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## London Rector

**H**is induction as rector of St. Stephen's gave Davenport some security for the first time in his life. The parish, underlining the point made in their dispute with the former rector, provided him a guaranteed income of £11 a year with an additional gift of £39 that was revocable at the discretion of the vestry.<sup>1</sup> He was also provided a house owned by the parish at a modest rent.<sup>2</sup> His new salary provided him with the opportunity to pay his Oxford fees and receive his degree. In addition to satisfying his financial obligations at the university, he was required to engage in an academic exercise. On May 18, 1625, he returned to Oxford to join in a disputation in the Divinity School with George Palmer of Lincoln College before John Prideaux, the rector of Exeter College.<sup>3</sup> Prideaux was the university's Regius Professor of Divinity and noted as a strong Calvinist and opponent of Arminianism. The subject set for the disputation was the issue of who was saved and how. In the notes he kept of the disputation, Davenport indicated that he argued that all men are not saved: "we are tormented by one disease; a remedy is provided for few." The reason not all are cured is because "so the physician has willed it." "The guilt was common," he concluded, "but not the cure." God "appears the judge of the wicked, and hence the Father of the good." As to whether or not an individual could fall from grace, Davenport concluded that "those whom Christ has called his spouse and his members are those to whom he has given the earnest of the Spirit, [which] neither the power of the world nor of Satan can wrest from him, nor can the gates of hell prevail against them."<sup>4</sup> Palmer's contrary argument was drawn from the recently published *Appello Caesarem* of Richard Montagu, who was perceived as the leading English critic of orthodox Calvinism. In deciding for Davenport, Prideaux denounced Montagu as *merus grammaticus*.<sup>5</sup> Interestingly,