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PROTESTANT DISSENT IN ENGLAND
IN THE REIGN OF JAMES II

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PLEASE NOTE:

that dates are Old Style except where indication is given to the contrary.

that, to avoid confusion, it has been assumed that the year began on 1 January.

that spelling has been modernised in quotations from primary sources

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

(In the case of printed sources, unless specified otherwise, the place of publication is London)

- Baschet Transcripts by Armand Baschet of French Ambassadors' Despatches, in PRO 31/3.
- Bennet , Memorial Benjamin Bennet. , A Memorial of the Reformation and of England's Delivered from Popery and Arbitrary Power (1717).
- Besse Joseph Besse, Collection of the Sufferings of the People called Quakers, two volumes (1753).
- Birch, Tillotson T. Birch, Life of John Tillotson (1753).
- BM. Add. MS. British Museum, Additional Manuscript.
- Bolam C. G. Bolam, J. Goring, H. L. Short and Roger Thomas, The English Presbyterians (1968).
- Braithwaite W. C. Braithwaite, The Second Period of Quakerism (2nd edit. 1961, ed. H.J.Cadbury).
- Brockett A. Brockett, Nonconformity in Exeter: 1650-1875 (Manchester 1962).
- Browne J. Browne, Congregationalism in Norfolk and Suffolk (1877).
- Bunyan J. Brown, John Bunyan: His Life Times and Work, revised by F. M. Harrison (1928).
- Buranelli V. Buranelli, The King and The Quaker (Philadelphia 1962).
- Burnet Gilbert Burnet, History of My Own Time, two volumes (1724).
- Calamy, Abridgement E. Calamy, An Abridgement of Mr. Baxter's History of His Life and Times, two volumes (1713) (Quotations from volume one, unless otherwise stated).
- Calamy, Continuation E. Calamy, A Continuation of the Account of the Ministers who were Ejected or Silenced after the Restoration of 1660, by or before the Act of Uniformity, two volumes (1727).
- Calamy, Howe E. Calamy, Life of John Howe (1724).
- Carpenter, Compton E. Carpenter, The Protestant Bishop, being a Life of Henry Compton (1956).

- Carpenter, Tenison E. Carpenter, Thomas Tenison Archbishop of Canterbury, His Life and Times (1948).
- CHST Congregationalist Historical Society Transactions.
- CJ Journals of the House of Commons.
- CMHS Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society.
- CR A. G. Matthews, Calamy Revised: Being a Revision of Edmund Calamy's Account of the Ministers and Others Ejected and Silenced, 1660-1662 (Oxford 1934).
- Cragg I G. R. Cragg, From Puritanism to the Age of Reason (Camb. 1950).
- Cragg II G. R. Cragg, Puritanism in the Period of the Great Persecution, 1660-88 (Camb. 1957).
- Crosby T. Crosby, A History of the English Baptists, four volumes (1738-1740).
- CSPD Calendars of State Papers Domestic.
- CTB Calendars of Treasury Books.
- Dalrymple Sir John Dalrymple, Memoirs of Great Britain and Ireland, two volumes (1771-3).
- Densham & Ogle W. Densham and J. Ogle, The Congregational Churches of Dorset (1899).
- DNB Dictionary of National Biography.
- Drysdale A. H. Drysdale, History of the Presbyterians in England (1889).
- Duckett Sir George Duckett (ed), Penal Laws and Test Act, Questions touching their Repeal Propounded in 1687-88 by James II, two volumes (1882-~~85~~).
- DWL Dr. Williams' Library.
- Ellis G. A. Ellis (ed), The Ellis Correspondence: letters written during the years 1686, 1687 and 1688 and addressed to John Ellis Esq., Secretary to the Commissioners of His Majesty's Revenue in Ireland (1829).
- Emerson W. R. Emerson, Monmouth's Rebellion (New Haven 1951).
- Evelyn E. S. de Beer (ed), The Diary of John Evelyn, six volumes (Oxford 1955).

- Every G. Every, *The High Church Party, 1688-1718* (1956).
- Gordon A. Gordon (ed), *Freedom after Ejection: a Review (1690-92) of Presbyterian and Congregational Nonconformity in England and Wales* (Manchester 1917).
- Grey (Debates) Anchtel Grey, *Debates of the House of Commons from the year 1667 to the year 1694, ten volumes* (1763).
- Henry, Diaries & Letters Philip Henry, *Diaries and Letters*, ed. M. H. Lee (1882).
- Henry MSS The incoming correspondence of Philip Henry, not included in 'Diaries and Letters'; and Sermon notes. DWL.
- Heywood Oliver Heywood, *His Autobiography, Diaries, Anecdote and Event Books*, four volumes, ed. J. H. Turner (1882-5).
- HMC Historical Manuscripts Commission.
- Ivimey J. Ivimey, *A History of the English Baptists*, four volumes (1811-1830).
- Janney S. M. Janney, *Life of William Penn, with Selections from His Correspondence and Autobiography* (Philadelphia 1852).
- JEH *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*.
- JFHS *Journal of the Friends' Historical Society*.
- JPHS *Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society of England*.
- Jolly Thomas Jolly, *The Note Book of the Reverend Thomas Jolly. AD.1671-1693*, Chetham Society volume 33 (Manchester 1895).
- Jones J. R. Jones, *The Revolution of 1688 in England* (1972).
- Kennett White Kennett, *A Complete History of England*, three volumes (2nd edit. 1719).
- Kiffin William Kiffin, *Some Remarkable Passages in the Life of William Kiffin*, ed. with notes, by William Orme (1823).
- Kitchin G. Kitchin, *Sir Roger L'Estrange* (1913).
- Lacey D. R. Lacey, *Dissent and Parliamentary Politics in England, 1661-1689*, (New Jersey 1969).

- LJ Journals of the House of Lords.
- Luttrell Narcissus Luttrell, A Brief Relation of State Affairs from September 1678 to April 1714, six volumes (Oxford 1857).
- Lyon Turner MSS a collection of primary sources of the history of Nonconformity principally in Bristol, Exeter, and Leicestershire, made and transcribed by Professor G. Lyon Turner between c.1900-1920. DWL.
- Mackintosh Sir James Mackintosh, History of the Revolution in England in 1688 (1834).
- Martindale Adam Martindale, The Life of Adam Martindale Written by Himself, Chetham Soc. (Manchester 1845).
- M'Crie T. M'Crie, Annals of English Presbytery (1872).
- Miall J. G. Miall, Congregationalism in Yorkshire (1868).
- Middx. CR Middlesex County Records, ed. J. C. Jeaffreson, IV (1892).
- Miller J. Miller, Popery and Politics in England 1660-88 (Camb. 1973).
- Morrice Roger Morrice, The Entr'ing Book, Being an Historical Register of Occurrences from April 1677 to April 1691. Morrice MSS, P. Q. and R. DWL.
- Neal D. Neal, A History of the Puritans, revised J. Toulmin (1797).
- Nuttall and Chadwick G. F. Nuttall and Owen Chadwick (eds), From Uniformity to Unity: 1662-1962 (1962).
- N.S. New Style
- OR [Official] Return of the Names of Every Member Returned to Serve in Each Parliament, Part 1, 1213-1702. Accounts Papers, Session of 1878.
- Palmer Samuel Palmer, The Nonconformists Memorial (1802).
- Penn M. M. Dunn, William Penn Politics and Conscience (New Jersey 1967).
- Perry G. G. Perry, A History of the Church of England, two volumes (1862).

- Powicke F. J. Powicke, *The Reverend Richard Baxter, Under the Cross, 1662-1691* (1927). The second volume of a two volume biography.
- PRO Public Records Office.
- RB Richard Baxter, *Reliquiae Baxterianae*, ed. M. Sylvester (1696).
- Reresby A. Browning (ed), *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby* (Glasgow 1936).
- Roberts G. Roberts, *The Life, Progresses and Rebellion of James, Duke of Monmouth*, two volumes (1844).
- Sewel Willem Sewel, *The History of the Rise, Increase and Progress of the Christian People called Quakers*, two volumes (3rd. ed. 1795). Originally published in Dutch, 1717.
- Simon Patrick, Works Simon Patrick, *Works*, ed. A. Taylor, nine volumes (1858).
- SP State Papers, Public Records Office.
- ST A Complete Collection of State Trials and Proceedings upon High Treason and Other Crimes and Misdemeanours (2nd edit. 1730).
- TBHS Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society.
- TRHS Transactions of the Royal Historical Society.
- Turner G. L. Turner (ed), *Original Records of Early Nonconformity under Persecution and Indulgence*, three volumes (1911-14).
- VCH Victoria County History.
- Walter Wilson MSS transcripts of sources relating to the history of Presbyterian and Congregationalist congregations in England up to 1820, collected and transcribed by Walter Wilson.
- Warwick CR Warwick County Records, ed. H. C. Johnson (Warwick 1953). VIII.
- Welwood, Memoirs James Welwood, *Memoirs of the Most Material Transactions in England for the last hundred Years* (1710).
- Whitehead George Whitehead, *The Christian Progress of.. George Whitehead* (1725).
- Whiting C. E. Whiting, *Studies in English Puritanism 1660-88* (1931).

- Williams Practical Discourses on Several Important
Subjects, six volumes (1738).
- Wilson Walter Wilson, Dissenting Churches in London,
four volumes (1808).

INTRODUCTION

1

A great deal of what appeared new in the religious policies of James II had already been tried in the previous reign. The Restoration ecclesiastical settlement had left some problems unsolved and had created others. The opportunity of amalgamating the two largest religious communities in the country had not been taken and the Presbyterians, who took the credit for bringing in the King, had not only been left without comprehension but were persecuted in common with the sects. And the sects themselves had not only been persecuted but politically excluded. Given these facts - and added to them, its active sympathy with an excluded group which, it seemed, could not be freed unless the Dissenters were too - it was not surprising that the government should periodically revert to the expedient of ameliorating dissenting grievances under the ecclesiastical settlement as a means of ensuring civil peace and tipping the political balance.

In general the Church - with the exception of a small, mainly London-based comprehension party - stood for the persecution of Dissenters, until the crisis of 1688 effected a dramatic change in her interest. The attitudes and practices of Dissent in the face of Church persecution and occasional Court toleration presented a much more intricate picture. A wide variety of stances was adopted by a whole spectrum of groups; to be rendered even more complex when Church and Court joined forces to destroy Dissent and the Whig political interest after 1681. The more intense persecution thereafter produced changes in Nonconformity - social deterioration, the

growth of quietism, the devolution of congregations, the decline of the ministries and rebellious sympathies amongst the laity in districts where Nonconformists were numerous yet persecuted - which, together with the political attitudes which had hardened by 1685, were to be of great importance during James II's reign. When in 1686 James abandoned the policy of persecution which he and Charles had pursued in conjunction with the Church since 1681 and began an attempt to enlist Dissenting support for his political and religious programme, these attitudes and changes predisposed most groups against collaboration and rendered them of minimal use to any political alliance, whether they were willing to co-operate or not. When Dissenters began to be subjected to converse pressures from Church and Court, the inter- and intra-sectarian fissures which divided them dictated the amount and degree of support either side could expect.

In the course of 1685 mounting persecution served to confirm the attitudes evident among Nonconformists before the accession; though it was undertaken by 'right-wing' Anglicans who saw an opportunity to extirpate Nonconformity in alliance with the Crown it served to revive the Dissenters' visceral apprehension of Popery and confirm their basic suspicion of a Popish King. It also served to provoke a Nonconformist rebellion in the West which in turn confirmed the King's own suspicions of the Dissenters.

The influence of the Quaker courtiers, and the special position of William Penn, helps to explain why the King, despite this suspicion, began to look on Dissenters as potential allies in a programme aimed at toleration and political emancipation for Dissenters and Roman Catholics. The first moves which signalled the volte face - positive instances of attempts to protect Quakers from the effects of persecution - may be dated from March 1686. During the last half of 1686

James was also using his dispensing power to protect Baptists and was prepared to use it, when his intervention was solicited, to protect any Nonconformists.

The limited success of this policy of selective relief, because of the resistance put up by the agencies of persecution, was among the factors which prompted the introduction of the Declaration of Indulgence of April 1687. The suspicions entertained by Nonconformists (after an initial outburst of enthusiasm) as to the King's motives in granting this Declaration, and their reluctance to commit themselves to his programme, were the natural consequence of developments evident as early as 1685; only small groups of Dissenters, many of whom had received a pardon or felt the benefits of the dispensing power in the course of 1686, were disposed to view 'enticement' favourably. Hence, despite the vigour of Nonconformist religious activity, 1687 produced only addresses from scattered groups of believers and the faint hope that those which contained undertakings of support would be meaningful in electoral terms.

The importance of attracting Dissenters away from a tolerationist policy pursued by the Court toward a comprehension policy held out by the Church, was foreseen by the Latitudinarian clergy as early as November 1685. But, despite the pamphlet war with the Catholics, which improved the image of the Church in Nonconformist eyes, little was done to achieve this end, and Anglican-Dissenting relations did not begin to soften until the end of 1687. Signs of a rapprochement evident in May 1687 disappeared in a reaction against both the Church and the Dutch interest which took place among Dissenters in the second half of the year and which The Letter to a Dissenter did nothing to offset. The rapprochement achieved in the

early months of 1688 received the support of the High Church divines as a result of the crisis of the seven bishops, and had as its upshot a scheme for toleration and comprehension sponsored by the Archbishop of Canterbury in July. This scheme, and the offers which preceded it, served to harden Dissenters still further against offers of local government office.

The pivotal position between Church and Court which the Dissenters occupied in the constitutional struggle from 1686-1688 inevitably raised hopes among all groups of achieving the religious and political goals for which they had striven since the Restoration in a permanent Settlement. The group favouring comprehension, and suspicious of toleration, and more especially of toleration based on a prerogative act, responded to the overtures of the Church. But as far as the other dissenting factions were concerned, whose aims lay in the direction of some kind of toleration and from whom the King might reasonably have expected help for his programme: 'enticement' had been tried before, its methods, and the constitutional dilemma they entailed, were more than familiar. The attitudes which had evolved from this familiarity and the enhanced prestige of the Nonconformist comprehension party as the Church took on the position of a bulwark against Catholicism, ensured the failure of enticement.

The remodelled corporations, shrievalty and magistracy of 1687-8 did receive a modicum of Nonconformist support. Many of those who filled the official positions made vacant by the removal of recalcitrant Anglicans and who staffed the King's electoral machine, however, were drawn from a medley of dissident groupings. Some were isolated, poor and powerless - the effects of long years of persecution - to whom the constitutional issue, if understood at all, seemed remote. Another was made up of individuals who had changed

sides or adopted the dissenting label merely to increase their usefulness to the Court, but who were not owned by any of the sects. Others who collaborated with the King's programme were in a precarious position, having been involved in the Rye House Plot and the Monmouth Rebellion, and, though shunned by the sects, owed their pardons to the King's clemency and were eager to eke a livelihood out of the King's generosity. There were urban groupings, which included Dissenters, who saw persecution as the major threat to their economic interest and were prepared to take a hand in rendering its cessation permanent. In some areas groups in local politics saw an opportunity of paying off old scores by replacing the Tories on the borough corporations; individuals, ousted from political position during the concluding years of Charles II's reign, who might more properly be styled 'Whig' than 'Dissenter'. There was a disproportionate number of Roman Catholics and more Tories than is usually assumed. Finally there was a handful of relatively prominent Dissenters who believed in toleration and thought that the King did too, who were not from one but many sects and who, whilst still in sympathy with the King's objectives, had lost sympathy with his methods by June 1688.

The reports of James II's electoral agents were inaccurate and any hopes of a Nonconformist Parliament which they generated were unfounded. Many Dissenters who were appointed to official positions were, as time went on, increasingly opposed to the King's objectives, and it is more than probable that all Dissenters who had been MPs previously held views which were incompatible with the King's objectives.

From April 1687 Dissenters enjoyed toleration and political emancipation. The Revolution led to the imposition of limits on these freedoms. The Nonconformist groups who looked forward to

comprehension and welcomed William's landing as the event that would bring it about, were disappointed; the landing removed the sense of crisis which had made comprehension appear advantageous to Anglicans. For groups who looked for a parliamentary toleration and greeted William's arrival with suspicion, the Toleration Act represented more than they had hoped for; but it encouraged tendencies toward inter-sectarian strife and fragmentation, and doomed the cherished scheme for union between the two larger sects. For those who looked to the Convention to enact political emancipation and hoped for a favoured position in the new regime, the Revolution represented a return to the pre-1687 restrictions and forced them to resort to the familiar device of occasional conformity to secure a voice in Parliament and local government.

Hitherto the extent of Nonconformist involvement in James II's policy of toleration has been in considerable doubt, and the motives of those who refused and those who accepted his advances have been caricatured or misunderstood, and a variety of other misconceptions harboured.⁽¹⁾ A major reason for this has been the fact that much of the work which has been done on Nonconformity in the period has

(1) T. B. Macaulay, *A History of England from the Accession of James II*, ed. C. H. Firth (1914) II, 858, 864-6, 870, 871-2, 872-84, 982-4, 991-2; J. P. Kenyon, *Robert Spencer Earl of Sunderland* (1958), 186, 188, 200; J. Carswell, *The Descent on England* (1969), 106-7; J. R. Jones, *The Revolution in England in 1688* (1972), 11, 14, 51-52, 98-99, 114-115.

been in the nature of sectarian apologetics⁽¹⁾ or has been limited in scope to an individual,⁽²⁾ to the comprehension theme, which has received a new vogue in the age of ecumenism,⁽³⁾ or to a particular group;⁽⁴⁾ or has arisen from the fact that the glib generalisms of Whig history die hard.⁽⁵⁾ A further reason has been a failure to appreciate the complex nature of the post Restoration Nonconformist spectrum, with its inter- and intra-sectarian fissures and the political attitudes which attached to them.

2

The most evident, and perhaps most fundamental division was

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- (1) e.g. D. Neal, *A History of the Puritans* (revised edit. 1797); A. H. Drysdale, *History of the Presbyterians in England* (1889); H. M. Dexter, *The Congregationalism of the last Three Hundred Years* (1880); R. W. Dale, *A History of English Congregationalism* (1907); J. Ivimey, *A History of the English Baptists (1811-1830)*; W. T. Whitley, *A History of British Baptists* (1923); A. C. Underwood, *A History of English Baptists* (1947); W. C. Braithwaite, *The Second Period of Quakerism*, 2nd edit. ed. H. J. Cadbury (1961). Almost all of the regional histories of Nonconformity published in the last, and the first two decades of the present, century fall within the same category and have had to be used as historical sources with extreme caution. Details of these will be found in the Bibliography.
- (2) e.g. V. Buranelli, *The King and the Quaker* (1962); M. M. Dunn, *William Penn Politics and Conscience* (1967); F. J. Powicke, *The Reverend Richard Baxter Under the Cross 1662-1691* (1927); G. F. Nuttall, *Richard Baxter* (1965).
- (3) G. F. Nuttall and Owen Chadwick (eds), *From Uniformity to Unity 1662-1962* (1962); C. G. Bolam, J. Goring, H. L. Short and Roger Thomas, *The English Presbyterians* (1968). The latter work does not confine itself to the comprehension scheme but has nothing to say about the political role of the Presbyterians.
- (4) D. R. Lacey, *Dissent and Parliamentary Politics in England 1661-1689* (1969). This is by far the most scholarly work on Nonconformist history in the period, but Lacey mainly concerns himself with the dissenting politicians, more especially those in Parliament under Charles II, James II and in the Convention.
- (5) One fairly recent work on Nonconformity which fits into none of these categories is G. R. Cragg, *Puritanism in the Age of the Great Persecution* (1958). Apart from two brief chapters of narrative the author is concerned to analyse the nature of post-Restoration persecution and the Nonconformists' reaction to it.

within the ranks of the Presbyterians. Notes left by Sir Joseph Williamson dated 13 December 1671 identified the division in the Presbyterian leadership as being between 'Dons', or 'the Five-Mile Men', and 'Ducklings', or 'the Young Presbyterian ministers'. To the first group he assigned William Bates, Thomas Manton and Thomas Jacombe, and to the latter, Samuel Annesley, Thomas Watson and Nathaniel Vincent.⁽¹⁾ Roger Thomas, who included the name of Richard Baxter with the list of 'Dons', added that they were 'the old-fashioned Presbyterians still hoping for comprehension'.⁽²⁾ The 'Ducklings' were clearly those who favoured toleration outside the Church for all Protestant Nonconformist groups. Richard Baxter was aware of the same division and saw it as being between the 'Presbyterians' - 'a great number of ministers and people who had addicted themselves (sic) to no sect or party at all' - and the 'Reconcilers', among whom he numbered himself, who accepted the principle of a state church, the parish system, the royal supremacy, a fixed liturgy, and a 'moderated episcopacy'.⁽³⁾ Whilst it was possible to foresee - as Williamson may well have done⁽⁴⁾ - that the Ducklings with their belief in toleration and, therefore, separation would engross the next generation of Presbyterian clergy born outside the establishment

- (1) CSPD 1671-2, 28-29. Dr. Samuel Annesley was first cousin of Arthur Annesley, Earl of Anglesey, one of the political leaders of Nonconformity until his death in 1686. W. Orme, *Memoirs of the Life, Writings and Religious Connexions of John Owen* (1820), 373-4.
- (2) Roger Thomas, 'Comprehension and Indulgence', Nuttall and Chadwick, 207-208.
- (3) RB II, 142-4, 146, 387. For a detailed discussion of Baxter's own position see Roger Thomas, 'The Rise of the Reconcilers', Bolam, 46-48; J. Hunt, *Religious Thought in England* (1870) I, 265-6.
- (4) Notes by Williamson dated 21 September 1671 included the comment that 'if the Savoy business had taken effect, there had not been a fanatic in England..' but, as things were 'the people grow more fanatic; all the Presbyterians are growing to Independent, and so must the teachers'. CSPD 1671, 496.

and educated in Nonconformist academies, the Dons included for many years to come the most respected and prolific pamphleteers among the ejected ministry. In fact, though a proportion of the ejected clergy of 1662 were dead by James II's accession - including two of those Williamson had designated Dons - the comprehension party was strong enough to make assimilation within the Church-in-danger a major topic of discussion between 1686-9 and a practical probability from May 1688. Strong enough also, with the aid of articulate Anglican clergy, to exert a powerful influence against addressing after the 1687 and 1688 Indulgences, to lead informed opinion at Court to rule out the Presbyterians as a whole as potential collaborators in the reformed corporations of 1687-8 and, through the exceptional circumstances of the time, to help create a situation in which toleration on James II's terms had hardly any support among even the younger Presbyterians. (1)

But co-operation between the comprehension party in the Church and the comprehension party among the Presbyterians was not only based on their common aim. It was also founded on a common theological position - a position which separated the Dons from much of the rest of Nonconformity; a common attitude towards toleration and, what it implied, a similar view toward the Church and the sects; and personal friendships which arose, after the ejection, from common residence in the London area.

Referring to the community of feeling between himself (with his associates), and the young intellectuals of the established church, Baxter asserted that the important line of demarcation in religion was not that between Conformity and Nonconformity, but that between

(1) Roger Thomas ('Parties in Nonconformity', Bolam, 100) asserted that the influence of the Dons enjoyed 'an Indian summer' 1686-8.

'reasonable religion' and 'fanaticism in all its forms'.⁽¹⁾ The terms 'reasonable', 'rational' and 'reason', and the views expressed in the remainder of the treatise in which Baxter made this distinction, on election, reprobation and free will, are an accurate reflection of the opinions which had been expressed by an articulate group of London-based Anglican clergymen since the Restoration who had been popularly designated Latitudinarians. And his arguments against predestination were the stock in trade of the Arminians who had been placed in the high positions of the Church when Baxter himself had been offered the bishopric of Hereford in 1660.⁽²⁾ The most influential writers and preachers of the Interregnum - John Owen, Philip Nye, Stephen Marshall and Thomas Goodwin - had all been Calvinists, evidence of the destruction of Laudian Arminianism in the Civil Wars.⁽³⁾ But the return of Charles II had not only meant the overthrow of the Puritan Party but the defeat of Puritan theology. The 'high church Calvinists', like Morley, Bishop of Winchester, who were restored to important positions in the Church in 1660 were a dying breed. The most remarkable development in theology between 1660-1688 was the 'gradual eclipse' of Calvinism within the Church of England.⁽⁴⁾ The restored Church, however, not only demonstrated the revival of Arminianism but a reaction against the 'enthusiasm', the obscurantism and 'the crude incoherences' of religious life in the

- (1) R. Baxter, *The Judgment of Nonconformists, of the Interest of Reason*, in *Matters of Religion* (1676).
- (2) J. Hunt, *Religious Thought in England* (1870) I, 282, 368-9, 374-8; A. R. Ladell, *Richard Baxter Puritan and Mystic* (1925), 7; Cragg I, 18-22, 29, 31, 33.
- (3) Cragg I, 16, 17.
- (4) J. Hunt, *op cit.*, 368-9, 410 *n.*; Cragg I, 13, 18-22; H. H. Oakley, *Beginnings of Congregationalism in Sheffield* (1913), 38.

Interregnum, and a renewed emphasis on the importance of reason in religion.⁽¹⁾ The term 'latitudinarian' had been used initially as a designation of the Cambridge Platonists, and it was from them that John Tillotson, Edward Stillingfleet, Simon Patrick, Thomas Tenison, Gilbert Burnet and Edward Fowler derived their emphasis on reason. Most of them were Cambridge men and had heard More, Cudworth and Whichcote (the Platonists) argue that the repudiation of reason meant rebellion against God: there was no conflict between faith and reason, reason enlightened 'the material of faith'.⁽²⁾

But Baxter's Arminianism had not come with the Restoration. In essential respects he was and always had been a Latitudinarian. His first work, Aphorisms of Justification (1649), had attacked the Antinomian views of Tobias Crisp from a 'reasonable' Arminian standpoint when it was unpopular to do so.⁽³⁾ Probably because of its Laudian connotation, however, Baxter disliked the label 'Arminian'. On the basis of this Alexander Gordon insists on regarding Baxter as a Calvinist.⁽⁴⁾ Indeed, on occasion, Baxter himself claimed to be one 'but he explained Calvinism so as to make it appear Arminianism'.⁽⁵⁾ A recent authority has argued that

'Baxter in common with the Cambridge Platonists and Anglican Rationalists ... while welcoming divine grace to make good human deficiency and save the elect, thought it intolerable

(1) J. Hunt, op cit., 368-9, 374-8; Cragg I, 10-13.

(2) J. Hunt, op cit., 410-11, 416-18, 431-2; Cragg I, 38, 40, 44.

(3) J. Hunt, op cit., 251-2.

(4) A. Gordon, 'Richard Baxter's Calvinism', JPHS I (1914-1919), 35.

(5) J. Hunt, op cit., 265.

that the rest of mankind should be predestined to be lost through no fault of their own'.⁽¹⁾

In 1672 Baxter, Bates and Manton disrupted a joint Presbyterian-Independent lecture at Pinners Hall by arguing that predestination was neither intellectually nor morally defensible.⁽²⁾ In 1676 they were involved in the same controversy with Annesley, a 'Duckling'.⁽³⁾ Like the Independents, Annesley, John Howe and their associates were traditional Calvinists, denying man virtually any part in his own salvation.⁽⁴⁾ Simon Patrick was guilty of a conscious over-generalisation when he identified Calvinism with Antinomianism and charged all Nonconformists with both errors.⁽⁵⁾ The 'Dons' were separated from their fellow Presbyterians and fellow Nonconformists by the most virulent theological debate of their time. It was, in fact, the intransigence of Bates, Baxter and Daniel Williams on the Arminian-Antinomian controversy which was to destroy the nascent 'Happy Union' which the Presbyterians and Independents, after years of negotiation, achieved in 1691.⁽⁶⁾

If the Dons had more in common with the Anglican Latitudinarians theologically, they certainly shared their attitude toward toleration, and expressed views toward monarchy and church administration typical of those of moderate churchmen. Before the death of Cromwell both

- (1) Roger Thomas, *Daniel Williams Presbyterian Bishop* (1964), 12-13. See also R. Thomas, 'Parties in Nonconformity', Bolam, 103.
- (2) *Ibid*, 104; RB III, 103, 154.
- (3) Baxter MSS (Treatises) V, 143; R. Thomas, *op cit.*, 105.
- (4) J. Hunt, *op cit.*, 250-1, 253; R. Thomas, *op cit.*, 103.
- (5) Simon Patrick, *A Friendly Debate Between a Conformist and a Nonconformist, Park One* (1669), 12, 47, 145, 238. See also S. Patrick, *A Brief Account of the New Sect of Latitude Men; Together with Some Reflections on the New Philosophy* (1662).
- (6) Powicke, 174, 175, 177; R. Thomas, 'Parties in Nonconformity', Bolam, 103, 107-108; Williams I, xii-xiii. See J. Hunt, *op cit.*, 253.

Baxter and Bates had spoken in favour of a restoration of the Stuarts, taking the view that Charles I had been innocently mistaken.⁽¹⁾ The attitude of both groups toward the Revolution was also surprisingly similar: suspicious at first, and then neatly swapping their belief in the divine sanction of hereditary succession for 'the providential revolution', or, as one Latitudinarian had it, 'the Divine Right of Providence'.⁽²⁾ Baxter's own (unpublished) justification of the Revolution, written immediately prior to his death, contained the quintessence of many moderate Anglican arguments to the same end, but bore no relationship to what Dissenters were saying about William's accession.⁽³⁾

As far as church organisation was concerned the 'Dons' and correspondents in the provinces who shared their views - like Philip Henry and Adam Martindale - were firmly wedded to the parish system and initially had no patience with those who wanted separate congregations, 'gathered churches'.⁽⁴⁾ The sectaries 'unchurched the nation' and 'plucked up the hedge of parish order'; the Congregational concept of the 'gathered church' 'was the way to spoil many churches for the new making of one'. The sectaries 'made too light of ordination': ordination by presbyters, as well as by bishops, should be recognised but it should not be taken out of the hands of

- (1) R. Baxter to Sir Edward Harley, 15 September 1656, Baxter MSS (Letters) VI, 166-7; RB I, 214, 229; CR, 35; A. R. Ladell, *Richard Baxter Puritan and Mystic* (1925), 109-110.
- (2) William Lloyd, *A Sermon Preached on the Fifth Day of November 1689* (1689), 32. See G. M. Straka, *Anglican Reaction to the Revolution of 1688* (1962), viii, 50-52.
- (3) R. Baxter, *King James His Abdication of the Crown Plainly Proved*, October 1691, Baxter MSS (Treatises) VII, 230-235. See G. M. Straka, *op cit*, 26-29, 30-37.
- (4) The Independent conception of a 'gathered church' is to be understood in opposition to Christendom, the national church or the parish system. See G.F. Nuttall, 'The Early Congregational Conception of the Church', *CHST XIV* (1940-1944), 197-200.

these two officials. The role and function of the dissenting ministry, it was argued, ought to approximate more closely to the Anglican model.⁽¹⁾ Baxter deplored the gradual movement of the Presbyterians into the role of separatists, especially when such a role was thrust upon them by the necessity of taking out licences under the 1672 Indulgence. Notwithstanding that they held this new role in common with the sects, however, the attitude of the Dons toward toleration did not change after 1672.⁽²⁾ The Latitudinarians took the view that comprehension was the only safeguard against the triumph of Popery: 'the ready way to overthrow a church is first to divide it'.⁽³⁾ Toleration or indulgence could only undermine the church system and render it vulnerable to the twin threats of Catholicism and extreme sectarianism. Those elements in the ecclesiastical spectrum capable of digestion within the national church should be comprehended by a policy of concession, whilst indigestible elements should be persecuted; 'a general unlimited toleration to dissenting Protestants will . bring confusion among us , and in the end Popery'.⁽⁴⁾ Baxter endorsed this view. 'Christ had but one Catholic Church' and those who did not profess the essentials of its belief put themselves beyond its pale and should be 'constrained to alter'.⁽⁵⁾ Calling upon Parliament to persecute what he regarded

- (1) RB II, 143-144 ; Bolam, 55; J. Hunt, Religious Thought in England (1870) I, 279-80. See Walter Wilson. MS.I, v, 221-222.
- (2) G. F. Nuttall, Richard Baxter (1965), 102; Bolam, 89-90.
- (3) Thomas Tenison, An Argument for Union taken from the True Interest of those Dissenters in England who profess and call themselves Protestants (1683), 1, 18-19. See Edward Stillingfleet, The Unreasonableness of Separation: or An Impartial Account of the History, Nature and Pleas of the Protestant Separation (1681), lxxxviii.
- (4) Ibid., lxxxii-lxxxiv, lxxxiv-lxxxv.
- (5) Richard Baxter, A Key to Catholics, to open the Juggling of the Jesuits and Satisfy all that are truly willing to understand Whether the Cause of the Roman or Reformed Church be of God (revised edit. 1674).

as extreme sectarians - 'seekers', 'Paraclesians', 'Quakers' and 'Behmenists' - during the Interregnum Baxter had argued, 'What more easy to know than that the best cause may seem bad through disadvantage, and that it is as easy to deceive the common people if men have liberty?' Error was 'more consistent with carnal interests and suitable to depraved nature'. It was not enough to argue that truth was stronger than error⁽¹⁾ and needed 'no policies or stratagems or licences to make her victorious', as Milton and Penn did.⁽²⁾

In Part IV - 'On Christian Politics or Duties to our Rulers and Neighbours' - of his compendious Christian Directory Baxter made it clear that the responsibility to constrain or persecute lay with the magistrate. In Memorandum V to the 'Civil Ruler' he admonished:

'Let none persuade you that you are such terrestrial animals that have nothing to do with the heavenly concernments of your subjects'. The magistrate must concern himself with the spiritual wellbeing, as well as the temporal wellbeing, of the individual; this was as much his concern as it was the minister's. He roundly condemned

'those Libertines that under the name of liberty of conscience do plead for a liberty of vicious practices and in order thereto would prove that the magistrate hath nothing to do in matters of religion'.⁽³⁾

But the magistrate was reminded 'how strict a judgment he must undergo' when he 'gave an account of his stewardship'; 'neither

- (1) Richard Baxter, *The Worcestershire Petition to the Parliament for the Ministry of England Defended* (1653), 37, 38.
- (2) Cited, J. Waddington, *Surrey Congregational History* (1866), 84; Penn, vii-viii.
- (3) Richard Baxter, *A Christian Directory: or a Summ of Practical Theology and Cases of Conscience. In Four Parts* (1673), IV, 5, 79.

unlimited liberty in matters of religion... nor unnecessary force or rigour' should be used, 'but tolerable differences and parties should be tolerated and intolerable ones by the wisest means suppressed'. There was an 'open' and acceptable persecution aimed at bringing the schismatic into the fold and there was 'an hypocritical persecution when the pretended cause was some odious crime, but the real cause was mens religion or obedience to God'. The differences which separated him from the Church were 'tolerable' and the persecution under which he suffered was 'hypocritical' and 'unjust'.⁽¹⁾ The anti-tolerant views of Baxter and other eminent Presbyterians, lay and clerical, were to be used against them by Anglicans who saw no distinction between 'tolerable' and 'intolerable' separatists, when they began to bleat under the post-1681 persecution.⁽²⁾

The final tie which bound the 'right-wing' of the Presbyterians more closely with the Anglican 'left' than with other Nonconformist groups was personal friendship. Richard Baxter counted Tillotson, Stillingfleet, Fowler and Tenison among his friends, though there is evidence in his letters that his friendship with Tillotson and Tenison did not preclude the possibility of occasional acrimonious recriminations.⁽³⁾ The information provided by Tillotson, then Archbishop of Canterbury, to Baxter's biographer after Baxter's death, makes it clear, however, that the two men had been close friends even

(1) Ibid, 5, 67, 69, 78.

(2) Roger L'Estrange, The Dissenters Sayings, Second Part (1681), 1-13; Cragg I, 195.

