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978-1-108-07409-4 - Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century: Comprizing Biographical Memoirs of William Boywer, Printer, F.S.A., and Many of his Learned Friends: Volume 3

John Nichols

Excerpt

[More information](#)

(1)

LITERARY ANECDOTES

OF THE

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

IN the beginning of the year 1766, by engaging in a partnership with the Writer of these Memoirs, Mr. BOWYER was again enabled to withdraw, in some degree, from that close application which had begun to be prejudicial to his health. His new Associate, whilst an Apprentice, had been intrusted with a considerable share of the management of the Printing-office; and the connexion was such as, I am proud to say, was highly satisfactory to Mr. BOWYER. To his Partner, it was all that a young man could possibly have hoped for; it was an introduction to a number of respectable Friends, whose patronage was equally honourable and advantageous. The good-natured Reader will pardon the vanity of this paragraph; it is meant as a tribute of gratitude to a Benefactor, whose memory the Writer cannot but heartily revere.

In the succeeding Annals of Mr. BOWYER's Life, the mode hitherto adopted will be observed. The productions of the press will be considered as *his*, without encumbering the narrative with the unnecessary distinction of a *Partnership*.

VOL. III.

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In

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[More information](#)

In this year Mr. BOWYER wrote an excellent Latin Preface * to “*Joannis Harduini, Jesuitæ, ad Censuram Scriptorum Veterum Prolegomena. Juxta Autographum; 8vo.*” In this Preface is a distinct account of the nature of the Work, as well as of the mode in which it was preserved “in naufragio fortunarum suarum, quod tota familia Jesuitica nuper fecit. Hoc verò fragmentum,” says Mr. Bowyer, “quasi ex undis ereptum, et in manus P. Vaillant † Bibliopolæ traditum, noluit ille orbi literario invadere. Paradoxa enim per se cum novitate suâ delectant, tum longè magis Harduini artificio exornata, qui tam bellè novit dare obscuris nitorem, lucidis umbram, fietis probabilitatem, omnibus denique speciem, prout velit, et gratiam. Istud, igitur, quicquid est, fideliter imprimendum curavit: autographumque ipsum in Museo Britannico reponendum, tanquam votivam tabulam, posteritati consecravit. Paucula hæc, quæ raptim prælibavi, erudito colloquio, quo vir reverendus Cæsar De Missy me honestavit, accepta debent referri. Si quid imprudenter dictum sit, meæ tribuendum est inscitæ; si quid quod non displiceat, ejus laudi; qui mox, ut spero, plura super hæc re publicâ luce dignabitur.”

Mr. De Missy's ‡ remarks on the celebrated Jesuit's extraordinary production accordingly appeared about the same time, under the title of “*De Joannis Harduini Jesuitæ Prolegomenis cum Autographo collatis, Epistola, quam ad amicissim-*

* “I was glad to see your Preface; it is perhaps all I shall ever read of the book. Swift says, that he never knew but two or three good lyars in his life. You have shewn how evidently the most artful of them are detected, by shifting their sails, and not abiding by their own decisions. Surely your friend the Bookseller, whom you are obliging with a Preface, is, as usual, a little hard upon Authors; and more dictatorial than usual, when he won't let you write, to puff off his work *gratis*.” *Mr. Clarke, MS.*

† Mr. Paul Vaillant; of whom some account will be given in another part of this Work.

‡ Of this good and learned man, and truly primitive Christian, see hereafter, under the year 1774.

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Excerpt

[More information](#)

1766.] THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

3

num virum Willhelmum Bowyerum, iisdem nondum prostantibus, scripserat Cæsar Missiacus [vulgò C. De Missy] Reg. Mag. Brit. à Sacris Gallicè peragendis;" 8vo.

In the same year Mr. Bowyer printed a complete edition of the Works of Dr. William Harvey, in one quarto volume. The liberality with which this publication was conducted by the College of Physicians is a lasting monument of honour to themselves, and to the excellent Author whose invaluable writings were thus collected. Let me add, that it is also a good specimen of unostentatious Typography.

Two Editions, in quarto, of "Observations on the Statutes, chiefly the more antient, from Magna Charta to the Twenty-first of James I. Cap. XXVII. With an Appendix, being a Proposal for new-modelling the Statutes. [By the Hon. Daines Barrington *.]

