

REFLECTIONS

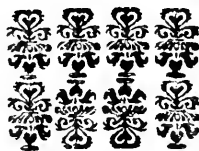
Upon a Late Scandalous and Malicious

PAMPHLET

ENTITUL'D,

*The shortest Way with the Dissen-
ters ; or Proposals for the
Establisment of the Church.*

To which the said PAMPHLET is
prefix'd entire by it self.



L O N D O N,

Printed in the Year 1703.

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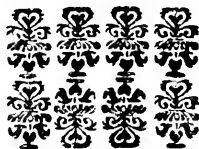
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T H E

P R E F A C E.

THere are two things which I think proper to signify to the Reader, before he enter upon the following Sheets. The first is, that I chose rather to have the Reflections upon the Pamphlet called *The Shortest Way, &c.* distinct by themselves, than subjoin'd Paragraph by Paragraph after the Passages which I reflect upon. My Reason was, that I found it would be too voluminous to take particular Notice of all the Impertinencies of that virulent Author; and therefore I confin'd my self to his principal Heads, chusing rather to expose the main Design of the Pamphlet, than to spend time upon every thing that might perhaps deserve a Remark.

The 2d thing which I think proper for the Reader's Notice is, that there are various Conjectures, as to the Author and his Party: Some think him a Papist, some a Nonjurant Parson, and others think him a Dissenter. I don't much concern my self which of the three he belongs to, or what his Design may be, or if he act in Disguise; for be that how it will, he is certainly one of the worst of Men. But since he speaks the Language of the two former, I attack him as such; for let him be serious or otherwise, it's plain that he argues their Cause, and insists upon the same Topics that are to be found in the Pamphlets and Sermons, which have been printed against the Dissenters since K. William's Death; only his Title is a little more bald, and his Expressions a little more plain than those

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that;

that have gone before him; but the Spirit, Notion and Application are the same. The ill applied Text which we had not long ago from a City-Pulpit, relating to Elijah's Treatment of Baal's Prophets, has the same Moral with this Author's Advice, of hanging up the Dissenting Ministers. The Author of the New Association betwixt the Dissenters and moderate Churchmen to undermine the Present Government, gives a Charge which would subject both those Parties to the like cruel Treatment. The continual Snarls in that malicious Libel, called, The Poetical Observer, against the same Persons, shew the like Design to expose them. The same is to be said of Mr. Sacheverel's Political Union, The Character of a Low-Churchman, and other Pamphlets of the same Stamp. And the general Charge of Hypocrisy against the Dissenters and moderate Churchmen, by those that do all they can to deprive them of their Birthright as English-men, proceeds from the same Spirit. But whether all these or any of them know what Spirits they are of, or whether their Advice be accommodated to the Interest of England and the Protestant Religion, may perhaps be made tolerably evident by the following Reflections.

THE

THE SHORTEST WAY WITH THE DISSENTERS, &c.

SIR Roger L' Eſtrange tells us a Story in his Collection of Fables, of the Cock and the Horſes. The Cock was gotten to Rooſt in the Stable, among the Horſes, and there being no Racks, or other Conveniences for him, it ſeems he was forc'd to rooſt upon the Ground ; the Horſes jostling about for room, and putting the Cock in danger of his Life, he gives them this grave Advice: *Pray Gentlefolks let us ſtand ſtill, for fear we ſhould tread upon one another.*

There are ſome People in the World, who now they are *unperche*, and reduc'd to an Equality with other People, and under ſtrong and very juſt Apprehenſions of being further treated as they deſerve, begin with *Aſop's* Cock, to preach up Peace and Union, and the Chriſtian Duties of Moderation, forgetting, that when they had the Power in their Hands, thoſe Graces were Strangers in their Gates.

It is now near Fourteen Years, that the Glory and Peace of the pureſt and moſt flouriſhing Church in the World has been Eclipſ'd, Buffeted, and Diſturb'd, by a ſort of Men, whom God in his Providence has ſuffer'd to inſult over her, and bring her down ; theſe have been the Days of her Humiliation and Tribulation : She has born with an invincible Patience the Reproach of the Wicked, and God has at laſt heard her Prayers, and deliver'd her from the Oppreſſion of the Stranger.

And now they find their Day is over, their Power gone, and the Throne of this Nation poſſeſt by a Royal, *Engliſh*, True and ever Conſtant Member of, and Friend to the Church of *England* : Now they find that they

are in danger of the Church of England's just Resentments; now they cry out *Peace, Union, Forbearance, and Charity*, as if the Church had not too long harbour'd her Enemies under her Wing, and nourish'd the viperous Brood till they hiss and fly in the Face of the Mother that cherish'd them.

No Gentlemen, the Time of Mercy is past, your *Day of Grace is over*; you should have practis'd Peace, and Moderation, and Charity, if you expected any your selves.

We have heard none of this Lesson for fourteen Years past: We have been huff'd and bully'd with your Act of Toleration; you have told us that you are the *Church establish'd by Law*, as well as others; have set up your Canting Synagogues at our Church-Doors, and the Church and her Members have been loaded with Reproaches, with Oaths, Associations, Abjurations, and what not. Where has been the Mercy, the Forbearance, the Charity you have shewn to *tender Consciences of the Church of England*, that could not take Oaths *as fast as you made 'em*; that having sworn Allegiance to their lawful and rightful King, cou'd not dispense with that Oath, *their King being still alive*, and swear to your new *Hodge-podge of a Dutch Government*? These ha' been turn'd out of their Livings, and they and their Families left to starve; their Estates double Tax'd, to carry on a War they had no hand in, and you *got nothing by*: What Account can you give of the Multitudes you have forced to comply against their Consciences, with your new *sophistical Politicks*, who like the new Converts in *France*, sin because they can't starve? And now the Tables are turn'd upon you, you *must not be persecuted, 'tis not a Christian Spirit*.

You have *Butcher'd* one King, *Depos'd* another King, and made a *mock King* of a Third; and yet you cou'd have the Face to expect to be employ'd and trusted by the Fourth: any body that did not know the Temper of your Party, would stand amaz'd at the Impudence, as well as Folly, to think of it.

Your Management of your *Dutch Monarch*, whom you reduc'd to a meer *King of Cl-s*, is enough to give any future Princes such an Idea of your Principles, as to warn them sufficiently from coming into your Clutches; and God be thank'd, the Queen is out of your Hands, knows you, and will have a care of you.

There is no doubt but the Supreme Authority of a Nation has in it self a Power, *and a Right to that Power*, to execute the Laws upon any part of that Nation it governs. The Execution of the known Laws of the Land, and that but with a weak and gentle Hand neither, was all that the Phanatical Party of this Land have ever call'd Persecution; this they have magnified to a height, that the Sufferings of the *Hugonots* in *France* were not to be compar'd

par'd with——. Now to execute the known Laws of a Nation upon those who transgress them, after having first been voluntarily consenting to the making those Laws, can never be call'd Persecution, but Justice. But Justice is always Violence to the Party offending, for every Man is innocent in his own Eyes. The first execution of the Laws against Dissenters in *England*, was in the Days of King *James* the First; and what did it amount to? Truly, the worst they suffer'd, was at their own request, to let them go to *New-England*, and erect a new Colony, and give them great Privileges, Grants, and sutable Powers, keep them under Protection, and defend them against all Invaders, and receive no Taxes or Revenue from them. This was the Cruelty of the Church of *England*; fatal Lenity! 'Twas the Ruin of that excellent Prince, King *Charles* the first: Had King *James* sent all the Puritans in *England* away to the *West-Indies*, we had been a National unmix'd Church; the Church of *England* had been kept undivided and entire.

To requite the Lenity of the Father, they take up Arms against the Son; Conquer, Pursue, Take, Imprison, and at last put to Death the Anointed of God, and Destroy the very Being and Nature of Government, setting up a sordid Impostor, who had neither Title to Govern, nor Understanding to Manage, but supplied that want with Power, bloody and desperate Counsels and Craft, without Conscience.

Had not King *James* the First withheld the full execution of the Laws; had he given them strict Justice, he had clear'd the Nation of them, and the Consequences had been plain; his *Son* had never been murder'd by them, nor the Monarchy overwhelm'd: 'twas too much Mercy shewn them, was the ruin of his Posterity, and the ruin of the Nation's Peace. One would think the Dissenters should not have the face to believe that we are to be wheedled and canted into Peace and Toleration, when they know that they have once requited us with a Civil War, and once with an intolerable and unrighteous Persecution for our former Civility.