(3) J. Tillotson to R. Baxter, 2 June 1680, Baxter MSS (Letters) II, 68; T. Tenison to R. Baxter, 25 September 1685, ibid. III, 67; RB III, 109-110.

before the ejection.⁽¹⁾ In 1673 when George Morley, Bishop of Winchester was negotiating the terms of a Bill of Comprehension with the Dons, Baxter told the Earl of Orrery that

'were but Dr. Stillingfleet, Dr. Tillotson, or any such moderate men appointed to consult with two or three of us, on the safe and needful terms of concord [instead of Morley] we should agree in a week's time'.⁽²⁾

Bates was also on terms of friendship with at least two of the Latitudinarians, Tillotson and Fowler, and had been since before the Restoration.⁽³⁾ Roger Morrice who, after his ejection from Duffield in 1662 had become, in succession, chaplain to Lord Hollis and Sir John Maynard,⁽⁴⁾ and was part of the group sharing Baxter's opinions, counted among his friends Tillotson, Stillingfleet, Fowler, Dr. Richard Kidder, and Dr. John Moore.⁽⁵⁾ In his Will he *made bequests to* Fowler, then Bishop of Gloucester, Kidder, then Bishop of Bath and Wells, Moore, then Bishop of Norwich, as well as to John Strype and John Wilkes, Vicars of London parishes.⁽⁶⁾ Stillingfleet would also appear to have been on friendly terms with Presbyterian ministers outside London and to have given support to some after the ejection.⁽⁷⁾ Another moderate Anglican, Robert Mayot of Oxford, left money to Baxter and Bates.⁽⁸⁾

(1) J. Tillotson to M. Sylvester, 3 February 1692, Baxter MSS (Letters) II, 68.

(2) RB III, 110.

(3) W. Bates to R. Baxter, 5 August 1658, Baxter MSS (Letters) III, 153.

(4) CR, 355.

(5) Morrice P, 204, 254.

(6) CR, 355.

(7) Bunyan, 185; CR, 102.

(8) Morrice P, 435.

The rapport between the Presbyterian 'right' and the Anglican 'left' - reinforced by a distinctive theology, nerved by common aims and attitudes, and invigorated by the ties of personal friendship - kept the comprehension issue alive from the ejection until the High Churchmen adopted the policy as their own in May 1688. During the reign of Charles II Bills of Comprehension came before Parliament no less frequently than Bills of Toleration - in 1660, 1667, 1673, 1675, 1681,⁽¹⁾ - but whilst it was the 'sober Churchmen' and 'sober Dissenters' who sponsored these projects, it was not always they who negotiated terms and, in any event, Parliament and Convocation made the final decisions. The Worcester House Declaration of 25 October 1660 envisaged considerable changes in a direction approved by Presbyterians, including Baxter, but when introduced into the Commons, the Bill 'was defeated at the instigation of the King's own ministers' now that the ploy had served its turn.⁽²⁾ Before the Savoy Conference of 1661 was over Convocation was busy making its own revision of the Prayer Book and determining the 'pattern of uniformity' leaving Parliament to lay down the terms under which it would be enforced.⁽³⁾ When the comprehension issue was revived in 1667 the Dons found themselves in negotiation with John Wilkins, Bishop of Chester, Sir Matthew Hale, Lord Chief Justice, and Hezekiah Burton, Chaplain to the Lord Keeper, Sir

(1) H. F. R. Smith, *The Theory of Religious Liberty in the Reigns of Charles II and James II*, Cambridge Historical Essays XXI (1911), 5.

(2) Cragg II, 5-6. *See* Nuttall and Chadwick, 61-72, 193-4.

(3) Cragg II, 6-7; H. H. Oakley, *Beginnings of Congregationalism in Sheffield* (1913), 38. *See* Nuttall and Chadwick, 91-146.

Orlando Bridgman.⁽¹⁾ In 1673 they had to contend with Morley and, only in 1675, in response to Baxter's complaint, were Tillotson and Stillingfleet among the chief negotiators. It was significant that the concessions offered in 1675 were 'much more ample than any granted hitherto'.⁽²⁾ Baxter - who, though 'a champion of the cause of comprehension' was often 'an unconciliatory one' - was still dissatisfied on the point of discipline; and this despite the liturgical concessions and the provision of a face-saving compromise device on the ordination issue proffered by Churchmen.⁽³⁾ Nevertheless, on the failure of the discussions, Tillotson wrote a letter of commiseration to Baxter, bemoaning the difficulties in the way of the implementation of their common ideal and, in a sermon before Sir Robert Clayton Lord Mayor of London in 1680, Stillingfleet suggested making an attempt at 'finding out a certain foundation for a lasting union'. Informal discussions were held and included, at various times in addition to Tillotson, Stillingfleet, Bates and Baxter, John Howe and William Lloyd;⁽⁴⁾ the former by virtue of his increased influence among the Dons (despite his Calvinism⁽⁵⁾), and the latter probably by virtue of a recent commitment to comprehension and his

- (1) When a scheme, broadly acceptable to the Dons, had been worked out it was abruptly disowned by the Anglicans, and the negotiations broken off. Every, 10, 11; Nuttall and Chadwick, 196-8; Cragg II, 15-16; J. Waddington, Surrey Congregational History (1866), 55; Morrice P, 359.
- (2) A. B. Hinds (ed), Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts Relating to English Affairs existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice XXXVII (1939), 225; XXXVIII (1940), 317, 358; RB III, 109-110; Morrice P, 359.
- (3) RB III, 156-157; Every, 10, 11; CR, 39.
- (4) Edward Stillingfleet, The Mischief of Separation; A Sermon preached at Guildhall Chapel, 11 May 1680 (1680), epistle dedicatory; RB III, 157; Calamy, Howe, 71-4.
- (5) J. Hunt, Religious Thought in England (1870) I, 253.

connections with the Dissenters of his diocese.⁽¹⁾ The efforts of the Latitudinarians, by sermon and pamphlet, to maintain the cause of comprehension in the bleak days for Dissenters which followed the dissolution of the Oxford Parliament, and to enliven its appeal to Nonconformists by invoking the Popish Peril as an argument for it,⁽²⁾ were to earn them a great deal of unpopularity within their own communion. But what looked like the fulfilment, in the early months of the next reign, of their gloomy prophecies, was to increase the urgency of the comprehension issue for the Dons and contribute to the image which the more left-wing Nonconformist sects gradually gained of the Church as the Bastion against Popery, hence increasing the resistance of Nonconformity in general to 'enticement' once it got under way.⁽³⁾

But the means by which the Church could influence the behaviour of Dissenters were not limited to the activities of the Latitudinarians. Williamson's distinction between 'Dons' and 'Ducklings' overlies a more complex system of fractures apparent in Presbyterian ranks after the enactment of the Restoration ecclesiastical settlement, caused by the extent to which different groups were prepared to conform to the Church of England. This influenced the degree of support which each of the two sides could expect in the struggle for the loyalty of Dissenters between 1686-8. The phenomenon of 'partial'

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- (1) A. T. Hart, *William Lloyd, 1627-1717, Bishop, Politician, Author and Prophet* (1952), 41, 42, 46; Calamy, *Howe*, 71-2; CR, 185; R. F. Skinner, *Nonconformity in Shropshire 1662-1816* (1964), 16.
- (2) Edward Stillingfleet, *op cit*, 3-4; Samuel Bolde, *A Plea for Moderation towards Dissenters* (1682), 5-6; Thomas Tenison, *An Argument for Union taken from the True Interest of those Dissenters in England who profess and call themselves Protestants* (1683), 18-19.
- (3) See below pp.139, 141, 151-167.

or 'occasional' conformity on the part of Presbyterians at times made it very difficult to draw a distinct line between Dissent and the Established Church. Edmund Calamy, in his catalogue of ejected ministers, had to admit occasionally that 'it *could never* be discerned what judgment he was of: whether Presbyterian, ^{Congregational} or Episcopal'.

This was the case, for example, with Robert Armitage and John Chandler.⁽¹⁾ Many Presbyterians - like Ralph Thoresby⁽²⁾ - though regularly hearing a Nonconformist preacher in secret, were unfailing in their church attendance. After the Act of Uniformity for many Presbyterians 'the perplexities which they faced were all the greater because the barriers in their way seemed less insuperable'.⁽³⁾

Baxter asserted that not to join in church worship would be 'divisive', 'scandalous' and 'offensive'.⁽⁴⁾ In 1683 John Corbet wrote a justification of the practice of 'communion with parish churches in the worship of God, at those times in which our own congregations do not require [our] presence therein'. Parish churches were 'true churches' where they had 'a competent minister and a number of credible professors of Christianity'. Under such conditions regular attendance and participation was not only justifiable but might be spiritually beneficial.⁽⁵⁾

(1) Calamy, Abridgement II, 315; CR, 15.

(2) J. Hunter (ed), The Diary of Ralph Thoresby (1830) I, 171, 173, 175.

(3) Cragg II, 8.

(4) Richard Baxter, A Christian Directory: or A Summ of Practical Theology and Cases of Conscience. In Four Parts (1673) III, 731-740.

(5) John Corbet, The Nonconformists Plea for Lay-Communion with the Church of England (1683), 5-6.

Exactly how far the Presbyterians were prepared to go in 'conforming' depended very much on the individual. For the ministry the chief obstacles to complete conformity were the necessity imposed by the Act of Uniformity (1662) of episcopal ordination for those ordained under the Commonwealth, and the obligation, imposed by the same statute, to use the orders, rites, ceremonies and prayers of the Book of Common Prayer, and to give 'unfeigned assent and consent' to all of the thirty-nine Articles.⁽¹⁾ For lay Presbyterians, the Sacrament posed the greatest obstacle. Those laymen most in the public eye appear to have found it less of a problem than others. Of the group of Presbyterian MP's in the 1661-79 Parliament,⁽²⁾ only seven had not received the Sacrament by July 1661, and of these all but two had complied within a few weeks.⁽³⁾ Many Presbyterian laymen were prepared to attend an Anglican Church but would avoid the Sacrament; some would also avoid Common Prayer.⁽⁴⁾ John Corbet was at pains to reassure his readers that the liturgy, Sacrament and Common Prayer of the Church were 'in the main ... good for the substance *or* matter thereof'.⁽⁵⁾ In fact the Presbyterian ministry seem to have viewed the Sacrament as much less of a problem, though Baxter represents the extreme of 'conformity' in stating that he would even kneel for the Sacrament; *perhaps most*

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- (1) 14 Car. II, c.4. J. P. Kenyon, *The Stuart Constitution* (1966), 378-382; Cragg II, 7-8.
- (2) Lacey, 30-32, estimates their number at approximately thirty-seven.
- (3) Lacey, 32.
- (4) Richard Baxter, *Epistle to the Nonconformists and a Vindication of the Church of England in Her Rites and Ceremonies* (1682), 4; Cragg II, 242-3, *See* J. Hunt, *Religious Thought in England* (1870) I, 285-6; Calamy, *Abridgement* II, 23-24.
- (5) John Corbet, *The Nonconformist Plea for Lay-Communion with the Church of England* (1683), 5-6.

would participate in Common Prayer and the Sacrament, but would take the latter in a sitting position.⁽¹⁾ The extent to which Nonconformists had attended Anglican services became very apparent after April 1687, when many Anglican congregations, like the one at Deptford, were 'left exceeding thin'.⁽²⁾ Only rarely was occasional conformity the subject of violent controversy among Presbyterians, and more rarely still did a congregation of Presbyterians, as a body, refuse even to attend Anglican services during the whole of the period between 1662 and 1687. There was such a congregation at Newbury in Berkshire but the situation was only made possible by the fact that its members were already socially disqualified from taking civic position, and hence had no incentive to comply with the terms of the Corporation Act.⁽³⁾ Looking in from the outside, these diverse practices and the casuistry which rationalised them, seemed strange indeed. In 1673 one bemused observer wrote: 'And some [Presbyterians] were for three-fourths conformity, some for one half, some for one-fourth, and a few for none at all'.⁽⁴⁾

Clearly, those Presbyterians who were for 'three-fourths conformity' would be far more amenable to pressure from the Church, whilst those less disposed to participate in Anglican rites would be more amenable to pressures aimed at the achievement of toleration - as they were in the reign of Charles II. But their experience during that reign rendered this latter group more discerning as to

(1) Ibid; Cragg II, 244; Henry, Diaries and Letters, 178.

(2) Evelyn IV, 546-7; Morrice Q, 90.

(3) DWL MS.38.66, ff 9, 32. See 13 Car. II 1661, J. P. Kenyon, The Stuart Constitution (1966), 376-378.

(4) B. M. Stowe MSS, 185, f. 172.

the sources from which those pressures came.

Whilst partial conformity might act as a measure of Nonconformist support for the Church, however, it did not - except in the case of moderate churchmen who welcomed it⁽¹⁾ - recommend Dissenters to Churchmen. On 2 October 1683 a Quarter Sessions meeting at Exeter Castle passed three resolutions against Nonconformists, the second of which was that all persons open to the slightest suspicion - for example, partial conformers - were to be closely watched for signs of seditious activities.⁽²⁾ In 1687 Seth Ward, Bishop of Salisbury, in a letter to William Sancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury, deliberately made it clear that as far as he was concerned even regular attendance at Anglican services (including acceptance of the Sacrament) did not make a Dissenter any more pleasing to the Church if he continued to attend conventicles.⁽³⁾ Old guard Anglicans could never erase from their minds the old equation formulated during the civil wars, of conventicles as meetings of subversion. In fact, Chief Justice Bridgman actually defined a conventicle as 'a meeting together to plot against the King and State'.⁽⁴⁾ The utterances of George Jeffreys indicate that the old equation still had currency in judicial circles in the reign of James II.⁽⁵⁾ In 1683 even a relatively moderate Anglican of the stamp of Thomas Lamplugh, Bishop of Exeter, could still equate conventicles with 'treasonable designs' and say that he

(1) Matthew Henry to Philip Henry, 22 December 1685, 5 January 1686 and 6 April 1686, Henry MSS 6, letters 9, 11 and 25.

(2) Powicke, 132-4.

(3) Tanner MS. XXXVI, f. 196.

(4) Cragg II, 35.

(5) See Calamy, Abridgement, 369-72.

especially disliked Dissenters who 'appear *in* the Church with a false show of conformity, only to save their money, and the better to serve their faction [in civic office]'.⁽¹⁾ Writing to the Bishop of Chichester on 4 September 1683 Thomas Barret~~t~~ complained that the trouble in his corner of the diocese was 'not owing so much to *the* professed separatists as to others, who go to church, take all the oaths and tests and crowd into public offices'.⁽²⁾

Whilst the Latitudinarians looked upon the moderate Presbyterians as the only amenable part of Nonconformity, there were some Anglicans who thought that Presbyterians were more dangerous than other Dissenters. The Presbyterians posed the greater threat to the ecclesiastical settlement precisely because they continued to attend church (they could not conceive that this practice enabled Anglican preachers to influence Dissenters in the congregation, as well as vice versa), and precisely because they sought changes in the liturgy, practices and administration of the Church to facilitate their comprehension. One of these was Roger L'Estrange, Surveyor of the Imprimery (the Press), Middlesex JP, editor of a propaganda broad-sheet variously titled The Intelligencer, The News, The Public Intelligencer, The City Mercury, and The Observator, avid persecutor of Dissenters and self-appointed Keeper of the Church's Conscience.⁽³⁾

L'Estrange ~~felt~~ that 'Lobb, Ferguson and Collins', 'the more

- (1) Thomas Lamplugh, A Condemnation of the Dissenters, Section 2, published for purposes of refutation in R. Baxter, The English Nonconformity as under King Charles II and King James II (1689).
- (2) CSPD 1683 (July-September), 362.
- (3) DNB XI, 1000-1003. L'Estrange became Surveyor of the Imprimery on 15 August 1663 with the sole privilege of publishing anything in the character of a newspaper (this monopoly was broken by the advent of The Gazette in 1665); he became a Middlesex JP in March 1680.

violent pastors' *were tolerable* ; but if one Ferguson came to the parish church, he did as much harm as forty Fergusons in as many conventicles .⁽¹⁾ Ever since the Restoration L'Estrange's most virulent pamphlets had been directed against the Presbyterians in general or Baxter in particular. The Presbyterian 'fanatics' and their doctrine were responsible for the civil wars and the death of the King, and would, if they were not extirpated, proceed to undermine the political and ecclesiastical settlement of the Restoration.⁽²⁾

In addition to the motive ascribed by Lamplugh and L'Estrange for the partial conformity of the Presbyterians, and further to the assumed motive of the spiritual compatibility of the Anglican service and the habit of the years before 1662, fear may also have been a motive. In the years that followed the withdrawal of the 1672 Indulgence escalated persecution in many districts appears to have brought even the recalcitrant Presbyterians to church. In the diocesan report for Canterbury of 1676 the Presbyterians were said to be 'divided: some of them come sometimes to church' and as for the others: 'the sending forth of these enquiries has caused many to frequent the church'.⁽³⁾

The gradual change in the balance of power in Presbyterian ranks from those who supported toleration from whatever source it might come; in favour of those, to some degree under Anglican

(1) Kitchin, 352, 353.

(2) e.g. Roger L'Estrange, *State Divinity, or a Supplement to the 'Relaps'd Apostate' Wherein is Presented the Discovery of a Present Design against the King, Parliament, and Public Peace, or Notes upon Some late Presbyterian Pamphlets (1661)* ;
Interest Mistaken, or The Holy Cheat, Proving from the Undeniable Practices and Positions of the Presbyterians that the Design of That Party is to enslave both King and People under the Masque of Religion (two editions 1661; two more editions 1682) ; *Toleration Discussed (1663) 1, 2, 104*

(3) Turner I, 27.

influence, who thought in terms of a limited toleration ratified by Parliament, or, of comprehension, owes itself to a large extent to Charles's two attempts at 'enticement', in 1662 and 1672, Buckingham's attempt of 1668 and the Duke of York's attempt of November and December 1674.

The singular lack of response to the Duke of Buckingham's bid for Nonconformist support by backing toleration early in 1668, is significant in that it demonstrates that no group was so mindless as to back any scheme for toleration. There must, it seemed, be some guarantee of success and permanence. Although Buckingham was known to have secured pardons for a number of Nonconformists he had already lost any support from the Presbyterians in Parliament before the toleration project was inaugurated in 1668. The project got little support in the country as well as in Parliament, though it must be conceded that the Dissenters' reasons were not subtle or political and largely centred around a distrust of the Duke's sincerity and the improbability of the whole venture.⁽¹⁾

Charles II's Declaration of Indulgence of 15 March 1672⁽²⁾ came at the end of a long series of negotiations with both Presbyterian groups, as well as the Independents, in which Charles II had gravitated away from the sponsorship of a comprehension project toward the view of Annesley (a 'Duckling') and Dr. John Owen (an Independent).⁽³⁾ It was believed that 'eminent

(1) RB III, 23; Lacey, 40, 43-44; A. Browning, Thomas Osborne Earl of Danby Duke of Leeds, 1632-1712 (1951) I, 59-60; H. H. Oakley, Beginnings of Congregationalism in Sheffield (1913), 46, 47.

(2) J. P. Kenyon, The Stuart Constitution (1966), 407-408.

(3) CSPD 1671, 496, 562-3; 1671-2, 28-29; RB III, 87-88; R. T. Jones, Congregationalism in England 1662-1962 (1962), 90-92; Nuttall and Chadwick, 207-209.

Dissenters in London', including Nicholas Butler, were being 'employed' to write to 'their country brethren' to encourage them to apply for licences under the terms of the Indulgence.

(1) Presbyterians did acquire licences to preach⁽²⁾ but there was more reticence about addressing. Although a group of leading Independents showed no qualms the Presbyterians, after prolonged debate, decided to confine themselves to 'a verbal Extemporate Thanksgiving'.⁽³⁾ The substance of the debate appears to have been a topic, the pros and cons of which were later to become all too familiar. Some, *wrote the Venetian ambassador,* 'scandalously maintain that it is a weakness on the part of the Nonconformists to thank the King for his grant of liberty of conscience, as they thereby approve the authority which he ~~th~~ arrogates to himself, in violation of the oath taken by him to observe the laws'.

Commenting on this attitude Girolamo Alberti, the Venetian ambassador, ruminated that

'the re-establishment of the Roman Catholic religion in England is not impossible, but it will be necessary first of all for the King to render himself absolute and.. then seize his opportunity'.

Many Presbyterians feared that the King was taking the first step toward this goal by tolerating Roman Catholics. Some, like Philip

(1) J. Murch, A History of the Presbyterian and Baptist Churches in the West of England (1835), 378-9.

(2) See below p. 34.

(3) Nuttall and Chadwick, 209.

Henry, feared that Indulgence would be the death of comprehension and 'the parish order'. Had the King the right to dispense with laws? Were they compromising their principles and their country's liberties by addressing at all and by accepting licences under the Indulgence? Were they aiding the King to revive and establish 'Popery'? Should they instead be 'preparing for a coalition with the bishops for self-defence'?⁽¹⁾

The action of Parliament relieved the Presbyterians of the necessity of providing concerted answers to many of these questions, or of taking concerted action based on those answers.⁽²⁾ The number of questions asked, the level of sophistication of the debate, showed a major improvement on that provoked by Charles II's Declaration favouring toleration issued on 26 December 1662.⁽³⁾ Many Presbyterians had been reluctant to accept anything short of comprehension, but those who did believe that the issue permitted of discussion had displayed only the customary gut fear of Catholicism: Philip Nye and his Independents might be prepared to countenance toleration of Roman Catholics, but not they. When Parliament convened in February 1663, the 'angry Presbyters of the House, supposing Popery to be the game,

- (1) A. B. Hinds (ed), *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts Relating to English Affairs existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice and Other Libraries in Northern Italy*, XXXVII (1939), 225-226; Cragg II, 19; Miller, 118; George Trosse, *The Life of the Reverend Mr. George Trosse Late Minister of the Gospel in the City of Exon (1714)*, 91; J. Murch, *op cit.*, 378; J. Waddington, *Surrey Congregational History (1866)*, 71.
- (2) Though the Declaration of Indulgence was cancelled in March 1673 the licences for meetings which it had authorised were not withdrawn until February 1675. During the three years of relative freedom 'the Nonconformists had won converts, self-respect and a new stability'. Many dissenting congregations in England date 'their formation and continuous life' from the Indulgence of 1672. Warwick CR VIII, lxx; B. Dale, 'The History of Early Congregationalism in Leeds', CHST II (1905-1906), 261. See G. W. Boag, 'Congregationalism in Northumberland and Durham', CHST IV (1909-1910), 82.
- (3) J. P. Kenyon, *The Stuart Constitution (1966)*, 403-406.

would not come up'.⁽¹⁾ The added sophistications of debate which the decade had produced were: one, a full awareness of the constitutional issue involved; two, the idea that a political coalition with the persecuting Church of England might be the answer in the face of a monarch bent on toleration for Catholic as well as Protestant Dissent, and - by enacting a toleration at all - on destroying the cherished dream of comprehension.

After Charles's surrender over the 1672 Indulgence and when the first Test Act had been passed,⁽²⁾ the Duke of York's vested interest in toleration was obvious not only to Presbyterians. From where he sat the Dissenters seemed to be one of the most powerful sections of the community; London had a high and ever increasing number of ejected ministers resident within its boundaries, and the numerical strength, as well as the wealth, of lay Dissenters was more in evidence in London than elsewhere. On 30 November 1674 the Venetian ambassador wrote:-

'The sect of the Presbyterians.. comprises the clearest intellects and the longest purses in the kingdom... If the Court takes the Presbyterians into its confidence and gives them a taste of what is going, affairs will doubtless take another turn, this party of men of substance being preferred to a fickle faithless band of mercenaries such as those who have been the ministers and confidants of the Court since the Restoration'.⁽³⁾

(1) Lacey, 52; Cragg II, 11.

(2) J. P. Kenyon, op cit, 408-409.

(3) A. B. Hinds (ed), Calendar of State Papers... Venice..XXXVIII (1940), 316-317; CR, xii.

Whilst Charles II reflected that the Presbyterians were 'too strong to be corrected or discarded, once in possession' the Duke of York was expressing the belief that, once he had won over the 'disloyal faction', he could, with their support, be reinstated in the Admiralty and on the Council and have his succession assured.⁽¹⁾

To this end James entertained 'the leaders of the Presbyterians', being convinced that he would never achieve his aims through 'the Protestant Church'.⁽²⁾ During December 1674 negotiations between the Duke ^{or his advisors} and certain leading Presbyterians and Independents regarding a new 'General Pardon' or 'public proclamation' were in earnest.

Much was made of the argument that,

'even if God permitted the Duke to be a Papist, as they could not prevent him from succeeding to the Crown, it would be to their interest to derive what little good they might from a misfortune and make the best terms they could with him, as there was no instance of his ever having broken his word'.

To assure them of his good faith James obtained pardons for a group of Bristol Presbyterians and 'admonished' the over-ardent Bishop and clergy of Bristol. As 'a first pledge' he undertook to 'procure for them through the royal clemency, pardon and suspension of the penal statutes', whilst 'on their side' they

'should give their support to a bill expressly declaring that he be not included in the acts which would have excluded him from the Privy Council, the Admiralty and all authority in government'.⁽³⁾

(1) A. B. Hinds (ed), op cit, 316-317, 327; Miller, 136-7.

(2) The Venetian ambassador frequently used this designation for the Church of England and the context makes it clear that he was doing so here.

(3) A. B. Hinds (ed), op cit, 324, 326-7.

That the scheme for another Indulgence was scotched by Danby almost before it really got off the ground⁽¹⁾ is significant in that Danby's rise represented a watershed in the Court's relations with Dissenters: from this time to the end of the reign the government made no further effort to save them from 'the consequences of their convictions'.⁽²⁾ That the scheme continued to be a part of James's thinking even after the order of 3 February 1675 to enforce the penal laws - and despite the fact that he 'normally' regarded Dissenters as 'enemies of the monarchy' - is interesting as part of the explanation for his reviving it in 1686.⁽³⁾ That ^{among} the stumbling blocks in the negotiations were suspicions of the Duke entertained by the Presbyterians and their unwillingness to express approval of a Catholic succession ^{perhaps} or even the inclusion of Catholics in a General Pardon⁽⁴⁾ is auspicious in that it indicates that, for Presbyterians, the way was already prepared for the Whig alliance and Exclusion, and that the issues of the reign of James II were already under discussion. That the Bishops 'offered the Presbyterians an act of comprehension' in February 1675,⁽⁵⁾ is a pointer to the reaction of the Church in competition with the Court for the loyalty of Dissenters. On 15 February the Venetian ambassador wrote; 'the Duke has warned the King to prevent the coalition of the bishops and Presbyterians, who are too strong to be commanded'.⁽⁶⁾

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- (1) A. Browning, Thomas Osborne Earl of Danby Duke of Leeds 1632-1712 (1951) II, 148.
- (2) Cragg II, 22.
- (3) Miller, 137, 198.
- (4) A. B. Hinds (ed), Calendar of State Papers... Venice.. XXXVIII (1940), 316-317, 318, 327, 358.
- (5) Ibid, 358.
- (6) Ibid.

Had the Duke of York been able to get further with his plan to persuade Charles to introduce another Indulgence in December 1674, he would have known in 1687 that any support available for this kind of programme would be from Independents and Baptists. It would be totally incorrect to assume from this analysis, however, that the line of demarcation between the Presbyterians and the Congregationalists was at all a clear cut one, as between the party supporting comprehension or a parliamentary toleration and the party prepared to back any scheme of toleration regardless of source and extent. C. E. Whiting has asserted that:

'The English Independents were, more than any other sect except the Quakers, in favour of toleration all round... Their tolerant spirit, however, did not lead the Independents in the direction of occasional conformity'.⁽¹⁾

To the extent that the first generalisation implies uniformity of concept and enthusiasm in the ranks of the Independents, it must be severely modified, and, unless one takes the writings of the most eminent Independent as representing the consensus of the whole body of Independents, it is difficult to uphold the latter at all.

Almost by definition, homogeneity of opinion and practice was not a characteristic of the Independents, and the same kind of 'anatomy' of their internal structure will be necessary to explain their part in the reign of James II as was undertaken for the Presbyterians.

Of all the inter sectarian divisions in the Nonconformist

(1) Whiting, 80.

spectrum the most meaningless and arbitrary is that between the Presbyterian 'Ducklings' and the Independents. Theologically the difference between the Calvinism of the Ducklings and the quasi-Antinomianism of many of the Independents was merely one of degree, and the lack of uniformity of belief in both groups makes it impossible to use theology as the criterion of difference.⁽¹⁾ Of the 1,434 Nonconformist 'teachers' who took out licences under the 1672 Indulgence, 854 categorised themselves as Presbyterians, 375 as Congregationalists and 202 as Baptists.⁽²⁾ The first two groups, however, showed a total indifference to nomenclature. Some ministers licensed themselves in one place as Presbyterians, and in another as Congregationalists.⁽³⁾ Others, including John Faldo and Stephen Lobb, who both before and after 1672 were known as Congregationalists, deliberately took out licences as Presbyterians.⁽⁴⁾ But one possible difference between the two labels which did emerge from the 1672 Indulgence returns related to the office of minister: almost all of those designated Presbyterian, as compared with a much smaller proportion of those designated Congregational, were ejected ministers. In Kent, for example, of the nineteen 'teachers' licensed as Presbyterians seventeen were ejected ministers; of the fourteen licensed as Independents eight were ejected ministers.⁽⁵⁾ There were those, like Thomas and Timothy Jolly, who clearly had a foot in both camps. The

(1) Bolam, 48, 56, 102, 103. See R. T. Jones, *Congregationalism in England 1662-1962* (1962), 25, 83.

(2) CR, xv.

(3) Bolam, 90.

(4) Turner II, 1191; CR, 190; T. Perry, *An Independent People 1669-1969* (1969), 2; 'R. T. Jones, *op cit*, 93 n. i.

(5) Bolam, 90. See G. F. Nuttall, 'Dissenting Churches in Kent before 1700', *JEH* XIV (1963), 176.

latter was described by the Presbyterian Oliver Heywood as 'Congregational.. yet of an healing, humble spirit'.⁽¹⁾ Only rarely was there actual distrust between the Presbyterian and Independent clergy of a particular area, as there was between James Fisher and Henry Newcome. Here it would appear to have arisen from the suspicion that Fisher - pastor of an Independent Congregation at Sheffield - was or had been involved in seditious activities.⁽²⁾ There were, perhaps, many Nonconformists who, like the Disney family of Lincoln, 'were simply Puritans, and cared more for the thing itself, than for any particular form of church government', Presbyterian or Independent.⁽³⁾ As far as the ministry was concerned

'the theological and ecclesiological differences which these distinctions in denomination represented tended to mean more to those.. denominated Congregational or Baptist than to those denominated Presbyterian'.⁽⁴⁾

In the years between 1672 and the 1689 Act of Toleration there were scores of dissenting congregations in most parts of England and Wales which included both Presbyterians and Independents, and at different times used either label or described themselves as 'of mixed communion'.⁽⁵⁾ In East Anglia the difference between the two sects hardly existed.⁽⁶⁾ In Leeds

- (1) H. H. Oakley, *Beginnings of Congregationalism in Sheffield* (1913), 62, 67.
- (2) *Ibid*, 47; J. E. Manning, *History of Upper Chapel, Sheffield* (1900), 15-17.
- (3) J. C. Warren, 'From Puritanism to Unitarianism at Lincoln', *Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society II* (1919-22), Part One, 15.
- (4) G. F. Nuttall, 'Dissenting Churches in Kent before 1700', *JEH XIV* (1963), 177.
- (5) *DWL MS.24.7*, 55; *Walter Wilson MS.I*, i, 136, 196, 248, 414; iii, 20, 190.
- (6) *Harmer MS.76.9*, 7, 12, 26, 31, 35, 50, 52, 64, 66, 71, 76, 85, 89, 108, 139, 149, 161; *MS.76.10*, 18, 65.

the Presbyterians and Independents were, after 1674, 'substantially one'.⁽¹⁾ At Lincoln 'the dividing lines between Presbyterianism and Independency' were 'very blurred and indistinct.. So far as church government was concerned the Presbyterians were as independent as the Independents themselves'.⁽²⁾ In parts of Lancashire there was no clear distinction between the labels 'Presbyterian' and 'Independent' and the two appear to have been used interchangeably.⁽³⁾ Elsewhere where some effort was made to preserve the distinctive connotation of the two labels, as in Devon and Cornwall, there was a long tradition of co-operation between the two sects.⁽⁴⁾ From the report made by Walter Blandford, Bishop of Oxford, to the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1669 it is evident that Congregationalists as a distinct sect did not exist within his diocese at all, but that Independents worshipped with either Presbyterians or Baptists.⁽⁵⁾ One of the effects in many parts of the country of the post 1681 persecution was to force Presbyterians and Independents (and occasionally Baptists) closer together.⁽⁶⁾ This process, and the indifference regarding nomenclature shown by the two sects, was also evident among the ministry. Presbyterian ministers often pastored congregations which described themselves as Independent, and

(1) B. Dale, 'The History of Early Congregationalism in Leeds', CHST II (1905-1906), 311.

(2) J. C. Warren, op cit, 15-16.

(3) B. Nightingale, The Old Independent Chapel at Tockholes (1886), 74.

(4) DWL MS.38.66, 39.

(5) Turner III, vii.

(6) Lyon Turner MS.89.13, IX56, 66, 68; Cragg II, 182-3; G. E. Evans, Come Wind Come Weather: Chronicles of the Tilehouse Street Baptist Church, Hitchin (1969), 4-5; T. Whitehead, History of the Dales Congregational Churches (1930), 25; T. G. Crippen, 'The Attercliffe Academy', CHST IV (1909-1910), 341. See C.S.P.D. 1682, 54.

Independent ministers were occasionally acceptable to congregations designating themselves Presbyterian. Where Nonconformity was weaker people from various sects were more likely to join together and accept ministers of varying labels. Despite this fluidity and indifference, however, it was often noticed that a determined pastor could mould a congregation in accordance with his own views, and, on occasion, that an attempt to do this might result in the splitting up of a congregation of 'mixed communion' into separate congregations on sectarian lines. John Langston found this in 1686 when he tried to divert the Presbyterian congregation at Ipswich 'back to the more regular congregational order'.⁽¹⁾ With some congregations, as with Guestwick in Norfolk, the inclination of the minister was the sole determining factor in the sectarian complexion of a congregation.⁽²⁾ In others what made it easier for a congregation, or a minority within a congregation, to accept a pastor of the opposite persuasion was a common Calvinistic theology.⁽³⁾

The cross-fertilisation which took place between the congregations and clergy of the Presbyterian and Independent sects - a process which was increasing during the 1681-6 persecution - doubtless acted as a restraining influence on the political response of the latter to enticement and hence may help to account for the relative restraint shown by Congregationalists in the face of James II's policies. But another important development which tended to the same end was that, taking advantage of the measure of fellow-feeling

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- (1) Harmer MS.76.9, 32, 66, 76; Walter Wilson MS.I, iii, 20; A. Goodall, 'Early Independency in Essex', CHST VI (1913-1915), 149; G. F. Nuttall, op cit, 177.
- (2) Harmer MS.76.10, 18.
- (3) See J. E. Manning, History of Upper Chapel Sheffield (1900), 32-3.

between Independents and Presbyterians which existed at the end of the great persecution, and building on groundwork done by a previous generation of negotiators during Charles II's reign, influential clergy, and local leaders, of the two denominations were negotiating an organic union between their organisations, a union which had been substantially achieved by 1688.⁽¹⁾ Despite the theological differences between the Presbyterian 'right' and the Independents, their differing attitudes toward church administration became purely a matter of academic debate at the Restoration.⁽²⁾ Those who wished to negotiate a union thereafter were the realists who understood that, given the existing state of affairs, there were, in fact, few essential differences between Presbyterians and Independents. Ironically, among this group of realists were the same group who aspired toward comprehension inside the Church of England, Richard Baxter and his associates. Hence the ultimate failure of union after 1691 was inbuilt when the idea was first conceived: whilst the Presbyterian negotiators were prepared to concede in fact that there was little to separate them from Independents, union was always a second best to comprehension, and theologically they continued to have a great deal more in common with the Latitudinarians, Tillotson and Stillingfleet, than with the Congregationalists, John Owen and Philip Nye.

