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SERIOUS

ADVICE

TO THE

DISSENTERS,

To persuade them from

Any ATTEMPT for the REPEALING

OF THE

TEST and CORPORATION ACT,

At this Critical Juncture,

AND

Shew them their real INTEREST.

By one who is their hearty FRIEND,
and wishes them well.

LONDON:

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SERIOUS ADVICE
TO THE
DISSENTERS.

THE Occasion of this Discourse is the *Accounts*, we find in the *Publick News* of the latter End of *August*, and the Beginning of *September* last, in which the *Writers* tell us, *they are informed, that the Dissenters are very busy in several Parts of this Kingdom in Applying to their several Members of Parliament, and in Procuring Hands to Petitions for the Repealing of the Test and Corporation Act.* My Concern for their Welfare makes me address my self to them in this Manner. I heartily wish, that the *Toleration*, which by our Laws they now enjoy, may continue to the End of the World in full Power, Force and Virtue, according as it was at first intended, and that they will make a good Use of it. I believe, that there are thousands in this Nation of such, who are well contented with it, as it is at present. But all are not of the same Temper. I own, that there are some of the *Dissenting Teachers*, who have vindicated the divine Original of the *Sacred Scriptures*, and the fundamental Doctrines of *Christianity*, against the pretended *Deists* and real *Atheists* of the present Age. But their Numbers are few in Comparison of the *Clergy* of the *Church of England*, who have exerted themselves on the same Occasion. I own also, that most of the *Dissenting Clergy* have kept up strictly to the fundamental Doctrines contained in those *Articles* of the *Church of England*, to which they subscribed, that they might enjoy the Benefit of the *Toleration Act*, and that several of them

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have printed excellent Treatises on the Dignity and Offices of *Christ Jesus*, as our *Mediator*, and on Faith in him, as the only Qualification to have an Interest in him, and as only necessary for our *Justification* and *Salvation*, and the Necessity of good Works in their proper Order. And for all these Things they justly deserve to be had in Respect and Esteem by all true *Christians* of all Denominations. But my Concern is, for Fear that some rash, hot headed Persons among them will spoil all their Interest, by their unseasonable Endeavours for the *Repeal* of our present *Laws*. And therefore my Advice to them is, that they would seriously consider, *First*, What Numbers they have in both Houses of *Parliament*, who will espouse their Interest. And, *secondly*, How they can fairly answer, what will probably be objected against their Design; and if they find, that they are defective in either, that then they would make no Attempt at all, but leave every Thing to stand, as it is at this present Time.

As to the first of these, it is not my Advice alone, but the Advice also of *Our blessed Lord and Saviour* in these Words, ⁽²⁾ *Which of you intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and consulteth the cost, whether he hath sufficient to finish it? Lest haply after, he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it, begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build, and is not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, setteth not down first, and consulteth, whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him, that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, whilst the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an embassage, and desireth conditions of peace.* So that the first Thing is, to consult their Interest in both Houses of *Parliament*, and if they are not certain of a Majority in both, let them drop their intended Project, and proceed no farther.

The next Thing to be considered is, what Arguments may be urged by their Opponents against their Design,

(2) *Luke* xiv. 28, 29, 30, 31, 32.

Design, and how they can fairly answer them. And here I am so much their Friend, as to discover to them the whole Strength of their Enemies, as far as I know, and hope that they will take it kindly. I know not how far the opposite Party may run back in searching into these Matters; but Dr. *Heylin* hath given us such an Account of them in *his History of the Presbyterians*, that we may say, ^(b) *If search may be made in the books of the records of our fathers, we shall find in the book of the records, and know, that this people was always a rebellious people, and hurtful unto kings and provinces, and that they have moved sedition within the same of old time, for which cause they always fared the worse in the End.*

I shall therefore only go back to the History of our *Civil Wars* in the last *Century*. And here I find, that some pretended popular Grievances made many People in the Kingdom uneasy. The *Dissenters* knew too well, how to take the Advantage of Fishing in troubled Waters, and therefore they employed *Alexander Henderson* to make *Remonstrances* to *King Charles I.* for an Alteration in our *Church Constitution*, under the specious Pretence of a more pure and spiritual Way of Worship. The *King* condescended so low, as to answer at several Times his Impertinence in a very solid Manner. But when this Party found, that they were baffled in their Arguments, they had Recourse to Arms, as that which they thought would be more effectual, and accordingly they proceeded so far as to behead the *Earl of Strafford* the *King's* Favourite first, *Archbishop Laud* next, and the *King* himself afterward, and so they proceeded to a total Subversion of our *Constitution* both in *Church* and *State*. The *Dissenters* in *England* joined with their *Brethren* in *Scotland*, where the Rebellion first began; and it is not impossible, that what happened then, may not happen at another Time, since it is a Plan already laid down for the same Purpose. The Consequence of this was the Driving *King Charles II.* and his Brother to take Shelter

(b) *Ezra* iv. 6.

Shelter in *France*, which upon the *Restoration* occasioned a strict Union between him and that Nation, inso- much that they joined their Forces together both by Sea and Land, against the *Dutch* to weaken the *Protestant* Interest, and aggrandize the Power of that ambitious and perfidious Nation, and hath been the Cause of all our Misfortunes ever since. Accordingly *King Charles II.* would never hearken to a Bill for the Exclusion of his Brother from the Throne, who upon his Advancement, made such Advances to entail *Po- pery* and *Slavery* upon us, as must have been our utter Ruin, if we had not been almost miraculously deli- vered at the Revolution. So that all our Misfortunes ever since, and what we now dread from the exorbi- tant Power of *France*, is wholly owing to the Artifices of the *Dissenters*, though we may charitably hope, that they did not design it.

Their first Pretence was only for a Liberty of Con- science, but they shewed afterward, that this was what they least intended; for as soon as they had gotten the Power into their own Hands, they turned out all the Orders and Degrees of the *Church of Eng- land*, and seized on all their Revenues, and made a Law to disqualify them from even Teaching a School, or being Tutors in any Gentleman or Nobleman's Family. And as they were not bred up to Labour, and could expect no Charity in common Begging; so the intended Consequence was, that they must all be starved. After this the *Dissenting* Party proceeded to impose upon all Persons an Oath, which they called *The solemn League and Covenant*, in which, after some specious Preambles, they bound themselves in the strongest Terms, which they could invent, to root out and destroy all the Orders and Degrees of the *Church of England* from the highest to the lowest, and never to be reconciled to them again, which they were all obliged to take, even to qualify themselves for the meanest Offices either in *Church* or *State*, mili- tary or civil. The Sufferings of the *Episcopal Clergy*, written in Folio, by *Dr. Walker*, cannot but draw

Tears from the Eyes of all who read it, and make the Ears tingle of all who hear it, and yet the tenth Part is not told us. And we may defy the History of all the *Popish Persecutions* to produce a Parallel in any one Country, or in all the *Popish* Countries in so short a Time. In their printed Pamphlets in those Days, they always declared against a *Toleration* or *Liberty of Conscience*, as *the Limb of Antichrist*, and *the Spawn of the Devil*, and their Actions declared, that they meant, as they said. Perhaps it will be objected, that these are only Expressions of a few private, hot headed Persons, for which the Publick was not accountable. But to shew, that this was their unanimous Sense, I am forced to give this single Instance. *The Assembly of Divines* who met at *Westminster*, were then the Representatives of the whole *Dissenting Clergy*. They made a *Confession of their Faith*, in which they advance the Power of *Church Censures*, and *Excommunication* as high as any. They made a *Directory* for their Worship, to restrain the *Licentiousness* of their own unlearned Teachers, which they knew to be intolerable. They also made two Catechisms called *The Assembly's Shorter* and *larger Catechism*, in which they shewed a sound and solid Judgment in Divinity, and against which I have nothing to object. In short, their eminent Learning caused them to be in the Main of the best Temper, and greatest Moderation among the whole Body of the Clergy. They also made *Annotations on the Old and New Testament*, which in the Main are sound and judicious; and we do not find in any of their Writings, that they gave any Encouragement to *extempore* Prayer, but restrained it as much as they could. However, we may see their Sentiments upon the Point before us in (°) one Expression, which may serve for all, and therefore I shall repeat it at large. They say, that *As God is one Lord; so there is one Faith in him, one Worship, and one Baptism*, Eph. iv. 4, 5, 6. *It is said of the Gods of the Heathens, that they were good Fellows, and that they were content*

