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**An historical  
and critical  
account of  
Hugh Peters**

**William Harris**



AN  
HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL  
ACCOUNT  
OF  
HUGH PETERS.

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HUGH PETERS (*a*) born (*a*) Chief-ly extracted from a dying Father's last Legacy to an only Child; or Mr. *Hugh Peters's* Advice to his Daughter. *London.* 1660, 12mo.

in the Year 1599, was the Son of considerable Parents, of *Foy* in *Cornwall*. His Father was a Merchant; his Mother of the ancient Family of the *Treffys* [*A*] of *Place* in that Town. He was sent to *Cambridge* at fourteen Years of Age; where being plac'd in *Trinity* College, he took the Degree of Batchelor of Arts in 1616, and of

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[*A*] *The ancient Family of the Treffys, of Place.*] Thus the Name is spelt in *Peters's last Legacy*: But the same Family was lately, if it is not now in Being, in the *same House*, whose Name is always, I think, spelled *Treffry*. However, from hence it is very apparent, that *Peters's* Parentage, by the Mother, was

Master in 1622. He was licensed by Dr. *Mountain*, Bishop of *London*, and preached at *Sepulchre's* with great Success. [B] Meeting with some Trouble on the Account of his Non-

very considerable. For the Antiquity of the Family is known to most; nor does it yield in Gentility to any of the *Cornish*; which is no mean Character in the Eyes of those who value themselves on Birth and Descent.

[B.] *Preached at Sepulchre's with great Success.* His Account of his coming to *Sepulchre's*, and the Success that he met with, will let us see something of the Man. (a) 'To *Sepulchre's* I was brought by a very strange Providence; for preaching before at another Place, and a young Man receiving some Good, would not be satisfied, but I must preach at *Sepulchre's*, once monthly, for the Good of his Friends. In which he got his End, (if I might not shew Vanity) and he allowed thirty Pounds *per Ann.* to that Lecture; but his Person unknown to me. He was a Chandler, and died a good Man, and Member of Parliament. At this Lecture the Resort grew so great, that it contracted Envy and Anger; though I believe above a hundred every Week were persuaded from Sin to Christ: There were six or seven thousand Hearers, and the Circumstances fit for such good Work.'——Great Success this! and what few Preachers are blessed with. But some, I know, would attribute this to Enthusiasm, which is very contagious, and produces surprising, though not lasting Effects. However this be, it is no Wonder Envy and Anger were contracted by it. For Church Governors are wont to dislike popular Preachers, especially when they set themselves to teach in a Manner different from them.——I will only remark further, that *Peters* was as great a Converter as our modern Methodists.

(a) *Peters's*  
Legacy, p.  
101.

conformity, [C] he went to *Holland*, where

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[C] *Trouble on the Account of his Nonconformity.* Never was there any Thing in the World more inconsistent with *Christianity* or *good Policy* than Persecution for Conscience Sake. Yet such was the madness of the Prelates, during the Reigns of the *Stuarts*, as to harrass and distress men most cruelly, merely on account of Nonconformity to *Ecclesiastical Ceremonies*. *Laud* was an arch Tyrant this Way, as is known to all acquainted with our Histories; nor were *Wren* and *others* much inferior to him. The very Spirit of *Tyranny* actuated their Breasts, and made them feared and loathed whilst living, caused them to be abhorred since dead, and will render them infamous throughout all Generations. I can add nothing to what *Locke* and *Bayle* have said on the Reasonableness and Equity of *Toleration*: To *them* I will refer those, who have any Doubts about it. Only as to the popular Objections of its being inconsistent with the Good of the State, and the Wars and Tumults occasioned by it, I will beg Leave to observe, that it is evident to a Demonstration, that those Communities are more happy in which the greatest Number of Sects abound. *Holland*, the *free Cities of Germany*, and *England*, since the Revolution, prove the Truth of my Assertion. And I will venture, without pretending to the Spirit of Prophecy, to affirm, that, whenever the *Sects* in *England* shall cease, Learning and Liberty will be no more amongst us. So that, instead of suppressing, we ought to wish their Increase. For they are Curbs to the *State Clergy*, excite a Spirit of Emulation, and occasion a Decency and Regularity of Behaviour among them, which they would, probably, be otherwise Strangers to.

And for Civil Wars about Religion; they are so far from arising from toleration, that for the most Part, they are the effect of the Prince's Imprudence. ' He ' must needs (says an indisputable Judge) have unsea-

he was five or six Years [CC]; from whence he removed to *New-England*, and, after residing there seven Years, was sent into *England* by that Colony, to mediate for Ease in Customs and Excise. The Civil War being then on Foot, he went into *Ireland*, and upon his Return, was entertained by the Earl of *Warwick*, Sir *Thomas Fairfax*, and *Oliver Cromwell*,

(a) *Anti-Machiavel*  
*Eng. Trav.*  
 p. 328, Edit.  
 1741.

‘sonably favoured one Sect, at the Expence of another:  
 ‘He must either have too much promoted, or too much  
 ‘discouraged the public Exercise of certain Forms of  
 ‘Worship: He must have added Weight to Party-  
 ‘quarrels, which are only transient Sparks of Fire,  
 ‘when the Sovereign does not interfere, but become  
 ‘Conflagrations when he foments them. To maintain  
 ‘the Civil Government with Vigour, to grant every  
 ‘Man a Liberty of Conscience, to act always like a  
 ‘King, and never to put on the Priest, is the sure  
 ‘Means of preserving a State from those Storms and  
 ‘Hurricanes which the dogmatical Spirit of Divines  
 ‘is continually labouring to conjure up.’ (a) Had  
*Charles the First* had the Wisdom and Prudence of this  
 great Writer, he never had plunged his Kingdoms into  
 the miseries of a Civil War; nor by hearkening to his  
 Chaplains, refused Terms which would have prevented  
 his unhappy Catastrophe.

[CC] *Where he was five or six Years.*] It seems that he behaved himself so well, during his stay in *Holland*, as to procure great Interest and Reputation in that Country; for, being afterwards in *Ireland*, and seeing the great Distress of the poor Protestants, that had been plundered by the *Irish* Rebels, he went into *Holland*, and procured about thirty-thousand Pounds to be sent from thence into *Ireland* for their Relief. *Ludlow’s Memoirs*, Vol. III. p. 75.

afterwards Protector [D]. He was much valued by the Parliament, and improved his Interest with them in the behalf of the unfortunate. [E] He was very zealous and active

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[D] *Entertained by the Earl of Warwick, Sir Thomas Fairfax, and Oliver Cromwell.*] Mr. *Whitlock* shall be my Voucher for this. (a) Mr. *Peters*, says he, gave a large Relation to the Commons, of all the Business of *Lyme*, where he was with the Earl of *Warwick*. Again, (b) Mr. *Peters*, who brought up Letters from Sir *Thomas Fairfax*, was called into the House, and made a large Relation of the particular Passages in the Taking of *Bridgwater*. And (c) Mr. *Peters* was called into the House, and gave them a particular Account of the Siege of *Bristol*;—and he pressed the Desire of Sir *Thomas Fairfax* to have Recruits sent him.—(d) Letters brought by Mr. *Peters*, from Lieutenant-General *Cromwell*, concerning the taking *Winchester* Castle; after which he was called in, and gave a particular Relation of it.—(e) He came from the Army to the House, and made them a Narration of the Storming and Taking of *Dartmouth*, and of the Valour, Unity, and Affection of the Army, and presented several Letters, Papers, Crucifixes, and other Popish Things taken in the Town.—It is plain from these Quotations, that *Peters* must have been in Favour with the Generals, and that he must have made some considerable Figure in the Transactions of those Times. It is not improbable that the Distinction with which he was treated by them, attached him so firmly to their Interest, that in the End it cost him his Life.

[E] *Improved his Interest with them in the behalf of the unfortunate.*] “At his Trial he averred he had a Certificate under the Marchioness of *Worcester’s* Hand beginning with these Words: *I do here testify, that in all the Sufferings of my Husband, Mr. Peters was my great Friend.* And, added he, I have here a Seal

(a) *Whitlock’s Memorials*, p. 92, Lond. 1732, Folio.

(b) *Ibid.* p. 163.

(c) *Ibid.* p. 171.

