Bodleian Libraries
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

This book is part of the collection held by the Bodleian Libraries and scanned by Google, Inc. for the Google Books Library Project.

For more information see:

http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/dbooks

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 2.0 UK: England & Wales (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0) licence.

LETTER

FROM A

MEMBER of the

House of COMMONS

IN

IRELAND

TO A

MEMBER of the

House of COMMONS

IN

ENGLAND,

Concerning the

SACRAMENTAL TEST.

LONDON:

Printed for *John Morphew*, near *Stationers-Hall*, 1709.

5

2.

2..S

A LETTER

From a Member of the House of Commons in Ireland *to a Member of the House of Commons in* England, *concerning the* SACRAMENTAL TEST.

SIR,

I Received your Letter, wherein you tell me of the strange Representations made of us on your side of the Water. The Instance you are pleased to mention is that of the Presbyterian *Missionary*, who according to your Phrase, hath been lately *Persecuted* in *Droghedah* for his Religion; But it is easy to observe, how mighty Industrious some People have been for Three or Four Years past, to hand about Stories of the Hardships, the Merits, the Number, and the Power of the *Presbyterians* in *Ireland*, to raise formidable Idea's of the Dangers of *Popery* there, and to transmit all for *England*, improved by great Additions, and with special care to have them inserted with Comments in those infamous Weekly Papers that

 infest

infeſt your Coffee-Houſes. So, when the Clauſe Enacting a *Sacramental Teſt* was put in Execution, it was given out in *England*, that half the Juſtices of Peace through this Kingdom had laid down their Commiſſions; whereas upon Examination, the whole Number was found to amount only to a Dozen or Thirteen, and thoſe generally of the loweſt Rate in Fortune and Underſtanding, and ſome of them Superannuated. So, when the Earl of *P——ke* was in *Ireland* and the Parliament Sitting, a formal Story was very gravely carried to his Excellency by ſome Zealous Members, of a Prieſt newly arrived from abroad to the North-weſt Parts of *Ireland*, who had publickly Preached to his People, to fall a Murthering the Proteſtants; which tho' invented to ſerve an End they were then upon, and are ſtill driving at, it was preſently handed over, and Printed with ſhrewd Remarks by your worthy Scribblers. In like manner, the Account of that Perſon who was lately expelled our Univerſity for Reflecting on the Memory of King *William*, what a Duſt it raiſed, and how fonlly it was related, is freſh enough in Memory. Neither would People be convinced till the Univerſity was at the pains of Publiſhing a Latin Paper to juſtify themſelves. And, to mention no more, this Story of the *Perſecution* at *Droghedah*, how it has been ſpread and aggravated, what Conſequences drawn from it, and what Reproaches fixed on thoſe who have leaſt deſerved them, we are already informed. Now if the End of all this Proceeding were a Secret and Myſtery, I ſhould not undertake to give it an Interpretation, but

but Care has been taken to give it sufficient Explanation. First by Addresses Artificially (if not Illegally) procured, to shew the miserable State of the Dissenters in *Ireland* by reason of the *Sacramental Test*, and to desire the Queen's Intercession that it might be Repealed. Then it is manifest that our S——r when he was last Year in *England*, Sollicited in Person several Members of both Houses, to have it Repealed by an Act there, though it be a matter purely National, that cannot possibly interfere with the Trade and Interest of *England*, and tho' he himself appeared formerly the most Zealous of all Men against the Injustice of binding a Nation by Laws to which they do not consent. And lastly, those weekly Libellers whenever they get a Tale by the end relating to *Ireland*, without ever troubling their Thoughts about the Truth, always end it with an Application against the *Sacramental Test*, and the absolute Necessity there is of Repealing it in both Kingdoms. I know it may be reckoned a weakness to say any thing of such Trifles as are below a serious Man's notice, much less would I disparage the understanding of any Party to think they would choose the Vilest and most Ignorant among Mankind to employ them for Asserters of a Cause; I shall only say, that the Scandalous Liberty those Wretches take, would hardly be allowed, if it were not mingled with Opinions that *some Men* would be glad to Advance. Besides, how insipid soever those Papers are, they seem to be levelled to the Understandings of a great Number, they are grown a necessary part in Coffee-house