with

(°) *The Assembly's Annotations on Exod. xii. 49.*

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with a Shew of Worship, because none at all is due unto them. For they are no gods, which are made with hands, Acts xix. 26. No more or better Gods are they, which are made with Brains, that is, with the vain Fancies and Imaginations of Men. (We all well know what they mean.) But he who is God indeed, will allow of no such Rivalship in his Service. For he requireth (as his Due) the Devotion of all the Heart, with all the Soul, and with all the Mind, Matth. xxii. 37. And therefore he is a jealous God, Exod. xx. 5. And if Men take any Part of that from him, which (when it is whole and intire) is much too little for so great a God, his Jealousy then will be raised up to a wrathful Revenge. Ezra ix. 13, 14. Exod. xx. 5. Toleration then of diverse Religions is impious and dangerous. Impious (especially as some late Libertines have taught) if the most Paganish, Jewish, Turkish and Antichristian Consciences and Ways should be permitted. For so, most horrid Blasphemies against God, and his Son Christ Jesus should be suffered. And dangerous, because thereby the Indignation of the Almighty may be much provoked, many Souls may be seduced to damnable Errors, and the Church and State rent into destructive Factions. It is contrary to Luke xiv. 23. Rev. ii. 20. 1 Cor. i. 10, and iii. 3, 4, 5. Mark iii. 22, to 28. Luke xi. 17. Phil. i. 27, &c. the Epistle of St. Jude, and many other Places of Scripture, which plainly taken together, do clearly evince a negative Conclusion against Toleration of several Religions, where there is a Power in the Church and State to suppress all, but that which is true, and consonant to the Scriptures.

From their avowed Principles let us proceed to their Practices, which run parallel to ^(d) a Story recorded in the Scriptures, That *the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the Inhabitants of Mount Seir utterly to slay and destroy them; and when they had made an end of the Inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to destroy another.* Thus the Dissenters unanimously agreed utterly to destroy the poor Remainder of the Church of England, and when they had gained their Point, they fell together by the Ears among themselves. The Presbyterians turned out all the Independents, The Inde-

(^d) 2 Chron. xx. 23.

Independents rallied their Forces, and when they knew their Strength, they turned out all the *Presbyterians*, and according to their usual *extempore* Method they frequently prayed to *God*, to rot, consume, destroy and damn the opposite Party, whilst both pretended to be guided and directed by the same Spirit, which is not at all improbable.

The *Presbyterians* thus finding themselves utterly disappointed, had no Remedy left, but to join with the *loyal Party* for the Restoration of *King Charles II.* which is the same, as if a Man should endeavour to sink a Ship, in which he and his Enemy were both embarked, that he might have the Satisfaction of their both Perishing together. However they were so far in the Right, as to trust to the Clemency of the *Church of England*, whom they had so long and so grievously provoked, rather than to trust one another. Accordingly *King Charles II.* by a miraculous Providence, which brings Good out of Evil, came to the Throne of his Ancestors without any Effusion of *Christian* Blood, and thereby our happy Constitution was restored both in *Church* and State. I know, that the *Dissenters* are willing to have these Stories stifled and buried in Oblivion; but if they go on with their intended Projects, they may happen to have them revived.

Upon this it was natural to expect, that all the Parts of our Constitution would make such Laws, as they might think sufficient for their common Security; which they did in the *fourteenth Year* of *King Charles II.* in two *Acts of Parliament.* The one is called *The Act of Uniformity*, and the other *An Act against Conventicles*, in which they explained what they meant by *Conventicles*, and what Penalties might be inflicted on such, who did frequent them. And this is commonly called *The Bartholomew Act.*

The *Dissenters* being thus outed from their Church Preferments, set up separate *Meetings* in several Parts of this Kingdom. In their Prayers and Sermons they took an especial Care to avoid all scurrilous, scandalous, and indeed all Manner of Reflections on the

Church of England. Their chief Study and Aim was to preach *Christ crucified*, and the fundamental Doctrines of *Christianity*, by which alone we can be saved. And the Laity (to the immortal Credit of both be it spoken) generally led religious, exemplary and conscientious Lives, infomuch that most People looked upon them to be honest, well meaning, though mistaken Persons, and such who deserved rather to be pitied than punished, and therefore we hear of few or no Prosecutions against any of them, until the latter End of *King Charles II's* Reign.

But a Design being laid to bring in *Popery* in the Reign of his Successor, some few furious and unthinking Persons, were stirred up in several Parts of this Kingdom to put the Laws in Execution against the *Protestant Dissenters*. The Design was deeply laid to set us at Variance among our selves, thereby to serve the Designs of our Enemies, and make us their Tools to devour and ruin one another. However the common Clamours and Outcries against the *Church of England* were revived, that it was a Relict of *Popery*, that our *Liturgy* was only a Part of the *Mass Book*, that the *Sacrament* of the *Lord's Supper* was *Idolatry*, and all her Members were *Popishly* affected, without Taking any Notice of the many Vindications printed on that Occasion, that we had laid aside all the Errors and Superstitions of that Church, that most of the Compilers of our *Liturgy* sealed to the Truth of it with their Blood in *Queen Mary's* Reign, and that the present Members of our *Church* retained the same Sentiments with their Ancestors, as it afterward appeared. But what Fence can be made against the Inventors of Lies and Scandals? And thus our Affairs stood at the Death of *King Charles II.*

When *King James II.* came to the Throne, he resolved to entail *Popery* and *Slavery* upon us, as fast as he could. But notwithstanding all these popular Clamours, his Creatures well knew, that the *Church of England* was the only Bulwark against them, that it was too strong to be attacked by open Force, and

therefore they must endeavour to undermine it. They knew, that our Members wanted neither Zeal nor Arguments to support our Cause, and therefore their only Method must be to let the *Dissenters* loose, like so many Lions or Bears upon us, whilst they were to play the after Game. Accordingly *King James* quickly proclaimed a *Liberty of Conscience* to all the *Dissenters*, not doubting but they would take that Opportunity to act against us without any *Conscience* at all. After this he published a second Declaration to the same Purpose, which was ordered to be read in all Parochial Churches. Very few of the *Episcopal Clergy* (if any) read it. Seven of our *Bishops* petitioned the King against it, in which they declared, that they did it not out of any *Disrespect to the Dissenters, with whom they should willingly come into a proper Temper, whenever that Affair should be debated and settled in Parliament.* For this they were sent to the *Tower*, and afterward arraigned and tried at the *King's Bench Bar in Westminster*, where their Cause was learnedly argued by Counsellors of the *Church of England*, and they were honourably acquitted accordingly; whereas if they had been found guilty, it was expected, that it would have cost them their Honours and Estates, or a perpetual Imprisonment, if not their Lives. In this King's Reign four Members of the University of *Oxford* turn'd *Papists*, and had a Dispensation from him for the same, with an Order that one of them should keep his Headship, and the other three their Fellowships in their respective Colleges. After this, upon the Death of the President of *Magdalen College* in *Oxford*, the King contrary to Law sent a *Mandamus* for the Choosing of a *Popish* Successor, and when it was refused, all the Fellows and Scholars were forcibly turned out, and professed *Papists* were put into their Places; so that our *Liturgy* was laid aside, and the *Mass* daily and publickly used instead of it. And upon the Death of the *Dean of Christ Church* in *Oxford*, the Nomination being in the King, he appointed also a *Popish* Successor, by which Means *Mass* was publickly

celebrated in the College, though not in the Chapel. In short, *Mass Houses* were set up in most Parts of the Kingdom. A Standing-Army was kept to force *Poper*y upon us, and soon after several Regiments of *Irish Papists* were raised, and brought over from *Ireland* for the same Purpose. Thus the Storm fell very heavily upon the *Church of England*, and we were in continual Danger of being massacred for our Religion. But what did the *Dissenters* do all this While? Truly, they, like *Gallio*, seemed to *care for none of these things*, They addressed the King from all Parts of the Kingdom to thank him for his gracious Indulgence. They promised to stand by him with their Lives and Fortunes, and to give their Votes, and use their utmost Interest with his Party to procure such Members of *Parliament*, as should repeal the *Test* and *penal Laws*, which under *God* was the only Security that we had at that Time, to prevent *Poper*y from coming in like an overbearing Flood upon us. And it must be said, that upon all those Occasions, they were true to their Word. And now the Clergy of the *Church of England* exerted themselves in Answering all the *Papist* Books, which were printed at that Time, and to their immortal Honour confuted that Religion with such solid Arguments, as never could, and, never will be answered. Their Writings fill several large Volumes in Folio, and in a small Print, when there were but two Books printed by the *Dissenters* on these Subjects, and both might then be bought for eighteen Pence. But now, though *they* hardly wrought one hour, except to ruin us, they would fain be equal to those, who have born the burden and heat of the day for our common Preservation. Their common Discourse at that Time was, that if they had but the Liberty to worship *God* according to their own Consciences, they should not only be easy, quiet and contented, but also very thankful, and never desire any farther Favour, because they knew they deserved none. They punctually performed their Promise to the *Papists*. But how they have performed their Promises to others, and what Returns

turns they have made for the real Favours, which they have received, will appear from the following History.

