

*To the right reverend My Lord the Bishop of Edinburgh.*

MY LORD,

*Saltoun, 5th March 1666.*

That any action of mine should occasion the least displeasure or trouble to my superiors cannot but much vex myself. The judging a reformation to be necessary is a thought I cannot avoid. All ranks both of the clergy and laitie have sinned, and all ought to be reformed; and, till this be carried on, no external amendments will recover us.

My

My Lord, my desires of this engage me to represent to yourself, with others of my Lords the Bishops, my thoughts in order to it, wherein (although I conceive I grounded them upon authority not to be contemned) I assume not in the least to dictate, only to propose my own opinion, with the grounds inducing me to it. This I intended neither for any public discoursing, nor private reproaching either of your order or persons, to both of which I shall ever pay all due esteem, but for a plain representation to yourselves; which having done without the counsell or advyce of any, 'tis the lesse wonder though I might have erred and been mistaken in many things. I am sorry that it hath given so great offence: I am sure I intended none by it. As for the form of my whole paper, or the particular expressions of it, or the manner of addressing it, I shall not stand to justify them; but wherein I have transgressed, do beg pardon. I shall only desire, that, be it never so irregularly done, the matter be impartially weighed, that so good a cause suffer not by my meddling in it, but that a reformation of all abuses that be among us be vigorously promoted, that the Church and Churchmen being purified, the work of Religion may be zealously advanced. And how difficult soever this may appear at a distance, I am assured, that, when gone about, it shall be found both easy and of unspeakable satisfaction to those who apply themselves to it, and, by the blessing of God, which is never wanting to such endeavours, shall greatly rebound to the infinite advantage of this so desolate and broken church. I shall never cease to pray for it, and shall labour patiently to wait for his coming who will make all things new: Meanwhile, I shall endeavour to carry myself so as that neither by the letting this abroad, nor any other way, ought may come from me which is contrary to the duty of,

MY LORD,

Your most humble and most obedient son and servant,

GILBERT BURNET.