Furniture,

Furniture, and ſome time or other happen to be Read by Cuſtomers of all Ranks, for Curioſity or Amuſement; becauſe they lie always in the way. One of theſe Authors (the Fellow that was *Pillor'd*, I have forgot his Name) is indeed ſo grave, ſententious, dogmatical a Rogue, that there is no enduring him, the *Obſervator* is much the brisker of the two, and I think farther gone of late in Lyes and Impudence than his *Presbyterian* Brother; the Reaſon why I mention him, is to have an Occaſion of letting you know, that you have not dealt ſo gallantly with us, as we did with you in a parallel Caſe; Laſt Year, a Paper was brought here from *England*, called, *A Dialogue between the A. Bp. of* Canterbury *and Mr.* Higgins, which we ordered to be Burnt by the Common Hangman, as it well deſerved; tho' we have no more to do with his Grace of *Canterbury* than you have with the A. Bp. of *Dublin*, nor can you Love and Reverence your Prelate more than we do ours, whom you tamely ſuffer to be abuſed openly and by Name by that paultry Raſcal of an *Obſervator*; and lately upon an Affair wherein he had no Concern; I mean the Buſineſs of the *Miſſionary* at *Droghedah*, wherein our excellent *Primate* was engaged, and did nothing but according to Law and Diſcretion. But becauſe the Lord A. Bp. of *Dublin* hath been upon ſeveral Occaſions of late Years miſrepreſented in *England*; I would willingly ſet you right in his Character. For his great Sufferings and eminent Services, he was by the late King promoted to the See of *Derry*. About the ſame time, he writ a Book to Juſtify the

the Revolution, wherein was an Account of K. *James's* Proceedings in *Ireland*, and the late A. Bp *Tillotson* recommended it to the King as the most Serviceable Treatise that could have been Published at such a juncture. And as his Grace set out upon *Revolution* Principles, he has proceeded so ever since, as a Loyal Subject to the Queen, entirely for the Succession in the Protestant Line, and for ever excluding the *Pretender*; and tho' a firm Friend to the Church, yet with Indulgence towards Dissenters, as appears from his Conduct at *Derry*, where he was settled for many Years among the most virulent Sect; yet upon his removal to *Dublin*, they parted from him with Tears in their Eyes, and universal Acknowledgments of his Wisdom and Goodness. For the rest, it must be owned, he does not busie himself by entring deep into any Party, but rather spends his Time in Acts of Hospitality and Charity, in building of Churches, repairing his Palace, in introducing and preferring the worthiest Persons he can find, without other Regards; in short, in the Practice of all Virtues that can become a Publick or Private Life. This and more if possible, is due to so excellent a Person, who may be justly reckoned among the greatest and most Learned Prelates of his Age, however his Character may be Defiled by such Men and dirty Hands as those of the *Observator*, or such as employ him, who ought not to have forgot that in the late Prosecution of *Forbes* for Reflecting on K. *William*, the A. Bp. did so distinguish himself, that the City gave him their publick Thanks.

I now

I now come to anſwer the other Part of your Letter, and ſhall give you my Opinion freely about Repealing the *Sacramental Teſt*, only whereas you deſire my Thoughts as a Friend, and not as I am a Member of Parliament, I muſt aſſure you they are exactly the ſame in both Capacities.

I muſt begin by telling you, we are generally ſurpriſed at your wonderful kindneſs to us on this Occaſion, in being ſo very induſtrious to teach us to ſee our Intereſts in a Point where we are ſo unable to ſee it our ſelves. This hath given us ſome Suſpicion; and tho' in my own particular, I am hugely bent to believe that when ever you concern your ſelves in our Affairs, it is certainly *for our Good*, yet I have the misfortune to be ſomething ſingular in this Belief, and therefore I never attempt to juſtify it, but content my ſelf to poſſeſs my own Opinion in private, for fear of encountring Men of more Wit or Words than I have to ſpare.

We at this diſtance who ſee nothing of the Spring of Actions, are forced by meer Conjecture to aſſign two Reaſons for your deſiring us to repeal the *Sacramental Teſt*; one is, becauſe you are ſaid to imagine it will be one ſtep towards the like *good Work* in *England*. The other more immediate, that it will open a way for Rewarding *ſeveral Perſons* who have well deſerved upon a *great Occaſion*, but who are now unqualified thro' that Impediment.

I do not frequently quote Poets, eſpecially *Engliſh*, but I remember there is in ſome of Mr. *Cowley's* Love Verſes, a Strain that I thought extraordinary at Fifteen,

teen, and have often ſince imagined it to be ſpoken by *Ireland*:

Forbid it Heaven my Life ſhould be
Weigh'd with her leaſt Conveniency.