Nay, to encourage us to be easy with them, 'tis apparent, that they never had the Upper-hand of the Church, but they treated her with all the Severity, with all the Reproach and Contempt as was possible. What Peace, and what Mercy did they shew the Loyal Gentry of the Church of *England* in the time of their triumphant Commonwealth? How did they put all the Gentry of *England* to ransom, whether they were actually in Arms for the King or not, making People compound for their Estates, and starve their Families? How did they treat the Clergy of the Church of *England*, sequester'd the Ministers, devour'd the Patrimony of the Church, and divided the Spoil by sharing the Church-Lands among their Soldiers, and turning her Clergy out

to starve? Just such Measure as they have meted, should be measured to them again.

Charity and Love is the known Doctrine of the Church of *England*, and 'tis plain she has put it in Practice towards the Dissenters, even beyond what she ought, till she has been wanting to her self, and in effect, unkind to her own Sons; particularly, in the too much Lenity of King *James* the First, mentioned before: had he so rooted the Puritans from the Face of the Land, which he had an Opportunity early to have done, they had not had the Power to vex the Church, as since they have done.

In the Days of King *Charles* the Second how did the Church reward their bloody doings with Lenity and Mercy? *Except the barbarous Regicides of the pretended Court of Justice*, not a Soul suffer'd for all the Blood in an unnatural War: King *Charles* came in all Mercy and Love, cherish'd them, prefer'd them, employ'd them, withheld the Rigour of the Law, and oftentimes, even against the Advice of his Parliament, gave them Liberty of Conscience; and how did they requite him with the villanous Contrivance to depose and murder him and his Successor at the *Rye-Plot*?

King *James*, as if Mercy was the inherent Quality of the Family, began his Reign with unusual Favour to them: Nor could their joining with the Duke of *Monmouth* against him, move him to do himself Justice upon them; But that mistaken Prince thought to win them by Gentleness and Love, proclaim'd an universal Liberty to them, and rather discountenanc'd the Church of *England* than them: how they requited him all the World knows.

The late Reign is too fresh in the Memory of all the World to need a Comment: how under pretence of joining with the Church in redressing some Grievances, they pusht things to that Extremity, in conjunction with some mistaken Gentlemen, as to depose the late King, as if the Grievance of the Nation could not have been redress'd but by the absolute Ruin of the Prince. Here's an Instance of their Temper, their Peace and Charity: To what Height they carried themselves during the Reign of a King of their own; how they crope into all Places of Trust and Profit, how they insinuated into the Favour of the King, and were at first prefer'd to the highest Places in the Nation; how they engross the Ministry, and *above all, how pitifully they managed*, is too plain to need any Remarks.

But particularly, their Mercy and Charity, the Spirit of Union, they tell us so much of, has been remarkable in *Scotland*. If any Man would see the Spirit of a Dissenter, let him look into *Scotland*; there they made an entire Conquest of the Church, trampled down the sacred Orders, and suppress the Episcopal Government, with an absolute, and as they suppose, irretrievable Victory, tho, 'tis possible, *they may find themselves mistaken*. Now
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'twould be a very proper Question to ask their *Impudent Advocate*, the *Observer* ; Pray how much Mercy and Favour did the Members of the Episcopal Church find in *Scotland*, from the *Scotch* Presbyterian Government ? and I shall undertake for the Church of *England*, that the Dissenters shall still receive as much here, tho they deserve but little.

In a small Treatise of the Sufferings of the Episcopal Clergy in *Scotland*, 'twill appear, what Usage they met with, how they not only lost their Livings, but in several Places were plunder'd and abus'd in their Persons ; the Ministers that could not conform, turn'd out, with numerous Families, and no Maintenance, and hardly Charity enough left to relieve them with a bit of Bread ; and the Cruelties of the Party are innumerable, and not to be attempted in this short Piece.

And now to prevent the distant Cloud which they perceiv'd to hang over their Heads from *England* ; with a true Presbyterian Policy, they put in for a *Union of Nations*, that *England* might unite their Church with the Kirk of *Scotland*, and their Presbyterian Members sit in our House of Commons, and their Assembly of *Scotch* canting Long-Cloaks in our Convocation. What might have been, if our Phanatick, Whiggish-States-Men had continu'd God only knows ; but we hope we are out of Fear of that now.

'Tis alledg'd by some of the Faction, and they began to bully us with it ; that if we won't unite with them, they will not settle the Crown with us again, but when her Majesty dies, will chuse a King for themselves.

If they won't we must make them, and 'tis not the first time we have let them know we are able : The Crowns of these Kingdoms have not so far disowned the Right of Succession, but they may retrieve it again ; and if *Scotland* thinks to come off from a Successive to an Elective State of Government, *England* has not promis'd not to assist the right Heir, and put them into possession, without any regard to their ridiculous Settlements.

These are the Gentlemen, these their ways of treating the Church, both at Home and Abroad. Now let us examine the Reasons they pretend to give, why we should be favourable to them, why we should continue and tolerate them among us.

First, They are very Numerous ; they say, they are a great Part of the Nation, and we cannot suppress them.

To this may be answer'd. 1. They are not so Numerous as the Protestants in *France*, and yet the *French* King effectually clear'd the Nation of them at once, and we don't find he misses them at Home.

But I am not of the Opinion they are so numerous as is pretended ; their Party is more numerous than their Persons, and these mistaken People of the Church,

Church, who are misled and deluded by their wheedling Artifices to join with them, make their Party the greater ; but those will open their Eyes, when the Government shall set heartily about the Work, and come off from them, as some Animals, which they say always desert a House when 'tis likely to fall.

2dly. The more numerous, the more dangerous, and therefore the more need to suppress them ; and God has suffer'd us to bear them as Goads in our sides, for not utterly extinguishing them long ago.

3dly. If we are to allow them, only because we cannot suppress them, then it ought to be tried whether we can or no ; and I am of opinion 'tis easy to be done, and could prescribe ways and means, if it were proper : but I doubt not but the Government will find effectual Methods for the rooting the Contagion from the Face of this Land.

Another Argument they use, which is this, That 'tis a time of War, and we have need to unite against the common Enemy.

We answer, this common Enemy had been no Enemy, if they had not made him so ; he was quiet in Peace, and no way disturb'd, or encroach'd upon us, and we know no Reason we had to quarrel with him.

But further, we make no question but we are able to deal with this common Enemy without their help. But why must we unite with them because of the Enemy ? will they go over to the Enemy, if we do not prevent it by a Union with them ?—— We are very well contented they should ; and make no question, we shall be ready to deal with them and the common Enemy too, and better without them than with them.

Besides, if we have a common Enemy, there is the more need to be secure against our private Enemies ; if there is one common Enemy, we have the less need to have an Enemy in our Bowels.

'Twas a great Argument some People us'd against suppressing the Old-Mony, that 'twas a time of War, and 'twas too great a Risk for the Nation to run, if we should not master it, we should be undone ; and yet the Sequel prov'd the Hazard was not so great, but it might be mastered ; and the Success was answerable. The suppressing the Dissenters is not a harder Work, nor a Work of less Necessity to the Publick ; we can never enjoy a settled uninterrupted Union and Tranquillity in this Nation, till the Spirit of Whiggism, Faction, and Schism is melted down like the Old-Mony.

To talk of the Difficulty, is to frighten our selves with Chimæras and Notions of a powerful Party, which are indeed a Party without Power. Difficulties often appear greater at a distance, than when they are search'd into with Judgment, and distinguish'd from the Vapours and Shadows that attend them.

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We are not to be frightened with it; this Age is wiser than that, by all our own Experience, *and theirs too*. King Charles the First had early suppressed this Party, if he had took more deliberate Measures. In short, 'tis not worth sarguing, to talk of their Arms: their *Monmouths* and *Shaftsburys*, and *Argiles* are gone, their *Dutch-Sanctuary* is at an end, Heaven has made way for their Destruction; and if we do not close with the Divine Occasion, we are to blame ourselves, and may remember that we had once an Opportunity to serve the Church of *England*, by extirpating her implacable Enemies, and having let slip the Minute that Heaven presented, may experimentally complain, *Post est Occasio Calva*.

Here are some Popular Objections in the way.

As first, The Queen has promis'd them to continue them in their tolerated Liberty; and has told us she will be a Religious Observer of her Word.

What her Majesty will do we cannot help, but what, as the Head of the Church, she ought to do, is another Case: Her Majesty has promised to protect and defend the Church of *England*, and if she cannot effectually do that without the Destruction of the Dissenters, she must of course dispense with one Promise to comply with another. But to answer *this Cavil more effectually*: Her Majesty did never promise to maintain the Toleration, to the Destruction of the Church; but it is upon supposition, that it may be compatible with the well-being and safety of the Church, which she had declar'd she would take especial Care of: Now if these two Interests clash, 'tis plain her Majesty's Intentions are to uphold, protect, defend, and establish the Church, and this we conceive is impossible.

