

LETTER

FROM

ARCHBISHOP SHARP TO HIS GRACE THE EARL OF
MIDDLETON, LORD HIGH COMMISSIONER.

From the Original, in the Museum.

May it please your Grace,

THE expectation of an express to be sent day by day this week, occasioned my omission of giving your Gr. my account, which yet I must send by the poast. Before I received that from your Gra. of May 18, I had another oppertunity of speking with my L. Chancellor of England to the full of all I.wald desire. His Lo^p. was pleased to tell me under what character my Lord Rothess was represented, and that he beleived the reprasenter now was of another opinion both of his Lo^p. and of me. He told me relating the circumstances, how my letter, dated in January, was made use of, and how much I was oblidge to your Gr. testimonies of me upon several occasions. Having enquired particularly of the management of affairs in Parliament, he expressed a great satisfaction, especially in your Gr. conduct, saying he had always a high esteem of your (Gr.) excellent parts and temper; and now you had given ample experiments thereof. The King is very sensible of your deservings,

and your country is exceedingly beholden to you; yea, he asked me of the way of your family, and did it to my thinking with such concernment, as if you had been one of his nearest relations. As to the matters of our church, he told me the King had acquainted him with what I had spoke; and by what he did ask of me, and communicat to me of the King's purpose in reference to this church and our church, I found that which your Gr. was pleased often to tell me was not without ground; and I perceive clearly, were not my L. Chancellor now fully satisfied y^t your Gr. may accomplish your purpose for the settlement of our church, he wuld not be induced to give way for removing of the English garrisons He spoke to me of the method to be usit for bringing about our church settlement, and bid me give my opinion of a present expedient; which, when I had offered, he was plesit to approve, so did the Bishops of London and Worcestre: and after consultation with our Lords, it was agreed that Lauderdaill and I should draw a proclamation from the King, to be sent to your Gr., with which I trust you will be satisfied; and, with submission to your Gr. opinion, I should think the time for our setling will be more seasonable and proper after that your Gr. hath come hither, and so ordered the way of it, as y^t the perfecting of the work may be upon your hand from whom it had its beginning, and under whose countenance and protection it must thrive and take rooting. Your Gr. knowest the work is of great consequence, and will not want its difficulties; which can only be over come by your prudence and resolution. Many things are previous to the ordering and signing of it; and till they be mouldit, the proclamation will suffice to the disposing of minds to acquiescence to the King's pleasure, which your Gr. will be able to put into execution with

fewer inconveniencies then if the King should presently declare. There is upon my heart a fixed perswasion of the necessity of your Grace's being here before any further procedure as to our church settlement, and that upon many accounts; which was my chief consideration in moving the King and my L. Chancellor for issuing such a proclamation, which will be sent imediatly doun after my L. Chancellor has seen the draught of it. I spoke of two other particulars effectually conducing to our settlement, which the King will take care of; but I cannot in this way acquaint your Gr. with them till I wait upon you. My Lords here have givin by this poast an account of there proceedings this week, especially of this day, with the King as to the passing of this proclamation,—the adjournment of the parliament till March next,—the calling your Grace hither to wait upon his Ma.—the ordering of the militia,—the appointing a commission for presentation to kirks,—the writing to your Gr. for passing an act for all ministers presented to take the oath of alleagance,—the continuing the act of indemnity till the next session of parliament; for all which the King has given positive order to his secretary. This parliament ^{was} is fully adapted to the King's purposes, both as to church and state. They make a busling about the removing of the garrisons from us; but the King will have them removed, and hath a present employment for them, without troubling them to march throw England, as I suppose your Gr. will know by his pacquet. My Lords Chancellor and the President act their parts in pursuance of ther trust nobly and successfully; and from what appeareth to me, I may make this inference, that the great and wise God, by whose providence the government of the world is disposed for his great ends, hath in a special maner ownd your Gr. by putting it into your heart to send up those noble lords at this time, without

whose coming I perceive your publick proceedings had been intangled; but now I trust all opposing designs are dashed, and a foundation laid for a superstructure, which will render your name precious to the succeeding generations. They are fain of nothing, and catch at a shadow, who are high in expectation of a change of governors or government, upon supposition of my Lord Cassils being in favour here, and that he is to continue in places, for nether of which there is any ground; and such reports in Edinburgh are as true as the report I met with the first week I came to London, that the E. of Cassils was most favourably entertained by the King at his first coming to Court, when my L. Chancellor and Rothess could not have access five days after their coming. There are some Scotts emissaries in the citty here, who spread lyes on purpose of proceedings with you; and it seems it is a part of their employment from this to creat lyes to Edinburgh. The King and his Chancellor are resolved to keep up the reputatⁿ of your parliament, which they say cannot be done if Cassils be admitted to places of trust; a demonstration wherof the King hath givin by a comand to draw a patent for my Lord of Atholl. I am sure it is not the King's fault if men of bad principles be trusted; and if your Gr. will pardon my Lords for their being prevailed with to admit of the E. of Tweddale for the comand of the foot in East Lothian, I think they will give a good account of all the rest. Col. Rutherford is now at Dunkirk, where he is governor by the King's appointment. The parliament are upon settling the militia upon the King and his successors; and in their act for the security of his person, they order that those who speak or print to the prejudice of the government in state or church, shall incur a *premunire*. I am sorrie if Mr Douglass, after such professions made to

your Gr. shall disappoint your expectations. The good LORD prosper your Grace, bliss my Ladye, and your noble family. I am,

Your Gr. most humble faythfull

Chaplain and Servant,

JA. SHARP.

London, May 21. 1666

Addressed for
*His Grace the Earle of Middleton, his Ma. High Commissionar to the
Parliament of Scotland.*