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ON THE EXPECTED DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT:

AN  
ADDRESS

TO THE  
MEMBERS

OF THE

CHURCH OF ENGLAND;

ENTITLED TO

VOTE FOR MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT.

BY A CHURCHMAN.

LONDON:

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**LONDON :**  
**GILBERT AND RIVINGTON, PRINTERS,**  
**ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.**

AN  
ADDRESS,

&c.

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**BROTHER ELECTORS,**

THE difficulties which the enemies of our religion, who have succeeded in obtaining a majority in the present House of Commons, have placed in the way of the King's Government are such, that, in all probability there will before long be another dissolution of Parliament, and you will be called upon again to consider whom you will send to that House as your Representatives. I beseech you all to consider well the consequences of your votes, before you promise them.

It will depend upon the votes of the English Electors, according to all human probability, whether the institutions in Church and State, under which, through God's blessing, our country has so long and happily flourished, shall or shall not be preserved: Whether the means of worshipping God according to the pure religion of the Gospel, as held by the Church of England, shall or shall not be handed down to its members and their children.

Consider, therefore, your right to give a vote which must affect such important interests, as a solemn trust committed

to your care by God and your Country, and determine so to discharge that trust as you shall best answer it now to your countrymen, and to your own conscience in the sight of God ; and hereafter to God himself at his tribunal.

Understand distinctly, that the difficulties in which the Government is placed, and which will probably lead to a dissolution of the Parliament, and another election, arise from the attempts which unprincipled men are making to compel the King to violate the solemn oath which the Constitution of our country required him to take when he became King : by which oath he bound himself to protect and maintain the Reformed Religion established in these kingdoms, and to defend the persons professing that religion, and their ministers in the enjoyment of their property, their rights and liberties. Attempts have been made in the House of Commons to violate those liberties, to trample on those rights, and to transfer that property to the deep and implacable enemies of the Reformed Religion. The King, as in duty bound<sup>1</sup>, has set himself to oppose these attempts ; and if he cannot otherwise effectually resist them, he will be compelled to throw himself upon his

<sup>1</sup> The words of the King's Oath are these, that he will "to the utmost of his power maintain the laws of God, the true profession of the Gospel, and the *Protestant Reformed Religion* established by the law : and will preserve to the Bishops and Clergy of this realm, and to the Churches committed to their charge, all such rights and privileges as by law do or shall appertain unto them, or any them."

The effect of the resolution of the House of Commons, at variance with this oath, if acted upon, will be, that whenever the number of Protestants in any given Parish in Ireland shall be reduced (by any means fair or foul,) below an arbitrary standard, the Church in that Parish shall be deprived of its rights and privileges, by having part of its property alienated for the purposes of education : *education which from the circumstances of the case, must necessarily be under the control of the Papists.*



people for support ; and to call upon them to protect him in fulfilling his engagement to uphold that pure religion which has been, under God, the main stay of our civil and religious liberties.

It remains to be seen how you will answer that call. Whether you will uphold a man, and that man your King, who desires to fulfil his oath which binds him to protect the established religion : or whether you will assist the restless band of factious men who are endeavouring to invade the rights of their fellow subjects, and to destroy and overthrow a Church which teaches the Word of God in truth.

It is a question which affects the dearest interests of yourselves, your children, and your children's children. Lay your hands upon your hearts, and as honest men, as Englishmen, and as Christians, consider how you ought to decide it.

The point where the danger most immediately presses, is Ireland. In that part of the kingdom the members of the pure and apostolic Church, who from the circumstance of their having protested against Romish error, are called *Protestants*, are few in number when compared with those who have embraced the errors and acknowledged the authority of the Pope of Rome, and who are therefore called Papists or Romanists. These last, relying upon their superior numbers, are therefore endeavouring to get possession of the property set apart for the Protestant Church, and to apply it for the propagation of their own Romish errors. It is clear, that if they succeed in this, it will be a gross and crying act of injustice, and endanger the security of the property of every religious denomination.

