18

A

SERMON

Preach'd before the

RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE

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LORD MAYOR,

THE

ALDERMEN

AND

CITIZENS of *LONDON*,

AT THE

CATHEDRAL CHURCH of St. *PAUL*,

On *November* the Fifth, 1734.

BEING THE

Anniversary THANKSGIVING-DAY for the Deliverance from the GUN-POWDER TREASON,

And for the

HAPPY ARRIVAL of King *WILLIAM* III.

By *WILLIAM CROWE*, D.D. Rector of St. *Botolph's Bishopsgate*, and Chaplain in Ordinary to His MAJESTY.

Published by Order of the LORD MAYOR and Court of ALDERMEN.

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(18)

LONDON,

BELLAMY, Mayor.

The first Court held on Tuesday *the Twelfth Day of* November, 1734, *and in the eighth Year of the Reign of King* George *the Second of* Great-Britain, *&c.*

IT is ordered that the Thanks of this Court be given to the Reverend Dr. CROWE, for his Sermon preached before this Court, and the Liveries of the several Companies of this City, at the Cathedral Church of St. *Paul*, on *Tuesday* the *fifth* Instant, and that he be desired to print the same.

Jackson.

To the Right Honourable

Sir Edward Bellamy, *Knt.*

LORD-MAYOR

OF THE

CITY of *LONDON.*

My Lord,

I Dare not expose this sermon to public censure without sheltering it under your Lordship's patronage, who are answerable not only for its publication, but in some measure, for its *defects* too, since you gave me less time for *the composition*, than would have sufficed to acquaint my self duely with *the subject*.

But, my Lord, it is not the design of this address to apologize for the meaness of my own performance; but rather to do justice, in some small degree, and as far as I am capable, to that amiable and useful character, which hath so justly endeared your Lordship to all the serious and sober part of this City.

Your great ability, application, and integrity in all *offices of trust* wherein you have been concerned, your impartial and unwearied administration of *justice*, and the generous, disinteressed, and publick-spirited *principles* on which you have always acted, are confessed and applauded universally.

But,

But, my Lord, I would rather (as more ſuitable to my profeſſion, and the relation I bear to your Lordſhip, as your *Pariſh-Miniſter)* bring to light ſome of thoſe *private* and *domeſtic* virtues, I have with ſo much pleaſure obſerved in your Lordſhip, ſince I had the honour of being known to you; that ſtrict temperance and regularity of living, that humility and modeſty of manners, that candour and condeſcenſion of behaviour toward all, even the meaneſt, which I my ſelf have often experienced; above all, that conſtant and conſcientious *attendance on the publick ſervice of the Church*, and religious demeanour there, wherein, I am bold to ſay, your Lordſhip, is a pattern to thoſe of your rank, and I heartily wiſh you were better followed: For I am perſuaded if all were as good friends to *religion* as your Lordſhip, our Church might yet vie with the *primitive*.

Theſe are qualities ſo well known to belong to Sir EDWARD BELLAMY, that I promiſe my ſelf, I ſhall not incur any ſuſpicion of *flattery* by this public recital of them.

May God confirm your Lordſhip's *health*, and continue you for many years a bleſſing and ornament to this great city, and, in that, to the Public! This is the hearty wiſh of,

MY LORD,

your Lordſhip's faithful Paſtour, and

moſt obedient humble ſervant

William Crowe.

Ezra ix. 13, 14.

After all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing, that thou, our God, hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such Deliverance as this: *Should we* again *break thy Commandments, and join in affinity with* the People of these Abominations? *Wouldest not thou be angry with us, till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping?*

THESE are the words of good *Ezra*, a Priest of the *Jews*; who, some years after their return from the *Babylonish Captivity*, was, by the Decree of King *Artaxerxes*, set at the head of that Nation. But scarcely had he entered on his Administration, when he understood that several, and some very considerable, Families of his Countrymen, had upon their Return, and before his coming among them, *join'd in Affinity with* the neighbouring Nations, and made *intermarriages* with the *Heathen* that were round about them: In direct contradiction to God's express and positive command given them by *Moses*, * and to the declarations of the *Prophets*, as *Ezra* himself testifies in the verses before the text.

Nor was this a slight offense, as some, perhaps, may be apt to imagine; but an offence of a most heinous nature, and a great *abomination* in God's sight, being indeed the very thing that had all along from the beginning led the *Israelites* into that series of *idolatry* and corruption, which God was at last provoked to punish with a seventy years captivity, and with the destruction, for a time, of their temple and government. And now, when he had graciously restored them to *both*, and they were just return'd from

* Exod. 34. 12, &c. and Deut. 7. 3.

their long exile, that they ſhou'd after ſuch repeated experience as well of the divine judgments as mercies, relapſe ſo ſoon into the old tranſgreſſion; this was certainly a very great aggravation of their ſin, and ſuch as made it *exceeding ſinful.*

This ſin therefore, *Ezra*, like a *pious ruler*, and one who had a juſt concern for the honour of God's law, and the welfare of his people, laments bitterly in this his *prayer* to God, (of which the Text is part:) wherein he firſt of all makes humble *confeſſion* of their guilt, and *deprecates* the puniſhment due to it, with great earneſtneſs, ſorrow, and compunction of heart: Next, he *gratefully commemorates* the late mercy and favour of Heaven ſhewed them in their reſtoration: And laſtly, expreſſes a becoming *dread* and apprehenſion *of God's utmoſt diſpleaſure* and vengeance if they ſhould ſtill perſiſt in ſuch abuſe of his goodneſs: *After all that is come upon us for our evil deeds*, &c. &c.

