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Sam^l. Church His Book 1731 —
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SION in DISTRESS:  
OR, THE ANGUS  
GROANS  
OF THE  
Protestant  
CHURCH.

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*The Second Edition Corrected and Amended.*

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Lam. I. 12. *Is there any Sorrow like unto my Sorrow?*

Verf. 17. *Sion spreadeth forth her Arms, and there is none to comfort her.*

Verf. 20. *Behold, O Lord, I am in DISTRESS!*

————— *Quis talia Fando*  
*Temperet a lachrimis?* ————— Virgil.

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L O N D O N :

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## To the R E A D E R.

**Y**OU are here presented with a *Reviv'd Poem*, with such Additions and Enlargement as makes it very different from the first Impression. It is suited to the Present State of the *Protestant Church*, shewing the *Causes* of her present *Calamity*, with an Enumeration of some *Prevailing Sins*; the *Plots* and *Contrivances* of *ROME* against *SION*; the Marks of the *Antichristian Beast* and *Scarlet Whore*, with her *Arraignment* and *Condemnation*, (illustrated in difficult places with Marginal Notes.) Also some probable Discoveries of the Churches Redemption, and the approaching Glory of the Latter Day.

We have now a plain Prospect (by the Gracious Discoveries of Providence) of those Horrid and Execrable Plots, which the restless Adversary has contriv'd against the Peace and very Being of *SION*, and

## To the Reader.

which were much in the dark when my Muse first bewail'd its condition, and suspected that this *Epidemical Mischief* (now Reveal'd) was then a hatching.

In a Subject of Grief, a quaint and ornamental Method is not to be expected: for an abrupt and sobbing Delivery is more natural in the Delineations of Sorrow, than a studied well-poiz'd and artificial Harangue. The Subject is Divine, and too lofty for so weak a *Muse*; which I hope will oblige the Generous Reader to a candid and mild Construction. I have writ according to the measure of Light received, and have contributed my Mite (in a well-meaning Spirit) to reduce us to our Selves.

Against the *Reigning Evils* which expose us to Temporal and Spiritual Enemies, many *Wholesome Precepts* from *Scripture* and *Reason* are given.

The *Rise, Progress, and Persecutions* of the *Man of Sin*, are succinctly delivered, with the Evidence of Approved *Historians*, (some of them *Papists*) whose Evidence against *Themselves* ought to be convincing



## To the Reader.

vincing. There can't be too many *Defendants* against so Vigorous an *Assailant* as Rome is.

There are many Excellent Tracts that discover the *Villanies* of *Popery*, and I wish they were more Common. It is a great comfort that the *Spirit of the Nation* is so much (and justly) incensed against it. And that our *Parliament* is so Thorow and Resolved to crush that *Interest*, whose *Principles* teach them to be (to all *Hereticks*, for so they call *Protestants*) Trayterous Subjects, ill Neighbours, and worse Sovereigns.

To promote the *Just Odium* of my *Native Country* against so destructive and malignant an *Enemy*, is (in part) the Design of this *Essay*; (which being of small bulk and price, may possibly come into more hands than larger Volumns.) If it contributes any thing in order to that End, it answers the Expectation of

Your Souls Well-Wisher.

To his Friend the AUTHOR,  
ON THE  
FIRST IMPRESSION.

**VV** *Hat Muse is this, that thus inspires thy  
Brain,*

*And leads thy Genius to so high a Strain?  
Must thy Aspiring Fancy now rehearse  
Thy Mothers Groans in an Elegiack Verse?  
Is Prose too mean and unregarded now,  
That still in Verse thou let'st the World know how  
SION'S abus'd by Rome's Infernal Crew?  
How in her Blood they did their hands imbrew?  
Let thy Endeavours prosper: Let them prove  
To be Rome's shame: A Token of thy Love  
To thy Distressed Mother, (now the scorn  
Of black-mouth'd Imps, who are of Satan born.)  
Aspiring Soul! What! from her sorrows climb  
To a Prophetick Spirit in thy Rhime!  
Foretelling how she shall deliver'd be  
From all these Bloody Beasts, whom thou do'st see  
God will destroy, and will thy Mother make  
Heav'n's Glory, and Earth's Joy, for his Names-sake.  
Jehovah bless thy Work, this Book, though small,  
And make it prove a Preface to Rome's Fall.*

Vale.



TO my FRIEND the  
**AUTHOR,**  
Upon his  
Reviv'd P O E M.

**H**ere's Grief in Raptures! Who could  
thus infuse  
All Strains of Sorrow? No Aonian Muse  
Such Sacred Rhapsodies could e'er inspire:  
Nor were they borrow'd from Apollo's Quire:  
No Inspiration from the Thespian Spring,  
Does teach our Poet in this mode to sing.  
He sucks no Hippocrene, nor feeds upon  
The fanci'd Dew of Pagan Helicon.  
He mounts no Pegasus, nor gathers Drops  
Distill'd by Clio from Parnassian Tops.  
These are but Whimsies--Some Seraphick Fire  
His Muse did with this Mourning Song inspire  
Who can but, in the highest Notes of Grief,  
Weep Tears in Verse, when SION wants Re-  
lief?

Such

*Such as from Art their lofty Strains do borrow,  
Do but describe an Artificial Sorrow:*

*But his is purely Natural: for we  
Perceive it comes from perfect Smpathy.*

*His cleer discerning Soul her danger sees  
Approaching on by unperceiv'd degrees.*

*He gives us Warning to prevent the Stroke,  
To leave our Sins, and Mercy to invoke.*

*Here's a Prophetick Glass, where we may view  
The swift Destruction that will (else) ensue.*

*But, Friend, we thank thee that thou hast not  
left us*

*Without some hope, nor has thy Book bereft us  
Of Consolation; for the SCARLET  
W H O R E*

*Is there so Sentenc'd, that She'll rise no  
more.*

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|------|------|------|------|
| 1731 | 1731 | 1731 | 1731 |
| 205  | 455  |      |      |
| 1066 | 176  |      | 1317 |

S I O N





# Sion in Distress :

OR, THE

G R O A N S

OF THE

PROTESTANT CHURCH.