(d) *Ibid.* p. 175.

(e) *Ibid.* p. 189.



in their Cause, and had Presents made him, and an Estate given him by them [F].

(a) Exact and impartial Account of the Trial of the Regicides. Lond. 4to. 1660. p. 173. (and then produced it) that the Earl of *Norwich* gave me to keep for his Sake, for saving his Life, which I will keep as long as I live (a)." And how great the Opinion was of his Interests with the Persons in Power, we find from the following Words in a Letter addressed to *Secretary Nicholas*, March 8, 1648. Mr. *Peters* presenting Yesterday *Hamilton's* Petition to the Speaker,

(b) *Ormond's* Papers, published by *Carte*, Vol. 1. p. 233. Lond. 1739. made many believe he at last would escape (b). Indeed, here he was unsuccessful: but his good Nature, and Readiness to oblige, were manifested, and one would have thought should have merited some Return to him when in Distress.

[F] *Had Presents made him, and an Estate given him by them.*] We find in *Whitlock*, that he had 100 Pounds given him, when he brought the News of taking *Bridgwater*; 50 Pounds, when he brought Letters from *Cromwell* concerning the taking *Winchester* Castle; that there was an Order for 100 Pounds a Year for him and his Heirs; and another Ordonance for 200 Pounds

(c) See the Pages before quoted in Remark [D]. a Year. (c) To all which we may add, the Estate the Parliament gave him, mentioned in the Body of the Article (if it was distinct from the 100 and 200 Pounds per Annum mentioned by *Whitlock*) which was Part of the Lord *Craven's*; and the *Bishop's* Books (*Laud's*, I suppose) valued, as he tells us, at 140 Pounds; and likewise the Pay of a Preacher as he could get it. (d)

(d) *Peters's* Legacy, p. 102, 104, 115. Id. p. 103. These were handsome Rewards, and shew the Parliament to have been no bad Masters. But, notwithstanding, "he says, he lived in Debt, because what he had, others shared in." From hence, Generosity, or Prodigality of Temper, may be inferred: But as it may as well be attributed to the former as to the latter, I know not why we should not consider him rather as laudable than culpable. Indeed, the Clergy have been branded for their Covetousness; though certain it is,

He assisted Mr. *Chaloner* in his last Moments, as he afterwards did Sir *John Hotham*. [G]

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there have been some among them, who have performed as many generous, good natured actions, as any of their ill Willers.

[G] *He assisted Mr. Chaloner and Sir John Hotham.*

Mr. *Chaloner* was (a) executed for what was called *Waller's Plot*, an Account of which is to be found in the Historians of those Times. He owned he *died* justly, and deserved his Punishment. In Compliance with *Peter's* Request, he explained the Part he had had in it, and being desired by him, *Peters* prayed with him (b).

—The Business of Sir *John Hotham* is well known. *Peters* attended him on the (c) Scaffold, and received public Thanks on it from him. I will transcribe Part of his Speech, and likewise of *Peters's*, by his Command, that the Reader may judge something of his Temper and Behaviour. 'I hope,' said Sir *John*, God Almighty 'will forgive me, the Parliament and the Court Martial, 'and all Men that have had any Thing to do with my 'Death. And, Gentlemen, I thank this *worthy* Gentleman (\*) for putting me in Mind of it.'—Then Mr. *Peters* spoke again [he had before mentioned the Desire of Sir *John*, not to have many questions put to him, he having fully discovered his Mind to him and other Ministers: But that he might have Liberty to speak only what he thought fit concerning himself] 'and 'told the Audience, that he had something further to 'commend unto them from Sir *John Hotham*, which 'was, that he had lived in Abundance of Plenty, his 'Estate large, about 2000 Pounds a year at first, and 'that he had gained much to it; that in the Beginning 'of his Days, he was a Soldier in the *Low Countries*, 'and was at the Battle of *Prague*; that at his first 'going out for a Soldier, his Father spoke to him 'to this Effect; *Son! when the Crown of England lies 'at Stake, you will have Fighting enough.* That he

(a) July 5, 1643.

(b) *Rushw. Hist. Collect. Part. III. Vol. II. p. 327, 328.*

*Lond. 1692. Fol.*

(c) Jan. 2, 1644.

(\*) He was hereunto moved by Mr. *Peters*, says *Rushworth.*

He could fight [*H*] as well as pray ; though,

‘ had run through great Hazards and Undertakings ;  
‘ and now coming to this end, desired they would take  
‘ Notice in him, of the Vanity of all Things here below,  
‘ as Wit, Parts, Prowess, Strength, Friends, Honour,  
‘ or what else.’

‘ Then Mr. *Peters* having prayed, and after him Sir  
‘ *John*, they sung the 38th Psalm ; and Sir *John* kneel-  
‘ ing behind the Block, spent above a Quarter of an  
‘ Hour in private Prayer ; after which, lying down,  
(a) Id. p. ‘ the Executioner, at one Blow, did his Office. (a).’  
803, 804.

We see nothing here but great Civility in *Peters*, and the due Discharge of his office. Here is nothing troublesome or impertinent, but as one would wish to have it in like Circumstances. Let the Reader compare the following Account of Sir *John*’s Behaviour with *Rushworth*’s, and judge of the Truth of the Narration, and the justness of the Epithet bestowed on *Peters*.

‘ The poor Man (Sir *John Hotham*) appeared so  
‘ dispirited, that he spoke but few words after he came  
‘ upon the Scaffold, and suffered his *ungodly* Confessor  
‘ *Peters*, to tell the People, that he *had revealed himself*  
‘ to him, and confessed his Offences against the *Parlia-*  
‘ *ment* ; and so he committed his head to the Block.(b)”

(b) *Clarendon*’s History of the grand Rebellion, Vol. II. Part II. p. 622. Oxford 1707.

*Peters*, we see, said nothing like his having confessed his Offences against the *Parliament*. This, therefore, is meer Invention, like too many other Things to be found in this celebrated History : The Charge of Interpolations and Additions against which I am sorry, for the Noble Writer’s sake, to find affirmed to be groundless, by so worthy a Man, and so good a Judge, as Mr. *Birch* (c).—As to the Epithet *Ungodly* conferred on *Peters*, the considerate Reader will judge of it as it deserves.

(c) Life of *Hampden* among the Lives of illustrious Men, A. 78.

[*H*] *Fight as well as Pray.*] Let us hear *Whitlock*.  
“ Mr. *Peters*, at the Beginning of the Troubles in  
“ *Ireland*, led a Brigade against the Rebels, and came

perhaps in his Capacity as a Preacher he was most serviceable to the Cause. [I]

“ off with Honour and Victory (a).” So that we see he knew how to use both Swords, and could *slay* and *kill*, as well as *feed* the *Sheep*, which, in the Opinion of *Baronius*, Christ gave *Peter* Authority to exercise equally, as Occasion might Require, (b). But to be serious. This leading a Brigade against the *Irish* Rebels, ought not to be imputed to *Peters* as a Crime: It being equally as Justifiable as Archbishop *Williams*’s arming in the Civil Wars in *England*, or Dr. *Walker*’s defending *London-Derry*, and fighting at the Battle of the *Boyn* (in which he gloriously lost his Life) in *Ireland*; more especially as the *Irish*, against whom *Peters* fought, were a *Blood-thirsty* Crew, who had committed (c) Acts of Wickedness, hardly to be paralleled even in the Annals of *Rome Papal*. Against such Villains, therefore, it was meritorious to engage, and *Peters* was undeniably Praise-worthy. For there are Times and Seasons when the *Gown* must give Place to Arms, even at those times when our Laws, Liberties, and Religion are endangered by ambitious, bloody, and superstitious Men. And were the *Clergy* in all Countries as much concerned for these Blessings as they ought, they would deserve the Reverence of all Orders of Men.

[I] in his Capacity of a Preacher he was most serviceable to the Cause.] *Whitlock* tells us, that when Sir *Thomas Fairfax* moved for storming *Bridgwater* anew, and it was assented to, the Lord’s Day before, Mr. *Peters*, in his Sermon, encouraged the Soldiers to the Work. And at *Milford Haven*, the Country did unanimously take the Engagement, and Mr. *Peters* opened the Matter to them, and did much encourage them to take it.—He preached also in the Market-place at *Torrington*, and convinced many of their

(a) *Whitlock*,  
P. 426.