In which words are four particulars well worthy our regard.

I. A brief recollection of what the Jews had already undergone for their paſt tranſgreſſions: *After all that is come upon us for our evil deeds and for our great treſpaſs.*

II. A grateful recognition and acknowledgment of the lenity and mercy of God toward them, notwithſtanding: *ſeeing that thou our God haſt puniſhed us leſs than our iniquities deſerve, and haſt given us ſuch deliverance as this.*

III. The baſeneſs and ingratitude of returning again, to thoſe iniquities, for which they had been ſo ſeverely puniſhed: *Should we again break thy commandments, and joyn in affinity with the people of theſe abominations? i. e.* with the idolatrous nations. This is ſpoken by *Ezra* interrogatively, to expreſs the ſtrong indignation and high reſentment he felt within himſelf at ſuch an indignity offer'd to God.

IV. Laſt of all, the extreme danger of ſo doing, even the danger of utter ruin and extirpation: *Wouldeſt not thou be angry with us, till thou hadſt conſumed us, ſo that there ſhould be no remnant nor eſcaping?*

Such is *Ezra*'s expoſtulation and reaſoning with regard to his countrymen the *Jews*. And now may we not juſtly apply the ſame to *our ſelves*, and our own caſe? —— *Who* have *ſuffered* ſo much, and ſo frequently,

quently, for our *iniquities*; —— *who* have the higheſt reaſon to acknowledge the unmerited favour and goodneſs of God in our frequent *deliverances*: — in *whom* therefore it would argue the utmoſt *baſeneſs* and *ingratitude* to *repeat* thoſe iniquities; and muſt indeed, in the end, prove our *final ruin* and deſtruction. For, after ſuch provocations on our part, and ſuch mercies on God's, *ſhould we again break his commandments*, and return to our old *abominations*, *would he not be angry with us till he had conſumed us ſo that there ſhould be no remnant nor eſcaping?*

As theſe particulars will, I perſuade my ſelf, afford matter of meditation and reflection very ſuitable to this *ſolemn Anniverſary*, I beg leave to offer ſomewhat upon each.

I. In the *firſt* Place, *Ezra* here reflects both on the paſt *Sufferings* of his People, and on their *Sins* as the occaſion of them: *After all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great treſpaſs* ——; as much as to ſay, after the many and ſore *Calamities* wherewith God had afflicted them for their ſins; meaning principally that lateſt and greateſt Calamity from which they were newly delivered, a long and ſevere Bondage at *Babylon*. *God be praiſed!* this laſt Evil indeed is not applicable to *us*: *We were never in Bondage to any*, nor was *our Iſrael* ever carried into their *Enemy's land*. We have, however, had the Enemy come frequently into *ours*: We have had many and grievous ſtruggles both with *foreign* and *domeſtic* Enemies. *Britain* hath more than once been invaded, and over-run by neighbouring Powers; and much oftener hath it been torn and harraſſed with inteſtine feuds and broils; falling a Sacrifice to its own unhappy Quarrels, and Diviſions: inſomuch, that, for ſome ages, this our Iſland ſeemed to reſemble the *floating Delos* of the Antients; it was toſſed to and fro, and fluctuated continually with the Winds and Waves of civil Diſſenſion, before it became happily fixed by the eſtabliſhment of wholeſome *Laws*, and the juſt balance of an even well-poiſed *Conſtitution*.

But as our Sins and Sufferings have been generally accompanied with God's *Mercies* and *Deliverances*, and *theſe* have graciouſly kept pace with the other; I ſhall no longer inſiſt on the firſt particular, as a diſtinct Head of Diſcourſe; but rather conſider it as it falls in with the ſecond, *viz.*

II. The frequent Experience which *we*, as well as the *Iſraelites*, have had of the divine Favour and Goodneſs, and the grateful Acknowlegements due from us upon that account, *Seeing that thou our God haſt*

puniſhed

punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us many and great *Deliverances.* And this being a Point of such importance, and so immediately belonging to the Day, you will allow me to be the larger upon it.

'Tis an Observation of *Solomon*, that the very *Mercies of the Wicked are cruel.* On the contrary, God's *Cruelties*, if I may so call them, and as they do indeed seem to us, are really *Mercies.* For 'tis the gracious method of Providence interchangeably to shift the face of things, and to vary his conduct toward Mankind betwixt the two Extremes of *Judgment* and *Mercy*; yet so, as that *Mercy* always *rejoiceth against Judgment.* He constantly with-holds, inflicts, or withdraws Punishment in such a manner, as may best serve the end of Repentance; and so, that such as will not adore his Goodness, may yet dread his Power; and again, those whom too great Severity might harden, may at least be softened by the milder Course. Now we of this Nation have had most pregnant Testimonies of *both* these; some of which it may conduce to the purpose of this Day seriously to recollect.