**W**hat dismal *Vapour* (in so black a form)  
Is this, that seems to *Harbinger* a Storm?

What pitchy *Cloud* invades our *Starry Sky*,  
To stop the Beamings of the *Worlds Great Eye*?  
What spreading *Sables* of *Egyptian Night*,  
Would rob the *Earth* of its *Illustrious Light*?  
What interposing *Fog* obscures our *Sun*?  
What dire *Eclipse* benights our *Horizon*?  
Is *England's* Great and Royal *Bridegroom* fled?  
Is its *Aurora* newly gone to bed?  
That scatter'd *Clouds* make such *prodigious* haste,  
Combine in one, and re-unite so fast.  
*Clouds* that so lately *dissipated* were,  
Do now conspire to make a *Darker Air*!

I mourn *unpityed*, groan without *Relief*!  
 No *bounds* nor *measures* terminate my grief  
 The *Sluces* of mine Eyes are too too narrow  
 To vent the Streams of my increasing *Sorrow*.  
 Ebbs follow swelling Floods, and vernal Day  
 Adorn the Fields that Winter disarrays.  
 All States and Things have their alternate ranges,  
 As Providence the Scene of Action changes.  
 All Revolutions, hurries to and fro,  
 At length some Rest and Settlement do know.  
 But helpless I, have often look'd about,  
 To find some Ease or Soul-Refreshment out ;  
 Yet can I see no prospect of *Relief*,  
 But *swift Additions* multiply my grief.  
 As *Pilgrims* wander in their distress *agreat*  
 Amongst the wild rapacious *Savages*,  
 In pathless Desarts, where the midnight howls  
 Of hungry *Wolves*, mixt with the screech of *Owls*,  
 And *Ravens* dismal croaks, salute the Ears  
 Of poor erratick trembling *Passengers* :  
 So I'm surrounded, so the *Beasts of Prey*  
 Conspire to take my *Life* and *Name* away.  
 My glowing Soul does melt, my Spirits faint ;  
 For want of vent ; I'm pregnant with Complaint  
 No Age nor Generation but has known  
 Some part of this my just and grievous moan.  
 But now I'm far more dangerously charg'd ;  
 By *Bolder Foes* my sorrows are enlarg'd :  
 A hellish Tribe from black *Avernus* flew,  
 That *Bloodhound*-like, me and my Lambs pursue.  
Lord



# The Groans of the Protestant Church. 3

Lord J E S U S come ! O let my Cries invoke  
Thy sacred Presence to divert the stroke.  
Are all my Friends withdrawn ? what is there none  
Steps in to ease me of my grievous moan ?

## Sion's Friend

**W**Hat doleful noise salutes my wondering Ear?  
What grief-expressing Note is that I hear?  
Methinks the Accent of this Dismal Cry,  
Bespeaks some one in great extremity.  
The shrillness of the mournful Voice bespeaks  
A Womans loud and unregarded shrieks.  
The more her deep and piercing sobs I heed,  
The more my Heart in sympathy does bleed.  
Ah ! who can find her out ? who can makee known  
The Author of this Heart-relentng Moan ?  
Doubtless, though Grief now seizes thus upon her,  
She is a Lady of high Birth and Honour ;  
Of Royal Stem, extracted from Above,  
Nurs'd in the Chambers of the Fathers Love ;  
Espoused to a most Illustrious Prince,  
Who over all has Just Preheminence,  
Monarch of Monarchs---Sion ! Is it Thou ?  
O mourn my Soul ! O let my Spirit bow !  
Let all that love the Bridgroom sigh for grief ;  
For Sion weepes as one <sup>that</sup> past Relief.  
But why, O Sion, since thou art belov'd  
Of Heavens Supream, art thou so sadly moved ?

*Why Arms expanded, thus implore the Skies ?  
 Why streaming Rivulets, flow from thine eyes ?  
 This makes me wonder-----*

*Sion.*

-----  
**M**Y forlorn Estate  
 Is poor unpittyed, mean and desolate ;  
 I long have wandered in the *Wilderness*  
 Involv'd in trouble, kept in sore *Distress*,  
 In *Caves* absconding from the *horrid Rage*  
 Of *Savage Beasts*, until this *later Age*  
 I made Attempts to look a little Out,  
 The *Monster* spied me, and does search about ;  
 The *Roaring Bloud-Hounds*, greedy on the scent,  
 To *kill*, or *drive* me back again, are bent.  
 No *Interval* of Peace, no *Rest* they give,  
 Pronounce me *curst*, and *not fit to live* :  
 A *Dragon* fell, combined with the *Beast*  
 To *gore* my *Sides* and *spoil* my *Interest*.  
 Th' old *Lion*, *Lioness*, and *Lions Whelp*,  
 With dreadful *Jaws*, the other *Beasts* do help.  
*Dogs*, *Bulls*, and *Foxes*, *Bears* and *Wolves* agree  
 To *rend*, to *tear*, and *make* a *spoil* of me.  
 I that have been so *delicately bred*,  
 My *Children* at a *Royal Table* fed ;  
 Am now *expos'd* to the *Infernal Spite*  
 Of such as do in *Fire* and *Blood* delight.  
 Plots hatch'd in *Hell* and *Rome* ! that *black design*  
 To *stab* a *Monarch* ; and to *undermine*.

