A SERMON PREACHED IN THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. PAUL, LONDON: ON THURSDAY, JUNE 5, 1794

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A Sermon Preached in the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, London: On Thursday, June 5, 1794 by John Warren

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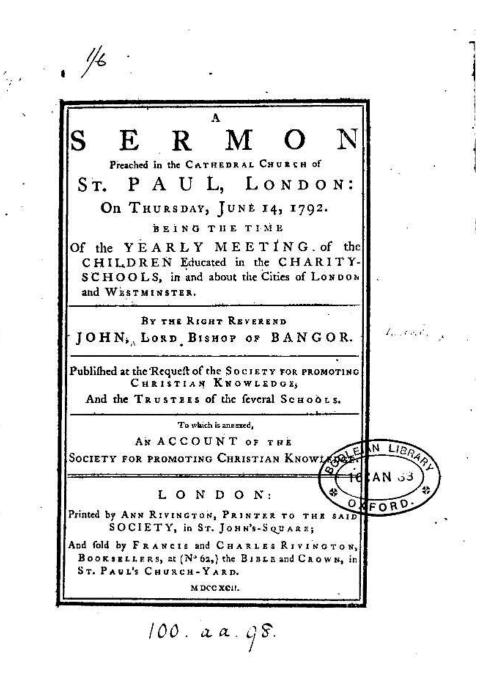
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JOHN WARREN

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Trieste



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⁴ Whoever withes to become a Member of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, or to make any enquiry concerning it, is requested to write to the Rev. Dr. GASKIN, Secretary to the Society, Bartlett's Buildings, Holborn, London, 1 who will give him every necessary information and direction."

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PROVERBS XIV. 34.

RIGHTEOUSNESS EXALTETH A NATION, BUT SIN-IS A REPROACH TO ANY PEOPLE.

T HAT Righteoufnefs is neceffary to exalt a Nation, and make it flourish and prosper; and, on the other hand, that Sin is a reproach to any People, and, if suffered to prevail, will prove ruinous and deftructive to it, are truths, which may easily be proved by considering the end and defign of Society, and the effect, which Virtue and Vice naturally have upon it *.

By Society is to be underftood a Body of People joined together by just and righteous laws, and

• See a Book entitled "An Account of the Societies for the Reformation of Manners, &c. &c., in which the Subject concerning the Effect of *Virtue* and *Vice* on Communities is well confidered.

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therefore, whilft these laws are observed, or, if other words, whilft the Members live virtuoafly, the Society, if rightly constituted, must needs flourish, because the end is answered, for which it was at first formed. As long as due obedience is paid to the laws, the Society may be faid to be true to itfelf; its peace and happiness will be preferved; and as nothing can arife from within to difturb it, to no Power from without can cafily overthrow it. But if a Society become falle to itfelf; if it's Members violate the just and righteous laws, upon which it is founded; if Vice prevail inftead of Virtue, diforder and confusion must enfue; fuch a State being divided against itself cannot stand; and as its firength will be weakened by inteffine quarrels and difputes, fo will it fall an eafy prey to any Foreign Force.

But we need not fpend our time in inquiring into the effect, which Virtue and Vice have on Society: There is no want of argument to evince this truth: Experience bears ample testimony to it: The Rife and Fall of Kingdoms have been constantly

at ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, London.

fantly found to be in proportion to the prevalency of Virtue or Vice among them; and no People was ever known to continue prosperous, after it had forfaken the virtuous principles and maxims, upon which it was founded. These are truths, which cannot be controverted, and are known to all, who are conversant in the histories of Nations; and they, who have not this knowledge, nor have been accuftomed to take, into their contemplation, fuch great Objects, as States and Kingdoms, and to trace, with exactness, the causes of their Progress or Decline, may look into private Families, and confider the effect, which Virtue and Vice have upon them, But if, as the cafe is, private Families rife or fall in proportion to their virtuous or vitious conduct, fo must Nations also; because a Nation is nothing but a collection of private Families united under one and the fame Government. But the Whole, the collective Body cannot flourish, whilst the Members, the feveral Parts of it, are in a weak and languishing condition : Nor on the other hand, can a State decay, or be in the leaft danger of ruin, whilft its conftituent Parts are ftrong and vi-

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gorous *. Every Whole is made up of it's Parts, and whatever preferves it's Parts, must preferve the Whole also +.

But the truth of the Text, which I have been endeavouring to effablish, will be still further confirmed by confidering the practice of all wise Lawgivers: For they did not only found their States in good and rightcous Laws; but, in order to promote the practice of *Virtue* and *Religion*, and, by that means, give strength and permanency to their Governments, added Laws, from time to time as they faw occasion, for the punishment of *Profanenefs* and *Immerchity*: And it must be granted, that such penal Laws have a direct tendency to premote *Virtue*, as they prevent the growth of *Vice* by hindering it from becoming quite general; as they deter strength of the profanenefs from being

* Account of the Societies for the Reformation of Manners, &c. paffim. Mr. Woodward's Rife and Progress of certain Religious Societies in and about London and Weftminster.

+ Demonstration of the Law of Nature by Dr. Samuel Parker, Bishop of Oxford, P. 26.

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