After the Restoration the Presbyterians made no attempt to

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- (1) Robert Harley to Sir Edward Harley, 21 July 1688, HMC 14th Report, Appendix Part II: Portland MSS III (1894), 415. *See Bolam, 99-102.*
- (2) The absence among English Presbyterians of 'any close ecclesiastical polity' after the Restoration did not prevent them from producing leaders of national status, like Richard Baxter, Daniel Williams and Edmund Calamy. R. Thomas, *Daniel Williams Presbyterian Bishop* (1964), 2.

revive the Presbyterian form of church organisation. Although they believed in a definite hierarchical system of ecclesiastical government it was impossible to maintain that system given conditions as they were after 1660. In the absence of this organisation Presbyterians developed into separate isolated groups. The points at issue, therefore, between Presbyterians and Independents were minimised.⁽¹⁾ It is piquant that, whilst the Presbyterians were undergoing devolution, the Congregationalists felt it necessary, to ensure their continued existence, to create a church organisation in which several individual congregations coalesced to form a church: a practice followed by the Presbyterians under the Commonwealth.⁽²⁾ Circumstances, therefore, had pushed the two groups together in so far as church government was concerned. But as time was to prove, there persisted two major exceptions to the common practice thus produced: the attitudes of the clergies of both sects to the moral discipline of their congregations and the question of ordination. In the years before union was achieved on a national level, all instances where the sects had worshipped together on a local level, and then broken up, divided on the issue of discipline.⁽³⁾ Congregationalist church authorities exerted their discipline over the laity through restricting communion, and through disciplining those 'of insufficient lives' (first by warning and admonition, then expulsion).⁽⁴⁾ The

(1) Warwick CR VIII, lxxiv; H. Shaw, 'Congregationalism in Manchester its beginnings and development', CHST I (1901-1904), 68. For a description of the differences on church government between Presbyterians and Congregationalists after the Restoration see B. Dale, 'The History of Early Congregationalism in Leeds', CHST II (1905-1906), 311-313.

(2) R. T. Jones, Congregationalism in England 1662-1962 (1962), 83. See H. H. Oakley, Beginnings of Congregationalism in Sheffield (1913), 50-53.

(3) Walter Wilson MS.I, iii, 20; Harmer MS.76.9, 66, 76; 76.10, 18.

(4)

RB III, 46; Bolam, 93-94.

difference over ordination arose from the fact that, to Congregationalists 'ordination is the public recognition that God's Spirit has made a man overseer of a particular congregation', and that the congregation should decide when to ordain; whilst, to Presbyterians, ordination should only be carried out after appropriate 'tests' and by senior ministry.⁽¹⁾

It was an apprehension of the differences that divided Presbyterians and Independents which led William Crompton of Barnstaple, after ten years of hard work 'to heal the breach' between the sects in his immediate locality, to conclude in 1672 that the breach was 'incurable'.⁽²⁾ But others thought not. Whilst Baxter had anathematised Congregationalist practice on virtually every aspect of the discipline question, he had also fulminated against the 'more rigid' Presbyterians who were 'not tender enough to the dissenting brethren' and 'too much against liberty as others were too much for it'.⁽³⁾

It was this curiously janus-like position which made Baxter an anomaly in the ecclesiastical spectrum of his time. On the one hand he was regarded by the Latitudinarians as the Nonconformist leader nearest to their own position, but notwithstanding, on the other, he was in a position to negotiate with John Owen for a union with the Independents. Baxter's informal negotiations with Philip Nye over a period of years since before the Restoration had got him nowhere.

'For Nye the gathered church was the norm: for Baxter the

(1) G. F. Nuttall, 'The Early Congregational Conception of the Church', CHST XIV (1940-1944), 200. See Bolam, 55, 94, 113-114.

(2) DWL MS.38.34, Quick MS.I, pt. 1, 219.

(3) Cited Bolam, 48.

parish church was the norm, and the gathered church was an inferior alternative to be discouraged as much as possible and to be permitted only under stringent conditions' to facilitate the union of dissident groups inside the framework of a national church.⁽¹⁾

The rapprochement may have begun after the publication of the Act of Uniformity when ministers of both groups began to contemplate ejection. On 1 June 1662 it was noted that:

'The Independents and Presbyterians, who could scarcely give each other a good word, on the publishing of the Act of Uniformity, ^{Great} held a great meeting at St. Bartholomew's, Thames Street, received the Sacrament together and have appointed a fast!'⁽²⁾

The first real attempt at hammering out terms for a union was made by Baxter and Owen in 1669,⁽³⁾ but the development of a personal enmity between the two negotiators, combined with fierce argument on the discipline question and the free will-predestination issue, worked against the success of the project.⁽⁴⁾ Although they failed to reach agreement, Owen and Baxter did draw up a list of proposals. These proposals were discussed at a meeting of clergy of both persuasions at Bristol in 1680 and, later in the same year, were given an

(1) Bolam, 56; RB II, 188; III, 67, 108; G. F. Nuttall, 'The Early Congregational Conception of the Church', CHST XIV (1940-1944), 197-200, 202-204.

(2) CSPD 1661-2, 396.

(3) W. Orme, *Memoirs of the Life of John Owen* (1820), 309-314.

(4) *Ibid*; RB III, 103; Whiting, 77, 80, 81. Before the publication of the Reliquiae Baxterianae in 1696 Calamy edited out Baxter's acrimonious reflections on Owen. A. Gordon, 'Calamy as a Biographer', CHST VI (1913-1915), 235.

airing again at a meeting of London clergy and, amid an atmosphere of compromise made possible by the sickness of Owen and the absence of Baxter, amended to mutual satisfaction.⁽¹⁾ Before the death of

Charles II *a further project aimed at reaching agreement on matters of church discipline was launched.* ⁽²⁾

Negotiations, against a background of friendly relations between the two sects, continued until the final scheme for agreement between them was worked out in 1688. However, the matter was temporarily shelved by the Independents when the Court indicated its disfavour.⁽³⁾

Despite this setback, however, relations between the two sects continued to be on the most cordial terms and in some localities the union went ahead regardless. One such area was Worcester, where in 1687 a common agreement was made on theological questions (based on Calvinism) as well as on disciplinary questions.⁽⁴⁾ Perhaps the only practical result of this period of amity was an acknowledgement by the Dons of the necessity of conciliating sectarian opinion - evidenced by the fact that, at the same time as negotiating the terms for their own comprehension in July 1688, they were also negotiating the terms of a toleration for the sects - and, on the part of the Congregationalists, a movement away from the minority view of 'toleration, on any terms and from whatever source it may come'.

This helps to explain the reaction of both sects to James II's efforts

(1) DWL Occasional Papers, VI and IX (1957; 1960); Bolam, 100. See Morrice P, 375.

(2) Gordon, 154.

(3) Robert Harley to Sir Edward Harley, 21 July 1688, HMC 14th Report, Appendix Part II: Portland MSS III (1894), 415; Whiting, 81; Bolam, 100 n.2.

(4) W. Urwick, Nonconformity in Worcester (1897), 73, 75 - 82; Walter Wilson MS.I, iii, 39-40; DWL MS.38.66, 39. The Happy Union was achieved in 1691.

to enlist Nonconformist support.

The moderating influence of the Presbyterian rapprochement on the political behaviour of the Congregationalists may have been further reinforced by the influence of the Church. C. E. Whiting was undoubtedly wrong in his assertion that the attitudes of Congregationalists toward 'partial conformity' were uniformly negative.⁽¹⁾ There were, in fact, two main parties. The one, representing the older tradition, was typified by the Nye family; attending the parish church to hear the sermon was quite acceptable, though participation in Common Prayer or the Sacrament was not. The source that the Nyes were fond of quoting was the renowned John Robinson's A Treatise on the Lawfulness of Hearing of the Ministers of the Church of England, written long before the civil wars.⁽²⁾ Philip Nye's treatise, A Case: Whether we may lawfully hear the Now-Conforming Ministers, who are Re-Ordained and Have Renounced the Covenant, was written around 1668 to defend a practice which had already become established in many areas.⁽³⁾ However, the matter was still sufficiently open to dispute in 1683 to cause his son, Henry Nye, to republish this work, together with that of Robinson, under the title The Lawfulness of Hearing the Public Ministers of the Church of England Proved. In his preface Henry Nye *accepts by implication that* there had been an increasing tendency for Congregationalists to participate in the Anglican liturgy and to be 'occasional communicants', as well as to attend church; he *points out* that they had done so with the approbation

(1) Whiting, 80. See above p. 33.

(2) Lacey, 16-17. John Robinson had sailed to the United Provinces in 1611; his treatise was published posthumously in Amsterdam, 1634.

(3) Lacey, 16-18, 271 n.14.

of many Congregationalist leaders. The 'design' behind the republication of these two pamphlets was 'to satisfy the consciences of those Dissenters that hold communion with the Church of England unlawful'.⁽¹⁾

The second party, which opposed even church attendance, was probably of diminishing influence but, since it included the two most articulate Independents, John Owen and Stephen Lobb, has an extensive literature. In 1672 Owen published anonymously A Discourse concerning Evangelical Love, Church Peace, and Unity, With ^{the} Occasions and Reasons of Present Differences and Divisions, Written in Vindication of the Principles and Practice of Some Ministers and Others.

According to his biographer he brings his arguments to bear

'on the controversy then warmly agitated by Baxter, and some others, respecting the Dissenters attending parish churches; to which Owen, for weighty reasons, was decidedly opposed'.

In the pamphlet 'he states the corruptions and defects of national churches' as the reasons which justified total separation from them.⁽²⁾

Owen was always adamant that 'Christ hath ordained no power or order in his church, no office or duty, that should stand in need of the civil authority, sanction or force to preserve it'.⁽³⁾ Stephen Lobb wrote two pamphlets against partial conformity,⁽⁴⁾ the second of which, published in 1685, was The True Dissenter, or The Cause of those that

- (1) Philip Nye and John Robinson, *The Lawfulness of Hearing the Public Ministers of the Church of England Proved* (1683), preface. See Lacey, 17, 271 n.16.
- (2) W. Orme, *Memoirs of the Life, Writings and Religious Connexions of John Owen* (1820), 360-1.
- (3) J. Waddington, *Surrey Congregational History* (1866), 84.
- (4) Lacey, 17-18, 271 n.17.

are for Gathered Churches. In the preface he recognised that those 'that are against all compliance' - 'thorough Nonconformists' - among the ranks of the Independents were decreasing. But he refused to be drawn into the argument over participation in Common Prayer or the Sacrament; total non-compliance alone was acceptable.⁽¹⁾ In fact by the time Lobb wrote this pamphlet 'thorough Congregationalists' had disappeared in some areas. In February 1685 Launcelot Addison, Dean of Lichfield, in a letter to Archbishop Sancroft, asserted that he had 'so thoroughly practised the Nonconformist Dissenters' that all Presbyterians and Independents in and around Lichfield not only came to church but took communion, and that only three or four Baptists and one Quaker still refused to do so.⁽²⁾ This movement to the 'right' among the Independents was doubtless partially a response to intensified persecution, but it can also be seen as a response to Presbyterian influences during the period of the rapprochement.

But the relative moderation which was to characterise the political behaviour of Independents in the face of James II's 'enticement', was becoming evident by 1672. It is difficult to find evidence in the reactions of the Independents to Charles II's Indulgence of that year of the uniform belief in 'toleration all round' which C. E. Whiting believed had disposed their behaviour throughout the period between 1660-1688.⁽³⁾ Enticement was already becoming somewhat hackneyed and the conviction widely held that its

(1) See preface and pp. 1, 132-142.

(2) Cited A. G. Matthews, *Congregational Churches in Staffordshire* (1924), 79-80.

(3) Whiting, 80. See above p. 33.

twin objectives were to facilitate the infiltration of Roman Catholics into the high offices of state and the subversion of Parliament's Constitutional rights. But in discussing the approach of the Independents to toleration it must first be conceded that, since it was difficult to conceive of their being comfortable in any scheme for comprehension, they had a strong vested interest in the ideal.⁽¹⁾ Neither their conception of it, nor their enthusiasm for it, **was** uniform however, and varying opinions were held as to the extent of toleration. And to these modifications - evident at the time of the 1662 Indulgence - was added an increasing fastidiousness as to the source of the toleration which came through a more widespread grasp of the constitutional issue.

The Independents gave a qualified support to the 1662 Indulgence. Veteran Congregationalist Philip Nye was a frequent visitor at Court during the last few months of 1662 when Charles II was endeavouring to get support for it, and was used by the King in an endeavour to get the support of the Presbyterians. But there is evidence that even he, short of 'all round toleration', had severe misgivings about the inclusion of Roman Catholics.⁽²⁾

There were always some Independents, however, who would argue that there was no reason why Catholics should not be included in a general toleration.⁽³⁾ The most eminent Independent of the period, Dr. John Owen,⁽⁴⁾ was an avowed tolerationist, and not only for

(1) G. F. Nuttall, 'Independency and Toleration', CHST XIV (1940-1944), 63-64.

(2) Mather Papers, CMHS 4th Series, VIII (1868), 207-209; *Lacey, St-S.*

(3) *Whiting, 80.*

(4) Dean of Christ Church and Vice Chancellor of Oxford under the Commonwealth.

reasons of sectarian interest. Comprehension, he believed, was totally unrealistic, and the Presbyterians would come to see this. Unrealistic because, as far as the King was concerned, it precluded the possibility of the emancipation of Roman Catholics - the achievement of which he understood as the prime mover behind the King's policy - and because, as far as the majority of the Bishops were concerned, it was simply unthinkable.⁽¹⁾ There is evidence that Owen was instrumental in quashing the Wilkins Proposals for comprehension in 1668,⁽²⁾ but it is significant to note that in the counter project of a toleration which he put forward Roman Catholics were specifically excluded and that in his pamphlet published after the Conventicle Act of 1670 he stressed the necessity of parliamentary approval for any scheme of indulgence.⁽³⁾ Placed in a situation, however, in which he had no say in the terms of the toleration, he was prepared to acquiesce in the inclusion of Catholics, as he did in 1672. Owen, along with two other prominent Congregationalists, George Griffiths and Anthony Palmer, **was** the first to thank the King for his mercies. The address, however, was less than effusive and, in places, almost sardonic. Owen's excuse for addressing at all was

'We were glad to take a little breathing from our troubles, under His Majesty's royal protection, designed only as an expedient, as was usual in former times, for the peace and security of the Kingdom, until the whole matter might be settled in Parliament'.⁽⁴⁾

(1) Nuttall and Chadwick, 204-207.

(2) Nuttall and Chadwick, 203-204.

(3) J. Waddington, *Surrey Congregational History* (1866), 67; Nuttall and Chadwick, 206.

(4) CSPD 1671-2, 609 (28 March); W. Orme, *Memoirs of the Life, Writing and Religious Connexions of John Owen* (1820), 355-6. For the text of the address see *ibid*, 357-8.

It is likely that, had he been alive in 1687-8, Owen would, like his disciple George Griffiths, have opposed collaboration with a scheme for toleration based on the royal prerogative.⁽¹⁾

Many Independent pastors were distinctly suspicious of the 1672 Indulgence. Although 375 accepted licences,⁽²⁾ they were anxious to avoid the embarrassment of a personal application. Hence John Hicke found himself on a pilgrimage to London to collect licences for by far the greater number of Independent clergy in Hampshire,⁽³⁾ and Thomas Taylor went on the same mission from Bedfordshire, and returned armed with fifty-seven licences to be distributed among the Independent and General Baptists pastors of Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Leicestershire, and Cambridgeshire, who had sponsored his visit.⁽⁴⁾ Whilst a few Independent clergy were prepared to travel miles to collect their licences, twenty-two prominent Independent ministers, including Matthew Mead, Thankful Owen, John Knowles and Robert Gouge, flatly refused to apply, though taking full advantage of their new freedom.⁽⁵⁾ Six hundred and forty-two householders were licensed to have 'congregational conventicles' on their premises,⁽⁶⁾ but by far the greater number of both householders and licensees refused to address. Their reasons varied from those who were merely sceptical as to how long the Indulgence would last, to those who thought they would be abetting the advance of Popery and those aware

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- (1) BM Add MS.34515, 65, 66; Portland Misc. 19 PWA 2161e; Morrice Q, 255-8, 263.
 (2) CR, xv.
 (3) Lyon Turner MS.89.25, 25, 26.
 (4) R. T. Jones, op cit, 92.
 (5) Ibid; J. Waddington, Surrey Congregational History (1866), 71.
 (6) R. T. Jones, op cit, 92.

of the constitutional implications of the Indulgence.⁽¹⁾

Despite his disappointment when this Indulgence was withdrawn, it is likely that John Owen placed the idea of getting the support of the Nonconformists through backing toleration into the mind of the Duke of York in 1674. What kind of toleration the Independents had in mind may be drawn from the fact that, in April, Independent leaders, with other Nonconformists, were putting pressure upon the King to dissolve the doggedly Anglican Parliament which had brought about the withdrawal of the 1672 Indulgence. In the ensuing elections they would 'rely on getting seats' and would seek to 'persuade the nation to sanction such liberty of conscience' as might 'be granted by the King'.⁽²⁾ The terms of the toleration were doubtless discussed by Owen and the Duke of York in their meetings at Tunbridge Wells during the summer. On Owen's return to London, the King and the Duke sent for him to discuss likely Nonconformist reactions to a scheme for freedom of worship. Charles even gave him a thousand guineas to distribute among distressed Dissenters.⁽³⁾ There is no evidence, however, that Owen envisaged another Indulgence based on the royal prerogative, which he had already acknowledged as a precarious and undesirable basis for a toleration,⁽⁴⁾ or that the scheme envisaged

- (1) Lyon Turner MS.89.24, 25; DWL MS.24.7, 82; G. G. Waddington, A History of the Independent Church at Greenacres (1854), 28; W. Orme, Memoirs of the Life, Writing and Religious Connexions of John Owen (1820), 355.
- (2) A. B. Hinds (ed), Calendar of State Papers..Venice..XXXVIII (1940), 243.
- (3) W. Orme, Memoirs of the Life, Writings and Religious Connexions of John Owen (1820), 377-8; Whiting, 79. See F. B. Meyer, Historical Associations of Some of the Free Churches in Kent and Sussex 1642-1904 (1904), 65.
- (4) W. Orme, op cit, 356. See J. Waddington, Surrey Congregational History (1866), 67.

by the Duke for a complete toleration which had emerged by December had his support at all. Indeed on 7 December the Congregationalists and others favouring toleration were reported to have reduced their sights to a General Pardon only, and that the Court was hoping that, when it had been drafted, its terms might 'be interpreted in favour of Catholics', as well as Dissenters. It was anticipated that Charles would only agree even to this if the Dissenting politicians undertook to leave 'the question of succession at rest'. That, on 21 December, leading Congregationalists were being chided for 'want of respect for his Highness [the Duke]' would seem to indicate that the undertaking had not been made and that the Court was preparing the way to drop the whole matter. (1)

In the atmosphere of heightened suspicion and greater 'awareness' in 1687, many of the arguments and patterns of behaviour noted among Independents during and before the 1672-4 period were to re-emerge. First the concern shown by articulate Dissenters at the inclusion of Roman Catholics in a scheme of toleration, was to be an element in the situation. Second, the tendency shown in 1672 to see the Indulgence as part of a 'Papist Design', was to be much exacerbated in 1687. Third, the concern shown over the constitutional implications of an Indulgence was to be more widespread in 1687, through the over-use of enticement and the increased abundance of pamphlet admonition. Finally, there were many in 1672 who were prepared to avail themselves of the freedom afforded by the Indulgence but not to apply for licences, and many more prepared to apply for licences but not to address. In 1687 all were prepared to use

(1) A. B. Hinds (ed), *Calendar of State Papers... Venice... XXXVIII* (1940), 318-9, 327.

the new freedoms, but only a few would address. And even those who would address, regarded an address of thanks for an Indulgence as one thing, but acting as a JP in the reformed commission of the peace, or a common councillor in a remodelled corporation as quite another. Perhaps the greatest change in the attitudes of the Independents between 1672 and 1687, partially induced by the influence of the Presbyterian rapprochement, was an increased emphasis on the importance of parliamentary ratification, a point laboured in 65% of the Congregationalist addresses of thanks in the latter year.⁽¹⁾

4

Structurally, the Baptists were in some respects more complex than the Independents, in other respects simpler. The term 'Baptist' was used after the Restoration as a blanket term for a compendium of independent sects, each with its own organisational framework. One historian has spoken of four independent 'Baptist' sects,⁽²⁾ and from a theological point of view this division would appear to be correct. However, there appear to have been only three separate administrations: General Baptists, Particular Baptists and Sabbatarian Baptists.⁽³⁾ The distinction between the first two groups was social as well as theological, the Particular Baptists drawing their

(1) See Appendix Two, Table B.

(2) Strict and Particular, Open and Particular, Seventh-day, and General. Whiting, *86*.

(3) B. R. White, 'The Baptists of Reading 1652-1715', BQ XXII (1967-8), 251, 254; M. F. Hewitt, 'John Gibbs, 1627-1699', BQ III (1926-7), 320-1; Ivimey I, 523. See D. Coomer, *English Dissent* (1946), 20-26. The Particular and General Baptists were united in 1892. Warwick CR VIII, lxxv-lxxvi.

converts from a higher echelon of society.⁽¹⁾ The Sabbatarian Baptists were a much smaller group, including among their number Dr. Peter Chamberlain, Physician-in-Ordinary to James I, Charles I and Charles II,⁽²⁾ and the influential Stennet family who provided the mainstay of the sect's ministry - it boasted only eleven congregations - for the period 1660-1688.⁽³⁾ The Sabbatarians were most numerous in London; the funeral of the pastor of the Mill Yard congregation in 1684 was attended by a 'whole rabble of Dissenters'.⁽⁴⁾ The theological difference between the two larger baptist sects was a fairly basic one: the General Baptists derived their name from their Arminian emphasis on Salvation for all men, subject to choice; the Particular Baptists derived theirs from their Calvinistic insistence upon the doctrine of 'particular redemption'. The Sabbatarians had leanings toward Antinomianism and resembled the Particular Baptists save in one respect: their distinctive doctrine of the Saturday-Sabbath.⁽⁵⁾ The expansion of the Particular Baptists at the expense of the General Baptists in the years 1660 to 1684

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- (1) R. Barclay, *The Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth* (1876), 596.
- (2) d. 1683. Chamberlain left the Independents to join the Seventh-day Baptists in 1651. Whilst Henry Jessen, Hanserd Knollys, Francis Bampfield, and many other leading Baptists were subjected to distraints and imprisonment after the Restoration, Chamberlain was subjected to neither. J. W. Thirtle, 'A Sabbatarian Pioneer - Dr. Peter Chamberlain', *TBHS II* (1910-1911), 9, 19, 111-112, 113.
- (3) Walter Wilson *MS I*, iii, 17; v, 90; E. A. Payne, *The Baptists of Berkshire* (1951), 47-50, 50-51; W. T. Whitley, *A History of the British Baptists* (1923), 86; E. A. Payne, 'More about the Sabbatarian Baptists', *BQ XIV* (1951-2), 161; W. T. Whitley, 'Seventh-day Baptists in England', *BQ XII* (1946-8), 253-4.
- (4) *HMC Ormond MS.VII* (1912), 198. See W. T. Whitley, 'Thomson's List of Conventicles in 1683', *CHST IV* (1909-1910), 50, 53.
- (5) Whiting, 82, 83; B. R. White, 'The Baptists of Reading, 1652-1715', 251, 254; T. W. Thirtle, *op cit*, 21-24. At least one Sabbatarian congregation was theologically Arminian. Whiting, 131.

serves to emphasise that 'the eclipse of Calvinism' was a phenomenon more apparent in Anglican circles than among the Nonconformists.⁽¹⁾ At the Restoration the minor 'militant' sects, confused and discredited, began to disappear⁽²⁾ but after the failure of Venner's Rising in 1661 'there was a rapid evolution of the passive Fifth Monarchists into Seventh-day Baptists' and, for a time, the Sabbatarians threatened to become a powerful sect on the extreme 'left' of Nonconformity. But the influence of the Stennet clan, and the professional contingent of the sect, like Chamberlain, as well as of certain moderate pastors like Francis Bampfield, led to the painless assimilation of this lunatic fringe, so that the Sabbatarians became a small but responsible group largely isolated from the rest of Nonconformity.⁽³⁾

The Particular Baptists, conscious of their distinctive stand on baptism by immersion, were also relatively exclusive and only in the most stringent conditions of persecution would a local group condescend to seek the safety in numbers concomitant on a temporary coalition with another sect for purposes of clandestine worship.⁽⁴⁾ General Baptists were rather less exclusive, perhaps because of the absence of doctrinal uniformity. Even on the central question of

(1) DWL MS.38.82, under 18 April 1688; W. T. Whitley (ed), Minutes of the General Baptist Churches in England (1908) I, xix; *See* Warwick CR VIII, lxxiii.

(2) Cragg II, 2, 252.

(3) W. Beck (ed), The London Friends' Meetings: Showing the Rise of the Society of Friends in London (1869), 35, 37; E. B. Underhill (ed), Records of the Churches of Christ, gathered at Fenstanton, Warboys and Hexham 1644-1720, Hanserd Knollys Soc. (1854), xxi; W. T. Whitley, 'Thomson's List of Conventicles in 1683', CHST IV (1909-1910), 50; E. A. Payne, 'More about the Sabbatarian Baptists', BQ XIV (1951-2), 161, 162-4; W. T. Whitley, 'Seventh-day Baptists in England', BQ XII (1946-8), 253-4; J. W. Thirtle, 'A Sabbatarian Pioneer - Dr. Peter Chamberlain', TBHS II (1910-1911), 23-9, 114-116. See Bunyan, 340.

(4) Lyon Turner MS.89.13, IX 58.

baptism by immersion there were widely differing opinions; some regarding it as a test of fellowship, others, like John Gibbs and John Bunyan, regarding it as an unimportant external.⁽¹⁾ Baptists, of whatever type, were usually by far the smallest of the Nonconformist groupings in a particular area; only in Kent did they predominate and, rather surprisingly, almost all the Kent Baptists were Arminian or General Baptists.⁽²⁾ The absence of doctrinal uniformity facilitated the shelving of what, further to the 'right' in Nonconformity, would have been an insuperable theological variance, and General Baptists were often found fraternising with Independents. In fact, this fraternisation occasionally led to a situation in which it was difficult to determine a man's precise religious affiliation. One such case was that of Bunyan. On 24 November 1671 he was 'elected elder' of a congregation in Bedford of 'mixed communion', but principally made up of 'paedo-Baptists and Anti-Paedobaptists' (and whose members were styled 'Anabaptists' when brought before the courts). Bunyan, nevertheless, was a firm friend of John Owen, who once secured his release from prison, preached to Independent congregations when he went to London and, in 1672, took out a licence 'to teach as a Congregational person, being of that persuasion'.⁽³⁾ Bunyan's friends and associates in Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire, twenty in all, also described themselves as

(1) Bunyan, 219-222, 236-238; M. F. Hewitt, 'John Gibbs 1627-1699', BQ (1926-7) III, 320.

(2) G. F. Nuttall, 'Dissenting Churches in Kent before 1700', JEH XIV (1963), 181.

(3) Walter Wilson MS.I, i, 136-8, 138-9, 145, 146; Lyon Turner MS.89.27, 15, 30; H. M. Spufford, 'Dissenting Churches in Cambridgeshire from 1660-1700', Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society LXI (1968), 85, 86; Bunyan 177, 212-213; W. Orme, Memoirs of the Life, Writings and Religious Connexions of John Owen (1820), 398.

'Congregational' in their applications for licences in 1672.⁽¹⁾ It has, however, been generally assumed that Bunyan and his associates were Baptists.⁽²⁾ Apart from the usual imprecision in the use of sectarian labels it would appear that Bunyan styled himself 'Congregational' because he was, at that time, 'vigorously opposed' to making baptism a test of fellowship. His indifference to labels would also tie in with his advocacy, in contrast with Particular Baptists, of open communion.⁽³⁾

Perhaps because of their social weighting, the Particular Baptists were by far the most significant group by 1685, and included William Kiffin, Hanserd Knollys, and Nehemiah Cox^e among its most respected ministers.⁽⁴⁾ Kiffin, one of the earliest Particular Baptists, was a very wealthy London merchant in addition to being pastor of a Particular Baptist congregation in Devonshire Square.⁽⁵⁾ His *importance* under Cromwell put him in a very dangerous position at the Restoration,⁽⁶⁾ but his relations with Charles II, and later James II, were usually cordial. He first made the acquaintance of the King after Charles had sent to him a request for a loan of £40,000, in response to which Kiffin

- (1) Bunyan, 217.
- (2) Bunyan, 217, 238; G. E. Page, 'Some Baptist Churches on the Borders of Bedfordshire and Huntingdonshire', BQ XI (1942-45), 226; Whiting, 86.
- (3) H. M. Spufford, op cit, 86; Bunyan, 236-8; E. B. Underhill (ed), Records of the Churches of Christ gathered at Fenstanton, Warboys and Hexham 1644-1770, Hanserd Knollys Soc.(1854), xxiii.
- (4) J. Culcross, The Life of Hanserd Knollys (1895), 16, 82, 88-89, 102-105; Wilson II, 185-187; Whiting, 83-84. Knollys was 85 in 1685 and had undergone a long imprisonment. Morrice P, 431.
- (5) Kiffin was born in 1616, was apprenticed to John Lilburn, owed his religious inception to Thomas Foxley and John Davenport, was baptised in 1638, and had made handsome profits as a merchant during and after the Civil Wars. Kiffin, iv, 2-9, 23, 95-95, 101.
- (6) Ibid, 28, 29.

made him a gift of £10,000, with an explanation that the former sum was beyond his means.⁽¹⁾ A measure of his political influence was that on one occasion, through intervention at Court, he was able to preserve twelve Ailsbury Baptists from an excessive penalty after they had been found guilty of meeting in a conventicle; that on two other occasions attempts by Buckingham to have him arrested for treason were rendered abortive; and that on a further occasion, he was able to use his influence to prevent the creation of a monopoly which would have ruined his business.⁽²⁾ Of the other influential Particular Baptists, Knollys, who pastored a Baptist meeting-house in Great St. Helen Street, London, had, before the Interregnum, been an ordained Anglican clergyman,⁽³⁾ and Nehemiah Coxe, 'elder' of a congregation in Petty France, between 1675-1688, was a practising 'physician'.⁽⁴⁾ Nevertheless the most widely respected Baptist was John Bunyan. One of the small group of Non-conformist pastors between 1660-1688 who were well-known beyond their own localities, it would appear that his prolonged imprisonments were not too inhibitive of his influence.⁽⁵⁾

Despite the complexity of doctrinal divisions among the Baptists, their attitudes toward politico-religious issues, such as

- (1) Kiffin afterwards told his friends that by giving £10,000 he had saved himself £30,000. Ibid, 160.
- (2) Ibid, **32-35, 37-45, 117-120.**
- (3) J. Culcross, *The Life of Hanserd Knollys* (1895), 13-15; Whiting, 84.
- (4) Wilson II, 185-187; **Morrice Q, 232.**
- (5) Like other imprisoned Dissenters, such as Margaret Fell, John Gratton and Francis Holcroft, it would appear that Bunyan could leave the prison, even to preach. Cragg II, 114, 115; H. M. Spufford, 'Dissenting Churches in Cambridgeshire from 1660-1700', *Proceedings of the Cambridgeshire Antiquarian Society*, LXI (1968), 72; W. T. Whitley, 'Bunyan's Imprisonments; a legal study', *TBHS VI* (1918-19), 1-24.

'partial conformity' and toleration, can be catalogued with relative simplicity. For most of Charles II's reign their response to 'partial conformity' ^{*in contrast with Presbyterians*} was emphatically negative; it went without saying that the Anglican Sacrament and Common Prayer were out of the question, and most Baptists would have strong objections to listening to any 'unbaptised' preacher. ⁽¹⁾ The only significant exception was John Tombes, an academic, and one of the best educated Baptists of the period. Before the full impact of persecution had been felt, he asserted the 'lawfulness' of church attendance, and the taking of the Sacrament. ⁽²⁾ When some Baptists did begin to attend Church, however, it was not in response to his influence, but merely a temporary accommodation to escalating persecution. ⁽³⁾ 'Occasional conformity' never became an accepted practice, and those who became 'episcopal Nonconformists' ⁽⁴⁾ were 'heinously censured' by their more stalwart brethren, many of whom refused to celebrate communion with them when they returned to the fold. ⁽⁵⁾ After the last, bitter spate of persecution in 1686 ^{*there was still*} a group of Baptists ^{*in*} Worcestershire who had never attended Church. ⁽⁶⁾ There were probably many more like them.

Toward toleration Baptist attitudes were equally clear-cut.

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- (1) *RB II*, 437; CR, 81; Whiting, 86; A. Tucker, 'Porton Baptist Church, 1655-85', BHST I (1908-1909), 59.
- (2) John Tombes, A Just Defence of Hearing the Sermons and other Teaching of the Present Ministers of England (1667), 1-10, 14, 15. See Lacey, 16; W. T. Whitley, 'Dissent in Worcestershire during the 17th Century', BHST VII (1920-21), 2.
- (3) Tombes was very much out-on-a-limb: by writing in favour of the Oath of Allegiance and Supremacy in 1660 Tombes 'forfeited the little sympathy he had ever had from Baptists generally'. W. T. Whitley, op cit, 7. See Lacey, 270 n.6.
- (4) Baxter's phrase. *RB III*, 100.
- (5) Lacey, 16; DWL MS.38.82, under 19 February and 17 September, 1685.
- (6) W. T. Whitley, 'Prosecutions of Worcestershire Dissenters under the Stuarts', BQ I (1922-3), 381.

Their right to worship must be exercised regardless of governments since it came from God.⁽¹⁾ And since it came from God, man was presumptuous to deny or limit it, or even to declare it. One of the few addresses of thanks received by Charles II from Baptists after his Declaration of Indulgence in 1672 was from General Baptists in Lincolnshire, expressing thanks briefly, and then pointing out at some length that the Declaration in fact fell rather short of what Christians had the right to expect and urging him to extend complete liberty to all such as God had decreed should enjoy it.⁽²⁾ Hanserd Knollys had already made his position clear on addressing. He wanted 'no concernment' with it;

'it was in vain, because if he could go two or three steps with the [the government] he should not be liked of because he was sure he could not hold out with them to their journey's end'.⁽³⁾

Before beginning his long term of imprisonment in 1683 Knollys was visited by 'a lord' who

'asked him whether his friends of his persuasion would accept of a Toleration gladly. He replied he was old and knew few mens' minds, but being further pressed for an answer, he said he thought no liberty but what came by Act of Parliament would be very acceptable, because that would be stable and firm and certain'.⁽⁴⁾

(1) Bunyan's life and utterances aptly exemplify this, as do the records of many Baptist congregations. Whiting, 117; Bunyan, 201-2, 211, 323, 329. See Lacey, 66.

(2) A. Taylor, A History of the English General Baptists (1818) I, 207; Whiting, 117.

(3) Writing in 1684 Morrice, doubtless incorrectly, dated this incident 1661. Morrice P, 431.

(4) Ibid.

