretion which I resolved to follow, yet with all possible caution with relation to you.

I doe therefore now sit down to answer you & in the first place I must tell you that I doe highly value that true courage & that just strictness with which you have managed your selfe in the doing your duty- I will ever retain a deep sense of it & will let you see how much I value you for it when I shall be so happy as to see you in these parts again. According to the appearances that you have seen & the apprehensions that you had, you did your duty in a noble hasarding your own interests for the sake of those that ought to be dearer

to us than our lives, and I am sure such a zeal & such a courage will not want its reward.

In the next place I must tell you now see that the main subject of your letter is now so much altered with relation to you that your concern in that person is now wholly at an end by a great advancement of his condition which was as good as quite ended before I knew that any such thing was either moved or thought on, so that has made a copious answer to many particulars in your letter lesse necessary. Yet when I had read yours I made all the enquiries I could among such as had known that person long & had practised him much, and found not any one man that had those thoughts of him which yours suggested. I made enquiry also among the Merchants & found nothing like complaints: on the contrary great commendations, not a hint had been given neither to my Lo. of Canterbury nor to my Lo. of London that looked that way, so that I found no sort of suggestions that seemed to second or relate to what you represented. Having nothing then but your letter and yet laying great weight on that I saw it was necessary to speake to the person himselfe, & I limited what I said to three heads, the first some opinions thrown out that struck at the foundations of our most holy faith. I told him the of that you wrote to him, and of his answer, were sent me. I make as great allowances to opinions as most men did, but the shaking foundations & the possessing young & weaker minds with unbeliefs was one of the worst things that a man was capable of beyond most immoralities; to all this he answered in the sedatest manner possible, without blaming you for writing & very much thanking me for the freedom I took with him. He said he might in the run of discourse & debate maintain things which he himselfe did not believe. He had indeed often commended Hobs but that he abhorred his both with relation to Religion & Policy yet in several other lesser matters he thought he had been happy enough in correcting some vulgar notions; but for any indiscretions he might be guilty of when he had little business & much leisure & so might be too much disposed to talk & to argue, he said as he did not deny but that he might have given you just occasion to write as you had done, & might have been indiscreet: he should be more careful for the future. I beg'd he would use all freedom with

me if there was any doubt in his own mind either about Religion in Generall or the Christian Religion in particular; or about any main Article of it, that he would be so free as to own it to me & I would endeavour to give him full satisfaction in it. He protested in the solemnest manner in which a man could speak that he firmly believed the Christian Religion & that he made it the business of his life to conform himself to it. I could carry this matter no further & I will say no more of it to you but that I have known some who have delighted mightily to shew their wit or force in arguing in the venting of Paradoxes & who for that reason passed for Atheists who yet I am sure were not so as it appeared at their death, though I am farre from excusing that wanton & profane humour.

The next thing I spoke of to him was his way of living with that Gentlewoman. I owned I had seen the copies of the letters that passed between you & him upon that subject. He said to me he had lived long at the Consul's house & so it was a suitable return to him to invite the Consul to his Quinta, but tho' he did not wonder that the Portugueses should talk of such things yet he thought he was so overt in his deportment that way that he was confident none of the servants talked of it who saw the whole method of his conversation with her. His taking pains to be fixed here does not look like a strong passion to return, so whatsoever may be with the matter I must leave it to God. I did not think it fit to presse that as I had done the other- he purged himselfe of it & since the matter is now at an end I let it fall more easily than I would have done if he had been to return.

As for the business of the place of Worship, he said in Generall he had in that matter acted to the best of his Endeavours for the Interest of the Nation; he would lay the business before the Archbishop & the B'p of London & whatsoever they should think best he would endeavour to prove a In general what he said was true as I thought that as long as the Court of Portugal either feared or needed England so long that matter was safe, & if ever it should be otherwise, tho' you had all the Capitulations in the World the power of the Inquisition is so great there that it would break thro' them. But he seems to be so farre from being

sold in that matter that he is moving here in consideration of the Merchants of Oporto that an Instruction be sent for allowing the Exercise of our Religion there.

This is the substance of what passed between him & me in two long conversations upon those matters. I could not reinforce matters nor presse things further after such plausible answers delivered with great calmness.

When I had done, he began to recriminate. He said you were a man of unblameable life, of good learning & of great firmness against Popery & was a very good preacher, but he said you had let your temper sour you extremely; you had many narrow notions & were apt to take things ill & to judge hardly & had too much of a roughness of spirit that he thought was much in your constitution, had been heightened at the University & did not wear of being abroad in the World. You may be sure I was glad to find the charge went no higher, & to tell you truly what I think, I am afraid somewhat of this may be true for there is an eagerness of stile that runs thro' your letter which disposes me to believe that you may be a little heated. I cannot form a certain Judgment at this distance — I tell you freely what I am a little inclined to suspect. He insisted much on one thing: why had you never all the while you lived with him testified your being offended with any liberties he took in dispute for he could have satisfied you & never have given you the like occasion of complaint any more. But now this business is at an end between him and you, yet since his son is to succeed him in his post there he saies he will write to him & give it to me to send it to you that you may deliver it to him; in his letter he will charge him to live with you in all the friendship and confidence to which you will be pleased to admit him, & I have undertaken that you shall live with him with all the respect and due regards that belong to him, in which I doe very earnestly beg it of you that you will study to bring yourself to as towardly and tractable a temper as you possibly can, make the best of things you can, discharge your duty but with discretion & tenderness & bear with many things tho' you cannot help them, for soe we must live unless we would goe out of the world, for if you can not procure your selfe quiet & satisfaction where you are you had best

think of coming home where you may depend upon all the protection & assistance that I can give or procure for you. I pray God to direct you to doe duty in all things as becomes you & then to learn in your patience to possesse your soul for the wisdom that is from above is first pure & then peaceable.

I can add no more, this being the longest letter that I have writ of a great while tho' it is but a short billet in comparison of yours. I assure you you are much in my heart & in my prayers & I am with a true friendship and much sincere esteem.

Dear Sir Your most faithfull
friend & most humble servant
Gr Sarum

London 16 March 1697.