

## CHAPTER VIII.

THE marked discourtesy of the Pope might well have irritated the meekest of princes. But the only effect which it produced on James was to make him more lavish of caresses and compliments. While Castelmaine, his whole soul festered with angry passions, was on his road back to England, the Nuncio was loaded with honours which his own judgment would have led him to reject. He had, by a fiction often used in the Church of Rome, been lately raised to the episcopal dignity without having the charge of any see. He was called Archbishop of Amasia, a city of Pontus, the birthplace of Strabo and Mithridates. James insisted that the ceremony of consecration should be performed in the chapel of Saint James's Palace. The Vicar Apostolic Leyburn and two Irish prelates officiated. The doors were thrown open to the public; and it was remarked that some of those Puritans who had recently turned courtiers were among the spectators. In the evening Adda, wearing the robes of his new office, joined the circle in the Queen's apartments. James fell on his knees in the presence of the whole Court and implored a blessing. In spite of the restraint imposed by etiquette, the astonishment and disgust of the bystanders could not be concealed.\* It was long indeed since an English sovereign had knelt to mortal man; and those who saw the strange sight could not but think of that day of shame when John did homage for his crown between the hands of Pandolph.

In a short time a still more ostentatious pageant was performed in honour of the Holy See. It was determined that the Nuncio should go to Court in solemn procession. Some persons on whose obedience the King had counted showed, on this occasion, for the first time, signs of a mutinous spirit.

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Conse-  
cration  
of the  
Nuncio at  
St. James's  
Palace.

His pub-  
lic re-  
ception.

\* Barillon, May 2. 1687.

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The Duke of Somerset.

Among these the most conspicuous was the second temporal peer of the realm, Charles Seymour, commonly called the proud Duke of Somerset. He was in truth a man in whom the pride of birth and rank amounted almost to a disease. The fortune which he had inherited was not adequate to the high place which he held among the English aristocracy: but he had become possessed of the greatest estate in England by his marriage with the daughter and heiress of the last Percy who wore the ancient coronet of Northumberland. Somerset was only in his twenty-fifth year, and was very little known to the public. He was a Lord of the King's Bedchamber, and colonel of one of the regiments which had been raised at the time of the Western insurrection. He had not scrupled to carry the sword of state into the royal chapel on days of festival: but he now resolutely refused to swell the pomp of the Nuncio. Some members of his family implored him not to draw on himself the royal displeasure: but their intreaties produced no effect. The King himself expostulated. "I thought, my Lord," said he, "that I was doing you a great honour in appointing you to escort the minister of the first of all crowned heads." "Sir," said the Duke, "I am advised that I cannot obey your Majesty without breaking the law." "I will make you fear me as well as the law," answered the King, insolently. "Do you not know that I am above the law?" "Your Majesty may be above the law," replied Somerset; "but I am not; and, while I obey the law, I fear nothing." The King turned away in high displeasure, and Somerset was instantly dismissed from his posts in the household and in the army.\*

On one point, however, James showed some prudence. He did not venture to parade the Papal Envoy in state before the vast population of the capital. The ceremony was performed, on the third of July 1687, at Windsor. Great multitudes flocked to the little town. The visitors were so numerous that there was neither food nor lodging for them; and

\* Memoirs of the Duke of Somerset; Citters, July 11. 1687; Eachard's History of the Revolution; Clarke's Life of James the Second, ii. 116, 117, 118.; Lord Lonsdale's Memoirs.



many persons of quality sate the whole day in their carriages waiting for the exhibition. At length, late in the afternoon, the Knight Marshal's men appeared on horseback. Then came a long train of running footmen; and then, in a royal coach, appeared Adda, robed in purple, with a brilliant cross on his breast. He was followed by the equipages of the principal courtiers and ministers of state. In his train the crowd recognised with disgust the arms and liveries of Crewe, Bishop of Durham, and of Cartwright, Bishop of Chester.\*

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On the following day appeared in the Gazette a proclamation dissolving that Parliament which of all the fifteen Parliaments held by the Stuarts had been the most obsequious.\*\*

Dissolution  
of  
the Par-  
liament.

Meanwhile new difficulties had arisen in Westminster Hall. Only a few months had elapsed since some Judges had been turned out and others put in for the purpose of obtaining a decision favourable to the crown in the case of Sir Edward Hales; and already fresh changes were necessary.

The King had scarcely formed that army on which he chiefly depended for the accomplishing of his designs when he found that he could not himself control it. When war was actually raging in the kingdom a mutineer or a deserter might be tried by a military tribunal and executed by the Provost Marshal. But there was now profound peace. The common law of England, having sprung up in an age when all men bore arms occasionally and none constantly, recognised no distinction, in time of peace, between a soldier and any other subject; nor was there any Act resembling that by which the authority necessary for the government of regular troops is now annually confided to the Sovereign. Some old statutes indeed made desertion felony in certain specified cases. But those statutes were applicable only to soldiers serving the King in actual war, and could not without the grossest disingenuousness be so strained as to include the case of a man who, in a time of profound tranquillity at home and abroad,

Military  
offences  
illegally  
punished.

\* London Gazette, July 7. 1687; Citters, July 17. Account of the ceremony reprinted among the Somers Tracts.

\*\* London Gazette, July 4. 1687.

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should become tired of the camp at Hounslow and should go back to his native village. The government appears to have had no hold on such a man, except the hold which master bakers and master tailors have on their journeymen. He and his officers were, in the eye of the law, on a level. If he swore at them he might be fined for an oath. If he struck them he might be prosecuted for assault and battery. In truth the regular army was under less restraint than the militia. For the militia was a body established by an Act of Parliament, and it had been provided by that Act that slight punishments might be summarily inflicted for breaches of discipline.

It does not appear that, during the reign of Charles the Second, the practical inconvenience arising from this state of the law had been much felt. The explanation may perhaps be that, till the last year of his reign, the force which he maintained in England consisted chiefly of household troops, whose pay was so high that dismissal from the service would have been felt by most of them as a great calamity. The stipend of a private in the Life Guards was a provision for the younger son of a gentleman. Even the Foot Guards were paid about as high as manufacturers in a prosperous season, and were therefore in a situation which the great body of the labouring population might regard with envy. The return of the garrison of Tangier and the raising of the new regiments had made a great change. There were now in England many thousands of soldiers, each of whom received only eightpence a day. The dread of dismissal was not sufficient to keep them to their duty: and corporal punishment their officers could not legally inflict. James had therefore one plain choice before him, to let his army dissolve itself, or to induce the Judges to pronounce that the law was what every barrister in the Temple knew that it was not.

It was peculiarly important to secure the cooperation of two courts; the court of King's Bench, which was the first criminal tribunal in the realm, and the court of gaol delivery which sat at the Old Bailey, and which had jurisdiction over offences committed in the capital. In both these courts there were great difficulties. Herbert, Chief Justice of the King's



Bench, servile as he had hitherto been, would go no further. Resistance still more sturdy was to be expected from Sir John Holt, who, as Recorder of the City of London, occupied the bench at the Old Bailey. Holt was an eminently learned and clear-headed lawyer: he was an upright and courageous man; and, though he had never been factious, his political opinions had a tinge of Whiggism. All obstacles, however, disappeared before the royal will. Holt was turned out of the recordership. Herbert and another Judge were removed from the King's Bench; and the vacant places were filled by persons in whom the government could confide. It was indeed necessary to go very low down in the legal profession before men could be found willing to render such services as were now required. The new Chief Justice, Sir Robert Wright, was ignorant to a proverb; yet ignorance was not his worst fault. His vices had ruined him. He had resorted to infamous ways of raising money, and had, on one occasion, made a false affidavit in order to obtain possession of five hundred pounds. Poor, dissolute, and shameless, he had become one of the parasites of Jeffreys, who promoted him and insulted him. Such was the man who was now selected by James to be Lord Chief Justice of England. One Richard Allibone, who was even more ignorant of the law than Wright, and who, as a Roman Catholic, was incapable of holding office, was appointed a puisne Judge of the King's Bench. Sir Bartholomew Shower, equally notorious as a servile Tory and a tedious orator, became Recorder of London. When these changes had been made, several deserters were brought to trial. They were convicted in the face of the letter and of the spirit of the law. Some received sentence of death at the bar of the King's Bench, some at the Old Bailey. They were hanged in sight of the regiments to which they had belonged; and care was taken that the executions should be announced in the London Gazette, which very seldom noticed such events.\*

\* See the statutes 18 Henry 6. c. 19.; 2 & 3 Ed. 6. c. 2.; Eachard's History of the Revolution; Kennet, iii. 468.; North's Life of Guildford, 247.; London Gazette, April 18. May 23. 1687; Vindication of the E. of R. (Earl of Rochester).

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Proceed-  
ings of  
the High  
Commis-  
sion.

It may well be believed, that the law, so grossly insulted by courts which derived from it all their authority, and which were in the habit of looking to it as their guide, would be little respected by a tribunal which had originated in tyrannical caprice. The new High Commission had, during the first months of its existence, merely inhibited clergymen from exercising spiritual functions. The rights of property had remained untouched. But, early in the year 1687, it was determined to strike at freehold interests, and to impress on every Anglican priest and prelate the conviction that, if he refused to lend his aid for the purpose of destroying the Church of which he was a minister, he would in an hour be reduced to beggary.

The Uni-  
versities.

It would have been prudent to try the first experiment on some obscure individual. But the government was under an infatuation such as, in a more simple age, would have been called judicial. War was therefore at once declared against the two most venerable corporations of the realm, the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

The power of those bodies has during many ages been great; but it was at the height during the latter part of the seventeenth century. None of the neighbouring countries could boast of such splendid and opulent seats of learning. The schools of Edinburgh and Glasgow, of Leyden and Utrecht, of Louvain and Leipsic, of Padua and Bologna, seemed mean to scholars who had been educated in the magnificent foundations of Wykeham and Wolsey, of Henry the Sixth and Henry the Eighth. Literature and science were, in the academical system of England, surrounded with pomp, armed with magistracy, and closely allied with all the most august institutions of the state. To be the Chancellor of an University was a distinction eagerly sought by the magnates of the realm. To represent an University in Parliament was a favourite object of the ambition of statesmen. Nobles and even princes were proud to receive from an University the privilege of wearing the doctoral scarlet. The curious were attracted to the Universities by ancient buildings rich with the tracery of the middle ages, by modern buildings



which exhibited the highest skill of Jones and Wren, by noble halls and chapels, by museums, by botanical gardens, and by the only great public libraries which the kingdom then contained. The state which Oxford especially displayed on solemn occasions rivalled that of sovereign princes. When her Chancellor, the venerable Duke of Ormond, sate in his embroidered mantle on his throne under the painted ceiling of the Sheldonian theatre, surrounded by hundreds of graduates robed according to their rank, while the noblest youths of England were solemnly presented to him as candidates for academical honours, he made an appearance scarcely less regal than that which his master made in the Banqueting House of Whitehall. At the Universities had been formed the minds of almost all the eminent clergymen, lawyers, physicians, wits, poets, and orators of the land, and of a large proportion of the nobility and of the opulent gentry. It is also to be observed that the connection between the scholar and the school did not terminate with his residence. He often continued to be through life a member of the academical body, and to vote as such at all important elections. He therefore regarded his old haunts by the Cam and the Isis with even more than the affection which educated men ordinarily feel for the place of their education. There was no corner of England in which both Universities had not grateful and zealous sons. Any attack on the honour or interests of either Cambridge or Oxford was certain to excite the resentment of a powerful, active, and intelligent class scattered over every county from Northumberland to Cornwall.

The resident graduates, as a body, were perhaps not superior positively to the resident graduates of our time: but they occupied a far higher position as compared with the rest of the community. For Cambridge and Oxford were then the only two provincial towns in the kingdom in which could be found a large number of men whose understandings had been highly cultivated. Even the capital felt great respect for the authority of the Universities, not only on questions of divinity, of natural philosophy, and of classical antiquity, but also on points on which capitals generally claim the right of

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The great moral and intellectual influence of the English Universities had been strenuously exerted on the side of the crown. The head quarters of Charles the First had been at Oxford; and the silver tankards and salvers of all the colleges had been melted down to supply his military chest. Cambridge was not less loyally disposed. She had sent a large part of her plate to the royal camp; and the rest would have followed had not the town been seized by the troops of the Parliament. Both Universities had been treated with extreme severity by the victorious Puritans. Both had hailed the Restoration with delight. Both had steadily opposed the Exclusion Bill. Both had expressed the deepest horror at the Rye House Plot. Cambridge had not only deposed her Chancellor Monmouth, but had marked her abhorrence of his treason in a manner unworthy of a seat of learning, by committing to the flames the canvass on which his pleasing face and figure had been portrayed by the utmost skill of Kneller.\*\* Oxford, which lay nearer to the Western insurgents, had given still stronger proofs of loyalty. The students, under the sanction of their preceptors, had taken arms by hundreds in defence of hereditary right. Such were the bodies which James now determined to insult and plunder in direct defiance of the laws and of his plighted faith.

Proceedings against the University of Cambridge.

Several Acts of Parliament, as clear as any that were to be found in the statute book, had provided that no person should be admitted to any degree in either University without

\* Dryden's Prologues and Cibber's Memoirs contain abundant proofs of the estimation in which the taste of the Oxonians was held by the most admired poets and actors.

\*\* See the poem called Advice to the Painter upon the Defeat of the Rebels in the West. See also another poem, a most detestable one, on the same subject, by Stepney, who was then studying at Trinity College.



taking the oath of supremacy, and another oath of similar character called the oath of obedience. Nevertheless, in February 1687, a royal letter was sent to Cambridge directing that a Benedictine monk, named Alban Francis, should be admitted a Master of Arts.

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The academical functionaries, divided between reverence for the King and reverence for the law, were in great distress. Messengers were despatched in all haste to the Duke of Albemarle, who had succeeded Monmouth as Chancellor of the University. He was requested to represent the matter properly to the King. Meanwhile the Registrar and Bedells waited on Francis, and informed him that, if he would take the oaths according to law, he should instantly be admitted. He refused to be sworn, remonstrated with the officers of the University on their disregard of the royal mandate, and, finding them resolute, took horse, and hastened to relate his grievances at Whitehall.

The heads of the colleges now assembled in council. The best legal opinions were taken, and were decidedly in favour of the course which had been pursued. But a second letter from Sunderland, in high and menacing terms, was already on the road. Albemarle informed the University, with many expressions of concern, that he had done his best, but that he had been coldly and ungraciously received by the King. The academical body, alarmed by the royal displeasure, and conscientiously desirous to meet the royal wishes, but determined not to violate the clear law of the land, submitted the humblest and most respectful explanations, but to no purpose. In a short time came down a summons citing the Vicechancellor and the Senate to appear before the new High Commission at Westminster on the twenty-first of April. The Vicechancellor was to attend in person; the Senate, which consists of all the Doctors and Masters of the University, was to send deputies.

When the appointed day arrived, a great concourse filled the Council chamber. Jeffreys sate at the head of the board. Rochester, since the white staff had been taken from him,

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was no longer a member. In his stead appeared the Lord Chamberlain, John Sheffield, Earl of Mulgrave. The fate of this nobleman has, in one respect, resembled the fate of his colleague Sprat. Mulgrave wrote verses which scarcely ever rose above absolute mediocrity; but, as he was a man of high note in the political and fashionable world, these verses found admirers. Time dissolved the charm, but, unfortunately for him, not until his lines had acquired a prescriptive right to a place in all collections of the works of English poets. To this day accordingly his insipid essays in rhyme and his paltry songs to Amoretta and Gloriana are reprinted in company with Comus and Alexander's Feast. The consequence is that our generation knows Mulgrave chiefly as a poetaster, and despises him as such. In truth however he was, by the acknowledgment of those who neither loved nor esteemed him, a man distinguished by fine parts, and in parliamentary eloquence inferior to scarcely any orator of his time. His moral character was entitled to no respect. He was a libertine without that openness of heart and hand which sometimes makes libertinism amiable, and a haughty aristocrat without that elevation of sentiment which sometimes makes aristocratical haughtiness respectable. The satirists of the age nicknamed him Lord Allpride. Yet was his pride compatible with all ignoble vices. Many wondered that a man who had so exalted a sense of his dignity could be so hard and niggardly in all pecuniary dealings. He had given deep offence to the royal family by venturing to entertain the hope that he might win the heart and hand of the Princess Anne. Disappointed in this attempt, he had exerted himself to regain by meanness the favour which he had forfeited by presumption. His epitaph, written by himself, still informs all who pass through Westminster Abbey that he lived and died a sceptic in religion; and we learn from the memoirs which he wrote that one of his favourite subjects of mirth was the Romish superstition. Yet he began, as soon as James was on the throne, to express a strong inclination towards Popery, and at length in private affected to be a con-



vert. This abject hypocrisy had been rewarded by a place in the Ecclesiastical Commission.\*

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Before that formidable tribunal now appeared the Vice-chancellor of the University of Cambridge, Doctor John Pechell. He was a man of no great ability or vigour; but he was accompanied by eight distinguished academicians, elected by the Senate. One of these was Isaac Newton, Fellow of Trinity College, and Professor of mathematics. His genius was then in the fullest vigour. The great work, which entitles him to the highest place among the geometricians and natural philosophers of all ages and of all nations, had been some time printing under the sanction of the Royal Society, and was almost ready for publication. He was the steady friend of civil liberty and of the Protestant religion: but his habits by no means fitted him for the conflicts of active life. He therefore stood modestly silent among the delegates, and left to men more versed in practical business the task of pleading the cause of his beloved University.

Never was there a clearer case. The law was express. The practice had been almost invariably in conformity with the law. It might perhaps have happened that, on a day of great solemnity, when many honorary degrees were conferred, a person who had not taken the oaths might have passed in the crowd. But such an irregularity, the effect of mere haste and inadvertence, could not be cited as a precedent. Foreign ambassadors of various religions, and in particular one Mussulman, had been admitted without the oaths. But it might well be doubted whether such cases fell within the reason and spirit of the Acts of Parliament. It was not even pretended that any person to whom the oaths had been tendered and who had refused them had ever taken a degree; and this was the situation in which Francis stood. The delegates offered to prove that, in the late reign, several

\* Mackay's character of Sheffield, with Swift's note; the Satire on the Deponents, 1688; Life of John, Duke of Buckinghamshire, 1729; Barillon, Aug. 30. 1687. I have a manuscript lampoon on Mulgrave, dated 1690. It is not destitute of spirit. The most remarkable lines are these:—

“Peters (Petre) to-day and Burnet to-morrow,  
Knaves of all sides and religions he'll woo.”

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royal mandates had been treated as nullities because the persons recommended had not chosen to qualify according to law, and that, on such occasions, the government had always acquiesced in the propriety of the course taken by the University. But Jeffreys would hear nothing. He soon found out that the Vicechancellor was weak, ignorant, and timid, and therefore gave a loose to all that insolence which had long been the terror of the Old Bailey. The unfortunate Doctor, unaccustomed to such a presence and to such treatment, was soon harassed and scared into helpless agitation. When other academicians who were more capable of defending their cause attempted to speak they were rudely silenced. "You are not Vicechancellor. When you are, you may talk. Till then it will become you to hold your peace." The defendants were thrust out of the court without a hearing. In a short time they were called in again, and informed that the Commissioners had determined to deprive Pechell of the Vicechancellorship, and to suspend him from all the emoluments to which he was entitled as Master of a college, emoluments which were strictly of the nature of freehold property. "As for you," said Jeffreys to the delegates, "most of you are divines. I will therefore send you home with a text of scripture, 'Go your way and sin no more, lest a worse thing happen to you.'"<sup>\*</sup>

State of  
Oxford.

These proceedings might seem sufficiently unjust and violent. But the King had already begun to treat Oxford with such rigour that the rigour shown towards Cambridge might, by comparison, be called lenity. Already University College had been turned by Obadiah Walker into a Roman Catholic seminary. Already Christ Church was governed by a Roman Catholic Dean. Mass was already said daily in both those colleges. The tranquil and majestic city, so long the stronghold of monarchical principles, was agitated by passions which it had never before known. The undergraduates, with the connivance of those who were in authority over them, hooted the members of Walker's congregation, and chanted

<sup>\*</sup> See the proceedings against the University of Cambridge in the collection of State Trials.



satirical ditties under his windows. Some fragments of the serenades which then disturbed the High Street have been preserved. The burden of one ballad was this:

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“Old Obadiah  
Sings Ave Maria.”

When the actors came down to Oxford, the public feeling was expressed still more strongly. Howard's Committee was performed. This play, written soon after the Restoration, exhibited the Puritans in an odious and contemptible light, and had therefore been, during a quarter of a century, a favourite with Oxonian audiences. It was now a greater favourite than ever; for, by a lucky coincidence, one of the most conspicuous characters was an old hypocrite named Obadiah. The audience shouted with delight when, in the last scene, Obadiah was dragged in with a halter round his neck; and the acclamations redoubled when one of the players, departing from the written text of the comedy, proclaimed that Obadiah should be hanged because he had changed his religion. The King was much provoked by this insult. So mutinous indeed was the temper of the University that one of the newly raised regiments, the same which is now called the Second Dragoon Guards, was quartered at Oxford for the purpose of preventing an outbreak.\*

These events ought to have convinced James that he had entered on a course which must lead him to his ruin. To the clamours of London he had been long accustomed. They had been raised against him, sometimes unjustly, and sometimes vainly. He had repeatedly braved them, and might brave them still. But that Oxford, the seat of loyalty, the head quarters of the Cavalier army, the place where his father and brother had held their court when they thought themselves insecure in their stormy capital, the place where the writings of the great republican teachers had recently been committed to the flames, should now be in a ferment of discontent, that those high-spirited youths who a few months

\* Wood's *Athenæ Oxonienses*; Apology for the Life of Colley Cibber; Citters, March 17. 1686.

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before had eagerly volunteered to march against the Western insurgents should now be with difficulty kept down by sword and carbine, these were signs full of evil omen to the House of Stuart. The warning, however, was lost on the dull, stubborn, self-willed tyrant. He was resolved to transfer to his own Church all the wealthiest and most splendid foundations of England. It was to no purpose that the best and wisest of his Roman Catholic counsellors remonstrated. They represented to him that he had it in his power to render a great service to the cause of his religion without violating the rights of property. A grant of two thousand pounds a year from his privy purse would support a Jesuit college at Oxford. Such a sum he might easily spare. Such a college, provided with able, learned, and zealous teachers, would be a formidable rival to the old academical institutions, which exhibited but too many symptoms of the languor almost inseparable from opulence and security. King James's College would soon be, by the confession even of Protestants, the first place of education in the island, as respected both science and moral discipline. This would be the most effectual and the least invidious method by which the Church of England could be humbled and the Church of Rome exalted. The Earl of Ailesbury, one of the most devoted servants of the royal family, declared that, though a Protestant, and by no means rich, he would himself contribute a thousand pounds towards this design, rather than that his master should violate the rights of property, and break faith with the Established Church.\* The scheme, however, found no favour in the sight of the King. It was indeed ill suited, in more ways than one, to his ungentle nature. For to bend and break the spirits of men gave him pleasure; and to part with his money gave him pain. What he had not the generosity to do at his own expense he determined to do at the expense of others. When once he was engaged, pride and obstinacy prevented him from receding; and he was at length led, step by step, to acts of Turkish tyranny, to acts which impressed the

\* Burnet, i. 697.; Letter of Lord Ailesbury printed in the European Magazine for April 1795.



nation with a conviction that the estate of a Protestant English freeholder under a Roman Catholic King must be as insecure as that of a Greek under Moslem domination.

Magdalene College at Oxford, founded in the fifteenth century by William of Waynfilete, Bishop of Winchester and Lord High Chancellor, was one of the most remarkable of our academical institutions. A graceful tower, on the summit of which a Latin hymn was annually chanted by choristers at the dawn of May day, caught far off the eye of the traveller who came from London. As he approached he found that this tower rose from an embattled pile, low and irregular, yet singularly venerable, which, embowered in verdure, overhung the sluggish waters of the Cherwell. He passed through a gateway overhung by a noble oriel,\* and found himself in a spacious cloister adorned with emblems of virtues and vices, rudely carved in grey stone by the masons of the fifteenth century. The table of the society was plentifully spread in a stately refectory hung with paintings and rich with fantastic carving. The service of the Church was performed morning and evening in a chapel which had suffered much violence from the Reformers, and much from the Puritans, but which was, under every disadvantage, a building of eminent beauty, and which has, in our own time, been restored with rare taste and skill. The spacious gardens along the river side were remarkable for the size of the trees, among which towered conspicuous one of the vegetable wonders of the island, a gigantic oak, older by a century, men said, than the oldest college in the University.