Perhaps it may be said, That the Church is in no immediate Danger from the Dissenters, and therefore 'tis time enough: But this is a weak Argument.

For first, If a Danger be real, the Distance of it is no Argument against, but rather a Spur to quicken us to Prevention, lest it be too late hereafter.

And 2dly, Here is the Opportunity, and the only one perhaps that ever the Church had, to secure her self, and destroy her Enemies.

The Representatives of the Nation have now an Opportunity, the Time is come which all good Men have wish'd for, that the Gentlemen of *England* may serve the Church of *England*; now they are protected and encouraged by a Church of *England* Queen.

What will ye do for your Sister in the Day that she shall be spoken for?

If ever you will establish the best Christian Church in the World:

If ever you will suppress the Spirit of Enthusiasm :

If ever you will free the Nation from the viperous Brood that have so long suck'd the Blood of their Mother :

If you will leave your Posterity free from Faction and Rebellion, this is the time.

This is the time to pull up this heretical Weed of Sedition, that has so long disturb'd the Peace of our Church, and poison'd the good Corn.

But, says another hot and cold Objector, this is renewing Fire and Faggot, reviving the *Act de Heret. Comburendo* : This will be Cruelty in its Nature, and barbarous to all the World.

Answer, 'Tis Cruelty to kill a Snake or a Toad in cold Blood, but the Poyson of their Nature makes it a Charity to our Neighbours to destroy those Creatures, not for any personal Injury receiv'd, but for prevention ; not for the Evil they have done, but the Evil they may do.

Serpents, Toads, Vipers, &c. are noxious to the Body, and poison the sensitive Life ; these poyson the Soul, corrupt our Posterity, ensnare our Children, destroy the Vitals of our Happiness, our future Felicity, and contaminate the whole Mass.

Shall any Law be given to such wild Creatures ? Some Beasts are for Sport, and the Huntsmen give them advantages of Ground ; but some are knock'd on head by all possible ways of Violence and Surprise.

I do not prescribe Fire and Faggot, but as *Scipio* said of *Carthage*, *Delen-da-est Carthago* ; they are to be rooted out of this Nation, if ever we will live in Peace, serve God, or enjoy our own. As for the Manner, I leave it to those Hands who have a right to execute God's Justice on the Nation's and the Church's Enemies.

But if we must be frighted from this Justice under the specious Pretences, and odious Sense of Cruelty, nothing will be effected : 'Twill be more Barbarous and Cruel to our own Children and dear Posterity, when they shall reproach their Fathers, as we do ours, and tell us, ' You had an Opportunity to root out this cursed Race from the World, under the Favour and Protection of a true *English* Queen ; and out of your foolish Pity you spared them, because, forsooth, you would not be cruel ; and now our Church is suppress'd and persecuted, our Religion trampled under foot, our Estates plunder'd, our Persons imprison'd and dragg'd to Jails, Gibbets, and Scaffolds : Your sparing this *Amalekite* Race is our Destruction, your Mercy to them proves Cruelty to your poor Posterity.

How just will such Reflections be, when our Posterity shall fall under the merciless Clutches of this uncharitable Generation, when our Church shall

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be swallow'd up in Schism, Faction, Enthusiasm, and Confusion; when our Government shall be devolv'd upon Foreigners, and our Monarchy dwindled into a Republick.

'Twould be more rational for us, if we must spare this Generation, to summon our own to a general Massacre, and as we have brought them into the World free, send them out so, and not betray them to Destruction by our supine negligence, and then cry *it is Mercy*.

Moses was a merciful meek Man, and yet with what Fury did he run thro the Camp, and cut the Throats of three and thirty thousand of his dear *Israelites*, that were fallen into Idolatry? What was the reason? 'Twas Mercy to the rest, to make these be Examples, to prevent the Destruction of the whole Army.

How many Millions of future Souls shall we save from Infection & Delusion; if the present Race of poison'd Spirits were purg'd from the Face of the Land.

'Tis vain to trifle in this matter; the light foolish handling them by Mulcts, Fines, &c. 'tis their Glory and their Advantage; if the Gallows instead of the Counter, and the Gallies instead of the Fines, were the Reward of going to a Conventicle to preach or hear, there would not be so many Sufferers; the Spirit of Martyrdom is over: They that will go to Church to be chosen Sheriffs and Mayors, would go to forty Churches rather than be hang'd.

If one severe Law were made, and punctually executed, that whoever was found at a Conventicle, shou'd be Banish'd the Nation, and the Preacher be Hang'd, we shou'd soon see an end of the Tale, they wou'd all come to Church; and one Age would make us all One again.

To talk of 5 s. a Month for not coming to the Sacrament, and 1 s. per Week for not coming to Church, this is such a way of converting People as never was known, this is selling them a Liberty to transgress for so much Money: If it be not a Crime, why don't we give them full Licence? And if it be, no Price ought to compound for the committing it, for that is selling a Liberty to People to sin against God and the Government.

If it be a Crime of the highest Consequence, both against the Peace and Welfare of the Nation, the Glory of God, the Good of the Church, and the Happiness of the Soul, let us rank it among capital Offences, and let it receive a Punishment in proportion to it.

We Hang Men for Trifles, and Banish them for things not worth naming; but an Offence against God and the Church, against the Welfare of the World, and the Dignity of Religion, shall be bought off for 5 s. This is such a shame to a Christian Government, that 'tis with regret I transcribe it to Posterity.

If Men sin against God, affront his Ordinances, rebel against his Church,
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and disobey the Precepts of their Superiors, let them suffer as such capital Crimes deserve; so will Religion flourish, and this divided Nation be once again united.

And yet the Title of Barbarous and Cruel will soon be taken off from this Law too. I am not supposing that all the Dissenters in *England* shou'd be Hang'd or Banish'd; but as in cases of Rebellions and Insurrections, if a few of the Ring-leaders suffer, the Multitude are dissu'd, so a few obstinate People being made Examples, there's no doubt but the Severity of the Law would find a stop in the Compliance of the Multitude.

To make the reasonableness of this matter out of question, and more unanswerably plain, let us examine for what it is that this Nation is divided into Parties and Factions, and let us see how they can justify a Separation, or we of the Church of *England* can justify our bearing the Insults and Inconveniences of the Party.

One of their leading Pastors, and a Man of as much Learning as most among them, in his Answer to a Pamphlet, entituled, *An Enquiry into the Occasional Conformity*, hath these Words, P. 27. *Do the Religion of the Church and the Meeting-houses make two Religions? Wherein do they differ? The Substance of the same Religion is common to them both; and the Modes and Accidents are the things in which only they differ.* P. 28. *Thirty nine Articles are given us for the Summary of our Religion, Thirty six contain the Substance of it, wherein we agree; Three the additional Appendices, about which we have some differences.*

Now if, as by their own acknowledgment, the Church of *England* is a true Church, and the Difference between them is only a few *Modes and Accidents*, Why should we expect that they will suffer Gallows and Gallies, corporeal Punishment and Banishment, for these Trifles? There is no question but they will be wiser; even their own Principles won't bear them out in it: They will certainly comply with the Laws, and with Reason; and tho at the first, Severity may seem hard, the next Age will feel nothing of it; the Contagion will be rooted out: The Disease being cur'd, there will be no need of the Operation; but if they sho'd venture to transgress, and fall into the Pit, all the World must condemn their Obstinacy, as being without Ground from their own Principles.

Thus the Pretence of Cruelty will be taken off, and the Party actually suppress'd, and the Disquiets they have so often brought upon the Nation, prevented.

Their Numbers, and their Wealth, makes them haughty, and that is so far from being an Argument to perswade us to forbear them, that 'tis a Warning to us, without any more delay, to reconcile them to the Unity of the Church, or remove them from us.

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At present, Heaven be prais'd, they are not so formidable as they have been, and 'tis our own fault, if ever we suffer them to be so: Providence and the Church of *England* seem to join in this particular, that now the Destroyers of the Nation's Peace may be overturn'd, and to this end the present Opportunity seems to be put into our Hands.

To this end her present Majesty seems reserv'd to enjoy the Crown, that the Ecclesiastick as well as Civil Rights of the Nation may be restor'd by her Hand.

To this end the face of Affairs have receiv'd such a turn in the process of a few Months, as never has been before: The leading Men of the Nation, the universal Cry of the People, the unanimous Request of the Clergy agree in this, that the Deliverance of our Church is at hand.