In ſhort, whatever Advantage you propoſe to your ſelves by repealing the *Sacramental Teſt*, ſpeak it out plainly, 'tis the beſt Argument you can uſe, for we value your Intereſt much more than our own, if your little Finger be Sore, and you think a Poltice made of our *Vitals* will give it any Eaſe, ſpeak the Word and it ſhall be done; The Intereſt of our whole Kingdom is at any time ready to Strike to that of your pooreſt *Fiſhing Town*, it is hard you will not accept our Services unleſs we believe at the ſame time that you are only conſulting our Profit, and giving us marks of your Love. If there be a Fire at ſome diſtance, and I immediately blow up my Houſe before there be Occaſion, becauſe you are a Man of Quality, and apprehend ſome danger to a *Corner of your Stable*, yet why ſhould you require me to attend next Morning at your Levèe with my humble Thanks for the Favour you have done me?

If we might be allowed to judge for our ſelves, we had abundance of Benefit by the *Sacramental Teſt*, and foreſee a number of Miſchiefs would be the Conſequence of Repealing it, and we conceive the Objections made againſt it by the *Diſſenters* are of no manner of force, they tell us of their Merits in the late War in *Ireland*, and how chearfully they Engaged

 for

for the Safety of the Nation; that had they thought they had been Fighting only other Peoples Quarrels, perhaps it might have cool'd their Zeal; and that for the future they shall sit down quietly and let us do our Work our selves; nay, that it is necessary they should do so, since they cannot take up Arms under the Penalty of High-Treason.

Now supposing them to have done their Duty, as I believe they did, and not to trouble them about the Fly on the Wheel; I thought *Liberty*, *Property* and *Religion* had been the Three Subjects of the Quarrel, and have not all those been amply secured to them? Had they at that Time a *Mental Reservation* for *Power* and *Employments*? and must those two Articles be added henceforward in our National Quarrels? It is grown a mighty Conceit among some Men to melt down the Phrase of a *Church Established by Law* into that of *the Religion of the Magistrate*; of which Appellations it is easier to find the Reason than the Sense: If by the *Magistrate* they mean the *Prince*, the Expression includes a Falshood; for when King *James* was *Prince*, the Established Church was the same it is now. If by the same Word they mean the Legislature, we desire no more. Be that as it will, we of this Kingdom believe the Church of *Ireland* to be the National Church, and the only one Established by Law, and are willing by the same Law to give a *Toleration* to Dissenters; but if once we Repeal our *Sacramental Test*, and grant a *Toleration*, or suspend the Execution of the Penal Laws, I do not see how we can be said to

have

have any Eſtabliſhed Church remaining; or rather why there will not be as many Eſtabliſhed Churches as there are Sects of Diſſenters. No, ſay they, yours will ſtill be the National Church, becauſe your Biſhops and Clergy are Maintained by the Publick; But, *That* I ſuppoſe will be of no long Duration, and it would be very unjuſt it ſhould, becauſe, to ſpeak in *Tindall's* Phraſe, it is not reaſonable that Revenues ſhould be annexed to one Opinion more than another when all are equally Lawful, and 'tis that Authors Maxim, That no Free-born Subject ought to Pay for maintaining Speculations he does not believe. *But why ſhould any Man, upon Account of Opinions he cannot help, be deprived the Opportunity of Serving his Queen and Countrey?* Their Zeal is commendable, and when Employments go a begging for want of Hands, they ſhall be ſure to have the Refuſal, *only* upon condition they will not pretend to them upon Maxims that equally include *Atheiſts*, *Turks*, *Jews*, *Infidels* and *Hereticks*, or which is ſtill more dangerous, even *Papiſts* themſelves; The former you allow, the other you deny, becauſe theſe laſt own a Foreign Power, and therefore muſt be ſhut out. But there is no great weight in this, for their Religion can ſuit with Free-ſtates, with Limited or Abſolute Monarchies, as well as a Better, and the *Popes* Power in *France* is but a ſhadow, ſo that upon this Foot there need be no great Danger to the Conſtitution by admitting Papiſts to Employments. I will help you to enough of them ſhall be ready to allow the *Pope* as

little Power here as you pleaſe; and the bare Opinion of his being Vicar of Chriſt is but a *Speculative Point*, for which no Man it ſeems ought to be deprived the Capacity of Serving his Countrey.