The statutes of the society ordained that the Kings of England and Princes of Wales should be lodged in their house. Edward the Fourth had inhabited the building while it was still unfinished. Richard the Third had held his court there, had heard disputations in the hall, had feasted there royally, and had mended the cheer of his hosts by a present of fat bucks from his forests. Two heirs apparent of the crown who had been prematurely snatched away, Arthur the elder brother of Henry the Eighth, and Henry the elder brother of Charles the

\* This gateway is now closed.

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First, had been members of the college. Another prince of the blood, the last and best of the Roman Catholic Archbishops of Canterbury, the gentle Reginald Pole, had studied there. In the time of the civil war Magdalene had been true to the cause of the crown. There Rupert had fixed his quarters; and, before some of his most daring enterprises, his trumpets had been heard sounding to horse through those quiet cloisters. Most of the Fellows were divines, and could aid the King only by their prayers and their pecuniary contributions. But one member of the body, a Doctor of Civil Law, raised a troop of undergraduates, and fell fighting bravely at their head against the soldiers of Essex. When hostilities had terminated, and the Roundheads were masters of England, six sevenths of the members of the foundation refused to make any submission to usurped authority. They were consequently ejected from their dwellings and deprived of their revenues. After the Restoration the survivors returned to their pleasant abode. They had now been succeeded by a new generation which inherited their opinions and their spirit. During the Western rebellion such Magdalene men as were not disqualified by their age or profession for the use of arms had eagerly volunteered to fight for the crown. It would be difficult to name any corporation in the kingdom which had higher claims to the gratitude of the House of Stuart\*.

The society consisted of a President, of forty Fellows, of thirty scholars called Demies, and of a train of chaplains, clerks, and choristers. At the time of the general visitation in the reign of Henry the Eighth the revenues were far greater than those of any similar institution in the realm, greater by nearly one half than those of the magnificent foundation of Henry the Sixth at Cambridge, and considerably more than double those which William of Wykeham had settled on his college at Oxford. In the days of James the Second the riches of Magdalene were immense, and were exaggerated by report. The college was popularly said to be wealthier than the weal-

\* Wood's Athenæ Oxonienses; Walker's Sufferings of the Clergy.



thiest abbeys of the Continent. When the leases fell in, — so ran the vulgar rumour, — the rents would be raised to the prodigious sum of forty thousand pounds a year.\*

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The Fellows were, by the statutes which their founder had drawn up, empowered to select their own President from among persons who were, or had been, Fellows either of their society or of New College. This power had generally been exercised with freedom. But in some instances royal letters had been received recommending to the choice of the corporation qualified persons who were in favour at Court; and on such occasions it had been the practice to show respect to the wishes of the sovereign.

In March 1687, the President of the college died. One of the Fellows, Doctor Thomas Smith, popularly nicknamed Rabbi Smith, a distinguished traveller, book-collector, antiquary, and orientalist, who had been chaplain to the embassy at Constantinople, and had been employed to collate the Alexandrian manuscript, aspired to the vacant post. He conceived that he had some claims on the favour of the government as a man of learning and as a zealous Tory. His loyalty was in truth as fervent and as steadfast as was to be found in the whole Church of England. He had long been intimately acquainted with Parker, Bishop of Oxford, and hoped to obtain by the interest of that prelate a royal letter to the college. Parker promised to do his best, but soon reported that he had found difficulties. "The King," he said, "will recommend no person who is not a friend to His Majesty's religion. What can you do to pleasure him as to that matter?" Smith answered that, if he became President, he would exert himself to promote learning, true Christianity, and loyalty. "That will not do," said the Bishop. "If so," said Smith manfully, "let who will be President: I can promise nothing more."

\* Burnet, i. 697.; Tanner's *Notitia Monastica*. At the visitation in the twenty-sixth year of Henry the Eighth it appeared that the annual revenue of King's College was 751*l.*; of New College, 487*l.*; of Magdalene, 1076*l.*

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Anthony  
Farmer  
recom-  
mended  
by the  
King for  
Presi-  
dent.

The election had been fixed for the thirteenth of April, and the Fellows were summoned to attend. It was rumoured that a royal letter would come down recommending one Anthony Farmer to the vacant place. This man's life had been a series of shameful acts. He had been a member of the University of Cambridge, and had escaped expulsion only by a timely retreat. He had then joined the Dissenters. Then he had gone to Oxford, had entered himself at Magdalene, and had soon become notorious there for every kind of vice. He generally reeled into his college at night speechless with liquor. He was celebrated for having headed a disgraceful riot at Abingdon. He had been a constant frequenter of noted haunts of libertines. At length he had turned pandar, had exceeded even the ordinary vileness of his vile calling, and had received money from dissolute young gentlemen commoners for services such as it is not good that history should record. This wretch, however, had pretended to turn Papist. His apostasy atoned for all his vices; and, though still a youth, he was selected to rule a grave and religious society in which the scandal given by his depravity was still fresh.

As a Roman Catholic he was disqualified for academical office by the general law of the land. Never having been a Fellow of Magdalene College or of New College, he was disqualified for the vacant presidency by a special ordinance of William of Waynflete. William of Waynflete had also enjoined those who partook of his bounty to have a particular regard to moral character in choosing their head; and, even if he had left no such injunction, a body chiefly composed of divines could not with decency entrust such a man as Farmer with the government of a place of education.

The Fellows respectfully represented to the King the difficulty in which they should be placed, if, as was rumoured, Farmer should be recommended to them, and begged that, if it were His Majesty's pleasure to interfere in the election, some person for whom they could legally and conscientiously vote might be proposed. Of this dutiful request no notice was taken. The royal letter arrived. It was brought down by



one of the fellows who had lately turned Papist, Robert Charnock, a man of parts and spirit, but of a violent and restless temper, which impelled him a few years later to an atrocious crime and to a terrible fate. On the thirteenth of April the society met in the chapel. Some hope was still entertained that the King might be moved by the remonstrance which had been addressed to him. The assembly therefore adjourned till the fifteenth, which was the last day on which, by the constitution of the college, the election could take place.

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The fifteenth of April came. Again the Fellows repaired to their chapel. No answer had arrived from Whitehall. Two or three of the Seniors, among whom was Smith, were inclined to postpone the election once more rather than take a step which might give offence to the King. But the language of the statutes was clear. Those statutes the members of the foundation had sworn to observe. The general opinion was that there ought to be no further delay. A hot debate followed. The electors were too much excited to take their seats; and the whole choir was in a tumult. Those who were for proceeding appealed to their oaths and to the rules laid down by the founder whose bread they had eaten. The King, they truly said, had no right to force on them even a qualified candidate. Some expressions unpleasing to Tory ears were dropped in the course of the dispute; and Smith was provoked into exclaiming that the spirit of Ferguson had possessed his brethren. It was at length resolved by a great majority that it was necessary to proceed immediately to the election. Charnock left the chapel. The other Fellows, having first received the sacrament, proceeded to give their voices. The choice fell on John Hough, a man of eminent virtue and prudence, who, having borne persecution with fortitude and prosperity with meekness, having risen to high honours and having modestly declined honours higher still, died in extreme old age, yet in full vigour of mind, more than fifty-six years after this eventful day.

Election  
of the  
Pre-  
sident.

The society hastened to acquaint the King with the circumstances which had made it necessary to elect a President

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without further delay, and requested the Duke of Ormond, as patron of the whole University, and the Bishop of Winchester, as visitor of Magdalene College, to undertake the office of intercessors: but the King was far too angry and too dull to listen to explanations.

The Fel-  
lows of  
Magda-  
lene cited  
before  
the High  
Commis-  
sion.

Early in June the Fellows were cited to appear before the High Commission at Whitehall. Five of them, deputed by the rest, obeyed the summons. Jeffreys treated them after his usual fashion. When one of them, a grave Doctor named Fairfax, hinted some doubt as to the validity of the Commission, the Chancellor began to roar like a wild beast. "Who is this man? What commission has he to be impudent here? Seize him. Put him into a dark room. What does he do without a keeper? He is under my care as a lunatic. I wonder that nobody has applied to me for the custody of him." But when this storm had spent its force, and the depositions concerning the moral character of the King's nominee had been read, none of the Commissioners had the front to pronounce that such a man could properly be made the head of a great college. Obadiah Walker and the other Oxonian Papists who were in attendance to support their proselyte were utterly confounded. The Commission pronounced Hough's election void, and suspended Fairfax from his fellowship: but about Farmer no more was said; and, in the month of August, arrived a royal letter recommending Parker, Bishop of Oxford, to the Fellows.

Parker  
recom-  
mended  
as Pre-  
sident.

Parker was not an avowed Papist. Still there was an objection to him which, even if the presidency had been vacant, would have been decisive: for he had never been a Fellow of either New College or Magdalene. But the presidency was not vacant: Hough had been duly elected; and all the members of the college were bound by oath to support him in his office. They therefore, with many expressions of loyalty and concern, excused themselves from complying with the King's mandate.

The  
Charter-  
house.

While Oxford was thus opposing a firm resistance to tyranny, a stand not less resolute was made in another quarter. James had, some time before, commanded the trustees of



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the Charterhouse, men of the first rank and consideration in the kingdom, to admit a Roman Catholic named Popham into the hospital which was under their care. The Master of the house, Thomas Burnet, a clergyman of distinguished genius, learning, and virtue, had the courage to represent to them, though the ferocious Jeffreys sat at the board, that what was required of them was contrary both to the will of the founder and to an Act of Parliament. "What is that to the purpose?" said a courtier who was one of the governors. "It is very much to the purpose, I think," answered a voice, feeble with age and sorrow, yet not to be heard without respect by any assembly, the voice of the venerable Ormond. "An Act of Parliament," continued the patriarch of the Cavalier party, "is, in my judgment, no light thing." The question was put whether Popham should be admitted, and it was determined to reject him. The Chancellor, who could not well ease himself by cursing and swearing at Ormond, flung away in a rage, and was followed by some of the minority. The consequence was that there was not a quorum left, and that no formal reply could be made to the royal mandate.

The next meeting took place only two days after the High Commission had pronounced sentence of deprivation against Hough, and of suspension against Fairfax. A second mandate under the Great Seal was laid before the trustees: but the tyrannical manner in which Magdalene College had been treated had roused instead of subduing their spirit. They drew up a letter to Sunderland in which they requested him to inform the King that they could not, in this matter, obey His Majesty without breaking the law and betraying their trust.

There can be little doubt that, had ordinary signatures been appended to this document, the King would have taken some violent course. But even he was daunted by the great names of Ormond, Halifax, Danby, and Nottingham, the chiefs of all the sections of that great party to which he owed his crown. He therefore contented himself with directing Jeffreys to consider what course ought to be taken. It was announced at one time that a proceeding would be instituted in the King's Bench, at another that the Ecclesiastical Com-

CHAP. mission would take up the case: but these threats gradually  
 VIII. died away.\*  
 1687.

The royal  
 progress.

The summer was now far advanced; and the King set out on a progress, the longest and the most splendid that had been known for many years. From Windsor he went on the sixteenth of August to Portsmouth, walked round the fortifications, touched some scrofulous people, and then proceeded in one of his yachts to Southampton. From Southampton he travelled to Bath, where he remained a few days, and where he left the Queen. When he departed, he was attended by the High Sheriff of Somersetshire and by a large body of gentlemen to the frontier of the county, where the High Sheriff of Gloucestershire, with a not less splendid retinue, was in attendance. The Duke of Beaufort soon met the royal coaches, and conducted them to Badminton, where a banquet worthy of the fame which his splendid housekeeping had won for him was prepared. In the afternoon the cavalcade proceeded to Gloucester. It was greeted two miles from the city by the Bishop and clergy. At the South Gate the Mayor waited with the keys. The bells rang and the conduits flowed with wine as the King passed through the streets to the close which encircles the venerable Cathedral. He lay that night at the deanery, and on the following morning set out for Worcester. From Worcester he went to Ludlow, Shrewsbury, and Chester, and was everywhere received with outward signs of joy and respect, which he was weak enough to consider as proofs that the discontent excited by his measures had subsided, and that an easy victory was before him. Barillon, more sagacious, informed Lewis that the King of England was under a delusion, that the progress had done no real good, and that those very gentlemen of Worcester-shire and Shropshire who had thought it their duty to receive their Sovereign and their guest with every mark of honour would be found as refractory as ever when the question of the test should come on.\*\*

\* A Relation of the Proceedings at the Charterhouse, 1689.

\*\* See the London Gazette, from August 18. to September 1. 1687; Barillon, September 13.



On the road the royal train was joined by two courtiers who in temper and opinions differed widely from each other. Penn was at Chester on a pastoral tour. His popularity and authority among his brethren had greatly declined since he had become a tool of the King and of the Jesuits.\* He was, however, most graciously received by James, and, on the Sunday, was permitted to harangue in the tennis court, while Cartwright preached in the Cathedral, and while the King heard mass at an altar which had been decked in the Shire Hall. It is said, indeed, that His Majesty deigned to look into the tennis court and to listen with decency to his friend's melodious eloquence.\*\*

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The furious Tyrconnel had crossed the sea from Dublin to give an account of his administration. All the most respectable English Catholics looked coldly on him as on an enemy of their race and a scandal to their religion. But he was cordially welcomed by his master, and dismissed with assurances of undiminished confidence and steady support. James expressed his delight at learning that in a short time the whole government of Ireland would be in Roman Catholic hands. The English colonists had already been stripped of all political power. Nothing remained but to strip them of their property; and this last outrage was deferred only till the cooperation of an Irish Parliament should have been secured.\*\*\*

\* "Penn, chef des Quakers, qu'on sait être dans les intérêts du Roi d'Angleterre, est si fort décrié parmi ceux de son parti qu'ils n'ont plus aucune confiance en lui." — Bonrepaux to Seignelay, Sept. 13. 1687. The evidence of Gerard Croese is to the same effect. "Etiam Quakeri Pennum non amplius, ut ante, ita amabant ac magnificiebant, quidam aversabantur ac fugiebant." — *Historia Quakeriana*, lib. ii. 1695.

\*\* Cartwright's Diary, August 30. 1687. Clarkson's Life of William Penn.

\*\*\* London Gazette, Sept. 5.; Sheridan MS.; Barillon, Sept. 7. 1687. "Le Roi son maître," says Barillon, "a témoigné une grande satisfaction des mesures qu'il a prises, et a autorisé ce qu'il a fait en faveur des Catholiques. Il les établit dans les emplois et les charges, en sorte que l'autorité se trouvera bientôt entre leurs mains. Il reste encore beaucoup de choses à faire en ce pays là pour retirer les biens injustement ôtés aux Catholiques. Mais cela ne peut s'exécuter qu'avec le tems et dans l'assemblée d'un parlement en Irlande."

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1687.

From Cheshire the King turned southward, and, in the full belief that the Fellows of Magdalene Colledge, however mutinous they might be, would not dare to disobey a command uttered by his own lips, directed his course towards Oxford. By the way he made some little excursions to places which peculiarly interested him, as a King, a brother, and a son. He visited the hospitable roof of Boscobel and the remains of the oak so conspicuous in the history of his house. He rode over the field of Edgehill, where the Cavaliers first crossed swords with the soldiers of the Parliament. On the third of September he dined in great state at the palace of Woodstock, an ancient and renowned mansion, of which not a stone is now to be seen, but of which the site is still marked on the turf of Blenheim Park by two sycamores which grow near the stately bridge. In the evening he reached Oxford. He was received there with the wonted honours. The students in their academical garb were ranged to welcome him on the right hand and on the left, from the entrance of the city to the great gate of Christ Church. He lodged at the deanery, where, among other accommodations, he found a chapel fitted up for the celebration of the Mass.\* On the day after his arrival, the Fellows of Magdalene Colledge were ordered to attend him. When they appeared before him he treated them with an insolence such as had never been shown to their predecessors by the Puritan visitors. "You have not dealt with me like gentlemen," he exclaimed. "You have been unmannerly as well as undutiful." They fell on their knees and tendered a petition. He would not look at it. "Is this your Church of England loyalty? I could not have believed that so many clergymen of the Church of England would have been concerned in such a business. Go home. Get you gone. I am King. I will be obeyed. Go to your chapel this instant; and admit the Bishop of Oxford. Let those who refuse look to it. They shall feel the whole weight of my hand. They shall know what it is to incur the displeasure of their Sovereign." The Fellows, still kneeling before him, again offered him their petition. He angrily

The King  
at Oxford.

He reprimands  
the  
Fellows of  
Magda-  
lene.

\* London Gazette of Sept. 5. and Sept. 8. 1687.



flung it down. "Get you gone, I tell you. I will receive nothing from you till you have admitted the Bishop."

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They retired and instantly assembled in their chapel. The question was propounded whether they would comply with His Majesty's command. Smith was absent, Charnock alone answered in the affirmative. The other Fellows who were at the meeting declared that in all things lawful they were ready to obey the King, but that they would not violate their statutes and their oaths.

The King, greatly incensed and mortified by his defeat, quitted Oxford and rejoined the Queen at Bath. His obstinacy and violence had brought him into an embarrassing position. He had trusted too much to the effect of his frowns and angry tones, and had rashly staked, not merely the credit of his administration, but his personal dignity, on the issue of the contest. Could he yield to subjects whom he had menaced with raised voice and furious gestures? Yet could he venture to eject in one day a crowd of respectable clergymen from their homes, because they had discharged what the whole nation regarded as a sacred duty? Perhaps there might be an escape from this dilemma. Perhaps the college might still be terrified, caressed, or bribed into submission. The agency of Penn was employed. He had too much good feeling to approve of the violent and unjust proceedings of the government, and even ventured to express part of what he thought. James was, as usual, obstinate in the wrong. The courtly Quaker, therefore, did his best to seduce the college from the path of right. He first tried intimidation. Ruin, he said, impended over the society. The King was highly incensed. The case might be a hard one. Most people thought it so. But every child knew that His Majesty loved to have his own way and could not bear to be thwarted. Penn, therefore, exhorted the Fellows not to rely on the goodness of their cause, but to submit, or at least to temporise. Such counsel came strangely from one who had himself been expelled from the University for raising a riot about the surplice, who had run the risk of being disinherited rather than take off his hat to the princes of the blood, and who had been

Penn at-  
tempts to  
mediate.

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more than once sent to prison for haranguing in conventicles. He did not succeed in frightening the Magdalene men. In answer to his alarming hints he was reminded that in the last generation thirty-four out of the forty Fellows had cheerfully left their beloved cloisters and gardens, their hall and their chapel, and had gone forth not knowing where they should find a meal or a bed, rather than violate the oath of allegiance. The King now wished them to violate another oath. He should find that the old spirit was not extinct.

Then Penn tried a gentler tone. He had an interview with Hough and with some of the Fellows, and, after many professions of sympathy and friendship, began to hint at a compromise. The King could not bear to be crossed. The college must give way. Parker must be admitted. But he was in very bad health. All his preferments would soon be vacant. "Doctor Hough," said Penn, "may then be Bishop of Oxford. How should you like that, gentlemen?" Penn had passed his life in declaiming against a hireling ministry. He held that he was bound to refuse the payment of tithes, and this even when he had bought land chargeable with tithes, and had been allowed the value of the tithes in the purchase money. According to his own principles, he would have committed a great sin if he had interfered for the purpose of obtaining a benefice on the most honourable terms for the most pious divine. Yet to such a degree had his manners been corrupted by evil communications, and his understanding obscured by inordinate zeal for a single object, that he did not scruple to become a broker in simony of a peculiarly discreditable kind, and to use a bishopric as a bait to tempt a divine to perjury. Hough replied with civil contempt that he wanted nothing from the crown but common justice. "We stand," he said, "on our statutes and our oaths: but, even setting aside our statutes and oaths, we feel that we have our religion to defend. The Papists have robbed us of University College. They have robbed us of Christ Church. The fight is now for Magdalene. They will soon have all the rest."

Penn was foolish enough to answer that he really believed that the Papists would now be content. "University," he



said, "is a pleasant college. Christ Church is a noble place. Magdalene is a fine building. The situation is convenient. The walks by the river are delightful. If the Roman Catholics are reasonable they will be satisfied with these." This absurd avowal would alone have made it impossible for Hough and his brethren to yield. The negotiation was broken off; and the King hastened to make the disobedient know, as he had threatened, what it was to incur his displeasure.

A special commission was directed to Cartwright, Bishop of Chester, to Wright, Chief Justice of the King's Bench, and to Sir Thomas Jenner, a Baron of the Exchequer, appointing them to exercise visitatorial jurisdiction over the college. On the twentieth of October they arrived at Oxford, escorted by three troops of cavalry with drawn swords. On the following morning the Commissioners took their seats in the hall of Magdalene. Cartwright pronounced a loyal oration which, a few years before, would have called forth the acclamations of an Oxonian audience, but which was now heard with sullen indignation. A long dispute followed. The President defended his rights with skill, temper, and resolution. He professed great respect for the royal authority. But he steadily maintained that he had by the laws of England a freehold interest in the house and revenues annexed to the presidency. Of that interest he could not be deprived by an arbitrary mandate of the Sovereign. "Will you submit," said the Bishop, "to our visitation?" "I submit to it," said Hough with great dexterity, "so far as it is consistent with the laws, and no farther." "Will you deliver up the key of your lodgings?" said Cartwright. Hough remained silent. The question was repeated; and Hough returned a mild but resolute refusal. The Commissioners pronounced him an intruder, and charged the Fellows no longer to recognise his authority, and to assist at the admission of the Bishop of Oxford. Charnock eagerly promised obedience; Smith returned an evasive answer: but the great body of the members of the college firmly declared that they still regarded Hough as their rightful head.

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1657.

Special  
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Commis-  
sioners  
sent to  
Oxford.

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1687.  
Protest of Hough.

And now Hough himself craved permission to address a few words to the Commissioners. They consented with much civility, perhaps expecting from the calmness and suavity of his manner that he would make some concession. "My Lords," said he, "you have this day deprived me of my freehold: I hereby protest against all your proceedings as illegal, unjust, and null; and I appeal from you to our sovereign Lord the King in his courts of justice." A loud murmur of applause arose from the gowmsmen who filled the hall. The Commissioners were furious. Search was made for the offenders, but in vain. Then the rage of the whole board was turned against Hough. "Do not think to huff us, Sir," cried Jenner, punning on the President's name. "I will uphold His Majesty's authority," said Wright, "while I have breath in my body. All this comes of your popular protest. You have broken the peace. You shall answer it in the King's Bench. I bind you over in one thousand pounds to appear there next term. I will see whether the civil power cannot manage you. If that is not enough, you shall have the military too." In truth Oxford was in a state which made the Commissioners not a little uneasy. The soldiers were ordered to have their carbines loaded. It was said that an express was sent to London for the purpose of hastening the arrival of more troops. No disturbance however took place. The Bishop of Oxford was quietly installed by proxy: but only two members of Magdalene College attended the ceremony. Many signs showed that the spirit of resistance had spread to the common people. The porter of the college threw down his keys. The butler refused to scratch Hough's name out of the buttery book, and was instantly dismissed. No blacksmith could be found in the whole city who would force the lock of the President's lodgings. It was necessary for the Commissioners to employ their own servants, who broke open the door with iron bars. The sermons which on the following Sunday were preached in the University church were full of reflections such as stung Cartwright to the quick, though such as he could not discreetly resent.

Installation of Parker.