(b) *Bedel’s*  
Life, p. 6,  
8vo Lond.  
1685.

(c) See a  
Breviate of  
some of the  
Cruelties,  
Murders, &c.  
committed by  
the *Irish* Po-  
pish Rebels  
upon the Pro-  
testants, Oct.  
23, 1641. In  
*Rushworth*,  
Part III, Vol.  
I. p. 405.

*Whitlock*,  
P. 162.

p. 447.

He was thought to be deeply concerned in the King's Death, and his Name has been treated with much Severity by Reason of it. [K]

Whitloc's,  
p. 194.

Errors in adhering to the *King's party*. A man of this Temper, it is easily seen, must be of great Service to any Party; and seems to deserve the Rewards he received. For in Factions, it is the bold and daring Man, the Man that will spare no Pains, that is to be valued and encouraged; and not the meek, the modest, and moderate one. A Man of Wisdom would not have taken these Employments upon him, nor would a Minister, one should think, who was animated by the meek and merciful Spirit of the Gospel, have set himself from the Pulpit, to encourage the Soldiers to storm a Town, in which his Brethren and Countrymen were besieged. If storming was thought necessary by the Generals, they themselves should have encouraged the Soldiers thereunto: But *Peters*, as a Minister of the Gospel, should have excited them rather to spare the Effusion of human Blood as much as possible, and to have Compassion on the Innocent. *Peters*, however, was not singular in his Conduct. The immortal *Chillingworth*, led away with *Party Spirit*, and forgetting that he was a Minister of the *Prince of Peace*, attended the *King's Army* before *Gloucester*; and "observing that they  
(a) *Mais-  
eau's Life of  
Chilling-  
worth*, p. 280,  
*Lond.* 1725,  
8vo. & *Rush-  
worth*, Part  
3d, Vol. II.  
p. 290.

"wanted Materials, to carry on the Siege, suggested the making of some Engines, after the Manner of the "*Roman Testudines cum pluteis* (a)."—Indeed, the Divines of both Sides too much addicted themselves to their respective Parties; and were too unmindful of the Duties of their Function.

[K] *Deeply concerned in the King's Death, &c.* Every one knows he suffered for this after the Restoration. He had Judgment passed on him as a Traytor, and as such was executed, (b) and his Head afterwards set on a Pole on *London-Bridge*.

(b) *Oct.* 16,  
1660.

He was appointed one of the Triers for the

(a) *Burnet* tells us, 'that he had been outrageous  
' in pressing the King's Death, with the Cruelty and  
' Rudeness of an Inquisitor.'—Dr. *Barwick* says he was  
' upon no slight grounds accused to have been one of  
' the King's Murtherers, though it could not be suffi-  
' ciently proved against him.' (b)

(a) *Hist. of his own Times, Dutch Edit. in 12mo. Vol. I. p. 264.*

And we find in a Satyrical Piece, stiled *Epulæ Thyestæ*, printed 1649, the following Lines:

(b) *Barwick's Life, Eng. Trans. p. 296, Lond. 1724.*

" There's *Peters* the Denyer (nay 'tis said,  
" He that (disguis'd) cut off his Master's Head;)   
" That Godly Pigeon of Apostacy  
" Does buz about his Anti-Monarchy,  
" His Scaffold Doctrines."

One Mr. *Starkey* at his Trial swore, that ' He stiled  
' the King Tyrant and Fool, asserted that he was not  
' fit to be a King, and that the Office was dangerous,  
' chargeable, and useless.'

Trial of the Regicides, p. 159.

It was likewise sworn on his Trial, that in a Sermon, a few Days before the King's Trial, he addressed himself to the Members of the two Houses, in these Terms:

(c) " My Lords and you, Noble Gentlemen,—It is you  
" we chiefly look for Justice from. Do not prefer the  
" great *Barabbas, Murtherer, Tyrant, and Traytor,*  
" before these poor hearts (pointing to the red Coats)  
" and the Army, who are our Saviours."

(c) *Ibid. p. 166.*

In another Sermon before *Cromwell* and *Bradshaw*, he said, " Here is a great Discourse and Talk in the  
" World; What, will ye cut off the Head of a Protes-  
" tant Prince? Turn to your Bibles, and ye shall find  
" it there, *Whosoever sheds Man's Blood, by Man*  
" *shall his blood be shed.*—I see neither King *Charles,*  
" Prince *Charles,* Prince *Rupert,* nor Prince *Mau-*  
" *rice,* nor any of that Rabble excepted out of it."

i. e. King's.

Trial of the Regicides, p. 168.

—These and many other Things, of the like Nature, were sworn against him at his Trial, and notwithstand-

ing his Denial of the most Part of them, caused his Condemnation. So that there seems pretty clear Proof of his Guilt, and sufficient Reason for his Censure.

Let us now hear *Peters* speak for himself: "I had  
 " Access to the King, — he used me civilly; I, in  
 " Requitall, offered my poor Thoughts three Times for  
 " his Safety; I never had Hand in contriving or acting  
 " his Death, as I am scandalized, but the contrary, to  
 (a) *Peters's* " my mean Power." (a) Which, if true, no Wonder  
 Legacy, p. he should think the Act of Indemnity would have  
 102. included him, as well as others, as he declares he did,  
 of which we shall speak more hereafter.

That he was useful and serviceable to the King, during his confinement, there is undeniable Proof. *Whitlock* writes, "that upon a Conference between the  
 " King and Mr. *Hugh Peters*, and the King desiring  
 " one of his own Chaplains might be permitted to come  
 " to him, for his Satisfaction in some Scruples of Con-  
 " science, Dr. *Juxon*, Bishop of *London*, was ordered  
 (b) *Whit-* " to go to his majesty." (b) And Sir *John Denham*,  
 lock, p. 370. " being entrusted by the Queen, to deliver a Message  
 " to his Majesty, who, at that Time, was in the hands  
 " of the Army, by *Hugh Peters's* Assistance, he got  
 (c) *Den-* " Admittance to the King." (c)

These were considerable Services, and could hardly have been expected from a Man, who was *outragious in pressing the King's Death, with the Cruelty and Rudeness of an Inquisitor.*

And as to what was said of his being supposed to be the King's Executioner, one, who was his servant, deposed on his Trial, that he kept his Chamber, being sick, on the Day the King suffered: And no Stress was laid by the King's Council on the Suspicions uttered against him on this Head. So that, in all Reason, Dr. *Barwick* should have forbore saying, "That he was upon no slight Grounds accused to have been one of the King's Murtherers."

Certain it is, he too much fell in with the Times, and, like a true Court Chaplain, applauded and justified what his Masters did, or intended to do; though he

(c) *Den-*  
*ham's* Epist.  
 Dedicat. to  
*Charles II.*  
 of his  
 Poems, 2d  
 Edit 1671.

Ministry. [L] And a Commissioner for amend-

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himself might be far enough from urging them beforehand to do it. He would perhaps have been pleased, if the King and Army had come to an Agreement: But as that did not happen, he stuck close to his Party, and would not leave defending their most iniquitous Behaviour.

Which Conduct is not peculiar to *Peters*. *Charles the First*, at this Day, is spoke of as the best, not only of Men, but of Kings; and the Parliament is said to have acted right in opposing his Tyranny, and likewise in bringing him to the Block, by the staunch Party-men of each side respectively. No wickedness is owned, no Errors are acknowledged on the one Part, nor is there any such Thing to be granted as Wisdom or Honesty on the other.—These are the men that often turn the World upside down, and spirit up Mobs, Tumults, and Seditions, till at length they become quite contemptible, and perhaps undergo the *Fate* allotted to *Folly* and *Villany*.

[L] *One of the Triers for the Ministry.*] These were men appointed by *Cromwell* to try the Abilities of all Entrants into the Ministry, and likewise the Capacity of such others as were presented, or invited to new Places. *Butler*, according to his Manner, has represented their Business in a ludicrous Light, in the following Lines:

“ Whose Business is, by cunning Slight,  
 “ To cast a Figure for Men’s *Light* ;  
 “ To find in Lines of Beard and Face,  
 “ The Physiognomy of *Grace* ;  
 “ And if by the Sound and *Twang* of *Nose*,  
 “ If all be sound within disclose ;  
 “ Free from a Crack or Flaw of Sinning,  
 “ As Men try Pipkins by the Ringing.