But if you pleaſe, I will tell you the great Objection we have againſtRepealing this ſame *Sacramental Teſt*. It is, that we are verily perſwaded the Conſequence will be an entire Alteration of Religion among us in a no great Compaſs of Years. And, pray obſerve how we reaſon here in *Ireland* upon this Matter.

We obſerve the *Scots* in our Northern Parts, to be a Brave, Induſtrious People, extreamly devoted to their Religion, and full of an *undiſturbed* Affection towards each other. Numbers of that Noble Nation, invited by the Fertilities of the Soil, are glad to exchange their Barren Hills of *Louquabar*, by a Voyage of three Hours, for our Fruitful Vales of *Doun* and *Antrim*, ſo productive of that *Grain* which at little Trouble and leſs Expence finds Diet and Lodging for themſelves and their Cattle. Theſe People by their extream Parſimony, wonderful *Dexterity in Dealing*, and firm Adherence to one another, ſoon grow into Wealth from the *ſmalleſt Beginnings*, never are rooted out where they once fix, and encreaſe daily by new Supplies; Beſides when they are the ſuperior Number in any Tract of Ground, they are not *over-Patient of Mixture*; but ſuch, whom they cannot *aſſimilate*, ſoon find it their Intereſt to remove. I have done all in my Power on ſome Land of my own to preſerve two or three *Engliſh* Fellows in their Neighbourhood, but

found

found it impossible, tho' one of them thought he had sufficiently made his Court by turning Presbyterian. Add to all this, that they bring along with them from *Scotland* a most formidable Notion of our Church, which they look upon at least three Degrees worse than Popery, and it is natural it should be so, since they come over full fraught with that Spirit which taught them to abolish Episcopacy at home.

Then we proceed further, and observe, that the Gentlemen of Employments here, make a very considerable Number in the House of Commons, and have no *other Merit* but that of doing their Duty in their several Stations; therefore when the Test is Repealed, it will be highly reasonable they should give Place to those who have much *greater Services* to plead. The Commissions of the Revenue are soon disposed of, and the Collectors and other Officers throughout the Kingdom are generally appointed by the Commissioners, which gives them a mighty Influence in every County. As much may be said of the great Officers in the Law; and when this Door is open to let Dissenters into the Commissions of the Peace, to make them High-Sheriffs, Mayors of Corporations, and Officers of the Army and Militia; I do not see how it can be otherwise, considering their Industry and our Supineness, but that they may in a very few Years grow to a Majority in the House of Commons, and consequently make themselves the National Religion, and have a fair Pretence to demand the Revenues of the Church for their Teachers. I know it will be

Ob-

Objected, that if all this ſhould happen as I deſcribe, yet the Presbyterian Religion could never be made the National by Act of Parliament, becauſe our Biſhops are ſo great a Number in the Houſe of Lords, and without a Majority there, the Church could not be Aboliſhed. But I have *two very good Expedients* for that, which I ſhall leave you to gueſs, and I dare Swear our *S——r* here has often thought on, eſpecially having endeavoured at *One of them* ſo lately. That this deſign is not ſo foreign from *ſome Peoples* Thoughts, I muſt let you know that an honeſt *Bell-weather* of our Houſe (you have him now in *England*, I wiſh you could keep him there) had the Impudence in Parliament time (I think it was laſt Year) to ſhake my Lord Biſhop of *Killaloo* by his Lawn Sleeve, and tell him in a threatning manner, *That he hoped to live to ſee the Day when there ſhould not be one of his Order in the Kingdom.* Now, becauſe that Gentleman is ambitious to be thought one of our Patriots, I can put him upon a much better way of ſerving his Countrey, which is to take ſome Courſe that himſelf and his *whole worthy Family* may be *Hang'd* to morrow Morning; and if this had been done (How long is it ſince my Lord *Capel's* Government?) about Fifteen Years ago, our Miſerable *Betrayed* Kingdom had been ſome Millions the better.

Theſe laſt Lines perhaps you think a Digreſſion; Therefore to return, I have told you the Conſequences we fully reckon upon from Repealing the *Sacramental Teſt*, which although the greateſt Number of ſuch as

are

are for doing it, are actually in no manner of Pain about, and many of them care not Three Pence whether there be any *Church* or no, yet becauſe they pretend to argue from Conſcience as well as Policy and Intereſt, I thought it proper to underſtand and anſwer them accordingly.