Some Baptists simply ignored the 1672 Indulgence, all dis-trusted it, suspecting that Popery was behind it.⁽¹⁾ In Worcester-shire, though Presbyterians and Independents applied for licences, Baptists did not; the one application which was received came almost too late to make it effective.⁽²⁾ Only one yardstick is available to measure the extent of Baptist reaction to the 1672 Declaration of Indulgence: the ratio of the total number of Baptist ministers (which can only be approximate, because of the nature of the Baptist ministry) against the number of applications for licences under the Indulgence. A study by possibly the most authoritative historian of the Baptists, W. T. Whitley, based on the diocesan reports of 1669, arrived at the figure 420 as an approximate representation of the number of Baptist ministers in that year.⁽³⁾ It would appear that of these 420 most were very tardy in making application, and many did not apply for licences at all. Outside London ninety-~~SEVEN~~ licences were issued to General Baptists,⁽⁴⁾ whilst in the four northern counties, despite considerable congregations in Newcastle and Co. Durham, no applications were received at all; even in Lancashire only one licence was taken out.⁽⁵⁾ Estimates of the total number of licences issued to Baptist preachers vary from

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- (1) Cragg II, 19; Warwick CR VIII, lxxii; A. B. Hinds (ed), Calendar of State Papers.. Venice.. XXXVII (1939), 225; Lacey, 66.
- (2) W. T. Whitley, 'Dissent in Worcestershire during the 17th Century', TBHS VII (1920-1), 10-11.
- (3) W. T. Whitley, A History of the British Baptists (1923), 123. When Whitley was critically revised in 1932 the figure was upheld (1932 edit. 123-5); it was also accepted by A. C. Underwood, A History of the English Baptists (1947), 102.
- (4) W. T. Whitley (ed), Minutes of the General Assembly of the General Baptist Churches in England (1909) I, lvi-lxvi.
- (5) W. T. Whitley, 'The Baptist Licences of 1672', TBHS I (1908-9), 156.

between 202⁽¹⁾ and 210.⁽²⁾

Recourse to the past practice of Baptists in analagous situations as a prediction of their behaviour under the pressures of James II's 'enticement' would have been less than encouraging for James. If by 1687 James's memory did stretch back as far as 1672, he could only have hoped that the second generation of those who had fought against the prerogative rights of his father would be less fastidious than the first generation had been in the face of the prerogative exercise of his brother. Or perhaps he believed that the 1681-6 persecution had rendered the Dissenting 'left' more servile, more apt to receive the King's Indulgence with a gratitude that would make them willing to co-operate.

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If the Baptists were little inclined to recognise, by addresses and requests for licences, the King's suspending power in 1672, the Quakers were even less so. They 'solicited no licences either for preacher or place, not admitting the need of any'.⁽³⁾ Man had the right to complete freedom of conscience, a right which was inalienable since it came from God.⁽⁴⁾ If Bunyan's post-Restoration

(1) CR, xv.

(2) Lacey, 291 n.89.

(3) Braithwaite, 82; Warwick CR VIII, lxxii; Cragg II, 19; F. B. Meyer, Historical Associations of Some of the Free Churches in Kent and Sussex, 1642-1904 (1904), 90. Girolamo Alberti, the Venetian Ambassador, was incorrect in listing Quakers along with the other sects who 'requested the royal placet for their meeting houses and ministers'. A. B. Hinds (ed), Calendar of State Papers.. Venice... XXXVII (1939), 225.

(4) W. Penn, The Great Case of Liberty of Conscience once more Briefly Debated and Defended (1670), *Works, ed. J. Besse (1726)* I, 443-447.

career was a living expression of this belief, then the history of the Quakers in this period was a fortiori so. They were the first, and perhaps until 1688, the only genuine protagonists of complete liberty of conscience: 'complete' in the sense that, whilst other dissenting sects claimed it for themselves, Quakers claimed it for all. Civil compulsion in religious affairs was antipodal to their theology and to their political philosophy. The only force they recognised was the operation of the Holy Spirit through the 'inward Light': the government of conscience was God's prerogative and could not be delegated. The end of civil government was justice and peace: persecution was contrary to both. (1)

From their beginnings, however, Quakers were heavily persecuted and whilst in theory they could hold that liberty of conscience could not be delegated by God to the Prince, the situation after 1660 taught them that, in practice, the Prince was the only source of clemency. There was a high premium upon the King's friendship, and the Quakers were prepared to expend considerable efforts to secure it and make use of it. All the more so since, because of their scruples about oath-taking, it was difficult to get redress through the courts. (2) Immediately after Charles II's accession, numerous attempts were made by individual Friends to gain his support by proving their innocence, and that of the sect they represented, of the political and military crimes of the Interregnum. (3) Throughout

(1) Ibid, 446-453; Penn, vii-viii, 44-45, 51-52.

(2) 'Refusal to swear.. barred Quakers from holding office because of Acts passed to exclude recusants; it sometimes became an obstacle at the polls; and it often prevented them from seeking redress in the Courts'. Penn, 9.

(3) A number of letters written to the King at this time were published in A Visitation of Love unto the King (1660).

the reign the persecution of Quakers was always of sufficient intensity to elicit regular appeals to the King for pardons; usually through George Whitehead, Gilbert Latey, Richard Carver and, after 1674, William Penn.⁽¹⁾ Charles II almost invariably made himself accessible to Quakers trying to secure releases; their efforts were not always fruitless. In 1660 Margaret Fell secured the release of 700 Quakers imprisoned under the Protectorate.⁽²⁾ As persecution was intensified their sense of dependence on the King increased. Braithwaite illustrates the intensity of persecution by recourse to the Middlesex County Records for the period between 24 July 1664 and 31 December 1665. During this brief period there were 909 convictions in Middlesex, of which at least 859 were Quakers. He also asserts that, in London, there were 2,100 imprisonments in connection with only five meeting houses during twelve months around the same period.⁽³⁾ In their Two Weeks, Monthly and Six Weeks Meetings, and the Meeting of Sufferings, the Quakers had machinery geared to correlate information on persecution from different parts of the country to make them a more effective pressure group in securing

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- (1) R. Hawkins (ed), *Friends Library: Consisting Principally of Journals and Extracts from Other Writings of Members of the Society of Friends IX* (1834), viii, xii-xiii, 65-69, 77-78; Penn, 21; A. J. Eddington, *The First Fifty Years of Quakerism in Norwich*, Friends Historical Society (1932), 185, 191.
- (2) Cragg II, 124-5; Sewel I, 251. See Neal IV, 7; Whiting, 155-6. George Whitehead, Richard Hubberthorne and Edward Burrough were permitted to plead the case of the Society before the Bar of the House of Commons against the 'Quaker Act' of 1662. W. Beck (ed), *The London Friends' Meetings: Showing the Rise of the Society of Friends in London* (1869), 35-6, 139, 175.
- (3) Braithwaite, 41-42. Despite heavy persecution, the Quakers (probably alone among the sects) grew numerically between 1660-1685. Warwick CR VIII, lxxiii-lxxiv.

releases.⁽¹⁾

Hence, in 1672, Quakers were prepared to make continued use of the King as their potential ally against the ecclesiastical establishment, as they had done since 1660, in order to procure pardons, but thought it unnecessary to solicit licences which recognised rights which they knew were inalienably theirs. George Whitehead, Thomas Moore and Thomas Green secured an audience with the King almost as soon as his Declaration had been published and received a pardon for 'One hundred and twenty-five praemunired persons, besides sixty under sentence of banishment'.⁽²⁾ Charles then went further and called for returns of prisoners from a number of gaols, and, when they had been received, included 491 names in the Patent.⁽³⁾ It is symptomatic of Whitehead's attitude to toleration that, on his advice, many included in the final Pardon were non-Quakers, and that, of these, at least one had been a strong opponent of Quakerism.⁽⁴⁾

With the renewal of persecution and its intensification after the dissolution of the Oxford Parliament, efforts were again made by Quakers to ingratiate themselves at Court with a view to lessening persecution and gaining pardons. But, because Charles II associated them - along with other Dissenters - with the Whig cause and the Exclusion they found him less amenable.⁽⁵⁾ In February 1683 George

- (1) W. Beck (ed), *The London Friends' Meetings: Showing the Rise of the Society of Friends in London* (1869), 92, 93. See J. R. Western, *Monarchy and Revolution* (1972), 161; Alan Cole, 'The Quakers and the English Revolution', *Crisis in Europe 1560-1660*, ed. T. Aston (1965), 354.
- (2) Braithwaite, 83; W. Beck (ed), *op cit*, 176.
- (3) Braithwaite, 83-84; Whitehead, 350-366.
- (4) Braithwaite, 85; Bunyan, 177.
- (5) Penn, 73-4; A. J. Eddington, *The First Fifty Years of Quakerism in Norwich*, Friends Historical Society (1932), 191.

Whitehead and Gilbert Latey appealed to Charles II on behalf of a group - variously numbered at sixty-three and eighty-two - of Quakers who, through the persecuting ardour of the Sheriff of Norfolk, were 'under severe sufferings and close confinement' in Norwich Jail. Although Charles ordered the Assize judges on the eastern circuit to investigate the conditions in which the Quakers were imprisoned and although Whitehead, and others, put further pressure on the judges, the Lord Keeper and the King, no action was taken.⁽¹⁾ In the meantime Latey, a successful merchant, was using his business contacts with gentry and ecclesiastics to greater effect in securing the release of Friends in prison. Indeed from a letter from Thomas Lamplugh, reproduced in Latey's Journal and dated 24 March 1684, it would appear that during the preceding twelve months the Bishop 'had done him several favours in respect ~~to~~ Friends under sufferings in his diocese'.⁽²⁾

What caused Lamplugh to make an exception of Quakers and what led the King ultimately to facilitate the release of the Norwich Quakers,⁽³⁾ was that Whitehead and Latey had reconvinced them that the Quakers were, in George Fox's words, a 'harmless and innocent people';⁽⁴⁾ innocent, that is, of political involvement. Once convinced, Lamplugh assured Latey 'that such as live quiet and peaceable in the land, by any order from me, are no way disturbed..

(1) Ibid, 183-5, 185, 186-9; R. Hawkins (ed), Friends Library: Consisting Principally of Journals and Extracts from other Writings of Members of the Society of Friends, IX (1834), 65-69.

(2) Ibid, 70-72, 74-75, 76-77.

(3) In the Norwich Sessions held in August 1683 'Judge Holloway, probably by special command from the King, released all the Quakers, then numbering eighty persons'. A. J. Eddington, op cit, 195.

(4) Bunyan, 182.

I never was, nor will be, for persecution'.⁽¹⁾ Whitehead brought about the King's change of heart in an audience on 26 April 1683. Remarking that many Quakers were imprisoned for refusing to take oaths, Charles added sarcastically, but 'many of your Friends can swear, or take an Oath, rather than lose their voices in [an] Election'. At this Whitehead assured him that 'though some few persons had sworn, who had sometimes gone under a profession, yet they were no longer in [the] Society with them'. Latey also responded: 'We are as much dissatisfied with such as have so done as the King can be'.⁽²⁾ Not long after this audience a directive to be read at Quaker meetings was sent out by Quaker leaders in which Friends were formally advised to keep out of politics.⁽³⁾

There had always been a tradition of passivity or 'quietism', among the older Quaker leadership typified by George Fox. Trevor-Roper regards this 'quietism' as 'the plebeian counterpart of the... Tory doctrine of non-resistance'. The quietism which became almost universal among English Quakers in the post 1681 period, however, was at first more like a practical accommodation to the harsh logic of events.⁽⁴⁾ But even the quietists had political aims - toleration, the abolition of tithes, the reform and simplification of the law - and were prepared to exert pressure on behalf of the Society to achieve them. Before 1681 the line between the quietists and the activists had been finely drawn and depended upon the methods that

(1) R. Hawkins (ed), op cit, 76-77.

(2) A. J. Eddington, op cit, 191; Whitehead, 534.

(3) Friends MSS, Book of Cases I, 98.

(4) Alan Cole, 'The Quakers and the English Revolution', Crisis in Europe 1560-1660, ed. T. Aston (1965), 343, 344-5, 346; Penn, 25, 42, 74; A. J. Eddington, op cit, 182, 183-5.

one was prepared to use to achieve these political aims.⁽¹⁾ There are examples of Friends who were prepared to exert pressure through local government. During the political struggle of 1675-81 the Morning Meetings and the Meeting of Sufferings urged Friends in the various constituencies to discuss their voting intentions and to act collectively in General Elections in support of candidates who favoured toleration. In the two elections of 1679 Quaker support went to Whigs, like Algernon Sidney. In the elections to the Oxford Parliament the Meeting of Sufferings 'cautioned the Quakers to elect sober, discreet, and moderate men friendly to the Quaker cause'.⁽²⁾

Behind much of this activism and political direction was William Penn, a member of the Meeting of Sufferings. Penn was on the hustings in the elections of 1679 in support of the candidatures of Algernon Sidney and Sir Charles Worsley, Whigs though not of Shaftesbury's camp. For the period 1678-9 he has been described as 'a leading Whig writer and agitator'.⁽³⁾ Penn's absence from the scene between 1681 and the end of 1684 doubtless enabled the traditional leaders of the movement to recover control and redirect the faithful away from political involvement and to the familiar paths of quietism; pressure on the Court to secure releases being left to the influential Whitehead and Latey. Even before the affair of the Norwich Quakers, the older Quaker leadership, repudiating 'the active policies of the younger men', through the Meeting of Sufferings 'insisted on a withdrawal behind the walls of passive resistance'.

(1) See Alan Cole, *op cit*, 346; Penn, 21, 25.

(2) R. F. Skinner, *Nonconformity in Shropshire 1662-1816* (1964), 8; Alan Cole, *op cit*, 354; Penn, 25, 36, 42.

(3) Penn, 28-32, 38, 41, 42; Alan Cole, *op cit*, 356.

Friends were told to stop using 'those reflecting, disgusting terms of distinction of Whig and Tory; or any such nicknames tending to provoke one neighbour against another', and to keep well clear of politics. In a letter dated December 1682 George Fox said that the Time of Trouble had come; it must be expected that 'they that will live godly shall suffer persecution by the ungodly'. But the faithful should not 'kick back': God's purpose and plan were being fulfilled and He would not impose upon them greater persecution than they could bear.⁽¹⁾

The Quakers had learned all the right lessons from the post-Exclusion persecution; although it is likely that only a small minority had been politically involved they saw clearly the pass to which it had brought them.⁽²⁾ Since the directive from the Quaker leadership in 1683 had forbidden them even to discuss political matters⁽³⁾ - and despite the occasional outbursts from an irresponsible⁽⁴⁾ - a total form of quietism developed among Quakers, anti-theetical to any kind of political involvement. However, this total quietism on the part of almost all Quakers, involving a disdain for political involvement, rendered the only sect who believed in complete toleration and were accustomed to looking to the King for favours, less than useful in James II's post-Indulgence programme.

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- (1) Penn, 42, 73-4; A. J. Eddington, *The First Fifty Years of Quakerism in Norwich*, Friends Historical Society (1932), 182, 183-5; Alan Cole, *op cit*, 354-5.
- (2) See W. Beck (ed), *The London Friends' Meetings: Showing the Rise of the Society of Friends in London (1869)*, 32.
- (3) Friends MSS, Book of Cases I, 98.
- (4) CSPD 1682, 538.

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The phenomenon of quietism, however, was apparent right across the Nonconformist spectrum in the years immediately prior to James II's accession and was just one of the effects of two decades of sporadic persecution. Among the other symptoms of decline which persecution had produced was a falling off in the number and quality of the ministries of the two most important Nonconformist sects. In addition a deterioration took place in the social weighting of the laity of each of the sects, accompanied by a diminution of the economic status of Nonconformists as against other religious groupings. Another consequence of persecution was an increase in the prevalence of partial conformity among the sects not aspiring toward comprehension and an increase in the extent of conformity among the group that did, a development partially accounted for by the determination of a politically motivated minority among the Dissenters (in contrast to the quietism of the majority) to hang on to some semblance of power in the municipalities after 1681. Finally, in certain areas where congregational-conventicle logistics favoured the Dissenters but persecution continued to escalate, there was evidence of a latent propensity for civil defiance (again in contrast to the prevailing quietism elsewhere), which the authorities converted into rumours of armed Nonconformist rebellion. These symptoms of decline, compounded by the rout of the political interest with which the Dissenters had been allied during Exclusion, led some surrealist thinkers in the Anglican camp to envisage the imminent extirpation of Nonconformity through the conjunction of a determined Church policy and a compliant monarchy.

The persecution which produced these polymorphic results was sporadic, not consistent, and multiplex in its application at a given time, rather than geographically uniform. The variable factors which produced this inconsistency in its application, geographically and chronologically, were the prevailing policy at Court, the vagaries - or occasionally, the perverse consistency - of local opinion, the varying zeal of local sheriffs and magistrates, the local ratio of Nonconformists to Anglicans, the prevalence of plots and rumours of plots, whether Parliament was in session or not, and, at diocesan level, the attitudes of the Deans and Bishops.⁽¹⁾ The much-persecuted Quaker, John Gratton, believed that the major factor determining the intensity of persecution was the character and prejudice of the local magistrate.⁽²⁾

In 1670, because the Hull magistracy was 'much disaffected to the government of the Church', they were prepared to turn a blind eye to conventicles. When the Earl of Plymouth became Governor in December 1682 one JP, Humphrey Duncalf, told him that Hull Dissenters were 'peaceable men' and he would have no hand in persecuting them.⁽³⁾ One pressure which might

(1) See CR, lix; Miller, 51, 59-62; Morrice P, 330; L. A. Fereday, *The Story of the Falmouth Baptists* (1950), 26; W. M. Wigfield, 'Recusancy and Nonconformity in Bedfordshire', *The Publications of the Bedfordshire Historical Record Society* XX (1938), 152; Cragg II, 18.

(2) John Gratton, *Journal of the Life of John Gratton* (1795), 78, 80.

See also

A. G. Matthews, *Congregational Churches in Staffordshire* (1924), 79.

(3) A. E. Trout, 'Nonconformity in Hull', *CHST* IX (1924-26), 141. See also G. F. Nuttall, 'Dissenting Conventicles in Kent before 1700', *JEH* XIV (1963), 186.

force a complacent JP or constable to act against conventicles was from informers, who under the terms of the Conventicle Act of 1670 stood to gain financially from a successful prosecution. The pressure was especially great where Nonconformists owned goods worth despoiling; there was usually an enormous disparity between the fine levied and the goods plundered in lieu of the fine.⁽¹⁾ Deans and Bishops, themselves agents of persecution through the church courts, could also exert pressure on JPs.⁽²⁾ *and the Government* The ebb and flow of persecution in Lincolnshire had a great deal to do with who was bishop.⁽³⁾ At Lichfield a complacent Dean shielded Nonconformists from persecution until 1684, when his death provided the occasion for the appointment of Launcelot Addison, whom local Dissenters soon discovered to be an avid persecutor.⁽⁴⁾ The contemporaneous appointments of a new Sheriff and a new Bishop in Bristol resulted in 'the stirring up of officials' and the fining of a record number of non-attenders.⁽⁵⁾

The most important factor which made persecution more widespread and more intense after 1681 was the changed attitude of the Crown. By their support for Exclusion Dissenters had forfeited the King's good-will and now he was quite prepared to acquiesce in all the consequences of the Church-Court alliance as it affected

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- (1) Cragg II, 16-17, 34, 57, 60, *See* R. Hawkins (ed), Friends Library: Consisting Principally of Journals.. of members of the Society of Friends, IX (1834), 146.
- (2) G. W. Boag, 'Congregationalism in Northumberland and Durham', CHST IV (1909-1910), 82-83; A. B. Hinds (ed), Calendar of State Papers... Venice... XXXVIII (1940), 353-4.
- (3) J. C. Warren, 'From Puritanism to Unitarianism at Lincoln', Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society II (1919-22), Part One, 3-4.
- (4) A. G. Matthews, op cit, 79, 80; Morrice P, 368.
- (5) Lyon Turner MS.89.13, IX 77. See also ff. 68, 72.

them.⁽¹⁾ In June 1681 the King ordered that conventicles and seditious meetings be suppressed, and on 15 December 1681 he was reported to be determined 'to have the laws effectually executed against Dissenters'.⁽²⁾ By 3 January 1682 Roger Morrice knew that JPs had been in receipt of a 'new order with direction from the King and the Board to suppress all conventicles' and that JPs and constables were in the possession of general warrants, and lists of Nonconformist preachers, of conventicles and of 'the most conspicuous frequenters'.⁽³⁾ By 14 January Lord Herbert knew 'how acceptable it was to His Majesty to have the laws against Dissenters.. put into execution'.⁽⁴⁾ On 10 November 1682 a Privy Council Order was issued 'for preventing tumultuous meetings'.⁽⁵⁾ Dissenters thought it significant that this was followed by 'Several presentments...upon the statute of the 35 of Queen Elizabeth'. One of those presented was Nathaniel Vincent. He was tried at the Surrey Sessions in January 1683, got his case postponed until the next term by presenting a Writ of Error in February, was 'bailed at the King's Bench Bar upon his Writ of Error' in May, was 'totally discharged' in June but soon had 'two other indictments..pending against him upon the same statute'.⁽⁶⁾ Crushing financial burdens upon non-attenders were initiated when, in February 1683,

'the King's Bench gave judgment unanimously that the statute of £20 a month, 23 Elizabeth, does extend to persons of any

(1) Cragg II, 24. See Bunyan, 315.

(2) Morrice P, 320; Miller, 190.

(3) Morrice P, 321.

(4) CSPD 1682, 24-25.

(5) Morrice P, 344.

(6) Morrice P, 351, 352, 353, 355, 357, 367, 368, 368, 424.

persuasion that are guilty of the offences contained therein, as well Protestant Dissenters as Popish Recusants'.⁽¹⁾

On 18 May the King's Bench re-stated this decision in more general terms: Protestant Dissenters could be tried under Elizabethan legislation aimed against Catholic Recusants.⁽²⁾

At every level there was evidence of a court-inspired tightening up on the machinery of persecution. At the Easter Sessions in Warwick in 1683 parish constables were ordered to present lists of non-attenders every three weeks. Shortly afterwards Sir Charles Holt was placed in the Commission of the Peace for Warwickshire, Shropshire, Worcestershire and Staffordshire almost certainly because of his known hostility toward religious dissent and because 'in his house at Aston he was conveniently placed to harry Dissenters' in all four counties. By the Epiphany Sessions 1684 constables and JPs were working together effectively to harry non-attenders and conventiclors.⁽³⁾ Elsewhere orders were issued in 1683 to beadles to

'make presentments of all such persons within their several wards that do not repair to their respective parish churches: and that those presentments be made every Tuesday'.⁽⁴⁾

On 16 January 1684 the Grand Jury for Middlesex issued a statement to the effect that Nonconformist ministers were 'the cause of all the dangers to the government' and when, ten days later a list of a hundred of them resident in London had been presented to the King, it was expected 'that there would be some public instructions given

(1) Morrice P, 356.

(2) Morrice P, 368.

(3) Warwick CR VIII, lxxv.

(4) W. Camfield, 'Religious Life in the 17th Century', CHST VIII (1920-23), 157.

for apprehending them'. Prosecutions followed thick and fast.⁽¹⁾
 On 29 April the Lord Chief Justice was reported to have told the Recorder of Abingdon that the King regarded the presence of three conventicles in the town as 'a reproach to the government'.⁽²⁾

In July he went

'to the assizes at York with special instruction and commission from the King to prosecute all Protestant Dissenters, beside Quakers' and adding that it was 'the King's pleasure... to root out all fanatics through the land'.⁽³⁾

A high density of Nonconformists in the population usually following a high density of ejected ministers resident in a particular locality; persecution was heaviest in the South West, more especially Devon (where 121 ejected ministers were resident), Yorkshire (where 110 ejected ministers were mainly concentrated in the West Riding), East Anglia (Essex and Suffolk had 178 between them) and London (where the original seventy-six soon increased as a result of migration).⁽⁴⁾ A high density of Nonconformists in the South Western counties is also indicated by the number of licences taken out in 1672 and by the number of prosecutions for religious offences. In the twelve months during which the 1672 Indulgence held good 'the number of licences taken out for dissenting preachers and meeting houses in Devonshire [160] was higher than in any other county'. Somerset, including Bristol, an important Nonconformist

(1) Morrice P, 415, 416, 417, 423.

(2) Morrice P, 433-4.

(3) MS. Notes by Dr. John Hall, Kipping, Bradford, cited B. Dale, 'The History of Early Congregationalism in Leeds', CHST II (1905-1906), 317.

(4) CR, . . . xii-xiii, xiv. For a discussion of the migration of Nonconformist clergy to London see below pp.133-134, 136, 138.

centre, was a close second.⁽¹⁾ From the number of licences, the odd church book which survives to corroborate the size of an individual congregation and the statistics of persecution it is clear that the density of Nonconformists in Dorset and Wiltshire was also unusually high.⁽²⁾

The records of the Exeter City Sessions show that the worst phases of persecution in Exeter were 1673-1676 - the period of Danby's ascendancy - and the spell after 1681, during which convictions for conventicles mounted year by year, reaching a peak in 1685.⁽³⁾ They also make it clear that the persecution was being deliberately aimed at the ejected ministry in the city or, to be more exact, against those ejected ministers (chiefly Presbyterians) who had taken out licences under the 1672 Indulgence.⁽⁴⁾ Elsewhere, where Congregationalists often took the brunt of the first onrush of persecution after 1681, it was also the ejected ministers among them who were singled out for persecution. John Owen, George Griffiths, John Collins, Samuel Slater, Matthew Mead and Robert Ferguson *were among those* convicted.⁽⁵⁾ In 1682 John James, Matthew Mead and John Humfrey were fined £100 each at Middlesex sessions for preaching.⁽⁶⁾

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- (1) H. P. R. Finberg and W. G. Hoskins, *Devonshire Studies* (1952), 372-3; S. W. Carruthers, 'Conventicles and Conventiclers', *JPHS* X, No. 3 (May 1954), 102, 103, 115-117; S. Schofield, *Jeffreys and The Bloody Assizes* (1937), 99-100.
- (2) *VCH Dorset* II (1908), 40; *Roberts* I, 258-9; A. Tucker, 'Porton Baptist Church, 1655-85', *TBHS* I (1908-9), 56-57.
- (3) *Morrice* P, 437-8, 438, 440. Statistics from Exeter Sessions reproduced, *Brockett*, 39. See also *Presentations from Non-conformity in the Archdeaconry of Exeter, 1673-1683*, Lyon Turner MS, 89.12, ff. 1, 2, 4, 5-6, 9-20, 26, 27, 29.
- (4) *Brockett*, 41, 43.
- (5) CSPD 1680-1, 592, 613; CSPD 1682, 610; CR, 236-237, 376-377.
- (6) *Middx. CR* IV, 165-6, 182, 186. In each case *other* offences were taken into consideration, £20 being levied for the first offence and £40 for each of the subsequent offences. See below pp. 222-223.

But even where persecution was not focused on the ejected ministers themselves, the equation between the intensity of persecution and the density of ejected ministers still holds. Between 1682-1684 Bristol, the West Riding, London and Norwich (in that order of intensity) took the brunt of persecution. About two-thirds of the leading inhabitants of Bristol were Nonconformists of various shades of opinion. ⁽¹⁾ *Various of the* Dissenting meeting houses were pillaged ^{and meetings broken} in the second half of December 1681, ⁽²⁾ and soon Bristol's Newgate Prison was 'crowded ... almost to suffocation' with Dissenters. ⁽³⁾ Enormous fines were levied on Bristol Dissenters: the aggregate takings were estimated as high as £100,000 by August 1682, a total which one observer believed to be the highest for any corporate town in England. ⁽⁴⁾ When all the Nonconformist ministers of the city were in jail a committee of eight lay-persons, representing all the sects, 'met to consider how the life of the congregations might best be maintained'. ⁽⁵⁾ The discovery of the Rye House Plot had a major impact in the West. An ejected minister, turned physician, from Bristol, Dr. Ichabod Chauncy, wrote to Increase Mather that the Plot was likely to prove 'the greatest advantage to our popish adversaries', ⁽⁶⁾ (in which compendious expression he seemed to be including the Tories and the Established Church!).

(1) Morrice P, 330, 322; Braithwaite, 8, 99.

(2) Lyon Turner MS.89.13, IX 66, 68; E. Terrill (ed), The Records of the Church of Christ Meeting in Broadmead, Bristol, 1640-87, *Bunyan Library Edition*. (1865), 213, 215-16 See Cragg II, 38.

(3) Lyon Turner MS.89.13, IX 72; Braithwaite, 102. ^{217-27;} See Penn, 110.

(4) Lyon Turner MS.89.13, IX 72; Besse I, 54-74; E. Terrill, op cit, 213, 216, 219, 225-6, 228, 231, 238, 239-240, 242. See also 247.

(5) Cragg II, 183.

(6) Cited Lacey, 163.

Within weeks Chauncy discovered the extent to which his 'adversaries' were prepared to use their advantage: he was arrested and only narrowly escaped the death penalty under 'the Act of 35 of Queen Elizabeth'.⁽¹⁾

Probably, West Yorkshire had the highest number of dissenting prisoners of all the counties,⁽²⁾ though, from Whitehead's account of Norwich (which had recently undergone an ill-timed evangelical revival) Norfolk must also have had a very high average.⁽³⁾ In fact there were so many Quakers in Norwich jail in September 1684 that the Monthly Meeting of Friends had to be held there.⁽⁴⁾ In London, however, there was a lull before the storm finally hit the Dissenters. Although George Jeffreys was appointed Chairman of the Middlesex JPs in 1681 'for the express purpose of enforcing the laws which the Cavalier Parliament had enacted against all classes of Nonconformist' the disturbance of meetings did not begin in earnest until January 1682. Even then when the cases were brought before the Hicks Hall Sessions on 17 February they were 'thwarted' by 'ignoramus juries'.⁽⁵⁾ During the summer the disturbance of meetings occurred with increasing frequency and, once the Whig Sheriffs had been removed, many Dissenters were fined and imprisoned under the terms of the Corporation and Conventicle Acts and under the Act of 23 of Elizabeth

- (1) Morrice P, 446-7; Braithwaite, 107; E. Terrill (ed), The Records of the Church of Christ Meeting at Broadmead Bristol (1865), 267, 272.
- (2) Besse II, 154. See also B. Dale, 'The History of Early Congregationalism in Leeds', CHST II (1905-1906), 317, 318.
- (3) See Whitehead, 524-536; Morrice P, 360; A. J. Eddington, The First Fifty Years of Quakerism in Norwich, Friends Historical Society (1932), 172-196.
- (4) Ibid, 218.
- (5) Morrice P, 322, 328; S. Schofield, Jeffreys of The Bloody Assizes (1937), 56, 96-7.

(which imposed the £20 per month fine for non-attendance).⁽¹⁾

London Dissenters believed that 1683 had been the worst year of persecution they had experienced, but 1684 was to be worse still.⁽²⁾

In February 1684 the 'chiefest business' at the Hicks Hall Sessions was 'the prosecution of Dissenters'.⁽³⁾ George Whitehead described the plight of London Nonconformists in the winters of 1682, 1683, 1684, during each of which the Thames was frozen sufficiently solidly as to make bridges superfluous for traffic, and when, because they were shut out of their meeting-houses, meetings had to be held in the open.⁽⁴⁾ The suffering of Nonconformists under the nationwide persecution of this period was such that two moderate Anglicans wrote pamphlets pleading for *moderation*.⁽⁵⁾

The consequence of these years of persecution - sporadic before 1681, pandemic thereafter - which was most apparent to contemporaries was the decline of the Nonconformist ministry. It was not that persecution, in the direct sense, resulted in many deaths - only eight ejected ministers died in prison between 1662-1687⁽⁶⁾ - but that persecution created a situation in which, once the old generation of ministers expired, it was difficult to recruit replacements and difficult to train those who were recruited. Of the original

- (1) Morrice P, 330, 336-7, 339-40, 341, 343, 345; S. Schofield, op cit, 56, 58-59, 62. See Miller, 52, 53, 54-55.
- (2) Morrice P, 360, 362, 364, 365, 370, 376, 409, 437-8, 438; E. B. Underhill (ed), Records of the Churches of Christ gathered at Fenstanton, Warboys and Hexham, 1644-1720, Hanserd Knollys Society (1854), 280.
- (3) HMC Ormond MSS. VII (1912), 203.
- (4) Whitehead, 543-4; W. Beck (ed), The London Friends' Meetings: Showing the Rise of the Society of Friends in London (1869), 173, 198, 202. See Besse I, 449-474; Whiting, 177.
- (5) Samuel Bolde, A Plea for Moderation towards Dissenters (1682), 1-4; W. Smithies, A Reply to The Observator (1684).
- (6) CR, 1x.

number of ejected ministers, variously put at 1,200, 1,800, and 1,897,⁽¹⁾ which had comprised the ministry of the two largest Dissenting sects in 1662, there were an inordinate number of deaths after 1681, including some of the most influential men in both sects, and the remnant included many who were sick and elderly, and hence of declining effectiveness.⁽²⁾ When Burnet left England for the Continent in 1684 he took away with him the impression that when the present generation of Nonconformist clergy 'were once laid in their graves, [Nonconformity] would sink, and die and come to nothing'.⁽³⁾

The Puritan Grammar Schools had been closed in 1660 and the Nonconformists barred from the Universities and, by the Five Mile Act, forbidden to teach under the penalty of £40.⁽⁴⁾ *It is probable that* the faithful few who, regardless of persecution, did enter the illegal ministry were of inferior education by comparison with those whom they succeeded.⁽⁵⁾ But until the new freedom made possible by the 1687 Indulgence led to a number of secret ordinations in different parts of the country, entrants into the Nonconformist ministry represented no more than an insignificant trickle, and even in 1687 only minute groups of ordinands (often the sons of ejected ministers) were involved, in some cases the persons who had been acting as

(1) CR, xv, xxxviii; Williams I, 59. Alexander Gordon, after a detailed study of the evidence, favoured 1,800. Contemporaries put the figure as high as 2,465. A. Gordon, 'Calamy as a Biographer', CHST VI (1913-1915), 239.

(2) Walter Wilson MS.I, iii, 58, 59, 135, 137, 149, 150, 156, 191-2, 221, 261, 288, 369, 390, 406, 407, 427; iv, 6, 65, 66, 91, 92, 265, 329.

(3) Calamy, Howe, 127-8.

(4) I. Parker, Dissenting Academies in England (1914), 47; R. T. Jones, Congregationalism in England: 1662-1962 (1962), 86.