*Our*



# The Groans of the Protestant Church. 5

Our Ancient *Laws*, subvert *Religion*, and  
Bow *England's* Neck to *Antichrists* command;  
Were but *Preludiums* to that dismal *Urn*  
(As martyr'd heaps in flaming *Smithfield* burn)  
Design'd for *Protestants*, and all the Rest  
Who hate *Romes* Idol, th' *Image of the Beast*.  
I am the *Mark* the Monsters aim at: All  
Their grand designs were to contrive my fall.  
If Friends or others any Favours show,  
They straight conspire to work their *Overthrow*.  
Ah vile *Conspiracy*! Ah cursed *PLOT*!  
So deeply laid! How canst thou be *Forgot*?  
Hells grand *Intreagues* ne'er introduc'd a *Brat*  
Into the World, so horrible as that.  
Since *Rome* the western cheated *Monarchs* rid,  
A *Rampant WHORE*, the horned Beast bestrid.  
Disgorging *Plots*, employing hellish *Actors*:  
May all our Off-spring Execrate such *Factors*!

*Sion* forlorn! How very few regard  
Thy cries & tears mens hearts are grown so hard!  
In Restless Hurries, tost with every wind,  
No Ease, no Peace, no Comfort can I find.  
The horrid Aspect of these *Monsters* do  
Affright my *Children*, some they worry too;  
On Some they seiz, like greedy *Beasts* of prey,  
And to their *Dens* the *Sacrifice* convey.  
Renowned *GODFREY*! (whose immortal glory,  
*Martyr'd* for me, shall ever live in Story)  
Let every Loyal *Eye* that sees it there,  
Yield to his Name the Tribute of a *Tear*,

*Brave Soul ! Thy Love and Loyalty do claim  
That King and People should proclaim thy Name,  
As England's Victim, ne'er to be forgot,  
Fast'ning on Rome an everlasting Blot.*

The Great *Jehovah*, who is only Wise,  
Permits thy Fall as a Sweet Sacrifice,  
Thy Barb'rous Murder has made clearly out  
That *Plot* which none but *Infidels* can doubt.  
Those bloody *Varlets*, black *Affassinates*,  
Curs'd Executioners of *Rome's* Debates,  
Drunk with *Infernal Cruelty*, made Thee  
A Specimen of *England's* Tragedy.  
By Thee we learn what *Courtesie* to hope  
From *Romish Butchers*, Vassalls to the *Pope*.  
Thou led'st the Van, first fell into the *Trap*,  
From whence they say no *Protestant* shall 'scape.  
*Pure Innocence* *Trapann'd*, amongst them came,  
Without suspicion, ( like a harmless Lamb )  
Whilst they, like hungry *Tygers*, ready stood  
T'embrue their *Tallons* in thy guiltless *Blood*.  
Thou little thought'st such an *Infernal Snare*  
Had been thus laid to trap Thee unaware !

'Tis strange, say some, what *Reason* should engage  
Them to make Thee the *Object* of their Rage ?  
The Cause was thus : The *Babylonish Whore*,  
Big with a *Bastard*, long'd ( as heretofore  
For *Christian Blood* ; her Favourites made haste,  
In her great need to help her to a *Taste*.  
Of choicest *Liquors* this she calls the first,  
To cheer her sinking heart, and quench her thirst.

Fearing



## The Groans of the Protestant Church.

Fearing *Miscarriage*, when her Spirits faint,  
She drinks the *hearts Blood* of some *Martyr'd Saint*.  
Than *Horse-leech* more insatiable, she cries,  
*Give, give me that, or nothing will suffice*  
*My Craving Paunch; my pleasure must be done:*  
*This Heretick was a Pragmatick One;*  
*He knew my Secret Clubs, and would Reveal*  
*My Tragick Plots: We must prevent his Zeal.*  
*We'll Strangle Him, before He gives a glimpse*  
*Of our Designs, or Countermines our Imps.*

Ah *British Whore!* of *Cannibals* the worse;  
This *bloody Draught* has brought an endless Curse  
On thee: And lasting *Calendars* we see  
Records this Instance of thy *Cruelty*.  
This *Loyal Knight* ne'er injur'd you, but stood  
Discharging *Justice* for his Countreys Good.  
Will nought but *Blood of Protestants* give ease  
Or quench your *thirst*? What mischeivous *Disease*  
Infects your *Bowels*? Must your Churches Food  
Be *flesh of Saints*? Your *mornings-draught, their blood.*  
*Fellonious Strumpet!* Must you be so bold,  
To steal by night into your Neighbours Fold?  
Seiz on my *Lambs*? Thy *Theft and Cruelty*,  
As well as *Murder*, shall revenged be.

But since he's gone, and *Justice* does pursue  
With eager Steps th' *Assassinating Crew*,  
We'll acquiesce: For *Heaven* seems to call  
For Tears Cessation at his *Funeral*:  
Let Christians offer, through the Universe,  
Whole *Hecatombs* upon his bleeding Herse.

And could their Tears increase into a Flood,  
 'Twere no excess---So much I prize his Blood,  
 But *other* grounds of Grief are in mine Eye,  
 Which cause my Sorrows to advance so high,  
 That my o'er burthen'd Heart can scarce express  
 The nature of my *Inward* Heaviness.

## Sion's Friend.

**S**ion, Thy sad and bitter Lamentation  
 Does move my very Soul unto Compassion :  
 But say, what Cause does aggravate your Fears,  
 And thus provokes to further Cries and Tears?