The advocates of the Romanists will tell you, that they have a right to it, for that it once was theirs. But the slightest reference to History will show you the falsehood of that assertion. The religion which St. Patrick established in Ireland, in the fifth century, was as free from the errors

and corruptions<sup>1</sup> which distinguish the Romanists from all other Christians, as the Protestant religion is now. Nor did the Pastors of the Church there, acknowledge the Pope of Rome to have any authority over them. And it was not till the middle of the twelfth century, that is, seven hundred years after the founding and endowing of the Church, that the Clergy there were for a time persuaded to submit themselves to the Pope<sup>2</sup>: a submission which in the sixteenth century they threw off, and returned to their ancient freedom from it. And then the Pope sent in a set of Foreign and intruding Clergy to keep up his interest; and these intruding schismatical Clergy, neither themselves nor their predecessors ever had, or claimed one particle of the property of the Church. The Clergy of the Church established there have held that property in uninterrupted succession from St. Patrick's time till now; and there is every reason to believe, that the whole of what they now have, was given to the Church before its temporary connexion with Rome. So that the claim of the Romanists has not a shadow of foundation. This they are for the most part aware of, and consequently go cunningly to work. They say that the Protestants have more property than they want for the purposes of their religion; and content themselves with asking for what they call the surplus. But I think you will agree with me, that the proprietor is the best judge whether his property is more than he wants; and that to take away a part of the property of any man, or body of

<sup>1</sup> The earliest of the corruptions with which the Church of Rome has defiled the Catholic Faith, was the worship of Images, which was decreed under pain of anathema, by the Second Nicene Council, A.D. 786. But solemnly *protested* against *at the time*, by the British, Gallican, and German churches, at the council of Francfort, A.D. 794.

<sup>2</sup> This was agreed to at the Synod of Kells, A.D. 1152. When the *Mass* Liturgy was adopted; and the authority of the Pope of Rome acknowledged.

men, because their covetous enemies choose to call it more than enough, would be an act of such flagrant injustice as would shake the security of all the property in the kingdom.

It is very true that in some parts of Ireland the number of Protestants which fall under each Clergyman's care, are few. But let the Romanists tell you, at least, one of the causes of those small numbers. Let them tell you, how many Protestant Clergy they have murdered within the last fifteen years: let them tell you all the acts of cruel persecutions with which they have so harassed the poor Protestants, that not less than 150,000 are supposed to have been driven out of their own country to others, where they could worship God after the customs of their fathers in peace. Now, if it is declared to the Romanists that in proportion as they can diminish the number of Protestants, they shall have more and more of the property of the Protestant Church, what will this be but to hold up a premium, to assassination, incendiarism, and all the other arts of persecution to which they have been so long already addicted?

And will you, Englishmen, do this? Will you, when you see a band of men of the same religion as yourselves, borne down with persecution at the hands of implacable enemies, (who think they are doing God service when they destroy your religion,) will you, I say, leave them to their fate, when it is in the power of your hand to protect them? Will you do worse than this, and strengthen the hands of their remorseless enemies, by voting for those misguided candidates who intend to join in this attack upon your religion in Ireland?

Before you determine to assist in destroying the religion of your Fathers, the pure religion of the Gospel, which now is established in Ireland, you will do well to consider the

nature of that religion which will be planted in its stead : I mean the religion of the Romanists or Papists. I said that they have added many errors and corruptions to the pure and apostolic faith which was once delivered unto the Saints, and which the Protestant Church, by God's blessing, has preserved. You may wish for a few instances of this. You shall have them.

1. If you turn to the institution of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, you will observe that our Lord appointed the memorial of his death to be celebrated by bread and *wine*, and made the Apostles His ministers to do as He had done, and to communicate to the congregations the blessing of His body and His blood, under both symbols. (1 Cor. xi. 24—26.)