And here, if James had not been infatuated, the matter might have stopped. The Fellows in general were not inclined to carry their resistance further. They were of opinion that, by refusing to assist in the admission of the intruder, they had sufficiently proved their respect for their statutes and oaths, and that, since he was now in actual possession, they might justifiably submit to him as their head, till he should be removed by sentence of a competent court. Only one Fellow, Doctor Fairfax, refused to yield even to this extent. The Commissioners would gladly have compromised the dispute on these terms; and during a few hours there was a truce which many thought likely to end in an amicable arrangement; but soon all was again in confusion. The Fellows found that the popular voice loudly accused them of pusillanimity. The townsmen already talked ironically of a Magdalene conscience, and exclaimed that the brave Hough and the honest Fairfax had been betrayed and abandoned. Still more annoying were the sneers of Obadiah Walker and his brother renegades. This then, said those apostates, was the end of all the big words in which the society had declared itself resolved to stand by its lawful President and by its Protestant faith. While the Fellows, bitterly annoyed by the public censure, were regretting the modified submission which they had consented to make, they learned that this submission was by no means satisfactory to the King. It was not enough, he said, that they offered to obey the Bishop of Oxford as President in fact. They must distinctly admit the Commission and all that had been done under it to be legal. They must acknowledge that they had acted undutifully; they must declare themselves penitent; they must promise to behave better in future, must implore His Majesty's pardon, and lay themselves at his feet. Two Fellows of whom the King had no complaint to make, Charnock and Smith, were excused from the obligation of making these degrading apologies.

Even James never committed a grosser error. The Fellows, already angry with themselves for having conceded so much, and galled by the censure of the world, eagerly caught at the opportunity which was now offered them of regaining

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the public esteem. With one voice they declared that they would never ask pardon for being in the right, or admit that the visitation of their college and the deprivation of their President had been legal.

Ejection  
of the  
Fellows.

Then the King, as he had threatened, laid on them the whole weight of his hand. They were by one sweeping edict condemned to expulsion. Yet this punishment was not deemed sufficient. It was known that many noblemen and gentlemen who possessed church patronage would be disposed to provide for men who had suffered so much for the laws of England and for the Protestant religion. The High Commission therefore pronounced the ejected Fellows incapable of ever holding any church preferment. Such of them as were not yet in holy orders were pronounced incapable of receiving the clerical character. James might enjoy the thought that he had reduced many of them from a situation in which they were surrounded by comforts, and had before them the fairest professional prospects, to hopeless indigence.

But all these severities produced an effect directly the opposite of that which he had anticipated. The spirit of Englishmen, that sturdy spirit which no King of the House of Stuart could ever be taught by experience to understand, swelled up high and strong against injustice. Oxford, the quiet seat of learning and loyalty, was in a state resembling that of the City of London on the morning after the attempt of Charles the First to seize the five members. The Vice-chancellor had been asked to dine with the Commissioners on the day of the expulsion. He refused. "My taste," he said, "differs from that of Colonel Kirke. I cannot eat my meals with appetite under a gallows." The scholars refused to pull off their caps to the new rulers of Magdalene College. Smith was nicknamed Doctor Roguery, and was publicly insulted in a coffee-house. When Charnock summoned the Demies to perform their academical exercises before him, they answered that they were deprived of their lawful governors and would submit to no usurped authority. They assembled apart both for study and for divine service. Attempts were made to



corrupt them by offers of the lucrative fellowships which had just been declared vacant: but one undergraduate after another manfully answered that his conscience would not suffer him to profit by injustice. One lad who was induced to take a fellowship was turned out of the hall by the rest. Youths were invited from other colleges, but with small success. The richest foundation in the kingdom seemed to have lost all attractions for needy students. Meanwhile, in London and all over the country, money was collected for the support of the ejected Fellows. The Princess of Orange, to the great joy of all Protestants, subscribed two hundred pounds. Still, however, the King held on his course. The expulsion of the Fellows was soon followed by the expulsion of a crowd of Demies. All this time the new President was fast sinking under bodily and mental disease. He had made a last feeble effort to serve the government by publishing, at the very time when the college was in a state of open rebellion against his authority, a defence of the Declaration of Indulgence, or rather a defence of the doctrine of transubstantiation. This piece called forth many answers, and particularly one from Burnet, written with extraordinary vigour and acrimony. A few weeks after the expulsion of the Demies, Parker died in the house of which he had violently taken possession. Men said that his heart was broken by remorse and shame. He lies in the beautiful antechapel of the college: but no monument marks his grave.

Then the King's whole plan was carried into full effect. The college was turned into a Popish seminary. Bonaventure Giffard, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Madura, was appointed President. The Roman Catholic service was performed in the chapel. In one day twelve Roman Catholics were admitted Fellows. Some servile Protestants applied for fellowships, but met with refusals. Smith, an enthusiast in loyalty, but still a sincere member of the Anglican Church, could not bear to see the altered aspect of the house. He absented himself; he was ordered to return into residence: he disobeyed: he was expelled; and the work of spoliation was complete.\*

\* Proceedings against Magdalene College, in Oxon. for not electing

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Magda-  
lene  
College  
turned  
into a  
Popish  
seminary.

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Resent-  
ment of  
the  
clergy.

The nature of the academical system of England is such that no event which seriously affects the interests and honour of either University can fail to excite a strong feeling throughout the country. Every successive blow, therefore, which fell on Magdalene College, was felt to the extremities of the kingdom. In the coffee-houses of London, in the Inns of Court, in the closes of all the Cathedral towns, in parsonages and manor houses scattered over the remotest shires, pity for the sufferers and indignation against the government went on growing. The protest of Hough was everywhere applauded: the forcing of his door was everywhere mentioned with abhorrence: and at length the sentence of deprivation fulminated against the Fellows dissolved those ties once so close and dear which had bound the Church of England to the House of Stuart. Bitter resentment and cruel apprehension took the place of love and confidence. There was no prebendary, no rector, no vicar, whose mind was not haunted by the thought that, however quiet his temper, however obscure his situation, he might, in a few months, be driven from his dwelling by an arbitrary edict to beg in a ragged cassock with his wife and children, while his freehold, secured to him by laws of immemorial antiquity and by the royal word, was occupied by some apostate. This then was the reward of that heroic loyalty never once found wanting through the vicissitudes of fifty tempestuous years. It was for this that the clergy had endured spoliation and persecution in the cause of Charles the First. It was for this that they had supported Charles the Second in his hard contest with the Whig opposition. It was for this that they had stood in the front of the battle against those who sought to despoil James of his birthright. To their fidelity alone their oppressor owed the power which he was now employing to their ruin. They had long

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Anthony Farmer president of the said College, in the Collection of State Trials, Howell's edition; Luttrell's Diary, June 15. 17., Oct. 24., Dec. 10. 1687; Smith's Narrative; Letter of Dr. Richard Rawlinson, dated Oct. 31. 1687; Reresby's Memoirs; Burnet, i. 699.; Cartwright's Diary; Citters, Oct. 25. Oct. 28. Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>, Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>, Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>, Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>, 1687.  
Nov. 1. Nov. 7. Nov. 15, Nov. 18, 1687.



been in the habit of recounting in acrimonious language all that they had suffered at the hand of the Puritan in the day of his power. Yet for the Puritan there was some excuse. He was an avowed enemy; he had wrongs to avenge; and even he, while remodelling the ecclesiastical constitution of the country, and ejecting all who would not subscribe his Covenant, had not been altogether without compassion. He had at least granted to those whose benefices he seized a pittance sufficient to support life. But the hatred felt by the King towards that Church which had saved him from exile and placed him on a throne was not to be so easily satiated. Nothing but the utter ruin of his victims would content him. It was not enough that they were expelled from their homes and stripped of their revenues. They found every walk of life towards which men of their habits could look for a subsistence closed against them with malignant care, and nothing left to them but the precarious and degrading resource of alms.

The Anglican clergy therefore, and that portion of the laity which was strongly attached to Protestant episcopacy, now regarded the King with those feelings which injustice aggravated by ingratitude naturally excites. Yet had the Churchman still many scruples of conscience and honour to surmount before he could bring himself to oppose the government by force. He had been taught that passive obedience was enjoined without restriction or exception by the divine law. He had professed this opinion ostentatiously. He had treated with contempt the suggestion that an extreme case might possibly arise which would justify a people in drawing the sword against regal tyranny. Both principle and shame therefore restrained him from imitating the example of the rebellious Roundheads, while any hope of a peaceful and legal deliverance remained; and such a hope might reasonably be cherished as long as the Princess of Orange stood next in succession to the crown. If he would but endure with patience this trial of his faith, the laws of nature would soon do for him what he could not, without sin and dishonour, do for himself. The wrongs of the Church would be redressed;

*Macaulay, History. III.*

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Schemes  
of the  
Jesuitical  
cabal re-  
specting  
the suc-  
cession.

her property and dignity would be fenced by new guarantees; and those wicked ministers who had injured and insulted her in the day of her adversity would be signally punished.

The event to which the Church of England looked forward as to an honourable and peaceful termination of her troubles was one of which even the most reckless members of the Jesuitical cabal could not think without painful apprehensions. If their master should die, leaving them no better security against the penal laws than a Declaration which the general voice of the nation pronounced to be a nullity, if a Parliament, animated by the same spirit which had prevailed in the Parliament of Charles the Second, should assemble round the throne of a Protestant sovereign, was it not probable that a terrible retribution would be exacted, that the old laws against Popery would be rigidly enforced, and that new laws still more severe would be added to the statute book? The evil counsellors had long been tormented by these gloomy apprehensions, and some of them had contemplated strange and desperate remedies. James had scarcely mounted the throne when it began to be whispered about Whitehall that, if the Lady Anne would turn Roman Catholic, it might not be impossible, with the help of Lewis, to transfer to her the birthright of her elder sister. At the French embassy this scheme was warmly approved; and Bonrepaux gave it as his opinion that the assent of James would be easily obtained.\* Soon, however, it became manifest that Anne was unalterably attached to the Established Church. All thought of making her Queen was therefore relinquished. Nevertheless, a small knot of fanatics still continued to cherish a wild hope that they might be able to change the order of succession. The plan formed by these men was set forth in a minute of which a rude French translation has been preserved. It was to be hoped, they said, that the King might be able to establish the true faith without resorting to extremities; but, in the worst event,

\* "Quand on connoit le dedans de cette cour aussi intimement que je la connois, on peut croire que sa Majesté Britannique donnera volontiers dans ces sortes de projets." — Bonrepaux to Seignelay, March 11. 1686.



he might leave his crown at the disposal of Lewis. It was better for Englishmen to be the vassals of France than the slaves of the Devil.\* This extraordinary document was handed about from Jesuit to Jesuit, and from courtier to courtier, till some eminent Roman Catholics, in whom bigotry had not extinguished patriotism, furnished the Dutch Ambassador with a copy. He put the paper into the hands of James. James, greatly agitated, pronounced it a vile forgery contrived by some pamphleteer in Holland. The Dutch minister resolutely answered that he could prove the contrary by the testimony of several distinguished members of His Majesty's own Church, nay, that there would be no difficulty in pointing out the writer, who, after all, had written only what many priests and many busy politicians said every day in the galleries of the palace. The King did not think it expedient to ask who the writer was, but, abandoning the charge of forgery, protested, with great vehemence and solemnity, that no thought of disinheriting his eldest daughter had ever crossed his mind. "Nobody," he said, "ever dared to hint such a thing to me. I never would listen to it. God does not command us to propagate the true religion by injustice; and this would be the foulest, the most unnatural injustice."\*\* Notwithstanding all these professions, Barillon, a few days later, reported to his court that James had begun to listen to suggestions respecting a change in the order of succession, that the question was doubtless a delicate one, but that there was reason to hope that, with time and management, a way might be found to settle the crown on some Roman Catholic to the exclusion of the two Princesses.\*\*\* During many months

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\* "Que, quand pour établir la religion Catholique et pour la confirmer icy, il (James) devoit se rendre en quelque façon dépendant de la France, et mettre la décision de la succession à la couronne entre les mains de ce monarque là, qu'il seroit obligé de le faire, parcequ'il vaudroit mieux pour ses sujets qu'ils devinssent vassaux du Roy de France, étant Catholiques, que de demeurer comme esclaves du Diable." This paper is in the archives of both France and Holland.

\*\* Citters, Aug. 16. 1686; Barillon, Aug. 12.

\*\*\* Barillon, Sept. 13. 1686. "La succession est une matière fort délicate à traiter. Je sais pourtant qu'on en parle au Roy d'Angleterre.

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Scheme of James and Tyrconnel for preventing the Princess of Orange from succeeding to the kingdom of Ireland.

this subject continued to be discussed by the fiercest and most extravagant Papists about the Court; and candidates for the regal office were actually named.\*

It is not probable however that James ever meant to take a course so insane. He must have known that England would never bear for a single day the yoke of an usurper who was also a Papist, and that any attempt to set aside the Lady Mary would have been withstood to the death, both by all those who had supported the Exclusion Bill, and by all those who had opposed it. There is however no doubt that the King was an accomplice in a plot less absurd, but not less unjustifiable, against the rights of his children. Tyrconnel had, with his master's approbation, made arrangements for separating Ireland from the empire, and for placing her under the protection of Lewis, as soon as the crown should devolve on a Protestant sovereign. Bonrepaux had been consulted, had imparted the design to his court, and had been instructed to assure Tyrconnel that France would lend effectual aid to the accomplishment of this great project.\*\* These transactions, which, though perhaps not in all parts accurately known at the Hague, were strongly suspected there, must not be left out of the account if we would pass a just judgment on the course taken a few months later by the Princess of Orange. Those who pronounce her guilty of a breach of filial duty must admit that her fault was at least greatly extenuated by her wrongs. If, to serve the cause of her religion, she broke through the most

et qu'on ne désespère pas avec le temps de trouver des moyens pour faire passer la couronne sur la tête d'un héritier Catholique."

\* Bonrepaux, July 11. 1687.

\*\* Bonrepaux to Seignelay, <sup>Aug. 25</sup> <sub>Sept. 4.</sub> 1687. I will quote a few words from this most remarkable despatch: "Je sçay bien certainement que l'intention du Roy d'Angleterre est de faire perdre ce royaume (Ireland) à son successeur, et de le fortifier en sorte que tous ses sujets Catholiques y puissent avoir un asile assuré. Son projet est de mettre les choses en cet estat dans le cours de cinq années." In the Secret Consults of the Romish Party in Ireland, printed in 1690, there is a passage which shows that this negotiation had not been kept strictly secret. "Though the King kept it private from most of his council, yet certain it is that he had promised the French King the disposal of that government and kingdom when things had attained to that growth as to be fit to bear it."



sacred ties of consanguinity, she only followed her father's example. She did not assist to depose him till he had conspired to disinherit her.

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Scarcely had Bonrepaux been informed that Lewis had resolved to assist the enterprise of Tyrconnel when all thoughts of that enterprise were abandoned. James had caught the first glimpse of a hope which delighted and elated him. The Queen was with child.

The  
Queen  
pregnant.

Before the end of October 1687 the great news began to be whispered. It was observed that Her Majesty had absented herself from some public ceremonies, on the plea of indisposition. It was said that many relics, supposed to possess extraordinary virtue, had been hung about her. Soon the story made its way from the palace to the coffee-houses of the capital, and spread fast over the country. By a very small minority the rumour was welcomed with joy. The great body of the nation listened with mingled derision and fear. There was indeed nothing very extraordinary in what had happened. The King had but just completed his fifty-fourth year. The Queen was in the summer of life. She had already borne four children who had died young; and long afterwards she was delivered of another child whom nobody had any interest in treating as supposititious, and who was therefore never said to be so. As, however, five years had elapsed since her last pregnancy, the people, under the influence of that delusion which leads men to believe what they wish, had ceased to entertain any apprehension that she would give an heir to the throne. On the other hand, nothing seemed more natural and probable than that the Jesuits should have contrived a pious fraud. It was certain that they must consider the accession of the Princess of Orange as one of the greatest calamities which could befall their Church. It was equally certain that they would not be very scrupulous about doing whatever might be necessary to save their Church from a great calamity. In books written by eminent members of the Society, and licensed by its rulers, it was distinctly laid down that means even more shocking to all notions of justice and humanity than the introduction of a spurious heir into a family might lawfully be

General  
incredu-  
lity.

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employed for ends less important than the conversion of a heretical kingdom. It had got abroad that some of the King's advisers, and even the King himself, had meditated schemes for defrauding the Lady Mary, either wholly or in part, of her rightful inheritance. A suspicion, not indeed well founded but by no means so absurd as is commonly supposed, took possession of the public mind. The folly of some Roman Catholics confirmed the vulgar prejudice. They spoke of the auspicious event as strange, as miraculous, as an exertion of the same Divine power which had made Sarah proud and happy in Isaac, and had given Samuel to the prayers of Hannah. Mary's mother, the Duchess of Modena, had lately died. A short time before her death, she had, it was said, implored the Virgin of Loretto, with fervent vows and rich offerings, to bestow a son on James. The King himself had, in the preceding August, turned aside from his progress to visit the Holy Well, and had there besought Saint Winifred to obtain for him that boon without which his great designs for the propagation of the true faith could be but imperfectly executed. The imprudent zealots who dwelt on these tales foretold with confidence that the unborn infant would be a boy, and offered to back their opinion by laying twenty guineas to one. Heaven, they affirmed, would not have interfered but for a great end. One fanatic announced that the Queen would give birth to twins, of whom the elder would be King of England, and the younger Pope of Rome. Mary could not conceal the delight whith which she heard this prophecy; and her ladies found that they could not gratify her more than by talking of it. The Roman Catholics would have acted more wisely if they had spoken of the pregnancy as of a natural event, and if they had borne with moderation their unexpected good fortune. Their insolent triumph excited the popular indignation. Their predictions strengthened the popular suspicions. From the Prince and Princess of Denmark down to porters and laundresses nobody alluded to the promised birth without a sneer. The wits of London described the new miracle in rhymes which, it may well be supposed, were not the most delicate. The rough country squires roared



with laughter if they met with any person simple enough to believe that the Queen was really likely to be again a mother. A royal proclamation appeared commanding the clergy to read a form of prayer and thanksgiving which had been prepared for this joyful occasion by Crewe and Sprat. The clergy obeyed: but it was observed that the congregations made no responses and showed no signs of reverence. Soon in all the coffee-houses was handed about a brutal lampoon on the courtly prelates whose pens the King had employed. Mother East had also her full share of abuse. Into that homely monosyllable our ancestors had degraded the name of the great house of Este which reigned at Modena.\*

The new hope which elated the King's spirits was mingled with many fears. Something more than the birth of a Prince of Wales was necessary to the success of the plans formed by the Jesuitical party. It was not very likely that James would live till his son should be of age to exercise the regal functions. The law had made no provision for the case of a minority. The reigning sovereign was not competent to make provision for such a case by will. The legislature only could supply the defect. If James should die before the defect had been supplied, leaving a successor of tender years, the supreme power would undoubtedly devolve on Protestants. Those Tories who held most firmly the doctrine that nothing could justify them in resisting their liege lord would have no scruple about drawing their swords against a Popish woman who should dare to usurp the guardianship of the realm and of the infant sovereign. The result of a contest could scarcely be matter of doubt. The Prince of Orange, or his wife, would be Regent. The young King would be placed in the hands of heretical instructors, whose arts might speedily efface from his mind the impressions which might have been made on it in the nursery. He might prove another Edward the Sixth; and the blessing granted to the intercession of the Virgin Mother

\* Citters, Oct. 28. Nov. 22. 1687; the Princess Anne to the Princess of Orange, Nov. 7. Dec. 2. March 14. and 20. 1687; Barillon, Dec. 17. 1687; Revolution Politics; the song "Two Toms and a Nat;" Johnstone, April 4. 1688; Secret Consults of the Romish Party in Ireland, 1690.

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Feeling  
of the  
consti-  
tuent bo-  
dies, and  
of the  
Peers.

and of St. Winifred might be turned into a curse.\* This was a danger against which nothing but an Act of Parliament could be a security; and to obtain such an Act was not easy. Everything seemed to indicate that, if the Houses were convoked, they would come up to Westminster animated by the spirit of 1640. The event of the county elections could hardly be doubted. The whole body of freeholders, high and low, clerical and lay, was strongly excited against the government. In the great majority of those towns where the right of voting depended on the payment of local taxes, or on the occupation of a tenement, no courtly candidate could dare to show his face. A very large part of the House of Commons was returned by members of municipal corporations. These corporations had recently been remodelled for the purpose of destroying the influence of the Whigs and Dissenters. More than a hundred constituent bodies had been deprived of their charters by tribunals devoted to the crown, or had been induced to avert compulsory disfranchisement by voluntary surrender. Every Mayor, every Alderman, every Town Clerk, from Berwick to Helstone, was a Tory and a Churchman: but Tories and Churchmen were now no longer devoted to the sovereign. The new municipalities were more unmanageable than the old municipalities had ever been, and would undoubtedly return representatives whose first act would be to impeach all the Popish Privy Councillors, and all the members of the High Commission.

In the Lords the prospect was scarcely less gloomy than in the Commons. Among the temporal peers it was certain that an immense majority would be against the King's measures: and on that episcopal bench, which seven years before had unanimously supported him against those who had attempted to deprive him of his birthright, he could now look for sup-

\* The king's uneasiness on this subject is strongly described by Ronquillo, Dec. 12. 1688. "Un Principe de Vales y un Duque de York y otro di Lochaosterna (Lancaster, I suppose,) no bastan á reducir la gente; porque el Rey tiene 54 años, y vendrá á morir, dejando los hijos pequeños, y que entonces el reyno se apoderará dellos, y los nombrará tutor, y los educará en la religion protestante, contra la disposicion que dejare el Rey, y la autoridad de la Reyna."



port only to four or five sycophants despised by their profession and their country.\*

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To all men not utterly blinded by passion these difficulties appeared insuperable. The most unscrupulous slaves of power showed signs of uneasiness. Dryden muttered that the King would only make matters worse by trying to mend them, and sighed for the golden days of the careless and good-natured Charles.\*\* Even Jeffreys wavered. As long as he was poor, he was perfectly ready to face obloquy and public hatred for lucre. But he had now, by corruption and extortion, accumulated great riches; and he was more anxious to secure them than to increase them. His slackness drew on him a sharp reprimand from the royal lips. In dread of being deprived of the Great Seal, he promised whatever was required of him: but Barillon, in reporting this circumstance to Lewis, remarked that the King of England could place little reliance on any man who had any thing to lose.\*\*\*

Nevertheless James determined to persevere. The sanction of a Parliament was necessary to his system. The sanction of a free and lawful Parliament it was evidently impossible to obtain: but it might not be altogether impossible to bring together by corruption, by intimidation, by violent exertions of prerogative, by fraudulent distortions of law, an assembly which might call itself a Parliament, and might be willing to register any edict of the Sovereign. Returning officers must be appointed who would avail themselves of the

James determines to pack a Parliament.

\* Three lists framed at this time are extant; one in the French archives, the other two in the archives of the Portland family. In these lists every peer is entered under one of three heads, For the Repeal of the Test, Against the Repeal, and Doubtful. According to one list the numbers were, 31 for, 86 against, and 20 doubtful; according to another, 33 for, 87 against, and 19 doubtful; according to the third, 35 for, 92 against, and 10 doubtful. Copies of the three lists are in the Mackintosh MSS.

\*\* There is in the British Museum a letter of Dryden to Etherege, dated Feb. 1688. I do not remember to have seen it in print. "Oh," says Dryden, "that our monarch would encourage noble idleness by his own example, as he of blessed memory did before him. For my mind misgives me that he will not much advance his affairs by stirring."

\*\*\* Barillon, Aug. 29.  
Sept. 8. 1687.

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slightest pretence to declare the King's friends duly elected. Every placeman, from the highest to the lowest, must be made to understand that, if he wished to retain his office, he must, at this conjuncture, support the throne by his vote and interest. The High Commission meanwhile would keep its eye on the clergy. The boroughs, which had just been remodelled to serve one turn, might be remodelled again to serve another. By such means the King hoped to obtain a majority in the House of Commons. The Upper House would then be at his mercy. He had undoubtedly by law the power of creating peers without limit: and this power he was fully determined to use. He did not wish, and indeed no sovereign can wish, to make the highest honour which is in the gift of the crown worthless. He cherished the hope that, by calling up some heirs apparent to the assembly in which they must ultimately sit, and by conferring English titles on some Scotch and Irish Lords, he might be able to secure a majority without ennobling new men in such numbers as to bring ridicule on the coronet and the ermine. But there was no extremity to which he was not prepared to go in case of necessity. When in a large company an opinion was expressed that the peers would prove intractable, "Oh, silly," cried Sunderland, turning to Churchill; "your troop of guards shall be called up to the House of Lords."\*

Having determined to pack a Parliament, James set himself energetically and methodically to the work. A proclamation appeared in the Gazette, announcing that the King had determined to revise the Commissions of Peace and of Lieutenancy, and to retain in public employment only such gentlemen as should be disposed to support his policy.\*\* A committee of seven Privy Councillors sate at Whitehall, for the purpose of regulating — such was the phrase — the municipal corporations. In this committee Jeffreys alone represented the Protestant interest. Powis alone represented the moderate Roman Catholics. All the other members be-

\* Told by Lord Bradford, who was present, to Dartmouth; note on Burnet, i. 755.