For this end has Providence given us such a Parliament, such a Convocation, such a Gentry, and such a Queen as we never had before.

And what may be the Consequences of a Neglect of such Opportunities? The Succession of the Crown has but a dark Prospect, another *Dutch* Turn may make the Hopes of it ridiculous, and the Practice impossible. Be the House of our future Princes never so well inclin'd, they will be Foreigners; and many Years will be spent in suting the Genius of Strangers to the Crown, and to the Interests of the Nation; and how many Ages it may be before the *English* Throne be fill'd with so much Zeal and Candour, so much Tenderness and hearty Affection to the Church as we see it now cover'd with, who can imagine?

'Tis high time then for the Friends of the Church of *England* to think of building up and establishing her, in such a manner, that she may be no more invaded by Foreigners, nor divided by Factions, Schisms, and Error.

If this could be done by gentle and easy Methods, I shou'd be glad; but the Wound is corroded, the Vitals begin to mortify, and nothing but Amputation of Members can compleat the Cure: All the ways of Tenderness and Compassion, all persuasive Arguments have been made use of in vain.

The Humour of the Dissenters has so increas'd among the People, that they hold the Church in defiance, and the House of God is an Abomination among them. Nay, they have brought up their Posterity in such prepossest Aversions to our Holy Religion, that the ignorant Mob think we are all Idolaters, and Worshipers of *Baal*; and account it a Sin to come within the Walls of our Churches.

The Primitive Christians were not more shy of a Heathen Temple, or of Meat offer'd to Idols, nor the *Jews* of Swine's Flesh, than some of our Dissenters are of the Church, and the Divine Service solemnized therein.

This Obstinacy must be rooted out with the Profession of it : while the Generation are left at liberty daily to affront God Almighty, and dishonour his Holy Worship, we are wanting in our Duty to God, and our Mother the Church of *England*.

How can we answer it to God, to the Church, and to our Posterity, to leave them entangled with Fanaticism, Error, and Obstinacy, in the Bowels of the Nation ; to leave them an Enemy in their Streets, that in time may involve them in the same Crimes, and endanger the utter Extirpation of Religion in the Nation ?

What's the Difference betwixt this, and being subjected to the Power of the Church of *Rome*, from whence we have reform'd ? If one be an extreme on one hand, and one on another, 'tis equally destructive to the Truth, to have Errors settled among us, let them be of what nature they will.

Both are Enemies of our Church, and of our Peace, and why shou'd it not be as criminal to admit an Enthusiast as a Jesuit ? Why shou'd the *Papist* with his seven Sacraments be worse than the *Quaker* with no Sacraments at all ? Why should Religious-houses be more intolerable than Meeting-houses ? *Alas the Church of England !* What with Popery on one hand, and Schismatics on the other, how has she been crucify'd between two Thieves !

Now *let us crucify the Thieves*. Let her Foundations be establish'd upon the Destruction of her Enemies : The Doors of Mercy being always open to the returning part of the deluded People, let the Obstinate be ruled with a Rod of Iron.

Let all true Sons of so Holy an Oppressed Mother, exasperated by her Afflictions, harden their Hearts against those who have oppress'd her.

And may God Almighty put it into the Hearts of all the Friends of Truth, to lift up a Standard against Pride and Antichrist, that the Posterity of the Sons of Error may be rooted out from the Face of this Land for ever.

F I N I S.

REFLEC-

REFLECTIONS

Upon the Foregoing

PAMPHLET.

OUR Author was so much in haste, and so intent upon making his Work short, that his very first Effort comes short of the Mark. He blunders in the Choice of his Text, and instead of some grave Sentence from one of the Apocryphal Authors, such as *Jesus* the Son of *Syrach*, or the History of *Bell* and the *Dragon*, he chuses his Subject from *Aesop* Jacobitz'd by *Roger* the Son of *Hammond*; who being a blind Passive-Obedience Mole, led the Inferior Clergy that were blinder than himself into the Pit digged for them by Father *Peters*, Bishop *Ellis*, &c. So that poor Church was so far got into the Quagmire, that the Priests and Jesuits had begun to take possession of both Universities, in order to put out her two Eyes; the Popelings had got the Command of our Army and chief Garisons, they had got a good Footing in our Fleet, they were absolutely possess'd of the Throne, their Advice was easily taken in the Privy-Council, they had by the Intercession of our Lady of *Loretto*, and the Benediction of Count *D'Ada* his Holinesses Nuncio, got a young *Jure Divino* Prince ready form'd, to entail the mighty Blessings of Popery and Slavery upon us; whilst our Bishops were cag'd up in the Tower, in order to be kept there and well dried, to make a good Blaze in *Smithfield*: The Princess her present Majesty was carefully sent to the *Bath*, lest the Presence of so great a Heretick should have infected his young Highness from the very Womb; and at last *Roger* the Son of *Hammond*, our Author's Divinely inspir'd Oracle, with such of the Superior and Inferior Clergy as had danc'd to his Pipe, brought Matters to such a Pass, as the Church found herself under a Necessity to cut the Throat of the spurious Bantling, call'd Passive Obedience, which she had so long dandled upon her Knee as her own

Genuine

Genuine Offspring, and to betake her self to Defensive Arms. Her present Majesty perceiving her own Royal Person, her Country and her Religion, brought to the Brink of Ruin, thought fit, not only with the Prince her Husband, to leave the Court, but to fly from it *Incognito*, and to join those who had taken Arms for the common Cause. All this being uncontroversible Matter of Fact, the Reader may easily judg, whether our Author's Fable be worse chosen or worse applied.

The poor Animal cannot hide the Asses Ears under the Lions Skin ; for notwithstanding the counterfeit Eulogies which he bestows here and there upon the Queen, the whole Pamphlet is a Libel upon her Majesty, and the Design of it is to raise Jealousies and Mistrusts betwixt the Sovereign and the Subject ; a Crime which is very well provided for in our Statute Books : but this poor Scribler shews himself to be equally a Stranger to Law, History and Christianity.

I believe there's scarce any Man but a Non-Jurant, Non-Associator, or *de facto* Clergyman, and the People they delude, will venture to say, that the Church of *England* has suffered any Eclipse these 14 Years past. Let our Author or any of his Party turn to what Period of our History they please, since the Reformation, and shew us better Men advanc'd to the Episcopal Sees, than those that were advanc'd by the late King, and his Royal Consort Queen *Mary* of ever-blessed Memory. Let them on the other hand tell us, when our Benches were so generally filled with Judges of greater Learning and Integrity, and in what Reign the Church of *England* was ever so much esteemed by the Protestant Churches abroad, as since the Revolution. The Exemplary Life and truly Catholick Soul of the late Queen *Mary*, whilst in a Foreign Country, was an Ornament to the Church of *England* in which she had been educated. It receiv'd an Additional Lustre by the Constancy of her present Majesty when Princess, and her joining so chearfully in the Revolution, notwithstanding the Risk she ran by it. Add to this, the Reputation the Church of *England* acquired among other Protestant Churches, by King *William's* living and dying in her Communion, tho bred to a contrary Discipline, and by the Moderation which she discovered toward Dissenters in that Reign, which took off the Imputation of her being of a persecuting Spirit, that she had labour'd under in all those that preceded. If these few of the many other things that might be said, be duly considered, a Man must have a wonderful deal of Assurance that will say, the Church of *England* did ever shine so bright in any other Reign. In that of King *Henry VIII.* she was but half reformed ; and tho she had renounc'd the Pope, the *Romish* Religion was still predominant, and many Protestants suffered for the six Articles. In that of *Edward VI.* her Beauty
was

was tarnish'd by the unnatural Heats and Divisions which happened betwixt her Bishops and Clergy, about Vestments, Ceremonies, &c. and by the Jars that arose from the Mixture of *Lutheran* and *Calvinistical* Principles among her Reformers. In Queen *Mary's* Reign she was eclipsed indeed, and by her own Folly brought that Popish Princeſs to the Throne contrary to the very End of Government, which the sacred Text informs us is, to preserve, and not to destroy the People under their Charge ; and all the Reward that bloody Woman gave them, was to bestow Crowns of Martyrdom upon the chief of them : Then Bishop *Ridley*, who was a rigid Imposer of the Ceremonies, and Bishop *Hooper* who was for laying them aside, came both to the Stake together ; at which time the former acknowledged his Error, whereas the latter, who was reproached by the High Fliers as a *Hypocrite*, had no Checks of Conscience for his Dissent. Yet the Spirit of Imposition, which is always accompanied with that of Persecution, was so predominant among the Ceremony-Mongers of that time, tho persecuted themselves, that they broke the *English* Church which was settled at *Frankford* to pieces ; and rather than part with an Ace of an indifferent Ceremony, persecuted Mr. *John Knox* their Minister with an Accusation at the Imperial Court, because he had written and preach'd against the bloody Queen *Mary* : which created but a very indifferent Idea of the High Churchmen of those times in the Minds of the Reformed abroad, as every Man knows who has look'd into the History of that Period. When Queen *Elizabeth* came to the Crown, the Spirit of Imposition still kept the Ascendant, and partly from the Stiffness of her own Temper, and from the Rigor of the High Fliers, Dissenters were severely us'd ; and Mr. *Udal* one of their Ministers, and I think some others condemned to die ; and that severe Act of the 35th of her Reign against Separation was obtain'd, which the true *English* Parliaments in *Char. II's* time found so destructive to the Protestant Interest, that they us'd all their Endeavours to have it repeal'd : nay the Bishops in Queen *Elizabeth's* Reign were so much ashamed of such Severities on those trifling accounts, that they were forc'd to make Apologies for it, and to excuse themselves on that Head to Foreign Churches, and particularly to those in *Swisserland*, as may be seen in Dr. *Burnet's* Letters.