The Church of Rome *forbids her Clergy to do as our Lord has commanded; and declares that Clergyman to be accursed who shall give the cup to the people, according to Christ's ordinance.* (Conc. Const. s. 13.)

2. If you turn to the account of the institution of that Sacrament, you will find that our Lord, after he had blessed and distributed the cup, still calls it "the fruit of the vine," (Matt. xxvi. 29.); and St. Paul speaking of the bread after consecration, still calls it bread. (1 Cor. x. 17.)

The Church of Rome teaches, that after consecration, the bread is no longer bread; and the wine no longer wine; and *declares that man to be accursed who shall affirm what our Lord and St. Paul have spoken concerning it.* (Council of Trent, s. 13. c. 2.)

3. If you turn to the Second Commandment, you will find God's people forbidden to make use of images, to bow down to them or worship them.

The Church of Rome teaches, that images are to be kissed, to be worshipped, and adored; and *declares that man to be accursed who will not do what God has forbidden.* (Second Nicene Council, Action 7.)

4. If you turn to St. Paul's directions for conducting the public worship of Almighty God, you will find him desiring it to be done in a language which the people understand. (1 Cor. xiv.)

The Church of Rome conducts her worship in the Latin language, which the people do not understand, and no remonstrance or entreaty can prevail with her to alter her custom.

5. If you turn to St. Paul's directions concerning the Christian Clergy, you will find him not only allowing but recommending that they should be married; that in all the relations of life they may be an example to their flocks. (1 Tim. iii. 2. 5. 12.)

The Church of Rome forbids her Clergy to marry, and *declares that man to be accursed who shall say that they may do what St. Paul has recommended them to do.* (Council of Trent, s. 24. c. 9.)

6. If you search the Scriptures, you will find two states spoken of concerning them that have departed this life, one of peace and happiness, another of misery and torment. And the whole tenor of the sacred writings, as well as particular passages, lead us to hope and to believe that they who die in true repentance for their sins, and in belief of God's mercy, through the blood of Jesus Christ, are at peace.

The Church of Rome *has invented a third state, which*

she calls *Purgatory*, and her clergy teach that souls which die in repentance, and whose greater sins are forgiven, are purified by extreme tortures and sufferings in this purgatory, for their lesser offences. So that when a soul has departed this life with the sign of peace, the relations are taught to believe, not that "it is in the hand of God, and no torment can touch it," but that it is enduring most horrid sufferings (almost equal to those of the damned) in this fictitious Purgatory, and that for thousands of years. Oh! but say the priests, it is in our power, with the Pope's help, to release these souls from purgatory, and if you will pay us handsomely, we will pray, and get the Pope's indulgence, and the suffering of the person you care about shall be either lessened, or remitted altogether, according to the money which you give us. And thus they work upon the feelings of an affectionate child mourning for a parent, of a distracted parent grieving for a beloved child, or a broken-hearted widow bewailing her husband's loss, and wring from them almost any amount of money that they please. You have heard, perhaps, of the enormous church of St. Peter at Rome; so large that it is sometimes said that our great St. Paul's could stand in a corner of it. *This great church was built with money wrung from the people through the false fear of purgatory.* The money was obtained by the sale of what they call the Pope's indulgences, *i. e.* remission of the pains of purgatory for different terms of years.

There are other errors besides these. But these will be sufficient to show you the nature of that religion which you are called upon by a band of factious, ignorant, or unprincipled men, to assist them in establishing in Ireland, though that can only be done by the destruction of your own pure and Apostolic religion in that country; by annihilating the rights of conscience and of property, and by a

violation of the King's oath. The King has set himself to resist this monstrous scheme, and calls upon you, his subjects, to assist him in resisting it, and in securing to your brethren and to yourselves your rights and liberties and properties, inviolate.