\*\* London Gazette, Dec. 12, 1687.



longed to the Jesuitical faction. Among them was Petre, who had just been sworn of the Council. Till he took his seat at the board, his elevation had been kept a profound secret from everybody but Sunderland. The public indignation at this new violation of the law was clamorously expressed; and it was remarked that the Roman Catholics were even louder in censure than the Protestants. The vain and ambitious Jesuit was now charged with the business of destroying and reconstructing half the constituent bodies in the kingdom. Under the committee of Privy Councillors a subcommittee consisting of bustling agents less eminent in rank was entrusted with the management of details. Local subcommittees of regulators all over the country corresponded with the central board at Westminster.\*

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The Board  
of Regu-  
lators.

The persons on whom James chiefly relied for assistance in his new and arduous enterprise were the Lords Lieutenants. Every Lord Lieutenant received written orders directing him to go down immediately into his county. There he was to summon before him all his deputies, and all the Justices of the Peace, and to put to them a series of interrogatories framed for the purpose of ascertaining how they would act at a general election. He was to take down the answers in writing, and to transmit them to the government. He was to furnish a list of such Roman Catholics, and such Protestant Dissenters, as might be best qualified for the bench and for commands in the militia. He was also to examine into the state of all the boroughs in his county, and to make such reports as might be necessary to guide the operations of the board of regulators. It was intimated to him that he must himself perform these duties, and that he could not be permitted to delegate them to any other person.\*\*

The first effect produced by these orders would have at once sobered a prince less infatuated than James. Half the Lords Lieutenants of England peremptorily refused to stoop

Many  
Lords  
Lieute-  
nants dis-  
missed.

\* Bourepaux to Seignelay, Nov. 14.; Citters, Nov. 14.; Lords Journals, Dec. 20. 1689.

Oct. 28.  
\*\* Citters, Nov. 7. 1687.

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to the odious service which was required of them. They were immediately dismissed. All those who incurred this glorious disgrace were peers of high consideration; and all had hitherto been regarded as firm supporters of monarchy. Some names in the list deserve especial notice.

The Earl  
of Ox-  
ford.

The noblest subject in England, and indeed, as Englishmen loved to say, the noblest subject in Europe, was Aubrey de Vere, twentieth and last of the old Earls of Oxford. He derived his title through an uninterrupted male descent from a time when the families of Howard and Seymour were still obscure, when the Nevilles and Percies enjoyed only a provincial celebrity, and when even the great name of Plantagenet had not yet been heard in England. One chief of the house of De Vere had held high command at Hastings: another had marched, with Godfrey and Tancred, over heaps of slaughtered Moslem, to the sepulchre of Christ. The first Earl of Oxford had been minister of Henry Beauclerc. The third Earl had been conspicuous among the Lords who extorted the Great Charter from John. The seventh Earl had fought bravely at Cressy and Poitiers. The thirteenth Earl had, through many vicissitudes of fortune, been the chief of the party of the Red Rose, and had led the van on the decisive day of Bosworth. The seventeenth Earl had shone at the court of Elizabeth, and had won for himself an honourable place among the early masters of English poetry. The nineteenth Earl had fallen in arms for the Protestant religion and for the liberties of Europe under the walls of Maestricht. His son Aubrey, in whom closed the longest and most illustrious line of nobles that England has seen, a man of loose morals, but of inoffensive temper and of courtly manners, was Lord Lieutenant of Essex, and Colonel of the Blues. His nature was not factious; and his interest inclined him to avoid a rupture with the Court; for his estate was encumbered, and his military command lucrative. He was summoned to the royal closet; and an explicit declaration of his intentions was demanded from him. "Sir," answered Oxford, "I will stand by your Majesty against all enemies to the last drop of my blood. But this is matter of conscience,



and I cannot comply." He was instantly deprived of his lieutenancy and of his regiment.\*

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Inferior in antiquity and splendour to the house of De Vere, but to the house of De Vere alone, was the house of Talbot. Ever since the reign of Edward the Third, the Talbots had sate among the peers of the realm. The earldom of Shrewsbury had been bestowed, in the fifteenth century, on John Talbot, the antagonist of the Maid of Orleans. He had been long remembered by his countrymen with tenderness and reverence as one of the most illustrious of those warriors who had striven to erect a great English empire on the Continent of Europe. The stubborn courage which he had shown in the midst of disasters had made him an object of interest greater than more fortunate captains had inspired, and his death had furnished a singularly touching scene to our early stage. His posterity had, during two centuries, flourished in great honour. The head of the family at the time of the Restoration was Francis, the eleventh Earl, a Roman Catholic. His death had been attended by circumstances such as, even in those licentious times which immediately followed the downfall of the Puritan tyranny, had moved men to horror and pity. The Duke of Buckingham in the course of his vagrant amours was for a moment attracted by the Countess of Shrewsbury. She was easily won. Her lord challenged the gallant, and fell. Some said that the abandoned woman witnessed the combat in man's attire, and others that she clasped her victorious lover to her bosom while his shirt was still dripping with the blood of her husband. The honours of the murdered man descended to his infant son Charles. As the orphan grew up to man's estate, it was generally acknowledged that of the young nobility of England none had been so richly gifted by nature. His person was pleasing, his temper singularly sweet, his parts such as, if he had been

\* Halstead's Succinct Genealogy of the Family of Vere, 1685; Collins's Historical Collections. See in the Lords' Journals, and in Jones's Reports, the proceedings respecting the earldom of Oxford, in March and April 1623. The exordium of the speech of Lord Chief Justice Crew is among the finest specimens of the ancient English eloquence. Citters, Feb. 7, 1688

1687

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born in a humble rank, might well have raised him to the height of civil greatness. All these advantages he had so improved that, before he was of age, he was allowed to be one of the finest gentlemen and finest scholars of his time. His learning is proved by notes which are still extant in his handwriting on books in almost every department of literature. He spoke French like a gentleman of Lewis's bedchamber, and Italian like a citizen of Florence. It was impossible that a youth of such parts should not be anxious to understand the grounds on which his family had refused to conform to the religion of the state. He studied the disputed points closely, submitted his doubts to priests of his own faith, laid their answers before Tillotson, weighed the arguments on both sides long and attentively, and, after an investigation which occupied two years, declared himself a Protestant. The Church of England welcomed the illustrious convert with delight. His popularity was great, and became greater when it was known that royal solicitations and promises had been vainly employed to seduce him back to the superstition which he had abjured. The character of the young Earl did not however develope itself in a manner quite satisfactory to those who had borne the chief part in his conversion. His morals by no means escaped the contagion of fashionable libertinism. In truth the shock which had overturned his early prejudices had at the same time unfixed all his opinions, and left him to the unchecked guidance of his feelings. But, though his principles were unsteady, his impulses were so generous, his temper so bland, his manners so gracious and easy, that it was impossible not to love him. He was early called the King of Hearts, and never, through a long, eventful, and chequered life, lost his right to that name.\*

Shrewsbury was Lord Lieutenant of Staffordshire and Colonel of one of the regiments of horse which had been

\* Coxe's Shrewsbury Correspondence; Mackay's Memoirs; Life of Charles Duke of Shrewsbury, 1748; Burnet, i. 762.; Birch's Life of Tillotson, where the reader will find a letter from Tillotson to Shrewsbury, which seems to me a model of serious, friendly, and gentlemanlike reproof.



raised in consequence of the Western insurrection. He now refused to act under the board of regulators, and was deprived of both his commissions. CHAP.  
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None of the English nobles enjoyed a larger measure of public favour than Charles Sackville Earl of Dorset. He was indeed a remarkable man. In his youth he had been one of the most notorious libertines of the wild time which followed the Restoration. He had been the terror of the City watch, had passed many nights in the round house, and had at least once occupied a cell in Newgate. His passion for Betty Morrice, and for Nell Gwynn, who called him her Charles the First, had given no small amusement and scandal to the town.\* Yet, in the midst of follies and vices, his courageous spirit, his fine understanding, and his natural goodness of heart, had been conspicuous. Men said that the excesses in which he indulged were common between him and the whole race of gay young Cavaliers, but that his sympathy with human suffering and the generosity with which he made reparation to those whom his freaks had injured were all his own. His associates were astonished by the distinction which the public made between him and them. "He may do what he chooses," said Wilmot; "he is never in the wrong." The judgment of the world became still more favourable to Dorset when he had been sobered by time and marriage. His graceful manners, his brilliant conversation, his soft heart, his open hand, were universally praised. No day passed, it was said, in which some distressed family had not reason to bless his name. And yet, with all his good-nature, such was the keenness of his wit that scoffers whose sarcasm all the town feared stood in craven fear of the sarcasm of Dorset. All political parties esteemed and caressed him: but politics were not much to his taste. Had he been driven by necessity to exert himself, he would probably have risen to the highest

\* The King was only Nell's Charles III. Whether Dorset or Major Hart had the honour of being her Charles I. is a point open to dispute. But the evidence in favour of Dorset's claim seems to me to preponderate. See the suppressed passage of Burnet, i. 263.; and Pepys's Diary, Oct. 26. 1667.

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posts in the state; but he was born to rank so high and wealth so ample that many of the motives which impel men to engage in public affairs were wanting to him. He took just so much part in parliamentary and diplomatic business as sufficed to show that he wanted nothing but inclination to rival Danby and Sunderland, and turned away to pursuits which pleased him better. Like many other men who, with great natural abilities, are constitutionally and habitually indolent, he became an intellectual voluptuary, and a master of all those pleasing branches of knowledge which can be acquired without severe application. He was allowed to be the best judge of painting, of sculpture, of architecture, of acting, that the Court could show. On questions of polite learning his decisions were regarded at all the coffee-houses as without appeal. More than one clever play which had failed on the first representation was supported by his single authority against the whole clamour of the pit, and came forth successful from the second trial. The delicacy of his taste in French composition was extolled by Saint-Evremond and LaFontaine. Such a patron of letters England had never seen. His bounty was bestowed with equal judgment and liberality, and was confined to no sect or faction. Men of genius, estranged from each other by literary jealousy or by difference of political opinion, joined in acknowledging his impartial kindness. Dryden owned that he had been saved from ruin by Dorset's princely generosity. Yet Montague and Prior, who had keenly satirised Dryden, were introduced by Dorset into public life; and the best comedy of Dryden's mortal enemy, *Shadwell*, was written at Dorset's country seat. The munificent Earl might, if such had been his wish, have been the rival of those of whom he was content to be the benefactor. For the verses which he occasionally composed, unstudied as they are, exhibit the traces of a genius which, assiduously cultivated, would have produced something great. In the small volume of his works may be found songs which have the easy vigour of *Suckling*, and little satires which sparkle with wit as splendid as that of *Butler*.\*

\* Pepys's Diary; Prior's dedication of his poems to the Duke of



Dorset was Lord Lieutenant of Sussex: and to Sussex the board of regulators looked with great anxiety: for in no other county, Cornwall and Wiltshire excepted, were there so many small boroughs. He was ordered to repair to his post. No person who knew him expected that he would obey. He gave such an answer as became him, and was informed that his services were no longer needed. The interest which his many noble and amiable qualities inspired was heightened when it was known that he had received by the post an anonymous billet telling him that, if he did not promptly comply with the King's wishes, all his wit and popularity should not save him from assassination. A similar warning was sent to Shrewsbury. Threatening letters were then much more rare than they afterwards became. It is therefore not strange that the people, excited as they were, should have been disposed to believe that the best and noblest Englishmen were really marked out for Popish daggers.\* Just when these letters were the talk of all London, the mutilated corpse of a noted Puritan was found in the streets. It was soon discovered that the murderer had acted from no religious or political motive. But the first suspicions of the populace fell on the Papists. The mangled remains were carried in procession to the house of the Jesuits in the Savoy; and during a few hours the fear and rage of the populace were scarcely less violent than on the day when Godfrey was borne to his grave.\*\*

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Dorset; Johnson's *Life of Dorset*; Dryden's *Essay on Satire*, and *Dedication of the Essay on Dramatic Poesy*. The affection of Dorset for his wife and his strict fidelity to her are mentioned with great contempt by that profligate coxcomb Sir George Etherege in his letters from Ratisbon, Dec. 9. 1687, and Jan. 10. 1688; Shadwell's *Dedication of the Squire of Alsatia*; Burnet, i. 264.; Mackay's *Characters*. Some parts of Dorset's character are well touched in his epitaph, written by Pope:

"Yet soft his nature, though severe his lay;"

and again:

"Blest courtier, who could king and country please,  
Yet sacred keep his friendships and his ease."

\* Barillon, Jan. 9. 1688; Citters, <sup>Jan. 31.</sup> Feb. 10.

\*\* Adda, Feb. 13. 1688.

*Macaulay, History. III.*

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The other dismissions must be more concisely related. The Duke of Somerset, whose regiment had been taken from him some months before, was now turned out of the Lord Lieutenancy of the East Riding of Yorkshire. The North Riding was taken from Viscount Fauconberg, Shropshire from Viscount Newark, and Lancashire from the Earl of Derby, grandson of that gallant Cavalier who had faced death so bravely, both on the field of battle and on the scaffold, for the House of Stuart. The Earl of Pembroke, who had recently served the crown with fidelity and spirit against Monmouth, was displaced in Wiltshire, the Earl of Rutland in Leicestershire, the Earl of Bridgewater in Buckinghamshire, the Earl of Thanet in Cumberland, the Earl of Northampton in Warwickshire, the Earl of Abingdon in Oxfordshire, and the Earl of Scarsdale in Derbyshire. Scarsdale was also deprived of a regiment of cavalry, and of an office in the household of the Princess of Denmark. She made a struggle to retain his services, and yielded only to a peremptory command of her father. The Earl of Gainsborough was ejected, not only from the Lieutenancy of Hampshire, but also from the government of Portsmouth and the rangership of the New Forest, two places for which he had, only a few months before, given five thousand pounds.\*

The King could not find Lords of great note, or indeed Protestant Lords of any sort, who would accept the vacant offices. It was necessary to assign two shires to Jeffreys, a new man whose landed property was small, and two to Preston who was not even an English peer. The other counties which had been left without governors were entrusted, with scarcely an exception, to known Roman Catholics, or to courtiers who had secretly promised the King to declare themselves Roman Catholics as soon as they could do so with prudence.

Questions  
put to the  
Magis-  
trates,

At length the new machinery was put in action; and soon from every corner of the realm arrived the news of complete and hopeless failure. The catechism by which the Lords Lieutenants had been directed to test the sentiments of the

\* Barillon, Dec. 15. 18. 22. 1687; Citters, <sup>Nov. 29.</sup> Dec. 9. 17.



country gentlemen consisted of three questions. Every magistrate and Deputy Lieutenant was to be asked, first, whether, if he should be chosen to serve in Parliament, he would vote for a bill framed on the principles of the Declaration of Indulgence; secondly, whether, as an elector, he would support candidates who would engage to vote for such a bill; and, thirdly, whether, in his private capacity, he would aid the King's benevolent designs by living in friendship with people of all religious persuasions.\*

As soon as the questions got abroad, a form of answer, drawn up with admirable skill, was circulated all over the kingdom, and was generally adopted. It was to the following effect: "As a member of the House of Commons, should I have the honour of a seat there, I shall think it my duty carefully to weigh such reasons as may be adduced in debate for and against a Bill of Indulgence, and then to vote according to my conscientious conviction. As an elector, I shall give my support to candidates whose notions of the duty of a representative agree with my own. As a private man, it is my wish to live in peace and charity with every body." This answer, far more provoking than a direct refusal, because slightly tinged with a sober and decorous irony which could not well be resented, was all that the emissaries of the Court could extract from most of the country gentlemen. Arguments, promises, threats, were tried in vain. The Duke of Norfolk, though a Protestant, and though dissatisfied with the proceedings of the government, had consented to become its agent in two counties. He went first to Surrey, where he soon found that nothing could be done.\*\* He then repaired to Norfolk, and returned to inform the King that, of seventy gentlemen of note who bore office in that great province, only six had held out hopes that they should support the policy of the Court.\*\*\* The Duke of Beaufort, whose authority

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and their  
answers.

Failure  
of the  
King's  
plans.

\* Citters,  $\frac{\text{Oct. 28.}}{\text{Nov. 7.}}$  1687; Lonsdale's Memoirs.

\*\* Citters,  $\frac{\text{Nov. 22.}}{\text{Dec. 2.}}$  1687.

\*\*\* Ibid.  $\frac{\text{Dec. 27.}}{\text{Jan. 6.}}$  1687.

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extended over four English shires and over the whole principality of Wales, came up to Whitehall with an account not less discouraging.\* Rochester was Lord Lieutenant of Hertfordshire. All his little stock of virtue had been expended in his struggle against the strong temptation to sell his religion for lucre. He was still bound to the Court by a pension of four thousand pounds a year; and in return for this pension he was willing to perform any service, however illegal or degrading, provided only that he were not required to go through the forms of a reconciliation with Rome. He had readily undertaken to manage his county; and he exerted himself, as usual, with indiscreet heat and violence. But his anger was thrown away on the sturdy squires to whom he addressed himself. They told him with one voice that they would send up no man to Parliament who would vote for taking away the safeguards of the Protestant religion.\*\* The same answer was given to the Chancellor in Buckinghamshire.\*\*\* The gentry of Shropshire, assembled at Ludlow, unanimously refused to fetter themselves by the pledge which the King demanded of them.† The Earl of Yarmouth reported from Wiltshire that, of sixty magistrates and Deputy Lieutenants with whom he had conferred, only seven had given favourable answers, and that even those seven could not be trusted.†† The renegade Peterborough made no progress in Northamptonshire.††† His brother renegade Dover was equally unsuccessful in Cambridgeshire. § Preston brought cold news from Cumberland and Westmoreland. Dorsetshire and Huntingdonshire were animated by the same spirit. The Earl of Bath, after a

\* Citters,  $\frac{\text{Dec. 27.}}{\text{Jan. 6.}}$  1687.

\*\* Rochester's offensive warmth on this occasion is twice noticed by Johnstone, Nov. 25. and Dec. 8. 1687. His failure is mentioned by Citters, Dec. 4<sup>o</sup>.

\*\*\* Citters, Dec. 1<sup>o</sup>. 1687.

† Ibid. Dec. 2<sup>o</sup>. 1687.

†† Ibid.  $\frac{\text{March 30.}}{\text{April 9.}}$  1687.

††† Ibid.  $\frac{\text{Nov. 22.}}{\text{Dec. 2.}}$  1687.

§ Ibid. Nov. 12<sup>o</sup>. 1687.



long canvass, returned from the West with gloomy tidings. He had been authorised to make the most tempting offers to the inhabitants of that region. In particular he had promised that, if proper respect were shown to the royal wishes, the trade in tin should be freed from the oppressive restrictions under which it lay. But this lure, which at another time would have proved irresistible, was now slighted. All the Justices and Deputy Lieutenants of Devonshire and Cornwall, without a single dissenting voice, declared that they would put life and property in jeopardy for the King, but that the Protestant religion was dearer to them than either life or property. "And, Sir," said Bath, "if your Majesty should dismiss all these gentlemen, their successors would give exactly the same answer."\* If there was any district in which the government might have hoped for success, that district was Lancashire. Considerable doubts had been felt as to the result of what was passing there. In no part of the realm had so many opulent and honourable families adhered to the old religion. The heads of many of those families had already, by virtue of the dispensing power, been made Justices of the Peace and entrusted with commands in the militia. Yet from Lancashire the new Lord Lieutenant, himself a Roman Catholic, reported that two thirds of his deputies and of the magistrates were opposed to the Court.\*\* But the proceedings in Hampshire wounded the King's pride still more deeply. Arabella Churchill had, more than twenty years before, borne him a son, widely renowned, at a later period, as one of the most skilful captains of Europe. The youth, named James Fitzjames, had as yet given no promise of the eminence which he afterwards attained: but his manners were so gentle and inoffensive that he had no enemy except Mary of Modena, who had long hated the child of the concubine with the bitter hatred of a childless wife. A small part of the Jesuitical faction had, before the pregnancy of the Queen was an-

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\* Citters, April 1<sup>o</sup>. 1688.

\*\* The anxiety about Lancashire is mentioned by Citters, in a despatch dated Nov. 1<sup>o</sup>. 1687; the result in a despatch dated four days later.

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nounced, seriously thought of setting him up as a competitor of the Princess of Orange.\* When it is remembered how signally Monmouth, though believed by the populace to be legitimate, and though the champion of the national religion, had failed in a similar competition, it must seem extraordinary that any man should have been so much blinded by fanaticism as to think of placing on the throne one who was universally known to be a Popish bastard. It does not appear that this absurd design was ever countenanced by the King. The boy, however, was acknowledged; and whatever distinctions a subject, not of the royal blood, could hope to attain were bestowed on him. He had been created Duke of Berwick; and he was now loaded with honourable and lucrative employments, taken from those noblemen who had refused to comply with the royal commands. He succeeded the Earl of Oxford as Colonel of the Blues, and the Earl of Gainsborough as Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire, Ranger of the New Forest, and Governor of Portsmouth. On the frontier of Hampshire Berwick expected to have been met, according to custom, by a long cavalcade of baronets, knights, and squires: but not a single person of note appeared to welcome him. He sent out letters commanding the attendance of the gentry: but only five or six paid the smallest attention to his summons. The rest did not wait to be dismissed. They declared that they would take no part in the civil or military government of their county while the King was represented there by a Papist, and voluntarily laid down their commissions.\*\*

Sunderland, who had been named Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire in the room of the Earl of Northampton, found some excuse for not going down to face the indignation and contempt of the gentry of that shire; and his plea was the more readily admitted because the King had, by that time, begun to feel that the spirit of the rustic gentry was not to be bent.\*\*\*

\* Bonrepaux, July 11. 1687.

\*\* Citters, Feb. 7. 1688.

\*\*\* Citters, April 17. 1688.



It is to be observed that those who displayed this spirit were not the old enemies of the House of Stuart. The Commissions of Peace and Lieutenancy had long been carefully purged of all republican names. The persons from whom the court had in vain attempted to extract any promise of support were, with scarcely an exception, Tories. The elder among them could still show scars given by the swords of Roundheads, and receipts for plate sent to Charles the First in his distress. The younger had adhered firmly to James against Shaftesbury and Monmouth. Such were the men who were now turned out of office in a mass by the very prince to whom they had given such signal proofs of fidelity. Dismissal however only made them more resolute. It had become a sacred point of honour among them to stand stoutly by one another in this crisis. There could be no doubt that, if the suffrage of the freeholders were fairly taken, not a single knight of the shire favourable to the policy of the government would be returned. Men therefore asked one another, with no small anxiety, whether the suffrages were likely to be fairly taken. The list of the Sheriffs for the new year was impatiently expected. It appeared while the Lords Lieutenants were still engaged in their canvass, and was received with a general cry of alarm and indignation. Most of the functionaries who were to preside at the county elections were either Roman Catholics or Protestant Dissenters who had expressed their approbation of the Indulgence.\* For a time the most gloomy apprehensions prevailed: but soon they began to subside. There was good reason to believe that there was a point beyond which the King could not reckon on the support even of those Sheriffs who were members of his own Church. Between the Roman Catholic courtier and the Roman Catholic country gentleman there was very little sympathy. That cabal which domineered at Whitehall consisted partly of fanatics, who were ready to break through all rules of morality and to throw the world into confusion for the purpose of propagating their religion, and partly of hypocrites who, for lucre, had apostatized from the faith in which they had been brought up,

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List of  
Sheriffs.

Character  
of the  
Roman  
Catholic  
country  
gentle-  
men.

\* London Gazette, Dec. 5. 1687; Citters, Dec. 16.