Now Sir in Anſwer to your Queſtion, Whether if an attempt ſhould be made here for Repealing the *Sacramental Teſt*, it would be likely to Succeed? The Number of Profeſt Diſſenters in this Parliament was, as I remember, ſomething under a Dozen, and I cannot call to mind above Thirty others who were expected to fall in with them. This is certain, that the Presbyterian Party having with great Induſtry muſtered up their Forces, did endeavour one Day upon occaſion of a Hint in my Lord *P——ke*'s Speech, to introduce a Debate about Repealing the *Teſt Clauſe*, when there appeared at leaſt Four to One Odds againſt them; and the ableſt of thoſe who were reckoned the moſt ſtranch and thorow-pace *Whigs* upon all other Occaſions, fell off with an Abhorrence at the firſt mention of this.

I muſt deſire you to take Notice, that the Terms of *Whig* and *Tory*, do not properly expreſs the different Intereſts in our Parliament. I remember when I was laſt in *England*, I told the King, that the higheſt Tories we had with us, would make tolerable Whigs there; this was certainly right, and ſtill in the general continues ſo, unleſs you have ſince admitted new Characteriſticks, which did not come within our De-

finition.

finition. Whoever bears a true veneration for the Glorious Memory of K. *William*, as our great Deliverer from Popery and Slavery, whoever is firmly Loyal to our present Queen, with an utter Abhorrence and Detestation of the Pretender; whoever approves the Succession to the Crown in the House of *Hanover*, and is for preserving the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of *England*, with a *Toleration* for Dissenters, such a Man we think acts upon *Revolution* Principles, and may be justly allowed a *Whig*; And I believe there are not Six Members in our House of Commons who may not fairly come under this Description. So that the Parties among us are made up on one side of *Moderate Whigs*, and on the other, of Presbyterians and their *Abettors*; by which last I mean, such who can equally go to a *Church* or a *Conventicle*, or such who are indifferent to all Religion in general, or lastly such who affect to bear a Personal Rancor towards the Clergy; These last are a set of Men not of our own Growth, their Principles at least have been *imported* of late Years; Yet this whole Party put together will hardly, I am confident amount to above Fifty Men in Parliament, which can hardly be worked up into a Majority of Three Hundred.

As to the House of Lords, the Difficulty there is conceived at least as great as in Ours. So many of our Temporal Peers live in *England*, that the Bishops are generally prety near a *Par* of the House, and we reckon they will be all to a Man against Repealing the *Test*, I never heard of above One or Two at most whom

whom there was the least Ground to suspect, and yet their Lordships are generally thought as good Whigs upon the *Revolution* Principles as any in the Kingdom. There are indeed a few Lay Lords who appear to have no great Devotion for Episcopacy; and perhaps one or two more with whom *certain powerful motives* might be used for removing any Difficulty whatsoever, but these are in no sort of a Number to carry any Point against a Conjunction of the rest with the whole Bench of Bishops.

Besides, the whole Body of our Clergy are utterly against Repealing the *Test*, though they are entirely Devoted to Her Majesty, and hardly One in a Hundred who are not very good *Whigs* in our Acceptation of the Word. And I must let you know, that we of *Ireland* are not yet come up to *other Folks Refinements*, for we generally Love and Esteem our Clergy, and think they deserve it; nay we are apt to lay some weight upon their Opinion, and would not willingly disoblige them, at least unless it were upon some greater Point of Interest than this. And their Judgment in the present Affairs is the more to be regarded, because they are the last Persons who will be affected by it; This makes us think them Impartial, and that their Concern is only for Religion and the Interest of the Kingdom. Because the Act which Repeals the Test, will only qualify a *Layman* for an Employment, but not a *Presbyterian* or *Anabaptist* Parson for a Church Living. Now I must take

leave to inform you, that ſeveral Members of our Houſe, and my ſelf among the reſt, knowing ſome time ago what was upon the Anvil, went to all the Clergy we knew of any Diſtinction, and deſired their Judgment in the Matter, wherein we found a moſt wonderful Agreement; there being but *One Divine* that we could hear of in the whole Kingdom, who appeared of a contrary Sentiment, wherein he afterwards ſtood alone in the *Convocation*, very little to his *Credit*, tho' as he hoped, very much to his *Intereſt*.