*Hudib. Canto III.*

However, jesting a part, it must be owned, the Thing in itself was good enough: But instead of ex-



amining those who came before them in Languages, Divinity, and more especially Morality, Things of the highest Importance, one should think, they used to ask them, *whether they had ever any Experience of a Work of Grace on their hearts?* (a) And according as they could answer hereunto, were they received or rejected. —How much more intelligible would it have been, to have enquired whether they were “*blameless, Husbands of one Wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to Hospitality, apt to teach, not given to Wine, no Strikers, not greedy of filthy Lucre, Patient, not Brawlers, not covetous? Whether they ruled well their own Houses, and had a good Report of them which were without?*” (b) I say, how much more intelligible and important would these Questions have been, yea, how much easier and more certainly determined, than that above mentioned? But it is a very long Time ago, that these were the Qualifications required and expected from Clergymen: For Ages past, Subscription to *doubtful* Articles of Faith, Declarations very ambiguous, or most difficult to be made by understanding Minds, or the *Shibboleth* of the *prevailing* Party in the Church have been the Things required and insisted on. Whence it has come to pass, that so many of our *Divines*, as they are stiled, understand so little of the Scriptures, and that they know and practise so little of pure, genuine Christianity. I would not be thought to reflect on any particular Persons; but hope those, in whose Hands the Government of the Church is lodged, will consider whether they are not much too careless in their Examinations of young Men for Ordinations? Whether very many of them are not unqualified to teach and instruct, through Neglect of having carefully studied the Word of God? And whether their Conversation be not such as is unsuitable to the Character conferred on them?—It is with Uneasiness one is obliged to hint at these Things. But, surely, it is more than Time that they were reformed, and St. *Paul's* Rules were put in Practice.

(a) *How's*  
*Life*, by *Ca-*  
*lamy*, p. 21,  
*Lond.* 1724,  
*8vo.*

(b) 1 *Tim.*  
 iii. 2—7.

ing the Laws, though poorly qualified for it. [M]

A wise, virtuous, prudent Clergy is the Glory and Happiness of a Community, and there cannot be too much Care taken to procure it. (a) But if *Triers* neglect the means of doing this, and admit all who are presented to a Curacy to Orders, if so be they will make Use of the Terms in Vogue, whether they understand them or no, they deserve Censure, and are answerable for all the sad Consequences which flow from Ignorance, Folly, and Vice.

(a) See Hutchinson's Introduction to Moral Philosophy, B. III. Ch. 8, Sect. 1.

[M] *Commissioner for amending the Laws, though poorly qualified for it.*] He as good as owns this in the following Passage: "When I was a *Trier* of others, " I went to hear and gain Experience, rather than to " Judge; when I was called about mending Laws, I rather was there to pray, than to mend Laws: But in all " these I confess, I might as well have been spared." (b)

(b) Peters's Legacy, p. 109.

This is modest and very ingenuous: But such a confession, as few of our Gentlemen concerned in such Matters would choose to make. They frequently boast of the great Share they have in Business; though many of them may well be spared.—Let us confirm the Truth of *Peters's* Confession, by *Whitlock*: "I was often " advised with by some of this Committee, and none " of them was more active in this Business than Mr. " *Hugh Peters* the Minister, who understood little of " the Law, but was very opinionative, and would " frequently mention some Proceedings of Law in " *Holland*, wherein he was altogether mistaken." (c)

(c) *Whitlock*, p. 521.

—The Ignorance and inability of the Man, with regard to these Matters, we see are as plainly described here as in his own Words; though how to reconcile his own Opinionativeness and Activity in it, with his going to the Committee rather to *pray* than to *mend Laws*, I confess, I know not. Perhaps he had forgot the Part he had acted.—This (d) "Committee were to take into " Consideration what Inconveniences were in the Law,

(d) This Committee was appointed Jan. 20, 1651.

“ how the Mischiefs that grow from Delays, the Charge-  
 “ ableness and Irregularities in the Proceedings of the  
 “ Law may be prevented, and the speediest Way to  
 “ prevent the same.” In this Committee with *Peters*  
 were Mr. *Fountain*, Mr. *Rushworth*, and Sir *Anthony*  
*Ashley Cooper*, afterwards Earl of *Shaftsbury*, and  
 Lord High Chancellor; besides many others of Rank  
 and Figure. No great Matters followed from this  
 Committee, by Reason of the Hurry of the Times, and  
 the Opposition which the Lawyers made to it. But the  
 (a) Oct. 25, 1650, *Whit-* Parliament had a little before (a) passed an “ Act that  
*lock*, p. 475. “ all the Books on the Law should be put into *English*,  
 “ and that all Writs, Process, and Returns thereof,  
 “ and all Patents, Commissions, Indictments, Judg-  
 “ ments, Records, and all Rules and Proceedings in  
 “ Courts of Justice, shall be in the *English* Tongue  
 “ only.” This Act or Ordinance (to speak in the  
 Language of the Times of which I am writing) does  
 great honour to the Parliament, and is an argument of  
 their good Sense, and Concern for the Welfare of the  
 People. It is amazing so good a Law should not have  
 been continued by proper Authority after the Restora-  
 tion! But it was a sufficient Reason then to disuse a  
 Thing, though ever so good in itself, that it had been  
 enacted by an usurped Power. Of such fatal Conse-  
 quences are Prejudices! But thanks be unto God! we  
 have seen the Time when this most excellent Ordinance  
 has been again revived, and received the sanction of the  
 whole Legislature.—How much were it to be wished,  
 that a Committee of wise and prudent Persons were  
 once more employed to revise, amend, and abridge our  
 Laws! that we might know ourselves how to act, and  
 not be necessitated to make Use of those, who (we are  
 sensible) live on our Spoils.—This would add greatly to  
 the Glory of our *most excellent Prince*; and would be  
 the best Employment of that Peace, which his *Wisdom*  
 has procured for us. But much is it to be feared, that  
 our adversaries will be too hard for us, and that we  
 shall be obliged, for a Time at least, to submit to their  
 Yoke. But whenever the Spirit of true *Patriotism*

He is accused of great Vices; but whether justly or not, is a Question. [N]

shall generally possess the Breasts of our Senators, I doubt not but that they will apply themselves to our Deliverance in good Earnest and bring it to Perfection (as it was long ago done in *Denmark*, and very lately in *Prussia*) in as much as the Happiness of the Community absolutely depends thereon.

[N] *Accused of great Vices; but whether justly, or not, is a question.*] I will transcribe Dr. *Barwick* at large. (a) "The wild Prophecies uttered by his (*Hugh Peters's*) impure Mouth, were still received by the People with the same Veneration as if they had been Oracles; though he was known to be infamous for more than one kind of Wickedness. A Fact, which *Milton* himself did not dare to deny, when he purposely wrote his Apology, for this very End, to defend even by Name (as far as was possible) the very blackest of the Conspirators, and *Hugh Peters* among the chief of them, who were by Name accused of manifest Impieties by their Adversaries." (a) *Barwick's Life*, p. 155. 156.

—(b) *Burnet* says likewise, "He was a very vicious Man." And (c) *Langbaine* hints something of an Affair that he had with a Butcher's Wife of *Sepulchre's*. *Peters* himself was not insensible of his ill Character amongst the opposite Party, nor of the particular Vice laid to his charge by *Langbaine*: But he terms it *Reproach*, and attributes it to his Zeal in the Cause.—"By my Zeal, it seems, I have exposed myself to all Manner of Reproach: But wish you to know, that (besides your Mother) I have had no Fellowship that Way with any Woman since I knew her, having a godly Wife before also, I bless God." (d) (b.) *Hist. Vol. I. p. 264.* (c) *Dramatic Poets*, p. 339. (d) *Legacy*, p. 106.