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and who now overacted the zeal characteristic of neophytes. Both the fanatical and the hypocritical courtiers were generally destitute of all English feeling. In some of them devotion to their Church had extinguished every national sentiment. Some were Irishmen, whose patriotism consisted in mortal hatred of the Saxon conquerors of Ireland. Some, again, were traitors, who received regular hire from a foreign power. Some had passed a great part of their lives abroad, and either were mere cosmopolites, or felt a positive distaste for the manners and institutions of the country which was now subjected to their rule. Between such men and the lord of a Cheshire or Staffordshire manor who adhered to the old Church there was scarcely anything in common. He was neither a fanatic nor a hypocrite. He was a Roman Catholic because his father and grand-father had been so; and he held his hereditary faith, as men generally hold a hereditary faith, sincerely, but with little enthusiasm. In all other points he was a mere English squire, and, if he differed from the neighbouring squires, differed from them by being somewhat more simple and clownish than they. The disabilities under which he lay had prevented his mind from expanding to the standard, moderate as that standard was, which the minds of Protestant country gentlemen then ordinarily attained. Excluded, when a boy, from Eton and Westminster, when a youth, from Oxford and Cambridge, when a man, from Parliament and from the bench of justice, he generally vegetated as quietly as the elms of the avenue which led to his ancestral grange. His cornfields, his dairy and his cider press, his greyhounds, his fishing rod and his gun, his ale and his tobacco, occupied almost all his thoughts. With his neighbours, in spite of his religion, he was generally on good terms. They knew him to be unambitious and inoffensive. He was almost always of a good old family. He was always a Cavalier. His peculiar notions were not obtruded, and caused no annoyance. He did not, like a Puritan, torment himself and others with scruples about everything that was pleasant. On the contrary, he was as keen a sportsman, and as jolly a boon companion, as any man who had taken the oath of supremacy



and the declaration against transubstantiation. He met his brother squires at the cover, was in with them at the death, and, when the sport was over, took them home with him to a venison pasty and to October four years in bottle. The oppressions which he had undergone had not been such as to impel him to any desperate resolution. Even when his Church was barbarously persecuted, his life and property were in little danger. The most impudent false witnesses could hardly venture to shock the common sense of mankind by accusing him of being a conspirator. The Papists whom Oates selected for attack were peers, prelates, Jesuits, Benedictines, a busy political agent, a lawyer in high practice, a court physician. The Roman Catholic country gentleman, protected by his obscurity, by his peaceable demeanour, and by the good will of those among whom he lived, carted his hay or filled his bag with game unmolested, while Coleman and Langhorne, Whitbread and Pickering, Archbishop Plunkett and Lord Stafford, died by the halter or the axe. An attempt was indeed made by a knot of villains to bring home a charge of treason to Sir Thomas Gascoigne, an aged Roman Catholic baronet of Yorkshire: but twelve of the best gentlemen of the West Riding, who knew his way of life, could not be convinced that their honest old acquaintance had hired cutthroats to murder the King, and, in spite of charges which did very little honour to the bench, found a verdict of Not Guilty. Sometimes, indeed, the head of an old and respectable provincial family might reflect with bitterness that he was excluded, on account of his religion, from places of honour and authority which men of humbler descent and less ample estate were thought competent to fill; but he was little disposed to risk land and life in a struggle against overwhelming odds; and his honest English spirit would have shrunk with horror from means such as were contemplated by the Petres and Tyrconnels. Indeed he would have been as ready as any of his Protestant neighbours to gird on his sword, and to put pistols in his holsters, for the defence of his native land against an invasion of French or Irish Papists. Such was the general character of the men to whom James now looked as to

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his most trustworthy instruments for the conduct of county elections. He soon found that they were not inclined to throw away the esteem of their neighbours, and to endanger their heads and their estates, by rendering him an infamous and criminal service. Several of them refused to be Sheriffs. Of those who accepted the shrievalty many declared that they would discharge their duty as fairly as if they were members of the Established Church, and would return no candidate who had not a real majority.\*

Feeling  
of the  
Dis-  
senter.

If the King could place little confidence even in his Roman Catholic Sheriffs, still less could he rely on the Puritans. Since the publication of the Declaration several months had elapsed, months crowded with important events, months of unintermitted controversy. Discussion had opened the eyes of many Dissenters: but the acts of the government, and especially the severity with which Magdalene College had been treated, had done more than even the pen of Halifax to alarm and to unite all classes of Protestants. Most of those sectaries who had been induced to express gratitude for the Indulgence were now ashamed of their error, and were de-

\* About twenty years before this time a Jesuit had noticed the retiring character of the Roman Catholic country gentlemen of England. "La nobiltà Inglese, senon se legata in servizio di Corte, ò in opera di maestrato, vive, e gode il più dell' anno alla campagna, ne' suoi palagi e poderi, dove son liberi e padroni; e ciò tanto più sollecitamente i Catolici quanto più utilmente, si come meno osservati colà." — *L'Inghilterra descritta dal P. Daniello Bartoli. Roma, 1667.*

"Many of the Popish Sheriffs," Johnstone wrote, "have estates, and declare that whoever expects false returns from them will be disappointed. The Popish gentry that live at their houses in the country are much different from those that live here in town. Several of them have refused to be Sheriffs or Deputy Lieutenants." Dec. 8. 1687.

Ronquillo says the same. "Algunos Catolicos que fueron nombrados por sherifes se han excusado," Jan. 3<sup>o</sup>, 1688. He some months later assured his court that the Catholic country gentlemen would willingly consent to a compromise of which the terms should be that the penal laws should be abolished and the test retained. "Estoy informado," he says, "que los Catolicos de las provincias no lo reprueban, pues no pretendiendo officios, y siendo solo algunos de la Corte los provechosos, les parece que mejoran su estado, quedando seguros ellos y sus descendientes en la religion, en la quietud, y en la seguridad de sus haciendas." July 23.  
Aug. 2. 1688.



sirous of making atonement by casting in their lot with the great body of their countrymen.

In consequence of this change in the feeling of the Non-conformists, the government found almost as great difficulty in the towns as in the counties. When the regulators began their work, they had taken it for granted that every Dissenter who had availed himself of the Indulgence would be favourable to the King's policy. They were therefore confident that they should be able to fill all the municipal offices in the kingdom with staunch friends. In the new charters a power had been reserved to the crown of dismissing magistrates at pleasure. This power was now exercised without limit. It was by no means equally clear that James had the power of appointing new magistrates: but, whether it belonged to him or not, he determined to assume it. Everywhere, from the Tweed to the Land's End, Tory functionaries were ejected, and the vacant places were filled with Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists. In the new charter of the City of London the crown had reserved the power of displacing the Masters, Wardens, and Assistants of all the companies. Accordingly more than eight hundred citizens of the first consideration, all of them members of that party which had opposed the Exclusion Bill, were turned out of office by a single edict. In a short time appeared a supplement to this long list.\* But scarcely had the new office-bearers been sworn in when it was discovered that they were as unmanageable as their predecessors. At Newcastle on Tyne the regulators appointed a Roman Catholic Mayor and Puritan Aldermen. No doubt was entertained that the municipal body, thus remodelled, would vote an address promising to support the King's measures. The address, however, was negatived. The Mayor went up to London in a fury, and told the King that the Dissenters were all knaves and rebels, and that in the whole corporation the government could not reckon on more than four votes.\*\* At Reading twenty-four Tory Alder-

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Regulation  
of corpora-  
tions.

\* Privy Council Book, Sept. 25. 1687; Feb. 21. 1687.

\*\* Records of the Corporation, quoted in Brand's History of Newcastle; Johnstone, Feb. 21. 1687.

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men were dismissed. Twenty-four new Aldermen were appointed. Twenty-three of these immediately declared against the Indulgence, and were dismissed in their turn.\* In the course of a few days the borough of Yarmouth was governed by three different sets of magistrates, all equally hostile to the Court.\*\* These are mere examples of what was passing all over the kingdom. The Dutch Ambassador informed the States that in many towns the public functionaries had, within one month, been changed twice, and even thrice, and yet changed in vain.\*\*\* From the records of the Privy Council it appears that the number of regulations, as they were called, exceeded two hundred.† The regulators indeed found that, in not a few places, the change had been for the worse. The discontented Tories, even while murmuring against the King's policy, had constantly expressed respect for his person and his office, and had disclaimed all thought of resistance. Very different was the language of some of the new members of corporations. It was said that old soldiers of the Commonwealth, who, to their own astonishment and that of the public, had been made Aldermen, gave the agents of the Court very distinctly to understand that blood should flow before Popery and arbitrary power were established in England.††

The regulators found that little or nothing had been gained by what had as yet been done. There was one way, and one way only, in which they could hope to effect their object. The charters of the boroughs must be resumed; and other charters must be granted confining the elective franchise to very small constituent bodies appointed by the sovereign.†††

But how was this plan to be carried into effect? In a few of the new charters, indeed, a right of revocation had been reserved to the crown: but the rest James could get into his

\* Johnstone, Feb. 21. 1688.

\*\* Citters, Feb. 13. 1688.

\*\*\* Ibid. May 17. 1688.

† In the margin of the Privy Council Book may be observed the words "Second regulation," and "Third regulation," when a corporation had been remodelled more than once.

†† Johnstone, May 23. 1688.

††† Ibid. Feb. 21. 1688.



hands only by voluntary surrender on the part of corporations, or by judgment of the King's Bench. Few corporations were now disposed to surrender their charters voluntarily; and such judgments as would suit the purposes of the government were hardly to be expected even from such a slave as Wright. The writs of Quo Warranto which had been brought a few years before for the purpose of crushing the Whig party had been condemned by every impartial man. Yet those writs had at least the semblance of justice; for they were brought against ancient municipal bodies; and there were few ancient municipal bodies in which some abuse, sufficient to afford a pretext for a penal proceeding, had not grown up in the course of ages. But the corporations now to be attacked were still in the innocence of infancy. The oldest among them had not completed its fifth year. It was impossible that many of them should have committed offences meriting disfranchisement. The Judges themselves were uneasy. They represented that what they were required to do was in direct opposition to the plainest principles of law and justice: but all remonstrance was vain. The boroughs were commanded to surrender their charters. Few complied; and the course which the King took with those few did not encourage others to trust him. In several towns the right of voting was taken away from the commonalty, and given to a very small number of persons, who were required to bind themselves by oath to support the candidates recommended by the government. At Tewkesbury, for example, the franchise was confined to thirteen persons. Yet even this number was too large. Hatred and fear had spread so widely through the community that it was scarcely possible to bring together in any town, by any process of packing, thirteen men on whom the Court could absolutely depend. It was rumoured that the majority of the new constituent body of Tewkesbury was animated by the same sentiment which was general throughout the nation, and would, when the decisive day should arrive, send true Protestants to Parliament. The regulators in great wrath threatened to reduce the number of electors to three.\* Mean-

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\* Johnstone, Feb. 21. 1688.

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while the great majority of the boroughs firmly refused to give up their privileges. Barnstaple, Winchester, and Buckingham, distinguished themselves by the boldness of their opposition. At Oxford the motion that the city should resign its franchises to the King was negatived by eighty votes to two.\* The Temple and Westminster Hall were in a ferment with the sudden rush of business from all corners of the kingdom. Every lawyer in high practice was overwhelmed with the briefs from corporations. Ordinary litigants complained that their business was neglected.\*\* It was evident that a considerable time must elapse before judgment could be given in so great a number of important cases. Tyranny could ill brook this delay. Nothing was omitted which could terrify the refractory boroughs into submission. At Buckingham some of the municipal officers had spoken of Jeffreys in language which was not laudatory. They were prosecuted, and were given to understand that no mercy should be shown to them unless they would ransom themselves by surrendering their charter.\*\*\* At Winchester still more violent measures were adopted. A large body of troops was marched into the town for the sole purpose of burdening and harassing the inhabitants.† The town continued resolute; and the public voice loudly accused the King of imitating the worst crimes of his brother of France. The dragonades, it was said, had begun. There was indeed reason for alarm. It had occurred to James that he could not more effectually break the spirit of an obstinate town than by quartering soldiers on the inhabitants. He must have known that this practice had sixty years before excited formidable discontents, and had been solemnly pronounced illegal by the Petition of Right, a statute scarcely less venerated by Englishmen than the Great Charter. But he hoped to obtain from the courts of law a declaration that even the Petition of Right could not control the prerogative. He actually consulted the Chief Justice of the King's

\* Citters, March 28. 1688.

\*\* Ibid. May 1. 1688.

\*\*\* Ibid. May 22. 1688.  
June 1.

† Ibid. May 1. 1688.



Bench on this subject:\* but the result of the consultation remained secret; and in a very few weeks the aspect of affairs became such that a fear stronger than even the fear of the royal displeasure began to impose some restraint even on a man so servile as Wright.

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While the Lords Lieutenants were questioning the Justices of the Peace, while the regulators were remodelling the boroughs, all the public departments were subjected to a strict inquisition. The palace was first purified. Every battered old Cavalier, who, in return for blood and lands lost in the royal cause, had obtained some small place under the Keeper of the Wardrobe or the Master of the Harriers, was called upon to choose between the King and the Church. The Commissioners of Customs and Excise were ordered to attend His Majesty at the Treasury. There he demanded from them a promise to support his policy, and directed them to require a similiar promise from all their subordinates.\*\* One Custom-house officer notified his submission to the royal will in a way which excited both merriment and compassion. "I have," he said, "fourteen reasons for obeying His Majesty's commands, a wife and thirteen young children."\*\*\* Such reasons were indeed cogent; yet there were not a few instances in which, even against such reasons, religious and patriotic feelings prevailed.

Inquisition in all the public departments.

There is reason to believe that the government at this time seriously meditated a blow which would have reduced many thousands of families to beggary, and would have disturbed the whole social system of every part of the country. No wine, beer, or coffee could be sold without a license. It was rumoured that every person holding such a license would shortly be required to enter into the same engagements which had been imposed on public functionaries, or to relinquish his trade.† It seems certain that, if such a step had

\* Citters, May  $\frac{1}{2}$ . 1688.

\*\* Ibid. April  $\frac{1}{2}$ . 1688.; Treasury Letter Book, March 14. 168 $\frac{1}{2}$ ; Ronquillo, April  $\frac{1}{2}$ .

\*\*\* Citters, May  $\frac{1}{2}$ . 1688.

† Ibid.

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been taken, the houses of entertainment and of public resort all over the kingdom would have been at once shut up by hundreds. What effect such an interference with the comfort of all ranks would have produced must be left to conjecture. The resentment produced by grievances is not always proportioned to their dignity; and it is by no means improbable that the resumption of licenses might have done what the resumption of charters had failed to do. Men of fashion would have missed the chocolate house in Saint James's Street, and men of business the coffee pot, round which they were accustomed to smoke and talk politics, in Change Alley. Half the clubs would have been wandering in search of shelter. The traveller at nightfall would have found the inn where he had expected to sup and lodge deserted. The clown would have regretted the hedge alehouse, where he had been accustomed to take his pot on the bench before the door in summer, and at the chimney corner in winter. The nation might, perhaps, under such provocation, have risen in general rebellion without waiting for the help of foreign allies.

Dismis-  
sion of  
Sawyer.

It was not to be expected that a prince who required all the humblest servants of the government to support his policy on pain of dismissal would continue to employ an Attorney General whose aversion to that policy was no secret. Sawyer had been suffered to retain his situation more than a year and a half after he had declared against the dispensing power. This extraordinary indulgence he owed to the extreme difficulty which the government found in supplying his place. It was necessary, for the protection of the pecuniary interests of the crown, that at least one of the two chief law officers should be a man of ability and knowledge; and it was by no means easy to induce any barrister of ability and knowledge to put himself in peril by committing every day acts which the next Parliament would probably treat as high crimes and misdemeanours. It had been impossible to procure a better Solicitor General than Powis, a man who indeed stuck at nothing, but who was incompetent to perform the ordinary duties of his post. In these circumstances it was thought desirable that there should be a division of



labour. An Attorney, the value of whose professional talents was much diminished by his conscientious scruples, was coupled with a Solicitor whose want of scruples made some amends for his want of talents. When the government wished to enforce the law, recourse was had to Sawyer. When the government wished to break the law, recourse was had to Powis. This arrangement lasted till the King obtained the services of an advocate who was at once baser than Powis and abler than Sawyer.

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No barrister living had opposed the Court with more virulence than William Williams. He had distinguished himself in the late reign as a Whig and an Exclusionist. When faction was at the height, he had been chosen Speaker of the House of Commons. After the prorogation of the Oxford Parliament he had commonly been counsel for the most noisy demagogues who had been accused of sedition. He was allowed to possess considerable quickness and knowledge. His chief faults were supposed to be rashness and party spirit. It was not yet suspected that he had faults compared with which rashness and party spirit might well pass for virtues. The government sought occasion against him, and easily found it. He had published, by order of the House of Commons, a narrative which Dangerfield had written. This narrative, if published by a private man, would undoubtedly have been a seditious libel. A criminal information was filed in the King's Bench against Williams: he pleaded the privileges of Parliament in vain: he was convicted and sentenced to a fine of ten thousand pounds. A large part of this sum he actually paid: for the rest he gave a bond. The Earl of Peterborough, who had been injuriously mentioned in Dangerfield's narrative, was encouraged, by the success of the criminal information, to bring a civil action, and to demand large damages. Williams was driven to extremity. At this juncture a way of escape presented itself. It was indeed a way which, to a man of strong principles or high spirit, would have been more dreadful than beggary, imprisonment, or death. He might sell himself to that government of which he had been the enemy and the victim. He might offer to go on the forlorn hope in

Williams  
Solicitor  
General.

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every assault on those liberties and on that religion for which he had professed an inordinate zeal. He might expiate his Whiggism by performing services from which bigoted Tories, stained with the blood of Russell and Sidney, shrank in horror. The bargain was struck. The debt still due to the crown was remitted. Peterborough was induced, by royal mediation, to compromise his action. Sawyer was dismissed. Powis became Attorney General. Williams was made Solicitor, received the honour of knighthood, and was soon a favourite. Though in rank he was only the second law officer of the crown, his abilities, learning, and energy were such that he completely threw his superior into the shade.\*

Williams had not been long in office when he was required to bear a chief part in the most memorable state trial recorded in the British annals.

Second  
Declara-  
tion of In-  
dulgence.

On the twenty-seventh of April 1688, the King put forth a second Declaration of Indulgence. In this paper he recited at length the Declaration of the preceding April. His past life, he said, ought to have convinced his people that he was not a person who could easily be induced to depart from any resolution which he had formed. But, as designing men had attempted to persuade the world that he might be prevailed on to give way in this matter, he thought it necessary to proclaim that his purpose was immutably fixed, that he was resolved to employ those only who were prepared to concur in his design, and that he had, in pursuance of that resolution, dismissed many of his disobedient servants from civil and military employments. He announced that he meant to hold a Parliament in November at the latest; and he exhorted his subjects to choose representatives who would assist him in the great work which he had undertaken.\*\*

\* London Gazette, Dec. 15. 1687. See the proceedings against Williams in the Collection of State Trials. "Ha hecho," says Ronquillo, "grande susto el haber nombrado el abogado Williams, que fue el orador y el mas arrabiado de toda la casa des comunes en los ultimos terribles parlamentos del Rey difunto." Nov. 27,  
Dec. 7, 1687.

\*\* London Gazette, April 30. 1688; Barillon, April 26,  
May 6



This Declaration at first produced little sensation. It contained nothing new; and men wondered that the King should think it worth while to publish a solemn manifesto merely for the purpose of telling them that he had not changed his mind.\* Perhaps James was nettled by the indifference with which the announcement of his fixed resolution was received by the public, and thought that his dignity and authority would suffer unless he without delay did something novel and striking. On the fourth of May, accordingly, he made an Order in Council that his Declaration of the preceding week should be read, on two successive Sundays at the time of divine service, by the officiating ministers of all the churches and chapels of the kingdom. In London and in the suburbs the reading was to take place on the twentieth and twenty-seventh of May, in other parts of England on the third and tenth of June. The Bishops were directed to distribute copies of the Declaration through their respective dioceses.\*\*

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The  
clergy  
ordered  
to read it.

When it is considered that the clergy of the Established Church, with scarcely an exception, regarded the Indulgence as a violation of the laws of the realm, as a breach of the plighted faith of the King, and as a fatal blow levelled at the interest and dignity of their own profession, it will scarcely admit of doubt that the Order in Council was intended to be felt by them as a cruel affront. It was popularly believed that Petre had avowed this intention in a coarse metaphor borrowed from the rhetoric of the East. He would, he said, make them eat dirt, the vilest and most loathsome of all dirt. But, tyrannical and malignant as the mandate was, would the Anglican priesthood refuse to obey? The King's temper was arbitrary and severe. The proceedings of the Ecclesiastical Commission were as summary as those of a court martial. Whoever ventured to resist might in a week be ejected from his parsonage, deprived of his whole income, pronounced incapable of holding any other spiritual preferment, and left to beg from door to door. If, indeed, the whole body offered an united opposition to the royal will, it was probable that

\* Citters, May 11. 1688.

\*\* London Gazette, May 7. 1688.

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even James would scarcely venture to punish ten thousand delinquents at once. But there was not time to form an extensive combination. The Order in Council was gazetted on the seventh of May. On the twentieth the Declaration was to be read in all the pulpits of London and the neighbourhood. By no exertion was it possible in that age to ascertain within a fortnight the intentions of one tenth part of the parochial ministers who were scattered over the kingdom. It was not easy to collect in so short a time the sense even of the episcopal order. It might also well be apprehended that, if the clergy refused to read the Declaration, the Protestant Dissenters would misinterpret the refusal, would despair of obtaining any toleration from the members of the Church of England, and would throw their whole weight into the scale of the Court.

They  
hesitate.

The clergy therefore hesitated; and this hesitation may well be excused: for some eminent laymen, who possessed a large share of the public confidence, were disposed to recommend submission. They thought that a general opposition could hardly be expected, and that a partial opposition would be ruinous to individuals, and of little advantage to the Church and to the nation. Such was the opinion given at this time by Halifax and Nottingham. The day drew near; and still there was no concert and no formed resolution.\*

Patriotism  
of the Pro-  
testant  
Noncon-  
formists  
of London.

At this conjuncture the Protestant Dissenters of London won for themselves a title to the lasting gratitude of their country. They had hitherto been reckoned by the government as part of its strength. A few of their most active and noisy preachers, corrupted by the favours of the Court, had got up addresses in favour of the King's policy. Others, estranged by the recollection of many cruel wrongs both from the Church of England and from the House of Stuart, had seen with resentful pleasure the tyrannical prince and the tyrannical hierarchy separated by a bitter enmity, and bidding against each other for the help of sects lately persecuted and despised. But this feeling, however natural, had been indulged long enough. The time had come when it was

\* Johnstone, May 27. 1688.



necessary to make a choice: and the Nonconformists of the City, with a noble spirit, arrayed themselves side by side with the members of the Church in defence of the fundamental laws of the realm. Baxter, Bates, and Howe distinguished themselves by their efforts to bring about this coalition; but the generous enthusiasm which pervaded the whole Puritan body made the task easy. The zeal of the flocks outran that of the pastors. Those Presbyterian and Independent teachers who showed an inclination to take part with the King against the ecclesiastical establishment received distinct notice that, unless they changed their conduct, their congregations would neither hear them nor pay them. Alsop, who had flattered himself that he should be able to bring over a great body of his disciples to the royal side, found himself on a sudden an object of contempt and abhorrence to those who had lately revered him as their spiritual guide, sank into a deep melancholy, and hid himself from the public eye. Deputations waited on several of the London clergy imploring them not to judge of the dissenting body from the servile adulation which had lately filled the London Gazette, and exhorting them, placed as they were in the van of this great fight, to play the men for the liberties of England and for the faith delivered to the Saints. These assurances were received with joy and gratitude. Yet there was still much anxiety and much difference of opinion among those who had to decide whether, on Sunday the twentieth, they would or would not obey the King's command. The London clergy, then universally acknowledged to be the flower of their profession, held a meeting. Fifteen Doctors of Divinity were present. Tillotson, Dean of Canterbury, the most celebrated preacher of the age, came thither from a sick bed. Sherlock, Master of the Temple, Patrick, Dean of Peterborough and Rector of the important parish of St. Paul's, Covent Garden, and Stillingfleet, Archdeacon of London and Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, attended. The general feeling of the assembly seemed to be that it was, on the whole, advisable to obey the Order in Council. The dispute began to wax warm, and might have produced fatal consequences, if it had not been

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Consulta-  
tion of the  
London  
clergy.