## Sion.

**I**F that my Head were Waters, and each Eye  
 A brim-full Fountain, I could drein 'em dry.  
 I'm steep'd in *brackish* Floods, nay almost drown'd,  
 To see how *Sin* does ev'ry where abound.  
 Where e'er I am, I nought can see or hear,  
 But that which doth my Soul in pieces tear.  
 It breaks my heart that *England* thus should be  
 A Scene for *Actors* of Debauchery.  
 What *perpretations* of the blackest Crimes  
 Appear not *bare-fac'd* in our present times?  
 Tho God ( incens'd ) has fearful *Judgments* sent,  
 To *humble* men, and move them to repent ;

Yet



## The Groans of the Protestant Church. 9

Yet they proceed in foul Impenitence,  
And aggravate their horrid Insolence;  
Seeming to bid Desiencies to Heaven,  
Scorning to take the dreadful *Warnings* given.  
The sweeping *Plague* ( that Messenger of Wrath )  
In such as 'scap'd, small Reformation hath  
Produc'd ! Nor has the desolating *Fire*  
( A perfect Token of Gods flaming *Ire* )  
Remov'd the *City's Pride* ; 'twas great before,  
And now it seems to multiply much more.  
*Fantastick Garbs*, and *Antick Modes* declare  
How much from *Pride* their Souls reformed are ;  
Though *want*, though *Poverty*, and loss of *Trade*,  
Do many Men and Families invade ;  
Yet do they vaunt in *pride* and *luxury*,  
As if they had vast *Mines* of *Treasures* by.  
Some know not what to *eat*, nor how to *go*,  
Yet on the *Poor* will no *Compassion* show :  
( Whose unregarded *Cries*, unheeded *Moans*,  
Whose unreliev'd *Distress*, unpity'd *Groans*,  
Can scarce extort a Mite ) such do not grudge  
To purchase Hell at dearest Rates, and drudge  
To please their brutish lusts, who void of measure  
Consume Estates to *wantonize* in Pleasure,  
Tumbling in Riot ( as proud *Dives* sat )  
Whilst *Lazarus* lies starving at the Gate.

### *A Complaint of Oaths.*

Volleyes of *Oaths*, with horrid Blasphemy,  
And dreadful Cursings, in mine Ears do cry.  
Mark but our impious Gallants when they meet,  
Observe the mode how they each other greet.

What new coin'd *oaths*, what modish *execrations* ?  
 What damning, sinking, horrid Imprecations  
 Do they disgorge ? The Serpents fiery hiss,  
 That belches Sulphur from the black Abyss,  
 Can scarce out-do this Ranting Tribe, who count  
 The Man Genteel that is most paramount  
 In wickedness ; he that blasphemeth aloud  
*Christs blood and wounds*, is Courtier alamode.  
 How can th' abused Earth but gape again,  
 To swallow quick vile Wretches so prophane !  
 Can Heavens great Artillery so long  
 Forbear the Treasons of a mortal Tongue ?  
*Jehovah's* Attributes so vilely us'd !  
 His sacred Essence and his Name abus'd.  
 Fresh Blasphemies they mint, new Curses frame,  
 And Sins that never had before a Name.  
 Graduates in Courtship are preferr'd, who made  
 Most quick proficiencie in a hellish Trade :  
 Such rant and roar, such revel, Domineer,  
 As if nor God nor Devil they did fear.  
 Approaching dangers can't disturb their pleasure  
 But still they sin until they fill their measure.  
 Judgments deferr'd, in evil makes them bold,  
 Despising such by whom they are controld.  
 As if th' avenging Hand their Lives did spare,  
 Thus to provoke Him without dread or fear.  
 But poor Blasphemer, when thou art past by,  
 'Tis not t' indulge thee in iniquity.  
 Think'st thou the God of Purity does like  
 Such ways, because he yet forbears to strike ?

Doſt



## 11 The Groans of the Protestant Church.

Do'st think a gloomy interposing Cloud,  
From Gods all-searching Eye can be thy shroud?  
Or that because He is inthron'd on high,  
Thy Deeds of Darknes He cannot espy?  
Or since his Judgments are so long delayd,  
Wilt thou proceed, and be no whit afraid?  
Wilt thou His Patience without end abuse,  
Slight true Repentance, and His Grace refuse?  
If so, thy Judgment hastens---For a Rod  
Will quickly reach thee from an angry God,  
*Because of Oaths the Land does greatly mourn,*  
For which my Soul much inward grief has born.

### *A Complaint of Drunkenness.*

Do'st thou not see how filthy *Drunkenness*  
Does raigin in City, and in Villages?  
Some reel and wallow in the street, like Swine,  
Whilst others boast their strength in drinking Wine:  
Although to such, God doth denounce a Curse,  
They mind it not, but still grow worse and worse.  
Dread not Examples of Gods wrath at all,  
Nor what to Drunkards does so oft befall:  
Altho Gods Word has dreadful Warnings given,  
*That Drunkards never shall inherit Heaven,*  
*But that their lot shall with damnd Spirits be,*  
*In Chains of Darknes to Eternity,*  
They drink carouse, and waste their jolly breath,  
Upon the brink of *Everlasting Death*.  
Whate'er ensues, they are resolv'd they will  
Carouse full Goblets, and be filthy still.  
Thus men by *Pride*, by *Oaths* by *Worldiness*,  
By *daily swallowing Liquor to excess*,

Defile the Land, and do the Lord provoke,  
 To cause his Vengeance on the Land to smok.  
 Sin sets the door wide open, and makes way  
 For all the Sorrows of th' approaching day,  
 These are in part the cause of *England's* Wo,  
 And will if ( Grace prevents not ) it undo :  
 But there are other hainous Sins behind,  
 Which pierce my Bowels, and perplex my Mind.

