in his power to provide for him otherwiſe, Swift left his patron (1694) in discontent ; having previouſly taken his maſter’s degree at Oxford, by means of a testimonial from Dublin, in which the words of diſgrace were omitted. He was resolved to enter into the church, where his firſt pre­ferment was only L.100 a-year, being the prebend of *Kilroot* in *Conner* ; which ſome time afterwards, upon Sir Wil­liam Temple’s earneſtly inviting him back to his houſe at Moorpark, he resigned in favour of a clergyman far ad­vanced in years and burdened with a numerous family. For this man he solicited the prebend, to which he himſelf in­ducted him.

In 1699 Swift lost his patron Sir William Temple, who left him a legacy in money, with the property of his manuscripts ; and, on his death-bed, obtained for him a promiſe from the king of the firſt prebend that ſhould become va­cant at Weſtminſter or Canterbury. That this promiſe might not be forgotten, Swift dedicated to the king the poſthumous works with which he was entruſted, and for a while attended the court ; but ſoon found his felicitations hopeless. He was then invited by the earl of Berkeley to accompany him into Ireland, where, after ſuffering some cruel diſappointments, he obtained the livings of Laracor and Rath- beggin in the dioceſe of Meath ; and ſoon afterwards invited over the unfortunate Stella, a young woman of the name of Johnſon, whoſe life he contrived to embitter, and whole days, though he certainly loved her, we may confidently af­firm that he ſhortened by his caprice.

This lady is generally believed to have been the daughter of Sir William Temple’s ſteward ; but her niece, a Mrs Hearn, aſſured Mr Berkeley, the editor of a volume of let­ters intitled *Literary Relics,* that her father was a merchant, and the youngeſt brother of a good family in Nottinghamſhire ; that her mother was the intimate friend of lady Gif­ford, Sir William’s ſiſter ; and that see herſelf was educated in the family with his niece, the late Mrs Temple of Moor­park by Farnham@@\*. This ſtory would be intitled to the fulleſt credit, had not Mrs Hearn affirmed, in the ſame letter, that, before the death of Sir William Temple, Mrs Johnſon’s little fortune had been greatly injured by the South- Sea bubbles, which are known to have injured no person till the year 1720: (See Company, II. 1.) When one part of a narrative is ſo palpably falſe, the remainder will always be received with heſitation. But whether Miss Johnſon was the daughter of Temple’s steward or of the friend of lady Gifford, it is certain that Sir William left her L. 1000 ; and that, accompanied by Mrs Dingley, whoſe whole fortune amounted to an annuity of L.27 for life, ſhe went, in conſequence of Swift’s invitation, to Laracor. With theſe two ladies he paſſed his hours of relaxation, and to them he opened his bosom ; but they never reſided in the ſame houſe, nor did he ſee either without a witneſs.

In 1701 Swift publiſhed *A discοurse of the contests and dissensions in Athens and Rome.* It was his firſt work, and indeed the only which he ever expreſsly acknowledged. According to his conſtant practice he had concealed his name ; but after its appearance, paying a viſit to some Iriſh biſhop, he was aſked by him if he had read that pamphlet, and what its reputation was in London. Upon his reply­ing that he believed it was very well liked in London ; “ Very well liked!” ſaid the biſhop with some emotion. “ Yes, Sir, it is one of the fineſt tracts that ever was written, and biſhop Burnet is one of the beſt writers in the world.” Swift, who always hated Burnet with something more than political rancour, immediately queſtioned his right to the work, when he was told by the biſhop that he was “a young man ;” and ſtill perſiſting to doubt of the juſtice of Burners claim, on account of the dissimilarity of the ſtyle of the pamphlet from that of his other works, he was told that he was “a very positive young man,” as no perſon in England but biſhop Burnet was capable of writing it. Upon which Swift replied, with some indignation, I am to aſſure your lord ship, however, that biſhop Burnet did *not* write the pamphlet, for I wrote it myſelf. And thus was he forced in the heat of argument to avow what otherwiſe he would have for ever concealed.

Early in the ensuing ſpring king William died ; and Swift, on his next viſit to London, found queen Anne upon the throne. It was generally thought, upon this event, that the Tory party would have had the aſcendant ; but, con­trary to all expectation, the Whigs had managed matters ſo well as to get entirely into the queen’s confidence, and to have the whole adminiſtration of affairs in their hands. Swift’s friends were now in power; and the Whigs in general, know­ing him to be the author of the Diſcourſe on the Conteſts, &c. which was written in defence of king William and his miniſters againſt the violent proceedings of the houſe of commons, conſidered themſelves as much obliged to him, and looked upon him as faſt to their party. But Swift thought with the Whigs only in the ſtate ; for with reſpect to the church his principles were always thoſe of a Tory. He therefore declined any intimate connection with the leaders of the party, who at that time professed what was called *low church principles.* But what above all ſhocked him, says Mr Sheridan, was their inviting Deists, Freethink­ers, Atheiſts, Jews, and Infidels, to be of their party, under pretence of moderation, and allowing a general liberty of conſcience. As Swift was in his heart a man of true reli­gion, he could not have borne, even in his private character, to have mixed with ſuch a motely crew. But when we conſider his principles in his political capacity, that he looked upon the church of England, as by law eſtabliſhed, to be the main pillar of our newly erected conſtitution, he could not, confidently with the character of a good citizen, join with thoſe who conſidered it more as an ornament than a ſupport to the edifice ; and could therefore look on with compoſure while it was undermining, or could even open the gate to a blind multitude, to try, like Sampson, their ſtrength againſt it, and conſider it only as ſport. With ſuch a party, neither his religious nor political principles would ſuffer him to join ; and with regard to the Tories, as is uſual in the violence of factions, they had run into oppoſite extremes, equally dangerous to the ſtate. He was therefore during the earlier part of the queen’s reign of no party, but em­ployed himſelf in diſcharging the duties of his function, and in publiſhing from time to time ſuch tracts as he thought might be uſeſul. In the year 1704 he publiſhed the *Tale of a Tub,* which, conſidered merely as a work of genius, is unqueſtionably the greateſt which he ever produced ; but the levity with which religion was thought to be there treated, raised up enemies to him among all parties, and eventually precluded him from a biſhopric. From that pe­riod till the year 1708, he ſeems to have employed himſelf in ſolitary ſtudy ; but he then gave ſucceſſively to the pub­lic *The Sentiments of a Church of England man,* the ridicule of aſtrology under the name of *Bickerstaff,* the *Argument against abolishing Christianity,* and the defence of the *Sacra­mental Test.*

Soon after began the buſy and important part of Swift’s life. He was employed (1710) by the primate of Ireland to solicit the queen for a remiſſion of the firſt fruits and twentieth parts to the Iriſh clergy. This introduced him to Mr Harley, afterwards earl of Oxford, who, though a Whig himſelf, was at the head of the Tory miniſtry, and in great need of an auxiliary ſo able as Swift, by whoſe pen he and the other miniſters might be ſupported in pamphlets,

@@@[m]\* See Inquiry into the Life of the Dean Swift, prefixed to Literary Relics, printed in 1789, for Elliot and Kay.