* This worthy Judge, and truly benevolent gentleman, was the intimate friend of Mr. Bowyer; and I cannot pass by this fair opportunity of expressing my own obligations to him. To two of his brothers, the venerable Bishop of Durham, and the late gallant Admiral Barrington, and to their noble Father, the first Lord Viscount Barrington, my respects shall be paid under the year 1770. — The Hon. Daines Barrington was the *fourth* son of the first Viscount, by Anne his wife, daughter and coheirress of Sir William Daines. He was one of his Majesty's Counsel learned in the Law, and a Bencher of the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple; appointed, May 24, 1751, Marshal of the High Court of Admiralty in England; which he resigned in 1753, on being appointed Secretary for the affairs of Greenwich Hospital; was appointed Justice of the Counties of Merioneth, Carnarvon, and Anglesey, 1757; and afterwards Second Justice of Chester, which he resigned after 1785, I believe, on a pension; and, at his death, retained only the place of Commissary-general of the Stores at Gibraltar. Although Mr. Barrington claimed no high distinction as a Lawyer, he was universally allowed to be a profound and judicious Antiquary. His first publication, which will always maintain its rank, and has gone through several editions, was his "Observations on the Statutes, 1766." The following year he exchanged his severer studies for those of a lighter kind, in Natural History, and published "The Naturalist's Calendar," which has also had more than one edition.

In 1768 he gave the following proof of his liberality.

"April 25, 1768. Mr. Barrington finds that there have issued from Mr. Bowyer's warehouse, 400 copies of the second Edition of

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Excerpt

[More information](#)

4 LITERARY ANECDOTES OF [1766.

“A Poem to the Memory of the celebrated Mrs. Cibber. By George Keate, Esq.” 4to.

the “Observations on the Statutes.” He also finds, upon looking into his own interleaved copy of the Book, that, by the perusal of many MSS. and other uncommon materials, he hath very considerable additions to make. He therefore thinks it would not be honest to sell the remaining 100 copies, when he is determined to print a new Edition, which will make perhaps the last nearly waste-paper. Mr. Barrington never intended to make any profit by this publication; and would therefore have from the first offered the copy-right to Messrs. Bowyer, Baker, and Sandby; but he really was apprehensive that they would be losers by such a present. The Book is of the Antiquary sort, and by no means calculated for a great sale. Mr. Barrington, therefore, still apprehends, that the proposed new Edition will be still less worth their acceptance, though perhaps the putting his name to it may contribute to the sale of a few copies. Mr. Barrington is at all events determined to print such a new Edition.—If Messrs. Bowyer, Baker, and Sandby, think the right of copy worthy their acceptance, they are most heartily welcome to it, letting Mr. Barrington have 24 copies for his relations and particular friends.—They will, however, consider of this, and give Mr. Barrington an answer without reserve.” The offer was of course accepted; and the third Edition was accordingly printed soon after.—In 1773, desiring to second the wishes of the Rev. Mr. Elstob to give to the world the Saxon translation of Orosius, ascribed to King Alfred, in one volume octavo, he added to it an English translation and notes, which neither give the meaning nor clear up the obscurities of the Latin or Saxon authors, and subjected the Editor (who intended it chiefly for his own amusement, and that of a few antiquarian friends) to severe animadversions (*Gent. Mag.* vol. XLVII. p. 337). His next publication was, “Tracts on the Probability of reaching the North Pole, 1775,” 4to. He was the first proposer of the memorable voyage to the North Pole, which was undertaken by Captain Phipps, afterwards created Lord Mulgrave; and, on the event of it, he collected a variety of facts and speculations, to evince the practicability of such an undertaking. His Papers were read at two meetings of the Royal Society; and, not being admitted into their “Philosophical Transactions,” were published separately. It must be allowed that the honourable Author bestowed much time and labour on the investigation of the subject, and accumulated an amazing quantity of written, traditionary, and conjectural evidence, in proof of the possibility of circumnavigating the Pole; but, after all, when his testimonies were examined *pondere non numero*, they were far from proving so satisfactory as might have been wished. His Tracts on this subject were republished in his “Miscellanies on various Subjects, 1781,” 4to, consisting of some of his papers in the “Philosophical Transactions,” and other miscellaneous Essays composed or compiled by him.