When *King William*, our glorious Deliverer, set us free from the Danger of *Poper*y and *Slavery*, the Wind turned about, and the *Dissenters* in *England* well knew, how to turn about with every Wind. They then joined with the *Church Members* in addressing the King from all Parts of the Kingdom, and, I believe, very heartily, as they had good Reason to do. But in *Scotland* Affairs took another Turn: Here they had not the Majority, there they had, and quickly took Care to let the World know it. So that the first Thing, which they did, was to declare, that they would not acknowledge *King William* for their King, unless he would utterly abolish all the Orders and Degrees of the *Church of England*, among them, and put the *Dissenters* at once into the Possession of all their Churches, threatening, that in Case of Refusal, they would chuse another. *King William* knew very well the formidable Power of *France*, and that the Opposing it would admit of no Delay, nor Debates, lest the *Low Countries* should be swallowed up by that devouring Monarch; so that he was reduced to the unhappy Necessity of Granting it, and he granted it accordingly. Upon this they immediately turned them all out, with the same Violence, as they used formerly in all Parts of these Kingdoms, leaving the poor *Clergy* to beg their Bread in *England*, and in other Parts, where they could find it. The Mob was let loose upon them wherever they went. Some they *mocked*, at others they *cast Stones*, others they *beat*, and *sent them all away miserably handled*. Here was another *Tragedy* like the former in *England*. The Consequences of which with some other of their Proceedings will be afterwards mentioned.

As soon as *King William* and *Queen Mary* were settled on the Throne, they took Care to procure an *Act of Parliament* in Favour of the *Protestant Dissenters*, which we call *The Toleration Act*. This was in itself a good and reasonable *Act*, and it is heartily wished

wished, that it was observed according to the true Intent and Meaning of it. But this did not long satisfy the *Dissenters*. They longed for Places of Trust, Honour, Profit and Authority, which was never intended for them, and soon found out a Way to obtain them by an *occasional Conformity* in receiving the *Sacrament* of the *Lord's Supper* kneeling in the *Church* of *England*, which according to their Language is occasional Idolatry. But any Thing for Profit and Honour. They put their Interest into one Side of the Scale, and their Conscience and Religion into the other. And here Interest happens to outweigh Conscience, and ever since Religion seems but a light and vain Thing among them, and never recovered to be, as it was before. Thus they *left their first Love*. And as *Liberty of Conscience* abused made them gross Hypocrites; so it is to be feared, that the *Repealing of the Test and Corporation Acts* will make them downright Atheists.

However their Teachers were not so squeamish in this Case, as it was thought that they would have been. The chief Argument, and that which lay most at Heart, was, If the Congregation could have more Money by Places, they should get more Money by Contributions, and therefore they must encourage them in it. And this seemed to be unanswerable at that Time. But the Event proved contrary to their Expectation. Many of those who received the *Sacrament*, found, that there was nothing so dreadful in our *Liturgy*, and nothing of *Idolatry* in our Celebration of our *Lord's Supper*, as it was represented, and instead of occasional they became constant Conformists. The Preachers seeing that the Hopes of their (°) *Gains* was going off, began to think, that this would never do, *the craft by which they had their wealth, was in danger to be set at nought, they should be despised, and their magnificence should be destroyed,* and now they groaned, *Oh our Christmas Box! our poor Christmas Box!* So that now they must unteach what

(°) *Acts* xix. 25, 27.

what they had taught before, and make that an Abomination, which at first was highly commendable. And the Laity must not in Conscience qualify themselves for Offices, because the Teachers could not in Conscience run the Risque of Losing their Incomes.

Let us now view the Arguments, which they before urged in Vindication of *occasional Conformity*. The first was the Example of *St. Paul* in ^(f) *circumcising Timothy*, and ^(g) *purifying himself in the temple*. But this did not come up to the Purpose. It would have been very material, if they could have proved, that the *Apostles* or any other *Christians* observed the *Jewish Passover* to qualify themselves for any Offices in the *Jewish State*; but unless they had proved this, they proved nothing. The next is what *St. Paul* said of himself ^(h) *I have made myself servant to all, that I might gain the more* (which according to their Interpretation must be, Gaining more Places of Profit and Trust, and Money into their Pockets.) *And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain (from) the Jews, to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain (from) them, who are under the law. To them that are without law, as without law (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ) that I might gain (from) them, that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain (from) the weak. I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means gain some (Money.)* But since the *Apostle* tells us in the next Verse, that *this he did not for Interest, but for the Gospel's sake*, that others also might be partakers thereof, this spoils their Interpretation. To this may be added the Example of *St. Peter*, ⁽ⁱ⁾ *who before that certain came from James, did eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those, which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.* But in this *St. Paul* withstood *St. Peter* to
the

^(f) *Acts* xvi. 3. ^(g) *Acts* xxi. 24, 26. ^(h) *1 Cor.* ix. 14, 20, 21, 22, 23. ⁽ⁱ⁾ *Gal.* ii. 11, 12, 13, 14.

the Face, because he was to be blamed, and said, that he walked not uprightly, and according to the truth of the Gospel; and this spoils the other Interpretation. It would have been more material to have alledged () the Example of Naaman the Syrian, who bowed himself in the house of Rimmon to keep the Place which he had got under his Master; but I do not find, that they insisted upon it.*

These Practices occasioning popular Discontents brought on an *Act* against *occasional Conformity* in *Queen Anne's* Reign, which was most violently opposed by the *Lay Dissenters*, as if their *Great Goddess Diana*, or their *All* was at stake; which shewed, that the *Laity* could easily have been brought to a Compliance, if either the *Pope* from abroad, or their *Teachers* at home (which might have been as well) would have given them a Dispensation.

However the *Act* was passed with the utmost Difficulty, and long Opposition. The *Dissenters* now have another Stratagem. The Succession to the Crown was settled on the illustrious House of *Hanover*; which brought King *George I.* and his Family to it, and I pray God, that his Posterity may continue in it to the End of the World. The *Dissenters* sily and craftily insinuate themselves into the good Opinion of *Baron Bozkmar*, his late Majesty's Embassador in *Great Britain* to *Queen Anne*, and took Care to insinuate also into him, that all the *Church of England* in general were in the Interest of the *Pretender*, and that they were the only Friends to the *Protestant Succession*; and he being deluded took Care to instil the same Notion into his Master. This Proceeding of the *Dissenters* was base, ungrateful, spiteful, scandalous, false, sly, undermining, and malicious. But what will they not do for their *good old Cause*, as they called it. The *Church of England* Members, little suspecting the *Snake in the Grays*, knew nothing of it, and so had no Opportunity to vindicate themselves, and they were condemned as guilty without a Hearing. But the
true

(*) 2 *Kings* v. 18.

true Case was this. The Nation is divided into several Parties. One are *Papists*. These by Principle are against the Government. Another are *Nonjurors*, who may incline the same Way. These are now but few, and these we give up, both of them being none of us. Another Part are of the *Church of England*; and another Part are *Dissenters*. As to the Members of the *Church of England*, they can vie with any other for Loyalty. It was a *Church of England* Parliament, which settled the Succession, as now it is. It is a *Church of England* Parliament which gives Supplies to carry on the War. The whole *English* Army, which fought for our Liberties, are of the same *Church*, very few excepted. If any Members of the *Church of England* are uneasy, they are as far from desiring a *Popish Government*, as they always were, and their Uneasiness is occasioned, because the *Dissenters* will not let us be at quiet, and are still in-croaching upon us, and undermining of us. But it is now come to that Pass, that whoever is uneasy at their Practices, is represented as disaffected to the *Government*, as if they were our *Governors*, or what they aim to be. And we cannot but be uneasy at the Thoughts of it, because we always found, that their *tender Mercies* towards us are *cruel*. Thus (i) *Ziba* by false Suggestions and sly Insinuations, rendered *Mephibosheth* odious to King *David*; but it was not any Zeal to him or his Family, that prompted him to it, but a covetous Desire to get the other's Estate to himself, and he succeeded so far in his Design, as (m) to get Half of what he aimed at, though he could not obtain the Whole. And that was too much, since he deserved rather to be punished than rewarded for his Pains.