You indeed hint ſomething to me about *Two Divines* of this Kingdom now in *London*, which ſeems to differ from what I ſaid of the reſt. I have not the Honour to be Acquainted with either, and I think they have not been much among us; but by what I have heard of them, I do not believe they are one degree greater Whigs than Five Hundred of their Brethren, and I have heard, that *one of them* (who is they ſay made chief Chaplain to our new Governour) has always declared againſt Repealing the *Teſt*; He is reckoned a worthy Perſon, and I know not how it can be conſiſtent with that Character to employ his Pen either in a Publick or Private manner againſt his Opinion, neither do I think he deſigns it. As for the *other Divine*, we all expected here that *He* was to be the Perſon his Excellency would bring over his Chaplain: But ſince that hath otherwiſe happened, it may not be altogether improbable that his great

Friends

Friends have dropp'd him, which Disappointment, if he be a right C—t—r may chance to cool his Zeal that way, if he had any before, of which I cannot accuse him. However that be, he will find it a difficult matter, with his Skill in Politicks, or Talent at Ridicule, backed by all the Wit he is said to be Master of, to Reason or Laugh us out of the *Sacramental Test*; and will find by the Event that my PREDICTIONS are truer than *His*.

But if I am mistaken in my Sentiments of those Two Divines, there is a *Third* now among you, of as much Consideration as either, and as good a Whig in all the necessary Fundamentals, from whose Opinions you may form a truer Judgment of his Brethren here; and I dare engage he will not be reserved in owning them, and besides he has reason to know as much of our House of Commons as any of its Members, his *Office* giving him free Access there at all times.

I will now consider a little the Arguments offered to shew the Advantages or rather the Necessity of Repealing the *Test* in *Ireland*. We are told, the Popish Interest is here so formidable, that all hands should be joyned to keep it under, that the only names of Distinction among us ought to be those of *Protestant* and *Papist*, and that this Expedient is the only means to *unite* all Protestants upon one common Bottom. All which is nothing but Misrepresentation and Mistake.

If we were under any real Fear of the Papists in this Kingdom, it would be hard to think us so Stupid, not to be equally apprehensive with *others*, since we are likely to be the greatest, and more immediate Sufferers; But on the contrary, we look upon them to be altogether as inconsiderable as the Women and Children. Their Lands are almost intirely taken from them, and they are rendred uncapable of Purchasing any more; and for the little that remains, Provision is made by the late Act against Popery, that it will daily crumble away: To prevent which, some of the most considerable among them are already turned Protestants, and so in all Probability will many more. Then, the Popish Priests are all Registred, and without Permission (which I hope will not be granted) they can have no Successors; so that the Protestant Clergy will find it perhaps no difficult matter to bring great Numbers over to the Church; and in the mean time, the common People without Leaders, without Discipline, or natural Courage, being little better than *Hewers of Wood, and Drawers of Water*, are out of all capacity of doing any Mischief, if they were ever so well inclin'd. Neither are they at all likely to joyn in any considerable Numbers with an *Invader*, having found so ill Success when they were much more Numerous and Powerful; when they had a Prince of their own Religion to Head them, had been Train'd for some Years under a *Popish Deputy*, and received such mighty Ayds from the *French* King.

As to that Argument uſed for Repealing the Teſt; that it will unite all the Proteſtants againſt the *Common Enemy*, I wonder by what Figure thoſe Gentlemen Speak who are pleaſed to advance it: Suppoſe in order to encreaſe the Friendſhip between you and me, a Law ſhould paſs that I muſt have half your Eſtate; do you think that would much advance the Union between us? Or ſuppoſe I ſhare my Fortune equally between my own *Children*, and a *Stranger* whom I take into my Protection; will that be a Method to unite them? 'Tis an odd way of uniting Parties, to deprive a *Majority* of part of their antient Right, by conferring it on a *Faction* who had never any Right at all, and therefore cannot be ſaid to ſuffer any Loſs or Injury if it be refuſed them. Neither is it very clear, how far ſome People may ſtretch the Term of *Common Enemy*. How many are there of thoſe that call themſelves Proteſtants, who look upon our Worſhip to be Idolatrous as well as that of the Papiſts, and with great Charity put *Prelacy* and *Popery* together as Terms convertible?