It is for you to decide upon the matter. There are three tests by which to try every course; and that is by seeing whether it is or is not in accordance with our duty; 1. to God; 2. to our neighbour; 3. to ourselves. Try your conduct by these tests; and before you determine to vote for those who have assisted the enemies of your King and your religion, ask yourself, 1st. Can it be consistent with my duty to God that I should endeavour to compel my King to break his oath; that I should assist to persecute a body of Christians who worship God according to the truth of his holy Word; and that I should help to promote and increase a religion so much at variance with the Scriptures as the religion of the Papists or Romanists?

2dly. Can it be consistent with my duty to my neighbour that I should join a cruel and persecuting body of men to injure and oppress those of the same religion and the same faith as myself? Have not the members of my own Church a right to ask for my help and protection, as far as I have the means of affording it? Let me do as I would be done by; and think if I were in the state of the Protestants in Ireland, what I should reasonably wish and expect the Protestants in England to do for me.

3dly. But supposing that I could make it consistent with my duty to God and to my neighbour, to vote for the friends of the Papists, what is my duty to myself on such a point? Shall I, or shall I not, injure my own interest by doing so?

In order to come to a right understanding on this point,

you will do well to consult the history of your country, and inquire what took place in England the last time the Romanists succeeded in their persecutions against the Protestants in Ireland, which was in the reign of Charles the First; and you will find that the time when the members of our Apostolic Church in Ireland, were oppressed and overcome by the Papists, was the very time which the English Dissenters chose for attacking our Apostolic Church in England. In this attack they succeeded, and while our religion was put down in Ireland by the Papists, it was put down in England by the Dissenters. I will mention to you some of the fruits of their persecution of us in England. Of the 10,000 English clergy, nearly 8,000 who would not palter with their consciences, were expelled from their parishes and houses, under circumstances of the greatest brutality. The Churches were shut up; many of them turned into stables and barns; others opened to admit Dissenting teachers. The use of our common Prayer Book was forbidden, and any clergyman using it, was fined or sent to prison. Neither the sacraments of Baptism nor of the Eucharist were allowed to be celebrated; nor the offices of confirmation, matrimony, or burial of the dead, allowed to be performed. And if you choose to look into the register-books of any parish church of that date, you will rarely find any entries of baptisms, marriages, or burials, unless now and then by stealth a chance clergyman ventured to perform the service. The King, who endeavoured to protect the Church, was beheaded; and so was the Archbishop of Canterbury. And this reign of blood and terror and persecution lasted so long, that when God in His mercy restored our King and Church, a vast proportion of the people were found in a state of heathenism.

This was what the Dissenters in England, on pretence



of redressing their grievances, did to our Apostolic Church; while the Papists were reeking with the blood of our fellow-churchmen in Ireland.

Now mark what the Dissenters in England are doing at this moment. Who gave the Romanists the victory in the House of Commons, in a vote for persecution against the Irish Protestants, which has placed the King and the nation in such a difficulty? The Papists do not number more than seventy or eighty out of a body of 650. How then were they enabled to get a majority to side with them against the Protestants in Ireland? I will tell you. Every English Dissenter voted with them. Every man who laughs all religion to scorn, voted with them; and this band of men, of all religions but the true, and of no religion at all, were aided by certain members of the Church of England whose party-spirit and political faction has blinded them so far that they have joined hands with the enemies of their own faith to destroy their own Church, either ignorant or reckless of the consequences that must ensue. And observe still further the conduct of the Dissenters. At the very moment that the Papists in Ireland are endeavouring to trample upon our Church there, the English Dissenters are endeavouring to persecute it here; and that on the same plea which their fathers used in King Charles the First's time—the redress of their own grievances—whereas the only pretended grievances for which redress has been refused, is that they are not allowed to pervert, for Dissenting purposes, the colleges and churchyards which have been set apart for the use of the Church. They having themselves all the time, colleges and burial-grounds of their own, with which the Church never attempts to interfere.

And observe still further, that, like their ancestors in King Charles the First's time, their enmity is directed not merely against the property of the Church, which excites