Let us now see, what (n) the *Dissenters* have done. I cannot find one Act of Loyalty in *King William* or *Queen Anne's* Reign, but what was common to others,

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or

(1) 2 Sam. xvi. 1, 2, 3, 4. (m) 2 Sam. xix. 24 to 31. (n) *Denique quid verbis opus est? Spectemur agendo. Ovid. Metam. Lib. 13.*

or what they could not avoid, such as Paying of Taxes, &c. and this cannot be reckoned as a Merit. In the latter End of *Queen Anne's* Reign there were strange Advances to lay aside the Succession in the House of *Hanover*, and as most People think, to bring in the *Pretender*. The *Dissenters* were uneasy at them, and so was the *Church of England* too, as much as they. Their Loyalty was only a Pretence, by which they imposed on the late *King* and *Baron Botbmar*. However their Plot took Effect, and they succeeded in a Law to repeal the *Act against Occasional Conformity*. So that it appears, that their Service, such as it was, was not intended for nothing. But though we grant, that the Ministry were then engaged in an ill Design; yet how doth that affect the whole Body? If a Conspiracy was formed against the present *Czarina* of *Muscovy*, must that affect the whole *Greek Church*? If a few *Dissenters* were in a Plot, must the whole Body be blamed? We can only say, Let the Guilty suffer the Law, and let the Innocent be cleared. But to come lower down. When there was a Design of Excising Wine and Tobacco, did they not revile the Government, as much as any others? Did they not shew themselves Men of like Passions with others? And that if any Thing of theirs was touched, they would abuse the Government as much as others? They are very much belied, if this was not the Case in *England*.

And now let us go into *Scotland*. Here we find their Loyalty to *King George I.* in Raising above ten thousand Men under the Command of the *Earl of Marr* in Rebellion against him, until they were routed by the *English* Forces at the Battle of *Dunblain*. This encouraged the *Pretender* to land among them, and we do not find that they raised any Forces to oppose him, nor that one City shut their Gates against him. On the other Hand, he was proclaimed as their King, a rich Crown was made for him, and every Thing prepared for a solemn Coronation, and he was received in the University of *Aberdeen* with
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all the Demonstrations of Joy imaginable, and publick Speeches on that Occasion. And were not the *Dissenters* in *England* wholly neuter? Did they ever address *King George I.* as they did *King James II.* and as in Gratitude they ought to have done, to stand by him with their Lives and Fortunes? They only stood by, and did nothing, that they might see the Event, and join with the strongest Side. So that the Case comes to this at last, The *Scotch Presbyterian Army* fought to bring the *Pretender* in, and the *Church of England Army* drove him out.

Let us next see their Loyalty in *England*. The vile Books printed against Monarchy shew their Temper. We had first *The secret History of the four last Reigns*, viz. *King James I. King Charles I. King Charles II. and King James II.* And all this must be designed to shew, that all Monarchs are alike to them, and that if *King William* would not do, as they would have him, whilst he was alive, they would reproach his Memory, when he was dead, which was the worst, that they could do. To carry this farther we had *Rushworth's Collections of the Proceedings of the Parliament in Oliver's Time*, who was their Clerk. But this being too tedious, and too candid, they must go to *France* for fresh Supplies, and *Rapin's History of England*, must be translated and printed here, as if we had not Historians enough of our own Nation, and we may be sure to find nothing in that Treatise in Favour of the *English Monarchy*. And because all this is too little to do Mischief, the *History of Oldmixon*, a *Dissenter*, must bring up the Rear to the present Times, whose Pen was dipt in Gall instead of Ink, and plainly shewed, what he would be at.

But it may be asked, How doth it appear, that the *Dissenters* had a Hand in all this? I answer, from their former and present, both Practices and Principles. They will be apt to say, that this Book was written by some *Clergyman* of the *Church of England*, but they have only the same Proof of this, as we

have of the other. And they may as well father this Treatise upon a *Dissenter*, as they can father the others upon any Members of the *Church of England*.

But now let us come to the Observation of the *thirtieth Day of January*. If it happens on a Week-Day, they do not preach upon it, or shew any publick Observance of it, neither is it expected, that they should; but it is expected, that they should be silent. On the other Hand they had formerly, and since the *Revolution*, a mock Feast, or Supper on this Day upon a Calve's Head, which was called, *The Calve's Head Club*; so that they had rather turn *Cannibals*, and prey upon their own Species, than not shew their Approbation of the Fact. However, this being too scandalous to be continued, hath been laid aside for several Years. But if the *thirtieth Day of January* happens to be upon a *Sunday*, their *Preachers* are even with us, witness a *Sermon* printed on (°) this Text, *The curse causeless shall not come*, and another on (P) this, *The Jews laid many and grievous complaints against Paul, which they could not prove, while he answered for himself, neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the Temple, nor yet against Cesar have I offended any Thing at all*. Any one may see, that the Words of the Texts lead them to discourse on these Particulars. First, That the Beheading of *King Charles I.* was not contrary to the Laws of the Land. Secondly, That the total Subversion of Monarchy was no Offence to the Royal Dignity. Thirdly, That the total Subversion of Episcopacy and all Orders among us was no Offence to the Church. Fourthly, That the Reproaches cast upon them on this Account are causeless, and not to be valued. These I leave to the Reader to answer. And lastly, If it was an Offence, their Forefathers, and not they were guilty of it. To this I answer, that they might be excused, if they did any Way declare their Abhorrence of the Facts, if they did only say with the *Jews*,

(°) Prov. xxix. 2.

(P) Acts xxv. 7, 8.

Jews, (⁹) *If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets,* it might be sufficient. But as long as they continue to vindicate the Facts by the Methods before mentioned, and their Preachers extenuate their Crimes from their Pulpits, they must excuse us, if we bring them in guilty together with their Ancestors, and say, that *they are witnesses to themselves, that they are the children of them, who killed the prophets,* and only want to *fill up the measure of their fathers.* Several of them have pleaded for the utter Abolishing of the Observation of the thirtieth Day of *January*, because they who were guilty, are dead and gone long since. But if this Argument is of any Force, it will plead more strongly for Abolishing the Observation of the fifth Day of *November*, because that happened above forty Years before the other. Thus the same Argument, which would lessen the Abhorrence of our *Dissentions*, will also lessen our Abhorrence of *Popery*. But I think, that we should continue the Observation of both; because the Men of the same Principles in both Respects continue still among us.

And now let us return to what was mentioned before, and view their Affection to the *Church of England*. When *King George I.* came to the Throne, the *Act* against *Occasional Conformity* was repealed by the false and subtle Insinuations of the *Dissenters* to that King, and their *Teachers* declared the Lawfulness of it. They thought, that by *this Craft* they should gain more Wealth. If the Laity grew rich by this Method, they might enlarge their *Boxes*, whilst the others enlarged their *Barns*, and so it was a comfortable Doctrine to both, and they well knew the Use and Application of it.

However, Things happened contrary to Expectation. Many of their Chief, who conformed occasionally, did afterward conform constantly, and thought it not proper to pay in both Places. Their *Teachers* then tack'd about. They saw, that this would not
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(⁹) Matth. xxiii. 29, 30, 31, 32, 33.

do, and that the very *Thing*, which (as they thought) would prove for their *Wealth*, did prove unto them an *Occasion of Falling*, so that they must preach down, what they preached up before. And now as the *Church of Rome* locks up the *Scriptures* in an unknown *Tongue* from the common *People*; so they must lock up their *Congregations* from *Going to Church* for the same *Reason*, that is, lest they should see their *Errors*. Thus their *Teachers* cry down *Occasional Conformity* for their own *Interest*. Their *Hearers* mind them, when they have no *Place of Profit* in *View*; but when that happens, they cry, *This is a hard Saying, who can bear it?* Religion is become nothing but *Interest*. And why should not the *Hearers* mind their own *Interest* as well as their *Preachers*? And so stands the *Case* at this *Time*.