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brought to a close by the firmness and wisdom of Doctor Edward Fowler, Vicar of St. Giles's, Cripplegate, one of a small but remarkable class of divines who united that love of civil liberty which belonged to the school of Calvin with the theology of the school of Arminius.\* Standing up, Fowler spoke thus: "I must be plain. The question is so simple that argument can throw no new light on it, and can only beget heat. Let every man say Yes or No. But I cannot consent to be bound by the vote of the majority. I shall be sorry to cause a breach of unity. But this Declaration I cannot in conscience read." Tillotson, Patrick, Sherlock, and Stillingfleet declared that they were of the same mind. The majority yielded to the authority of a minority so respectable. A resolution by which all present pledged themselves to one another not to read the Declaration was then drawn up. Patrick was the first who set his hand to it; Fowler was the second. The paper was sent round the city, and was speedily subscribed by eighty-five incumbents.\*\*

Meanwhile several of the Bishops were anxiously deliberating as to the course which they should take. On the twelfth of May a grave and learned company was assembled round the table of the Primate at Lambeth. Compton, Bishop of London, Turner, Bishop of Ely, White, Bishop of Peterborough, and Tenison, Rector of St. Martin's parish, were among the guests. The Earl of Clarendon, a zealous and uncompromising friend of the Church, had been invited. Cartwright, Bishop of Chester, intruded himself on the meeting, probably as a spy. While he remained, no confidential communication could take place; but, after his departure, the great question of which all minds were full was pro-

\* That very remarkable man, the late Alexander Knox, whose eloquent conversation and elaborate letters had a great influence on the minds of his contemporaries, learned, I suspect, much of his theological system from Fowler's writings. Fowler's book on the Design of Christianity was assailed by John Bunyan with a ferocity which nothing can justify, but which the birth and breeding of the honest tinker in some degree excuse.

\*\* Johnstone, May 23. 1688. There is a satirical poem on this meeting entitled the Clerical Cabal,



pounded and discussed. The general opinion was that the Declaration ought not to be read. Letters were forthwith written to several of the most respectable prelates of the province of Canterbury, entreating them to come up without delay to London, and to strengthen the hands of their metropolitan at this conjuncture.\* As there was little doubt that these letters would be opened if they passed through the office in Lombard Street, they were sent by horsemen to the nearest country post towns on the different roads. The Bishop of Winchester, whose loyalty had been so signally proved at Sedgemoor, though suffering from indisposition, resolved to set out in obedience to the summons, but found himself unable to bear the motion of a coach. The letter addressed to William Lloyd, Bishop of Norwich, was, in spite of all precautions, detained by a postmaster; and that prelate, inferior to none of his brethren in courage and in zeal for the common cause of his order, did not reach London in time.\*\* His namesake, William Lloyd, Bishop of St. Asaph, a pious, honest, and learned man, but of slender judgment, and half crazed by his persevering endeavours to extract from Daniel and the Revelations some information about the Pope and the King of France, hastened to the capital and arrived on the sixteenth.\*\*\* On the following day came the excellent Ken, Bishop of Bath and Wells, Lake, Bishop of Chichester, and Sir John Trelawney, Bishop of Bristol, a baronet of an old and honourable Cornish family.

On the eighteenth a meeting of prelates and of other eminent divines was held at Lambeth. Tillotson, Tenison, Stillingfleet, Patrick, and Sherlock were present. Prayers were solemnly read before the consultation began. After long deliberation, a petition embodying the general sense was written by the Archbishop with his own hand. It was not drawn up with much felicity of style. Indeed, the cumbrous and inelegant structure of the sentences brought on Sancroft

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Consulta-  
tion at  
Lambeth  
Palace.

\* Clarendon's Diary, May 22. 1688.

\*\* Extracts from Tanner MS. in Howell's State Trials; Life of Prideaux; Clarendon's Diary, May 16. 1688.

\*\*\* Clarendon's Diary, May 16 and 17. 1688.

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some raillery, which he bore with less patience than he showed under much heavier trials. But in substance nothing could be more skilfully framed than this memorable document. All disloyalty, all intolerance, was earnestly disclaimed. The King was assured that the Church still was, as she had ever been, faithful to the throne. He was assured also that the Bishops would, in proper place and time, as Lords of Parliament and members of the Upper House of Convocation, show that they by no means wanted tenderness for the conscientious scruples of Dissenters. But Parliament had, both in the late and in the present reign, pronounced that the sovereign was not constitutionally competent to dispense with statutes in matters ecclesiastical. The Declaration was therefore illegal; and the petitioners could not, in prudence, honour, or conscience, be parties to the solemn publication of an illegal Declaration in the house of God, and during the time of divine service.

This paper was signed by the Archbishop and by six of his suffragans, Lloyd of St. Asaph, Turner of Ely, Lake of Chichester, Ken of Bath and Wells, White of Peterborough, and Trelawney of Bristol. The Bishop of London, being under suspension, did not sign.

Petition  
of the  
seven  
Bishops  
present-  
ed to the  
King.

It was now late on Friday evening: and on Sunday morning the Declaration was to be read in the churches of London. It was necessary to put the paper into the King's hands without delay. The six Bishops set off for Whitehall. The Archbishop, who had long been forbidden the Court, did not accompany them. Lloyd, leaving his five brethren at the house of Lord Dartmouth in the vicinity of the palace, went to Sunderland, and begged that minister to read the petition, and to ascertain when the King would be willing to receive it. Sunderland, afraid of compromising himself, refused to look at the paper, but went immediately to the royal closet. James directed that the Bishops should be admitted. He had heard from his tool Cartwright that they were disposed to obey the royal mandate, but that they wished for some little modifications in form, and that they meant to present a humble request to that effect. His Majesty was therefore in very



good humour. When they knelt before him, he graciously told them to rise, took the paper from Lloyd, and said, "This is my Lord of Canterbury's hand." "Yes, Sir, his own hand," was the answer. James read the petition; he folded it up; and his countenance grew dark. "This," he said, "is a great surprise to me. I did not expect this from your Church, especially from some of you. This is a standard of rebellion." The Bishops broke out into passionate professions of loyalty: but the King, as usual, repeated the same words over and over. "I tell you, this is a standard of rebellion." "Rebellion!" cried Trelawney, falling on his knees. "For God's sake, Sir, do not say so hard a thing of us. No Trelawney can be a rebel. Remember that my family has fought for the crown. Remember how I served your Majesty when Monmouth was in the West." "We put down the last rebellion," said Lake: "we shall not raise another." "We rebel!" exclaimed Turner; "we are ready to die at your Majesty's feet." "Sir," said Ken, in a more manly tone, "I hope that you will grant to us that liberty of conscience which you grant to all mankind." Still James went on. "This is rebellion. This is a standard of rebellion. Did ever a good Churchman question the dispensing power before? Have not some of you preached for it and written for it? It is a standard of rebellion. I will have my Declaration published." "We have two duties to perform," answered Ken, "our duty to God, and our duty to your Majesty. We honour you: but we fear God." "Have I deserved this?" said the King, more and more angry, "I who have been such a friend to your Church! I did not expect this from some of you. I will be obeyed. My Declaration shall be published. You are trumpeters of sedition. What do you do here? Go to your dioceses and see that I am obeyed. I will keep this paper. I will not part with it. I will remember you that have signed it." "God's will be done," said Ken. "God has given me the dispensing power," said the King, "and I will maintain it. I tell you that there are still seven thousand of your Church who have not bowed the knee to Baal." The

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Bishops respectfully retired.\* That very evening the document which they had put into the hands of the King appeared word for word in print, was laid on the tables of all the coffee-houses, and was cried about the streets. Everywhere the people rose from their beds, and came out to stop the hawkers. It was said that the printer cleared a thousand pounds in a few hours by this penny broad-side. This is probably an exaggeration; but it is an exaggeration which proves that the sale was enormous. How the petition got abroad is still a mystery. Sancroft declared that he had taken every precaution against publication, and that he knew of no copy except that which he had himself written, and which James had taken out of Lloyd's hand. The veracity of the Archbishop is beyond all suspicion. It is, however, by no means improbable that some of the divines who assisted in framing the petition may have remembered so short a composition accurately, and may have sent it to the press. The prevailing opinion, however, was that some person about the King had been indiscreet or treacherous.\*\* Scarcely less sensation was produced by a short letter which was written with great power of argument and language, printed secretly, and largely circulated on the same day by the post and by the common carriers. A copy was sent to every clergyman in the kingdom. The writer did not attempt to disguise the danger which those who disobeyed the royal mandate would incur: but he set forth in a lively manner the still greater danger of submission. "If we read the Declaration," said he, "we fall to rise no more. We fall unpitied and despised. We fall amidst the curses of a nation whom our compliance will have ruined." Some thought that this paper came from Holland. Others attributed it to Sherlock. But Prideaux, Dean of Norwich, who was a principal agent in distributing it, believed it to be the work of Halifax.

The conduct of the prelates was rapturously extolled by the general voice: but some murmurs were heard. It was

\* Sancroft's Narrative printed from the Tanner MS.; Citters, May 22.  
June 1.  
1688.

\*\* Burnet, i. 741.; Revolution Politics; Higgins's Short View.



said that such grave men, if they thought themselves bound in conscience to remonstrate with the King, ought to have remonstrated earlier. Was it fair to him to leave him in the dark till within thirty-six hours of the time fixed for the reading of the Declaration? Even if he wished to revoke the Order in Council, it was too late to do so. The inference seemed to be that the petition was intended, not to move the royal mind, but merely to inflame the discontents of the people.\* These complaints were utterly groundless. The King had laid on the Bishops a command new, surprising, and embarrassing. It was their duty to communicate with each other, and to ascertain as far as possible the sense of the profession of which they were the heads before they took any step. They were dispersed over the whole kingdom. Some of them were distant from others a full week's journey. James allowed them only a fortnight to inform themselves, to meet, to deliberate, and to decide; and he surely had no right to think himself aggrieved because that fortnight was drawing to a close before he learned their decision. Nor is it true that they did not leave him time to revoke his order if he had been wise enough to do so. He might have called together his Council on Saturday morning, and before night it might have been known throughout London and the suburbs that he had yielded to the intreaties of the fathers of the Church. The Saturday, however, passed over without any sign of relenting on the part of the government; and the Sunday arrived, a day long remembered

In the City and Liberties of London were about a hundred parish churches. In only four of these was the Order in Council obeyed. At Saint Gregory's the Declaration was read by a divine of the name of Martin. As soon as he uttered the first words, the whole congregation rose and withdrew. At Saint Matthew's, in Friday Street, a wretch named Timothy Hall, who had disgraced his gown by acting as broker for the Duchess of Portsmouth in the sale of pardons, and who now had hopes of obtaining the vacant bishopric of Oxford, was in like manner left alone in his church. At

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The  
London  
clergy  
disobey  
the royal  
order.

\* Clarke's Life of James the Second, ii. 155.

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Serjeant's Inn, in Chancery Lane, the clerk pretended that he had forgotten to bring a copy; and the Chief Justice of the King's Bench, who had attended in order to see that the royal mandate was obeyed, was forced to content himself with this excuse. Samuel Wesley, the father of John and Charles Wesley, a curate in London, took for his text that day the noble answer of the three Jews to the Chaldean tyrant. "Be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." Even in the chapel of Saint James's Palace the officiating minister had the courage to disobey the order. The Westminster boys long remembered what took place that day in the Abbey. Sprat, Bishop of Rochester, officiated there as Dean. As soon as he began to read the Declaration, murmurs and the noise of people crowding out of the choir drowned his voice. He trembled so violently that men saw the paper shake in his hand. Long before he had finished, the place was deserted by all but those whose situation made it necessary for them to remain.\*

Never had the Church been so dear to the nation as on the afternoon of that day. The spirit of dissent seemed to be extinct. Baxter from his pulpit pronounced an eulogium on the Bishops and parochial clergy. The Dutch minister, a few hours later, wrote to inform the States General that the Anglican priesthood had risen in the estimation of the public to an incredible degree. The universal cry of the Nonconformists, he said, was that they would rather continue to lie under the penal statutes than separate their cause from that of the prelates.\*\*

Another week of anxiety and agitation passed away. Sunday came again. Again the churches of the capital were thronged by hundreds of thousands. The Declaration was read nowhere except at the very few places where it had been

\* Citters,  $\frac{\text{May 22.}}{\text{June 1.}}$  1688; Burnet, i. 740.; and Lord Dartmouth's note; Southey's Life of Wesley.

\*\* Citters,  $\frac{\text{May 22.}}{\text{June 1.}}$  1688.



read the week before. The minister who had officiated at the chapel in Saint James's Palace had been turned out of his situation, and a more obsequious divine appeared with the paper in his hand: but his agitation was so great that he could not articulate. In truth the feeling of the whole nation had now become such as none but the very best and noblest, or the very worst and basest, of mankind could without much discomposure encounter.\*

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Even the King stood aghast for a moment at the violence of the tempest which he had raised. What step was he next to take? He must either advance or recede: and it was impossible to advance without peril, or to recede without humiliation. At one moment he determined to put forth a second order enjoining the clergy in high and angry terms to publish his Declaration, and menacing every one who should be refractory with instant suspension. This order was drawn up and sent to the press, then recalled, then a second time sent to the press, then recalled a second time.\*\* A different plan was suggested by some of those who were for rigorous measures. The prelates who had signed the petition might be cited before the Ecclesiastical Commission and deprived of their sees. But to this course strong objections were urged in Council. It had been announced that the Houses would be convoked before the end of the year. The Lords would assuredly treat the sentence of deprivation as a nullity, would insist that Sancroft and his fellow petitioners should be summoned to Parliament, and would refuse to acknowledge a new Archbishop of Canterbury or a new Bishop of Bath and Wells. Thus the session, which at best was likely to be sufficiently stormy, would commence with a deadly quarrel between the crown and the peers. If therefore it were thought necessary to punish the Bishops, the punishment ought to be inflicted according to the known course of English law. Sunderland had from the beginning objected, as far as he dared, to the Order in Council. He now suggested a course

Hesitation  
of the go-  
vernment.

\* *Citlers*, May 29.  
June 5. 1688.

\*\* *Ibid.* May 29.  
June 8. 1688.

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which, though not free from inconveniences, was the most prudent and the most dignified that a series of errors had left open to the government. The King might with grace and majesty announce to the world that he was deeply hurt by the undutiful conduct of the Church of England; but that he could not forget all the services rendered by that Church, in trying times, to his father, to his brother, and to himself; that, as a friend to the liberty of conscience, he was unwilling to deal severely by men whom conscience, ill informed indeed, and unreasonably scrupulous, might have prevented from obeying his commands; and that he would therefore leave the offenders to that punishment which their own reflections would inflict whenever they should calmly compare their recent acts with the loyal doctrines of which they had so loudly boasted. Not only Powis and Bellasyse, who had always been for moderate counsels, but even Dover and Arundell, leaned towards this proposition. Jeffreys, on the other hand, maintained that the government would be disgraced if such transgressors as the seven Bishops were suffered to escape with a mere reprimand. He did not, however, wish them to be cited before the Ecclesiastical Commission, in which he sat as chief or rather as sole Judge. For the load of public hatred under which he already lay was too much even for his shameless forehead and obdurate heart; and he shrank from the responsibility which he would have incurred by pronouncing an illegal sentence on the rulers of the Church and the favourites of the nation. He therefore recommended a criminal information. It was accordingly resolved that the Archbishop and the six other petitioners should be brought before the Court of King's Bench on a charge of seditious libel. That they would be convicted it was scarcely possible to doubt. The Judges and their officers were tools of the Court. Since the old charter of the City of London had been forfeited, scarcely one prisoner whom the government was bent on bringing to punishment had been absolved by a jury. The refractory prelates would probably be condemned to ruinous fines and to long imprisonment, and would be glad to ransom themselves by

It is determined to prosecute the Bishops for a libel.



-serving, both in and out of Parliament, the designs of the Sovereign.\*

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On the twenty-seventh of May it was notified to the Bishops that on the eighth of June they must appear before the King in Council. Why so long an interval was allowed we are not informed. Perhaps James hoped that some of the offenders, terrified by his displeasure, might submit before the day fixed for the reading of the Declaration in their dioceses, and might, in order to make their peace with him, persuade their clergy to obey his order. If such was his hope it was signally disappointed. Sunday the third of June came; and all parts of England followed the example of the capital. Already the Bishops of Norwich, Gloucester, Salisbury, Winchester, and Exeter, had signed copies of the petition in token of their approbation. The Bishop of Worcester had refused to distribute the Declaration among his clergy. The Bishop of Hereford had distributed it: but it was generally understood that he was overwhelmed by remorse and shame for having done so. Not one parish priest in fifty complied with the Order in Council. In the great diocese of Chester, including the county of Lancaster, only three clergymen could be prevailed on by Cartwright to obey the King. In the diocese of Norwich are many hundreds of parishes. In only four of these was the Declaration read. The courtly Bishop of Rochester could not overcome the scruples of the minister of the ordinary of Chatham, who depended on the government for bread. There is still extant a pathetic letter which this honest priest sent to the Secretary of the Admiralty. "I cannot," he wrote, "reasonably expect your Honour's protection. God's will be done. I must choose suffering rather than sin."\*\*

On the evening of the eighth of June the seven prelates, furnished by the ablest lawyers in England with full advice, They are examined

\* Barillon, May 24. May 31. 1688; Citters, July 11; Adda May 25. June 4.

May 30. June 9. June 11; Clarke's Life of James the Second, ii. 158.

\*\* Burnet, i. 740.; Life of Prideaux; Citters, June 12. 13. 1688; Tanner MS.; Life and Correspondence of Pepys.

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by the  
Privy  
Council.

repaired to the palace, and were called into the Council chamber. Their petition was lying on the table. The Chancellor took the paper up, showed it to the Archbishop, and said, "Is this the paper which your Grace wrote, and which the six Bishops present delivered to his Majesty?" Sancroft looked at the paper, turned to the King, and spoke thus: "Sir, I stand here a culprit. I never was so before. Once I little thought that I ever should be so. Least of all could I think that I should be charged with any offence against my King: but, since I am so unhappy as to be in this situation, your Majesty will not be offended if I avail myself of my lawful right to decline saying anything which may criminate me." "This is mere chicanery," said the King. "I hope that your Grace will not do so ill a thing as to deny your own hand." "Sir," said Lloyd, whose studies had been much among the casuists, "all divines agree that a person situated as we are may refuse to answer such a question." The King, as slow of understanding as quick of temper, could not comprehend what the prelates meant. He persisted, and was evidently becoming very angry. "Sir," said the Archbishop, "I am not bound to accuse myself. Nevertheless, if your Majesty positively commands me to answer, I will do so in the confidence that a just and generous prince will not suffer what I say in obedience to his orders to be brought in evidence against me." "You must not capitulate with your Sovereign," said the Chancellor. "No," said the King; "I will not give any such command. If you choose to deny your own hands, I have nothing more to say to you."

The Bishops were repeatedly sent out into the antechamber, and repeatedly called back into the Council room. At length James positively commanded them to answer the question. He did not expressly engage that their confession should not be used against them. But they, not unnaturally, supposed that, after what had passed, such an engagement was implied in his command. Sancroft acknowledged his handwriting; and his brethren followed his example. They were then interrogated about the meaning of some words in the petition, and about the letter which had been circulated



with so much effect all over the kingdom: but their language was so guarded that nothing was gained by the examination. The Chancellor then told them that a criminal information would be exhibited against them in the Court of King's Bench, and called upon them to enter into recognisances. They refused. They were peers of the realm, they said. They were advised by the best lawyers in Westminster Hall that no peer could be required to enter into a recognisance in a case of libel; and they should not think themselves justified in relinquishing the privilege of their order. The King was so absurd as to think himself personally affronted because they chose, on a legal question, to be guided by legal advice. "You believe everybody," he said, "rather than me." He was indeed mortified and alarmed. For he had gone so far that, if they persisted, he had no choice left but to send them to prison; and, though he by no means foresaw all the consequences of such a step, he foresaw probably enough to disturb him. They were resolute. A warrant was therefore made out directing the Lieutenant of the Tower to keep them in safe custody, and a barge was manned to convey them down the river.\*

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They are  
committed to the  
Tower.

It was known all over London that the Bishops were before the Council. The public anxiety was intense. A great multitude filled the courts of Whitehall and all the neighbouring streets. Many people were in the habit of refreshing themselves at the close of a summer day with the cool air of the Thames. But on this evening the whole river was alive with wherries. When the Seven came forth under a guard, the emotions of the people broke through all restraint. Thousands fell on their knees and prayed aloud for the men who had, with the Christian courage of Ridley and Latimer, confronted a tyrant inflamed by all the bigotry of Mary. Many dashed into the stream, and, up to their waists in ooze and water, cried to the holy fathers to bless them. All down the river, from Whitehall to London Bridge, the royal barge passed between lines of boats, from which arose a shout of "God bless your Lordships." The King, in great alarm, gave

\* Sancroft's Narrative, printed from the Tanner MS.

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orders that the garrison of the Tower should be doubled, that the Guards should be held ready for action, and that two companies should be detached from every regiment in the kingdom, and sent up instantly to London. But the force on which he relied as the means of coercing the people shared all the feelings of the people. The very sentinels who were under arms at the Traitors' Gate reverently asked for a blessing upon the martyrs whom they were to guard. Sir Edward Hales was Lieutenant of the Tower. He was little inclined to treat his prisoners with kindness. For he was an apostate from that Church for which they suffered; and he held several lucrative posts by virtue of that dispensing power against which they had protested. He learned with indignation that his soldiers were drinking the health of the Bishops. He ordered his officers to see that it was done no more. But the officers came back with a report that the thing could not be prevented, and that no other health was drunk in the garrison. Nor was it only by carousing that the troops showed their reverence for the fathers of the Church. There was such a show of devotion throughout the Tower that pious divines thanked God for bringing good out of evil, and for making the persecution of His faithful servants the means of saving many souls. All day the coaches and liveries of the first nobles of England were seen round the prison gates. Thousands of humbler spectators constantly covered Tower Hill.\* But among the marks of public respect and sympathy which the prelates received there was one which more than all the rest enraged and alarmed the King. He learned that a deputation of ten Nonconformist ministers had visited the Tower. He sent for four of these persons, and himself upbraided them. They courageously answered that they thought it their duty to forget past quarrels, and to stand by the men who stood by the Protestant religion.\*\*

Birth of  
the Pre-  
tender.

Scarcely had the gates of the Tower been closed on the prisoners when an event took place which increased the public

\* Burnet, i. 741.; Citters, June 8. 1688; Luttrell's Diary, June 8.; Evelyn's Diary; Letter of Dr. Nalson to his wife, dated June 14., and printed from the Tanner MS.; Reresby's Memoirs.

\*\* Reresby's Memoirs.



excitement. It had been announced that the Queen did not expect to be delivered till July. But, on the day after the Bishops had appeared before the Council, it was observed that the King seemed to be anxious about her state. In the evening, however, she sate playing cards at Whitehall till near midnight. Then she was carried in a sedan to Saint James's Palace, where apartments had been very hastily fitted up for her reception. Soon messengers were running about in all directions to summon physicians and priests, Lords of the Council, and Ladies of the Bedchamber. In a few hours many public functionaries and women of rank were assembled in the Queen's room. There, on the morning of Sunday, the tenth of June, a day long kept sacred by the too faithful adherents of a bad cause, was born the most unfortunate of princes, destined to seventy-seven years of exile and wandering, of vain projects, of honours more galling than insults, and of hopes such as make the heart sick.