(5) Brockett, 48.

pastors during the years of persecution.⁽¹⁾

Those who did enter the Presbyterian and Congregationalist ministries after the ejection were doubtless the graduates of the twenty-two academies and 101 schools which, despite the law, the two sects operated (sometimes jointly) at various times between 1662 and 1687.⁽²⁾ In 1682 there were said to be 'great numbers in and about London' of unlicensed school masters, school mistresses and private academies.⁽³⁾ The most respected of the Nonconformist academies was that operated by Richard Frankland which, after a series of moves necessitated by the vicissitudes of persecution in different areas, ultimately settled at Attercliffe, near Sheffield.⁽⁴⁾ Charles Morton operated 'the *chief* Congregational Academy in London' at Newington Green.⁽⁵⁾ The latter institution was *probably* held in high regard by Sir Edward Harley⁽⁶⁾ and its curricula and teaching methods were in advance of the time. Latin was abandoned and Morton is given the credit for being the pioneer of English as the medium of instruction. In addition to theology, many academies taught logic, maths, science and modern languages, but in addition modern

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- (1) See below pp.301,303-304,511; G.F.Nuttall, 'Lyon Turner's Original Records', CHST XIV (1940-1944), 112. Among the first to enter the post-ejection Nonconformist ministry and the first to be ordained, were Daniel Williams and Timothy Jolly. Williams I, vii-ix; H. H. Oakley, *Beginnings of Congregationalism in Sheffield* (1913), 62.
- (2) CR, lv, lvi; I. Parker, *op cit*, 137-9. These figures exclude a number of small establishments for the education of the children of Quakers. W. Beck (ed), *The London Friends' Meetings: Showing the Rise of the Society of Friends in London* (1869), 143.
- (3) CSPD 1682, 609.
- (4) Lyon Turner MS.89.13, IX 6a; Walter Wilson MS.553 D, 69, 70; T. G. Crippen, 'Richard Frankland and His Academy', CHST II (1905-1906), 423-4, 425; H. McLachlan, *English Education under the Test Acts* (1931), 106.
- (5) *Ibid*, 76.
- (6) Sir Edward Harley to Robert Harley, 5 July 1681, HMC 14th Report, App. Pt. II: Portland MSS III (1894), 369.

history and political science were taught at Newington-Green.⁽¹⁾ The academies run by Francis Tallents (at Shrewsbury) and John Woodhouse (at Sheriffhales) may also be considered innovative in that their curricula included, respectively, modern history and practical science.⁽²⁾ Edward Reyner's academy at Lincoln, Thomas Cole's at Nettlebed and Matthew Warren's at Taunton would doubtless also have been considered progressive in that their curricula included rhetoric, philosophy and science.⁽³⁾ A more traditional emphasis on Latin and Greek was to be found in the academies at Bethnal Green, Highgate and Clerkenwell.⁽⁴⁾ Frankland's curriculum was also fairly unrevolutionary.⁽⁵⁾ Thomas Doolittle's academy at Islington and John Flavell's at Dartmouth may have been typical of the smaller academies in sticking to a 'Bible-centred' curriculum and being distrustful of 'human learning'.⁽⁶⁾ Among the smaller academies were those at Ipswich, Sulby, Wapping, Bridgewater, Ogwell, Coventry, and Whitchurch.⁽⁷⁾

At a given time only a fraction of the 101 Nonconformist

- (1) J. W. Ashley Smith, *The Birth of Modern Education, the Contribution of the Dissenting Academies 1660-1800* (1954), 1, 56-61, 237; H. McLachlan, *op cit*, 15, 76, 77-79, 80; I. Parker, *op cit*, 55, 59-60, 61, 63.
- (2) J. W. Ashley Smith, *op cit*, 51-53, 53-56. T. G. Crippen, 'Early Nonconformist Academies', *CHST IV* (1909-1910), 252.
- (3) J. W. Ashley Smith, *op cit*, 26-29, 29-31; T. G. Crippen, *op cit*, 233-5, 236-9, 242; W. Tong, *Some Memoirs of the Life and Death of the Reverend Mr. John Shower (1716)*, 6-7.
- (4) T. G. Crippen, 'Early Nonconformist Academies: second part', *CHST VI* (1913-1915), 20-24.
- (5) J. W. Ashley Smith, *op cit*, 17-18, 19.
- (6) *Ibid*, 24-5, 49; I. Parker, *op cit*, 138; T. G. Crippen, 'Early Nonconformist Academies', *CHST IV* (1909-1910), 252.
- (7) I. Parker, *op cit*, 138-139; E. Windeatt, 'Early Nonconformity in Ashburton', *Transactions of the Devonshire Association XXVIII* (1896), 8; T. G. Crippen, *op cit*, 41-44; Palmer II, 21; III, 127, 272; H. McLachlan, *op cit*, 2, 10, 14; Walter Wilson MS.I, i, 301; J. Murch, *A History of the Presbyterian and Baptist Churches in the West of England* (1835), 172, 178.

schools were actually in operation: most existed for only a few years before being smoked out by the rekindling of persecution and they were, in any event, very small.⁽¹⁾ The academies, with the exception of those of Frankland and Morton, would also appear to have been in operation for relatively short periods.

⁽²⁾ These academies would in addition appear not to have been primarily training centres for Nonconformist ministry, though most had been founded with this end in mind. In view of the exclusion of Nonconformist youth from all access to higher learning, the academies - as their curricula demonstrate - were mainly geared to the provision of a general education to facilitate entry into any profession. Only a third of Frankland's graduates went into the ministry, the rest going into Law or 'Physick'.⁽³⁾ Many academies were very small. Only four students are known to have been tutored by Flavel at Dartmouth. During the twenty-two years of its life the largest academy, Frankland's, tutored only 303, and in a typical year might have sixteen.⁽⁴⁾ In view of the instability caused by persecution and the fact that, in each institution, one instructor was responsible for teaching all subjects to all students, standards of attainment were not high and the academies failed to produce a new generation of clergy to replace the old until after the Revolution.⁽⁵⁾

(1) Turner I, 91; Palmer I, 212; III, 366. *See R. T. Jones, op cit, 87.*

(2) I. Parker, op cit, 137-139.

(3) T. Whitehead, *History of the Dales Congregational Churches* (1930), 52; T. G. Crippen, 'Frankland and His Academy', CHST II (1905-1906), 424-5; CR, lv, lvi; Walter Wilson MS.553 D, 145; I. Parker, op cit, 64-65.

(4) Ibid, 64-65, 137-9; R. E. Leader, 'The Origin of Nonconformity in Sheffield', CHST VI (1913-1915), 398.

(5) See I. Parker, op cit, 58, 62, 64-65; T. G. Crippen, 'Richard Frankland and His Academy', CHST II (1905-1906), 423, 424-5.

When Dissenters were given the freedom to meet and preach in 1687 there was a chronic shortage of ministers, especially in the north of England, and Thomas Jolly, Henry Newcome and Oliver Heywood ^{may have} between them had to pastor the congregations of Lancashire, Cheshire, Westmorland, and part of the West Riding.⁽¹⁾ In Yarmouth, in the absence of any regular pastor, one large congregation negotiated with a succession of London pastors (Independent and Presbyterian), a Scottish Presbyterian, as well as a local Independent, in an effort to induce one of them to settle as their pastor after the Indulgence, and when all refused, pleading commitments elsewhere, settled for a local, unordained Independent preacher called Hannot, (on 26 April 1688).⁽²⁾ A nearby congregation at Wattisfield had the same difficulty in finding a pastor and complained: 'the harvest is great but the labourers are few, especially that will take upon them the office of pastor'.⁽³⁾ A congregation of Presbyterians at Boston in Lincolnshire had to search far and wide, after they had received their freedom to meet, in order to find a minister.⁽⁴⁾ When Francis Crow, a Nonconformist pastor who had fled to Jamaica in 1684 to escape persecution, returned to England in 1687, he was peppered with invitations from congregations all over the country, before he decided to return to his old congregation at Clare in Somerset.⁽⁵⁾ When John Pinney, who was over seventy and broken in health and

(1) Heywood III, 229, 234; Jolly, 82-85; Henry Newcome, Autobiography, Chetham Soc. (1852). II, 264-267.

(2) Harmer MS.76.2, 146, 147, 148, 149-51; J. E. Clowes (ed), Chronicles of the Old Congregational Church at Great Yarmouth (1906), 45.

(3) Harmer MS.76.9, 152, 153.

(4) Walter Wilson MS.I, i, 256.

(5) Walter Wilson MS.I, ii, 33.

morale due to family tragedies, returned from Ireland in 1688
 pressure was put on him to accept a congregation.⁽¹⁾ An ejected
 minister who had pastored an underground Presbyterian congregation
 at Frome since 1662, found himself, because of the nationwide short-
 age, in charge of five dissenting congregations, in addition to
 Frome, after the 1687 Indulgence.⁽²⁾ Young ministers, newly gradu-
 ated from Newington Green, found themselves under constant pressure
 to accept appointments from a multiplicity of congregations.⁽³⁾ One
 Independent pastor found that his services were in demand from
 congregations as far apart as Leicester and Kent.⁽⁴⁾ Whilst a
 pastorless congregation thought automatically of 'sending to
 London', among the London congregations themselves 'there was a
 great demand for young ministers' and some, like Matthew Clarke,
 moved in from the provinces.⁽⁵⁾ The poverty and paucity of the
 ministries of the two dissenting sects which boasted regular clergies,
 devalued the Nonconformists as political allies for James II. It
 also created a situation in which many isolated congregations in all
 parts of England and Wales - sheep without shepherds - were left
 without guidance and direction in the face of the pressure to
 address instigated by the Court in 1687, the pressure to accept

(1) John Pinney to Hester Pinney, 26 July 1688, G. F. Nuttall (ed),
 Letters of John Pinney 1679-1699 (1939), 57. See also pp
 52-56.

(2) Walter Wilson MS.I, ii, 272.

(3) Walter Wilson MS.I, ii, 330; W. Urwick, Nonconformity in
 Cheshire (1864), 125

(4) T. Coleman, Memorials of Independent Churches in Northampton-
 shire (1853), 124.

(5) Walter Wilson MS.553 D, A.15 (Obituaries), 7. See W. Urwick,
 Nonconformity in Worcester (1897), 86-87.

positions on the remodelled corporations and commission of the peace in 1687-8, and the pressures from Robert Brent's agents to make voting commitments in 1688.⁽¹⁾

The second effect produced on the Nonconformist sects by the post-Restoration persecution was a widespread deterioration of the social and economic status of their membership. Ironically, this deterioration was less apparent among the ministry of the sects - who might have been expected to have borne the greater incidence of persecution - than among the laity. Inevitably the income and standard of living of the ejected of 1662, who formed the hard core of the Presbyterian and Congregationalist clergies until at least 1687, did decline. But this decline, though enough to disqualify many pastors from fulfilling political functions, including voting under most types of franchise, rarely ended in poverty. Even Edmund Calamy could enumerate only thirty cases of acute distress out of his 1,897, and ^{Matthews} regarded these as 'exceptional'.⁽²⁾ On the other hand, it is evident that at least 100 ejected ministers were of independent means,⁽³⁾ that a further 101 made a living keeping educational establishments,⁽⁴⁾ that fifty-nine practised medicine, that forty-seven held chaplaincies in the homes of nobility or gentry, and that nine took to trade and ten to farming.⁽⁵⁾ It is also clear that Nonconformist pastors and their widows were

(1) Many congregations had been pastorless since the early days of the post 1681 persecution, like the Baptist groups in Bristol. E. Terrill (ed), *The Records of the Church of Christ meeting in Broadmead, Bristol, 1640-1687*, Hanserd Knollys Soc. (1847), 475, 481, 490, 491.

(2) CR, lvii. See Cragg II, 9.

(3) CR, lv.

(4) CR, lv, lvi; Walter Wilson MS.553.D, 69, 70.

(5) CR, lvi.

relatives,

frequently the chief beneficiaries of the Wills of merchants and traders who were either Dissenters or were men who sympathised with Dissenters.⁽¹⁾ Those who frequented conventicles, however poor, usually managed to make some contribution toward the livelihood of their pastors. Entries made in Baptist churchbooks provide evidence that even they allocated sums of money to defray the expenses of their preachers.⁽²⁾ The amounts allocated by other Nonconformist congregations for 'the upkeep of the ministry' varied considerably. For 1682 John Heywood's congregation at Sedburgh ~~afforded~~ ^{afforded} him only £6,⁽³⁾ whilst Michael Drake at Lincoln was receiving £15 per year⁽⁴⁾ and George Trosse at Exeter, £50 per year.⁽⁵⁾ There were many instances in which charitable relief was given by wealthy benefactors who regarded themselves as, to some degree, morally responsible for the welfare of ejected ministers in their districts. The list of those who gave this kind of relief included Philip Lord Wharton, the Earl of Bedford, Lord Fairfax, his daughter Lady Dorothy Norcliffe, Lady Hewley, the Harleys in Herefordshire, the Barringtons in Essex, the Bakers in Shropshire, the Lamberts of Calton Hall in the West Riding, the Foleys in Staffordshire, the Barnardistons in Suffolk, the Boscawens in Cornwall, the Le Grays in Sussex, and the Dunches in Hampshire and Berkshire.⁽⁶⁾ However, whilst this gives the lie to

- (1) Lyon Turner MS.89.13, X50-57, X72-75, X112; CR, 3, 98, 525.
 (2) B. R. White, 'The Baptists of Reading 1652-1715', BQ XXII (1967-8), 253-4.
 (3) T. Whitehead, History of the Dales Congregational Churches (1930), 360.
 (4) J. C. Warren, 'From Puritanism to Unitarianism at Lincoln', Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Soc. II (1919-22) Part One, 12.
 (5) G. Trosse, The Life of the Reverend Mr. George Trosse (1714), 91.
 (6) CR, lvi; C. E. Darwent, The Story of the Fish Street Church Hull (1899), 5; R. F. Skinner, Nonconformity in Shropshire 1662-1816 (1964), 16; T. Whitehead, History of the Dales Congregational Churches (1930), 25, 82, 83, 134-6; Cragg II, 180.

many of those who cried ruin, there is no doubt that Nonconformist pastors did live under constant pressure and uncertainty, were - like Stephen Lobb, Samuel Annesley and William Bates - subjected to recurrent fines, did suffer a significant diminution in their social and economic status as a group, and were forced to expend a great deal of physical and intellectual energy in the business of obviating the disastrous effects which could have resulted from persecution.⁽¹⁾

On 10 November 1685 Edward Harley reported to his brother Robert a conversation he had had with Richard Baxter: 'He says the old ministers are many of them dead, and the young ones that are coming up, he hears are... some of them in great want'.⁽²⁾

But the effects of persecution, direct and indirect, had the greatest impact upon the laity. Whilst it led to a greater indifference to sectarian labels than would have been believed possible before 1660, it produced a fragmentation of congregations into small, separate groups (often in and around the same town), tight-knit, introspective, preoccupied with mutual support and aid and of necessarily narrow mental horizons.⁽³⁾ Lyon Turner's breakdown of the social composition of the isolated Nonconformist congregations in Leicestershire in the years after the withdrawal of the 1672 Indulgence, demonstrated that, coeval with the devolution of congregations, the social weighting of each group was also changing: whilst there was no evidence of a significant number of apostasies, conversions were no longer being made amongst the monied and landed classes.

(1) Edward Pearce, *The Conformists Plea for the Nonconformists* (1683), 45; Morrice P, 343, 345, 348, 349, 370; Cragg II, 66-67; T. Whitehead, *op cit*, 111-112.

(2) HMC 14th Report, App. Pt. II: Portland MSS III (1894), 390.

(3) Lyon Turner, MS.89.27, 156, 34-36; Browne, 260.

Listed under occupations, by far the greater part of all congregations were made up of 'labourers', with only the occasional 'artisan' or 'apothecary'.⁽¹⁾ Many of the diocesan returns sent to Archbishop Sheldon in 1669 portrayed the Nonconformists in their parishes as 'meane persons' or 'labourers'.⁽²⁾ By the same year all the 'considerable members' among the Nottingham Congregationalists^{at Castle Gate} were 'dead and gone', leaving ~~them~~ a 'destitute people'.⁽³⁾ Whilst this picture may not have been general as early as 1669, it would undoubtedly become more nearly so as persecution took its toll on the Nonconformist skilled tradesmen and merchant classes.⁽⁴⁾ The Dissenters brought before the courts in Worcestershire were invariably working men and their wives.⁽⁵⁾ Of the 1400 of all sects who appeared before Dr. William Foster, Commissary of the Archdeacon's Court at Bedford, 1668-9,^{circa} twenty were styled 'gentleman', eight 'esquire' whilst 'the vast majority were drawn from the ranks of [the] artisans and the labouring poor'. In the period of persecution after 1670 no 'gentlemen' passed before Foster, all were cordwainers, hempdressers, fellmen, heel-makers, pipe-makers and others of the 'labouring poor'. On 20 August 1672 six (probably the wealthier) members of Bunyan's congregation in Bedford paid £50 for the purchase of a barn in which to hold their meetings. On the indenture one of

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- (1) Lyon Turner, MS.89.27, 44-57. See Cragg II, 159-160.
- (2) Warwick CR VIII, lxxxix, c, cviii; C. Thomas, The History of the First Nonconformist Congregational Church in Hinckley (1962), 15, 16; Bunyan, 203. See H. H. Oakley, Beginnings of Congregationalism in Sheffield (1913), 49.
- (3) A. R. Henderson, History of the Castle Gate Congregational Church Nottingham (1905), 66.
- (4) See Cragg II, 26, 40, 43.
- (5) W. T. Whitley, 'Prosecutions of Worcestershire Dissenters under the Stuarts', BQ I (1922-23), 375.

the signatories described himself as a brazier, two as haberdashers, two as drapers and one as a last-maker.⁽¹⁾ During 1683/^{many of}the 145 Nonconformists summoned before the Archdeacon's Court ~~from~~ Bishop Stortford were categorised as various types of labourer.⁽²⁾

During the local government re-organisation in 1687-8 Ambrose Barnes drew up a list of the Nonconformists of Newcastle who were suitable to serve in civic office. The list, broken down into occupations, was entirely made up of artisans: ^{e.g.} shipwrights, mariners, slaters, ~~tanners~~, barbers, weavers, coopers, glovers, house-carpenters, ~~saddlers~~, glaziers, and colliers.⁽³⁾ In Warwickshire,

'the Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Baptists ceased to attract new gentry adherents after the Restoration; between 1660 and 1689 their wealth, as measured by the hearth tax, declined perceptibly'.⁽⁴⁾

Whilst the pattern among Quakers may have varied considerably from county to county, a detailed study of Buckinghamshire has revealed that 'after the first decade or two, the Quaker movement ceased to attract upper middle class members and drew more consistently from the lower ranks of society'.⁽⁵⁾ From the information in Quaker archives a table has been compiled of marriages within the Society. It is interesting to compare the 250 marriages which took place in

(1) Bunyan, 201-202, 205-208, 208-209, 215.

(2) M. G. Lewis, *The Congregational Church Water Lane Bishops Stortford 1662-1962* (1962), 7.

(3) W. H. D. Longstaff (ed), *Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Ambrose Barnes, Surtees Soc. Vol. L.* (1866), 178.

(4) It would appear that the same trend was not evident among Warwickshire Quakers. J. J. Hurwich, 'Social Origins of the Early Quakers', *Past and Present*. No. 48 (August 1970), 158.

(5) R. T. Vann, paraphrased *Ibid*, 156. See also pp 156-7, 161.

1680 with the 250 marriages in 1780 'with reference to [the] description given of the bridegrooms'. The table clearly demonstrates the weighting of labourers and craftsmen in the movement in 1680, and the weighting of bankers, merchants and manufacturers in the movement in 1780.⁽¹⁾

In July 1685 Launcelot Addison told Archbishop Sancroft that the Dissenters resident in Staffordshire towns, once wealthy and influential, were now, through persecution 'of inconsiderable quality'.⁽²⁾ Any social deterioration evident before 1681 was undoubtedly exacerbated by the severe persecution thereafter. The wealthy and influential were often the main targets of persecution. Quakers knew that those among them with any wealth or land were watched more closely and any meeting which they attended was much more likely to be broken up.⁽³⁾ Under the terms of the Conventicle Act of 1670 'a ten shilling fine was to be levied by Distress and Sale, the rich paying for the poor of the meeting up to £10 each.' In 1682 many Norwich Quakers were reported to be 'in sadly straightened circumstances' because of this practice. Anthony Alexander had the fines of twelve of his poorer brethren levied upon him.⁽⁴⁾ An even more rapid means by which a relatively wealthy Dissenter could

- (1) W. Beck (ed), *The London Friends' Meetings: Showing the Rise of the Society of Friends in London* (1869), 90. See also A. Cole, 'The Quakers and the English Revolution', *Crisis in Europe 1560-1660*, ed. T. Aston (1965), 341.
- (2) Tanner MS. CXXXI, 113. See also A. G. Matthews, *Congregational Churches in Staffordshire* (1974), 79, 80.
- (3) R. Hawkins (ed), *Friends Library: Consisting Principally of Journals and Extracts from Other Writings of Members of the Society of Friends*, IX (1834), 139-152.
- (4) W. M. Wigfield, 'Recusancy and Nonconformity in Bedfordshire', *Publications of the Bedfordshire Historical Record Society* XX (1938), 151; A. J. Eddington, *The First Fifty Years of Quakerism in Norwich*, Friends Historical Society (1932), 175.

be reduced to poverty was through the repeated distraint of the £20 per month fine for non-attendance.⁽¹⁾ The Nonconformist 'husbandmen and yeomen of Cambridgeshire found their farm stock and household goods disappearing to satisfy demands for fines of £20 a month for not attending church'. In the same county, under the Conventicle Act, 'the records show the same members of the same meetings distrained on again and again'.⁽²⁾ In March 1684 ^{some} Bristol Baptists anticipated the levying of a £240 fine, the annual accumulation of the £20 fine.⁽³⁾ In Bedford there was an example of 'the monthly accumulations for persistent refusal to come to church' for a group of Baptists amounting to £4,370.⁽⁴⁾ On 22 November 1680 twenty-five Herefordshire Quakers wrote to Sir Edward Harley, their MP, to complain that they had been 'proceeded against upon the Act made against Popish Recusants, whereby two-thirds of their lands' had been 'brought into sequestration'.⁽⁵⁾ In March 1684 Roger Morrice believed that the authorities had belatedly realised the deleterious effect that excessive fines were having on the national economy and had given the judges 'instructions to drop the Statute of £20 per month this circuit, and not let it fall with its weight on Dissenters'.⁽⁶⁾ But the damage was already done. Because of repeated victimisation once wealthy Dissenters ^{were in debt and} could no longer give financial

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- (1) John Gratton, *Journal of the Life of John Gratton* (1795), 78-79; E. Terrill (ed), *The Records of the Church of Christ Meeting in Broadmead, Bristol 1640-87*, Hanserd Knollys Soc. (1847), 464-5.
- (2) H. M. Spufford, 'Dissenting Churches in Cambridgeshire from 1660 to 1700', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society* LXI (1968), 91.
- (3) E. Terrill (ed), *op cit*, 482-3.
- (4) Bunyan, 211.
- (5) HMC 14th Report, App. Pt. II: Portland MSS III (1894), 367.
- (6) Morrice P, 424.

assistance to the ministry, advance bail or assist others in the payment of fines.⁽¹⁾ It was increasingly the case that Nonconformist merchants and tradesmen, because of distrains and confiscation, could no longer pay their fines in cash or kind and had to go to prison. The period in prison almost invariably completed the ruin of their business enterprise.⁽²⁾ On 28 July 1685 a group of imprisoned Norwich Quakers sent an abortive appeal to 'the Mayor and Justices of Norwich' that because their farms and businesses faced ruin they should be released before the harvest.⁽³⁾ The great concern of the 'Quarterly Meetings for Norfolk was the number of debtors among them and the fact that there were no longer funds available to alleviate poverty.⁽⁴⁾ *Since the late 1660s* Nonconformist groups in many parts of England were worried at the extent of absenteeism among the faithful; some congregations disappearing altogether.⁽⁵⁾ It is likely that the ruin of many of the Nonconformist gentry was completed by the aftermath of the Rye House Plot.⁽⁶⁾

In the relentless harrying of Dissenters between 1681-1686 in places like Bristol, Exeter, London and the towns of East Anglia

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- (1) Morrice P, 409, 413, 415, 423, 425; Williams I, 58-59; HMC 14th Report, op cit, 376; W. Beck (ed), The London Friends' Meetings: Showing the Rise of the Society of Friends in London (1869), 296-7.
- (2) Cragg II, 26, 40, 58; Morrice P, 423; A.J. Eddington, The First Fifty Years of Quakerism in Norwich, Friends Historical Society (1932), 176, 176-9, 194-5, 219-220, 221, 222-6.
- (3) Ibid, 219-220.
- (4) Ibid, 222, 222-6, 225, 226-31, 233-5, 237, 239, 241-2.
- (5) E. Terrill (ed), op cit, 493; Bunyan, 192-4, 195, 196-7; R. Hawkins (ed), op cit, 154; HMC Ormond MSS. VII (1912), 104; Warwick CR VIII, cvi-cvii; A. J. Eddington, op cit, 182. See Cragg II, 78; G. F. Nuttall, 'Dissenting Churches in Kent before 1700', JEH XIV (1963), 178, 179. A pamphlet was published to strengthen Nonconformist waverers. John Humphreys, Persecution for Conscience Sake, Most Vain, Cruel and Destructive to the Promoters and Abettors of it. (1682).
- (6) Morrice P, 371-2, 377-8, 382-7, 388, 389, 392, 393, 394, 396, 398, 400-401.

and the West Riding many obstinate Dissenters were undoubtedly ruined by a persistent application of the penal laws. And with their ruin, creditors, partners, employers, employees, apprentices, servants, landlords, and tenants could not but have been seriously affected. Hence, whilst the social and economic decline of Nonconformists reduced their potential usefulness in James II's programme, it also created a vested interest, which included many non-Dissenters, in urban areas who stood to lose by the economic disruption which religious persecution arbitrarily caused. Hence the second major effect of persecution, whilst devaluing Dissenters as political allies through the diminution of their wealth and social weighting and through the process of devolution, also provided one of the major motives which led many pseudo-Dissenters to accept positions on the remodelled corporations of 1687-1688.⁽¹⁾

The process of devolution, brought about by the advisability of meeting in groups of five or six rather than in meetings of fifty or sixty,⁽²⁾ led Nonconformity in many parts to take on the form of small, scattered communities of believers with little contact with one another.⁽³⁾ The absence of contact worried Thomas Jolly, who urged the small Independent groups to 'keep up their associations.'⁽⁴⁾

(1) Jones, 114, 115.

(2) Lyon Turner MS.89.13, IX43-45; Walter Wilson MS.I, 1, 18, 304; 11, 51-52, 142; R. T. Jones, *Congregationalism in England: 1662-1962* (1962), 83-84.

(3) A. R. Henderson, *History of the Castle Gate Congregational Church Nottingham 1655-1905* (1905), 66; W. Beck (ed), *The London Friends' Meetings* (1869), 140; R. E. Leader, 'Origins of Nonconformity in Sheffield', CHST VI (1913-15), 397-403. See G. G. Waddington, *A History of the Independent Church at Greenacres* (1854), 8, 9, 26-27; W. J. Palmer, *A Short History of Dronfield Independent Church* (1934), 12; E. B. Underhill (ed), *Records of the Churches of Christ gathered at Fenstanton, Warboys and Hexham 1644-1720*, Hanserd Knollys Soc. (1854), 263, 279, 280; I. Sellers, 'Baptists in Liverpool in the Seventeenth Century', BQ XX (1963-4), 198.

(4) R. T. Jones, *op cit*, 83.

In the absence of information about national affairs and discussion with other groups, congregations gravitated away from any idea of political involvement and concentrated on the hard business of economic survival.⁽¹⁾ Among the Quakers, as has been observed, quietism was almost total after 1681 and any Friend guilty of political 'meddling' could expect discipline and perhaps expulsion.⁽²⁾ But the same attitude of mind - passivity in the face of persecution - which may be termed 'quietism' was being recommended to the other sects by their pamphleteers. The Presbyterian Samuel Shaw counseled against discontent with the civil authorities; it acted as a canker to the soul. 'To prefer power and advancement..before God, before truth, and a good conscience, was to be a lover of the world'. In a 'corrupt age' political position should be eschewed; to accept 'civil office' was to lay oneself open to the 'distractions', 'cruelties, commissions and omissions' which were its concomitants. Political parties and factions represented 'worldly interests which God had not consecrated'. To seek political power was to 'prefer party and advancement of it before the propagation of the Gospel'.⁽³⁾ In 1683 Baxter published A Preparation for Sufferings; or The Best Work in the Worst Times. He made no reference to contemporary persecution and, because his argument was replete with complex biblical imagery, his purpose was not clear for the first eleven pages. From his parallels with the persecution of Christians in Ancient Rome thereafter it became clear that he was preaching the

(1) Lyon Turner MS.89.22, 1, 3, 4. See Lacey, 155.

(2) See above pp. 63-66.

(3) Samuel Shaw, *The True Christian's Test* (1682), 70, 133, 136.

virtues of resignation and non-involvement.⁽¹⁾ The Congregationalist John Shower also preached resignation. It was 'seasonable' in that 'troublesome..world' and would 'compose their spirits, and quiet their thoughts under the vicissitudes of human affairs'. Christianity, 'enjoined' them to 'look for persecution and the cross' and not to try to alter the course of human affairs by political meddling.⁽²⁾ John Bunyan said that, from his experience during the crisis of 1678-9, he had learned his lesson not to put his faith in institutions and concluded that he had been wrong in forgetting the exhortation 'Let Israel hope in the Lord'. In 1684 he published Seasonal Counsel; or Advice to Sufferers. All Christians must walk in the ways of peace and loyalty; persecution should be borne as a purifier of the soul, with complete subservience.⁽³⁾ The Anglican pamphleteers who pleaded for moderation in the treatment of Dissenters from 1681-5 argued that they had now eschewed political involvement and were 'peaceable'; Nonconformity was a movement of religious, not political, dissent.⁽⁴⁾ The consequences for Dissenters of the rout of Whigs in 1681 and the discovery of the Rye House Plot in 1683, recommended 'quietism' or 'resignation' to the sects even more eloquently than their pamphleteers.

A further effect of persecution, which at first glance looks like a by-product of quietism, was the increased prevalence of

(1) See pp. 3-6, 11, 12-15.

(2) John Shower, Resignation to the Divine Good Pleasure in Every Condition: Recommended as the Duty and Happiness of Every Good Man in a Sermon from 2 Sam.XV.26 (1684), Letter to the Reader and p.8.

(3) Bunyan, 295, 304, 329.

(4) Samuel Bolde, A Plea for Moderation towards Dissenters (1682), 29-30, 33-35; Edward Pearce, The Conformists Plea for the Nonconformists (1683), 46-47.

partial conformity among Presbyterians, Congregationalists and, even, Baptists.⁽¹⁾ Ralph Thoresby was prosecuted for Nonconformity in December 1683; from January 1684 he attended church regularly, though still hearing a Presbyterian preacher in secret.⁽²⁾ Baxter

may have provided the rationalisation for Nonconformists increasingly attending church and participating in Common Prayer and the Sacrament.⁽³⁾ A Baptist preacher in Bristol in March

1684 exhorted his hearers 'to watch over one another, that none draw back to the world's worship'; knowing that some of his flock already had.⁽⁴⁾ Between 1682-1685 the Government and the Bishops received

repeated complaints that 'Nonconformists and Fanatics' were on the increase at morning service in Anglican Churches, and would even take the Sacrament, but invariably proceeded to their conventicles on Sunday afternoons. The motive universally ascribed, short of

quietistic compliance, was the desire of Nonconformists of all shades to 'crowd into public offices'.⁽⁵⁾ In fact, whilst quietism

was evident right across the Nonconformist spectrum, it was by no means general. It produced its own converse reaction. In April

(1) W. Beck (ed), *The London Friends Meetings* (1869), 140; Luttrell I, 250; DWL MS.38.82, under 19 February and 17 September 1685; Whiting, 129. Kitchin, 352-353; Powicke, 132-134. See Roberts I, 298; Miller, 191; Cragg II, 160.

(2) J. Hunter (ed), *The Diary of Ralph Thoresby* (1830) I, 170-173, 175.

(3) R. Baxter, *Epistle to the Nonconformists and a Vindication of the Church of England in Her Rites and Ceremonies, Discipline and Church Orders* (1682), 2-3.

(4) E. Terrill (ed), *The Records of the Church of Christ Meeting in Broadmead, Bristol, 1640-87, Hanserd Knollys Soc.* (1847), 464, 482-3. In Kent some Nonconformists went completely over to the church. Of the fifty-odd dissenting congregations in existence in or before 1672, 'the grave and the Church of England' had swallowed up most by 1690-2. G. F. Nuttall, 'Dissenting Churches in Kent before 1700', *JER* (1963), 188.

(5) CSPD 1682, 362, 608-9; 1683 (July-September), 362; R. Baxter, *English Nonconformity as Under King Charles II and King James II* (1689), Preface and Bishop Lamplugh's *Condemnation of the Nonconformists* (written in 1683 and quoted in full by Baxter), part 2.

1684 Roger Morrice, with unconscious subjectivity, wrote of the 'censorious sort of Dissenters that condemn others for complying in anything in Church and State[who had] absented themselves from all public places or Courts where they were members, for these two years last'.⁽¹⁾

The issue of political involvement divided the Dissenters into two groups, one which shied away from it, and another which sought to conform in order to continue to qualify for offices.

Exactly what the partially conforming activists intended to do with the political power which they were so determined to hang on to, became evident in the late summer of 1681, when William of Orange visited England. They gave support to him in his pressure at Court for a parliament, and even constructed lists of candidates and made 'all the interest' they could in their support.⁽²⁾ Their renewed activism was short-lived, however, and died in the face of government retaliation following the Rye House Plot.⁽³⁾

But behind this insight into the political leanings (given an opportunity) of the political set among the Nonconformists, there was evidence of more disturbing grass roots political activity among rank and file Dissenters in certain areas where Nonconformists were numerous and persecution bitter. Even before the Rye House Plot rumours were circulating that Dissenters were *involved in various forms of seditious activity*.⁽⁴⁾ Reports came in from some parts of the country

(1) Morrice P, 430. cited Lacey, 157.

(2) Lacey, 150-151. Dissenters were also in evidence on the juries which failed to indict the Whig leaders at this time. Morrice P, 308, 318, 322, 355; S. Schofield, *Jeffreys of the Bloody Assizes* (1937), 54, 56-57; Lacey, 151, 152.

(3) CSPD 1683 (January to June), 362; Morrice P, 371-2, 377-8, 382-7, 388, 389, 392, 393, 394, 396, 398, 400-401. See Cragg II, 25.

(4) CSPD 1682, 237; Roberts I, 210; S. W. Carruthers, 'Conventicles and Conventiclers', *JPHS X*, No. 3 (May 1954), 115-117.

that Dissenters were involved in seditious talk or practices or even para-military training in preparation for an armed rebellion.⁽¹⁾

Everywhere it was the concern of local authorities to represent conventicles to the government as being subversive; at Taunton the Presbyterians were said to worship with pistols in their pockets.⁽²⁾

At Canterbury and Rye Nonconformists were alleged to be involved in seditious activities and attempts to thwart the government's policy to destroy the Whigs.⁽³⁾ Discontent was especially rife in the West

Country. It was alleged that letters had been sent out from a central source to Dissenters in Bristol, Devon, Dorset and Somerset which amounted to incitement.⁽⁴⁾ From the reports he received Ormond seemed to be expecting some kind of rising.⁽⁵⁾ Anglicans believed that

the Rye House Plot was a confirmation of their suspicions and policy.⁽⁶⁾

The nationwide search for suspects took the form of a pogrom of the Dissenters in which, of all the sects, perhaps the Congregationalists were most hardly hit. Most of their leaders, including William Carstairs, Matthew Mead, John Owen, George Griffiths, Stephen Lobb and Isaac Bugsby, were arrested and brought to trial in connection with it.⁽⁷⁾ In London and Bristol Dissenters of all sorts were

either arrested and imprisoned or implicated and forced to prove

(1) CSPD 1682, 54 (2 February), 538 (13 November); Roberts I, 210 (February 1682).

(2) CSPD 1682, 36-37 (21 January); S. W. Carruthers, *op cit*, 115-117; XII No. 1 (May 1960), 30.

(3) CSPD 1680-1, 436; 1682, 250, 338, 366-8. See CR, 173.

(4) CSPD 1682, 435, 493 (28 September; 24 October); Emerson, 16-17; S. Schofield, *Jeffreys of The Bloody Assizes* (1937), 99-100.

(5) HMC Ormond MSS VII (1912), 62, 65.

(6) CSPD 1683 (January to June), 346-7; HMC Ormond MSS VII (1912), 90.

(7) CSPD 1683 (January to June), 356, 357; (July to September), 14-15, 41, 80, 113, 163-5, 166, 195, 250-1, 265-6, 317-318, 368 - 369; Morrice P, 371; CR, 348.

their non-involvement.⁽¹⁾ On 6 October 1684 an order was given to the constables 'of the City and Liberty of Westminster' 'that several disaffected and dangerous persons, who are suspected to be concerned in the late, horrid conspiracy' should be taken up and brought before the magistrates. Both the order and the attached schedule were reproduced in full by Morrice. The schedule included 110 names, and among them probably those of all Nonconformist ministers resident in London. The list included Baxter, Rosewell, Jenkins, Calamy, Bates, Vincent, Howe, Mayo, Silvester and Alsop (Presbyterians); Lobb, Meade, Griffith, Lorrimer, Doolittle and Faldo (Congregationalists); and Knollys, Collins, Kiffin, Danvers and Stretton (Baptists).⁽²⁾

The backlash was so severe that many Dissenters, including Sir Samuel Barnardiston, arrived at the view that it was a 'sham plot', manufactured by the authorities to make possible the final destruction of Nonconformity. Some of the Dissenters treated especially harshly after the Restoration had been prosecuted under similar pretexts.⁽³⁾ The reports of Nonconformist sedition between 1680 and 1683 were doubtless exaggerated and, in part, intended to rationalise the severity of the persecution which followed the Popish Plot and Exclusion. Nevertheless, the reports were ubiquitous and numerous,

(1) ^{See} Kiffin, 51-53; Whiting, 80.