In the Reign of King *James* her Successor, it is certain that the Church of *England* declin'd in her Reputation, by his declaring in Parliament, that he would meet the Church of *Rome* half way, if she would leave her King-killing Doctrine, and some few things more ; by his eagerness first for a *Spanish*, and then for a *French* Popish Match for his Son King *Charles I.* and his granting unreasonable Favours to the *Papists* in both Treaties ; by his Declaration for Sports and Pastimes on the Sabbath-Day, as he return'd
from

from Puritanical *Scotland*, to please *Popish Lancashire*; and from his suffering his own Protestant Daughter the Queen of *Bohemia*, with the King her Husband, her Posterity, and the Protestant Interest in *Germany*, to be ruin'd, so he could but obtain the *Spanish Match* for his Son, tho' at the Expence of *England's Wealth, Honour and Religion*.

In the Reign of King *Charles I.* the Church of *England* suffer'd much in her Reputation by the Severities us'd against the moderate Men of her own Communion, call'd *Puritans* by way of Reproach, whom Bishop *Laud* and the rest of the High Fliers did all they could to drive out of the Church, by imposing upon them the reading of the Book of Sports and Pastimes fit to be us'd on Sunday; and forcing them to rail in the Communion Table Altar-wise; and to make some other Advances towards the Church of *Rome*, with whom that Prelate and his Party were so inclinable to reconcile, that the Pope thought fit to offer him a Cardinals Cap, and he good Man had no Scruple at the thing, as appears by his own Diary, printed both by *Prynne* and *Heylin*; only he would be Master of the Revels himself, and have the Reformation of the Church of *Rome*, and the Deformation of the Church of *England*, all of his own Management. His tender Conscience could swallow down a red Hat, and he had no Scruple of Mind to license and let pass uncensured the Books of *Montague*, and others, advancing *Popish Doctrines*, and running down the Reformation every where; but so zealous was he for the Rites and Ceremonies and Pictures of Mother Church, that a Mans refusing to bow to the Altar, or taking down an Idolatrous Picture out of a Church-Window, was a Crime fit for the Censure of the Star Chamber and High Commission Court. Blessed St. *Laud* advanced *Montague* by his Interest to be Bishop of *Norwich*; and amongst other Qualifications fit to recommend this Doctor to a Mitre, these were some. In his Appeal to *Cesar* he treated all the Arguments of Protestant Divines to prove the Pope to be Anti-Christ, as Apocalyptical Dotages and Phrensies. In his *Antididatribe* he said, none but Frantic Phanaticks would deny the Title of Holiness to the Popes: He commended those Zealous and Pious Emperors, who alighted from their Horses to adore them, and maintain'd the Usefulness of the Popes Power over the Kings of *France* and *Spain*. The maintaining of the Popes Ecclesiastical Primacy, if not Supremacy, is so plain to be found in *Laud's* Speeches in the Star Chamber, and his Conferences with *Fisher* the Jesuit, that it cannot be denied: his striking out the Epithet *Antichristian* join'd to the *Roman Sect* in the *English Liturgy*, is also very well known; nor is it to be conceal'd, that he branded *Luther's* Reformation with the Character of a deplorable Schism. The Defence of the *Limbus Patrum*, Image-Worship, and other *Popish Doctrines*, by *Montague, Potter, Stobbsford, Heylin,*

Heylin, Poklington, and other high flying Doctors of the Church of *England* in those times, will appear to all Men that have read their Writings; and if any Person have a mind to be satisfied of the Truth of this without being at much Pains, he may find the Pages of their Writings, where those Doctrines are asserted, refer'd to in a Book, call'd *Laudensium Autocatacrisis*, written by Mr. *Robert Bailie* a Minister of the Church of *Scotland* in those times. I have not time to insist upon this Subject, and therefore shall conclude it in short with this Observation, that the Church of *England* suffered much in her Fame in those Days by her persecuting the Church of *Scotland* and her own moderate Sons, whilst *Papists* were indulg'd and prefer'd; nay the very *Irish* Cut-Throats, who so barbarously massacred the Protestants in *Ireland*, were called over to join *Montrose* in *Scotland*, and the High-Fliers endeavoured likewise to bring 'em into *England*, in defence of their illegal Impositions upon Church and State. It must be own'd indeed, that they were the properest Champions for such Doctrines as were delivered by those *Laudian* Oracles, such as the noble Decision pronounc'd by *Sibthorp* and *Manwaring*, the two grand Apostles of Passive Obedience, from the Chair of Truth; *That the King might make Laws, and do whatever pleaseth him, and that the Subjects under Pain of Damnation ought to pay the Loan Money demanded by King Charles I. and obey the King's Will in all things.* But whatever Power they thought fit to allow the King over Laymen, they would be sure to reserve an Absolute Power over the Church to their Bishops, as appears by Mr. *Hoard's* Sermon at a Metropolitcal Visitation, wherein he asserted, that the Power of making Ecclesiastical Laws belong'd only to the Diocesan Bishop, as well out of a Synod as in it. And *Chouney* in his Theological Collections, P. 53. says, that all the Laws by which the Churches are governed, and by which Kings, who are Members and Sons of the Church, suffer'd themselves to be govern'd, derive all their Native and Vital Power from the Bishops as the Head. And *Laud* in his Letters to the *Scotch* Bishops, pressing them to impose the Liturgy and Book of Canons upon their Clergy, has this worthy Sentence, *That the Commands of Bishops ought to be obey'd with the like Care and Reverence as the Commands of God, when their Commands are not contrary to his.* In a word, that sort of Men did screw up the Royal and Ecclesiastical Prerogative to such a Height, and did by the Assistance of the Queen so closely besiege King *Charles I.* that they rendred him inflexible; they were the chief Instruments of breaking all the Treaties betwixt him and his Parliament, and by consequence the principal Cause of his deplorable Fate. I cannot make an end of this without taking notice, that Col. *Barnfield* in his Apology asserts, that Dr. *Hudson* one of the High-flying Church Divines of that time, was let

out of the Tower on purpose by *Oliver*, to dissuade King *Charles*; when in the Hands of the *Scots* at *Newcastle*, from agreeing to the Proposals of the Parliament, and to persuade him that *Oliver* and the Army would give him better Terms; and by that means he prevail'd with that unfortunate Prince, to concur under hand by himself and his Friends, to his being deliver'd up by the *Scots*, in hopes of *Oliver's* performing his Promise, whereas it dolefully fell out otherwise; and from that day forward the mis-led Prince may justly have been said to have been deliver'd up into the Hands of his Executioners, by the Conduct of the High-flown Clergy.

In the Reign of King *Charles II.* the Reputation of the Church of *England* suffer'd no small Eclipse, by the dissolute Life of that Prince who was their Head, by their renewing the Persecution against Dissenters, by their exalting the Prerogative to an unlimited Height, by their paving the Way for the Duke of *York's* Accession to the Throne, tho a *Papist*, tho at the Head of a Plot against our Religion and Liberty, and tho known to be entirely in the Interest of *France*. And this was aggravated by their running down the moderate Men of the Church, under the Notion of Whigs, Trimmers, and Plotters, even to the illegal Execution of some of them, such as the Lord *Russel*, &c. And in a word, by concurring to the Surrender of Charters, keeping up of Standing Armies, and all those other things complain'd of in the Claim of Right; and at the same time by preaching the People into Slavery, with their Doctrines of Non-Resistance and Passive-Obedience, binding it upon their Consciences on Pain of Damnation; tho when King *James* came to touch their own Property, they made it evident to the World, that they neither believ'd nor practis'd 'em themselves.