The calamities of the poor child had begun before his birth. The nation over which, according to the ordinary course of succession, he would have reigned, was fully persuaded that his mother was not really pregnant. By whatever evidence the fact of his birth had been proved, a considerable number of people would probably have persisted in maintaining that the Jesuits had practised some skilful sleight of hand; and the evidence, partly from accident, partly from gross mismanagement, was open to some objections. Many persons of both sexes were in the royal bedchamber when the child first saw the light; but none of them enjoyed any large measure of public confidence. Of the Privy Councillors present half were Roman Catholics; and those who called themselves Protestants were generally regarded as traitors to their country and their God. Many of the women in attendance were French, Italian, and Portuguese. Of the English ladies some were Papists, and some were the wives of Papists. Some persons who were peculiarly entitled to be present, and whose testimony would have satisfied all minds accessible to reason, were absent; and for their absence the King was held responsible. The Princess Anne was, of all the inhabitants of

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He is generally believed to be supposititious.

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the island, the most deeply interested in the event. Her sex and her experience qualified her to act as the guardian of her sister's birthright and her own. She had conceived strong suspicions which were daily confirmed by circumstances trifling or imaginary. She fancied that the Queen carefully shunned her scrutiny, and ascribed to guilt a reserve which was perhaps the effect of delicacy.\* In this temper Anne had determined to be present and vigilant when the critical day should arrive. But she had not thought it necessary to be at her post a month before that day, and had, in compliance, it was said, with her father's advice, gone to drink the Bath waters. Sancroft, whose great place made it his duty to attend, and on whose probity the nation placed entire reliance, had a few hours before been sent to the Tower by James. The Hydes were the proper protectors of the rights of the two Princesses. The Dutch Ambassador might be regarded as the representative of William, who, as first prince of the blood and consort of the King's eldest daughter, had a deep interest in what was passing. James never thought of summoning any member, male or female, of the family of Hyde; nor was the Dutch Ambassador invited to be present.

Posterity has fully acquitted the King of the fraud which his people imputed to him. But it is impossible to acquit him of folly and perverseness such as explain and excuse the error of his contemporaries. He was perfectly aware of the suspicions which were abroad.\*\* He ought to have known that those suspicions would not be dispelled by the evidence of members of the Church of Rome, or of persons who, though they might call themselves members of the Church of England, had shown themselves ready to sacrifice the interests of the Church of England in order to obtain his favour. That he was taken by surprise is true. But he had twelve hours to make his arrangements. He found no difficulty in crowding St. James's Palace with bigots and sycophants on whose word the nation placed no reliance. It would have been quite as

\* Correspondence between Anne and Mary, in Dalrymple; Clarendon's Diary, Oct. 31. 1688.

\*\* This is clear from Clarendon's Diary, Oct. 31. 1688.



easy to procure the attendance of some eminent persons whose attachment to the Princesses and to the established religion was unquestionable.

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At a later period, when he had paid dearly for his foolhardy contempt of public opinion, it was the fashion at Saint Germain's to excuse him by throwing the blame on others. Some Jacobites charged Anne with having purposely kept out of the way. Nay, they were not ashamed to say that Sancroft had provoked the King to send him to the Tower, in order that the evidence which was to confound the calumnies of the malecontents might be defective.\* The absurdity of these imputations is palpable. Could Anne or Sancroft possibly have foreseen that the Queen's calculations would turn out to be erroneous by a whole month? Had those calculations been correct, Anne would have been back from Bath, and Sancroft would have been out of the Tower, in ample time for the birth. At all events the maternal uncles of the King's daughters were neither at a distance nor in a prison. The same messenger who summoned the whole bevy of renegades, Dover, Peterborough, Murray, Sunderland, and Mulgrave, could just as easily have summoned Clarendon. If they were Privy Councillors, so was he. His house was in Jermyn Street, not two hundred yards from the chamber of the Queen. Yet he was left to learn at St. James's Church, from the agitation and whispers of the congregation, that his niece had ceased to be heiress presumptive of the crown.\*\* Was it a disqualification that he was the near kinsman of the Princesses of Orange and Denmark? Or was it a disqualification that he was unalterably attached to the Church of England?

The cry of the whole nation was that an imposture had been practised. Papists had, during some months, been predicting, from the pulpit and through the press, in prose and verse, in English and Latin, that a Prince of Wales would be given to the prayers of the Church; and they had now accomplished their own prophecy. Every witness who could not be corrupted or deceived had been studiously ex-

\* Clarke's Life of James the Second, ii. 159, 160.

\*\* Clarendon's Diary, June 10, 1688.

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cluded. Anne had been tricked into visiting Bath. The Primate had, on the very day preceding that which had been fixed for the villany, been sent to prison in defiance of the rules of law and of the privileges of peerage. Not a single man or woman who had the smallest interest in detecting the fraud had been suffered to be present. The Queen had been removed suddenly and at the dead of night to St. James's Palace, because that building, less commodious for honest purposes than Whitehall, had some rooms and passages well suited for the purpose of the Jesuits. There, amidst a circle of zealots who thought nothing a crime that tended to promote the interests of their Church, and of courtiers who thought nothing a crime that tended to enrich and aggrandise themselves, a new born child had been introduced into the royal bed, and then handed round in triumph, as heir of the three kingdoms. Heated by such suspicions, suspicions unjust, it is true, but not altogether unnatural, men thronged more eagerly than ever to pay their homage to the saintly victims of the tyrant who, having long foully injured his people, had now filled up the measure of his iniquities by more foully injuring his children.\*

The Prince of Orange, not himself suspecting any trick, and not aware of the state of public feeling in England, ordered prayers to be said under his own roof for his little brother-in-law, and sent Zulestein to London with a formal message of congratulation. Zulestein, to his amazement, found all the people whom he met open mouthed about the infamous fraud just committed by the Jesuits, and saw every hour some fresh pasquinade on the pregnancy and the delivery. He soon wrote to the Hague that not one person in ten believed the child to have been born of the Queen.\*\*

\* Johnstone gives in a very few words an excellent summary of the case against the King. "The generality of people conclude all is a trick; because they say the reckoning is changed, the Princess sent away, none of the Clarendon family nor the Dutch Ambassador sent for, the suddenness of the thing, the sermons, the confidence of the priests, the hurry." June 13. 1688.

\* Ronquillo, <sup>July 26.</sup> <sub>Aug. 5.</sub> Ronquillo adds, that what Zulestein said of the state of public opinion was strictly true.



The demeanour of the seven prelates meanwhile strengthened the interest which their situation excited. On the evening of the Black Friday, as it was called, on which they were committed, they reached their prison just at the hour of divine service. They instantly hastened to the chapel. It chanced that in the second lesson were these words: "In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments." All zealous Churchmen were delighted by this coincidence, and remembered how much comfort a similar coincidence had given, near forty years before, to Charles the First at the time of his death.

On the evening of the next day, Saturday the ninth, a letter came from Sunderland enjoining the chaplain of the Tower to read the Declaration during divine service on the following morning. As the time fixed by the Order in Council for the reading in London had long expired, this proceeding of the government could be considered only as a personal insult of the meanest and most childish kind to the venerable prisoners. The chaplain refused to comply: he was dismissed from his situation; and the chapel was shut up.\*

The Bishops edified all who approached them by the firmness and cheerfulness with which they endured confinement, by the modesty and meekness with which they received the applauses and blessings of the whole nation, and by the loyal attachment which they professed for the persecutor who sought their destruction. They remained only a week in custody. On Friday the fifteenth of June, the first day of term, they were brought before the King's Bench. An immense throng awaited their coming. From the landing-place to the Court of Requests they passed through a lane of spectators who blessed and applauded them. "Friends," said the prisoners as they passed, "honour the King; and remember us in your prayers." These humble and pious expressions moved the hearers, even to tears. When at length the procession had made its way through the crowd into the presence of the Judges, the Attorney General exhibited the

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The  
Bishops  
brought  
before the  
King's  
Bench  
and  
hailed.

Citters June 17. 1688; Luttrell's Diary, June 18.

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information which he had been commanded to prepare, and moved that the defendants might be ordered to plead. The counsel on the other side objected that the Bishops had been unlawfully committed, and were therefore not regularly before the Court. The question whether a peer could be required to enter into recognisances on a charge of libel was argued at great length, and decided by a majority of the Judges in favour of the crown. The prisoners then pleaded Not Guilty. That day fortnight, the twenty-ninth of June, was fixed for their trial. In the meantime they were allowed to be at large on their own recognisances. The crown lawyers acted prudently in not requiring sureties. For Halifax had arranged that twenty-one temporal peers of the highest consideration should be ready to put in bail, three for each defendant; and such a manifestation of the feeling of the nobility would have been no slight blow to the government. It was also known that one of the most opulent Dissenters of the City had begged that he might have the honour of giving security for Ken.

The Bishops were now permitted to depart to their own homes. The common people, who did not understand the nature of the legal proceedings which had taken place in the King's Bench, and who saw that their favourites had been brought to Westminster Hall in custody and were suffered to go away in freedom, imagined that the good cause was prospering. Loud acclamations were raised. The steeples of the churches sent forth joyous peals. Sprat was amazed to hear the bells of his own Abbey ringing merrily. He promptly silenced them; but his interference caused much angry muttering. The Bishops found it difficult to escape from the importunate crowd of their well-wishers. Lloyd was detained in Palace Yard by admirers who struggled to touch his hands and to kiss the skirt of his robe, till Clarendon, with some difficulty, rescued him and conveyed him home by a bye path. Cartwright, it is said, was so unwise as to mingle with the crowd. Some person who saw his episcopal habit asked and received his blessing. A bystander cried out, "Do you know who blessed you?" "Surely," said he who had just been



honoured by the benediction, "it was one of the Seven." "No," said the other; "it is the Popish Bishop of Chester." "Popish dog," cried the enraged Protestant; "take your blessing back again."

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Such was the concourse, and such the agitation, that the Dutch Ambassador was surprised to see the day close without an insurrection. The King had been by no means at ease. In order that he might be ready to suppress any disturbance, he had passed the morning in reviewing several battalions of infantry in Hyde Park. It is, however, by no means certain that his troops would have stood by him if he had needed their services. When Sancroft reached Lambeth, in the afternoon, he found the grenadier guards, who were quartered in that suburb, assembled before the gate of his palace. They formed in two lines on his right and left, and asked his benediction as he went through them. He with difficulty prevented them from lighting a bonfire in honour of his return to his dwelling. There were, however, many bonfires that evening in the City. Two Roman Catholics who were so indiscreet as to beat some boys for joining in these rejoicings were seized by the mob, stripped naked, and ignominiously branded.\*

Sir Edward Hales now came to demand fees from those who had lately been his prisoners. They refused to pay anything for a detention which they regarded as illegal to an officer whose commission was, on their principles, a nullity. The Lieutenant hinted very intelligibly that, if they came into his hands again, they should be put into heavy irons and should lie on bare stones. "We are under our King's displeasure," was the answer; "and most deeply do we feel it: but a fellow subject who threatens us does but lose his breath." It is easy to imagine with what indignation the people, excited as they were, must have learned that a renegade from the Protestant faith, who held a command in defiance of the fundamental laws of England, had dared to

\* For the events of this day see the State Trials; Clarendon's Diary; Luttrell's Diary; Citters, June 12; Johnstone, June 18.; Revolution Politics.

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Agitation  
of the  
public  
mind.

menace divines of venerable age and dignity with all the barbarities of Lollard's Tower.\*

Before the day of trial the agitation had spread to the farthest corners of the island. From Scotland the Bishops received letters assuring them of the sympathy of the Presbyterians of that country, so long and so bitterly hostile to prelacy.\*\* The people of Cornwall, a fierce, bold, and athletic race, among whom there was a stronger provincial feeling than in any other part of the realm, were greatly moved by the danger of Trelawney, whom they revered less as a ruler of the Church than as the head of an honourable house, and the heir through twenty descents of ancestors who had been of great note before the Normans had set foot on English ground. All over the county the peasants chanted a ballad of which the burden is still remembered:

"And shall Trelawney die, and shall Trelawney die?  
Then thirty thousand Cornish boys will know the reason why."

The miners from their caverns reechoed the song with a variation:

"Then twenty thousand under ground will know the reason why."\*\*\*

The rustics in many parts of the country loudly expressed a strange hope which had never ceased to live in their hearts. Their Protestant Duke, their beloved Monmouth, would suddenly appear, would lead them to victory, and would tread down the King and the Jesuits under his feet. †

The ministers were appalled. Even Jeffreys would gladly have retraced his steps. He charged Clarendon with friendly messages to the Bishops, and threw on others the blame of the prosecution which he had himself recommended. Sunderland again ventured to recommend concession. The late auspicious birth, he said, had furnished the King with an excellent opportunity of withdrawing from a position full of danger and inconvenience without incurring the reproach of

\* Johnstone, June 18. 1688; Evelyn's Diary, June 29.

\*\* Tanner MS.

\*\*\* This fact was communicated to me in the most obliging manner by the Reverend R. S. Hawker of Morwenstow in Cornwall.

† Johnstone, June 18. 1688.



timidity or of caprice. On such happy occasions it had been usual for sovereigns to make the hearts of subjects glad by acts of clemency; and nothing could be more advantageous to the Prince of Wales than that he should, while still in his cradle, be the peacemaker between his father and the agitated nation. But the King's resolution was fixed. "I will go on," he said. "I have been only too indulgent. Indulgence ruined my father."\* The artful minister found that his advice had been formerly taken only because it had been shaped to suit the royal temper, and that, from the moment at which he began to counsel well, he began to counsel in vain. He had shown some signs of slackness in the proceeding against Magdalene College. He had recently attempted to convince the King that Tyrconnel's scheme of confiscating the property of the English colonists in Ireland was full of danger, and had, with the help of Powis and Bellasyse, so far succeeded that the execution of the design had been postponed for another year. But this timidity and scrupulosity had excited disgust and suspicion in the royal mind.\*\* The day of retribution had arrived. Sunderland was in the same situation in which his rival Rochester had been some months before. Each of the two statesmen in turn experienced the misery of clutching, with an agonizing grasp, power which was perceptibly slipping away. Each in turn saw his suggestions scornfully rejected. Both endured the pain of reading displeasure and distrust in the countenance and demeanour of their master; yet both were by their country held responsible for those crimes and errors from which they had vainly endeavoured to dissuade him. While he suspected them of trying to win popularity at the expense of his authority and dignity, the public voice loudly accused them of trying to win his favour at the expense of their own honour and of the general weal. Yet, in spite of mortifications and humiliations, they both clung to office with the gripe of drowning men. Both at-

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Uneasi-  
ness of  
Sunder-  
land.

\* Adda, <sup>June 29.</sup> 1688.  
<sup>July 9.</sup>

\*\* Sunderland's own narrative is, of course, not to be implicitly trusted. But he vouched Godolphin as a witness of what took place respecting the Irish Act of Settlement.

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He pro-  
fesses  
himself a  
Roman  
Catholic.

tempted to propitiate the King by affecting a willingness to be reconciled to his Church. But there was point at which Rochester was determined to stop. He went to the verge of apostasy: but there he recoiled: and the world, in consideration of the firmness with which he refused to take the final step, granted him a liberal amnesty for all former compliances. Sunderland, less scrupulous and less sensible of shame, resolved to atone for his late moderation, and to recover the royal confidence, by an act which, to a mind impressed with the importance of religious truth, must have appeared to be one of the most flagitious of crimes, and which even men of the world regard as the last excess of baseness. About a week before the day fixed for the great trial, it was publicly announced that he was a Papist. The King talked with delight of this triumph of divine grace. Courtiers and envoys kept their countenances as well as they could while the renegade protested that he had been long convinced of the impossibility of finding salvation out of the communion of Rome, and that his conscience would not let him rest till he had renounced the heresies in which he had been brought up. The news spread fast. At all the coffee-houses it was told how the prime minister of England, his feet bare, and a taper in his hand, had repaired to the royal chapel and knocked humbly for admittance: how a priestly voice from within had demanded who was there; how Sunderland had made answer that a poor sinner who had long wandered from the true Church implored her to receive and to absolve him; how the doors were opened; and how the neophyte partook of the holy mysteries.\*

Trial of  
the Bi-  
shops.

This scandalous apostasy could not but heighten the interest with which the nation looked forward to the day when the fate of the seven brave confessors of the English Church was to be decided. To pack a jury was now the great object of the King. The crown lawyers were ordered to make strict inquiry as to the sentiments of the persons who were re-

\* Barillon,  $\frac{\text{June 21.}}{\text{July 1.}}$   $\frac{\text{June 28.}}{\text{July 8.}}$  1688; Adda,  $\frac{\text{June 29.}}{\text{July 9.}}$  Citters,  $\frac{\text{June 26.}}{\text{July 6.}}$ ; Johnstone, July 2. 1688; The Converts, a poem.



gistered in the freeholders' book. Sir Samuel Astry, Clerk of the Crown, whose duty it was, in cases of this description, to select the names, was summoned to the palace, and had an interview with James in the presence of the Chancellor.\* Sir Samuel seems to have done his best. For, among the forty-eight persons whom he nominated, were said to be several servants of the King, and several Roman Catholics.\*\* But as the counsel for the Bishops had a right to strike off twelve, these persons were removed. The crown lawyers also struck off twelve. The list was thus reduced to twenty-four. The first twelve who answered to their names were to try the issue.

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On the twenty-ninth of June, Westminster Hall, Old and New Palace Yard, and all the neighbouring streets to a great distance were thronged with people. Such an auditory had never before and has never since been assembled in the Court of King's Bench. Thirty-five temporal peers of the realm were counted in the crowd.\*\*\*

All the four Judges of the Court were on the bench. Wright, who presided, had been raised to his high place over the heads of many abler and more learned men solely on account of his unscrupulous servility. Allibone was a Papist, and owed his situation to that dispensing power, the legality of which was now in question. Holloway had hitherto been a serviceable tool of the government. Even Powell, whose character for honesty stood high, had borne a part in some proceedings which it is impossible to defend. He had, in the great case of Sir Edward Hales, with some hesitation, it is true, and after some delay, concurred with the majority of the bench, and had thus brought on his character a stain which his honourable conduct on this day completely effaced.

The counsel were by no means fairly matched. The government had required from its law officers services so odious and disgraceful that all the ablest jurists and advocates

\* Clarendon's Diary, June 21. 1688.

\*\* Citters, <sup>June 26,</sup> 1688.  
July 6.

\*\*\* Johnstone, July 2. 1688.

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of the Tory party had, one after another, refused to comply, and had been dismissed from their employments. Sir Thomas Powis, the Attorney General, was scarcely of the third rank in his profession. Sir William Williams, the Solicitor General, had quick parts and dauntless courage: but he wanted discretion; he loved wrangling; he had no command over his temper; and he was hated and despised by all political parties. The most conspicuous assistants of the Attorney and Solicitor were Serjeant Trinder, a Roman Catholic, and Sir Bartholomew Shower, Recorder of London, who had some legal learning, but whose fulsome apologies and endless repetitions were the jest of Westminster Hall. The government had wished to secure the services of Maynard: but he had plainly declared that he could not in conscience do what was asked of him.\*

On the other side were arrayed almost all the eminent forensic talents of the age. Sawyer and Finch, who, at the time of the accession of James, had been Attorney and Solicitor General, and who, during the persecution of the Whigs in the late reign, had served the crown with but too much vehemence and success, were of counsel for the defendants. With them were joined two persons who, since age had diminished the activity of Maynard, were reputed the two best lawyers that could be found in the Inns of Court: Pemberton, who had, in the time of Charles the Second, been Chief Justice of the King's Bench, who had been removed from his high place on account of his humanity and moderation, and who had resumed his practice at the bar; and Pollexfen, who had long been at the head of the Western circuit, and who, though he had incurred much unpopularity by holding briefs for the crown at the Bloody Assizes, and particularly by appearing against Alice Lisle, was known to be at heart a Whig, if not a republican. Sir Creswell Levinz was also there, a man of great knowledge and experience, but of singularly timid nature. He had been removed from the bench some years before, because he was afraid to serve the purposes of the government. He was now afraid to appear as the advocate of

\* Johnstone, July 2. 1688



the Bishops, and had at first refused to receive their retainer: but it had been intimated to him by the whole body of attorneys who employed him that, if he declined this brief, he should never have another.\*

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Sir George Treby, an able and zealous Whig, who had been Recorder of London under the old charter, was on the same side. Sir John Holt, a still more eminent Whig lawyer, was not retained for the defence, in consequence, it should seem, of some prejudice conceived against him by Sancroft, but was privately consulted on the case by the Bishop of London.\*\* The junior counsel for the Bishops was a young barrister named John Somers. He had no advantages of birth or fortune; nor had he yet had any opportunity of distinguishing himself before the eyes of the public: but his genius, his industry, his great and various accomplishments, were well known to a small circle of friends; and, in spite of his Whig opinions, his pertinent and lucid mode of arguing and the constant propriety of his demeanour had already secured to him the ear of the Court of King's Bench. The importance of obtaining his services had been strongly represented to the Bishops by Johnstone; and Pollexfen, it is said, had declared that no man in Westminster Hall was so well qualified to treat a historical and constitutional question as Somers.

The jury was sworn; it consisted of persons of highly respectable station. The foreman was Sir Roger Langley, a baronet of old and honourable family. With him were joined a knight and ten esquires, several of whom are known to have been men of large possessions. There were some Nonconformists in the number; for the Bishops had wisely resolved not to show any distrust of the Protestant Dissenters. One name excited considerable alarm, that of Michael Arnold. He was brewer to the palace; and it was apprehended that the government counted on his voice. The story goes that he

\* Johnstone, July 2. 1688. The editor of Levinz's reports expresses great wonder that, after the Revolution, Levinz was not replaced on the bench. The facts related by Johnstone may perhaps explain the seeming injustice.

\*\* I draw this inference from a letter of Compton to Sancroft, dated the 12th of June.

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complained bitterly of the position in which he found himself. "Whatever I do," he said, "I am sure to be half ruined. If I say Not Guilty, I shall brew no more for the King; and if I say Guilty, I shall brew no more for anybody else."\*

The trial then commenced, a trial which, even when coolly perused after the lapse of more than a century and a half, has all the interest of a drama. The advocates contended on both sides with far more than professional keenness and vehemence: the audience listened with as much anxiety as if the fate of every one of them was to be decided by the verdict; and the turns of fortune were so sudden and amazing that the multitude repeatedly passed in a single minute from anxiety to exultation and back again from exultation to still deeper anxiety.

The information charged the Bishops with having written or published, in the county of Middlesex, a false, malicious, and seditious libel. The Attorney and Solicitor first tried to prove the writing. For this purpose several persons were called to speak to the hands of the Bishops. But the witnesses were so unwilling that hardly a single plain answer could be extracted from any of them. Pemperton, Pollexfen, and Levinz contended that there was no evidence to go to the jury. Two of the Judges, Holloway and Powell, declared themselves of the same opinion; and the hopes of the spectators rose high. All at once the crown lawyers announced their intention to take another line. Powis, with shame and reluctance which he could not dissemble, put into the witness box Blathwayt, a Clerk of the Privy Council, who had been present when the King interrogated the Bishops. Blathwayt swore that he had heard them own their signatures. His testimony was decisive. "Why," said Judge Holloway to the Attorney, "when you had such evidence, did you not produce it at first, without all this waste of time?" It soon appeared why the counsel for the crown had been unwilling, without absolute necessity, to resort to this mode of proof. Pemberton stopped Blathwayt, subjected him to a searching cross examination, and insisted upon having all that had passed between the King and the defendants fully related. "That is a pretty thing

\* Revolution Politics.



indeed," cried Williams. "Do you think," said Powis, "that you are at liberty to ask our witnesses any impertinent question that comes into your heads?" The advocates of the Bishops were not men to be so put down. "He is sworn," said Pollexfen, "to tell the truth and the whole truth: and an answer we must and will have." The witness shuffled, equivocated, pretended to misunderstand the questions, implored the protection of the Court. But he was in hands from which it was not easy to escape. At length the Attorney again interposed. "If," he said, "you persist in asking such a question, tell us, at least, what use you mean to make of it." Pemberton, who, through the whole trial, did his duty manfully and ably, replied without hesitation; "My Lords, I will answer Mr. Attorney. I will deal plainly with the Court. If the Bishops owned this paper under a promise from His Majesty that their confession should not be used against them, I hope that no unfair advantage will be taken of them." "You put on His Majesty what I dare hardly name," said Williams: "since you will be so pressing, I demand, for the King, that the question may be recorded." "What do you mean, Mr. Solicitor?" said Sawyer, interposing. "I know what I mean," said the apostate: "I desire that the question may be recorded in Court." "Record what you will, I am not afraid of you, Mr. Solicitor," said Pemberton. Then came a loud and fierce altercation, which the Chief Justice could with difficulty quiet. In other circumstances, he would probably have ordered the question to be recorded and Pemberton to be committed. But on this great day he was overawed. He often cast a side glance towards the thick rows of Earls and Barons by whom he was watched, and who in the next Parliament might be his judges. He looked, a bystander said, as if all the peers present had halters in their pockets.\* At length Blathwayt was forced to give a full account of what had passed. It appeared that the King had entered into no express covenant with the Bishops. But it appeared also that the Bishops might not unreasonably think that there was an implied engagement.