(2) Morrice P, 444. A similarly comprehensive list of leading Dissenters was prepared by Alderman Martin Headley of Leeds 'to be devoted to destruction'. B. Dale, 'Early Congregationalism in Leeds', CHST II (1905-1906), 318.

(3) E. Pearce, The Conformists Plea for the Nonconformists (1683), 47; Morrice P, 352; HMC 14th Report, App. Pt. II; Portland MSS III (1894), 377, 378-9; CSPD 1684-5, 177. See H. H. Oakley, Beginnings of Congregationalism in Sheffield (1913), 39, 44, 45, 46, 47-48; J. E. Manning, History of Upper Chapel, Sheffield (1900), 17.

and complicity in the plot of 1683 so considerable, as to provide evidence that the persecution which had shown some Dissenters the advantages of quietism, others the need for greater conformity to avoid the destruction of Dissenters as a political force, had driven others to contemplate armed rebellion. Anglican JPs in the West Country understood this, and on 2 October 1683 the Exeter Quarter Sessions passed three Resolutions - ordered to be read in all churches by the Bishop - which provided that in every division of the County 'sufficient sureties for their abearing and peaceable behaviour' should be required of all persons attending conventicles; that Dissenters open to the slightest suspicion were to be closely watched by Church Wardens and Constables (who were to report to monthly meetings of the Session); that 'strict warrants' were to be left in the hands of all Constables, in every parish in the county, to seize Nonconformist preachers as 'the authors and fomentors of ~~the~~ pestilent faction', that they and their followers might be tried under the 35 Elizabeth I.⁽¹⁾ The preface of one of Baxter's pamphlets, dated 28 September 1683, though not published until after the Revolution, provides evidence that, at that stage at least, he believed that Nonconformity was about to give way under the pressure of persecution and that extirpation was being attempted.⁽²⁾ In the same year Morrice was disposed to believe that troops would be used to destroy the remaining Nonconformist meetings in London and that 'the more

(1) An Act for the Keeping of Her Majesty's Subjects in due Obedience: originally levelled primarily at Roman Catholics, involving imprisonment or transportation or death for the first, second or third offence respectively. Powicke 133, note 1. Text of the three Resolutions. Powicke, 132-133.

(2) Richard Baxter, The English Nonconformity as Under King Charles II and King James II (1689), preface.

considerable hearers and ministers' would be scuttled by indictments under the Act of 35 Elizabeth I.⁽¹⁾ Years after the event Penn wrote that when he returned to England in 1684 he believed that 'the men of authority' were resolved to ensure that Dissenters would either 'bow or break'.⁽²⁾ Undoubtedly most of the Tory magistracy did look upon the rout of the Whigs and the extirpation of Dissenters as one and the same thing. Between 1681 and 1685 Roger L'Estrange's propaganda broadsheet embodied this idea, rubbing in the connection between Dissenters and sedition. It was as if the Anglican 'right' looked to the accession of a Catholic King as their opportunity to complete the rout of the Dissenters, the King joining with the Church in a final revenge on the 'exclusioners and plotters'.⁽³⁾

This expectation was shared by the Dissenters⁽⁴⁾ and helped to reinforce the effect persecution had already had on their political attitudes and expedite the changes it had wrought in the morphology of the sects. Both species of change, rubbed home by the last bitter years of persecution before James II's accession, served to render the heterogenous factions of Nonconformity of even less potential utility as allies in any political programme. Of the political attitudes evident among Dissenters, one revealed the disinclination, on the part of many, to any form of political activism,

(1) Morrice P, 352.

(2) Penn, 108.

(3) CSPD 1682, 24-25, 36, 179-180; Bunyan, 323; Lyon Turner MS. 89.13, XI, 1; S. Bolde, A Plea for Moderation towards Dissenters (1682), 6; G. Trosse, The Life of the Reverend Mr. George Trosse (1714), 93; K. Feiling, A History of the Tory Party 1640-1714 (1924), 199-200. At his accession the Tories believed James II to be the 'true Cavalier'. Ibid, 204. See Perry II, 473, 474; The Observator, 1st Series, Nos. 1 (13 April 1681), 165 (5 July 1682), 96 (4 February 1682), 310 (29 March 1683); 2nd Series No. 8 (28 February 1685).

(4) Calamy, Abridgement, 366; R. Baxter, Against the Revolt to a Foreign Jurisdiction (1691), 324-9; G. Trosse, op cit, 93-4.

another

^ exposed a proclivity for civil disobedience on the part of some, and the third illustrated that those who were still desirous of office had not changed their opinions since Exclusion. Of the changes in composition - devolution, social and economic debilitation and the decline of the ministry - all contributed to a situation in which, by the 1687 Indulgence, Nonconformity in many parts of England had been rendered politically supine, innocuous to both sides in enticement.

CHAPTER ONE1685: BEFORE THE VOLTE-FACE1

When James II acceded to the throne on 6 February 1685 the Church-Court alliance had rarely been stronger. Quite apart from the King's assurances in his accession speech there were other cementing factors; the influence of the in-laws of his first marriage, which had engendered in his mind an almost exaggerated respect for the Anglican Establishment, and the strong sense of his indebtedness left by the unfailing loyalty of the Church of England in his 'late distresses'. Maintaining this alliance meant maintaining the Established Church integral 'as by law established' and hence inescapably involved persecuting dissenters from it.⁽¹⁾

Given the sincerity of the King's religious convictions (and the necessity that they imposed upon him of improving the lot of those who shared them), and given the inflexibility of the Church's conception of itself (uniform in dogma and liturgy, but still comprehensive, not exclusive) a collision was bound to come if an accommodation could not be arrived at. That such a collision, and the re-distribution of forces that would follow it, was not foreseen by Dissenters in February 1685 was probably owing to an understandable assumption on their part that Anglican Non-Resistance was nothing less than rock solid, to the relative positions in the

(1) Barillon to Louis, 19 February, C.J. Fox, A History of the Early Part of the Reign of James II (1808), appendix, xv-xvi; London Gazette no. 2006, 5-9 February 1684/5; Calamy, Abridgement, 366; Luttrell I, 327.

ecclesiastical spectrum of a Catholic King and even the most 'right-wing' Dissenter, and to the assumed necessity of the King's dependence upon the Anglicans in view of the numerical inferiority of Roman Catholics. The same postulates prevented the King from seeing that the policies implied by the continuance of the Church-Court alliance and those necessary to the achievement of his desideratum were conflicting, perhaps incompatible. His whole conception of the Church and of Nonconformity at his accession worked against his envisaging the achievement of his aims through any other medium but the combination of forces which had brought success to the concluding years of his brother's reign: a firm alliance with the Church and Tory interest, and the financial backing of Louis XIV.

In James's mind the Church was synonymous with loyalism, and Nonconformity with exclusion, republicanism and sedition.⁽¹⁾ His close friend William Penn saw that fundamental to the King's religious feeling was a belief in an institutionalised Church, with a hierarchy and a sacramental system, with the full apparatus of altars, surplices and censers; that in all of these respects, and reinforced by an affinitive theology, the English High Church looked to him like a near approximation to Rome, lacking only the final essential of obedience to the Pope.⁽²⁾ The King's minimisation of the importance of this 'final essential' led him to hope for conversions among High Church ecclesiastics and this, in turn,

(1) Barillon to Louis, 26 February, C. J. Fox, *Early Part of the Reign of James II (1808)*, appendix xxxii; Barillon 10 February 1686-7, Baschet, 168; Miller, 207-208; James to William, 10 September 1685, Dalrymple II, appendix part 1 bk. 2, 53. See K. Feiling, *A History of the Tory Party 1640-1714* (1924), 180, 205.

(2) *Ibid.*, 205; Buranelli, 68, 118.

reinforced his desire to remove the disabilities on Roman Catholics.⁽¹⁾ It was, perhaps, the religious affinity which James felt with the Church whose loyalty had withstood the test of the civil wars, the interregnum and exclusion, which caused him to expect so much of her alliance. His actions and words regarding the Church often revealed a disappointed man, baffled and incensed that those in whom he had put so much trust should drag their heels. The explanation was often to be found in the vicious circle of a friendship betrayed, injuries recoiling upon themselves: Anglicans opposing the King because he appointed Catholics to civil and military office; the King ostentatiously making such appointments because of Anglican opposition. James had believed that it was in 'the interest of monarchy to preserve the Church of England as by law established' and asserted that he had 'constantly joined with the Bishops and [the] loyal party in Parliament'. He failed to understand

'how men could apprehend danger from Popery, which was so inconsiderable a body and forclosed from all employments, while they overlooked the imminent danger of being swallowed up by Presbytery and Fanaticism, which had already overspread the face of the Kingdom, and had the impudence to propose in Parliament the repeal of the Act of the 35 of Queen Elizabeth and the Corporation Act, and indeed all such laws as *have* been counted the Church of England's only bulwark against them'.⁽²⁾

Hence, whilst James might talk to Penn about toleration,⁽³⁾

(1) Miller, 71, 202; Buranelli, 118.

(2) J. S. Clarke (ed), The Life of James the Second King of England &c. Collected out of Memoirs Writ of His Own Hand (1816) I, 656.

(3) Janney, 265-6.

employ the odd Nonconformist physician,⁽¹⁾ and be at pains to demonstrate to the Anglicans at Court that he believed it 'unlawful' to force a man, much less a whole Kingdom, to apostasise,⁽²⁾ the idea of a general indulgence was one of the farthest thoughts from his mind when he acceded. Jacques-Benigne Bossuet, 'intellectually [the] most powerful and persuasive of ^{all} contemporary Catholic thinkers', had just castigated the idea of toleration for heresy as destructive to Roman Catholic order and the advancement of the Faith, as well as inhibitive of the good governance of a Christian King, and was currently reviving St. Augustine's arguments for persecution to rationalise Louis XIV's measures against the Huguenots, thus removing from the minds of the faithful the last doubts on the score of forcible extirpation.⁽³⁾ Although James well understood the differences between the political environment in which Bossuet wrote and the one in which he ruled, he appreciated enough of his 'good governance' argument to oppose the idea of toleration for Dissenters if only because it would unleash their political potential which he, like the Churchmen, had learned to fear (and possibly exaggerate).⁽⁴⁾ Before his accession, he had told Charles that to ruin the Dissenters politically was the only way to control a section of society which, by long experience, 'he had found was never to be gained by concessions

(1) Samuel Haworth. DNB IX, 247; CR, 254.

(2) J. S. Clarke (ed), op cit, I, 656; II, 3, 6, 14.

(3) J-B Bossuet, Discours sur l'histoire Universelle (Paris 1681), 41-42; H. Daniel-Rops, The Church in the Seventeenth Century (Eng. edit. Lond. 1963), 264-266; Jones, 77, 89. The Works of Bossuet were widely circulated in England during James's reign. M. V. Hay, The Enigma of James II (1938), 101, 104-5, 107; VCH London (1909) I, 345.

(4) ^{See} Barillon to Louis, 16 July 1685, C. J. Fox, Early Part of the Reign of James II (1808), appendix ^{vi}; Cragg I, 166; M. V. Hay, op cit, 80.

nor indulgence'.⁽¹⁾

On 19 February 1685 James spoke to Barillon of 'liberty of conscience', but only in favour of Catholics. Barillon told Louis 'I do not imagine his plans will include the Nonconformists and the Presbyterians'.⁽²⁾ However, by January 1686 James was telling William that he had always been against 'persecuting any...for their religion'.⁽³⁾ Although by the beginning of 1686 he may have begun to entertain the idea of a general toleration as one of a number of political possibilities, it is equally probable that he was merely telling Louis and William what he thought they wanted to hear, or, that he had rationalised the continued persecution of Dissenters as the harassment of political dissidents. His enthusiasm for the suppression of 'field conventicles' when the Scottish Parliament met in 1685 was because he believed them to be potentially subversive.⁽⁴⁾ In his fairly sympathetic interpretation of the motives behind James's policies John Miller does not include the belief in or the pursuit of liberty of conscience as one of them. Before the accession, and after, James 'advocated a policy which would strengthen the Crown, afford relief to Papists (but not ^{to} Dissenters) and open the way for the employment of Catholics in Ireland'.⁽⁵⁾ Even the apologists of James II have not inferred that James had always believed in liberty of conscience; presenting it rather as an expedient forced upon him by the 'defection' of the Anglicans.⁽⁶⁾ To doubt the consistency

(1) J. S. Clarke (ed), op cit, I, 690.

(2) Barillon to Louis, 19 February 1685, Dalrymple II, app. pt. 1, bk. 2, 3; M. V. Hay, op cit, 81.

(3) James to William, 26 January 1686, Dalrymple II, pt. 1, appendix to bks. 3 and 4, 108-109.

(4) J. S. Clarke (ed), op cit, II, 13.

(5) Miller, 197, 198, 199, 201.

(6) J. S. Clarke (ed), op cit, II, 102-103. See also pp 111-112.

and sincerity of James as a tolerationist, however, is not to imply that he intended to impose Catholicism by force; the near-inevitability of a Protestant succession would have made that, at best, something to dream about.⁽¹⁾

It was perhaps not insignificant that Roger L'Estrange - with twenty-five years as the Church's most outspoken opponent of Nonconformity, and proponent of severe persecution, behind him⁽²⁾ - should within weeks of the accession, receive a knighthood, direct royal support as one of the candidates for Winchester in the March Election, and a warrant ordering him strictly to enforce the regulations concerning treasonable and seditious publications (which he took to include Baxter's Paraphrase of the New Testament). It was even rumoured in high places that he was about to become a peer.⁽³⁾

In addition to James II's affinity with the Church of England, and his aversion for Nonconformity, there was enough on purely pragmatic grounds to recommend the Church - which he knew well enough would never approve a general toleration - as his political ally rather than the Dissenters in a programme aimed at the civil emancipation of Roman Catholics. First, he knew only too well that Catholics were a small minority, powerless on their own.⁽⁴⁾ He may also have realised that they were far from being a cohesive minority. The conservative, recusant aristocracy and gentry had little in common with the cosmopolitan court Catholics, and nothing at all with the Irish Catholics. And, like the Nonconformist gentry and

(1) Miller, 199.

(2) DNB XI, 999-1004.

(3) HMC 11th Report, app. pt. V, 123; DNB XI, 1004-1005; Luttrell I, 340. See also, 367.

(4) J. S. Clarke (ed), op cit, I, 656.

for the same reasons, they were of much diminished wealth and influence in their localities.⁽¹⁾ On the basis of Sheldon's diocesan reports of 1676 it is clear that even had a coalition of political forces been possible between Catholics and Dissenters, the numerical weakness of such a coalition in the face of the great Anglican preponderance would have been such as to render it of dubious viability.⁽²⁾

Hence the requirements of the King's policy of aid to his co-religionists at the outset increased rather than diminished the strength of the Church-Court alliance. From this time, until the two great absolutes - the King's desideratum and the Church's conception of itself - came into collision, the policy toward Nonconformists changed very little. The evidence which exists shows signs of increased persecution at local level. This, frequently taking the form of the victimisation of particular dissenting pastors, led to a large-scale migration and emigration of Nonconformist clergy who had withstood previous storms of persecution. It was also one of the factors which, together with the attitude of the Nonconformists toward the new King and the concomitant fear widespread among them of the imminent triumph of Popery in England through his policies, led to the two major political developments involving Nonconformists in 1685. The first was the ripening of the latent propensity for civil disobedience, evident in certain areas at the end of the previous reign, into a Nonconformist Rebellion. The

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- (1) Jones, 79-80; Miller, 26, 27, 206; Penn, 138. Hugh Aveling describes this latter development as it affected the Catholic gentry families in the North Riding of Yorkshire between 1642-1691. H. Aveling, *Northern Catholics: the Catholic Recusants of the North Riding of Yorkshire 1558-1790* (1966), 352-9. He concluded (p. 358): 'Our survey of the Catholic gentry of the Riding leaves us with a very strong impression of aristocratic decay, well-advanced'.
- (2) A. Browning (ed), *English Historical Documents 1660-1714* (1953), 413-414.

second was the reappearance of the Nonconformist politicians, whose political bent had been made evident during Exclusion, William of Orange's visit to England in 1681 and, in some cases through the Rye House Plot, as anti-Court candidates in the 1685 Election and the nucleus of the opposition in the second session of the 1685 Parliament. Yet during this period, thanks to the efforts of William Penn and the Court Quakers, the feasibility of winning over the Dissenters, through a general indulgence, to a programme involving the abrogation of the Test and Penal Laws, first dawned on the King's mind.

It was unfortunate for the prospects of such a project, however, that the dawn of the idea should have been contemporaneous with the arrival in England of the exiles from Louis XIV's final onslaught on the Huguenots. The tales of woe that the Huguenots brought with them, the increasing persecution in England, the beginnings of the anti-Popery preaching campaign of the Anglicans, and the rumours which surrounded the dissolution of Parliament in November, led to a Popish Peril scare of traditional dimensions among Nonconformists. This, together with the developments of the previous reign, served to case-harden the Dissenters against anything that a Catholic King might propose.

2

With the Anglican-Court Alliance reaffirmed by the new King in the first utterances of his reign, neither activist nor quietist among the Dissenters found much hope of relief. A few Quakers, aware of the friendship between the King and William Penn, might hope

for ease from persecution, but even they believed that, with equal probability, 'worse times' might be at hand, and that 'burning of heretics' might come 'in vogue again'.⁽¹⁾ Dissenters in Bristol, still suffering the excesses of the magistrates and ecclesiastical authorities, half hoped that James would 'stay the persecuting fury of the Anglicans', but were not surprised when he did not.⁽²⁾ Most Dissenters had anticipated the accession with the gravest apprehensions.⁽³⁾ Those who had attributed the great persecution since 1681 to Popish influences upon the late King, now had the grim satisfaction of having their fears voiced as facts by certain high-placed young Anglican divines, and looked forward to perilous times.⁽⁴⁾ Ralph Thoresby bewailed 'the gloomy prospect of Popery'.⁽⁵⁾ Baxter believed that the very worst could be expected now that 'bare-faced Popery lifted ^{up} its head among us'. With the Anglican-Court alliance consolidated, the Dissenters should not only expect 'greater rigours and severities than before' but, if it were possible, 'extirpation'.⁽⁶⁾

In public, however, Dissenters declined to comment on James's accession. Certain of the Anglicans, who had expected outrages from them, may have interpreted this silence as evidence that Nonconformity was already broken. On 10 February Rochester commented, 'Every-

(1) Sewel II, 443.

(2) Lyon Turner MS.89.13, XI 2.

(3) Bennet, Memorial, 294; Palmer I, 66; W. B. Shaw, The Story of Presbyterianism in Wigan (1912), 43-44.

(4) *Calamy, Abridgement, 366:*

(5) J. Hunter (ed), The Diary of Ralph Thoresby (1830) I, 180.

(6) Calamy, Abridgement, 366. Part of this quotation, as well as others from the same source, is based on the assumption that, in the Abridgement, Baxter's statements in the first person were often reproduced in the third person by Calamy. A. Gordon, 'Calamy as a Biographer', CHST VI (1913-15), 236.

thing is calm and quiet to a wonder'.⁽¹⁾ On 21st Ormond referred to the 'alacrity and quietness' of the King's accession as if it were surprising, and seemed to be putting it down to the fact that substantial opposition had not survived the 1681-5 purge.⁽²⁾ Sir John Reresby said that

'it was a strange effect of power from above that so strong a party as had not long before appeared in Parliament to exclude the Duke of York from the Crown of his ancestors should submit to his now coming to it with so great deference and submission'.⁽³⁾

It is likely that the silence of the Nonconformists surprised no one more than the King, who during the Exclusion years had come to anticipate quite a different reception from them.⁽⁴⁾ Of the 361 laudatory addresses printed week by week in the Gazette, none came from a Nonconformist source.⁽⁵⁾ The Nonconformist apologist Daniel Neal reproduced an address allegedly sent to the King by a group of Quakers, and his lead was followed by a Quaker historian,⁽⁶⁾ but despite the fact that an identical address appears in Lord Preston's Letter Book,⁽⁷⁾ it is fairly certain that it was composed by a non-Quaker with a satirical purpose: its style is overdone - especially its use of the 'thees' and 'thous' - and is out of line with the

(1) HMC, Ormond MSS VII (1912), 317.

(2) Ibid, 325-6.

(3) Reresby, 352.

(4) See HMC 15th Report, app. pt. 5, Savile Foljambe MSS (1897), 133-4; Barillon to Louis, 26 February, C. J. Fox, Early Part of the Reign of James II (1808), app. xxxi, xxxii.

(5) London Gazette Nos. 2007-2027; Luttrell I, 329, 331, 332-9, 340, 342-4.

(6) Neal V, 2; J. Gough, A History of the Quakers (1789) III, 160-161.

(7) HMC 7th Report, appendix (1878), 379.

style adopted by the Quakers in their addresses of 1687.⁽¹⁾ This bogus address was of a piece with a number of scurrilous verses, full of flattery for James, that were doing the rounds in March 1685 bearing the initials 'W.P.' and which made necessary a published denial by Penn.⁽²⁾

The pseudo-address and the verses were the first of a series of lampoons levelled against the Quakers in general and William Penn in particular which continued until the end of the reign and left their mark in Whig history. As such they were the first evidence of public recognition of the special position which the Society of Friends was to occupy in the reign of James II, and of the influential status which Penn was to enjoy at Court until his moderate ideas were outpaced by events in 1688. Among the dissenting sects, only the Quakers noted any marked decline in persecution after James's accession.⁽³⁾ Only the Quakers, long accustomed to looking to the King as their potential ally against the remainder of the politico-ecclesiastical establishment, were prepared to make unlimited use of James to allay persecution and promote toleration. And only the Quakers - unaware of the 'Popish Peril'⁽⁴⁾ and with no brief for or against the royal prerogative - would have no compunction about extending the toleration which they sought, together with complete

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- (1) London Gazette Nos. 2238, 2245, 2252, 2270, 2273, 2282, 2287. Neal gave Sewel as his source, but Sewel (II, 443) does not mention the address. J. Toulmin, who revised Neal in 1797, believed the address to be apocryphal, as did Janney (266-7).
- (2) W. Penn, Fiction Found Out (April 1685); Janney, 271; Buranelli, 83, 84.
- (3) Besse I, 473. c.f. J. Waddington, Surrey Congregational History (1866), 87.
- (4) Penn did not believe in a 'Catholic Menace'; he asserted that the Tories and the Church of England were the main enemies of the radical sects. A. Cole, 'The Quakers and the English Revolution', Crisis in Europe 1560-1660. ed. T. Aston (1965), 357.

political equality, to the King's co-religionists. For these reasons the Quakers must be discussed as a special case, separately from the other sects.

Basically, the 'special' position of the Quakers was founded on a paradox: their dogmatic intransigence made them the obvious targets for persecution; yet from the accession of James they were, though theologically the least congenial, the most favoured of the dissenting groups.

Their rigid fundamentalism brought them into conflict with the authorities on a number of heads: their refusal to pay tithes, which they held to be a Levitical custom abrogated by the death of Christ; their literal interpretation of the biblical injunction 'swear not at all'; their 'levelling' customs - especially the refusal to do 'hath honour' - which so often incurred the wrath of local magistrates; their determination to assemble and evangelise regardless of the law or the current approach to its enforcement; their refusal to make use of the Anglican clergy for marriages and funerals; and, as pacifists, their refusal to join the militia.⁽¹⁾ Quakers, in every locality where they were to be found, were regularly being brought before the local magistrate for meeting in conventicles, and before the ecclesiastical courts for non-payment of tithes and non-attendance. In each case the instigator of the prosecution was the parish priest working through the hated informers, a situation which the Quakers clearly understood and which the Quaker courtiers tirelessly pointed out to the King during 1685.

(1) Besse I, 1-2; Sewel II, 444-450; Cragg II, 32, 35, 39, 43, 47. See W. M. Wigfield, 'Recusancy and Nonconformity in Bedfordshire', Publications of the Bedfordshire Historical Record Society XX (1938), 187.

The favoured position of the Quakers was owing partly to the sheer persistence with which they had ^{publicised and} brought their sufferings before the Court since 1660, ⁽¹⁾ but, more importantly, to the unique position of William Penn. The curious personal friendship between James and Penn dated back to 1673, had been consolidated by the committal of Penn, by the wish of his dying father, to James's care; and subsequently had been strong enough to weather many pressures and tensions. ⁽²⁾ That Penn was an influential figure at Court from the accession of James II and that he continued to enjoy that status for most of the reign that followed, says a great deal for the King's magnanimity. Although Penn sympathised with James's objective of ameliorating the lot of his co-religionists, the King was constantly treated to the spectacle of his close friend vigorously castigating the Catholic Faith and denying, in the most explicit terms, charges that he was a crypto-Catholic. Penn's Seasonable Caveat against Popery, originally published in 1670, went through a number of re-prints. Fiction Found Out (1685) did not stop at a denial of Penn's authorship of the scurrilous doggerel, but went on to vilify the King's religion. ⁽³⁾

His publicised self-defence against John Tillotson's persistent accusations of crypto-Catholicism revealed a grim determination to go to any lengths to shake off the Romanist label, but it did not upset his relationship with the King. ⁽⁴⁾ Even this was not enough to convince Nonconformist and Anglican opinion and, in an effort to stave off the widespread accusations that he was a Jesuit current in the

(1) See above pp. 60-63; Penn, 12, 19, 20-28, 45-46.

(2) Janney, 265-6; Buranelli, 49-66; Penn, 5, 21, 73, 113.

(3) Buranelli, 83, 84.

(4) Janney, 273-6.

summer of 1688 Penn published another execration of the King's faith on 24 October 1688. It is perhaps significant, however, that in the same pamphlet, written when James's plans had collapsed and an invasion was impending, Penn could attest that: 'He [James] never refused me, repeated proofs' of the sincerity of his belief in complete toleration 'as often as I had any poor sufferers for conscience sake to solicit help for'.⁽¹⁾ But Penn's open disavowals of Catholicism were not the only things calculated to annoy James. In 1678-9 he had professed faith in the Popish Plot, and was involved in Whig electioneering. In 1683 he had published England's Great Interest Discovered, described by his biographer as 'pro-Sidney propaganda', and in 1684 he was 'informed of for meeting with men of the Whig stamp'. As far as is known, James never made Penn pay for these indiscretions.⁽²⁾

In fact Penn and James, despite the differences of their religious beliefs, had a substratum of opinion in common. Both had a deep respect for the Church of England, but wished to abolish its powers to oppress non-Anglicans.⁽³⁾ Both abhorred Puritanism, Penn at least as much as James. Having reacted against the Calvinism taught him at Oxford by John Owen and at the college at Saumur by Moses Amyraut, he hated it with the anger of an apostate, and he was a strong believer in free will and salvation for all.⁽⁴⁾ They were united in their hope for the immediate religious toleration of an oppressed and spurned minority; both advocated strong central

(1) W. Penn, Letter to William Popple (24 October 1688), Works of William Penn, ed. J. Besse (1726) I, 135-6; Janney, 341-7.

(2) Buranelli, 74, 75, 84-85; Penn, 31-38, 73, 108-109. See above pp. 65-66.

(3) Buranelli, 120.

(4) Ibid, 69.

government by a God-appointed King.⁽¹⁾ Both abominated the memory of the Great Rebellion and the political behaviour to which it had led, identifying respectively with the two outcast religious groups which had borne the brunt of its persecution.

'O what did not the Bloodthirsty Spirit in its day?' fulminated Penn; 'these were the great pretending Presbyterians, Independents, and Anabaptists, fighting, kicking, knocking, robbing, imprisoning, and murdering an Innocent People'.⁽²⁾

To the substratum of opinion common to James and Penn in 1685, however, was also to be added, as the reign progressed, the common experience of motives caricatured and intentions misinterpreted by the same national hysteria.

The lampoons against Penn, sometimes from within his own sect, were especially unfair, since his position at Court, as he tirelessly pointed out, was unofficial and unsought, the bent of his advice moderate, and his presence there at all merely activated by the same aim that had brought Quakers to Whitehall ever since the Restoration, to secure releases.⁽³⁾ In fact, Penn's objective in returning to England had been partly to solicit the liberation of certain of his friends recently imprisoned, and partly to obtain a favourable settlement on the Pennsylvanian boundary dispute. Beyond the achievement of the latter objective, he repeatedly promised his Steward that he would not remain in England 'another day', but would return to Pennsylvania, where his presence was necessary to

(1) Buranelli, 70; Penn, 111-113.

(2) W. Penn, *The Christian Quaker (1674)*, preface. cited Buranelli, 70. See W. Beck (ed), *The London Friends' Meetings: Showing the Rise of the Society of Friends in London (1869)*, 30-31.

(3) Buranelli, 77, 78, 79.

solve certain problems of paramount importance to the colony which had emerged since his departure.⁽¹⁾ Even as late as October 1685, he was still intending to sail as soon as the boundary dispute was settled.⁽²⁾ An Order in Council settling this dispute in Penn's favour was issued on 13 November 1685,⁽³⁾ but in March 1686 he was still writing to his Steward telling him that he was in a hurry to get away.⁽⁴⁾ In September he felt it necessary to go into a detailed explanation as to why, even now, he could not quit England. By the use of obstructionist tactics, Lord Baltimore was successfully preventing the implementation of the Order in Council of the previous November; hence Penn had decided to remain in England 'to see an end to that', and had determined 'not to leave unfinished that which I came for'.⁽⁵⁾ But the rectification of the Pennsylvania border was only part of what Penn had 'come for', and the limited aim of soliciting the liberation of a few personal friends had by this time, and perhaps months before, developed into a wider objective of assisting in the establishment of liberty of conscience in England. This prospect had already involved him in a visit to the Hague in an effort to persuade William to endorse his cause⁽⁶⁾ and had led him to ~~move to~~ Holland House in preparation for a longer stay in England than he had originally anticipated.⁽⁷⁾

While William Penn was the most influential Nonconformist at

- (1) W. Penn to J. Harrison, 11 July 1685, Janney, 267-8. See Penn, vii-ix, 73.
- (2) Janney, ~~268-70~~, 276.
- (3) Janney, 276.
- (4) W. Penn to J. Harrison, [18] March 1686, Janney, 281-2.
- (5) W. Penn to J. Harrison, 23 September 1686, Janney, 284-5.
- (6) Janney, 281-2, 284.
- (7) Whiting, 181; Janney, 267-8.

the Court of James II and, with the possible exception of the Presbyterian Sir John Baber,⁽¹⁾ the only one of any standing until the 1687 Indulgence, there were other Quakers who periodically presented themselves at Whitehall from March 1685 and undoubtedly contributed toward the indulgence policy. One of these was Robert Barclay, who felt it necessary to publish, after the Revolution, a complete account of his dealings with James. It is interesting that his connection with James, which dated from 1676, had led him to accept on trust, as Penn did, the sincerity of the deposed monarch's expressed belief in toleration. Through the influence of James when Duke of York the Barclay family had acquired an estate at Urie in Scotland.⁽²⁾ George Whitehead, who had had a great deal to do with the 1672 Indulgence,⁽³⁾ Alexander Parker, and Gilbert Latey, were other Quakers at the Court of James II;⁽⁴⁾ the three last presented a petition on behalf of the Society of Friends to James II on 2 March 1685. This 'humble petition' pointed out that 1,460 Quakers were at that time in prison in England and Wales, among whom were at least 200 women; 'Many under sentence of praemunire... and more than 300 near it; not for refusing the substance of allegiance itself, but only because they dare not swear'. It asserted that, of the 320 Quakers who had died in prison since 1660, 'near 100' had been since 1680. The counties with the highest number of Quaker prisoners were Yorkshire (279), Devon (104), the City of Bristol (103),

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- (1) Morrice P, 594; R. A. Beddard, 'Vincent Alsop and The Emancipation of Restoration Dissent', JEH XXIV, No. 2 (1973), 175.
- (2) Penn, 113-114; Braithwaite, 118-119.
- (3) Braithwaite, 82-83; W. Beck (ed), op cit, 176-7.
- (4) R. Hawkins (ed), Friends Library: Consisting Principally of Journals.. of Members of the Society of Friends (1834) IX, 77, 78; Whitehead, 575-9; Whiting, 179.

Suffolk (79), Lancashire (73), and London and Middlesex (66). Quakers were being 'convicted unsummoned and unheard in their own defence', many had been fined £20 a month over a long period or had had two-thirds of their goods confiscated, and they were being spoliated by rapacious informers who left them without furniture, cattle or implements. Whitehead concluded his reading of the petition by reminding the King that his brother had issued a Declaration of Indulgence and put forth letters of pardon under the Great Seal. He also cannily urged that the defence of the Church of England and an indulgence for Dissenters were not mutually exclusive objectives. Somewhat to the surprise of the three Quakers, James agreed with this assertion, promised a pardon and undertook 'to see what measures could be taken' to curtail the endeavours of the informers.⁽¹⁾ By 4 March Whitehead and Latey had 'obtained, by the King's commission' from the Lord Treasurer a 'warrant to the Clerk of the Pipe' for a stay of process till the next term on four sheets (fourteen columns) of names.⁽²⁾

The rumours of the King's response to the petition circulated rapidly among the Quakers and softened the attitude of many towards him. The petitioners themselves believed that they had provoked the discussion of liberty of conscience at Court as a practical expedient.⁽³⁾ William Penn was more cautious. On 16 March he wrote to a friend that 'severities continue still, but some ease to us [is] faintly promised.. [the King] said he desired not that peaceable people

(1) Sewel II, 443-4, 451-4; Janney, 266-7; R. Hawkins (ed), op cit, 77.

(2) R. Hawkins (ed), Friends Library: Consisting Principally of Journals.. of Members of the Society of Friends (1834) IX, 77-78.

(3) Sewel II, 453.

should be disturbed for their religion'. He was careful to point out, however, that the King had given him to understand that no releases could be expected until, at the earliest, when Parliament met.⁽¹⁾ In general, however, Quakers were confident, some believing that 'liberty of conscience was in the press' but that the King was being delayed by Anglicans who had promised to support toleration for Roman Catholics but not for Dissenters.⁽²⁾ *Probably* in this belief Margaret Fox, the wife of the aged founder of the Quaker movement, aided by William Meade, drew up two papers to present to James and began to seek an opportunity to present them.

They were received by James, who listened patiently to their pleas to end persecution but made no commitment. At home in Newcastle-under-Lyme Margaret Fox noted that persecution was unabated. Therefore, *not long* after her visit to London, she wrote to the King.

Although she received no direct response to this letter she concluded

that, 'as her persecutors troubled her no more.. the Privy Council *had* given them a private caution'.⁽³⁾

George Whitehead, *when it became evident* that the pardon promised in March was somewhat overdue,⁽⁴⁾ paid a second visit to Court in May, accompanied by Robert Barclay, and presented a second petition. This petition rehearsed the arguments of its predecessor, but contained a subtle twist. The heavy fines levied on Quakers were not being paid into the Exchequer it was argued, but were feathering the

(1) W. Penn to T. Lloyd, 16 March 1685, Janney, 263-4. Luttrell reported talk of 'a toleration' before the end of February, though he believed that it would be only for Roman Catholics. Luttrell I, 326, 332. See Miller, 195.

(2) Sewel II, 453-4.

(3) I. Ross, Margaret Fell Mother of Quakerism (1949), 325, 327-328.

(4) *Braithwaite, 120.*

nests of informers, who were awarded one third of the fine as compensation for services rendered. Appeals against fines were too expensive, having regard to the treble costs against an unsuccessful appellant, but no costs or restorations were granted against informers who made unjust or unsuccessful prosecutions.⁽¹⁾ This petition led to the first positive action by the King on behalf of the Quakers; all writs for the seizing of Quakers' estates were suspended until the next law term. Whitehead, who had hoped for more, was very disappointed.⁽²⁾

Despite this and the hints of the Quaker courtiers on the feasibility of an indulgence for persecuted Nonconformists and despite the continued efforts of Penn to direct the King's mind toward such a project,⁽³⁾ there was as yet no evidence at all of the emergence of the policy of favouritism which the Court was to extend toward Quakers after the General Pardon of March 1686.⁽⁴⁾ In fact, the only significant action taken by the Court to shield any religious group from persecution was the continuation of a policy which pre-dated the accession of James. On 27 February 1685 the King issued warrants to

(1) Whitehead, 575-587; Whiting, 180.