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Excerpt

[More information](#)

1766.] THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY. 5

The large "Greek Grammar, for the Use of Westminster School," 8vo.

him. The first tract among these was, "An Enquiry whether the Turkey was known before the Discovery of America." [This produced from Mr. Pennant, in the "Philosophical Transactions, 1781," an History of the Turkey, to prove that it was peculiar to America, and unknown before the discovery of that Continent. "My respected friend Mr. Barrington," he says, "had taken the other side of the question; but this was not published by me polemically, or in any wise inimical to so excellent a character." (Literary Life, p. 27.)] Essays on the Rein-deer; the Bat, or Rere-mouse; the sudden Decay of several Trees in St. James's Park, within a Year after the Filling-up of Rosamond's Pond; the periodical Appearance and Disappearance of certain Birds at different Times of the Year (Phil. Trans. vol. LXII. p. 265; Gent. Mag. vol. XLIII. p. 501); the Torpidity of the Swallow Tribe when they disappear; on the prevailing Notions with regard to the Cuckoo; on the Linnean System (to which he objects, as obscure, complicated, and unintelligible, on many accounts); Particulars of the Agreement between the King of Spain and the Royal Society for an Exchange of Natural Curiosities; Account of Mozart, a remarkable young Musician, with other extraordinary Persons in the same Line (Phil. Trans. vol. LX. p. 54); of the Deluge in the Time of Noah (objecting to its universality, and confining the term *Earth* to the country where Noah lived); the History of the Gwidir Family, by Sir John Wynne, the first Baronet of the Name, who was born 1553 (first printed by Mr. Barrington in 12mo); a Letter, intended for Dodsley's Museum, on the English and French Writers (the Plan taken from the Battle of the Books); a Dialogue on the antient Tragedies, written at Oxford, 1746; the Voyage of Oththere and the Geography of the IXth Century illustrated, extracted from the Anglo-Saxon Version of Orosius before mentioned; Journal of a Spanish Voyage, 1775, to explore the Coast of America Northward of California.—Mr. Barrington's communications in the "Philosophical Transactions" are, a Letter on some Particular Fish found in Wales (LVII. 204); Investigation of the Difference between the present Temperature of Air in Italy and some other Countries from what it was Seventeen Centuries ago (LVIII. 58, Gent. Mag. XL. 131); on the Trees which are supposed to be indigenous in Great Britain (LIX. 23); Letter concerning Chesnut Trees (LXI. 167), controverting Dr. Ducarel's Paper on that subject (ibid. 136, Gent. Mag. XLII. 527, XXXII. 54); Account of a Mole from North America (LXI. 292); some Experiments made in North Wales to ascertain the Quantities of Rain which fell at the same time at different Heights (ibid. 294); Investigation of the specific Character which distinguishes the Rabbit from the Hare (LXII. 4, Gent. Mag. XLIII. 284); Account of a Fossil lately found near Christ Church in Hampshire (LXIII. 171); Observations on the Lagoonus,

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[More information](#)

“A larger Confutation of Bishop Hare’s System of Hebrew Metre; in a Letter to the Rev. Dr. Ed-

