

**THE CURATE: A
POEM. WITH
OTHER POEMS**

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The Curate: A Poem. With Other Poems by Anonymous

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ANONYMOUS

**THE CURATE: A
POEM. WITH
OTHER POEMS**

THE
C U R A T E :
A
P O E M .

The world is not thy friend, nor the world's law.

SHAKESPEARE.

WITH
OTHER POEMS.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR JAMES CARPENTER,
OLD BOND-STREET.

1810.

P R E F A C E.

NO apology can be necessary for the publication of the present Poem. If it deserves any regard, the public will be at liberty to determine. If it has no claims upon their favour, the consequences devolve solely upon the author. In the mean time, it is a duty he owes to himself to declare, that he has used his best efforts to render it acceptable. The subject itself, however, is of such vital interest to the community, that he presumes to hope it may excite attention ; and if that object be attained, it will be a sufficient consolation under the partial odium necessarily

attending such a composition, and in the midst of those obstacles, which it will probably oppose to his future success in his profession.

There are, however, some subjects of a general nature introduced into the Poem, which it may not be improper to notice somewhat more at large in this place.

It appears too much the practice of persons who estimate things by halves, to depreciate directly or indirectly the value of our Ecclesiastical Establishment. Others again contemplate it with total indifference. Any thing, however, would be preferable to such neutrality. If the Church of England is not a polity of the first importance, let the immediate dissolution of it become a national

PREFACE.

experiment ; let us try the effect of such a bill, as that once presented by * Sir Edward Deering, in the time of Charles I. ; or allow it to die away in an enfeebled and superannuated old age. But if it is of essential importance to the country, if it has been, and is, the admiration of the Christian world, the '*ocellus Ecclesiarum*,' the basis of the best civil government, the common bond of social confidence and security, and the most rational of all religious institutions, it becomes a necessary consequence, that it should be supported in a manner best calculated to give it effect ; that those, who devote their time, health, and abilities, to it's service, should be removed from every difficulty and inconvenience, that may damp their exertions ;

* Clarendon's History of the Rebellion, Book III.

and that not only the State, the *legislative* and executive powers of government, should lose no opportunity of promoting it's welfare, and of acknowledging it's advantages, but every individual should pay it the tribute of respect, deference, support, and gratitude.

It is said, that the Clergy are indolent and supine in the performance of their professional duties, and the increase of Methodism is adduced in proof of the assertion. But is not this, if the assertion be true, the effect of poverty in the officiating part of them? Is it not because the motives to exertion are curtailed, or not sufficient; and that they are obliged to seek a maintenance, a precarious and disreputable subsistence, by employments foreign to the profession which

should support them ? None but knaves will assert, that their poverty is the consequence of their own vices, and imperfections. In a body, they may be considered as the main pillar of the national character: and let me be allowed to suggest, that it is at the peril of the country to neglect them. With the demolition of our Established Church, it wants no great sagacity to foresee the downfall of our liberties ; unless universal profligacy, want of faith and social integrity, narrow and intolerant bigotry, hypocrisy, neglected or superficial education, solution of political ties, debility of institutions, public treachery, destruction of legal principle, abandonment of the poor, insecurity of property, debasement of national reputation, and final revolution, may be thought compatible with real freedom.

I have neither leisure nor inclination, to answer the objections of some modern cavillers against the Church. We all know what a serious infringement of the liberty of the subject it would be to censure their disputing upon that, which they have not the opportunities of understanding. In civil and ecclesiastical matters this right, though implicitly waved in the first foundation of all government, must meet with no restraint. It would effectually estrange many from the Established Church to tell them that they were not fully competent to judge of its merits and defects. This, however, I must say ;---it is the height of uncharitableness, nor can I envy that man his understanding or moral feelings, who is weak enough to imagine that generations of men should continue in the mere mercenary profession of a