(2) Whitehead, 609-614. See R. Hawkins (ed), op cit, ix. In fact the Quakers mentioned in the Lord Treasurer's Warrant of 4 March 1685 did not receive a pardon until March 1686. R. Hawkins (ed), op cit, 78-79; See below pp. 234, 241-242.

(3) Janney, 265-6, 267-8, 269-70. See Penn, 117.

(4) See below, pp. 238-253.

the Justices of Assize for the Midland, Northern, Western, Home, Norfolk and Oxford circuits, to the JPs of Westmorland, Cumberland, Northumberland and Durham, and to the Mayor of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, to the effect that, in pursuit of his late brother's intention of pardoning the offences against the laws relating to church attendance and taking the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy of

'such of his subjects ~~who~~ had been sufferers in [the] late Rebellion for their loyalty, or whose parents or nearest relations had been then sufferers for their loyalty, or who ~~have~~ themselves testified their loyalty and affection to the Government',

they should discharge and set at liberty all such of His Majesty's subjects in prison or under restraint for these offences who should produce certificates of loyalty 'under the hands of two or more of the Justices of the Peace or Deputy Lieutenants ^{within} the respective counties'. (1)

This policy was reinforced by a further warrant, on 18 April, to all persons *exercising* ecclesiastical jurisdiction. In pursuance of the late King's intention of 'pardoning all such of his subjects 'who had been sufferers in the late Rebellion for their loyalty or whose parents or nearest relations had been sufferers...etc' but who were nevertheless being prosecuted for refusing to take the oaths, or for not coming to church or taking the Sacrament; that 'all process and proceedings' in regard to 'the several persons mentioned in the schedule annexed [who] had produced certificates of the loyalty and sufferings of themselves and their families', should be 'wholly

(1) CSPD 1685, 52-53.

superseded and stayed'. This second warrant was more than an ordinary 'stay of process'. 'All process and proceedings' were not merely to be superseded for the twenty persons from the London area mentioned in the schedule, but for 'all others for whom such certificates [of loyalty] should thereafter be produced' and, further, no process should thereafter be made against either group for any of the causes mentioned until the King's pleasure should be signified.⁽¹⁾ In other words persons producing certificates of loyalty would receive what amounted to a dispensation.

A warrant in exactly the same terms as that of the 18 April was issued to the ecclesiastical authorities in Herefordshire and Radnorshire on behalf of 223 named 'recusants' on 30 May.⁽²⁾ Another, in almost the same terms as those of 27 February, was issued to all Justices of Assize on 10 August. All those in prison or under restraint for ecclesiastical offences - 'or upon some other statutes made against Popish Recusants' - and who had produced certificates of loyalty should be released and process terminated.⁽³⁾ It is interesting that a warrant of 16 October to the ecclesiastical authorities in London for stay of process for ~~thirteen~~ named persons⁽⁴⁾ should have been revoked on 6 November, 'the King *being* given to understand that the certificate of loyalty produced on behalf of the said persons *was* obtain^{ed} by surprise'.⁽⁵⁾

The encouragement given to the persecution of Dissenters in

(1) CSPD 1685, 131-132.

(2) CSPD 1685, 169-171.

(3) CSPD 1685, 300.

(4) CSPD 1685, 355.

(5) CSPD 1685, 378.

the last years of his reign by Charles II,⁽¹⁾ James II's attitude to Dissenters in the first year of his,⁽²⁾ and the use of loyalty to the Crown during the Great Rebellion - with certificates countersigned by two JPs or Deputy Lieutenants - as the criterion of eligibility for a dispensation, would seem to indicate that the aim of this exercise is unlikely to have been the protection of Nonconformists. Whilst this is not the same as saying that some Nonconformists did not use certificates of loyalty to acquire protection, it would seem unlikely that many did. During 1685, 1686 and the first quarter of 1687 during which the expedient was operative, almost all JPs and Deputy Lieutenants, whose signatures on certificates of loyalty were essential to their validity, were Anglicans and, although the Latitudinarian Anglican clergy began to look with favour on Dissenters during 1686, their liberal attitude was not shared by the great majority of magistrates.⁽³⁾ The reluctance of Presbyterians and Congregationalists to apply to the Licence Office set up in November 1686 would surely have been at least as great when the practice of applying for dispensations was still less regularised prior to that date.⁽⁴⁾ It must also be significant that none of the 257 names of persons who had produced certificates of loyalty which appear on the warrants for 1685⁽⁵⁾ are to be found in the Sunday by Sunday account of

(1) Morrice P, 409, 415, 433-4, 444. See Lacey, 150-153. See above pp. 69-72.

(2) J. P. Kenyon, *The Stuarts* (1958), 151, 155; J. P. Kenyon, *Robert Spencer Earl of Sunderland* (1958), 112, note. See above pp. 102, 103, 104.

(3) Miller, 205; W. M. Wigfield, 'Recusancy and Nonconformity in Bedfordshire', *Publications of the Bedfordshire Historical Record Society* XX (1938), 148.

(4) See below pp. 265-266, 267-269.

(5) CSPD 1685, 131-132, 169-171, 355.

Nonconformist persecution catalogued by Morrice between January 1682 and April 1687,⁽¹⁾ or in the indices of regional histories of Non-conformity for the areas covered by the warrants.⁽²⁾

However, one Dutch observer of events in England believed that although Presbyterian, Independent or Baptist might be excluded by the terms of this dispensation, in view of the quietist tradition of the Quakers it might prove for them 'the first step toward liberty of conscience'. He also believed that in the schedule attached to one of the warrants were to be found the names of a few Quakers in the process of being prosecuted for refusing to take the oaths.⁽³⁾ There is, however, no corroborative evidence - this is the sort of thing that would certainly have been known to Besse, who does not mention the Dispensation at all - nor any indication that other Dissenters regarded the King's warrants as any more than a move to protect Roman Catholics from continued Anglican persecution.⁽⁴⁾ While conclusive proof is lacking that the names mentioned in the warrants of 18 April, 30 May and 16 October were those of Roman Catholic recusants, it seems certain that no significant number of them - perhaps none - were those of Protestant Dissenters. Certificates of loyalty continued to be presented during 1686.⁽⁵⁾ When the King waived the expedient by a warrant of 15 March 1687 he acknowledged

- (1) Morrice P, 321 - Morrice Q, 87.
- (2) T. Rees, History of Protestant Nonconformity in Wales (1883); T. G. Thomas and J. Jones (eds), Brecon and Radnor Congregationalism (1912); A. J. Stevens, The Story of Congregationalism in Bromyard [Herefordshire] and the Neighbourhood (1930); Wilson I-IV.
- (3) Sewel II, 454 - 455.
- (4) Morrice P, 453, 460. The first warrant 'to forbear process' issued to benefit Quakers was almost certainly that of 4 March 1686 issued in response to a petition from Whitehead and Latey, and the first releases were those effected after 15 March 1686. See CTB VIII, pt. 2, 629-634; below pp. 234-235.
- (5) See below pp. 231-235.

its real purpose:

'The King has formerly directed a discharge of all proceedings against Recusants who themselves or whose relatives were certified loyal.,, The King being well satisfied in the loyalty of all his Roman Catholic subjects hereby declares his pleasure that all things needful to be done for discharging and vacating upon record all convictions... and ^{also} for restoring... unto them all monies due to the Crown and not answered to the Crown' for recusancy. (1)

In a warrant a few days earlier he had ordered

'the restoring, paying and discharging to all... his subjects who shall appear to be of the Roman Catholic religion, all monies grown due or that shall grow due...: all whether.. certificates of loyalty.. be produced or not'. (2)

The editor of the Warwick County Records concludes that the warrants of 27 February 1685 and thereafter were intended to relieve 'Popish Recusants'. (3) It is difficult to avoid John Miller's conclusion that 'the use of loyalty certificates was a convenient way of distinguishing between Catholics and Dissenters without doing so in overtly denominational terms'. Had there been a toleration in 1685 it might well have embodied a distinction between 'loyal' and 'disloyal' dissenters. (4)

In fact, the efforts of William Penn notwithstanding, 1685 was to see no significant move by the Court toward religious toleration

- (1) CTB VIII, pt. 3, 1262.
- (2) CTB VIII, pt. 3, 1246.
- (3) Warwick CR VIII, lxx-lxvi.
- (4) Miller, 206.

Even the warrant intended to secure relief for Roman Catholics rationalised their right to immunity by reference to their past loyalty. Had there been any doubts on this point they would have been destroyed by a warrant issued to Edward Ange, Solicitor for the King in matters relating to recusancy, on 5 December ordering him to 'take care that all Recusants who have not certificates of their steady loyalty and obedience to the Government.. be effectually prosecuted according to law'. It was indicative that the King had learned something from the Quaker petitions, however, that the main purpose of the warrant was to authorise Ange to ensure that all sums distrained from Dissenters and Recusants actually arrived in the Exchequer: 'all by reason that divers sums..levied by Justices on conventiclers have been concealed and never brought to account'.⁽¹⁾ This warrant was followed up by another authorising Ange to ascertain the true value of the property and estates of those persecuted for non-attendance and conventicles, presumably with the aim of maximising the revenue potential from this source.⁽²⁾

Although there was no move by the Court at the accession or during the twelve months that followed it to protect Quakers, or any other Nonconformist group, from the effects of persecution, Quakers then and subsequently persisted in the belief that the accession of James had brought a falling off in persecution and that this was traceable to Penn's influence at Court.⁽³⁾ To ascertain what truth,

(1) CTB VIII, pt. 1, 467. A further purpose behind this warrant may have been to prevent Dissenters deriving any indirect benefit from the dispensations, primarily intended for Roman Catholics, through a general cessation of persecution.

(2) CTB VIII, pt. 1, 498 (23 December).

(3) Besse I, 473 ; G. Croese, A General History of the Quakers (1696) II, 105 ; Sewel II, 443, 466-7; Janney, 279, 280, 281.

if any, there was in this assertion, it will be necessary to undertake a detailed examination of Quaker persecution between the publication of The Official Account of the State of the Cruel Persecution.. Inflicted on the People called Quakers on 1 March 1685,⁽¹⁾ and the publication of the King's General Pardon of 10 March 1686, and to discover the extent to which persecution diminished after the accession by effecting some comparison with the year prior to the accession.

Since the most complete information is available from London and Middlesex, and since the persecution in this area was often a microcosmic replica *of what was happening elsewhere*, London should be taken first. Between March 1684 and March 1685, thirty-two Quakers in London were fined or imprisoned for preaching. One of these, Whitehead, was convicted twice. The standard fine was £20, but goods were in many cases confiscated *to a greater value.*⁽²⁾ Prosecution for meetings or, as the warrants usually read 'being taken in a riotous and unlawful assembly' or 'convicted of a riot', were very numerous between March 1684 and the accession of James II: 195 were imprisoned (sentences could be between six days and six weeks, occasionally more); forty-nine were fined a total of £458. The greatest suffering, however, was caused when the confiscation of property took place: in each case the value of the property confiscated was far in excess of the £10 fine.⁽³⁾

(1) The figures used by Whitehead in his first petition were based on this document. The 'Official Accounts' were published once in five years.

(2) Besse I, 462, 465, 469, 470, 471.

(3) Besse I, 462-3, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472. The usual heavy persecution for refusing to swear, refusing to join the militia and failure to pay tithes is omitted. See Besse I, 473-474.

The first evidence of any change with the accession of James II was an initiative taken by the Friends themselves: appeals began to come in against previous sentences. In some appeal cases informers refused to give evidence, in others they admitted that they had been mistaken, but in each case 'through the influence of the Recorder' the former fines were upheld.⁽¹⁾ This was a heavy financial blow to the Friends, since each unsuccessful appellant had to pay treble costs.⁽²⁾ In fact, the benefits which the Quakers later considered to have accrued from James's accession were not readily apparent for a long period. Between his accession and March 1686, although there are few examples of convictions for preaching, ninety-*one* persons in London were fined or had goods confiscated for being 'found guilty of riot', ^{or} meeting in a conventicle.⁽³⁾ At the time it would have been difficult to convince the Quakers of Southwark that any benefit at all had accrued from the accession of the new king since 'by order of the Government', their meeting house was wrecked.⁽⁴⁾ In fact the de-escalation which had come with the accession was more subtle; although twice as many persons were convicted for meeting as in the previous twelve months, their penalties were much more moderate. Only eight persons were imprisoned,⁽⁵⁾ and fines were much smaller; although there were still instances of persons being fined £10 per offence,⁽⁶⁾ the more usual figure was six shillings and eight

(1) Besse I, 471, 472.

(2) See Whitehead's 2nd Petition, May 1685, Whiting, 180.

(3) Besse I, 473, 474, 476, 479.

(4) Whiting, 179; W. Beck (ed), London Friends Meetings (1869), 219.

(5) One in June, Seven in October. Besse I, 474.

(6) Ibid, September.

pence. (1)

As the year progressed it became increasingly evident that London magistrates were showing a marked reluctance to proceed against Quakers, and only did so at the urging of informers. (2) Unfortunately for the Friends, however, a formidable body of such persons, mainly of the female gender, existed and were instrumental in breaking up a number of meetings. In November 1685, doubtless after a long period of thorough detection, two female informers produced an information which included a comprehensive list of Quakers from a meeting house in *the City*. (3) The magistrates realised that they must choose between giving in to court pressures or giving in to pressures from informers. They made their decision, *it would appear that* and no prosecutions resulted from this information, 'for such kind of prosecutions began now to be discontinued *at* the Court, and the Justices became far more moderate than formerly.' (4) Hereafter, civil persecution (as opposed to distresses for non-payment of tithes, instigated by the ecclesiastical courts) was carried on by only a handful of magistrates, including the intrepid John Cleave, who were not to be discouraged by any amount of Court pressure (and it could not have been strong at this stage). (5) As a result of the investigations of Edward Ange, however, some of the over eager informers, whose 'takings' from fines exceeded what was considered circumspect, were beginning to be

(1) e.g. May, October. Ibid.

(2) Besse I, 474, 477, 478.

(3) Dated 29 November 1685. Besse I, 477-8.

(4) Besse I, 478.

(5) Besse I, 478, 479.

'brought to book'.⁽¹⁾

This general pattern of persecution in the capital was followed in some of the counties. Fines, though still numerous, were smaller in most counties than in the previous twelve months, though Friends continued to be imprisoned in large numbers and, since provincial magistrates were slower to follow the feelings of the Court, persecution lasted longer. In Berkshire forty-six persons were fined a total of over £200 and five were imprisoned.⁽²⁾ In Cambridgeshire three were imprisoned for non-attendance and in Cumberland *Ueven* jailed for 'riot' (conventicles).⁽³⁾ In Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire the main grounds for persecution was for non-attendance and in both counties a large number of Quakers paid £20 per month throughout 1685.⁽⁴⁾ In Derbyshire and Lincolnshire

An increase in persecution may be noted as between the two periods under comparison.⁽⁵⁾ Only in Gloucestershire was there a very marked increase in persecution. Here Friends noted that 1685 brought the worst persecution for many years, with thirty imprisoned and fines and confiscations exceeding £800.⁽⁶⁾ In Yorkshire there is evidence of a very considerable abatement of persecution for meetings after James II's accession. Only thirty-five were indicted for 'riot' (meetings) in 1685,⁽⁷⁾ in comparison with more than four times that number in the previous year.⁽⁸⁾ It would appear, however,

(1) Sewel II, 455-6.

(2) Besse I, 36, 37.

(3) Besse I, 98, 135.

(4) Besse I, 82, 253.

(5) Besse I, 143, 144, 357.

(6) Besse I, 225-227.

(7) Besse II, 165.

(8) Besse II, 158-164.

that as the Yorkshire magistrates relaxed their persecution, the ecclesiastical courts, at the instigation of the local Anglican clergy, intensified theirs; there was an increase in the number and value of fines for non-attendance and non-payment of tithes in the twelve months after the accession in comparison with the twelve months before it.⁽¹⁾

It is clear that if Quakers did receive any relief from persecution before the General Pardon of March 1686, it was purely a matter of degree and was in particular localities. There were no Court directives, and if any 'intimations' were received that an abatement of persecution would be in order - probably from the assize judges⁽²⁾ - they were not very clear ones and the magistrates found them easy to ignore. The Quakers who noticed an abatement of persecution, however, believed that it was owing to the King's clemency, through the intercession of Penn and the Quaker petitioners of March, April and May 1685. And, although not one of the 1,460 imprisoned Quakers who had been the subject of Whitehead's petitions had been released by the King's intercession twelve months after the petition had been presented, Quakers continued to look for favours from the King, despite the baleful prognostications of other Nonconformists. Ignorant of the constitutional implications of a programme involving dispensations or an indulgence, innocent of the darker undertones of the 'Papist Design' which other Dissenters accused them of abetting, grateful for what they regarded as favours past and hopeful of favours to come, it was clear that the Quakers would hardly need to be 'enticed' to support the political programme which the King was

(1) Besse II, 158-164, 165.

(2) Burnet I, 672.

beginning to envisage by the Spring of 1686. It was of awful significance for the Dissenting Alliance that such a programme would imply, however, that the only dissenting sect that did not need to be 'enticed' was socially inferior to the others, most deeply affected by quietistic attitudes, and, having suffered more than the other sects, was the one on which the effects of the great persecution were most manifest.

3

As the reign progressed the Nonconformist sects, other than the Quakers, had no reason to repent the pessimistic forebodings they had had at the accession. Having no representative at Court and not caring to solicit the King for protection from the agents of persecution, none of them expected anything but the worst to come of the reign of a Catholic King. Those with a good nose for Popery even thought they saw the King behind their Anglican persecutors, and half-believed that the whole exercise was part of some continent-wide design 'to extirpate the Northern Heresy'.⁽¹⁾ While the Quakers spoke of the decline of persecution, the other sects believed that it was increasing. Nonconformity's serious historians as well as its quasi-martyrologists, refer to 1684 and 1685 as representing the high-water mark of post-Restoration persecution, the years that contributed disproportionately toward the catalogue of 60,000 'sufferers', 5,000 'deaths in prison' and 15,000 'families

(1) Morrice P, 460, 480, 481, 488, 490, 498-9, 504, 506, 509; Lyon Turner MS.89.13, XI 3. See Bennet, Memorial, 294, 309-23. c.f. Evelyn IV, 487.

ruined' - the common indices of the 1662-1687 persecution.⁽¹⁾ The contemporary source of these suspiciously round, and doubtless inflated, figures was the 'Account of the Nonconformist Persecution' prepared by an Independent minister, Jeremiah White. This document had been prepared over a period of years and, were it still extant, would doubtless provide a valuable background to the statistics of persecution. Since it reflected very badly upon the Established Church 'representatives of the Court' made White 'very considerable offers' to publish it in 1686. He refused 'for fear of strengthening and serving the Roman Catholic interest' and the written copies of the manuscript have subsequently been lost.⁽²⁾ The published writings of White, written much later, in which he inveighed against 'misguided zealots in religion' and aimed 'to promote concord and unity among all Christians', may suggest that, since his Account was written in the different spirit of a previous era, he had by that time a motive for suppressing it himself.⁽³⁾

Despite his unreliable figures, however, there is evidence that White was correct in his general assertion that persecution reached a peak in 1684-5. Another document, drawn up by a Yorkshire Dissenter, corroborates the assertion,⁽⁴⁾ and two of the most prominent Presbyterians outside London, Oliver Heywood and Adam Martindale,

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- (1) Mackintosh, 160 ; Drysdale, 406-7n ; M'Crie, 255-6 ; Neal V, 22 ; Bunyan, 323, 330, 336 ; T. Whitehead, History of the Dales Congregational Churches (1930), 83, 121 ; T. Timpson, Church History of Kent (1859), 268. See G. G. Waddington, A History of the Independent Church at Greenacres (1854), 26 ; A. E. Trout, 'Nonconformity in Hull', CHST IX (1924-26), 43 ; J. Waddington, Surrey Congregational History (1866), 87 ; *Perry II, 474.*
- (2) Palmer I, 211 ; *CR, 525* ; W. Urwick, Nonconformity in Hertfordshire (1884), 278-9.
- (3) Jeremiah White, A Persuasive to Moderation (1708), preface ; The Restoration of All Things (1709), 1, 2.
- (4) MS prepared by James Smith of Kipping, Yorks. Quoted Miall, 91-93.

expressed opinions which implied that 1685 was the most difficult year in their experience of persecution.⁽¹⁾ The records of the Exeter City Sessions indicate that 1685 saw the highest number of convictions for conventicles since 1673.⁽²⁾ A detailed Table of Sufferings for Leicestershire indicates that 1684, 1685, and 1686 were the record years for Nonconformist persecution in that county.⁽³⁾ There is evidence of dissenting congregations in Bedfordshire, Dorset, Somerset, Bristol, London, Berkshire, Hertfordshire and the West Riding which, having weathered twenty years of persecution, were forced to 'go underground,' ^{to meet outdoors} or were permanently broken up in 1685.⁽⁴⁾

Since 1681 persecution in some localities had often taken the form of the victimisation of individual pastors, evidenced by repeated convictions and constant surveillance. Thus Thomas Jolly in Lancashire and Thomas Tregoss in Cornwall were imprisoned five times each. Francis Holcrofts in Cambridgeshire had been confined on and off for eight years by the time of his release in 1687, Richard Worts of Norfolk for seven years, and John Cromwell of Nottinghamshire for *Six* years.⁽⁵⁾ This characteristic of persecution led to a situation in which, in the course of the next twelve months following James II's accession, many Nonconformist divines, who had withstood ejection and long periods of persecution, deemed it prudent to go into voluntary exile abroad or, in the case of some

(1) Miall, 93; Heywood III, 221 *et seq*; Martindale, 233, 234.

(2) Brockett, 39.

(3) Lyon Turner MS.89.27, 44-57..

(4) Walter Wilson, MS.I, i, 18, 33-35; ii, 51-52, 142; iii, 261; Bunyan, 330; W. Beck (ed), The London Friends' Meetings (1869), 143, 165 note (see also pp 162-5). See E. Terrill (ed), The Records of the Church of Christ.. Broadmead, Bristol, Hanserd Knollys Soc. (1847), 493-4.

(5) CR, lix, lx.

from the provinces, to take refuge in the relative anonymity of London. Of those who went abroad only one did so legally,⁽¹⁾ and at least one ship's captain was later convicted of 'grand misdemeanour in spiriting and transporting many of the King's subjects beyond the seas' presumably without passes.⁽²⁾ In August 1685 John Howe, in common with a number of Nonconformists and Whigs, including Lord Wharton, fled *the country*. 'In 1685, the Dissenters were run down universally, and hardly anyone durst speak or write in their favour; and the prospects.. grew every day more and more gloomy'.⁽³⁾ Howe's departure was so hurried that he 'had not an opportunity of taking leave of his friends'. He therefore on arrival at his destination sent a letter to his flock in London explaining that the suddenness of his departure, and his silence before it, had been essential. Even then he could not descend into the detailed reasons for it except to say 'that the providence of God' had given him 'the prospect of the present quiet abode, with some opportunity of being serviceable'. The only reference, albeit an abstruse one, to the specific circumstances which had led him to flee abroad, was that he had never found anything so destructive to his health, 'than confinement to a room' which, because of current 'anger and jealousies' seemed

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- (1) A pass was issued to Philip Lord Wharton on 7 August 1685. This pass covered servants and hence John Howe and Nathaniel Taylor may have been covered as Lord Wharton's chaplains. CSPD 1685, 441. See A. Gordon, 'Calamy as a Biographer', CHST VI (1913-1915), 239. No passes were issued to the other Nonconformist pastors who emigrated. See CSPD 1685, 433-444; 1686-7, 443-9.
- (2) CTB VIII, pt. 2 (1686), 672-3; Luttrell I, 375.
- (3) Calamy, Howe, 113; CR, 280; R. Harley to Sir Edward Harley, 22 August 1685, HMC 14th Report, app. pt. II; Portland MSS III (1894), 387; T. Whitehead, History of the Dales Congregational Churches (1930), 83; R. F. Horton, John Howe (1895), 158, 159-160.

inevitable to a person in his position who could seldom even 'walk the streets'.⁽¹⁾ In Howe's company were a number of other Presbyterian pastors who were 'apprehensive for the liberties of their country', including Nathaniel Taylor and John Shower, and two Whig politicians with Nonconformist leanings, Sir Patience Ward and Thomas Papillon.⁽²⁾ For younger Nonconformist ministers, like Thomas Gouge, Holland had an advantage as a place of resort in that it afforded educational facilities for further preparation for the ministry.⁽³⁾ For Shower it was not the first trip to the Continent to escape persecution. In fact, he had returned to England only a matter of weeks before his flight in 1685. On his return he had found 'the vessel of nonconformity riding in a storm... Dissenting Protestants... hunted down by penal laws and ruined'. He had been shocked to find that 'the vilest men were encouraged to disturb ^{the} Dissenters in the worship of God'. What had led him to decide on a second flight had been the fact that 'it was not safe for a Dissenting minister to be seen in the streets of London. Their meetings were suppressed and many of them [were] thrown into common jails'.⁽⁴⁾

By April of 1686 many of those who had fled in the previous year were 'settled in pretty comfortable circumstances' in the university cities of Utrecht and Leyden. John Howe was lecturing at the University of Utrecht, and there were rumours of his being

- (1) Calamy, Howe, 113-115; H. Rogers, Life and Character of John Howe (1836), 322-335.
- (2) W. Tong, Some Memoirs of the Life and Death of the Reverend Mr. John Shower (1716), 49-52; Wilson II, 14, 312-315. See Lacey, 273 n.45, 431-2. On 5 November 1686 a 'John Showers.. Late of London' was pardoned for treason. CSPD 1686-7, 296.
- (3) Wilson II, 69-70.
- (4) W. Tong, op cit, 21-22, 43, 49, 49-52; Wilson II, 312-315.

offered a Chair. In Utrecht there was a boarding house for exiled Nonconformists, and in both cities the exiles were understood to be 'pursuing their studies'.⁽¹⁾

In the last few months of 1685, during which French Huguenots were arriving in England 'by every packet', Nonconformist pastors were leaving England for more congenial shores. Matthew Henry appreciated the irony: 'That some should fly from us while others fly to us forms a riddle'. Leyden, he knew, had by that time a sizeable colony of English Dissenters.⁽²⁾ Francis Crow, 'the severity of the times' having 'threatened much' his 'personal safety', had sailed for Jamaica.⁽³⁾ Samuel Lee left his congregation in Holborn and sailed from Gravesend to Boston, New England.⁽⁴⁾ Anthony Fido *and* Giles Say left congregations in Yorkshire ^{*and*} Southampton, respectively, *for the relative safety of* London.⁽⁵⁾

'In the latter part of 1685' Thomas Elstow left his flock at Wattisford, Suffolk, and moved to Yorkshire to elude his persecutors. Even there, however, he was not allowed to settled, and in April 1687 emerged from hiding at Tiverton.⁽⁶⁾

Independents felt the same pressures as Presbyterians. Charles Morton, principal of the Independent academy at Newington Green, was 'so infested with processes from Bishops' Court' that he fled to New England in 1685, leaving Stephen Lobb to carry on his work. Shortly

(1) Matthew to Philip Henry 13 April 1686, Henry MS.5, letter 26; Morrice P, 530; R. H. Horton, John Howe (1895), 161.

(2) Matthew to Philip Henry 29 December 1685, 13 April 1686, 20 April 1686, Henry MS.5, letters 10, 26, 27.

(3) CR, 151.

(4) CR, 321; Palmer I, 104-105.

(5) CR, 194, 428.

(6) Harmer MS.76.9, 154.

after his arrival in New England, Morton was elected a member of the corporation of Harvard College and became its first Vice President.⁽¹⁾ But despite Lobb's efforts, Morton's academy did not long outlast the flight of its principal: conscious that their academy was 'looked upon by the government with an evil eye', most of the student body

'judged it prudent to retire abroad, and fixed upon Geneva as the most eligible place, where they might not only pursue their studies unmolested but likewise have the benefit of a public university'.⁽²⁾

Lobb was imprisoned.

The migration of Nonconformist clergy continued in 1686.

Walter Cross deserted his Independent congregation at Aldermanbury for Holland.⁽³⁾ ^{had long} Jonathan Hanmer considered it expedient to adopt the pattern of life of an itinerant preacher in the face of persecution, and continued on the move between Bristol, London, Barnstaple and Torrington.⁽⁴⁾ In preference to perse-

cution at home, John Ryther left his congregation and became a chaplain on merchant ships in the East India trade.⁽⁵⁾

Robert Billio of Essex fled to Holland.⁽⁶⁾ Daniel Burgess, an

(1) Matthew to Philip Henry, 29 December 1685, 13 April 1686, Henry MS.5, 26; 6, 10; DWL MS.38.34 Quick MSS I, pt. 1, 462; CR, 356; Wilson III, 437; H. McLachlan, English Education Under the Test Acts (1931), 80; I. Parker, Dissenting Academies in England (1914), 62; R. Ball, Congregationalism in Cornwall (1956), 10.

(2) Wilson I, 157-8.

(3) Wilson II, 535.

(4) Palmer II, 6.

(5) Palmer II, 416.

(6) Palmer II, 226.

Independent Minister, and George Hammond, a Presbyterian pastor, believed that the relative strength of the dissenting cause in London would afford them protection, and left their congregations in the West Country to take refuge there.⁽¹⁾

The evidence would seem to indicate that emigration reached its peak in 1685, but Nonconformist pastors had been emigrating to Holland and the New World since 1681, and doubtless before.⁽²⁾ In 1683 Baxter wrote that 'they are fain to fly..that are not in prison' and that 'conscionable' persons were being 'driven' out of the land.⁽³⁾ But by 1686, combined with the other effects of persecution which had been evident in English Nonconformity when James acceded, the migration and emigration of ministry had produced a situation in which in many parts of England, like Surrey,⁽⁴⁾ Protestant Nonconformity had, to all intents and purposes, already been destroyed. The old Nonconformists themselves were frightened, confused and pessimistic, impoverished into a temporary abandonment of the practice of separate meetings. The dissenting congregations of Hampshire and Dorset, left 'destitute' after the migration of their pastors, and more literally 'destitute' after successive assaults by the magistrates, were either breaking up or becoming, in the absence of guidance, 'a prey to every wind of doctrine'.⁽⁵⁾ Even in Bristol, where Nonconformity had so recently been strong and powerful, all but

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- (1) Wilson II, 458; III, 496-497;
J. Murch, A History of the Presbyterian and Baptist Churches in the West of England (1835), 266.
- (2) Walter Wilson MS.I, ii, 33; CR, 394-5; Lyon Turner MS.89.13, X46, 47, XI 37.
- (3) Richard Baxter, The English Nonconformity as under King Charles II and King James II (1689), preface (dated 23 September 1683).
- (4) Lyon Turner MS.89.22, 3.
- (5) DWL MS.38.66, 32, i-iv.

three congregations (one Presbyterian, two Baptist) had been left pastorless - the pastors having migrated or gone into hiding - and Dissenters, under the influence of a depression in local industries and anti-Popish paranoia, were beginning to contemplate desperate solutions.⁽¹⁾

The dissenting clergy who remained in England for reasons of finance or conviction - and all leading dissenting clergy, with the exception of Howe, did remain - found the atmosphere extremely tense. Certain events and rumours of April and May 1685 led more and more Dissenters to give credence to the Popish Peril babbling of the extremists, and as the more sober Dissenters became convinced so the infection spread to the Anglican clergy of London.⁽²⁾ *As a*

Catholic monarch, James II was committed

to reconvert England or die a martyr.⁽³⁾ *Two* Londoners, 'formerly Dr. Oates's men', were sentenced to stand in the pillory and pay £10 apiece for 'saying His Majesty had burned this city and was a Papist'.⁽⁴⁾ The apprehension of a 'Popish conspiracy' was compounded when it began to be generally known as a fact rather than rumour that, whilst Dissenters still felt the brunt of persecution, Recusants who produced 'Certificates of Loyalty' were escaping fines and forfeitures.⁽⁵⁾ In the session held in Justice Hall on 29 and 30 April 1685 the jury found a 'Writing Master' of the City 'guilty of high misdemeanours' for asserting that the Protestant Dissenters

(1) Lyon Turner MS.89.13, X43-44. See below pp. 173, 180-183.

(2) Morrice P, 452, 453, 454-6, 458-60; Carpenter, Compton, 81, 82.

(3) Bennet, Memorial, 294.

(4) CSPD 1685, 11.

(5) Morrice P, 453.

were undergoing persecution 'and not the Popish Dissenters' and that 'the King was the greatest dissenter'.⁽¹⁾ Some Nonconformist pamphleteers had gone still further and, despite the close watch which Sir Roger L'Estrange - Middlesex JP, Surveyor of the Press, and Arch-Villain of London Dissenters - was supposed to be keeping on publications on all subjects, such pamphlets had a wide circulation and though written, and probably printed and published in London, could be seized in the 'fanatic coffee houses' of Newcastle.⁽²⁾

The harassment of individual Nonconformist pastors who chose not to emigrate seemed like a concerted policy to those capable of collating the news from different parts of the country.⁽³⁾ The year had begun with the death in Newgate, after repeated prosecutions, of William Jenkins, one of the acknowledged founding fathers of Nonconformity.⁽⁴⁾ In Devon John Hoppin was imprisoned for refusing the Oxford Oath.⁽⁵⁾ On 5 April, Fownes, pastor of Broadmead one of the last Nonconformist congregations in Bristol still in operation, was imprisoned at Gloucester.⁽⁶⁾ John Maidwell, Presbyterian pastor at Kettering, was imprisoned at Leicester.⁽⁷⁾ John Panton received

(1) Morrice P, 460.

(2) CSPD 1685, 158, 385.

(3) Morrice P, 459.

(4) DWL MS.38.35, Quick MSS I, pt. ii, 897; Luttrell I, 325, 326.

(5) CR, 277. See G. Trosse, op cit, 95.

(6) Lyon Turner MS.89.13, XI 2.

(7) CR, 332.

a fine at Lewes Quarter Sessions, and Henry Parsons was imprisoned at the Bideford Sessions, both men were mainstays of Nonconformity in their respective counties.⁽¹⁾ At Bury St. Edmunds Presbyterians bemoaned the continued imprisonment of their pastor, John Salkeld, still held for refusing to pay a £100 fine in 1683 and not released until the General Pardon of 1686.⁽²⁾ *One* of the few remaining ejected ministers at Exeter *was* imprisoned for six months at the Spring Sessions, Thomas Wait *was* *tried and possibly* imprisoned at the York Assizes on 5 July and Lawrence Wise imprisoned at the April Assizes in London.⁽³⁾ All of these men were numbered among the ageing ejected ministry of 1662 who had subsequently kept the larger sects together: a body of men already weakened by deaths and past waves of persecution and whose continued losses, in the absence of replacements, threatened the very existence of Nonconformity in many parts of England.

The Popish Peril scare was heightened by the gradual disappearance of the remaining ministry, and did not lose any of its realism to those who knew their persecutors to be the Anglican Bishop and parson, and the Tory magistrate and MP. Baxter and Calamy gave it credence, though they *may have* managed to exculpate in their minds the actual instigators of persecution, the Church Party; the aim of 'Popery' was more far-reaching - persecution was only a means.⁽⁴⁾ The queue of Bristol Dissenters who filed through the Quarter Sessions in May to receive their fines for conventicles all believed that the

(1) CR, 381, 382.

(2) CR, 424.

(3) CR, 431, 505. ; Middx. CR, IV, 301.

(4) Calamy, Abridgement, 366.