And now it will be asked, why they did not get the *Test and Corporation Act* repealed, soon after they had repealed the *Act* against *Occasional Conformity*, and when they knew their own *Strength*? To this I answer, That they would have done it, if they could, and attempted it to the uttermost. But their *Friends* in the *House of Commons* considered, that if these were let farther into *Places*, they themselves would have the less *Prospect*, and answered them with *Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you*. The *Lord Barrington*, a professed *Dissenter*, *Sir Charles Wager* and others, whom they depended on, told them, that they had done enough for them at the *Present*, and if they proceeded any farther, it might be apt to put the *Nation* in a *Ferment*. That two large *Steps* would spoil all, and do themselves a *Mischief* at last, and therefore they should oppose it. Thus *Religion* is the grand *Pretence*; but *Self-Interest* is at the *Bottom* of all. And this dropt the *Attempt* for that *Time*.

But since the *Toleration Act* they had another *Artifice*, which was to engage the *Clergy* of the *Church of England* in *Controversy* with them by *Letters* from one to another, and so both were printed. Thus *Dr.*

Bennet, Dr. Welles, Dr. Hole, Mr. Lacey, and others, were engaged against Mr. Shepperd, Mr. Doyley, Mr. Moor, and Mr. England, &c. But the Event was, that the *Dissenters* were utterly baffled. They found, that they had neither good Arguments, nor found Learning enough to maintain their Cause, and so this Attempt, like the *Calve's Head Club*, was laid aside.

Their next Artifice was to abuse the *Toleration Act*, by introducing from thence all Sorts of *Toleration* whatsoever, contrary to the very Design of the *Act*. Thus (1) their *Liberty* is made *an occasion for the flesh*, and (2) a *cloak of maliciousness*, and is intended to bring over all *Dissenters*, all *Jews*, *Turks*, *Infidels*, and *Heriticks*, all *Athists*, *Deists*, and *Freetinkers*, all *Methodists* and *Moravians*, and whatever else can be started up, into their Party, that so, if possible, they may out do us with their Numbers, and ruin us at last. All these will gladly be exempted from all *Laws*, *Pains*, and *Penalties*. They will gladly be united with them upon these Terms. And for this Purpose their universal *Toleration*, farther than the Law allows, is exactly calculated in all their printed Sermons and Discourses on this Subject.

And indeed we have been long pestered with Discourses of this Nature. One would think by them, that the poor *Dissenters* are in a deplorable Condition, and that the *Church of England* was the most persecuting Church in the World. That in every Market Town there was a Rack to torment them, in every City there was a *Smithfield* to burn them, and in every Parish there was a Gallows to hang them. Dr. *Grosvenor*, who is reckon'd to be a Man of the greatest Temper and Moderation among them, in his *Sermon against the Persecutions of the Church of Rome*, brings in the *Kings* and *Bishops* of the *Church of England* as roaring Lions, but he takes no Notice of his own Party in this Nation, because they were always innocent Lambs. He begins with the *Reformation*, and
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(1) Gal. v. 13.

(2) 1 Pet. ii. 16

brings the *Tragedy* down to the *Star Chamber*. He might have gone a little lower, and spoken of THE GREAT REBELLION, and the Consequences of it, which occasioned more Persecutions than all which have happened from all the *Protestants* ever since the Reformation. But he was not willing to defile his own Nest, and so he passed it over with a profound Silence. But what means all this Outcry? Are any of them molested? Is there any Harm done them, or intended, if they can but be quiet? Every Body knows, that the Charge is impudent, false and scandalous, and that there is no Occasion for such Pamphlets, which are only laugh'd at, and spoils the Credit of every Thing else, which they tell us. But here they act like froward Brats, who kick, pinch, scratch, roar, and cry, as if they were murder'd, when no Body hurts them, and the only Reason is, because they cannot have their own Wills in every Thing. They would fain represent all the Members of the *Church of England* as so many mad Dogs, and then set all the Country upon them to worry them, and run them down.

To gain their Ends more effectually, Mr. *Foster* prints two *Volumes of Sermons*. One of them was (1) against *Heresy*, in which he endeavours to prove, that no one ought to be prosecuted for the vilest Opinions, but before one who knows the Heart, or God alone. This was the constant Plea of all *Hereticks* in all Ages. Dr. *Stebbing* engages in the Controversy. The *Dissenters* laugh in their Sleeves and stand on Tiptoe, to see the Event of their *Great Goliath* entering the List, and *defying the armies of the living God*. They now conclude, that if they can but demolish the Authority of the Bishops, they might more readily strike at their Order. Mr. *Foster* managed his Cause with all the Arguments, which could be urged, and never wanted Words to express himself. But he was soon forced to change his Opinions

(1) Vol. I. Sermon on *Titus* iii. 10, 11.

nions (^u) from one to another, as a Bankrupt Debtor runs from House to House for Fear of being caught, and at last gives up the Cause.

And now let us see the Consequences of these Proceedings. The *Dissenters* have no Power nor Authority to suppress these Things, and (as I believe) no Inclination to it. Though the vilest, absurdest, and most monstrous Opinions in the World, and fresh ones every Day are daily started; yet they must go on without Controul. There is no King in their *Israel*, and every Man is at Liberty to do whatever is right; and preach whatever is good in their own Eyes. Indeed, sometimes the Congregation have been so offended with an heretical Preacher, as to withdraw their Subscriptions, and turn him out. This hath happened in some few Places, and to their Credit it may be spoken. But the Examples are so few, the Judges so unfit, and the Artifices of heretical Teachers so many, that the Remedy is not equal to the Disease. Formerly the *Presbyterians* had some Authority, which was lodged in those, that they called *The Assembly of Divines*; but that is all lost long ago: The *Presbyterians* are all turned *Independents*, and their *Teachers* are willing that it shall be so, that they may be absolutely under no Controul nor Subjection. Now an *Independent Church*, or a *divided Unity* is to me a Contradiction. It is the same, as if we should call a Line of Sand a Rope, or a Heap of Stones a regular Building, or that a Body, which is cut in Pieces, and hath no regular Connexion. It is like serving the *God* of Order without any Order at all. And it is like making *Christ* the Head of a Body, all whose Parts are of the same Kind, call them Eyes, Ears, Tongues, Hands or Feet, or any Thing else, what you will. And this is the Condition, to which they are bringing themselves, as fast as they can.

Secondly, The Consequence is as bad in other Ecclesiastical Affairs. The turning Liberty into a general

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(^u) Sed tamen eventus vestra, fortissime, pugnae
Quis fuit? alter abivit violatus vulnere nullo. *Qvid. Metam. lib. 13.*

ral *Licentiousness* hath brought in such a *Licentiousness* of the Press, as was never known, since it first began. We have now the Authority of the sacred *Scriptures* called in Question, the Divinity of *Our Saviour* denied, all the worst of Vices encouraged under *The Fable of the Bees*, the Government of *God* in the Care of the World exposed, the Eternity of Hell Torments exploded, and *God* represented as all Love, Goodness and Mercy without any Regard to his infinite Justice, as if there was no such Thing as a future Judgement, or a future Punishment, but only future Rewards. And all these Things are generally treated with the utmost Sophistry and Ridicule, which the Devil can invent. All these Sorts of Books are greedily bought up by *Atheists, Deists, Arians, Socinians, Freethinkers, Libertines* and others, to confirm them in their Opinions and Heresies, and harden them in their Vices, and then they lend their Books to others, for the same Purpose. The Poison is taken by some, who refuse the Antidote, and by others, who know not where it is, or cannot come at it. The Nation now swarms with such Monsters in every Corner, and even among the politer Sort, who set up to be the greatest Masters of Reason. The Mischief done is inexpressible. Some deny, that *God* takes Notice of what is done in this World, because they wish it was so. Others deny the Authority of the *Scriptures*, because they curb them in their Vices. All this may justly provoke *God* to vindicate the Honour of his *Providence*, his *Son*, and his *sacred Writings*, and so deliver us over for a Time to be scourged by our common Enemies, that we may learn not to blaspheme. And this is the Case, which the *Dissenters* are bringing in upon us by an unbounded *Licentiousness*.