gopus, or Ptarmagan (ibid. 224); Experiments and Observations on the Singing of Birds (ibid. 249); of the Gillaroo (LXIV. 116, Gent. Mag. XLIV. 530, 531, 579). To the Third Volume of Mr. Pennant’s “British Zoology” is added Mr. Barrington’s “ingenious and learned Essay on the Language of Birds;” which having produced a slight remark in Gent. Mag. vol. LIII. p. 990; Mr. Barrington very placidly observed to a friend, “I could send a very short answer to this objection, which is, that I have expressly confined the power of imitation in birds to the respective powers from their organs. A duck undoubtedly can only *quack*, because its organs will produce no other sound. If I was to make this, or other defence, it would be expected that I should do the same to every other objection. I have, perhaps, published too many things, but mean to be quiet from controversy for the remainder of my days. When I say this, do not suppose me out of humour, either with the world, or my brother authors, whose treatment of me I have no occasion to complain of.”—In the “Archæologia” of the Society of Antiquaries are the following Papers by Mr. Barrington: Observations on the Welsh Castles (I. 278); on Cæsar’s Invasion of Britain, and more particularly his Passage across the Thames (II. 134, 141); Dr. Owen, in a subsequent Paper, printed in the same Volume, concurs with him in opinion that Cæsar’s *Tamensis* was the *Medway*, and not the Thames. Some Account of Two Musical Instruments used in Wales, the *Crwth* and the *Pib-gawn* (III. 30); Mr. Pegge’s Observations on the Growth of the Vine in England considered and answered (ibid. 67). [An unfounded conjecture advanced in “The Observations on the Statutes,” that England never produced Grapes, was controverted by Mr. Pegge in the Paper preceding the present; and a defence of the latter’s arguments, though read at the Society and approved, not being indulged with a place in their “Archæologia,” appeared in the Gentleman’s Magazine, vol. XLV. p. 513.] On the Expiration of the Cornish Language (III. 278); on the Corbridge Altars (ibid. 324); it was reserved for the penetration of the late Mr. Tyrwhitt to decypher this *Cruz Antiquariorum*. The account of the body of Edward I, as it appeared on opening it, was drawn up by Sir Joseph Ayloffe (ibid. 376), to obviate a misconception of the writ for renewing the wax round it, as if it was a repeated censing, instead of renewing the wax tapers placed round the tomb. On the Term *Levant* (IV. 27); Observations on the Apamean Medal (ibid. 315), in which his objections to the universality of the Deluge are stated. And, in a second Paper, delivered to the Society, but not printed, without concerning himself with the genuineness of the Medal, which seems the most essential part of the controversy, and which had been completely overthrown by Dean Milles, he defended every argument he had before brought in favour of the *Deuchalonic* against the *Noachic* Deluge, against

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[More information](#)

1766.] THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

7

wards, in answer to his Latin Epistle. By Robert Lowth, D. D. F. R. SS. Lond. & Goetting. and Chaplain in Ordinary to his Majesty.

against both Mr. Bryant and the Dean; and concluded with saying, "that, having thus endeavoured to vindicate his former Dissertation on the Apamean Medal, he sees no room for an apology in that behalf, as it is the duty, he conceives, of every member so to do, while he continues unconvinced by the arguments of his opponents; and this duty also becomes the more necessary, when the objections are made from so respectable authority." The fate of this medal is truly singular. Mr. Bryant applied it in proof of the universality of the Deluge; Mr. Barrington wrested it to a contrary sense. Abbé Barthelemy, followed by Deau Milles, denied its genuineness; and on this and his other Papers in this Volume see *Gent. Mag.* XLVII. 336, 337. Some additional information relative to the Continuance of the Cornish Language (V. 81); Observations on Patriarchal Customs and Manners (*ibid.* 119, *Gent. Mag.* XLIX. 444); on which review it was observed by a friend of Mr. Urban, half surmising the writer, that "somebody had taken the pains to go over the ground carefully and *con amore* with the Hon. Daines Barrington." The same Correspondent had before observed, "It is not often that Laymen get credit by meddling with the Bible; at least, we Clerks think so; yet, if any, surely the patriarchal life might have been properly treated." Observations on St. Justin (or Justinian's) tomb in Anglesey (*ibid.* 143); Observations on the earliest Introduction of Clocks (*ibid.* 416); on the vitrified Walls in Scotland, particularly Fort Dunagoyle, in the Isle of Bute (VI. 100), supposing the stones to be volcanic, or from the Bloomeries; Observations on the Progress of Archery in England (VII. 46); on the Progress of Gardening in England (*ibid.* 113); an Account of certain remarkable Pits or Caves in the Earth in the County of Berks (*ibid.* 236); Silver Denarii found in Lancashire (*ibid.* 414), and a Celt near Segontium in Wales (*ibid.* 417, *Gent. Mag.* LIII. 465); Observations on a Picture by Zuccaro, from Lord Falkland's Collection, supposed to represent the Game of Primero (VIII. 133*); on the Antiquity of Card-playing in England (*ibid.* 134); on the Grey-weather in Berkshire (supposing them to have been blown thither from a volcano), and the Crypts in Canterbury Cathedral (supposing them and others to have been intended to keep the Choirs dry (*Gent. Mag.* LVII. 697); Disquisitions on the Game of Chess (IX. 16); on the Origin of the Arms belonging to the Two Honourable Societies of the Inner and Middle Temple, the Pegasus and the Holy Lamb (*ibid.* 127); a Seal found at Dunstar Castle (*ibid.* 369). After all these various literary productions, Mr. Barrington incurred the animadversions and ridicule of the author of the "Pursuits of Literature."—He was F. R. S. and was elected F. A. S. Feb. 18, 1768, and afterwards Vice-president; which rank he resigned on account of the ill state of his health. He