And therefore there is one ſmall doubt, I would be willingly ſatisfied before I agree to the Repealing of the *Teſt*; that is, whether, theſe ſame *Proteſtants*, when they have by their Dexterity made themſelves the National Religion, and diſpoſed the Church Revenues among their *Paſtors* or *Themſelves*, will be ſo kind to allow *us Diſſenters*, I do not ſay a ſhare in Employments, but a bare *Toleration* by Law. The Reaſon of my Doubt is, becauſe I have been ſo very idle

as

as to Read above Fifty Pamphlets, written by as many Presbyterian Divines, loudly disclaiming this Idol *Toleration*, some of them calling it (I know not how properly) a *Rag of Popery*, and all agreeing, it was to *establish Iniquity by a Law*. Now, I would be glad to know when and where *their Successors* have renounced this Doctrine, and before what Witnesses. Because methinks I should be loath to see my poor Titular Bishop *in partibus* seised on by mistake in the Dark for a Jesuit, or be forced my self to keep a Chaplain Disguised like my Buttler, and steal to Prayers in a back Room, as my Grandfather used in those times when the Church of *England* was *Malignant*.

But this is ripping up old Quarrels long forgot; Popery is now the *common Enemy* against which we must all unite, I have been tired in History with the perpetual Folly of those States who call in Foreigners to assist them against a *Common Enemy*: But the Mischief was, these *Allies* would never be brought to allow that the Common Enemy was quite Subdued: and they had Reason; for it proved at last, that one part of the Common Enemy was those who called them in, and so the *Allies* became at length the *Masters*.

'Tis agreed among Naturalists that a *Lyon* is a Larger, a Stronger, and more dangerous Enemy than a *Cat*, yet if a Man were to have his Choice, either a *Lyon* at his Foot, bound fast with Three or Four Chains, his Teeth drawn out, and his Claws pared to the Quick, or an angry *Cat* in full Liberty at his Throat; he would take no long time to determine.

I have

I have been ſometimes admiring the wonderful ſignificancy of that Word *Perſecution*, and what various Interpretations it hath acquired even within my Memory. When I was a Boy, I often heard the Preſbyterians complain that they were not permitted to ſerve God in their own way, they ſaid they did not grudge us our Employments, but thought that all Men who live Peaceably ought to have Liberty of Conſcience, and leave to Aſſemble. That Impediment being removed at the Revolution, they ſoon learned to ſwallow the *Sacramental Teſt*, and began to take very large Steps, wherein all that offered to oppoſe them, were called Men of a *Perſecuting Spirit*. During the time the Bill againſt Occaſional Conformity was on foot, *Perſecution* was every Day rung in our Ears, and now at laſt the *Sacramental Teſt* it ſelf has the ſame name. Where then is this matter likely to end, when the obtaining of one Requeſt is only uſed as a ſtep to demand another? A Lover is ever complaining of *Cruelty* while any thing is denied him, and when the Lady ceaſes to be *Cruel*, ſhe is from the next Moment at his Mercy: So *Perſecution* it ſeems, is every thing, that will not leave it in Men's Power to *Perſecute others*.

There is one Argument offered againſt a *Sacramental Teſt*, by a ſort of Men who are content to be ſtiled of the Church of *England*, who perhaps attend its Service in the Morning, and go with their Wives to a *Conventicle* in the Afternoon, confeſſing they hear very good Doctrine in both. Theſe Men are much offended that ſo Holy an Inſtitution as that of the

Lord's

Lord's Supper ſhould be made ſubſervient to ſuch Mercinary Purpoſes as the getting of an Employment. Now, it ſeems, the Law, concluding all Men to be Members of that Church where they Receive the Sacrament; and ſuppoſing all Men to live like Chriſtians (eſpecially thoſe who are to have Employments) did imagine they Received the Sacrament in courſe about Four times a Year, and therefore only deſired it might appear by Certificate to the Publick, that ſuch who took an Office were Members of the Church Eſtabliſhed, by doing their ordinary Duty. However, *leſt we ſhould offend them*, we have often deſired they would deal candidly with us; For if the matter ſtuck only there, we would propoſe it in Parliament, that every Man who takes an Employment, ſhould inſtead of Receiving the Sacrament, be obliged to Swear, that he is a Member of the Church of *Ireland* by Law Eſtabliſhed, with Epiſcopacy, *and ſo forth*; and as they do now in *Scotland*, *to be true to the Kirk*. But when we drive them thus far, they always retire to the Main Body of the Argument, urge the Hardſhip that Men ſhould be deprived the liberty of Serving their Queen and Country on account of their Conſcience: And in ſhort have recourſe to the common Stile of their half Brethren. Now whether this be a ſincere way of Arguing, I will appeal to any other Judgment but theirs.