*A Complaint of Whoredom, Adultery, &c.*

Did filthy *Lust* and *Whoredom* ever rage  
 With more success then in the present Age?  
 Abominations of so vile a Name,  
 That their bare mention is indeed a shame.  
 What Sin more hateful in *Jehovah's* Eye,  
 Then this of *Whoredom* and *Adultery*?  
 'Tis rank'd as Chief and marches in the Van  
 Of all the gross Debaucheries of Man,  
 In those black Muster-Rolls God does record  
 Of grand Offences in his holy Word.  
 What more affronts the *Second Table*? Or  
 Provokes the Lord? No fitter Metaphor  
 Could be produc'd t' express *Idolatriy*,  
 Then that abhorred Name, *Adultery*.  
 Besides the Terrors of Gods fiery Wrath,  
 Which judges such to everlasting Death;  
 On Earth, amongst all sober men, they gain  
 So vile a blot, so infamous a stain,  
 As all the Waters in the Sea can never  
 Wipe off, nor can it be forgot for ever.  
 But O what dismal Consequences wait  
 For speedy entrance at the wretches gate!



*The Groans of the Protestant Church.* 13

For lewd Embraces of lascivious Dames  
Will rot their *bones*, breed cankers in their *names*,  
Beget consumption in Estate and Purse,  
Produce Destruction, and a certain Curse :  
The common ends that such arrive unto,  
Are foul Diseases, Beggery and Wo.  
They're fortifish Fools ( says wise *Demoſthenes* )  
That buy Repentance at ſuch Rates as theſe :  
That Sin, to pleaſe an Enemy, that ſtrives  
To damn their Souls, and rob them of their lives.  
God in his Sacred \* Ordinances hath \* *Leu.*  
Appointed ſuch to an immediate Death. 20 10.  
Would men but Judge it as their greateſt Foe,  
They'd never love, nor hug it as they do.  
Each Sex is bad, but Women ſeem to be  
The very Brokers of Immodeſty ;  
Which makes that paſſage to be born in mind,  
*A wiſe and virtuous Woman who can find ?*  
Your *City-Dames* and *Ladies* are on fire  
With wanton paſſion, and unchaſte deſire ;  
Providing Meats on purpoſe to inflame  
Their pamper'd Gallants to their wonted ſhame.  
Bare Breſts and Naked Necks, a Harlots Dreſs,  
Are ſtrong Temptations unto Wickedneſs.  
All other ſins ( th' Apoſtle does declare )  
Which men commit without the Body are :  
But this abominable Act alone,  
Againſt his Body by a man is done.  
Marriage to all, the Undeſiled Bed,  
Is Honourable ; he that will, may wed:

But Whoremongers God judges, and they shall  
 Be cast into the Lake, both great and small,  
 The Wiseman calls th' Adulterer, A Fool ;  
 And well he may, for he destroys his Soul.  
 No Sots like them, for branded still they show  
 The marks of Folly, wherefoe'er they go.  
 O how th' unclean and brutish man exceeds  
 Inferiour Sinners in reproachful Deeds !

My Grievances are many, and my Fear  
 Is more then my distressed Soul can bear :  
 My panting Breast and aking Heart is sad,  
 To think of what I further have to add.

*A Complaint of Atheism.*

But O amazing master-piece of wonder !  
 That's like to rend my very heart a sunder,  
 When I consider that an Age of Light  
 Produces Monsters blacker then the Night :  
 A Cursed Tribe of wretched Atheist dare,  
 Without all Dread and Reverential Fear,  
 Strike at the Essence of the Great Jehove.  
 And all the Glories that reside Above.  
 As if meer Fancies of a Cloudy Brains,  
 And all Religion an Intrigue of Man :  
 That dare pronounce all Evangelick Law.  
 A Trick of State to keep the World in aw.  
 Creating Idols in their Brains ; that ewe  
 Make mocks of Hell, and a meer scorn of Heaven.  
 But can such Fancies challenge an abode  
 Within your Hearts, to Dis-believe a GOD ?  
 On th' Universal Fabrick cast an Eye,  
 The Sea, the Earth, and <sup>the</sup> expanded Sky :



Can so Sublime Illustrious an Effect  
Be form'd without a Glorious Architect?  
If Reason be your Rule, true Logicks Laws  
Pronounce Effects resulting from a Cause,  
Whose Order leads us to Infinity,  
Sure Arguments of a Divinity.  
Created Things must a Creator have;  
And that Begetter who first being gave  
To Essences produc'd, can't be Begot;  
He's therefore GOD, and other else is not.  
This *Causa Prima*, without Time or Date,  
Is He that did all Entity create.  
The First could not Himself create; so He  
Must have His Essence from Eternity.  
Who can make *Phabus* his swift Course Reverse?  
Or ballance in his Palm the Universe?  
Who can the Ocean in a Sieve confine?  
If none can do't, then none can GOD define.  
First Principles are beyond Definition;  
No Logick reaches at so high a Vision:  
'Tis unreveal'd to Reason, for no strain  
Of lofty Metaphysicks can contain  
Those Mysteries; true wisdom therefore hath  
Commanded Reason to give room to Faith.  
If what we see had not a first Creator,  
Then 'tis its own immediate Operator;  
If so, it Acts before it had a Being:  
But such Conclusions are too disagreeing  
With Reasons Maxims: For all things that be,  
May say they are their own Divinity,

If each can make it self, and that which can  
Create it self, can so it self sustain  
*In Infinitum*, and will ne'er dissolve  
Its self; for Natures principal Resolve  
Is, That no Essence will forbear to be,  
If it can keep up its own Entity.

'This strain of Atheistick Sophistry  
Makes all of equal Independancy,  
Without Subordination: 'Tis a Theam,  
Without Inferior, making all Supream.  
FIRST CAUSE supposes *Time*, & *Time* supposes  
Some *second. Acts*, which *After-Time* discloses.  
So view their Series, you may trace them all  
( As Links in Chains ) to their Original,  
The Great JEHOVAH, whose unfathom'd Glory  
Is Emblem'd in the Universe before ye.