The *Reformation* (that greatest and most valuable of all Blessings, if we knew but how to esteem and use it aright) was hardly introduced, far from being settled, among us; when on a sudden it underwent an Eclipse, and was well-nigh extinguished by the *return of Popery.* Every one hath heard what Havock and Devastation *that* made in the first Queen *Mary*'s days, the Chains and Imprisonments, the Fires, Gibbets, and all sorts of Cruelty which then raged against *Protestants.* God, it seems, was pleased that the *revival* of Christianity in this Kingdom should for a while, like the first Publication of it in the World, be attended with a fiery Tryal of *Persecution*, and pass thro' the Furnace of Affliction, on purpose that as St. *Peter* speaks, (1 Pet. 1. 7.) it might be like *Gold tryed with Fire*, and come out at last *true Sterling*, throughly refined and purifyed from Popish dross and corruption.

But as this Reign was a *bloody* one, so God suffer'd it to be but *short:* This Storm happily blew over; and the Reformation, which had been hitherto but barely planted, began henceforward to take deep root and flourish under the long and steddy Administration of the glorious Queen *Elizabeth.* But *the Enemy*, our inveterate and irreconcilable Enemy *the Church of Rome*, was very watchful and industrious to *sow Tares among the Wheat*, and made but too much advantage of the unhappy *Differences* that then sprung up *among Protestants.* The Spirit of Popery, always restless and intent upon our Ruin, never ceased during that whole Reign to cherish (as it still does) the Seeds of Discontent and Jealousy,

louſy, to foment factions and diviſions, nay and to raiſe ſeditions and rebellions. For they tampered continually with the next heir and ſucceſſor to the Crown, of whom for a long while they conceived great hopes that they ſhould be able to make him their own, and bring him over to the Popiſh intereſt: And whenſoever the ſucceſs did not anſwer their expectations, and they were out of heart as to this Project; they ſcrupled not, at proper junctures, to ſet up ſeveral *Pretenders* to the Crown of *England* (a game, which they have ſince *revived* with Succeſs:) Nay, they actually, more than once, made treacherous and bloody attempts againſt the life of the illuſtrious Princeſs then on the throne. In fine, when they found this wou'd not do neither, and that all their ſecret arts and practices fail'd them, they grew ſo daring as to *invade England* openly, and procured that prodigious Armament, call'd the *Spaniſh Armada*, fraught not only with the neceſſary implements of War, but with thoſe of *Cruelty* likewiſe, to torture Proteſtants into the Romiſh Faith, and to convert them by the moſt powerful of their arguments, *Force*, being indeed but too ſenſible how weak all their *other* arguments were And in this grand undertaking they ſo mightily triumphed and prided themſelves, that they ſcrupled not to pronounce it *invincible*. But the Lord of earth and ſea ſhewed it to be otherwiſe: *He that ſitteth in heaven laughed them to ſcorn*, and derided ſuch vain boaſtings: he ſuffered not theſe *weapons form'd againſt* his Church to *proſper*; but warded off that dreadful blow; and ſo entirely diſſipated that tempeſt which hung over our heads, (thick, and gloomy as it was) that it never ſo much as gathered again, and *Spain* received ſuch a wound in her naval ſtrength, as ſhe was never able to recover afterwards.

And here one wou'd have thought the cauſe of Popery had been quite deſperate; and that they would have given over all farther attempts, having found both *perſuaſion*, and *force*, the artifices of *intrigue*, and the hoſtilities of *war* to be ineffectual. But——

Creditis avectos hoſtes? —— ſic notus Ulyſſes?

We have very miſtaken notions of the ſpirit of *Popery*, if we think any difficulties or diſappointments can ſubdue and extinguiſh it. 'Tis inured to the trade of *miſchief*, 'tis unwearied in the labour of *perſecution*, and will never ceaſe it's endeavours to deſtroy *proteſtantiſm* as long as it has any being in the world. For,

Behold now the *moſt monſtrous* of all it's efforts, the very *maſterpiece* even of *Popiſh* wickedneſs, which was produced in the following

ign,

reign, and which hath accordingly *marked* our calendar, being indeed what we this day commemorate a deliverance from, and for which this day will be for ever ſignalized in the Britiſh annals. No ſooner had the Papiſts experience of *K. James the firſt's* adminiſtration, and ſaw it was not for their turn, (he treading for a while in the ſteps of his glorious predeceſſor) but they entered upon the moſt villainous enterprize, deviſed the moſt horrid and compendious Scheme of ruin, that, I believe, was ever conceived in an human brain; ſuch as, literally, *eye had not ſeen, nor ear heard, nor had ever entred into the heart of any*, but a Jeſuit: or rather, I may ſay, was really, what ſome ſaid of it, hatched in *Hell:* For whence elſe could proceed a contrivance of ſuch deſperate malice, of ſuch complicated miſchief, and ſuch expeditious, inevitable, extenſive ruin, as the POWDER-PLOT?

Were we to ranſack the records of time; and memorials of all ages, it would, I'm perſuaded, be very difficult to find any thing in hiſtory, I do not ſay parallel in circumſtances, (for that ſure is impoſſible) but even equal in horror and guilt, to the deſign of this day.