In the Reign of King *James II.* the Reputation of the Church as well as her Security was pretty much clouded; she was divided against her self as well as in former Reigns; tho the common Enemy, the *Papists*, were ready to swallow her up: There was a high Commission Court composed of her own Spiritual and Temporal Sons, to teach such of their Brethren as were refractory better Manners; of which the Archbishop of *York*, the Bishop of *London*, and *Magdalen* College in *Oxford*, may perhaps remember some thing. Nor do we suppose that they and others have quite forgot that *Papists* were plac'd on our Benches, and had the chief Commands in our Army, Fleet and Garisons; and that the King by his dispensing Power enervated all those Laws which were made for the Security of the Reformation. We can scarcely suppose their Memories to be so bad, as not to remember still, that 7 Bishops were put up in the Tower and brought to their Trial, for refusing to read the King's Illegal Declaration of Indulgence; and it's presum'd, there are some People still alive, who remember what Care there was taken

to procure the Surrender of Charters of Corporations, and to regulate their Magistracy and Town Councils, in order to get a Parliament to approve all that the King had done; and it is well enough known, that there was a great Standing Army kept on foot, to give Authority to this Method of Administration. To crown the Work, and to put us out of all Hopes of ever bettering our Condition, a young Prince is declared to be born, without any previous Care to satisfy the jealous and suspicious Nation of the Reality of the Queen's Pregnancy and Delivery of that Child, tho the Court knew that a Cheat was universally suspected in that Matter. Then we may easily judg of the Temper of our Author, who dates the time of the Churches Calamity and Affliction from the Beginning of King *William's* Reign, when all Mankind, besides those of his Party, must own that that Prince of Glorious Memory, was invited over chiefly by the Clergy, Nobility and Gentry of the Church of *England*, to rescue her from the greatest Danger she had been in since the Reformation: and by comparing her State during his Reign with what it was in any of those that preceded, it will appear, that her Condition was more flourishing than ever, and that she had the peculiar Happiness not to be so much as stain'd with one Act of persecuting her dissenting Brethren in his time; but on the contrary, there were visible Demonstrations given of their Harmony in Doctrine, by all the Dissenting Ministers subscribing the Doctrinal Articles of the Church; and notwithstanding their Difference in Points of Discipline, yet the best of both sorts cordially agreed in promoting a Reformation of Manners, by erecting Societies for that end, and hearing one anothers Ministers on those Occasions. Such a Reformation alone has ever been countenanc'd by all wise Nations; Heathen and Christian, as being absolutely necessary for their Safety, for the World must own that there can be nothing more destructive to a Nation than a Dissolution of Manners. And by this we may judg of the real Kindness of these High-Fliers to their Country, who in several late Books and Pamphlets do all they can to ridicule and run down that necessary Work, and to expose such as have been, and are zealous in it to Contempt. Many Libels of this Nature might be instanced, but I shall satisfy my self with mentioning one, *viz.* that Fulsom, Abusive and Scandalous Book, entituled, *Letters from the Living to the Living*; which abuses the greatest and best of the Clergy, runs down both the Principles and Persons of those who concurr'd in the Revolution, and is calculated for nothing but to promote Vice and Jacobitism.

But to return to *The Shortest Way*, It is evident that he designs to create Jealousies in the Minds of the Dissenters and moderate Churchmen of her Majesty, and her High Court of Parliament, as if they design'd their De-

struction; tho her Majesty has been pleas'd to declare in Parliament, that she will maintain the Toleration, as by Law establish'd: and tho the Honourable House of Commons in the Preamble of their Occasional Bill, have declar'd themselves against Persecution; yet he would perswade the Dissenters, and under that Notion it's plain he includes all those of the Revolution Principles, that *their Day of Grace is over.*

That we may not be at a loss to guess what Church he is of, he complains heavily of the Oaths, Associations, Abjurations, and what not, which have been impos'd upon the tender Consciences of the Church of *England*, who could not *dispense with the Allegiance they had sworn to their lawful King, and swear to a new Hodge-podge of a Dutch Government.* This is directly to fly in her Majesty's face, whose Title was asserted by the Claim of Right, and maintain'd by those Associations, Abjurations, &c. This is at once to libel all the Parliaments in *K. William's* Reign, as Dissenters, Traitors, and what not; tho every one knows that they took particular care of the Church of *England*, and address'd his Majesty again and again for its Security and Preservation; and in their several Acts of Settlement had a special regard to it. By this we may see what truly Friends and loyal Subjects our Author and his Nonjurant Church are to her Majesty and their Country.

At the same time he tells us of a Multitude of Occasional Communicants, who are men of a far more dangerous Constitution than those that he and his Party do libel at such an unmerciful rate; and that is *such who are forc'd so comply against their Consciences with our new sophistical Politicks, and like the New Converts in France, sin because they cannot starve.* These new sophistical Politicks must needs be the Revolution Principles, upon which her Majesty's Right and Title is founded; and therefore by our Author's confession those Occasional Communicants must be much more dangerous to be allow'd in the State, than those of the Dissenting sort: For the latter have no scruple as to her Majesty's Title, they have associated themselves in defence of it; there's none of them that will refuse to abjure all other Pretenders, or to swear to preserve our present Constitution. Whereas the former are only loyal *de Facto*, but not *de Jure*: They can have no other Idea of her Majesty, but that of an Usurper who is too strong for them; and therefore must take all occasions, if they be true to their Principles, to join with those who favour the *St. Germain's* Pretender, that so they may ease their Consciences, and not be oblig'd to live for ever under the wretched Alternative of being forc'd to sin or starve. If her Majesty and our Legislature should, from our Author's Suggestion, and the Evidence of the Matter of Fact, that there are too many Occasional Communicants of this sort in *England*,

England, think fit to make a Test to keep them out of all Places of Power and Truſt, and enjoin a Penalty to be impos'd upon thoſe that own her Maſteſty to be Queen *de Facto*, and will not at the ſame time own her to be ſo *de Jure*, the Party would find themſelves but little oblig'd to our Author for this Hint : and perhaps ſuch a Teſt would not ſeem very unneceſſary or unreaſonable to thoſe who conſider the Thouſands of Foot and Horſe, which Sir *John Friend*, Sir *William Parkins*, Sir *John Fenwick*, and others were to join the *French* with at their Landing upon the Aſſaſſination Plot ; that amongſt others there was to be a Troop of Nonjurant Parſons to hallow the Rebellion ; that ſome, if not all of thoſe three Knights, were Occaſional Communicants or Hearers at leaſt, and that it was not poſſible for the *Jacobite* Separatiſts alone to have rais'd ſo many thouſand Horſe and Foot as were then propos'd. Certainly ſuch a ſort of Occaſional Communicants are more dangerous to the Church and State of *England* than thoſe whom our Author would have puniſh'd with the Gallies and Gallows. Nor is there any Parity of Reaſon for allowing more Favour to Nonjurants than to Nonconformiſts, ſince the latter agree with the Church of *England* in her Doctrine, and are united with her by a cordial, not feigned Allegiance to the Queen as their Civil Head : Whereas the Nonjurants, whatever Right of Membership they pretend to the Body, do undeniably ſeparate from her Maſteſty as the Head, which is a more dangerous and material piece of Nonconformity than any the Diſſenters are guilty of. It was never reckon'd good Policy in any State to give too much Indulgence to a Set of men who own a Foreign Head, as it is known our Nonjurants do : Moſt, if not all of them, are for the *St. Germain's* Pretender, tho bred up in Popery and Arbitrary Power, as their Civil Head ; and we have heard already that moſt of the Eccleſiaſticks of that Temper have no great averſion to a foreign Religious Head. Bp *Montague* in his *Antididatribe* above-mentioned, Pag. 156. ſays, *If the King of England ſhould command his Subjects, that nothing in Eccleſiaſtical Affairs ſhould be determin'd in his Dominions without the Pope's Authority, and that whatever ſhould be eſtabliſh'd by that Authority ſhould have the force of a Law, all men ought to obey it.* And what Advances of the ſame nature are made by a preſent Author, a Nonjurant Clergyman, in his Caſe of the *Regale* and *Pontificate*, is well enough known : *The Snake in the Graſs is diſcover'd* by the Wriggling of his Tail, when he tells us, *Concors Romana & Reformatæ Eccleſiæ Fides* ; tho he might as well tell us that there's an Agreement betwixt Light and Darkneſs. The Aſſociation, both Old and New, betwixt the Papiſts and ſuch High-Churchmen, to undermine and blow up the preſent Church and Government, is a great deal plainer and more evident than the pretended New Association.