There is a thing in Man call'd *CONSCIENCE*,  
Which of his Actions gives clear Evidence,  
Whether he likes or nor: That's ready still  
To check the Course of his Disorder'd Will:  
It is Eccentick to his Sensual Part,  
Arraigns his words, his Deeds, his very Heart;  
And if it finds they be irregular,  
It does Pursue them with continual War.  
What can this Just, this Inward Witness be,  
But some bright Beam of a Divinity?

In former Times was not *Jehovah* known  
By Miracles which visibly were shown?  
Can Reason brag that Causes Natural  
Could raise the Dead? Or that a word can call.



*The Groans of the Protestant Church.* 17

An Intomb'd Carcass to behold the Light?  
Make sound a Cripple? give the blind their sight?  
If not, then surely it will follow hence,  
That 'tis an *Act* of some *Omnipotence*:  
That such were done we have the *Common Vote*  
Of *Pagans*, *Jews*, and all the *Men of Note*,  
Whose *Works* are Extant, whom we may believe,  
Because they had no *Int'rest* to deceive. (hear  
Whence come those *Judgments* which you daily  
Of *Wrath* and *Vengeance* darted every where  
Against *Prophaners* of that *Sacred Name*?  
Whence come those *Arrows*, that *Consuming flame*  
Which terrifies the *World*? & whence the *breath*  
That strikes *Blasphemers* with a sudden *Death*?  
Which of these rare *Philosophers* can show  
What makes the *Spacious Deep* to *Ebb* and *Flow*?  
Let them produce their *Maxims*, if they can,  
How scatter'd *Atomes* can compose a *Man*?  
Who brandishes those blazing *Signs* of *Wonder*?  
Who frights the *Earth* with rapid *Peals* of *Thunder*?  
Who did defeat the *Fatal Enterprize*  
Which *Rome*, by *Devils Council*, did devise?  
Who sets the *Comet* in the *Angry Sky*,  
Those dismal *Harbingers* of *Misery*?  
God does *Himself* by many *Ways* make know;  
*Forewarning* Men of what's a coming on:  
Yet *Senseless Mortals* falter more and more,  
Though hovering *Vengeance* threaten at the *Door*,  
*Deceit*, *Soul-killing-Errors*, *Perjury*,  
*Injustice*, *Murder*, *Theft*, *Hypocrisy*,

Do so abound through our enlightned Isle,  
That *Sodom* hardly e'er appear'd more vile.

*A Complaint against Hypocrites.*

I am not onely persecuted by  
My *Open Foes*, but *Lurking Snakes* do lie  
Within my Bosom, using all their Art  
To seiz my Vitals, and corrode my Heart.  
Such *seeming Friends*, such *Traytors in disguise*,  
Are more malignant then *known Enemies* :  
For the *Attagues of These*, a man may ward ;  
*Those* unsuspected, stand within our Guard.  
How many seem to reverence my Name  
For worldly Ends, or to avoid the shame  
Of Irreligion ? Frequently they go  
To worship God, and so devout do show,  
As if meer *Saints* ; but *Hypocrites* in grain,  
Do all the while Intelligence maintain  
With my declared Foes, who proudly joyn,  
And all their Politicks in one combine,  
To root my Name from off the very Earth,  
And make provision that no more get Birth.  
Betray'd by *middle* and by *low Degrees*,  
But most of all by *Capital Grandees*.  
Such as my Peace and Safety should procure,  
Contribute most to make me Unsecure :  
Such seem their *purpose* by soft words to smother :  
So *Boatsmen* look one way, but row another.  
Such perjur'd *Statesmen* have the Art to smile  
Upon my Face but cut my Throat the while,

But



The Groans of the Protestant Church. 19

But grant, Dread Sovereign of the Universe;  
That whilst I weep my Grievances in Verse,  
Thy Sion's Interest may not be betray'd  
To Rome, by Protestants in Masquerade.  
O let me hear the Joyful Trumpets sounded,  
That does proclaim their Babylon confounded.

Rome's black Militia is all up in Arms,  
Annoying Europe in unusual Swarms.  
This critick moment they expect and hope  
To thrust *Me* out, and Introduce a Pope,  
To plague this Noble Nation, that has been  
A Wall, a Fort, a Counterscarp between  
Their bauling Canons most impetuous shots,  
And *forreign Saints*; that countermines their Plots.  
The desp'rate Archers are aware of this,  
They know that *England* the chief Bulwark is,  
To check their growth: If they could make it sup  
Th'invennom'd dregs of th' Antichristian Cup,  
They judg it easie to subdue the rest  
Of my *European* Gospel-Interest.

But O my melting Soul-tormenting Fears!  
Burst into Sighs, and bubble into Tears!  
Observe the Heavens! View that dreadful Mark  
Of flaming Vengeance, that precedes the dark  
Approach of Night! Can this vast *Corner* be  
Ought but the Prologue of Calamity?  
Prodigious Meteors, blazing fiery Stars,  
Are Heralds sent to menace open Wars  
Against rebellious and polluted Coasts,  
By Him who is the mighty Lord of Hosts.