To have entertain'd a *thought* only of deſtroying at once the very ſtrength and flower of the kingdom, *the three eſtates of the realm*, the *King* and *royal Family*, all the *Nobility*, together with the chief of the *Gentry* and *Commonalty*, and ſo of murdering, as it were, the whole nation in its repreſentatives; was dreadfully ſhocking and deteſtable. But had it ſtopt here, had it gone no farther than bare *imagination*, it might perhaps have paſſed for no worſe than that wild conceit of a certain Roman Emperor, who wiſh'd that the whole people of *Rome* had but *one neck*, that he might have the pleaſure of diſpatching them at a ſtroke, with one deciſive, compendious blow. But now, to carry this horrid thought into *fact* and *execution*, actually to *contrive* and *attempt* what the other conceived only in *wiſh* and *deſire*, and to do this by ſuch an horrible expedient as neither wiſdom cou'd foreſee, nor power defeat; this was ſuch a *ſingular*, *refined* piece of villany, ſo replete at once with both horrour and ſubtlety, as beſpeaks it to be indeed *infernal*, and cou'd be the iſſue of none but the grand authour of all miſchief, the very father of fraud, malice, and treachery. For this machination, we may obſerve, was of ſo ſubtle and exquiſite a nature, that there was no poſſibility of guarding againſt it. The contrivance and preparation being wholly out of view, and *faſhioned beneath in the earth*, none cou'd be apprized of it beforehand, otherwiſe than from the conſpirators themſelves: and again, the execution being ſo quick and fatal, (like *lightning*, the effects whereof prevent all notice) an eſcape was utterly impoſſible; ſince the accurſed hand

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wou'd have done it's work before it was known to be employed, and the mischief wou'd have been past all remedy before 'twas perceived, the *ruin* even preceding the *report*. Then again, this ruin was so *general* and *diffusive*, that it reached all orders and degrees of men; it wou'd have taken in *friends*, as well as enemies; and involved the most innocent, together with the most obnoxious: which consideration was indeed, under God, the very means that prevented it's execution.

And the *consequences*, no doubt, must have been answerable; the greatest consternation and confusion sure, the most dreadful ravage, and most bloody universal massacre, that Popery it self ever effected; so that *this* wou'd probably have eclipsed the glory of *the massacre at Paris*, and perhaps have superseded all future massacres.

But 'tis impossible to describe all the shocking and criminal circumstances of this most unnatural conspiracy: in which there was this *farther* aggravation of guilt (if it be indeed possible to admit any) that it was formed, not on the sudden, or under the influence of passion, or personal resentments; but upon mature consideration, and by many deliberate steps, in cool blood, and without any provocation: it being notorious that the *Roman Catholics* in *England* had at that time the absolute enjoyment both of their liberties and effects; made a part of the legislature it self; nay, and shared the *Royal favours* too, as the King himself acknowledges in his own book ‡.

But to crown all, this conspiracy received the approbation, I had almost said, *Sanction*, of the *H. See* it self. For such of the conspirators as escaped the hand of justice here, met with commendation at *Rome*, and even reward *. And those who suffered, some tell us, were very near being *canonized* for it. I suppose nothing but mere shame with-held the Church of *Rome* from doing that †. But had the plot succeeded, what honours, think we, wou'd not have been decreed? what painful pilgrimages would not have been undertaken, and costly offerings made, to the shrines of these *blessed saints* and martyrs, who had merited so highly of Mother Church, as for it's service to commit the most prodigious wickedness, that ever was invented? These are things that wou'd really exceed belief, had we not most undoubted evidence of their truth.

And yet these things are charg'd to the account of religion.—— Righteous God! that *religion* should have such a load of guilt laid upon it! Or

‡ See his Works.

* One of them, Father *Tesmond* was preferred to be the Pope's *Penitentiary*, vide Thuanum.

† However, two of them, *Ball* and *Garnet*, were inserted in the Jesuits catalogue of *English Martyrs*.

 that

that any thing which bears that ſacred name ſhould be proſtituted to ſuch vile purpoſes! ſhould prompt men to ſuch deteſtable iniquities! ſhould extinguiſh thus all the natural, inborn ſentiments of humanity it ſelf; transforming men into *wolves* and *tygers*, or into ſomething, if poſſible, *more ſavage than* wolves and tygers: for *they* purſue their *natural* prey only, and never deſtroy but to ſatisfy *hunger* and *neceſſity:* whereas theſe *tygers in human ſhape*, theſe *wolves in ſheeps cloathing* ſlay and perſecute without regret and remorſe, not for ſelf-preſervation or ſecurity, but purely from a principle of hatred, enmity, and inbred rancour toward all that differ from them in opinion, and whom they are pleaſed to term *Heretics.* I cannot indeed aſſert theſe to be the ſentiments of every *individual* in the Church of *Rome:* many of them, I am willing to believe, are much better than their principles, *victi bonitate naturæ.* But theſe are unqueſtionably the ſentiments of the *bulk* of that communion, who are under the influence of their leaders, and who never fail to act accordingly. Much more are they the ſentiments of thoſe *leaders* themſelves, only with this aggravation: *They* in their converſions, contrary to the Apoſtles practice, *ſeek not us, but OURS:* for I believe 'tis no breach of charity to think, that the governing part of that Church, thoſe who are in the ſecret, and have the immediate management of that gainful ſcheme we call *Popery*, have ſomewhat more in view than the bare making of proſelytes, or puniſhing heretics for conſcience ſake: They look with a wiſhful eye after thoſe *goodly poſſeſſions*, that wealth and power, which heretofore they drew ſo plentifully from this iſland, which they loſt at the Reformation, but which they ſtill long earneſtly for the recovery of. But to return:

God would not ſuffer this their execrable deviſe to take effect. His all-ſeeing eye penetrated into thoſe deſperate ſnares, which were hid for us; and his all-ſearching wiſdom opened a way for our eſcape. For while theſe wicked plotters *encouraged themſelves in miſchief, and communed how they might lay ſnares privily, ſaying, Who ſhall ſee us?* God *ſuddenly ſhot at them with a ſwift arrow; yea and made them fall by their own tongue.* He, whoſe *eyes are upon the ways of men, and who ſeeth all their goings*; from whom *there is no darkneſs, nor ſhadow of death, where the workers of iniquity can hide themſelves*; He, to whom *Hell* itſelf *is naked, and deſtruction hath no covering*; He diſcloſed theſe depths of *Satan, this myſtery of iniquity*; diſcloſed it in the very nick of danger, when fire was juſt ready to be ſet to that fatal train, which with one blaſt of deſtruction muſt have diſſipated our religion, liberty, and whatever elſe is dear and valuable to us. And this diſcovery was brought about in ſo ſingular and ſurprizing a manner, that every one who *heareth it*, muſt

ſay,

ſay, this hath God done, and perceive that it his *work: This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.*

BUT we have as yet taken but an *half-view* of the bleſſing of this day: God was pleaſed to make it again memorable to us for a *ſecond* deliverance; a *deliverance*, differing indeed in circumſtances from the former, but ſo far of the ſame kind as it was from the ſame implacable and blood-thirſty Enemy. For

The *Romaniſts* being thus fruſtrated of their horrid purpoſe by the timely and *providential* diſcovery of the powder-plot; yet gave not over their peſtilent deſigns, but purſued them with freſh vigour and alacrity in the ſucceeding reign. Witneſs that inhuman and bloody *Maſſacre in Ireland*, wherein (according to their own Accounts) above an 150,000 Proteſtants were butchered in cold blood; another terrible teſtimony *what ſpirit they are of*, and that they will ſtick at nothing, though ever ſo abominable, to promote what they impiouſly ſtile the cauſe of God. —— And indeed the miſerable confuſions and diſtractions which accompanied almoſt that whole reign, and which ended not but with the murder of the ſovereign, and the expulſion of the whole royal family, gave them ſuch great advantages againſt us, as laid the foundation for thoſe bolder and more vigorous inſults and incurſions which they made upon us ſome years after. For having at laſt got *a Prince* upon the throne, who was confeſſedly *of their own perſuaſion*, (a natural conſequence of thoſe ſuperſtitious and tyrannical principles which they had infuſed into him during his long *exile* among them;) they now ventured to pull off the maſk which they had hitherto worn, and made ſuch open, haſty, and violent advances upon our liberties both religious, and civil, that the *Reformation* loſt ground daily, and they had within the compaſs of four years very near demoliſhed that comely ſtructure, which had been above an hundred in rearing. Then did our ſtreets ſwarm with Jeſuits and Popiſh emiſſaries of every ſort, as with *Locuſts*; and Romiſh ſuperſtition diſplayed all its fooleries, without check and controul, in ſuch gaudy colours as ſerve to attract the regard of the unthinking *many*, who can ſee no farther than the outward appearance. But this was the leaſt part, and indeed but the *ſurface*, of the evil: For, by degrees, the very foundations of liberty and property were ſtruck at, rights and privileges became precarious things, and we were liable to be ſtript at pleaſure of all our antient charters and immunities, unleſs we would redeem them by illegal compliances. The very *militia* of the kingdom was, a great part of it, put into the hands of *profeſſed Papiſts*, the freedom of *Parliaments* was infringed, and *the Sovereign* (in league with *France* too) aſ-

ſumed

ſumed an unheard of power of *diſpenſing with our laws*, thoſe very laws on which the *Sovereignty* itſelf is founded. Thus was our *Conſtitution ſubverted*. And to complete all, effectual meaſures were taken to entail tyranny and ſuperſtition upon the ſucceding generations.

Under the ſenſe of theſe miſeries, and the proſpect of nothing but their being render'd perpetual, the hearts of all ſerious and conſiderate men began to melt, and *to fail them for fear, and for looking after thoſe things that were* then *coming upon* this kingdom. To ſpeak, in the prophets ſtile, *the people were much pained, and all faces gathered blackneſs*. It was indeed a very gloomy and uncomfortable Face of things; and the terrors of Popery, I have been well aſſured, ſeemed very frightful at that time, however we have learn'd to make light of them ſince.