Association of those call'd Moderate Churchmen with the modern Whigs and Fanatics, to undermine and blow them up. For they must have a Forehead of harder Brass than any Jesuit, and a Mind capable of swallowing something more absurd than Transubstantiation, who will offer to deny, that had it not been for the moderate Churchmen and Dissenters, the present Church and Government had been blown up long e'er now, 1st. By the associated High-Church and Popish Plotters under the Conduct of the Duke of York, 2^{dly}. By the same Associators when he was King. And 3^{dly}, By the same Holy Leaguers at the time of the Assassination and *La Hogue* Invasion: and if any of them had happen'd to miscarry in the Attempt, as did the blessed Martyrs *Fenwick, Friend* and *Perkins*, there was a Troop of Nonjurants ready to absolve them at *Tyburn*, and to tell them that the next step from the Cart would be to Heaven. May God deliver her Majesty and the Nation from such Nonjurants, and their Brethren the *de facto* Occasional Communicants, who like the *French* New-Converts, are forc'd to conform, because they must otherwise starve.

It were endless to animadvert upon all the extravagant Passages of this invenom'd Libel, which is writ on purpose to set the Nation in a Flame, and to engage us in an intestine War, that the *French* King may have an opportunity to force the Pretender upon us. His advising to send all our Dissenters to the Gallies and Gallows, his founding a Charge to a general Massacre of 'em, and his proposing the *French* King's Method with his Protestant Subjects, whom he reproachfully calls *Hugonots*, as a fit Model and a proper Instance for our Encouragement to attempt it; his falling foul upon the Act of Succession and the Family of *Hanover*, his outrageous Reflections upon the late K. *William* and his Government, and his Advice to subdue the *Scots* instead of uniting 'em, are so unpolitick, inhuman and unchristian, that I could not at first perswade my self that any Man who calls himself a Protestant, could be so much inspir'd by Hell as to write such a Libel. But when I consider'd that the same Spirit, the same Notions, and many of the same Expressions are to be found in a Libel of one Sheet, call'd, *A short Abstract of the Behaviour of the Occasional Communicants towards the Members of the Church of England since the Revolution*, and in that call'd the *New Association* abovemention'd; and that the same Temper is to be found in most of the Pamphlets that have been printed against Occasional Communion, tho' not always so palpable and gross, I was oblig'd to change my Mind. Most part of the Nation may remember, that *L' EStrange*, in his *Observers*, when the blessed Designs of bringing in Popery and Arbitrary Power upon us were in their full Vigor, advis'd to cutting of Throats, and a Reconciliation with *Rome*, which made many of his *quondam* Fol-

lowers

lowers drop him. It has ever been the Method of that Party, who were for a Popish Successor and Arbitrary Power, to pave their Way by promoting Severities against Protestant Dissenters, that whilst the Church and they were engag'd against one another, the common Enemy might take their advantage of both. Thus in Queen *Elizabeth's* time, they that favour'd the *Infanta's* Title against the King of *Scots*, did all they could to encourage the Prosecution of the Puritans. In K. *James's* time they that were for the Popish Matches and Arbitrary Power, took the same Methods. In K. *Charles* the 1st's time, they that were for advancing the Prerogative above all Law, and for bringing in the *Laudean* or *Cassandrian* Popery, trod in the same steps. In K. *Charles* the 2^d's time, they that were for the Popish Successor, and making the King absolute, pursu'd the same Measures, and by multiplying the Penal Laws against Dissenters, brought the Kingdom into strange Convulsions, encourag'd the Popish Plot, baffled the Discovery, and blunted the Prosecution of it, turn'd it upon the Dissenters and moderate Church-men, cut the Throats of some of the best Protestants in *England* contrary to all Law, and at last brought the Popish Plot to its designed effect. They settl'd their Popish King upon the Throne, where he might have continu'd till the Day of his Death, had he not made too much haste to destroy the Church which set him up; but having fail'd of his Promise to them, tho he mounted the Throne with an assurance *that he would never be worse than his Word*, he was oblig'd to quit his Throne, and the Nation set his Daughters upon it one after the other, which they might have done as well before, and have sav'd that Reputation, Blood and Treasure, which their not doing so, has cost us since that time; and God knows how much more it may. Our Author, it's true, calls these New Politicks; but in so doing he discovers his Ignorance of our History and Constitution. By turning over a few Leaves of our Histories and Statute-Books, he may be satisfy'd that it is no new thing in this Nation for the Succession of the Crown to be regulated by Act of Parliament, so as it might best preserve our Religion and Liberty: and if he look into 13 *Eliz.* Cap. 1. he will find they incur the Guilt of a *Premunire*, who affirm that the Laws and Statutes do not bind the Right of the Crown, and the Descent, Limitation, Inheritance and Governace thereof; and perhaps it may prove something more than a Moot Point, whether his Scribbling against the Act of Settlement upon the Family of *Hanover*, does not bring him within the reach of that Statute.

I shall now touch a little upon the chief Arguments this Author and others of the same stamp make use of to persuade a Repeal of the Act of Toleration: and these are, that the Dissenters are Hypocrites, because of their Occasional Conformity; that they have always us'd the Church of
England.

England ill when in Power ; and their Brethren in *Scotland* have abolish'd Episcopacy there, and treated the Bishops and their Clergy with unheard-of Cruelty ; that the Principles of the Dissenters will not bear them out in suffering upon those Points ; and that bearing with them any longer is a Cruelty to our selves and our Posterity ; and that since they own the Church of *England* to be a true Church, and conform to be Mayors and Sheriffs, they will much sooner conform than be hang'd or otherwise severely treated.

That Hypocrites are one of the worst sorts of Men I shall readily allow ; but that those Dissenters who take the Sacramental Test to qualify themselves for serving their Country, must therefore be such, I think is hard to prove. The Act of the Test, if we may believe the Title and Preamble, was principally design'd to keep *Papists* from Places of Power and Trust. The late Earl of *Shafesbury*, who is generally thought to have had the chief hand in contriving that Act, was known to be no Enemy to the Dissenters ; and it was as well known that his principal Design in that Act was against the Duke of *York* and his *Papists*. Then since neither the Contrivers of the Act, nor the Act it self does require that piece of Conformity as a Test, that the Compliers should own themselves to approve of every or any thing insisted upon by the Church of *England*, as a Qualification to entitle themselves to be Members of that Church, in contradistinction or opposition to Protestants of all other Denominations, but only as a publick Declaration that they are not *Papists* ; Where's the Hypocrisy in Dissenters to do this ? I am afraid, if the matter be duly canvass'd, that the Hypocrisy will be found to be chargeable elsewhere, and that the Fraud, if any there be, must be plac'd to the account of those who stretch the Act beyond its natural Meaning, and the Design of the Contrivers : Yet this has been no new thing amongst those of the High-Church, who turn the edg of the Laws that were design'd against *Papists* upon Protestant Dissenters.

Then tho they own the Church of *England* to be a true Church, and their Religion to be one and the same with their own, that therefore they must be Hypocrites in not keeping constant Communion with that Church, and complying with every thing that she requires, is a meer Fallacy and downright Sophism. The Truth of this will appear thus. There were some Churches or Societies of Christians in the times of the Apostles, who would needs join the Ceremonies of the *Jews* with the Worship of the Christians, and there were others who were for building Hay and Stubble upon the solid Foundation of Christian Doctrine, 1 Cor. 3. 12. The Apostles had Occasional Communion with both of these ; but neither approv'd the Ceremonies of the one, nor the Stubble of the other : They
come