Awake O *England*! this *Lethargick Sleep*  
 Is out of *Season*, 'tis a time to weep;  
 If *guilty Children* tremble at the *Rod*,  
 Can you be *stupid* when the *Angry God*  
 Sets up this *dreadful Ensign* of his *Wrath*?  
 Rouze up *Repentance*, let a *lively Faith*  
 Now go to work; See how the *Preaching Air*,  
 Instead of *Sinning*, does exhort to *prayer*:  
 For thy *Fantastick Garbs*, *Perfumes* and all  
 Thy other *Trash*, it doth for *Sackcloth* call:  
 From *Carnal Sports* it bids thee quickly get,  
 Calls from the *Taverns* to the *Mercy-Seat*.  
 From that accursed *Rendezvous* of *Lust*  
 It bids thee *hasten*, and repent in *Dust*.  
 Have not th' *Experience* of *past Ages* given  
 Their sad *Remarks* upon those *Signs* in *Heaven*?  
 What follow'd still, but certain *Spoil* of *Nations*,  
*Plagues*, *Fire*, and *Sword*, and other *Devastations*?  
 The sure *Everfion* of some *Potent Crown*;  
 The *Death* of *Heroes*, *Monarchs* tumbled down;  
 But thou, *Illustrious Architect* of *Wonder*,  
 Remove the *Sorrows* which I labour under.  
 Does this *Amazing Prodigy* betoken  
 That *Rampant Babel* shall be quickly broken?  
 Does it portend that *Antichrist* shall break  
 In pieces, striving to destroy the *Weak*  
 Remains that on this blessed *Name* do *Call*?  
 Or dost *presage* that (trembling) I shall fall?  
 Lord canst thou see thy *pleasant Vineyard Tore*,  
 And rooted up, by this *rapacious Boar*?



## The Groans of the Protestant Church. 21

Or have my *Childrens* crying *Sins* provok'd  
That *dismal Sentence*, not to be *revok'd*  
(*Gods Methods* were to *chasten*, not *destroy*  
Those *Sinning Souls* in whom he once took joy)  
O give thy *Sinking Church* a true *discerning*  
What thou dost mean by this *prodigious Warning*;  
That by thy *Spirits sacred Flame* calcin'd,  
By *Scourges mended*, and by *heat refine*,  
We may find *Grace*. But Oh! My *Spirits faint*  
Under the *Pressure* of my *Great Complaint*!  
My *panting Soul* another *grief* doth *feell*,  
My *feeble Knees* beneath their *burden Reel*.

### Sion's Children.

A *H Mother!* who can *disallow* your *moan*?  
The *Cause* is *just*, for every one must own  
Our *failings great*, and that our *sins provoke*  
*Impending Judgments*, and a *future Stroke*,  
If *interceding Mercy* steps not in,  
To ward the *blow*, and cancel out our *Sin*.  
But since *unthought-of Providence* gives *light*,  
And calls the *Sun* to see the *Acts of Night*;  
Since *Heaven* exposes the *Results of Rome*  
To *Publick Notice*; since the *Traytors* come  
To *Legal Execution*; since the *grand*  
*Contrivers* of this *Mischief* dare not *stand*  
To *Test of Law*, or *due Examination*;  
Since such *brave Heroes* represent the *Nation*,

Whose clear sagacious penetrating Eyes  
 Dive into Rome's abhorred Mysteries;  
 Whose Nobler Souls, whose Loyal English Hearts,  
 The closest Sights of Antichristian Arts  
 Can ne'er deceive; whose brave Resolves defeat  
 Those curs'd Delinquents, whether small or great:  
 Whose Free-born Courages do scorn to stoop  
 To be the Vassals of a Rascal-Pope,  
 An Upstart Imp, whose Title ne'er was given  
 By binding Laws of either Earth or Heaven.  
 We therefore, dearest Mother, do conclude,  
 That what has past of Romish Interlude,  
 Is near an Exit; that the Scene will be  
 Chang'd from a Tempest to Serenity.

### Sion.

O That's a Cordial! But my grief does borrow  
 Some fresh Objections to renew my sorrow:  
 For some that wish me well, do yet, in spite  
 Of Gospel-Beamings, and the clearest Light,  
 Retain some Romish Fragments, which displeases  
 The meek, the humble, self-denying JESUS.  
 His way of Worship, Scripture does express:  
 No Useless Pomp, no Artificial Dress  
 Becomes Religion; Chastity abhors  
 The Garb, the Painting, and the Gate of Whores.  
 Why should my Friends a Virgin-Church pollute  
 With any Relicks of that prostitute?

Why



*The Groans of the Protestant Church.* 23

Why Gawdy Things, that never had a Name  
In sacred Records, our Profession shame?  
Why are our *Rites* enamel'd with their *Gloss*?  
Why must our *Gold* be mingled with their *Dross*?  
Why *further Reformation* is suppress'd,  
To uphold a *Grandeur* that's *Usurp'd* at best?  
VVhy *Doors* and *Windows* must be shut up quite,  
To stop the Radiance of a *further Light*?  
And why must such as disallow those Tricks,  
Be branded as the vilest *Schismatics*?

But that's not all: My Children more refin'd  
From those Corruptions, do afflict my mind.  
O depths of Sorrow that disturb my Rest!  
O racking Grief that rends my woful Breast!  
Some are so Carnal, some so swiftly hurl'd  
Into the Labrints of th' enticing World,  
That in the hurries of that crouded Road,  
They find small leasure to attend their God;  
Preferring filthy Gain, and ill-got Wealth,  
Before the means of their Eternal Health.  
Some that in words respect me, I behold,  
In that sad posture, betwixt hot and cold.  
Sometimes they seem for Sanctity; sometimes  
Slide with the current of prevailing Crimes:  
Their Pulses beat with an alternate motion;  
Now for the *World*, then for some faint *Devotion*.  
Some that unto my Tabernacle were  
Admitted, left me for *Egyptians Fare*:  
These not content with my Celestial Diet,  
Do run with others to excess of Riot.