But the ſame Divine Goodneſs which we had before ſo often experienced, interpoſed here alſo; God would not forſake his church in this dangerous conjuncture, but ſent us ſeaſonable relief in our diſtreſs. For, *when the Enemy* was thus pouring in upon us *like a flood*, ready to overrun and over-turn all things, *the ſpirit of the Lord did lift up a ſtandard againſt him* * He put it into the hearts of many great and publick-ſpirited perſons, even the principal of the nation, to implore the aſſiſtance of a PRINCE of that illuſtrious *houſe*, which had been long famed for being the ſcourge of tyrants, the patrons of the oppreſſed, and the great bulwark of religion and liberty: *who*, as he was ſo nearly allied to the crown of *England*, had the juſteſt reaſon in the world to take care of *his own* rights and intereſts, at the ſame time that his native goodneſs and generoſity led him to preſerve *ours*. This great and noble-ſpirited Prince did, at our earneſt and reiterated inſtances, *put his life in his hand*, and expoſe himſelf for our reſcue not only to the dangers of the ſea, and that tempeſt which actually overtook him there, retarding his paſſage for a while, but alſo to thoſe more dangerous ſtorms and tempeſts which awaited him on our ſhore, and which *Popiſh* fury and revenge, eſpecially when ſo much lay at ſtake, would not fail to excite againſt him. But God was pleaſed to crown the generous enterprize with the deſerved ſucceſs: The Romaniſts, conſcious of the badneſs of their cauſe, durſt not hazard ſo much as a ſingle trial of it; but the unhappy king, who had been ſo groſly miſled by their councils, ſoon abandoned his crown, and the body of the nation, regularly *convened*, did in gratitude, and with great unanimity, (ſo ſenſible were they then of their deliverance!) place it on the head of their glorious *deliverer*.

And this is that *other* ſignal mercy of the divine Providence, which alſo belongs to *this day*, and which ſhares the office of the *church* together

* Iſ. LIX. 19.

gether with the *former*. For it pleased God that *the same day* should carry a *double* signature of the divine favour upon it, and *twice* bear testimony to our deliverance from Popery. First from its *fraud* and *treachery*, the blackest treachery, and most closely concerted fraud, that ever were devised; and next from its avowed *tyranny and oppression*, when that pestilent spirit, which had hitherto been working covertly under-ground, now assaulted us openly and barefaced, and with undisguised insolence defied our *laws*, insulted our *religion*, and trampled on our *liberties:* And, had it not been repressed in time, who can doubt but it must quickly have extinguished them all three, since it came armed and back'd with *that very authority* which ought to have been our greatest security against it; and since *he*, who was by his office the guardian and protector of our church, was now become it's adversary, and obliged even upon principles of religion to endeavour the extirpation of it.

Had either of these attempts succeded, *we* should not now have been assembled, to return God thanks for the *preservation* of our Church and State; but probably in this very place, this sacred place, *Popish* eloquence would have exerted its powers in setting forth the glories of the *5th of November*, for having *ruined* the protestant religion, and in displaying the praises of those heroes who had been either the authors or the instruments of effecting that ruin. Had either of these attempts succeeded, we *Britons* should not at this day boast the blessing of a mild, equitable, and peaceful government, wherein every Subject enjoys his own in the utmost security and extent; but we must have been slaves and vassals to the court of *Rome* (the worst of slavery) and groan'd under those continual oppressions and corruptions, which are the necessary consequents of arbitrary power, and of the *Pope*'s intrigueing and intermeddling in the affairs of our state, as before the Reformation he constantly did. But praised be the Lord who blasted *both* these attempts, and will, we hope, blast all future attempts from that quarter: *Who did not give us over for a prey unto their teeth: but our soul escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowler; the snare was broken, and we were delivered. The Lord is known by the judgment that he executeth; for the wicked were snared in the work of their own hands, and fell themselves into the pit which they had made for others.*

III. and IV. And now to proceed as briefly as may be, to the two remaining heads of this discourse: After such *great things* as the *Lord our* God *hath done for us*, and *whereof we* this day *rejoice*, what *baseness*

and

and *ingratitude* would it be for us to forſake him, and to turn again to *thoſe abominations* from which he hath ſo often, and ſo wonderfully reſcued us! Muſt it not aſſuredly at length prove our *utter ruin and deſtruction?* For, *after all that is come upon us; ſeeing that thou our God haſt given us deliverance*, ſuch a *twofold*, repeated *deliverance*, as we on this day commemorate, *ſhould we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity* (make alliance) *with the people of theſe abominations; wouldſt thou not be angry with us, till thou hadſt conſumed us, ſo that there ſhould be no remnant nor eſcaping?* 'Tis urged in ſcripture as the groſſeſt aggravation of ſin to *return with the dog to his vomit, and with the ſow that was waſhed to a wallowing in the mire.* For the divine goodneſs and mercy will not *for ever ſtrive* with obſtinacy and perverſeneſs; and unleſs we *ourſelves* are *willing* to be ſaved, *ſalvation* itſelf cannot ſave us.