communicated with them as Christians in general, without approving^r their unwarrantable Additions: But their settled Communion was with those that had neither Ceremonies nor Stubble, and on occasion they declar'd against the use of both. Nay, it's very well known that St. *Paul* fix'd the Charge of Dissimulation, which is a synonymous Word for Hypocrisy, on his Brother St. *Peter* and his Followers, for betraying their Christian Liberty by complying with the Ceremonious *Jews*, and abstaining from the Communion of the *Gentile Christians*, who worship'd their Saviour in Spirit and Truth, without the Legal and Ceremonious Pomp; *Gal.* 2. 11, 12, &c. But to bring this Matter more close to the purpose in hand, it's well enough known that many, nay most of the High-Church Party, hold the Church of *Rome* to be a true Church, and have written and spoke of that Society of Men with a great deal of more Respect and Honour than their Passion would allow them to speak of *Luther* and *Calvin*, as has been hinted already: Yet they would take it as a very false and uncharitable way of arguing, either from Papist or Dissenter, to charge them with Hypocrisy for not continuing in the Communion of that Church, and for making a Separation from her. When they answer this, then we shall answer the other; and in the meantime, that they may see I don't slander them, their *Antesignanus*, *Laud*, in his Conference with *Fisher*, p. 36. says that the Church of *Rome* doth still retain all things necessary to Salvation, and has every thing that is needful to the Essence of a Church. Many such Passages might be instanc'd from *Heylin*, *Potter*, *Montague*, and other High-flyers; so that here's *Argumentum ad Hominem* for them. Then since it is evident that Puritanical *Hooper* laid down his Life for his Religion as well as Ceremonious *Ridley*, and that Dissenters have suffer'd as much and as cheerfully for their Opposition to Bishops and Ceremonies as Churchmen have done in defence of 'em, tho' no wise Man of either Party will say, that Conformity or Nonconformity in those Matters is essential to Christianity; It's uncharitable in either of the Parties to charge the other with Hypocrisy in those Matters: The Apostle's Rule in such cases is, that every Man should be fully persuaded in his own Mind, and not act with a doubting Conscience, and that there should be a mutual Forbearance, and no Imposition. There's not one Word in the Sacred Text which impowers Episcopal Men or Presbyterians to decree Rites and Ceremonies, and to impose them, or any other thing which our Saviour has not appointed, as Terms of Communion upon Christian Societies or particular Persons; and till Churchmen of all sorts be cur'd of this imposing Humour, we shall never see any thing like Primitive Christianity. Experience and Matter of Fact has convinc'd the World that both Parties have had Sufferers for their Opinion, tho' it must be own'd

that the Instances are much more numerous on the Dissenting side ; and therefore to urge Death and Banishment against any Party, because of the Occasional Communion of some of their Number, to force them to a constant Communion, is the Voice of a Beaufeu or Incendiary, and not of an *Englishman* or Christian. Suppose the Tide should turn here as it has done in *Scotland*, and that Episcopacy were abolished with us as it is with them, the High-Fliers would look upon it as a *Mahometan* way of Arguing, if the Presbyterians should tell them thus ; Gentlemen, You are a Parcel of Hypocrites, the Clergy of *England* are near 10000, and upon the Restoration of Episcopacy by *Ch. II.* there were only 2000 Noncons ; therefore since 8000 of you were not only Occasional but Constant Communicants with us, tho we abolished Episcopacy and Ceremonies, you shall all be constant Communicants, or be condemned to the Gallies and Gallows. Or suppose they should give it this Turn ; Gentlemen, there were 10000 of you who preached up Passive Obedience, or at least signed the Unlawfulness of resisting the King, or any having Authority under him, upon any Pretence whatsoever ; yet there were not perhaps above 300 of you who did not act a contrary Part, and fell in with the Revolution ; therefore you shall all renounce that Doctrine, and declare her Majesty Queen *Ann* is Queen *de jure* as well as *de facto*, and that no other Person has any Pretensions to the Crown ; otherwise your Preachers shall be hang'd, and those who attend your Sermons shall be banished. How would our High-Fliers like this Treatment ?

Since we are upon the Business of *Scotland*, it's proper to observe that our Author's Argument from the Behaviour of the Presbyterians there, towards the Episcopal Party, is no way conclusive. If the *Scotch* Presbyterians do ill things, must the Church of *England* follow their Example ? Does not the Preamble of the Occasional Bill declare, that Persecution is contrary to her Principles ? then must she abandon those Principles to be reveng'd on the *Scotch* Presbyterians. But as a further Answer, whatever the Author of the *Shortest Way* may do, it's suppos'd, that the Author of the *New Association* has reason to know the Affairs of *Scotland* better, than to impose such Falshoods upon the World ; and they that will turn to the Acts of the *Scotch* Parliament and General Assemblies, will find, that Episcopacy made no part of the Cause of turning out any of the *Scotch* Episcopal Clergy, their fourteen Bishops only excepted, (whose Order they abolish'd, as a Grievance to their Country, and contrary to the Inclinations of their People ;) but either Immorality or Disaffection to the Civil Government was the cause of turning out the Inferior Clergy ; and tho it be true, that many of the Episcopal Clergy there did suffer Indignities from the Mob upon the Revolution, especially

cially such as had been active in bringing Persecution upon the Presbyterians; yet they that will compare the *Scotch* Acts of Parliament in King *Charles* and King *James's* time against the Presbyterians, with those of King *William* against the Episcopal Men, will find that the latter are not required according to the Talion Law; for there's no Act to make it Death for an Episcopal Minister to preach, or for the People to hear him, as there was against the Presbyterians and those who heard them: nor is there any Test to exclude the Episcopal Laity from Places of Power and Trust in *Scotland*, where it's known they have always had a Share in the greatest Posts of the Nation; nor is the Renunciation of Episcopacy, or a new Ordination, impos'd upon any Minister that has a publick Charge. For their Abolition of Episcopacy, and Restoration of Presbytery, they did it as most conducive to the Peace of the Nation, and because it was their ancient Constitution; Reasons altogether Political, of which every Kingdom is the most proper Judge for themselves; and indeed the Impolittick Behaviour of their Bishops, who did all of 'em oppose the Revolution, contributed not a little to their Overthrow.

Would Time and Place allow it, I could easily expose the Author's Inconsistencies and manifest Contradictions; but enough has been said already to shew, that the Design of the Scribler and his Party, is to embroil the Nations in a Civil War, to make way for the *St. Germain's* Pretender: but 'tis hop'd, that since their Intentions are now clearly seen into, there will be found *Englishtmen* and Protestants enough to defeat them. It's particularly the Concern of the moderate Churchmen to make their last Efforts to prevent any new Persecution of the Dissenters, which can have no other Tendency but to obstruct our Trade, to pave the Way for Arbitrary Power, and to raise Divisions among us, which will weaken the Protestant Interest at Home, and expose it to Ruin abroad. It's easy enough to perceive that the drooping *Jacobites* have been inspir'd with new Courage, and are become perfectly impudent, as may be seen by that virulent Libel, call'd the *Poetical Observer*, and other Pamphlets that have been publish'd since the raising of the new Clamour against the Dissenters. They well remember that the same Course was follow'd by Men of the same Principles, and some of them the very same Persons, when the Duke of *York* was brought to the Throne; they are not without Hopes, that the like Causes may have the like Effects, and therefore they cannot conceal their Joy. This has encourag'd them to run with open Mouth upon the Acts of Settlement and the Family of *Hanover*. This emboldens them to blacken the Memory and Administration of the late King *William*, with all the Calumnies that their own Malice and a bad Cause can inspire into them. And they think it their undoubted Right, not only to rail against Dissenters and moderate Churchmen with Impunity, but that they

they ought to be protected in it. It's in the Power however of the latter to avert the threaten'd Danger; and if they will use their Interest to preserve the Dissenters Right of Election for Parliament Men and Magistrates of Cities and Corporations, they may easily baffle the Hopes which some Men have conceiv'd from making Dissenters incapable of being elected: for when none but Churchmen are put upon the Lists, the Dissenters and moderate Churchmen may easily in most parts of the Nation bring in moderate Men, and turn the Tables upon the High-Fliers, tho they had 20 Tests more than they have. This the moderate Churchmen may easily perceive to be their Interest, since any Man may see that there's a Set of Men in the Nation, who would fain be acting the same part over again, which they did in the Reign of King *Charles* and King *James II.* when by the Intrigues of the Court and High-Fliers, the Protestant Subjects were engag'd to worry one another with an unnatural, as well as unaccountable Fury, under the reproachful Names of Tories, Whigs and Trimmers, whilst a *Popish* Successor, and an Arbitrary Power came in like a Flood, and had well nigh swallow'd them all up.

But blessed be God, our Condition is not so dangerous now as 'twas then. We have a Protestant Queen on the Throne, who has again and again declared that she will maintain the Succession in the Protestant Line, as by Law established. We have now an Act of Exclusion of *Popish* Successors, which then could not be had: the Pretender is attainted, and our Religion and Liberties are secur'd by excellent Laws; so that if we cannot under her Majesty's Auspicious Conduct maintain what we have in Possession against all the Intrigues of the *Papists* and High-Fliers to set aside the Acts of Settlement on any pretence whatsoever, we deserve to be accounted the most abject People in the World, and to be stigmatiz'd with this perpetual Brand of Infamy, that *We are a Nation born to Slavery.*

F I N I S.