There is another Topick of Clamor ſomewhat Parallel to the foregoing; It ſeems, by the Teſt Clauſe, the *Military* Officers are obliged to Receive the Sacrament

ment as well as the *Civil*. And it is a Matter of ſome Patience to hear the Diſſenters declaming upon this Occaſion: They cry they are *Diſarmed*, they are uſed like *Papiſts*, when an Enemy appears at Home or from Abroad, they muſt ſit ſtill, and ſee their Throats Cut, or be Hang'd for High Treaſon if they offer to Defend themſelves. Miſerable Condition! Woful Dilemma! It is happy for us all, the Pretender was not appriſed of this *Paſſive Presbyterian* Principle, elſe he would have infallibly Landed in our Northern Parts, and found them all ſat down in their Formalities, as the *Gauls* did the *Roman* Senators, ready to Dye with Honour in their Callings. Sometimes to appeaſe their Indignation, we venture to give them Hopes, that in ſuch a Caſe the Government will perhaps connive, and hardly be ſo ſevere to Hang them for Defending it againſt the Letter of the Law, to which they readily anſwer, that they will not lye at our Mercy, but let us Fight our Battles our Selves; Sometimes we offer to get an Act, by which upon all *Popiſh* Inſurrections at Home, or *Popiſh* Invaſions from Abroad, the Government ſhall be empowered to grant Commiſſions to all Proteſtants whatſoever, without that *Perſecuting* Circumſtance of obliging them to *ſay their Prayers* when they receive the Sacrament; but they abhor all Thoughts of *Occaſional* Commiſſions, they will not do our Drudgery, and we reap the Benefit; It is not worth their while to Fight *pro Aris & focis*, and they had rather loſe their Eſtates, Liberties, Religion and Lives, than the pleaſure of *Governing*.

 But

But to bring this Discourse towards a Conclusion; If the Dissenters will be satisfied with such a *Toleration* by a Law as hath been granted them in *England*, I believe the Majority of both Houses will fall readily in with it; further it will be hard to perswade this House of Commons, and perhaps much harder the next. For, to say the Truth, we make a mighty difference here betwen suffering *Thistles* to grow among us, and wearing them for *Posies*. We are fully convinced in our Consciences, that *We* shall always *Tolerate Them*, but not quite so fully that *They* will always *Tolerate Us*, when it comes to their Turn, and *We* are the Majority, and *We* are in Possession.

He that Argues in Defence of a Law in Force, not Antiquated or Obsolete, but lately Enacted, is certainly on the safer side, and may be allowed to point out the Dangers he conceives to foresee in the Abrogation of it.

For if the Consequences of Repealing this Clause, should at some time or other enable the Presbyterians to work themselves up into the National Church; instead of *uniting* Protestants, it would Sow eternal Divisions among them. First their own Sects which now lye Dormant, would be soon at Cuffs *again* with each other about Power and Preferment; And the *Dissenting Episcopals*, perhaps discontented to such a Degree, as upon some *fair unhappy* Occasion, would be able to shake the firmest Loyalty, which none can deny theirs to be.

Neither

Neither is it very difficult to conjecture from ſome late Proceedings, at what a rate this *Faction* is like to Drive wherever it gets the *Whip* and the *Seat*. They have already ſet up Courts of Spiritual Judicature in open Contempt of the Laws. They ſend *Miſſionaries* every where, without being incited, in order to *Convert* the Church of *England* Folks to Chriſtianity. They are as vigilant as *I know who*, to attend Perſons on their Death Beds, and for Purpoſes much alike. And what Practices ſuch Principles as theſe (with many others that might be invidious to mention) may Spaun, when they are *laid out to the Sun*, you may determine at Leiſure.

Laſtly, whether we are ſo entirely ſure of their Loyalty upon the preſent Foot of Government as you may imagine, their Detractors make a Queſtion, which however, does I think by no means affect the Body of Diſſenters; But the Inſtance produced, is of ſome among their Leading Teachers in the North, who have refuſed the *Abjuration Oath*, yet continue their Preaching, and have abundance of Followers. The Particulars are out of my Head, but the Fact is notorious enough, and I believe has been Publiſhed, I think it a Pity it has not been *Remedied*.

Thus I have fairly given you, Sir, my own Opinion, as well as that of a great Majority in both Houſes here relating to this weighty Affair, upon which I am confident you may ſecurely reckon. I will leave you to make what uſe of it you pleaſe.

For

For the other Part of your Letter I can only tell you, that I have Obey'd your Commands as far as it was in my Power, and I hope well enough to encourage you to honour me with more.

I am with great Respect, Sir

Dublin December *the* 4th. 1708.

Yours, &c.

FINIS.