The Relaxing of all *Ecclesiastical Discipline* in the *Church of England* may seem but a small Thing to some, and is wished for by others. If a Person is punished in the *Bishop's Court* for the most notorious Crime, there is such an Outcry, as if all the *Persecutions* of the *Church of Rome* were coming at once up-

on the whole Nation. These popular Clamours artfully raised, and industriously spread have relaxed their Authority; so that they they think it not prudent to put that little, which still remains, in its due Force, for Fear of a popular Odium, and the Consequences of it. From hence springs up such a Parcel of *new Sects*, one of *Henly*, another of the two *Wesleys*, another of *Seagrave*, another of *Whitefield*, and another of the *Moravians*, and any Butcher or Collier, or others of mean Employments may begin a new Sect, in any Place without any Ordination or Licence at all, blasphemously pretending a Call from *God*. They are all divided among themselves, but all united in Conspiring the Ruin of the *Church of England* by their subtil, violent, bitter, and unchristian Practices. And several of these *Sectaries* were bred up and ordained in the *Church of England*. All the *Dissenters* saw this with Approbation enough. They naturally thought, that if we fought with one another, they might have an Opportunity of Running away with the Bone. Afterward followed *Field Preaching*. This was very pleasing to them, and looked upon to be a very good Omen, because it was so before the Civil Wars, when they got all the Power into their own Hands, which they now aim at: However though their Numbers daily increase, and may grow formidable; yet it affects them more than us. These Sects were begun by *Enthusiasm*, *Extempore Prayers*, and *Preaching*. This had not so much Effect upon the *Church of England*, because they were used to another Method; but it caught the *Dissenters* in their own Snare, infomuch that three to one of the *Separatists*, in Comparison of *Church Men*, are gone off to them. So that the Congregations of the *Dissenters* lessen, and their *Teachers* are as much affected with it, as the City Lecturers. And now their *Teachers* begin to wish, that they had never been set up, being very much concerned for their own Incomes. But there is no Remedy. They must go on and prosper according to the *Dissenters* Principles. And this is the un-

happy Condition, to which they have reduced themselves.

And this is the Case also in the State. The Relaxing the Rules of the *Church* hath occasioned the Relaxing of the Laws of the other. Indeed where Vices affect human Interest, the Offenders are often prosecuted and brought to Justice; but when the Glory of *God* is concerned, there is no Care taken to preserve it. The *Magistrates* care for none of these Things, but love to have as little Trouble as possible. The Societies for Reformation of Manners are dissolved, and the very Name of an Informer is become odious. Now Whoredom, Adultery, Drunkenness, and Profaning of the *Lord's Day*, ride triumphant in Despight of the Laws. The detestable Sin of Sodomy, which before was seldom named, and People hardly knew, what it meant, is now grown common. A Man cannot go into the Streets, or scarcely into an Alehouse, but he hears such Oaths and Curses of all Sorts, both old and newly invented, as are enough to make the Ears tingle, and the Heart ache. And this is the Effect of an unbounded *Toleration*.

And in this Case the *Dissenters* have a particular Cause to complain. Before the *Toleration Act* was passed, they had a Shew of Religion at the least; but I believe, that it was then real. But since there hath been a woful Degeneracy among them, which they will not deny. Before, they promised, that they would be contented and thankful; but since they have broken their Words, they have broken in upon Religion, and this will bring them to have no Conscience of their Oaths at last. Before the *Toleration* they seemed to serve their *God*; but since the Abuse of it, they are all intent upon Places of Profit, and how to serve their *Mammon*, though they neglect their other Master. They are become as crafty, subtle and designing as any other Men; so that in this Respect they cannot pretend to any Manner of Difference. Religion is so declined since the *Toleration*, that a sober Man among them could almost wish, that they never had had
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any *Toleration* at all. So that if they get into the Places of Authority, Honour, and Profit, which they aim at, there will be Danger, that it will be much worse, and then in Time they will have no Need of an Act for Liberty of Conscience, because they will act without any Conscience at all

This I hope, may be enough to satisfy the *Dissenters* concerning the Repeal; but perhaps their Enemies, and the Enemies to the Repeal may farther add:

First, That there is a nearer Union between the *Dissenters* in *England* and their Church in *Scotland*, than most People are aware of. We never find that they blame them for Turning out all the Orders and Constitutions of *The Church of England*, and destroying both Root and Branch. On the other Hand, we find the *Scotch Universities* very liberal in Conferring the highest Degrees of Honour on their Brethren the *Teachers* in *England*, and they are as ready to receive them, and as fond of them, as a Child is of a Feather in his Cap; so that we can hardly see three of them together, but one of them is a *Doctor*. All this shews, that they are in perfect Unity one with another. They retain the same Principles, and only wait to put the same Practices in Execution.

Secondly, An Enemy will say, that others are easy in Cases of the like Nature. The *Parliament* hath made a Law, that none shall sit in the House of *Commons*, but such as have Estates in Fee of three hundred Pounds a Year. And can we think, that a Merchant, who is worth ten thousand Pounds, may not be as fit to represent a Trading-City, as one who hath an Estate? But we find no Contention about it. They say, that they have a natural Right, that is, as I apprehend it, every one among them is born a Privy-Counsellor, a Judge, or a Justice of the Peace, or at least a common Counsellor. However natural Rights may be restrained by civil Laws. Every Man hath a natural Right to Liberty, but yet Madmen or Debtors may be confined. Every Man hath a natural Right to his Estate, and yet in many Cases it may be

be forfeited. Every Man hath a natural Right to his Life, and yet Malefactors may be punished with Death. An Heir may be very capable of Managing his Estate at eighteen Years of Age, and yet he is kept out of it until he is one and twenty. And if every Man hath a natural Right to Places; yet many may be kept out, when it is judged, that their Admission will do more Harm than Good. Since the *Toleration* the *Dissenters* have had Funeral Sermons of *Sundays*. This hath forced the *Clergy* of the *Church of England* to take the same Method, instead of Preaching, whilst the Corps was present. This brought Funeral Sermons into Disesteem, insomuch that by a moderate Computation the *Clergy* of the established Church have lost near sixty thousand Pounds a Year. We make no Clamour about it against the *Dissenters*, because in Charity we think, that they did not intend it. But if by any such Accident the *Dissenting Clergy* had lost but the sixtieth Part of such a Sum, it may easily be guessed, what a Roaring and Outcry we should have had of Persecution. And by this we may see the Difference of Tempers.

Thirdly, Others will think, that there is no Occasion for such a Repeal. If they can be *Occasional Conformists*, Why did they make such a Clamour and Outcry against the Act, and were never at Quiet, until by all Means fair or foul, they got it repealed? We know, that they can take it, if they will, and that their Consciences are not too straight laced. The Repeal will be no Benefit, but rather a Misfortune to them. If a Place of Profit or Honour offers, they can as readily take the *Sacrament*, according to the Usage of the *Church of England*, as any other Men. An Enquiry only at *Bristol* will shew, how few did ever refuse it, whenever they had an Opportunity of being Members of the *Common Council*. But if they are chosen to a Place of Trouble or Charge, as to be Sheriffs of the City of *London*, then they have this Fetch, that they have a Scruple of Conscience, they cannot take the *Test*, and so they must be excused from Paying
their

their Fine, which is a Privilege, from which those of the *Church of England* are excluded. But if the *Test* is taken off, it can be of no Advantage to their covetous and ambitious Tempers, but it will be a Disadvantage in the other Case, because it will leave them without Excuse. If they would go into the Army, they might shew the Loyalty, which they so much boast of. They are well versed in Wiles and Stratagems, they know how to sap the Ground from another's Feet, and are the best Underminers in the World. But your humble Servants for that. They love the Places, whereby they can serve themselves, but not those, whereby they can serve the Publick.

Fourthly, Let them consider the great Improbability of bringing their Designs to bear. It is well known, that the *Quakers* not long ago brought in a Bill, for Cramping the Clergy of the *Church of England* in their Tythes. This readily passed the House of *Commons*, and was with great Difficulty rejected in the House of *Lords*. The *Dissenters* of other Persuasions thought from thence, that they had a vast Number of Friends to support them, they readily laid hold on that Opportunity for a Law to repeal the *Test* and *Corporation Acts*, but it was rejected in the House of *Commons* at the first Reading; and there is the utmost Reason to think, that the present Attempt will have the same Fate.