A man is not allowed to be a Witness in his own Cause: nor should, I think, his Adversaries Testimony

He was executed shortly after the Restoration ; though doubtless, he had as much Reason to

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be deemed full Proof. One loaden with such an Accusation as *Peters* was, and suffering as a Traytor, when the *Party Spirit* ran high, and Revenge actuated the Breasts of those who bore Rule: For such a one to be traduced, and blackened beyond his Deserts, is no Wonder.—It is indeed hard to prove a Negative; and the concurring Testimony of Writers to *Peters's* bad Character, makes one with difficulty suspend Assent unto it. But if the following Considerations be weighed, I shall not, perhaps, be blamed, for saying it was a Question *whether he was accused justly or not?*

1. The Accusations against him came from known Enemies, those who hated the Cause he was engaged in, and looked on it as detestable. It may easily therefore be supposed, that they were willing to blacken the Actors in it, or at least that they were susceptible of ill Impressions concerning them, and ready to believe any evil Thing they heard of them. This will, if attended to, lessen the Weight of their Evidence considerably, and dispose us to think that they may have misrepresented the Characters of their Opponents. *Barwick*, at first sight, appears an angry partial Writer; *Burnet's* Characters were never thought *too soft*; they were both Enemies to the Republican Party though not equally furious and violent. Add to this, that neither of them, as far as appears, *knew* any thing of *Peters themselves*; and therefore what they write must be considered only as common Fame, than which nothing is more uncertain.

2. The Times in which *Peters* was on the Stage, were far enough from favouring Vice (public Vice, for it is of this *Peters* is accused) in the Ministerial Character. He must be a Novice in the History of those Times, who knows not what a *precise, demure* Kind of Men the Preachers among the *Parliamentarians*

were. They were careful not only of their *Actions*, but likewise of their *Words* and *Looks*; and allowed not themselves in the *innocent* Gaieties and Pleasures of Life. I do not take on me to say, they were as good as they pretended to be. For ought I know, they might be, yea, perhaps, were proud, conceited, censorious, uncharitable, avaritious. But then Drunkenness, Whoredom, Adultery, and Swearing, were things quite out of Vogue among them, nor was it suffered in them. So that how vicious soever their Inclinations might be, they were obliged to conceal them, and keep them from the Eye of the Public. It was this Sobriety of Behaviour, this Strictness of Conversation, joined with their popular Talents in the Pulpit, that created them so much Respect, and caused such a regard to be paid unto their Advice and Direction. The People in a Manner adored them, and were under their Government almost absolutely. So that the leading Men in the House of Commons, and those who, after the King's Death, were in the Administration of Affairs, were obliged to Court them, and profess to admire them. Hence it was, that Men of such Sense as *Pym, Hampden, Holles, Whitlock, Selden, St. John, Cromwell, &c.* sat so many Hours hearing their *long winded* weak Prayers and Preachments; that Men of the greatest Note took it as an Honour to set with the Assembly of Divines, and treated them with so much Deference and Regard. For it was necessary to gain the Preachers in Order to maintain their Credit with the People: Now, certainly, if *Peters* had been a Man so vicious as he is represented, he could have had no influence over the People, nor would he have been treated by the then great Men in the Manner he was. For they must have parted with him even for their own Sakes, unless they would have been looked on as Enemies to Godliness. But *Peters* was caressed by the Great; his Prophecies were received as Oracles by the People; and he was of great Service to *Cromwell*: And therefore he could not surely (at least publickly) *be known to be infamous for more than one Kind of Wickedness*, as

think he should have escaped, as many others.  
[O]

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*Barwick* asserts. In short, *Hypocrisy* was the Characteristic of *Peters's* Age: And,

————— “Hypocritic zeal  
“Allows no Sins, but those it can conceal.” Dryden.

3. *Peters's* Patrons seem to render the Account of his Wickedness very improbable. We have seen that he was entertained by the Earl of *Warwick*, Sir *Thomas Fairfax*, and *Oliver Cromwell*, and that he was much caressed and rewarded by the Parliament. How improbable then is it, that *Peters* should be infamous for Wickedness! His Patrons were never accused of *personal* Vices; they were Men who made high Pretensions to Religion; and the Cause they fought for, they talked of (if they did not think it to be) as the Cause of God. Now, with what Face could they have done this, if their Chaplain, Confident and Tool, had been known to have been a very vicious Man? Or how could they have talked against scandalous Ministers, who employed one most scandalous? In short, how could they reward *Peters* *publickly*, when they always professed great Zeal for Godliness, and were for promoting it to the highest Pitch? Men of their Wisdom can hardly be thought to have acted so inconsistent a Part; nor is there any Thing in their whole Conduct, which would lead one to think they could be guilty of it. From all these Considerations therefore I think it reasonable to make it a Question, whether *Peters* was charged justly with great Vices?

[O] *As much Reason to think he should have escaped, as many others.*] “I thought the Act of *Idemnity* would have included me; but the hard character upon me, excluded me. (a) And no wonder he should think so, if it was true, “that he never had his “Hand in any Man’s Blood, but saved many in Life

(a) *Peters's* Legacy, p. 106.

The Charge against him was for compassing and imagining the Death of the King, by conspiring with *Oliver Cromwell*, at several Times and Places; and procuring the Soldiers to

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“ and Estate. (a) All that was laid to *Peters's* Charge was Words; but Words, it must be owned, unfit to be uttered: Yet if we consider how many greater Offenders than *Peters* escaped capital Punishment, we may possibly think he had hard Measure. *Harry Martyn*, *John Goodwin*, and *John Milton*, spoke of *Charles the First* most reproachfully, and the two latter vindicated his Murther in their Public Writings. As early as 1643, we find *Martin* speaking out plainly, “ That it was better the King and his Children were destroyed, than many;” which Words were then looked on as so high and dangerous, that he was committed by the House to the *Tower*; though shortly after released and re-admitted to his Place in Parliament. (b) He continued still virulent against the King, was one of his Judges, and acted as much as possible against him. *Goodwin* justified the Seclusion of the Members, which was the Prelude to *Charles's* Tragedy; vindicated his Murther, and went into all the Measures of his Masters; and being a Man of ready Wit and great Learning, was of good service to them. And as for *Milton*, there is no one but knows, that he wrote most sharply against King *Charles*, and set forth his Actions in a terribly black light. To take no Notice of his Writings against *Salmasius* and *More*; what could be more cruel against *Charles*, than his *Iconoclastes*! How bitter are his Observations, how cutting his Remarks on his Conduct! How horribly provoking, to point out Sir *Philip Sidney's* *Arcadia* as the Book from whence the “ Prayer in the Time of Captivity,” delivered to Dr. *Juxon*, immediately before his Death, was chiefly taken (c)? One should have thought this an Indignity never to have been forgotten, nor forgiven, especially as it was offered by one who was

(a) Legacy, p. 104. See Remark [E]

(b) *Whitlock*, p. 71.

(c) *Vid. Bayle's Dict. Article Milton's Works, or Toland's Amyntor.*



demand Justice, by preaching divers Sermons to persuade them to take off the King, comparing him to *Barabbas*, &c. To which he pleaded in his own Defence, that the War began before he came into *England*; that since his Arrival, he had endeavoured to promote sound Religion, the Reformation of Learning and

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Secretary to *Cromwell*, and who had spent the best part of his Life in the Service of the *Anti-Royalists*. But yet *Milton* was preserved as to Life and Fortune (happy for the polite Arts he was preserved) and lived in great Esteem among Men of Worth all his Days. *Goodwin* had the same good Fortune; and *Martin* escaped the Fate of many of his fellow Judges; though on his Trial, he behaved no Way abjectly or meanly. All this had the Appearance of Clemency, and *Peters* might reasonably have expected to share in it. But poor Wretch! He had nothing to recommend him, as these had, and therefore, though more innocent, fell without Pity. *Martin*, as it was reported, escaped merely by his Vices (a) *Goodwin* having been a zealous *Arminian*, and a Sower of Division among the Sectaries, on these Accounts had Friends: But what *Milton's* Merit with the Courtiers was, *Burnet* says not. Though, if I am not mistaken, it was with his having saved Sir *William Davenant's* Life formerly, which was the Occasion of the Favour shewn to him. Merit or Interest, in the Eyes of the then Courtiers these had; but *Peters*, though he had saved many a Life and Estate, was forgotten by those whom in their Distress he had served, and given up to the Hangman.—But the sentence passed on him, and much more the Execution of it, will seem very rigorous if we consider that it was only for *Words*; for *Words* uttered in a Time of Confusion, Uproar, and War. I am not Lawyer enough to determine, whether by any Statute then in Force, *Words* were Treason. Lord