Some

Some to be *Popular*, away would give  
 Those *Gospel-Duties* that are *positive* :  
 From such as these, my Sorrows do increase,  
 That Sell *Gods Order* for a *seeming Peace* ;  
 Such Open Gaps that do *pervert* the Laws  
 Of my just *Right*, and well-defended *Cause*.  
 But O ! how many *Easy Christians* take  
 Their *Rest* in *Forms*, and no *distinction* make  
 'Twixt Shell and Kernel, that rely on *Duty*  
 As if it were the Sole adorning Beauty ?  
 Such give the Lord the more invalid part,  
 Present their Body, but deny their Heart.

Are not some *Pastors* careless to provide  
 A *Word in Season*, for the *Flocks* they guide ?  
 Some are too backward to supply the *Need*  
 Of *painful Lab'ers*, that their *Souls* do feed :  
 Discourag'd, by Close-fisted *Avarice*,  
 Despis'd neglected, through this *Hellish Vice* ;  
 My *Workmen* languish, and have cause of moan,  
 To see their *Toyl* so ineffectual grown.  
 The most *Pathetick* Preaching scarce can move  
 Some *Rocky Hearers* to the *Grace of Love*.  
 Must *Hag-fac'd Envy*, and *foul-tongu'd Detraction*,  
 Invenom'd *Malice*, and unfaithful *Action*,  
 Ill-grounded *Slander*, and uncertain *Rumors*,  
*Backbitings*, *Quarrels*, and the worst of *Humours* ;  
 Be practic'd thus ? Ah grief of griefs to see  
*Professing People* act iniquity ( *Wives*  
 To such a Pitch ! --- Some *Husbands* and some  
 Do lead such shameful, such unfavoury *Lives* ;

Whilst



*The Groans of the Protestant Church. 25*

VVhilst mutually at strife, they do impeach  
That Name that should be very dear to each.  
Such Pride, such dogged *reprehension*  
For every Toy, such sharpness and contention,  
As does disgrace *Religion*, and does lay  
Blocks and Offences in a *Converts* VVay.  
Ah! why can't Saints in Families eschew  
That which *meer Heathens* are asham'd to do?  
Their Houses are the Scene of *Civil Wars*,  
Of Brawls, of Discord, and *Domestick Fars*;  
In Grace or comfort can they find increase,  
Or *Heavenly Blessings*, who are void of Peace?

How oft do *Parents* Ill Example draw  
Their tender Children to infringe the Law  
And Sanctions of the Everlasting God!  
*Do they not spoil them when they spare the Rod?*  
To strict Extremes some Parents do adhere,  
Check not at all, or else are too severe:  
On *Back* and *Belly* they bestow much Cost,  
But care not if their Precious Souls be lost:  
Are they not guilty of Prodigious Folly  
That teach them *Courtship*, & neglect what's *Holy*?  
A Child untutor'd, (a meer lump of Sin,)  
May justly curse its cause of having been.  
Such as instruct, do doubly them beget,  
By timely Lessons lab'ring to defeat  
Their growth in Ill; such mold their *better part*,  
By wise prevention of a Canker'd heart.  
O: then's the time to give 'em Form and Mold!  
For Trees admit no bending, that are Old.

Who

Who timely sow such *seed* they would have grow,  
 VVill surely reap according as they sow.  
 Some like the Ape, that does by hugging kill,  
 Prompt on a Child to tip his tongue with ill  
 In his first prattle : But it is less pain  
 To form good Habits, then reform the vain.

On th' other hand, how many Children do  
 Prove vain rebellious, disobedient to  
 Their *godly Parents*? Slight their careful teaching  
 Make Games of Prayer, and a mock of Preaching,  
 Contempt of Parents, of what kind so'er,  
 Contracts a bitter Curse, which every where  
 VVill find them out. But O my akeing Soul  
 Beats sad Alarms of Grief! I must condole  
 The dismal fate of Youth! Alas how few  
 The ways of God and Holiness pursue!  
 But very eager to obey the Devil,  
 In quickly learning every reigning Evil.  
 Here you may see, if you survey the Nation,  
 Our Youth grown old in vile Abomination:  
 Such early Graduates in the Hellish Science,  
 Setting both Heaven and Hell at loud Defiance.  
 Let Grace and Vertue grovel in the Dust,  
 Their Youth and Strength they'l sacrifice to Lust.  
 That sacred Precept in the Word of Truth,  
*To find their Maker in the Days of Youth,*  
 They scorn to heed: Ah fools! that would begin  
 Conversion, when they can no longer sin.  
 But know, preposterous Sots, the Day of Doom  
 (That dreadful Audit of Accounts) will come.

How



## The Groans of the Protestant Church. 27

How dare you run this vile *Career* till Death,  
Like a *Grim Serjeant*, comes t' arrest your breath,  
When *Tongues* do falter, & your *Eie strings* crack,  
VWhen stings of Horror do your *Conscience* rack,  
VWhen Hells *Abys*s sets ope its spacious Gate,  
And *Troops of Devils* round about you wait,  
VWhen nought but *Horror* and *Confusion* seizes,  
Upon your Sences, when those foul *Diseases*  
You got by vile *Debauches*, have at length  
Destroy'd your Person, and subdu'd your *Strength*;  
Is this a Season to Detest your Lewdness,  
To talk of *Vertue*, or pretend to Goodness?  
Egregious Fools! how dare you to delay  
Your Souls Affair to that *uncertain Day*!  
O! Can you trust so grand a Work to that  
Moment of *Anguish*? when you know not what.  
(When Sound) your end will be, nor yet how soon,  
Though brisk at *Morning*, you may die ere Noon!  
And if unchang'd, your certain *Doom* will be  
To lie in *Hell* to all *Eternity*.

### Sion's Children.

O *Dismal State*! O miserable Case!  
Enough to daunt all that are void of *Grace*!  
And crush the bragging of the stoutest mind!  
But are there still more grievances behind?

Sion.