was

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Excerpt

[More information](#)

8

LITERARY ANECDOTES OF

[1766.]

“An Historical Account of the Life of Charles the Second, King of Great Britain; after the Manner of Mr. Bayle. Drawn from original Writers

was also a member of the club in Essex-street, instituted by Dr. Johnson (see vol. II. p. 553).—He died, after a lingering illness, in the King’s Bench Walk, Temple, March 11, 1800; and his remains were interred in the vault of the Temple church: where the funeral service was performed by the Master, Dr. Reynell, since Dean of Winchester. The pall-bearers were, the Master of the Rolls, Sir William Scott, Counsellor Graham, Mr. Popham, Sir William Wynne, the Attorney General, Mr. Graves, and Mr. Champion; his nephew Col. Price (son of his elder sister, by Robert Price, esq. of Hereford) chief mourner; other mourners, Mr. Stanley, Mr. Aldeney, Mr. Wynne, and Mr. Lascelles, brother benchers and particular friends.—To these particulars, originally compiled by Mr. Gough for the use of Mr. Urban, another correspondent adds, “There are certain men who, without the boast of great talents or resplendent abilities, obtain, by useful diligence, accurate investigation, and invariable integrity, that solid respect which the eccentricities of Genius will seldom suffer throughout a long and honourable life. He was bred to the Bar; but, though esteemed a very sound lawyer, he never rose to any distinguished eminence as a pleader. He was, however, for some time Recorder of Bristol, a very respectable situation, in which he was preceded by that eminent judge Sir Michael Foster, and was succeeded by Mr. Dunning, the first lawyer of his day, afterwards created Lord Ashburton. He was also advanced to the rank of King’s Counsel, and was, during several years, one of the Welsh Judges. If it had been his wish, he might, without doubt, have attained the English Ermine; but, possessed of an ample income, having a strong bias to antiquarian knowledge, natural history, and its concomitant studies, he retired from the practice of the law, and applied his legal knowledge to the purposes of investigating curious questions of legal antiquity. They have been published in a quarto volume. His enquiries into ornithology and various phænomena of Nature are well known; and his conversation on those subjects will not be forgotten by any one who has been admitted to reap the benefits of it. He was an old and most respectable fellow of the Royal Society, and a very ingenious contributor to the annual volume of its Transactions. He was also among those who, at a former period, frequented Tom’s Coffee-house, near the Temple; where, during the early part of the evening, the literature and the theatrical history of the day were agreeably discussed, by men who were capable of deeper discussions; and where, in his earlier years, the writer of this article has frequently listened with pleasure and improvement to their conversation. But Tom’s Coffee-house is no more; and Mr. Barrington was nearly the survivor of those who formed that pleasant society. He had for a great number

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[More information](#)

1766.] THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY. 9

and State Papers. By William Harris *, D. D." 2 volumes, 8vo.

"Hogarth† Moralised," by Dr. John Trusler, 8vo.

number of years occupied the chambers in the King's Bench Walks, in the Inner Temple, where he died. His latter companions were principally the Benchers of that Society, of which he was one; and the little exercise which he had for some time been able to take was in the Temple gardens, whose arrangement he was pleased to superintend, and where he appeared to find an occasional amusement in observing the growth of the few trees and flowers which adorn them. Thus he passed a studious, inoffensive, and long-extended life; and was attended to his grave in the Temple church by the principal members of that Society, with that respect which his life deserved, and that regret which the remembrance of him cannot fail to inspire."