(a) *Burnet*,  
Vol. 1. p. 265.

the Law, and Employment of the Poor ; that, for the better Effecting these Things, he had espoused the Interest of the Parliament, in which he had acted without Malice, Avarice, or Ambition ; and that whatever Prejudices or Passions might possess the Minds of Men,

*Strafford (a)*, in his Defence at the Bar of the House of Lords, says expressly, “ *No Statute makes Words* (a) Trial, p. 561. Fol. Lond. 1680. “ *Treason.*” But allowing they were, such a Law must be deemed to have been *hard*, and *unfit* for Execution ; Especially as the Words were spoken in Times of Civil Commotion. For in such Seasons Men say and do, in a Manner, what they list, the Laws are disregarded, and Rank and Character unminded, Contempt is poured on Princes, and the Nobles are had in Derision. These are the natural Consequences of Wars and Tumults ; and Wise Men foresee and expect them. But were all concerned in them to be punished, whole Cities would be turned into Shambles. To overlook and forgive what has been said on such Occasions, is a Part of Wisdom and Prudence, and what has been almost always practised. Never were there greater Liberties taken with Princes, never more dangerous Doctrines inculcated by Preachers, than in *France*, during part of the Reigns of the 3d and 4th *Henry*. “ The College of *Sorbonne*, “ by Common Consent, concluded that the *French* were “ discharged from the Oath of Allegiance to *Henry the Third*, and that they might arm themselves in Opposition to him.” In Consequence of which, the People vented their Rage against him, in Satyrs, Lampoons, Libels, infamous Reports and Calumnies, of which the most moderate were *Tyrant* and *Apostate*. And the Curates refused Absolution to such as owned they could not renounce him *(b)*. And the same *Sorbonists* decreed all those who favoured the Party of *Henry the Fourth* to be in a mortal Sin, and liable to Damnation ; and (b) Maimbourgh's History of the League, translated by Dryden, Oct. 1684. Lond. p. 432 and 437.

yet there was a God who knew these Things to be true.

At the Place of Execution, when Chief Justice *Coke* was cut down and embowelled, *Hugh Peters* was then ordered to be brought

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(a) Ibid.  
p. 805.

such as resisted him, Champions of the Faith, and to be rewarded with a Crown of Martyrdom (a). These Decrees produced terrible effects: and yet, when *Henry the Fourth* had fully established himself on the Throne, I do not remember that he called any of these Doctors to an Account, or that one of them was executed. That wise Prince, undoubtedly, considered the Times, and viewed these Wretches with *Pity* and *Contempt* for being the Tools of cunning artful Men, who veiled their ambitious Designs under the Cloke of Religion.

So that really considering what had passed abroad, and what passed under his own Observation, *Peters* had Reason to think that the *Act of Indemnity would have included him.*—But setting aside all this, I believe all impartial Judges will think he had hard Measure dealt him, when they consider that those who preached up Doctrines in the Pulpit as bad as *Peters's*, and those likewise who, though Guardians of our Laws and Liberties, and sworn to maintain them, delivered Opinions *destructive* of them, even from the Bench: I say, whoever considers the comparatively mild Treatment these Men have met with, will be apt to judge the Punishment of *Peters* very severe. What was the Crime of *Peters*? Was it not the justifying and magnifying the *King's* Death? And is this worse than the Doctrine of *Montague*, *Sibthorp*, and *Manwaring*, which set the King above all Laws, and gave him a Power to do as he list; Is this worse than the Opinion of the Judges in *Charles the First* and *James the Second's* Time, whereby it was given for Law, that the *King might take from his Subjects without Consent of*

that he might see it, and the Executioner came to him, rubbing his bloody Hands, asked him how he liked that Work? He told him he was not at all terrified, and that he might do his worst. And when he was upon the Ladder, he said to the Sheriff, Sir, You have butchered one of the Servants of God before my Eyes, and have forced me to see it, in order to terrify and discourage me; but God has permitted it for my Support and Encouragement.

One of those *Prodigies* of those Times attended *Peters* going to the Gibbet; [*P*] which, as

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*Parliament* and dispense with the *Laws enacted* by it? Far from it. For the depriving the People of their Rights and Liberties, or the arguing for the Expediency and Justice of so doing, is a crime of a higher *Nature* than the *murthering*, or *magnifying* the Murder of the wisest and best Prince under Heaven. The Loss of a good Prince is *greatly* to be *lamented*; but it is a Loss which may be repaired: Whereas the Loss of a Peoples Liberties is seldom or ever to be recovered: And, consequently, the Foe to the *latter* is much more detestable than the Foe to the *former*.—But what was the Punishment of the Justifiers and Magnifiers of the Destruction of the Rights and Liberties of the People? Reprimands at the Bar of one or other of the Houses, Fines, or Imprisonment: Not a Man of them graced the Gallows, though none, perhaps, would better have become it. *Peters*, therefore, suffered more than others, though he had done less to deserve it than others, which we may well suppose was contrary to his Expectation.

[*P*] *One of the Prodigies of those Times attended Peters going to the Gibbet.*] “Amongst the innume-

it may afford some Diversion to the Reader, I shall give an Account of.

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(a) *Parker's*  
Hist. of his  
own Time,  
p. 23. Tran-  
slated by  
*Newlin,*  
*Lond. 1727,*  
8vo.

“ rable Libels which they (the Fanaticks) published  
 “ for two years together, those were most pregnant  
 “ with Sedition, which they published concerning  
 “ Prodigies. Amongst these, all the Prodigies in *Livy*  
 “ were seen every Day: Two Suns; Ships sailing in  
 “ the Air; a bloody Rainbow; it rained Stones; a  
 “ Lamb with two Heads; Cathedral Churches every  
 “ where set on Fire by Lightning; an Ox that spoke;  
 “ a Hen turned into a Cock; a Mule brought forth;  
 “ five beautiful young Men stood by the Regicides  
 “ while they suffered; a very bright star shone round  
 “ their Quarters that were stuck upon the City Gates.  
 “ —A certain Person rejoicing at the Execution of  
 “ *Harrison* the Regicide, was struck with a sudden  
 “ Palsy; another inveighing against *Peters* as he went  
 “ to the Gibbet, was torn and almost killed by his  
 “ own favourite Dog;—with an infinite Number of  
 “ such prodigious Lies (a.)” What ridiculous Tales  
 “ are here! How worthy to be preserved in a work called  
 “ an *History!* The Fanaticks, if they reported these  
 “ Things, undoubtedly reported Lies; though many of  
 “ them, in great simplicity of Heart, believed them.  
 “ However, it is no great Wisdom to relate idle Stories  
 “ to disgrace the Understanding, or impeach the Honesty  
 “ of Parties. For weak, credulous, superstitious Men,  
 “ are to be found on all Sides. The Reader, as he has  
 “ a Right, is welcome to laugh at these Stories. And,  
 “ to contribute to his Mirth, I will add the following  
 “ Relation, of a Child born in *London* with a double  
 “ or divided tongue, which the third Day after it was  
 “ born, cried a *King*, a *King*, and bid them *bring it*  
 “ *to the King.* The Mother of the Child saith, it told  
 “ her of all that happened in *England* since, and much  
 “ more, which she dare not utter.—A Gentleman, in  
 “ the Company, took the Child in his Arms, and gave

He was weak, ignorant, and zealous, and, consequently, a proper Tool for ambitious, artful Men to make Use of [Q]. All Preachers

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“it money; and asked what it would do with it? To which it answered aloud, *that it would give it to the king.*” This Story matches pretty well the others, and, I believe will be thought equally as ridiculous, and yet the Relator of it, (no less a Man than Bishop *Bramhall*) says, he cannot *esteem it less than a Miracle* (a). But let us away with these Trifles; they are fit for nothing but Ridicule, and can serve no Purpose, unless it be to shew the Weakness of the human Understanding, or the Wickedness of the human Heart: Though these are many Times, by other Things, but too apparent.

(a) *Ormond's Papers*, by *Carte*, Vol. II. p. 208.