Fifthly, Let them also consider the Case of the poor Clergy of the *Church of England*. The *Quakers* are for Paying no Tythes. The other *Dissenters* are for Paying as little as possible. There is an *Act* of *Parliament* passed, for the more easy Recovery of small Tythes, that it shall be done before the Justices of the Peace, but they have also the Liberty of Applying to the Ecclesiastical Courts, or to the Exchequer, if they think fit. But it is always represented in the most odious and malicious Terms, if they do. Now if this Bill passes, then all the *Dissenters* and *Quakers* are of Course let in to be Justices of the Peace, and so the poor Clergy must be crucified be-

tween two Thieves. The Country Gentlemen of the *Church of England* often avoid, and refuse such Offices. The others covet, and are fond of them. Beside this, if a professed *Papist* will take the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy with this Equivocation, that the Oath doth not tell them, how long they shall observe it, and that they will keep it, until they have an Opportunity to break it, and acknowledge the King as supream, until they can get another; I know not, what will hinder them, or even *Jews*, *Turks* or the vilest of Hereticks from being Justices of the Peace, and then they have an Army of *Jews*, *Romans*, and all others, to pierce the poor *Clergy* to the Heart; and they must sue for their own undoubted Rights before those, who are their professed Enemies, and would take them from them; from which they may pray, *Good Lord*, deliver us. The *Dissenters* are as tenacious of Places of Profit, and Honour as any others, and I know not how they should part with them to such Monsters on this Occasion, but only to unite their Forces, and that what they part with at present, may be abundantly made up to them by another total Revolution. I know, that it will be said, that the *dissenting* Justices do favour the *Clergy*, as much as others. But it may be answered, That they may do this at present, because it is not Time as yet for them to shew themselves in their proper Colours (*). Nature may act against Principles, but yet it will return to that which is natural. I only add, that it was one of *Julian's* Arts, for the Extirpation of *Christianity*, to seize upon the Revenues of the *Clergy*, and this will be a hopeful Step for such a wretched Purpose.

Sixthly, Let them consider, what Security they offer to the *Church of England* in this Case, and the Answer is, None at all. The *Clergy* would be willing to abrogate the *Test* with all their Hearts, if an equivalent Security was offered them. But they must have none. This doth not answer the Design of the Enemy.

(*) *Naturam expellas furcâ licet, usque recurret. Horat.*

Enemy. Their Intention is to pull down her Fences, and ruin all her Bulwarks, that so ^(y) *the wild boar out of the wood may root her out, and the little foxes may pluck off her grapes,* and they may drink of her Wine, until they are drunk, or mad (though they are mad enough already) or at least come in for their Plunder. They were never easy yet, and it cannot be expected, that they ever will be. So that the first Struggle will be to be equal, and the next of Course will be to be uppermost; which it concerns all the Lovers of our Constitution to prevent, and consequently to prevent the first Cause of it.

Seventhly, It should be considered, that if some Persons are to be obliged, and others to be disobliged, then it is but common Prudence to oblige the Majority. And if it is asked, Who are they? The Answer must be against them. The best Way to know this, is to consider, that since the last Act of Parliament for the better Collection of Briefs, there were several of them ordered to be read in the *Dissenting Meetings*, and upon their Return it appeared, that their Numbers put all together throughout all *England* and *Wales* was but as one to six; and if we may guess by their Charity, it was more inconsiderable. But there is no Certainty from that. Their *Teachers* judged, that the more Money was collected for other Uses, the less would come into their own Pockets, and so they read four or five Briefs at one Time, and divided that Day's Collection among them all, that as Charity begins at home, so it might also end there. Let the *Legislature* but consider the greatest Numbers to be obliged, and they may easily know how to resolve the Question, and that the Body of *Dissenters*, when others are disobliged, are not able to chuse one Man to represent them in the House of Commons. They may be very good Tools, but as we do not want them, and have enough of our

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(y) *Psal.* lxxx. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16.

own always; so I suppose, that it will not be thought prudent to buy them at so dear a Price.

Eighthly, Let them consider the ill Consequences of all their former Attempts. First, After the Civil Wars, when they had totally ruined the *Church of England*, they fell to Biting, Persecuting and Devouring one another. This made the disappointed Party join with the rest to bring about the *Restoration*, and with it our antient Constitution both in *Church* and *State*. This caused a severe Law to pass against the *Dissenters* in the fourteenth Year of the Keign of King *Charles I.* which stood unrepealed until the *Toleration Act*.

Secondly, When King *William*, our glorious Deliverer came to the Throne of these Kingdoms, the People of *Scotland* forced him to an unhappy Necessity of altering the Constitution of the *Church* in that Kingdom, which was soon seconded by the *Toleration Act* in *England*. The first of these Proceedings caused the other to be misunderstood, as a Design to alter our *Constitution* here; and the Consequence was, that the King could never get a *Parliament* to his Mind. *Occasional Conformity*, which soon followed, so soured the Electors, that the longer the King lived, the worse they grew. This retarded all the Proceedings in the War against *France*, and forced on the Peace of *Reswick*. This impaired the King's Constitution, almost broke his Heart, and was the greatest Trouble, that he ever met with in his Life.

Thirdly, When King *George I.* came to the Throne, the *Dissenters* insinuated into him by *Baron Bothmar*, that they were his only Friends, and that the *Church of England* were his utter Enemies; or that the *English* were *Scotch*, and the *Scotch* were *English*; or that white was black, and black was white. This brought on the Repealing of the Act against *Occasional Conformity*. This filled the Head of our late gracious King with false Notions and imaginary Fears of the *Pretender*. To prevent the Consequences thereof he made a League offensive and defensive with the late Emperor of *Germany*, upon Condition, that we should
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assist him with all our Forces both by Sea and Land, if he was attack'd by any foreign Enemy; and he should assist us in the same Manner, if any one should endeavour to palm the *Pretender* upon us. This was perfectly right. Soon after this the *Spaniards* set upon the *Emperor* with a large Fleet in the *Mediterranean Sea*. The *Emperor* demands our Succours. Our Fears put him off with many Delays, until he was forced to represent, that the Treaty was broken by us, and he was free from any Obligation. Upon this *Sir George Byng* was sent with the *British Fleet*, which burnt and destroyed those of the *Spaniards*, and rescued the *Emperor*. And better late than never. Upon this the *Spaniards* were angry, and threaten us with an Invasion from the *Pretender*. To prevent this we must tack about, and undo all that we had done before. Thus our late King's Fears occasioned a Signing a Paper with his own Hand to deliver up *Gibraltar* to the *Spaniards*, provided the Parliament did consent to it; and after that, to oblige them farther, he sent *Sir Charles Wager* with the *British Fleet*, to take *Naples* and *Sicily* from the *Emperor*, and give them to *Don Carlos*, Son to the King of *Spain*, which occasion'd all our Misfortunes in *Italy*, distress'd our Friends, and obliged our Enemies; and now we are at War to pull down, what we thus built up, which may cost many Millions of Pounds, before it is accomplished. After this the *French* attack the *Emperor* of *Germany*, and take *Fort Keil*. The *Emperor* sends again for the Performance of our Treaty. We stand off, and do nothing. The *French* enlarge their Conquests. The *Emperor* is distress'd, and forced to make a Peace upon Condition of Giving up the Dukedom of *Lorain* to them. This Dukedom is about an hundred Miles in Length, and the same in Breadth, and is able to raise twenty thousand Men, and therefore it is forty thousand Odds to the Confederate Army at this Time, and the Giving of *Tuscany* instead of it, is no Loss to the *French*, and a poor Equivalent to the *Germans*. As *Lorain* stands

on the *French Side* of the *Rhine*; so if the *Germans* had had it now in their Hands, there would have been an easy Passage over that River at Prince *Charles's* first Approach thither. So that this hath wholly ruined the Operations of the last Campaign, and what the Event of it may be to all *Europe*, God only knows.

Fourthly, Let them consider the Effects of their Proceedings in the City of *London*. Here the *Dissenters* have endeavoured to make an Interest in their several Wards to be chosen Aldermen, when they have had the least Hopes of Success, and one of them applied to the Court of the *King's Bench* to set aside a legal Election, but he was cast. This shews, that there is no Necessity of Repealing the *Test and Corporation Acts* upon their Account. But the Effect is, that they have been always disappointed. This with other Accidents hath united the Livery Men of that great City to assert their antient Privileges in the Election of a *Lord Mayor*. And this hath also united the Electors of *Aldermen* in their several Wards to disappoint their Ambition, and save them the Trouble of being Candidates.