* The Rev. William Harris, a Protestant Dissenting Minister of eminent abilities and character, at Honiton in Devonshire. On the 20th of December, 1765, the degree of D. D. was conferred on him by the University of Glasgow, by the unanimous consent of that Body. "He published, besides the above, an historical and critical account of the Lives of James I. Charles I. and Oliver Cromwell, in 5 vols, 8vo, after the manner of Mr. Bayle. He was preparing a like account of James II. He also wrote the Life of Hugh Peters; besides many fugitive pieces occasionally, for the public prints, in support of liberty and virtue. All his Works have been well received; and those who differ from him in principle, still value him in point of industry and faithfulness." I give this character in the words of his munificent patron Mr. Hollis, who had presented him with many valuable books in reference to the subjects of his Histories; and was at the expence of procuring his Doctor's degree. Dr. Harris's Works were differently thought of by the Authors of the "Critical Review," in an account of the "Life of Charles II." in March 1766.—Industry was the principal characteristick of Dr. Harris; whose writings certainly have none of the vivacity which inspired Bayle; and in the judgment of dispassionate readers, impartiality is frequently violated. Dr. Harris died at Honiton, Feb. 4, 1770.

† Of this great, this inimitable Artist, I had (more than thirty years ago) collected some materials with a view to an Article in the first Edition of these Anecdotes. But my intelligence (aided by the acute and elegant criticism of the late George Steevens, esq.) was so greatly extended beyond the limits of a note, that I formed from them a separate publication, intitled, "Biographical Memoirs of William Hogarth, 1781;" which, by the indulgence of the publick, arrived at a second edition, in 1782; and to a third in 1785; and, at the distance of 25 years, having been thoroughly revised and new modelled, was again re-published in two handsome quarto volumes, illustrated with CLX beautiful Plates, in 1810.

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[More information](#)

10

LITERARY ANECDOTES OF

[1766.]

“The Confessional*; or, a full and free Enquiry into the Right, Utility, Edification, and Success,

* The (at that time anonymous) Author of this celebrated performance was obliged to Mr. Bowyer for some useful hints in its progress through the press, and for several improvements towards a new (and much enlarged) edition. This assistance was thus handsomely acknowledged:

“WORTHY SIR,

Nov. 16, 1766.

“Though Mr. Millar has not perhaps acquainted you with all my scruples concerning another edition of “The Confessional,” yet I can have no objection to be determined by the considerations you lay before me with so friendly a view to the common benefit of my Brethren, and the credit of the Book, which however exhibits nothing more than every Clergyman ought to know without it. I am obliged to you greatly for suggesting the particulars concerning the Articles. The history of the clause, passed in the Lords’ House, and rejected by the Commons, did not escape me. But it was made use of in a pamphlet published by Mr. Millar against Dr. Powell’s Subscription Sermon some years ago; and I was aware, that if the Author of ‘The Confessional’ should ever come to be known, it would at the same time be known, that the same person was the Author of that pamphlet; and to repeat that circumstance, might be called pillaging his own works, which somebody calls the worst kind of plagiarism. However, as it is so much to the purpose, I will try if it may decently be put into a note at the place you mention. The terms of the limited subscription in the 13th Elizabeth, I had noticed in Selden and elsewhere; but own I had overlooked the double subscription in the Act of Uniformity, and am obliged to you for reminding me of it. With regard to the canonical subscription, my opinion is exactly the same with yours. But the case with me was this: I had the late Lord Hardwicke’s opinion in MS. long before it was printed, from the late Mr. Erskine’s papers: and as I supposed it conclusive as to the Clergy, I did not meddle with the limited subscription, as that might give advantage to an adversary, the point being certainly problematical. I own I differ with his Lordship as to the obligation of the Canons, even upon the Clergy, in this matter of subscription. I cannot see how canonical obedience, which is retained to things lawful and honest, can be extended to an ordinance enjoining unlimited subscription contrary to law. But the point was rather too delicate for me to handle in the light it appears to me, and, as I now perceive, it appears likewise to you. Some years ago I had occasion to ask a leading man in Cambridge by what authority they required subscription for degrees; and had for answer, it was by virtue of an injunction from James I. under his own Royal hand. The Cambridge people have dropped subscription at Matriculations, though I imagine both you and I subscribed at Matriculation, perhaps both at the very same time; for I remember you at St. John’s
of