[Q] *Weak, ignorant, and zealous, and consequently a proper Tool for ambitious, artful Men to make Use of.*] *Peters's* Weakness, Ignorance, and Zeal, appear from his own Confession, as well as the Testimony of *Whitlock* before quoted. Now such a Man as this was thoroughly qualified to be a Tool, and could hardly fail of being employed for that purpose. *Fools* are the instruments of *Knaves*: Or, to speak softer, Men of small Understandings are under the Direction and Influence of those who possess great Abilities. Let a Man be ever so wise and ambitious, he never would gain the Point he aims at, were all Men possessed of equal Talents with himself. For they would see his Aims, and would refuse to be made Use of as Tools to accomplish them. They would look through his specious Pretences, they would separate Appearances from Realities, and frustrate his selfish Intentions: So that his Skill would stand him in little Stead.

But as the Bulk of Men are formed, nothing in the World is easier than to impose on them. They see not beyond the present moment, and take all for Gospel that is told them. And of these, there are none who

to be warn'd by his Fate, against going out

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become so easily the Dupes of crafty, ambitious Men, as those who have attained just Knowledge enough to be proud and vain. It is but to flatter them, and you become their Master, and lead them what Lengths you please. And if they happen to have active Spirits, you may make them accomplish your Designs even without their being sensible of it. Those who have great Things to execute, know this; and therefore are careful to have as many of these Instruments as possible, to manage the Multitude when there is Occasion; for which End they carefully observe their Foibles, and seemingly fall in with their Notions, and thereby secure them. Hence it has come to pass, that Real *Great Men* have paid very uncommon Respect to those they despised. They knew they might be of Use; and therefore were worth gaining.—*Peters* must necessarily have appeared in a contemptible Light to *Cromwell*: But as his Ignorance and Zeal qualified him for Business, which wiser and more moderate Men would have declined, he was thought worthy of being caressed; and had that Respect paid him, which was necessary to keep him tight to the Cause. And, generally speaking, they have been Men of *Peters's* Size of Understanding, who have been subservient to the Interests of aspiring Statesmen, and the Implements of those in Power. Were not (a) *Shaa* and *Pinker* weak Men, in assisting the then Duke of *Gloucester*, Protector, afterwards *Richard the Third*, to fix the Crown on his own Head? Armed with Impudence, *Shaa* at *Paul's Cross* declared the Children of *Edward the Fourth* Bastards; and *Pinker* at *St. Mary's Hospital*, sounded forth the Praise of the Protector: Both so full, adds the Historian, of tedious Flattery, as no Man's Ear could abide them. (b) What was *John Padilla's* Priest, who did not fail every *Sunday* to recommend him, and the Sedition of which he was

(a) *Speed's*  
Hist. p. 902,  
Fol. Lond.  
1632.

(b) *Bayle's*  
Dict. Article  
*Padilla*.  
(*John de*)

of their Province, and meddling with Things,

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the great Promoter, with a *Pater-Noster* and an *Ave Maria*? Indeed, ill Usage from the Rebels caused him to change his Note soon after, and to advise his People to cry out, *Long Live the King, and let Padilla perish!*

To come nearer home.—Was not *Sacheverel* a weak ignorant Man, to be made the Tool of a Party? Would any but such a one have exposed himself by a nonsensical Sermon, set the Nation in a Flame, and brought himself into Trouble?—But he was in the hands of intriguing Politicians, who spurred him on, and made him the Instrument of raising a Cry of an imaginary Danger, which served many Purposes to themselves, though detrimental to the Nation.—And what Character have our Jacobite Clergymen universally deserved? If we will not be uncharitable, we must impute their Behaviour to *Ignorance*, and the Influence they have been under. For Men of Sense and Penetration could never have set themselves to infuse Notions into their Flocks, which have no other Tendency than to enslave Body and Soul. And Men uninfluenced would not run the Risk of the Gallows, for the Sake of Nonsense and Absurdity, as *Jacobitism* really is. But they have been the Dupes of wicked, artful, and ambitious Men, who have blinded their Understandings, and by Flatteries and Caresses gained their Affections, and consequently the poor Wretches are the Objects of Pity.

So that *Peters*, we see, was as his Brethren have been and are. His Faults arose chiefly from his Weakness, and his being in the Hands of those who knew how to make Use of him. Had he contented himself with Obscurity, he had avoided Danger; which indeed is the chief Security for the Virtue, Ease, and Welfare of Men, in such a noisy contentious World as this.



which no Way belong to them. [R] But,

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[R] *All Preachers ought to be warned by his Fate, against going out of their Province.*] The Business of the Clergy is that of instructing the People in Piety and Virtue. If ever they meddle with Civil Matters, it ought to be only with an Intent to promote Peace and Happiness, by exhorting Princes to rule with Equity and Moderation, and Subjects to obey with Willingness and Pleasure. 'This I say is what alone concerns them, and if they confine themselves within these bounds, they merit Praise. But, if instead hereof they mix with Civil Factions, and endeavour to promote Hatred, Strife, and Contention; if they aspire to bear Rule and attempt to embroil Matters, in order to render themselves of some Importance; they then become not only really *contemptible*, but likewise *criminal*.

*Ormonde's Papers*, vol. II. p. 457. "The Clergy, as the Marquis of *Ormonde* justly observes, have not been happy to themselves or others when they have aspired to a Rule, so contrary to "their Function."—Nature never seems to have intended the Clergy, any more than the Gospel, for State-Affairs. For Men brought up in Colleges, and little versed in the World, as they generally are, make wretched Work when they come to intermeddle with secular Matters.—To govern well, requires great knowledge of human Nature, the particular Interests, Dispositions and Tempers of the People one has to do with, the Law of Nations, and more especially the Laws of the Country. Great Skill and Address likewise are required to manage the different and contradictory Tempers of Men, and make them conspire to promote the public Happiness; as likewise great Practice in Business, in order to dispatch it with Speed and Safety. And therefore it is evident, that the Clergy, from the Nature of their Education, as well as their Profession, cannot be qualified for it.—They should therefore seriously weigh their Incapacity for Civil Affairs; and

perhaps, they are cautioned in vain. [S]

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how inconsistent they are with the Business to which they have solemnly engaged to devote themselves. They should consider how contemptible and ridiculous they render themselves in the Eyes of all wise and good Men, when they engage in Parties, and most hateful when they stir up Wars and Tumults. They should have the Dignity of their Character before their Eyes, and scorn to disgrace it, by letting themselves out to ambitious, self-interested Men. These Things they should do; and a very small Degree of Knowledge and Reflection will enable them to keep themselves from this, which is one of the greatest Blemishes which can be found in their Character.

If this is not sufficient, let them call to their Minds *Peters*: Who, after having been sought to, and caressed by the most eminent Personages, was obliged to skulk about privately; was seized by the Officers of public Justice; laden with Infamy and Reproach, and embowelled by the Hangman.—*He that hath Ears to hear, let him hear.*

[S] *Perhaps they are cautioned in vain.*] No Men in the World seem less willing to hearken to Advice than the Clergy. Puffed up with Conceit of their own Knowledge and Abilities, and being used to dictate uncontrouled from the Pulpit, they with Contempt hearken to Instruction, and are uninfluenced by Persuasion. For which Reason, I say, *Perhaps they are cautioned in vain.* *Peters's* Fate will not deter them, but engage in Factions they still will.—After the *Restoration*, the Pulpits sounded loud with the Doctrines of *Passive Obedience* and *Non-resistance*; the Whigs and Presbyterians were represented as *Villains*; the Power of the Church was magnified, and the Regal Power was represented as *sacred* as that of God himself. Then *Sam. Parker* and his Fellows arose, full of Rage and Venom; who treated all who opposed them with ill Manners

and Severity. Then were *Englishmen* pronounced Slaves, in Effect, by *Hicks* in his *Jovian*; and then was the infamous *Oxford* Decree framed, which was doomed to the Flames, by the Sentence of the most august Assembly in the World, *Anno* 1710.

