

**THE CHARGES OF SAMUEL
HORSLEY, LATE LORD
BISHOP OF ST. ASAPH**

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The Charges of Samuel Horsley, Late Lord Bishop of St. Asaph by Samuel Horsley

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SAMUEL HORSLEY

**THE CHARGES OF SAMUEL
HORSLEY, LATE LORD
BISHOP OF ST. ASAPH**

THE
CHARGES
OF
SAMUEL HORSLEY,
LL.D. F.R.S. F.A.S.
LATE
LORD BISHOP OF ST. ASAPH,
DELIVERED AT HIS
SEVERAL VISITATIONS
OF THE
DIOCESES OF ST. DAVID'S, ROCHESTER, AND ST. ASAPH,
&c.



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THE
CHARGE
OF
SAMUEL, LORD BISHOP OF ST. DAVID'S,
TO
THE CLERGY OF HIS DIOCESE;
DELIVERED AT HIS PRIMARY VISITATION, IN THE YEAR
1790.

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,

THE principal object of episcopal visitation being the remedy or the prevention of such irregularities and abuses, as, without any impeachment of the general good intention and good conduct of the clergy, may be expected from time to time, through mere inadvertence, to creep in, — I should deem every moment lost to the immediate purpose of our meeting, which I were to consume either

in subtle disquisition upon abstruse points of speculation, or in general exhortation to awaken your zeal and industry in the duties of your sacred function. I trust that I address myself to men well taught in those mysteries of God of which they are the stewards ; from many of whom I might myself be happy to receive instruction, — to faithful servants of the Lord who hath called us ; who need no other incitement to their general duty than their own sense of the obligation that is laid upon them. The advice which I mean to offer upon the present occasion applies specially to your particular situation as called to the exercise of your ministry in these remote corners of the island, in congregations which, except in some of the greater towns, are composed almost entirely of the common people ; and of such common people as, from their sequestered situation, are, of all their countrymen of the same degree, the least improved by early education, and of consequence the least prepared by any previous tuition to receive the instruction which it is your wish and your duty to convey.

It is a question of great moment, in itself not difficult, but involved in endless intricacies to those who take up the discussion with their minds posses-

sed with certain common prejudices, — and for that reason too often, I fear, erroneously decided, — “What is the proper *matter of instruction* in such congregations, more especially in the present circumstances of the established church?” I am of opinion, that to stop the progress of that new species of infidelity which is propagated by certain of the sectaries of the present day, as well as to cure the fanaticism of some weak but I trust well-intentioned members of our own communion, much might be done by the labours of the country parish-priest, — much more, indeed, than by the learned disquisitions of professed polemic; were it not that erroneous maxims are gone abroad, which for several years past, if my observation deceive me not, have very much governed the conduct of the parochial clergy in the ministration of the word.

A just abhorrence of those virulent animosities which in all ages since external persecution ceased have prevailed among Christians, especially, since the Reformation, among Protestants of the different denominations, upon the pretence at least of certain differences of opinion in points of nice and doubtful disputation, hath introduced and given general currency to a maxim, which seemed to promise