Lastly, Let them think of the Case in *Bristol*. There the Mayor and Common Council have for many Years chosen *Dissenters* to be Members of that great Body. But this hath engaged another Body against them; insomuch that whereas they had before Interest enough to nominate their *Parliament Men*, who were often chosen without Opposition, they have lost all their Interest of this Nature, and are not likely to recover it any more. And thus we see the Consequences of the hot, mad and giddy Effects of the Practices of the *Dissenters*, both in Reference to all *Europe*, to this Nation, and also to themselves.

To this it may be added, that as all these Arguments make such an Application improper at any Time; so more especially at this Time. We are now engaged in a foreign War, and what the Event will

will be, *God* only knows. However, there is a greater Necessity for an Union, and to prevent Fews and Animosities at home. But should these increase by such Mismanagements, the Nation will be weakened, our common Enemy will be encouraged, and they themselves may be ruined also in the common Destruction, which they bring upon others.

And now I suppose, that their own Friends will furnish them with another Argument to persuade them to be quiet, which is the great Probability of their being disappointed. Or if they succeed, it will hardly be possible to hold it long. If they are uneasy, because the Acts are not repealed, and they are repealed, the Members of the *Church of England* will be uneasy, until they have got another. It is not impossible, but that by such Methods they may so distress the Nation, and force them to change the Ministry, and chuse another, which may not be in their Favour. That which hath often happened, may happen again, and then they may repent of their Folly, when it is too late, and say, ⁽²⁾ *Who would have thought it?* When the *French King* sent his Armies into *Germany*, he little expected, that the *English* Forces would have came on the other Side of the *Rhine*. The *Dissenters* say, Let the *Church of England* be quiet. And we say, Let them but Practise their own Doctrine, and then every Thing will be quiet. We only desire to keep our own Ground. We envy them none of their Privileges, nor desire, nor ever petitioned to take one from them. We are not willing, that our Bulwarks should be undermined, and blown up. We only stand on the Defensive, and they are the Aggressors. We ⁽²⁾ *labour for peace, but when we speak to them thereof, they make themselves ready to battle.* But if notwithstanding all, which hath been said, they will still go on in this perverse Humour, if nothing less than what they aim at, will satisfy them, and if they make Disturbances und Distractions in the Nation, especially at this critical Juncture,

(2) Insipientis est dicere, non putâram. (2) *Psal.* cxx. 5, 6, 7.

Juncture, they cannot but be look'd upon as the worst Enemies, which the Government hath, and may at last be treated accordingly. If they are baffled in open War, they are not sure, where the Conqueror will stop, or that they may not be in Danger to lose not only the Benefit of *Occasional Conformity*, but even of the *Toleration Act*. So that the most friendly Advice which can be given them, is to be easy, quiet and contented, and not push on Matters to the last Extremity. The *Church of England* daily prays to God for our gracious Sovereign Lord King George, that God would strengthen him, that he may vanquish, and overcome all his Enemies. Let them not prove the greatest Enemies, which he hath in the Kingdom. For God may at last hear our Prayers. We daily pray, that our unhappy Divisions may not disappoint the Designs of our gracious King, nor bring down God's Judgments upon us. They take Methods to foment, and increase our unhappy Divisions, be the Consequence what it will. And certainly, as God doth not require these things at their hands; so neither can it be expected, that the King will give them any Thanks for their Pains.

Besides, there is no Occasion for all this Bustle. There are not Places enough for the Members of the *Church of England*; so that what they propose, as an Advantage to themselves, will be a Damage to others. And as to their Usefulness to the State, let it only be put in its due Light. Suppose a Place of considerable Profit is to be disposed of, and there are ten Candidates for it, and that eight of them may be of the *Church of England*, and two of them may be *Dissenters*; it is very probable, that each of these may be as useful to the State as the other. So that the Taking in of one useful Member is only the Keeping out of the other, and this is no Advantage to the Publick. The Members of the *Church of England* will be as tenacious of their own Privileges, as the others are solicitous to take them away. The Taking in of a Member of the *Church of England* is

but as it is used to be, and then every Thing is quiet; but the Taking in of a *Dissenter* will increase the Feuds and Animofities, and difoblige the far greateft Part of the Nation, which will prevent their Ufeulnefs. And this Confideration may turn the Scale in fuch a Cafe. So that let the *Dissenters* have Patience to ftay, till they are wanted, and then they will be fent for without any more to do.

And now, I fuppofe, that it will be objected, that there is no Need of all this, for the *Dissenters* have not ftirred at all, and we are not to believe all that is faid in the *News Papers*. To this I anfwer, that I heartily wifh, that there was no Need of fuch a Treatife as this. But what if there is Need? We have a publick Alarm to be upon our Guard, and this can do no Hurt. But if we will not fence againft approaching Dangers, we may be ^(b) like the People of *Laiſh*, *carelefs and ſecure*, until the Chidren of *Dan* comes, and deſtroys us all.

I hope, that the *Dissenters* will not reckon me to be ^(c) their *Enemy* *becauſe I have told them the truth*. I have kept back nothing from them, which is profitable for them to know. I have diſcovered to them the Strength of their Opponents, as far as I know, or have heard. And if I am reputed as a Traitor to the *Church of England*, I am contented to bear the Reproach for their Sakes.

I ſhall now conclude with the beſt Advice, which I can give to the *Presbyterians* and the *Independents* in this Kingdom, which is this. Let them conſider ſeriouſly, how they can anfwer theſe Arguments, which their Enemies will be apt to plead againſt them in this Cauſe. And if they cannot do this, let them make a publick Declaration, that they deſire no Alteration in our Laws, and are contented with thoſe Privileges which they now enjoy. This is the ready Way to make the Nation quiet and eaſy, and heartily and unanimoſly join together againſt the common Enemy. This is the ready Way to be
blessed

(b) Judg. xviii. 7, 28, and the whole Chapter. (c) Gal. iv. 16.

blessed with a firm, and a lasting Peace. And when this is obtained, let them be willing to have a perfect Union with the *Church of England*, that so we may be *one Fold under the great Shepherd of our souls*. The *Church of England* will gladly receive them with open Arms, like so many *lost Sheep*, which were gone astray so long. The *Convocation* would be ready to unite with them. They were never in a better Temper for such a Purpose, than they are now, and are likely to continue so, as appears in the frequent, and late Choice of their *Prolocutors*. The *Bishops, Deans, Archdeacons, &c.* who are Members thereof, and were chosen under the present Ministry, are Men of Candour and Moderation, and I suppose, that all the rest will shew themselves of the same Temper. If it pleases God to bless us with a firm and a lasting Peace, I suppose, that there will be no Difficulty to get an *Act of Parliament* for their *Teachers* to choose *Convocation* Men to represent them, as many, or in what Manner they shall think fit. These Affairs may then be calmly debated and settled. And if they will agree to *Episcopacy*, and a *Form of Prayer* in general, I doubt not, but that the *Church Convocation* would readily agree, to abolish several Ceremonies, which they dislike, and leave others at Discretion, which would be the same Thing to them. And in such a Case, if they only agreed to subscribe again to the same *Articles*, to which they have subscribed already, their *Teachers* might keep the very same Congregations, and in the same Places, which they now enjoy; they might be admitted into the *Church of England* without Re-ordination; they might be qualified for any Manner of Preferments in the *Church*, which they could obtain; and they might have the Liberty of Marrying all such, who should come to them for that Purpose, and of Keeping a Register of Marriages, Births or Christnings and Burials, which should be as authentick as the others. These would be great Advantages to their *Teachers*. On the other Hand the Hearers would be qualified for all Manner of Places, if they did only receive the *Lord's Supper* from their own *Teachers*, as they usually do, and an *Act* against *Occasional Conformity* would be to their Advantage. In such a Case neither they nor we should have any Thing to fear from those other little, insignificant Sects, which are among us. We might have such Laws, which would more effectually unite us. We might join together in Corroborating the present Laws, and Procuring others for the Suppressing of Heresies, and all Manner of Vice and Profaneness among us. This might make us a holy, religious and united People, and cause God to give us his Blessing for our mutual Happiness, both in this World and the other.

And now, I suppose, it is evident, that I wish better for them, than most of them do wish for themselves. I pray God to direct them for the best. But if they will not hearken to such Advice as this, it is evident, that they do not desire Peace, but flatter themselves with Hopes, that a Time will come, when by their united Forces with *Scotland*, from whence they have sixteen Members to sit in the *House of Lords*, and five and forty to sit in the *House of Commons*, they may at last overturn our whole Constitution in the *Church*, as their united Forces have done already, and which it concerns all, who desire the Peace of this Nation, to endeavour to prevent.