The Bishops stood firm by the Duke of *York*; and the whole Clergy in a manner damned the Bill of Exclusion. In short, such was their Behaviour, that they fell under great Contempt, and were treated with much Severity.—Under *James the Second*, they acted the same Part; and would undoubtedly have continued his fast Friends, had he not given *Liberty* to the *Dissenters*, and touched them in their most tender Part, even that of their Revenue, by thrusting in *Popish* Persons into their Colleges. This alarmed them: They suddenly tacked about, wished heartily for the coming of the Prince of *Orange*, and prayed for his Success. He came and delivered them out of the Hands of their Enemies; but they could not be quiet and thankful. Numbers of them refused to own his Government; many of them joined in Measures to restore the Tyrant *James*; and a great Part did all that in them lay, to blacken and distress their Deliverer.—*Lesly*, *Sacheverel*, &c. worked hard to inculcate on Men's Minds the Danger of the Church; the Designs of the Dissenters; the Villainy of the Ministry, during the first and glorious Part of *Queen Ann's* Reign; in which they were but too successful.—

When the Protestant Succession took Place, it was railed at, and even cursed by these Men, and many of them attempted to set up an *abjured* Pretender. Their Attempts however were vain: Though for these their Endeavours, Parson *Paul* made his exit at the Gallows, and the celebrated *Atterbury* died in Exile.—What has been, and is the Temper since, every one knows. The *Oxford* affair is too fresh in Memory, to let us remain ignorant of the Disposition of many of the Clergy. They are of *Peters's* busy meddling Disposition; though, I hope, they will not merit his Fate.

Far be it from me, to point these Reflections at the

*whole Body of the Clergy.* Numbers of them have been, and are Men of great Worth; who not only dignify their Office, but add Lustre to the human Nature. He must have lost all Sense of Excellency, who is not struck with the Generosity of *Tillotson*, the Integrity of *Clarke*, the Christian Sentiments of *Hoadley*, the Worth of *Butler* (on whose late Advancement I beg Leave to congratulate the Public) and the Piety, Humanity, and Patriotism of *Herring*.

These and many others have been ornaments of the Body to which they belong, and have never studied to embroil us, or promote a Party-Spirit among us. Rectitude and Benevolence, Piety and Self-Government, have been their Themes: These with uncommon Abilities they have taught; and those who tread in their Steps, cannot fail of being honoured now and for ever! But those who make it their Business to poison the Minds of the People with factious and seditious Discourses; those who censure their Governors for Actions, of which they are frequently no competent Judges, and traduce and vilify every Thing, right or wrong; those who join with the sworn Foes of the best of Princes, and strive to promote an Interest incompatible with the public Good, are the Men who deserve Titles, which I do not care to give: And they may be certain, that though through the Lenity of the present Government they may escape unpunished, yet Contempt will be their Portion from all Men of Sense. For when Men pervert so excellent an Office as that of the Ministry, to the purposes of Ambition and the Lust of Power, hardly any Censure too severe can be cast on them.

## Postscript.

(a) The  
Reverend  
Mr. Birch,  
F. R. S.

**S**INCE Transcribing these Papers for the Press, a very learned Gentleman (a) has been so kind as to impart to me an Account of *Peters's* Writings (his last *Legacy* excepted, from which a good Deal has been inserted in this Work) which I doubt not will be highly acceptable to the Curious. [P]

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[P] *Which I doubt not will be highly acceptable to the Curious.*] In April, 1646, he preached a Sermon before both Houses of Parliament, the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of *London*, and the Assembly of Divines, which was printed in *Quarto*. In this Sermon he expresses his Desire that 'some shorter Way might be found to further Justice; and that two or three Friend-makers might be set up in every Parish, without whose Labour and Leave none should implead another.' He proposed likewise that the *Charter-House* should be converted into an Hospital for lame Soldiers.

In the same Year 1646, he published at *London*, in a *Quarto* Pamphlet of fifteen Pages, intitled, '*Peter's last Report of the English Wars*, occasioned by the Importunity of a Friend, pressing an Answer to some Queries:'

- I. Why he was silent at the Surrender of *Oxford*?
- II. What he observed at *Worcester*, it being the last Town in the King's Hand?
- III. What were best to be done with the Army?

As likewise a Letter from Col. *Lockhart* to Secretary *Thurloe*, concerning *Peters*, which,

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IV. If he had any Expedient for the present Difference?

V. What his Thoughts were in Relation to Foreign States?

VI. How these late Mercies and Conquests might be preserved and improved?

VII. Why his Name appears in so many Books, not without Blots, and he never wipe them off?

In this Pamphlet he observes, p. 14, That he had lived about six Years near that famous Scotsman, Mr. *John Forbes*: 'With whom, says he, I travelled into *Germany*, and enjoyed him in much Love and Sweetness constantly; from whom I never had but Encouragement, though we differed in the Way of our Churches. Learned *Amesius* breathed his last Breath into my Bosom, who left his Professorship in *Friezeland*, to live with me, because of my Church's Independency at *Rotterdam*: He was my Colleague and chosen Brother to the Church, where I was an unworthy Pastor.'

In 1647, he published at *London*, in *Quarto*, a Pamphlet of fourteen Pages, intituled, *A Word for the Army, and two Words to the Kingdom, to clear the one and cure the other, forced in much Plainness and Brevity, from their faithful Servant, Hugh Peters*.

It appears by a Pamphlet, printed in 1651, written by *R. V. of Gray's-Inn*, and intituled, *A Plea for the Common Laws of England*, that it was written in Answer to Mr. *Peters's* good Work for a good Magistrate, or a short Cut to great Quiet; in which Mr. *Peters* had proposed the Extirpation of the whole System of our Laws, and particularly recommended that the old Records in the *Tower* should be burnt, as the Monuments of Tyranny.—

as very characteristical of the Man, and containing some curious Particulars relating to him, I cannot forbear giving at Length. [Q]

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[Q] *I cannot forbear giving at length.*

*Colonel Lockhart to Secretary Turloe,*

*From Dunkirk, July, 8-18, 1658.*

Thurloe's  
State Papers,  
Vol. VII.  
p. 249.

*May it please your Lordship,*

I Could not suffer our worthy Friend, Mr. *Peters*, to come away from *Dunkirk* without a Testimony of the great Benefits we have all received from him in this Place, where he hath laid himself forth in great Charity and Goodness in Sermons, Prayers, and Exhortations, in visiting and relieving the Sick and wounded; and, in all these, profitably applying the singular Talent God hath bestowed upon him to the chief Ends proper for our Auditory: For he hath not only shewed the Soldiers their Duty to God, and pressed it Home upon them, I hope to good advantage, but hath likewise acquainted them with their Obligations of Obedience to his Highness's Government, and Affection to his Person. He hath laboured amongst us here with much Goodwill, and seems to enlarge his Heart towards us, and Care of us for many other Things, the Effects whereof I design to leave upon that Providence which has brought us hither. It were superfluous to tell your Lordship the Story of our present Condition, either as to the Civil Government, Works, or Soldiery. He who hath studied all these more than any I know here, can certainly give the best Account of them. Wherefore I commit the whole to his Information, and beg your Lordship's casting a favourable Eye upon such Pro-

‘ positions as he will offer to your Lordship for the  
‘ Good of this Garrison.’ I am,

*May it please your Lordship,  
Your most humble, faithful,  
and obedient Servant,  
Will. Lockhart.*

[*This Part is all written with Lockhart's own Hand.*]

*My LORD,*

**M**R. *Peters* hath taken Leave at least three or four Times, but still something falls out, which hinders his Return to *England*. He hath been twice at *Bergh*, and hath spoke with the \* Cardinal Mazarine. three or four times; I kept myself by, and had a care that he did not importune him with too long Speeches. He returns, loaden with an Account of all Things here, and hath undertaken every Man's Business. I must give him that Testimony, that he gave us three or four very honest Sermons; and if it were possible to get him to mind Preaching, and to forbear the troubling himself with other Things, he would certainly prove a very fit Minister for Soldiers. I hope he cometh well satisfied from this Place. He hath often insinuated to me his Desire to stay here, if he had a Call. Some of the Officers also have been with me to that Purpose; but I have shifted him so handsomely, as, I hope, he will not be displeas'd: For I have told him, that the greatest Service he can do us, is to go to *England*, and carry on his Propositions, and to own us in all our other Interests, which he hath undertaken with much Zeal.—

*FINIS.*