One would think there ſhould be but little need at this time a-day; after the *Reformation* hath been amongſt us for near two centuries, and we have ſo often, and ſo ſeverely felt the dire effects of a Popiſh ſpirit; that there ſhould be but little need, I ſay, to caution our hearers, againſt returning, or making any approaches to Popery. And yet the vigorous progreſs it hath made of late, and the notorious *increaſe of Papiſts* not only in this great city, but in other parts of the kingdom alſo, are an undeniable proof that this caution is no unneceſſary one, but that there is more than ordinary occaſion to warn men againſt this fearful evil. For the increaſe of Papiſts, and growth of Popery here in *England*, carries evidently one of theſe two conſequences along with it: Either it ſhews that they have ſome *new deſign* in agitation, another *plot* perhaps on foot, to advance the *Catholick* cauſe; (for the gathering of clouds does not more ſurely preſage a ſtorm, than the extraordinary reſort of Romiſh prieſts and jeſuits into this kingdom does ſome impending miſchief:) or elſe, (which is ſtill worſe, and God avert!) it muſt argue a greater *diſpoſition in our own people*, than formerly, *toward the Romiſh communion*, that they are better reconciled to this monſter, and have not now ſuch ſhocking and formidable thoughts of it, as heretofore.

But is this poſſible? Is it indeed poſſible that ſuch a groſs infatuation can ſeize upon *Proteſtants*, nay the Proteſtants of *theſe nations*, who have perhaps ſuffered more from that mercileſs religion, than all the *other* Proteſtants of Chriſtendom put together? Are we grown *ſick* of our own felicity, and ſo ſurfeited with the long ſweets of *religious liberty*, that we muſt needs exchange them for the grateful viciſſitude of *ſpiritual*

tual chains and fetters? Or do we really think that all the horrid talc we have been told of Popery are mere *fable* and *romance*, and that th dread of it is no better than a *bugbear* to frighten children with, an to quiet them when they are froward?--- O let us beware that we d not provoke God to undeceive us of this our error by ſome *woful* ex periment! to give us ſome freſh conviction of the reality of this evil and bring us again under the chaſtiſement of that *rod* which we nov make light of, though we have heretofore ſo ſeverely *ſmarted* from it!

But after all, one would think it ſhould be no hard matter to con vince any man of common ſenſe, even of the meaneſt capacity, how *i* a thing *Popery* is, as long as *this* day continues in our calendar. Here tofore, indeed, and immediately upon the *Reformation*, it requir'd ſom cloſeneſs of *reaſoning*, ſome ſubtilty of *wit*, and a competent *knowledg* of *antiquity* to confute Popery: But the *5th of November* hath furniſh'd every body with a ready, and moſt forcible confutation of it. For tho every man is by no means capable of diſcovering the falſhood of al the Romiſh *tenets* and *opinions*; the impiety of its pretenſe to *infal libility*, and the arrogance of its claim to a *ſupremacy* over all chriſtia churches; the vanity of *purgatory* and *pilgrimages*; the idolatry of *image worſhip*, and *praying to ſaints*; the unwarrantableneſs of *indulgences* the indecency, as well as hurtful conſequence of *auricular confeſſion*; to gether with the monſtrous abſurdities of *tranſubſtantiation*; in ſhort, th unjuſtifiableneſs of all its doctrines: Yet no one can be at a loſs to di cern the horror of its PRACTICES; its traiterous *plots*, *conſpiracies*, *a ſaſſinations*, *maſſacres*, *holy leagues and covenants* to extirpate hereticks *foreign invaſions*, *inteſtine ſeditions*, *open rebellions*, ſavage *tortures* an *butcheries* in all the ways that cruelty itſelf can invent. Nor is th wickedneſs of its *principles* leſs palpable; "that a good *intention* ſancti fies the *act*, tho' never ſo wicked; "that any thing is lawful againſt *here ticks*; nay "that 'tis meritorious to deſtroy them by any means wha ever, and that "no *promiſe*, *oath*, or *obligation* of any kind, is bindin to the contrary, but the *Pope* may *diſſolve* it at pleaſure; and "that h can alſo diſcharge ſubjects of their *allegiance*, to their governors, and rend the very foundations of ſociety and government. Bleſſed *princ ples*! and *practices* conformable! Now the argument ariſing from henc comes home to every man's *ſenſes*, as well as *judgment*; it can never fa of being *underſtood*, becauſe 'tis ſure to be *felt*; and we are convinc'd its force by the ſtrongeſt of all convictions, our *own fatal experienc* Let but any one acquaint himſelf with the hiſtory of this day, the tran ſactions of the *Powder-plot*, and of the late *Revolution*, and he cannot fa

to have a *just abhorrence* of Popery, unless he himself is of the same bloody tyrannick disposition, he there reads of.