\* This is the expression of an eye witness. It is in a newsletter in the Mackintosh Collection.

*Macculay, History. III.*

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Indeed, from the unwillingness of the crown lawyers to put the Clerk of the Council into the witness box, and from the vehemence with which they objected to Pemberton's cross examination, it is plain that they were themselves of this opinion.

However, the handwriting was now proved. But a new and serious objection was raised. It was not sufficient to prove that the Bishops had written the alleged libel. It was necessary to prove also that they had written it in the county of Middlesex. And not only was it out of the power of the Attorney and Solicitor to prove this; but it was in the power of the defendants to prove the contrary. For it so happened that Sancroft had never once left the palace at Lambeth from the time when the Order in Council appeared till after the petition was in the King's hands. The whole case for the prosecution had therefore completely broken down; and the audience, with great glee, expected a speedy acquittal.

The crown lawyers then changed their ground again, abandoned altogether the charge of writing a libel, and undertook to prove that the Bishops had published a libel in the county of Middlesex. The difficulties were great. The delivery of the petition to the King was undoubtedly, in the eye of the law, a publication. But how was this delivery to be proved? No person had been present at the audience in the royal closet, except the King and the defendants. The King could not well be sworn. It was therefore only by the admissions of the defendants that the fact of publication could be established. Blathwayt was again examined, but in vain. He well remembered, he said, that the Bishops owned their hands; but he did not remember that they owned the paper which lay on the table of the Privy Council to be the same paper which they had delivered to the King, or that they were even interrogated on that point. Several other official men who had been in attendance on the Council were called, and among them Samuel Pepys, Secretary of the Admiralty; but none of them could remember that anything was said about the delivery. It was to no purpose that Williams put leading questions till the counsel on the other side declared that such twisting, such



wiredrawing, was never seen in a court of justice, and till Wright himself was forced to admit that the Solicitor's mode of examination was contrary to all rule. As witness after witness answered in the negative, roars of laughter and shouts of triumph, which the Judges did not even attempt to silence, shook the hall.

It seemed that at length this hard fight had been won. The case for the crown was closed. Had the counsel for the Bishops remained silent, an acquittal was certain; for nothing which the most corrupt and shameless Judge could venture to call legal evidence of publication had been given. The Chief Justice was beginning to charge the jury, and would undoubtedly have directed them to acquit the defendants; but Finch, too anxious to be perfectly discreet, interfered, and begged to be heard. "If you will be heard," said Wright, "you shall be heard; but you do not understand your own interests." The other counsel for the defence made Finch sit down, and begged the Chief Justice to proceed. He was about to do so when a messenger came to the Solicitor General with news that Lord Sunderland could prove the publication, and would come down to the court immediately. Wright maliciously told the counsel for the defence that they had only themselves to thank for the turn which things had taken. The countenances of the great multitude fell. Finch was, during some hours, the most unpopular man in the country. Why could he not sit still as his betters, Sawyer, Pemberton, and Pollexfen had done? His love of meddling, his ambition to make a fine speech, had ruined everything.

Meanwhile the Lord President was brought in a sedan chair through the hall. Not a hat moved as he passed; and many voices cried out "Popish dog." He came into Court pale and trembling, with eyes fixed on the ground, and gave his evidence in a faltering voice. He swore that the Bishops had informed him of their intention to present a petition to the King, and that they had been admitted into the royal closet for that purpose. This circumstance, coupled with the circumstance that, after they left the closet, there was in the King's hands a petition signed by them, was such

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proof as might reasonably satisfy a jury of the fact of the publication.

Publication in Middlesex was then proved. But was the paper thus published a false, malicious, and seditious libel? Hitherto the matter in dispute had been whether a fact which everybody well knew to be true could be proved according to technical rules of evidence; but now the contest became one of deeper interest. It was necessary to inquire into the limits of prerogative and liberty, into the right of the King to dispense with statutes, into the right of the subject to petition for the redress of grievances. During three hours the counsel for the petitioners argued with great force in defence of the fundamental principles of the constitution, and proved from the journals of the House of Commons that the Bishops had affirmed no more than the truth when they represented to the King that the dispensing power which he claimed had been repeatedly declared illegal by Parliament. Somers rose last. He spoke little more than five minutes; but every word was full of weighty matter; and when he sat down his reputation as an orator and a constitutional lawyer was established. He went through the expressions which were used in the information to describe the offence imputed to the Bishops, and showed that every word, whether adjective or substantive, was altogether inappropriate. The offence imputed was a false, a malicious, a seditious libel. False the paper was not; for every fact which it set forth had been proved from the journals of Parliament to be true. Malicious the paper was not; for the defendants had not sought an occasion of strife, but had been placed by the government in such a situation that they must either oppose themselves to the royal will, or violate the most sacred obligations of conscience and honour. Seditious the paper was not; for it had not been scattered by the writers among the rabble, but delivered privately into the hands of the King alone: and a libel it was not, but a decent petition such as, by the laws of England, nay, by the laws of imperial Rome, by the laws of all civilised states, a subject who thinks himself aggrieved may with propriety present to the sovereign.



The Attorney replied shortly and feebly. The Solicitor spoke at great length and with great acrimony, and was often interrupted by the clamours and hisses of the audience. He went so far as to lay it down that no subject or body of subjects, except the Houses of Parliament, had a right to petition the King. The galleries were furious; and the Chief Justice himself stood aghast at the effrontery of this venal turncoat.

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At length Wright proceeded to sum up the evidence. His language showed that the awe in which he stood of the government was tempered by the awe with which the audience, so numerous, so splendid, and so strongly excited, had impressed him. He said that he would give no opinion on the question of the dispensing power, that it was not necessary for him to do so, that he could not agree with much of the Solicitor's speech, that it was the right of the subject to petition, but that the particular petition before the Court was improperly worded, and was, in the contemplation of law, a libel. Allibone was of the same mind, but, in giving his opinion, showed such gross ignorance of law and history as brought on him the contempt of all who heard him. Holloway evaded the question of the dispensing power, but said that the petition seemed to him to be such as subjects who think themselves aggrieved are entitled to present, and therefore no libel. Powell took a bolder course. He avowed that, in his judgment, the Declaration of Indulgence was a nullity, and that the dispensing power, as lately exercised, was utterly inconsistent with all law. If these encroachments of prerogative were allowed, there was an end of Parliaments. The whole legislative authority would be in the King. "That issue, gentlemen," he said, "I leave to God and to your consciences."\*

It was dark before the jury retired to consider of their verdict. The night was a night of intense anxiety. Some letters are extant which were despatched during that period of suspense, and which have therefore an interest of a peculiar kind. "It is very late," wrote the Papal Nuncio;

\* See the proceedings in the Collection of State Trials. I have taken some touches from Johnstone, and some from Citters.

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“and the decision is not yet known. The Judges and the culprits have gone to their own homes. The jury remain together. To-morrow we shall learn the event of this great struggle.”

The solicitor for the Bishops sate up all night with a body of servants on the stairs leading to the room where the jury was consulting. It was absolutely necessary to watch the officers who watched the doors; for those officers were supposed to be in the interest of the crown, and might, if not carefully observed, have furnished a courtly juryman with food, which would have enabled him to starve out the other eleven. Strict guard was therefore kept. Not even a candle to light a pipe was permitted to enter. Some basins of water for washing were suffered to pass at about four in the morning. The jurymen, raging with thirst, soon lapped up the whole. Great numbers of people walked the neighbouring streets till dawn. Every hour a messenger came from Whitehall to know what was passing. Voices, high in altercation, were repeatedly heard within the room: but nothing certain was known.\*

At first nine were for acquitting and three for convicting. Two of the minority soon gave way; but Arnold was obstinate. Thomas Austin, a country gentleman of great estate, who had paid close attention to the evidence and speeches, and had taken full notes, wished to argue the question. Arnold declined. He was not used, he doggedly said, to reasoning and debating. His conscience was not satisfied; and he should not acquit the Bishops. “If you come to that,” said Austin, “look at me. I am the largest and strongest of the twelve; and before I find such a petition as this a libel, here I will stay till I am no bigger than a tobacco pipe.” It was six in the morning before Arnold yielded. It was soon known that the jury were agreed: but what the verdict would be was still a secret.\*\*

At ten the Court again met. The crowd was greater than

\* Johnstone, July 2. 1688; Letter from Mr. Ince to the Archbishop, dated at six o'clock in the morning; Tanner MS.; Revolution Politics.

\*\* Johnstone, July 2. 1688.



ever. The jury appeared in their box; and there was a breathless stillness.

Sir Samuel Astry spoke. "Do you find the defendants, or any of them, guilty of the misdemeanour whereof they are impeached, or not guilty?" Sir Roger Langley answered, "Not guilty." As the words passed his lips, Halifax sprang up and waved his hat. At that signal, benches and galleries raised a shout. In a moment ten thousand persons, who crowded the great hall, replied with a still louder shout, which made the old oaken roof crack; and in another moment the innumerable throng without set up a third huzza, which was heard at Temple Bar. The boats which covered the Thames gave an answering cheer. A peal of gun-powder was heard on the water, and another, and another; and so, in a few moments, the glad tidings went flying past the Savoy and the Friars to London Bridge, and to the forest of masts below. As the news spread, streets and squares, market places and coffee-houses, broke forth into acclamations. Yet were the acclamations less strange than the weeping. For the feelings of men had been wound up to such a point that at length the stern English nature, so little used to outward signs of emotion, gave way, and thousands sobbed aloud for very joy. Meanwhile, from the outskirts of the multitude, horsemen were spurring off to bear along all the great roads intelligence of the victory of our Church and nation. Yet not even that astounding explosion could awe the bitter and intrepid spirit of the Solicitor. Striving to make himself heard above the din, he called on the Judges to commit those who had violated, by clamour, the dignity of a court of justice. One of the rejoicing populace was seized. But the tribunal felt that it would be absurd to punish a single individual for an offence common to hundreds of thousands, and dismissed him with a gentle reprimand.\*

It was vain to think of passing at that moment to any other business. Indeed the roar of the multitude was such that,

\* State Trials; Oldmixon, 739.; Clarendon's Diary, June 25. 1688; Johnstone, July 2.; Citters, July  $\frac{2}{3}$ .; Adda, July  $\frac{1}{6}$ .; Luttrell's Diary; Barillon, July  $\frac{1}{2}$ .

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The  
verdict.

Joy of the  
people.

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for half an hour, scarcely a word could be heard in court. Williams got to his coach amidst a tempest of hisses and curses. Cartwright, whose curiosity was ungovernable, had been guilty of the folly and indecency of coming to Westminster in order to hear the decision. He was recognised by his sacerdotal garb and by his corpulent figure, and was hooted through the hall. "Take care," said one, "of the wolf in sheep's clothing." "Make room," cried another, "for the man with the Pope in his belly."\*

The acquitted prelates took refuge from the crowd which implored their blessing in the nearest chapel where divine service was performing. Many churches were open on that morning throughout the capital; and many pious persons repaired thither. The bells of all the parishes of the City and liberties were ringing. The jury meanwhile could scarcely make their way out of the hall. They were forced to shake hands with hundreds. "God bless you," cried the people; "God prosper your families; you have done like honest good-natured gentlemen; you have saved us all to-day." As the noblemen who had appeared to support the good cause drove off, they flung from their carriage windows handfuls of money, and bade the crowd drink to the health of the King, the Bishops, and the jury.\*\*

\* Citters, July 1<sup>o</sup>. The gravity with which he tells the story has a comic effect. "Den Bisschop van Chester, wie seer de partie van het hof houdt, om te voldoen aan syne gewoone nieuwsgierigheyt, hem op dien tyt in Westminster Hall mede hebbende laten vinden, in het uytgaan doorgaans was uytgekreten voor een grypende wolf in schaaps kleederen; en hy synde een heer van hooge stature en vollyvig, spotsgewyse alomme geroepen was dat men voor hem plaats moeste maken, om te laten passen, gelyck ook geschiede, om dat soo sy uytshreewden en hem in het aanzigt seyden, hy den Paus in syn buyck hadde."

\*\* Luttrell; Citters, July 1<sup>o</sup>, 1688. "Soo syn in tegendeel gedagte jury's met de uysterste acclamatie en alle teyckenen van genegenheyt en danckbaarheyt in het door passeren van de gemeente ontvangen. Honderden vielen haar om den hals met alle bedenckelycke wewensch van segen en geluck over hare persooenen en familien, om dat sy haar-so heusch en eerlyck buyten verwagtinge als het ware in desen gedragen hadden. Veele van de grooten en kleynen adel wierpen in het wegyden handen vol gelt onder de armen luyden, om op de gesontheit van den Coning, der Heeren Prelaten, en de Jury's te drincken."



The Attorney went with the tidings to Sunderland, who happened to be conversing with the Nuncio. "Never," said Powis, "within man's memory, have there been such shouts and such tears of joy as to-day."\* The King had that morning visited the camp on Hounslow Heath. Sunderland instantly sent a courier thither with the news. James was in Lord Feversham's tent when the express arrived. He was greatly disturbed, and exclaimed in French, "So much the worse for them." He soon set out for London. While he was present, respect prevented the soldiers from giving a loose to their feelings; but he had scarcely quitted the camp when he heard a great shouting behind him. He was surprised, and asked what that uproar meant. "Nothing," was the answer: "the soldiers are glad that the Bishops are acquitted." "Do you call that nothing?" said James. And then he repeated, "So much the worse for them."\*\*

He might well be out of temper. His defeat had been complete and most humiliating. Had the prelates escaped on account of some technical defect in the case for the crown, had they escaped because they had not written the petition in Middlesex, or because it was impossible to prove, according to the strict rules of law, that they had delivered to the King the paper for which they were called in question, the pre-rogative would have suffered no shock. Happily for the country, the fact of publication had been fully established. The counsel for the defence had therefore been forced to attack the dispensing power. They had attacked it with great learning, eloquence, and boldness. The advocates of the government had been by universal acknowledgment over-matched in the contest. Not a single Judge had ventured to declare that the Declaration of Indulgence was legal. One Judge had in the strongest terms pronounced it illegal. The language of the whole town was that the dispensing power had

\* "Mi trovava con Milord Sunderland la stessa mattina, quando venne l'Avvocato Generale a rendergli conto del successo, e disse, che mai più a memoria d'huomini si era sentito un applauso, mescolato di voci e lagrime di giubilo, egual a quello che veniva egli di vedere in quest' occasione." — Adda, July 16. 1688.

\*\* Burnet, i. 744; Citters, July 13. 1688.

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received a fatal blow. Finch, who had the day before been universally reviled, was now universally applauded. He had been unwilling, it was said, to let the case be decided in a way which would have left the great constitutional question still doubtful. He had felt that a verdict which should acquit his clients, without condemning the Declaration of Indulgence, would be but half a victory. It is certain that Finch deserved neither the reproaches which had been cast on him while the event was doubtful, nor the praises which he received when it had proved happy. It was absurd to blame him because, during the short delay which he occasioned, the crown lawyers unexpectedly discovered new evidence. It was equally absurd to suppose that he deliberately exposed his clients to risk, in order to establish a general principle: and still more absurd was it to praise him for what would have been a gross violation of professional duty.

That joyful day was followed by a not less joyful night. The Bishops, and some of their most respectable friends, in vain exerted themselves to prevent tumultuous demonstrations of joy. Never within the memory of the oldest, not even on that evening on which it was known through London that the army of Scotland had declared for a free Parliament, had the streets been in such a glare with bonfires. Round every bonfire crowds were drinking good health to the Bishops and confusion to the Papists. The windows were lighted with rows of candles. Each row consisted of seven; and the taper in the centre, which was taller than the rest, represented the Primate. The noise of rockets, squibs, and firearms, was incessant. One huge pile of faggots blazed right in front of the great gate of Whitehall. Others were lighted before the doors of Roman Catholic peers. Lord Arundell of Wardour wisely quieted the mob with a little money: but at Salisbury House in the Strand an attempt at resistance was made. Lord Salisbury's servants sallied out and fired: but they killed only the unfortunate beadle of the parish, who had come thither to put out the fire; and they were soon routed and driven back into the house. None of the spectacles of that night interested the common people so



much as one with which they had, a few years before, been familiar, and which they now, after a long interval, enjoyed once more, the burning of the Pope. This once familiar pageant is known to our generation only by descriptions and engravings. A figure, by no means resembling those rude representations of Guy Faux which are still paraded on the fifth of November, but made of wax with some skill, and adorned at no small expense with robes and a tiara, was mounted on a chair resembling that in which the Bishops of Rome are still, on some great festivals, borne through Saint Peter's Church to the high altar. His Holiness was generally accompanied by a train of Cardinals and Jesuits. At his ear stood a buffoon disguised as a devil with horns and tail. No rich and zealous Protestant grudged his guinea on such an occasion, and, if rumour could be trusted, the cost of the procession was sometimes not less than a thousand pounds. After the Pope had been borne some time in state over the heads of the multitude, he was committed to the flames with loud acclamations. In the time of the popularity of Oates and Shaftesbury this show was exhibited annually in Fleet Street before the windows of the Whig Club on the anniversary of the birth of Queen Elizabeth. Such was the celebrity of these grotesque rites, that Barillon once risked his life in order to peep at them from a hiding place.\* But, from the day when the Rye House Plot was discovered, till the day of the acquittal of the Bishops, the ceremony had been disused. Now, however, several Popes made their appearance in different parts of London. The Nuncio was much shocked; and the King was more hurt by this insult to his Church than by all the other affronts which he had received. The magistrates, however, could do nothing. The Sunday had dawned, and the bells of the parish churches were ringing for early prayers, before the fires began to languish and the crowds to disperse. A proclamation was speedily put forth

\* See a very curious narrative published among other papers, in 1710, by Danby, then Duke of Leeds. There is an amusing account of the ceremony of burning a Pope in North's Examen, 570. See also the note on the Epilogue to the Tragedy of OEdipus in Scott's edition of Dryden.

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against the rioters. Many of them, mostly young apprentices, were apprehended; but the bills were thrown out at the Middlesex sessions. The magistrates, many of whom were Roman Catholics, expostulated with the grand jury and sent them three or four times back, but to no purpose.\*

Peculiar  
state of  
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Meanwhile the glad tidings were flying to every part of the kingdom, and were everywhere received with rapture. Gloucester, Bedford, and Lichfield, were among the places which were distinguished by peculiar zeal: but Bristol and Norwich, which stood nearest to London in population and wealth, approached nearest to London in enthusiasm on this joyful occasion.

The prosecution of the Bishops is an event which stands by itself in our history. It was the first and the last occasion on which two feelings of tremendous potency, two feelings which have generally been opposed to each other, and either of which, when strongly excited, has sufficed to convulse the state, were united in perfect harmony. Those feelings were love of the Church and love of freedom. During many generations every violent outbreak of High Church feeling, with one exception, has been unfavourable to civil liberty; every violent outbreak of zeal for liberty, with one exception, has been unfavourable to the authority and influence of the prelacy and the priesthood. In 1688 the cause of the hierarchy was for a moment that of the popular party. More than nine thousand clergymen, with the Primate and his most respectable suffragans at their head, offered themselves to endure bonds and the spoiling of their goods for the great fundamental principle of our free constitution. The effect was a coalition which included the most zealous Cavaliers, the most zealous Republicans, and all the intermediate sections of the community. The spirit which had supported Hampden in the preceding generation, the spirit which, in the succeeding generation, supported Sacheverell, combined to support the Archbishop who was Hampden and Sacheverell in one. Those

\* Reresby's Memoirs; Citters, July  $\frac{1}{2}$ . 1688; Adda, July  $\frac{1}{16}$ .; Barillon, July  $\frac{1}{2}$ .; Luttrell's Diary; Newsletter of July 4.; Oldmixon, 739.; Ellis Correspondence.



classes of society which are most deeply interested in the preservation of order, which in troubled times are generally most ready to strengthen the hands of government, and which have a natural antipathy to agitators, followed, without scruple, the guidance of a venerable man, the first peer of the realm, the first minister of the Church, a Tory in politics, a saint in manners, whom tyranny had in his own despite turned into a demagogue. Those, on the other hand, who had always abhorred episcopacy, as a relic of Popery, and as an instrument of arbitrary power, now asked on bended knees the blessing of a prelate who was ready to wear fetters and to lay his aged limbs on bare stones rather than betray the interests of the Protestant religion and set the prerogative above the laws. With love of the Church and with love of freedom was mingled, at this great crisis, a third feeling which is among the most honourable peculiarities of our national character. An individual oppressed by power, even when destitute of all claim to public respect and gratitude, generally finds strong sympathy among us. Thus, in the time of our grandfathers, society was thrown into confusion by the persecution of Wilkes. We have ourselves seen the nation roused almost to madness by the wrongs of Queen Caroline. It is probable, therefore, that, even if no great political and religious interests had been staked on the event of the proceeding against the Bishops, England would not have seen, without strong emotions of pity and anger, old men of stainless virtue pursued by the vengeance of a harsh and inexorable prince who owed to their fidelity the crown which he wore.

Actuated by these sentiments our ancestors arrayed themselves against the government in one huge and compact mass. All ranks, all parties, all Protestant sects, made up that vast phalanx. In the van were the Lords Spiritual and Temporal. Then came the landed gentry and the clergy, both the Universities, all the Inns of Court, merchants, shopkeepers, farmers, the porters who plied in the streets of the great towns, the peasants who ploughed the fields. The league against the King included the very foremost men who manned

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his ships, the very sentinels who guarded his palace. The names of Whig and Tory were for a moment forgotten. The old Exclusionist took the old Abhorrer by the hand. Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, forgot their long feuds, and remembered only their common Protestantism and their common danger. Divines bred in the school of Laud talked loudly, not only of toleration, but of comprehension. The Archbishop soon after his acquittal put forth a pastoral letter which is one of the most remarkable compositions of that age. He had, from his youth up, been at war with the Nonconformists, and had repeatedly assailed them with unjust and unchristian asperity. His principal work was a hideous caricature of the Calvinistic theology.\* He had drawn up for the thirtieth of January and for the twenty-ninth of May forms of prayer which reflected on the Puritans in language so strong that the government had thought fit to soften it down. But now his heart was melted and opened. He solemnly enjoined the Bishops and clergy to have a very tender regard to their brethren the Protestant Dissenters, to visit them often, to entertain them hospitably, to discourse with them civilly, to persuade them, if it might be, to conform to the Church, but, if that were found impossible, to join them heartily and affectionately in exertions for the blessed cause of the Reformation.\*\*

Many pious persons in subsequent years remembered that time with bitter regret. They described it as a short glimpse of a golden age between two iron ages. Such lamentation, though natural was not reasonable. The coalition of 1688

\* The Fur Prædestinatus.

\*\* This document will be found in the first of the twelve collections of papers relating to the affairs of England, printed at the end of 1688 and the beginning of 1689. It was put forth on the 26th of July, not quite a month after the trial. Lloyd of Saint Asaph about the same time told Henry Wharton that the Bishops purposed to adopt an entirely new policy towards the Protestant Dissenters; "Omni modo curaturos ut ecclesia sordibus et corruptelis penitus exueretur; ut sectariis reformatis reditus in ecclesiæ sinu exoptati occasio ac ratio concederetur, si qui sobrii et pii essent; ut pertinacibus interim jugum levaretur, extinctis penitus legibus mulctoriis." — Excerpta ex Vita H. Wharton.



was produced, and could be produced, only by tyranny which approached to insanity, and by danger which threatened at once all the great institutions of the country. If there has never since been similar union, the reason is that there has never since been similar misgovernment. It must be remembered that, though concord is in itself better than discord, discord may indicate a better state of things than is indicated by concord. Calamity and peril often force men to combine. Prosperity and security often encourage them to separate.

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