But there are also other effectual remedies against this evil: The *principal*, and wherein I heartily wish we were less defective, is to manifest upon all occasions a just and proper *regard for* the interests *of religion in general.* We cannot possibly give the *Popish* religion a greater advantage over us, than by being *indifferent* and unconcerned about *any.* For, as the bulk of mankind are ever prone to extremes, and *irreligion* and *superstition*, naturally produce each other, *irreligion* in one age, making way for *superstition* in the next; I believe the grand cause of Popery's gaining such ground of late, has been the *profane* and *libertine spirit* of the present age, which vents itself in invectives against all religious order and establishment, and has endeavour'd in the most flagrant manner to sap the foundations of Christianity itself. This has greatly unsettled the minds of many serious and well-disposed christians, but who at the same are not so considerate, as to reflect how much the *Papists themselves* are at the bottom of all this, that *Popery* itself strikes in with this licentious spirit, and readily *joins* with the adversaries of our common Christianity, under whatever shape and disguise: wisely considering (as that Church seems wholly built upon *Policy)* that if they can but once unsettle people, and turn them adrift in matters of religion, they may then the more easily be brought over to *them*; because *Scepticism* and want of principles is an unsatisfactory state of the mind, wherein it cannot rest long, and most men will espouse and embrace even the *worst* of religions; rather than have *none* at all. Especially, as the Romanists insinuate farther, that *irreligion* and *infidelity* are the natural, genuine effects of the *Reformation*, and can be cured by nothing but by a return into the bosom of the *Catholic* Church, as they falsely term theirs. But of this error 'tis in our power to convince them effectually, by adhering steddily and uniformly to the doctrine of our own Church, *the Church of England as it stands established upon the principles of the Reformation. I beseech you, therefore Brethren,* (in the words of St. *Paul) to mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which they have learned, and to avoid them, for they that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own Belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.* Rom. xvi. 17, 18.

And as a still farther means conducive to the forementioned end, oh that we could be once persuaded to lay aside our party-quarrels and contentions, our uncharitable heats and animosities, and to cultivate *peace, harmony*, and *good agrement* amongst ourselves! Are we not yet sensible,

ble, that *a houſe divided againſt it ſelf cannot long ſtand*, and that *faction* hath, ſooner, or later, been the overthrow of all States and Communities? Or are we ignorant, that this is the ſtanding policy, the grand artifice of *the Church of Rome*, who vigorouſly purſue that old maxim, *divide, & impera*; *Divide, and govern*; and ſtudy by all means poſſible to prevent an *union among Proteſtants*, that ſo they may in the end break, and get the maſtery of them? Should it not be our wiſdom then to turn this policy upon themſelves, and to diſappoint their malice by uniting at leaſt as readily for our own *preſervation*, as they do for our *ruin?*

But to draw at laſt toward a concluſion: We ſhall not do juſtice to this auſpicious day, unleſs we remember, gratefully remember, that *this* laid the foundation and baſis of our *preſent happy ſettlement:* that to *this* we owe the invaluable bleſſing of his preſent MAJESTY's acceſſion to the crown of theſe realms, and of his wiſe, juſt, and gracious reign over us; who conſults nothing ſo much as the general welfare of his ſubjects, who ſecures us in the full and peaceable enjoyment of all our rights as well religious as civil, and perfectly makes good thoſe great and beneficial ends for which the crown was firſt ſettled in his *illuſtrious Line.* ——— May it long continue there a felicity to theſe Kingdoms, and an everlaſting honour to the late glorious *Revolution!* ——— To which it is alſo owing, that we have a QUEEN upon the throne of ſuch eſtabliſh'd virtue and conſtancy, that ſhe refuſed the dignity of an *Empreſs*, rather than quit her profeſſion of the *Proteſtant Religion.* May this illuſtrious example have its due weight with us, and make us aſhamed to be wanting in zeal toward *that*, for which we ought to quit every thing, even life it ſelf, if it ſhould pleaſe God to call us to ſuch a tryal!

Let us then reſolutely *ſtand faſt in the liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made us free, and not be again entangled in that yoke of bondage, which we, as well as our fathers, are unable to bear.* How ſenſeleſs and beſotted ſhall we appear to the whole world, if we ſhould at laſt forfeit and give up all the good fruits and effects of our former deliverances, by unnaturally joyning hands with the very enemies, we were delivered from; and by nouriſhing that *factious, turbulent*, and *diſcontented* ſpirit, which is now arrived to ſuch an height, that it cannot help ſhewing it ſelf in our *open ſtreets!* cannot forbear INSULTING MAGISTRACY *it ſelf* under its own eye, and to the very face!

Suffer me, my brethren, before I quite conclude, to expoſtulate with you a little, concerning *this licentious humour*, or, to ſpeak more juſtly, this daring *outrage* upon the public peace. Conſider, I beſeech you, the *inhumanity* of ſuch a proceedure; how baſe, how unmanly, and un-

generous

generous it is; how deſtructive of all decency and regularity, of all order and good government! Conſider again, how *unjuſt* and unreaſonable it is in it ſelf, and how utterly inconſiſtent with that univerſal rule of equity, *to do to others as we would be done unto!* And conſider yet farther, that this is an evil of the moſt *dangerous* and fearful *conſequence* imaginable, ſuch as no man can ſet bounds to, nor ſee the end of. For MOBS and TUMULTS are ungovernable things, entirely ungovernable: no one knows on whom they may fall next, nor where they will ſtop One thing only we are ſure of, they muſt in the end return upon the heads of the authors and abettors of them.

GOD grant we may all of us *know in this our day the things which belong to our peace, before they are hid from our eyes!*

F I N I S.