Sheriff was acting on Court directives.⁽¹⁾ When they realised that the 23 and 35 of Elizabeth were about to be applied drastically to deal with non-attenders, the severity of the penalties imposed by these acts on persistent absentees (banishment and the capital penalty) seemed to point to the instrument through which extirpation might finally be effected. The belief that Popery would 'come in' after such an extirpation led many to 'give way' to the Church so 'as occasionally to conform as far as to frequent divine service in parish churches', a practice 'condoned' by the remaining Congregationalist pastor, John Weekes, who still had his freedom. George Townes and Andrew Gifford, the two Baptist pastors still at large, however, believed that, if extirpation was portended, partial conformity was not the answer and 'set their face against it as a lapse'.⁽²⁾

Anglican priests and Tory magistrates and informers made themselves as prominent as possible in the campaign to break up conventicles in London in the first three months of 1685, but Dissenters frequently put the renewed vigour of the magistracy down to 'Popish influences at Court'.⁽³⁾ There can be no doubt, however, that in most instances - including the dispersal of the Presbyterian congregation in Bishopsgate, the Sabbatarian Baptist congregation at Currier's Hall - and perhaps all instances, the initiative came from magistrates spurred on as usual by Anglican informers, and that the large number of conventiclors convicted at the April assizes represented a triumph for the Established Church, not 'Popery'.⁽⁴⁾ On the eve of the Chester assizes, at which he was due to appear, there were overtones

(1) Lyon Turner MS.89.13, IX 78; XI 2.

(2) Lyon Turner MS.89.13, X 45, 47; XI 1.

(3) Morrice P, 452-3, 460.

(4) Morrice P, 460; Wilson I, 398; II, 584-5.

in Thomas Jolly's remarks in his Note Book of a millennial dawning, preceded by a confrontation between the Faithful and the Scarlet Woman.⁽¹⁾ But whilst it is true to say that at this stage the Catholic monarch did nothing to stem the force of persecution, he did not, despite the belief of rank and file Dissenters, organise, inspire, or in any way assist it. When asked by his Quaker courtiers why he did nothing to dampen the persecuting ardour of the Established Church James replied that he had planned 'a general Coronation Pardon', but deferred it to prevent certain 'obnoxious Whigs' from sitting in the Parliament.⁽²⁾ But when a Parliament devoid of 'obnoxious Whigs' met, James again reaffirmed the Anglican Alliance - thus giving the Tory Commons the confidence to press for a more concerted persecution of Protestant and Catholic dissenters - and was doubtless the source of a rumour doing the rounds in high circles that soon he would require 'the taking away of ^{the} sanguinary laws and the allowance of the practice of the Roman [Catholic] religion in private', which made Protestant Dissenters suspect the worst.⁽³⁾ Among the Quakers a rather sardonic proverb began to circulate that if 'liberty of conscience was in the press' it was taking a long time to come out.⁽⁴⁾

Parliament's resolution of 27 May to ask the King to implement the penal laws against dissenters from the Church of England and the reported discomfiture at Court which resulted, should have exposed the identity of the persecutors to those Dissenters still in

(1) Jolly, 68. See also Owen Stockton's observations on the source of persecuton. DWL MS.24.7 (Stockton's Diary), 73-74.

(2) Whitehead, 570-587.

(3) Reresby, 362, 363-4. See pp. 361, 366. For the text of the King's speech see Gazette No. 2036 (21-25 May).

(4) *Braithwaite*, 120.

doubt.⁽¹⁾ But in the wave of persecution that followed - the Tory magistrate taking his cue from his parliamentary representative - it was rumoured that 'the Hierarchists' had made a bargain with the Court on the basis of immunity for Catholics and intensified persecution for Nonconformists.⁽²⁾ In this supercharged atmosphere there took place the three spectacular trials of the year - Oates, Dangerfield and Richard Baxter.⁽³⁾ Even those who had little sympathy with the two former, felt that their treatment was excessively severe,⁽⁴⁾ whilst the Richard Baxter affair could not but be seen as the ultimate extension of the policy of victimisation aimed at the Nonconformist ministry which was forcing many to go into hiding or emigrate.⁽⁵⁾ If the prosecution, trial and imprisonment of the ailing seventy-year old Presbyterian patriarch was part of such a policy of victimisation, there is also evidence that makes it look like the extension of a personal vendetta on the part of Sir Roger L'Estrange. By May 1685 L'Estrange was regarded as a leader in the campaign against Dissenters and Trimmers⁽⁶⁾ and, like Jeffreys,⁽⁷⁾ was motivated by a life-long enmity to Nonconformists.

For two decades prior to the 1685 trial L'Estrange had used his position as Surveyor of the Imprimery, and the free rights of publication which went with this position,⁽⁸⁾ to muzzle and attack

(1) F. C. Turner, *James II* (1948), 272; Reresby, 368-9. See CJ IX, 721. This resolution was withdrawn when it was realised that it would give offence at Court. D. Ogg, *England in the reigns of James II and William III* (1955), 144.

(2) Sewel II, 453-4; Neal V, 4-6.

(3) CSPD 1685, 8, 156-7; ST, IV, 1-105; S. Schofield, *Jeffreys of The Bloody Assizes* (1937), 141-9, 152-3.

(4) Evelyn IV, 445; Neal V, 3; BM Add MS.34508, f. 19.

(5) Morrice P, 461.

(6) Evelyn IV, 439.

(7) S. Schofield, *op cit*, 56.

(8) DNB XI, 1000-1002.

Baxter and the Presbyterian comprehension party which he represented.⁽¹⁾ And since his appointment to the Middlesex Commission of the Peace in 1680 he had sought to use his powers in this capacity against the same interest. In October 1682 Baxter was fined £190 and only escaped a term in Newgate when the King accepted his physician's assurance that his health was not up to it.⁽²⁾ L'Estrange's first attack on Baxter had been in 1661 in the form of a pamphlet. From his appointment as Surveyor of the Imprimery in 1663 to the suspension of the Press Act in May 1679 Baxter found it impossible to get any pamphlet on the Church-Dissent question past him. From 1679 onwards L'Estrange's attacks on Baxter through the medium of pamphlets and The Observator had been unrelenting. With days of Baxter's publication of his Paraphrase of the New Testament, in February 1685, L'Estrange had fastened on it and, in an elaborate diatribe in The Observator, had condemned it as 'seditious'.⁽³⁾ Aware of L'Estrange's potential as a trouble-maker in what he believed to be the changed conditions of the new reign, Baxter immediately decided to avoid any confrontation with the law by bending over backwards to conciliate his persecutor. On 19 February 1685 he wrote a friendly letter to L'Estrange asking for an opportunity to talk over with him his objections to The Paraphrase.⁽⁴⁾ No reply to this letter is extant and a warrant for Baxter's arrest was issued on 28 February.⁽⁵⁾ John Tillotson believed, however, that after Baxter had been committed to prison

(1) See above pp. 25-26, 99.

(2) Morrice P, 339-40.

(3) Powicke, 137-8, 140-142.

(4) Ibid, 142-3.

(5) A. R. Ladell, *Richard Baxter Puritan and Mystic* (1925), 110.

by L'Estrange an interview took place at the home of Jeffreys;⁽¹⁾ this may have resulted from Baxter's letter. At all events Baxter was then allowed a period in the country before his first appearance at Westminster Hall on 6 May.⁽²⁾ On 6 May, the first day of the Term, an information was drawn up against Baxter in which his Paraphrase of the New Testament was termed 'a scandalous and seditious book against the government'. On 14 May, Baxter pleaded 'Not Guilty' to this information. Between then and the trial on 30 May he twice asked for more time, 'being much indisposed', but Jeffreys refused.⁽³⁾

Despite the immense distance in type between Oates and Dangerfield and the Presbyterian patriarch, Jeffreys' style at each trial was uniform.

'If Baxter did but stand on the other side of the pillory with [Oates], I would say two of the greatest rogues and rascals of the Kingdom stood there'.⁽⁴⁾

The other Nonconformists tried on the same day as Baxter - Sir Walter ^{Young,} Duke and Peinall - and Thomas Rosewell, tried at the end of the previous term, were dealt with after the same

(1) Powicke, 143.

(2) Ibid, 143, 144.

(3) Katherine Bromfield to Sir Edward Harley, 16 May 1685, HMC 14th Report, App. pt. II: Portland MSS III (1894), 384; Morrice P, 461; Calamy, Abridgement, 368.

(4) Ibid; Morrice P, 461, 464. Jeffreys' biographer was under the impression that all accounts of Baxter's trial were in Nonconformist sources and were, therefore, 'very partisan and probably inexact'. S. Schofield, op cit, 155. In fact, John Tillotson's account of the trial is substantially the same as those of Calamy and Morrice. J. Tillotson to M.Sylvester, 2 February 1692, Baxter MSS (Letters) II, 76, 77.

fashion.⁽¹⁾ No counsel for the Crown was appointed: Jeffreys was counsel as well as judge.⁽²⁾ On the day of the trial, the exact nature of the charge brought by L'Estrange became clearer: despite his earlier talk of 'sedition', it was the Church, not the Court, whose cause he was protecting. Certain passages in the Paraphrase were said to have 'reflected on the prelates of the Church of England', making Baxter guilty of sedition.⁽³⁾ Baxter's counsel asserted that those who had drawn up the information were the ones guilty of sedition since they had applied Baxter's remarks to the Anglican prelates; in fact the 'sharp reflections' had been intended to apply to the Church of Rome. When Jeffreys had overcome his desire to keep that court pure of Baxter's 'Kidderminster stuff' and allowed him to speak, Baxter confirmed the line taken by his counsel. After a great deal of confusion in the Court, inflamed by Jeffreys' own rages - 'I know thou hast a mighty party... but by the grace of God I will crush you all' - a verdict of Guilty was found. On 29 June sentence was passed: Baxter was fined 500 marks; was to lie in prison until he had paid it; and was to be 'bound to his good behaviour for seven years'.⁽⁴⁾ The inflated language used by Jeffreys in the trial suggests that he had expected a more severe penalty. There is, in fact, evidence that he had sought to

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- (1) Morrice P, 464. Rosewell had been arrested for preaching a treasonable sermon to his congregation in Bermondsey the preceding September. The evidence against him was amassed by the notorious informer, 'Captain' Hilton. He was tried on 18 November 1684, found Guilty, received the death sentence but was pardoned by Charles II on the intervention of Sir John Talbot. Jeffreys subjected him to insult when he pleaded the King's pardon on 9 February 1685. Young, Duke and Peinall were being tried for sedition. Luttrell I, 327-8, 342; CSPD 1685, 8; J. Waddington, *Surrey Congregational History* (1866), 76-81, 147-9; S. Schofield, *op cit*, 128. See HMC 14th Report, *op cit*, 387.
- (2) Powicke, 145. Baxter's notes are in Baxter MSS (Treatises) I, ff 2a-13b; VII, 215a-219a.
- (3) Calamy, *Abridgement*, 369; A. R. Ladell, *op cit*, 111-113.
- (4) Calamy, *Abridgement*, 369-372; Morrice P, 464-5; Luttrell I, 350.

get Baxter whipped like Dangerfield (sentenced the same day) but had been overruled by his colleagues.⁽¹⁾ This 'comparative leniency' demands explanation. It would appear that Baxter's sentence was a compromise reached after a tug of war between rival interests, Jeffreys and others (amongst them probably L'Estrange) urging the utmost severity, and another group including Henry Compton, Bishop of London, and the Roman Catholic Earl of Powis, favouring moderation, with the King looking on. The evidence for this resides in six letters which appear in Baxter's correspondence, only one in Baxter's handwriting but all bearing his signature. These letters would appear to have been written - at the urging of friends who feared the worst⁽²⁾ - between the trial on 30 May and the sentence on 29 June. The first took the form of a petition to the King in which he argued that his defence (placed in Jeffreys' hands before the trial) had not been considered, and that in any event, juries were not competent to decide on matters of biblical exegesis. The petition concluded with a request that the 'matters accused' be referred to his 'Diocesan the Lord Bishop of London or any other of the Lord Bishops'.⁽³⁾ It seems clear that nothing came of this petition, since a second petition to the King appears, summarising the arguments of the first, which included in its salutation the information that it was to be presented to the King by the Bishop of London on Baxter's behalf.⁽⁴⁾ This second petition

(1) Powicke, 146.

(2) A. R. Ladell, *op cit*, 115-6.

(3) Baxter MSS (Treatises) VII, f. 1.

(4) Baxter MSS (Treatises) IV, f. 316.

is referred to in a letter written by Baxter to Compton, with which the petition was doubtless included, asking him to present it. It is interesting that Baxter, in arguing that his diocesan was the only person competent to adjudicate, gave as his reason the fact that he, Baxter, was after all 'by Episcopal Ordination vowed to the Sacred Ministry'.⁽¹⁾ The two petitions and the letter to the Bishop of London were known to Baxter's biographer, F. J. Powicke, but Powicke would appear to have overlooked two other letters bearing dates in June 1685.⁽²⁾ The first of these was written to an unnamed Anglican Lord or Bishop and took the form of a detailed justification of the stand he had taken in the 'Paraphrase', concluding with a request that the recipient use what influence was in his power to mitigate the sentence shortly to be pronounced.⁽³⁾ The other was addressed to William Herbert, Earl of Powis, and was dated 23 June 1685, by which time Baxter must have been getting desperate. This desperation communicated itself in a spirited denunciation of the Monmouth Rebellion; he 'confuted' the conspiracy and disowned any of his persuasion who had had a part in it.⁽⁴⁾ The last of the six letters was written to Lord Powis on the day before sentence was pronounced and serves to demonstrate that Baxter's purpose in sending the earlier letter had been to provide proof of his loyalty

(1) R. Baxter to Henry Compton, Bishop of London, June 1685, Baxter MSS (Letters) VI, ff 246b - 247a.

(2) Powicke, 146-150. The most recent biographer of Baxter compressed the whole business of the convictions and trial into one brief paragraph and hence does not mention this correspondence. G. F. Nuttall, *Richard Baxter* (1965), 110.

(3) Dated June 1685. Baxter MSS (Letters) I, f. 7.

(4) R. Baxter to W. Herbert, Earl of Powis, 23 June 1685, Baxter MSS (Letters) I, f. 32.

in preparation for enlisting his support, perhaps on the advice of Compton, in an effort to induce the King to mitigate the sentence. No stone was left unturned as an argument for clemency; his great age, his poor health, his proven loyalty, his episcopal ordination.⁽¹⁾ Precisely how pressures were brought to bear on Jeffreys at the last moment is not apparent, but the relative moderation of the sentence bears witness that some restraining influence was exerted. The letters in themselves represent one of the few attempts made by a Nonconformist who was not a Quaker to solicit favour from the King during his reign. But whilst the sentence itself was probably mitigated, Baxter's request - made in five out of the six letters - that the case be tried before his diocesan, was ignored.

If Baxter's pleas for clemency contributed to the moderation of his sentence, it may well be that they also contributed to the moderation with which the sentence was executed. It seems likely that Baxter never entered the King's Bench Prison. When Matthew Henry, a law student at Grays Inn, visited Baxter in November 1685, he reported to his father:

'I found him in pretty comfortable circumstances.. in a private house near the prison, attended on by his own man and maid'. He was 'in good health as one can expect. The token you sent he would by no means be persuaded to accept of, and was almost angry when I prest it. From one outed the same as himself, he did not use to receive'.

Matthew Henry concluded: 'I understand since that his need is not too great'.⁽²⁾ The correspondence which Baxter received from

(1) R. Baxter to Lord Powis, 28 June 1685, Baxter MSS (Letters) VI, ff 246b-247a. This letter was known to Powicke (page 150).

(2) Matthew to Philip Henry, 17 November 1685, Henry MS.6, letter 4, f. 6.

Thomas Beverley - expressing his outrage at Baxter's 'latitudinarian' approach to the imagery of the Apocalypse - during April, May and June 1686 was addressed to 'The Patten Shop over against the Kings Bench Prison, Southwark'.⁽¹⁾ But despite the moderation of both the sentence and its execution, and despite the fact that Baxter's counsel pretended to smell Popery behind the trial,⁽²⁾ there were many Dissenters, for a generation to come, who continued to feel very bitter about the use that the Church of England had made of Judge Jeffreys in condemning Rosewell and Baxter.⁽³⁾

4

Public events from the time of Baxter's trial were very much overshadowed by Monmouth's Rebellion and the backlash of judicial and extra-judicial proceedings that followed it. Hence, for the second half of 1685, it becomes extremely difficult to separate cases of persecution for religious reasons from cases in which Dissenters were being tried for involvement in, or arrested 'on suspicion' during, the Rebellion. Prosecutions in which the charge is very clearly connected with the Rebellion, however, will be discussed in a separate context.

Few Dissenters troubled to make this kind of distinction. Accustomed to interpreting events in the light of their own chiliastic beliefs, they saw it all as part and parcel of the mounting

(1) Thomas Beverley to R. Baxter 12 April, 21 May, 9 June and 19 June, 1686, Baxter MSS (Letters) V, 284; IV, 180; V, 125; V, 89.

(2) Calamy, Abridgement, 369-371.

(3) James Pierce, A Vindication of the Dissenters (2nd edit. 1718), 264.

persecution in which a Catholic Court, allied with the Church, was threatening English Nonconformity with extinction. This increasing persecution was, in its turn, at once an evidence of, and an element in, belief in the international Popish Peril to which, despite over-use and opportunistic exploitation, Nonconformists had by no means become inured.⁽¹⁾ This Peril, a substantially non-rational conception, but formed of an admixture of various lurid episodes in England's post-Reformation history, was a vital part of the psychological outlook of most Nonconformists. Few dissenting sources of that or the subsequent period do not contain the myth in some form. This ingredient of the 'Nonconformist mind' coloured its whole religious and political outlook and is probably far more significant in explaining the behaviour of a rank and file Baptist, or Independent, in the face of James II's post-accession persecution or post-Indulgence enticement than any conception of the niceties of the constitutional issue or clear antipathy to, or understanding of, what the King was trying to do.

Mounting persecution was only one aspect of the phenomenon. Fundamental to all was Nonconformist eschatology and the conventional interpretation put on the types and symbolisms of the Book of Revelation as they were believed to relate to the Papacy. To those with a more empirical turn of mind, the trend of public events in England in the second half of 1685 seemed to add credence to an easily satisfied desire for evidence to reinforce the intrinsic prejudice. The arrival of the Huguenots following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes provided more authentication and ensured a

(1) See recent discussions of this phenomenon in J. P. Kenyon, *The Popish Plot* (1972), 1-31; Jones, 75-97; Miller, 67-90.

uniformly pessimistic diagnosis and prognosis of events in England.⁽¹⁾ The character and activities of the cosmopolitan motley of Roman Catholics, with which - or so the Dissenters believed - the capital had begun to swarm, awakened genuine feelings of insecurity in Nonconformists and provided conclusive evidence of the accuracy of their lowering prognoses. And, at a time when partial conformity was most widespread among the sects, Nonconformists were afforded the spectacle, from the beginning of November, of Anglican clergy fulminating from their pulpits on the subject of the Catholic Menace, and reinforcing the same message by a prodigious output of tracts and pamphlets. All of these elements combined to produce by the end of the year a frenetic wave of anti-Popery feeling on the scale of 1678-9, as yet relatively restrained in outward expression but none the less potent as a catalyst of Nonconformist political behaviour.

The flight of many dissenting ministers, the trial and imprisonment of Baxter, the arrests and savage penalties associated with the Western Rebellion and its aftermath, and the increased persecution in many parts of the country, had all confirmed earlier Nonconformist presentiments. During October 1685 more Nonconformist pastors were imprisoned; in Exeter the last ejected minister was arrested, along with George Trosse and *Robert Gillard*, two dissenting academy-trained men who had sought to assume the leadership of the once-powerful

(1) The Huguenots had been arriving in fairly considerable numbers since the autumn of 1681, but the number of refugees greatly increased following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. F. C. Turner, *James II* (1948), 313, note 1.

Nonconformist interest in the city.⁽¹⁾ In the same month twenty-eight Leicestershire Dissenters were committed to jail for their inability to pay the fines levied upon them for conventicles.⁽²⁾ In London, the Home Counties, Bristol and Exeter record fines were levied and many Dissenters, already 'mulced dry', were imprisoned for failing to pay them. At Ex~~e~~^r twenty-two persons were involved at one arrest, and 157 at another. Around London it was believed that Nonconformist involvement in and sympathy for Monmouth's Rebellion was to be used as an excuse for their final destruction.⁽³⁾ There were reports from some parts of intensified persecution following the prorogation of Parliament on 9 November. In Lincolnshire and East Anglia some dissenting ministers, each followed by a handful of laity, took the final step from partial to complete conformity to avoid the disastrous consequences of further prosecutions. But in the same counties there is some evidence of a contrary trend; that some clergymen in the twilight zone between the Anglicans and the Presbyterians 'renounced the Church as a persecuting establishment' and became 'Presbyterians' or 'Nonconformists'. These included John Spademan and John Ratrick in Lincolnshire, Borrourghs, Scoffin and Quip of Norfolk - 'and a few others'. Evidence of this migration across denominational boundaries is to be found in two sources, but the 'defections' are ascribed to various dates in the last three months of 1685 and in 1686.⁽⁴⁾

(1) CR, 169; Brockett, 46 ; G. Trosse, The Life of the Reverend Mr. George Trosse Late Minister of the Gospel in the City of Exon (1714), 93-94, 95.

(2) Lyon Turner MS.89.27, 40, 41, 59. See Morrice P, 480.

(3) Lyon Turner MS.89.30, 49-50; 89.22, 14; 89.13, X47; Brockett, 46; Morrice P, 487, 494; G. Trosse, op cit, 96.

(4) Walter Wilson MS.I, iii, 222;
Neal V, 11.

At all events it is probable that Nonconformity lost rather than gained by any changes of religious affiliation that took place in this period. As a result of the recent persecution, Dissenters were pessimistic and apprehensive in the extreme at the end of 1685. Howe, at Utrecht, was 'not a little affected with the melancholy tidings of the swift advances they were making in England towards Popery and slavery'. And Burnet, who had his own contacts, anticipated the imminent demise of Nonconformity.⁽¹⁾ In fact, the aftermath of the Monmouth Rebellion 'could scarcely have been more serious' for Nonconformity. 'Strong societies were almost obliterated; their records have vanished because their life was virtually stamped out.'⁽²⁾ This effect was, of course, particularly evident in the West,⁽³⁾ but by no means exclusively so.

The Church Book of one large Baptist congregation in Hertfordshire carried the melancholy reflection in January 1686 that, thanks to repeated arrests, all its 'substantial' members were now in jail.⁽⁴⁾ The burning of Elizabeth Gaunt and the prospect of the imminent triumph of Popery had reminded Baxter of Bloody Mary and he gave to his visitors

'good counsel to prepare for trials, and said the best preparation

(1) Calamy, Howe, 126-8.

(2) Cragg II, 27.

(3) J. Murch, A History of the Presbyterian and Baptist Churches in the West of England (1835), 253, 267; F. B. Wyatt, 'The Congregational Church at Axminster', CHST IV (1909-10), 108.

(4) W. T. Whitley (ed), The Church Books of Ford or Cuddington and Amersham (1912), 225.

for them was the life of faith and a constant course of self-denial ... He thought dying by sickness was much more painful and dreadful than dying a violent death...⁽¹⁾

The same idea was in Matthew Henry's mind when he commented on the King's ban on bonfires on 5 November: 'If we have good fires in the chimney and none in Smithfield we shall do pretty well'.⁽²⁾ In this sort of mood, Dissenters were disposed to accept seriously the rumours that circulated after the prorogation to the effect that a 'proclamation' was about to be issued 'for the strict and severe execution of all laws against dissenting ministers and their followers' whilst the penal laws were to be 'taken off the Papists'. Another variation had it that James had offered 'to sacrifice all the Dissenters in the kingdom' if the Church of England would comply with his political and religious programme.⁽³⁾ Nor can the rumours of attempts to reach such a bargain be entirely discounted; their source was Roger Morrice, a relatively objective analyst of affairs, who had by this time succeeded John Conant as Chaplain to Sir John Maynard, one of the leaders of the Commons opposition to the King.⁽⁴⁾

The scale of the Anglican persecution in the last months of 1685, and speculation as to the mainspring of its volition, do not on their own account for the pessimism of men like Baxter and Matthew Henry. Their interpretation of events in England was deeply coloured by the news brought from France by the Huguenots flooding into London. Dissenters were quick to draw analogies between mounting

(1) Matthew to Philip Henry, 17 November 1685, Henry MS.6, letter 4, f. 6.

(2) Matthew to Philip Henry, 10 November 1685, Henry MS.6, letter 3, f. 3.

(3) Morrice P, 481. See Wilson III, 437.

(4) DWL 38.35, Quick MSS I, pt. 2, 739; CR, 355.

persecution at home and the last brutal phase of Louis XIV's campaign against the Huguenots. When the news arrived in October of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes and the attendant atrocities, a similar crisis in England was felt to be imminent.⁽¹⁾ When Savoy began to vie with France in brutality of persecution it was taken as confirmation that extirpation was being attempted.⁽²⁾ In late November and December, the arrival of a large number of Huguenot refugees, each family with its own tale of woe, substantiating the news of 'unheard of cruelties which came in by every post', heightened to fever pitch the Popish Peril apprehension. Nonconformist diaries and letters during this period catalogued in immense detail the atrocity stories of the refugees, each account being accompanied by the gloomiest forecasts of their own prospects.⁽³⁾ Matthew Henry met

'a French minister newly come over who had but forty-eight hours warning to depart. He hath lands in France but cannot get a farthing out of them. Brought over a wife and two children with him. The way they take is to force them to go to the mass by keeping them long waking, quartering rude soldiers upon them and the like violences, and if they once go to the mass, and after renounce it again, they are reckoned apostates, and tis death by law'.

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- (1) Morrice P, 480, 484, 504. See Luttrell I, 358, 360.
- (2) Evelyn IV, 511. See also pp. 447-8, 484-6; Robert to Sir Edward Harley, 6 February 1686, HMC 14th Report, App. pt. II: Portland MSS III (1894), 393-4. See also Same to Same 24 November 1685, 9 March 1686, and Edward to Sir Edward Harley, 14 June 1687, *ibid*, 390, 395, 398-9.
- (3) Morrice P, 498-502, 506; Matthew to Philip Henry, 10 November 1685, 17 November 1685, 24 November 1685, 8 December 1685, 5 January 1686, 12 January 1686, Henry MS.6, letters 3, 4, 5, 7, 11; Henry MS.5 letter 12; Robert to Sir Edward Harley, 24 November 1685, *op cit*, 390.

It was 127 years, ruminated Henry, since the accession of Elizabeth I, 'the day from which we date the establishment of the Protestant truth in England'. God had striven with the antediluvian world 120 years 'and after these were out, seven years more were cast into the bargain. Call them prophetic days - a day for a year - and you have the exact number'. Time was running out, and the direct intervention of the Almighty to save his persecuted faithful was near. 'God looks upon the troubles of his people... The Protestant interest was never smaller in the world than now it is'.⁽¹⁾

The abuse poured by The Observator on the refugees and the silence of The Gazette on the French atrocities was taken as a more accurate guideline to the true attitude of the Court than the pretended compassion of the public pronouncements.⁽²⁾ But this development, which brought an even greater separation between the Dissenters and the Catholic Court, gave them a common cause with the Churchmen. Dissenters were deeply satisfied by the pulpit outbursts of the London Whig clergy and the refugee relief work undertaken by men like William Lloyd, Bishop of St. Asaph.⁽³⁾ And to this community of feeling was superadded the common recourse of both Nonconformists and Churchmen to Protestant eschatology in order to buttress their warnings of the Popish Peril. The whole portentous

- (1) Matthew to Philip Henry, 17 November 1685, Henry MS.6, letter 4, ff 7-8. c.f. Evelyn IV, 511; C. Hill, *Antichrist in Seventeenth Century England* (1971), 160-1, 162-3, 164.
- (2) Matthew to Philip Henry, 24 November 1685, Henry MS.6, letter 5, f 10; Evelyn IV, 486. James II's attitude to the French atrocities has been the subject of long-standing controversy. M. V. Hay has argued that James did not express approval of Louis XIV's methods even to Barillon but merely applauded the conversions, accepting the ambassador's assurances (until December 1685) that the stories current in England were untrue. M. V. Hay, *The Enigma of James II* (1938), 171-2, 172-3, 177, 181-2, 184-5.
- (3) Matthew to Philip Henry, 24 November 1685, Henry MS.6, letter 5, ff 9, 10; A.T. Hart, *William Lloyd 1627-1717, Bishop, Politician, Author & Prophet* (1952), 68.

menagerie of the 'prophetic' books of Daniel and the Revelation was invoked and variously interpreted as representing, in symbolism, the activities of contemporary European Catholicism, and more especially of its shock troops, the Jesuits. All of which was to be taken as a dire warning against any communication on the part of the faithful with the common anti-type of the Beast, Fallen Babylon or the Scarlet Woman, which they were to shun and distrust. Kidder, Stillingfleet and Tillotson preached repeatedly from Revelation during this period,⁽¹⁾ as did many other responsible Anglicans like Dr. Henry More, Daniel Burgess, Samuel Hardy and William Allen. In each case a tirade against Catholicism was accompanied by the identifications of the Papacy with one or other of the prophetic symbols and a call to the faithful to prepare for a 'time of troubles'.⁽²⁾ The same sort of message was being preached by Presbyterians like Dr. William Bates, Henry Newcome and Oliver Heywood, by Congregationalists like John Beaumont and Thomas Beverley, and Baptists like Hanserd Knollys and Simeon Cradock, some of whom had never seen a Huguenot.⁽³⁾ Dissenting preachers who had no taste for the complex imagery of the Apocalypse rubbed home the association between Catholicism and combustion and took their sermon illustrations from John Foxe's Acts and Monuments, which had appeared in a new edition in 1684 (the first

(1) Matthew to Philip Henry, 2 February 1686, 15 February 1686, Henry MS.5, letters 16, 17. See Miller, 72, 87-89; Evelyn IV, 535, 563.

(2) Sermons dated October 1685 - June 1686. No titles. Nos. refer to DWL Catalogue of Sermons: W. Allen, 1035.G.4; D. Bull, 2.45.15 (5); D. Burgess, 1060.2.12; H. More, 2043.D.9 and 1030.M.21; S. Hardy, 1057.N.22.

(3) DWL Catalogue of Sermons: W. Bates, 1039.D.39; O. Heywood, 9.62.27 (3); H. Newcome, 1023.1.8; J. Beaumont, 2073.F.6; H. Knollys, 1038.M.21; S. Cradock, 1083.P.24; T. Beverley, 3.44.3L.

since 1641).⁽¹⁾ This revivification of historical memories and the recourse to prophetic imagery, were both symptomatic of a general tendency on the part of Nonconformists to view past, present and future as part of a composite, pre-ordained whole in which mankind was moving toward an apocalyptic end before the coming of which there must, of necessity, be a time of trial in which there would be a confrontation between 'the Elect' and Catholicism. Many Dissenters viewed political events in this light.⁽²⁾

Whilst eschatology was an essential element in the Popish Peril as it affected many Dissenters (and Anglicans), others looked at the threat posed by Catholicism from a much more realistic angle. To them the military victories of Louis XIV, as much as the religious persecution in France and Savoy, served to emphasise the precariousness of the Northern Heresy, and the implications for England of a final triumph of Catholicism in Europe.⁽³⁾ Against a background of these apprehensions, William of Orange's profiered protection of the Huguenots and his military preparations against France were received with wide acclaim by Dissenters and Anglicans.⁽⁴⁾ William of Orange, it appeared, would be the only Champion of the Protestant Cause in the face of 'the universal confederation amongst the Popish Princes for the extirpation of the Northern Heresy' which seemed impending in

- (1) Henry MS. No. 1, 683-7, 699-704, 713-19; J. P. Kenyon, *The Popish Plot* (1972), 3; B. Dale, 'The History of Early Congregationalism in Leeds', CHST II (1905-1906), 319.
- (2) J. Gratton, *Journal of the Life of John Gratton* (1795), 109; Williams I, 72-73; E. A. Payne, 'More about the Sabbatarian Baptists', BQ XIV (1951-2), 163; DWL MS.38.34, Quick MSS I, pt. 1, 282; DWL MS.24.7 (Owen Stockton's Diary), 73, 74; DWL Catalogue of Sermons, S. Lobb, 1034.L.6.
- (3) Morrice P, 460, 488, 490, 498-9, 504, 506, 509; Matthew to Philip Henry, 8 December 1685, 4 May 1686, Henry MS.5, letter 28, MS.6, letter 7.
- (4) Morrice P, 499.

December 1685 following the Emperor's peace with the Turks.⁽¹⁾

Against a background of these fears for the safety of the reformed church in Europe, public events in England in the last three months of 1685 could not but imply to Dissenters that James II was part of the European scheme. The dismissal of Halifax, who was regarded with no great affection by Nonconformists, nevertheless disturbed them, as did the execution of Alderman Cornish who, they alleged, was suffering for his diligence against Roman Catholics whilst Sheriff of London. The execution of Aylofffe and Nelthorp, two Dissenters convicted of complicity in the Rebellion, also seemed ominous, as did the rumours that John Hampden (still in the Tower) when brought to trial, would not avoid the capital penalty.⁽²⁾ The sense of impending crisis was heightened by (false) rumours from the North that Catholics in Lancashire were breaking into the homes of substantial 'Whigs' and doing them bodily harm, and that Catholics had taken over Anglican churches by force and were saying mass in them.⁽³⁾ When Parliament assembled in November and it became clear that the King was already using the dispensing power, and was making positive endeavours to get support for the removal of the Tests,⁽⁴⁾ the old debate of 1672 (with slight variations), on the pros and cons of the dispensing and suspending powers, and their constitutional implications for the liberties of the country and the practical long-term implications for Nonconformists, was revived.⁽⁵⁾ If the

(1) Morrice P, 504.

(2) Luttrell I, 361, 362; Morrice P, 484; Matthew to Philip Henry, 10 November 1685, Henry MS.6, letter 3; Bennet, Memorial, 300, 302-303; Reresby, 393; Robert to Sir Edward Harley, 27 and 31 October 1685, HMC 14th Report, App. pt. II: Portland MSS III (1894), 389. See ST IV, 130-162, 207-209.

(3) Morrice P, 481.

(4) Reresby, 394, 395, 396, 398.

(5) Morrice P, 491.

incapacitating laws' were removed from Roman Catholics, Roger Morrice ruminated, they would not only be free to acquire control of the government, but also the Church. This, he believed, would inescapably lead to intensified persecution, if not ultimate disaster, for the Nonconformist sects. Since Morrice's discussion follows immediately on a long and detailed description of the very latest atrocities in France, it seems likely that these coloured his thinking a great deal.⁽¹⁾ In confirmation of his worst suspicions, a week later he quoted a French source to the effect that all that was necessary to 'complete the King of France's glory' was 'to assist the King of England to extirpate heresy'.⁽²⁾ A Presbyterian preacher in Suffolk was fined £100 and 'committed to the common jail in Bury St. Edmunds, till the fine should be paid', for openly voicing the comparison, which was in most Dissenters' minds, between the events in France and developments at home and speculating on the imminence of Louis XIV's descent on England to facilitate the rapid success of the King's assumed Design.⁽³⁾

The tales of horror from France and the turn of public events, with the increasing persecution, at home, all served to confirm the apprehensions of English Nonconformists. But what confirmed their sense of the gravity of the crisis and made some realise that even the Church itself was in danger, was the beginning of the anti-Papist preaching campaign and the pamphlet war, conducted by the Anglican clergy. A meeting of the Latitudinarian clergy in London on 7 November and an informal meeting of a larger group of London clergy

(1) Morrice P, 488-9. See Calamy, Abridgement, 374.

(2) Morrice P, 490.

(3) Walter Wilson MS. I, v, 121-2.

convened by the Bishop a month later, had been enough to launch the campaign in earnest.⁽¹⁾ From 7 November, as each Sunday went by, Matthew Henry added to his list of Anglican clergy who were preaching against Rome. William Sherlock, Hesketh, Dean of Windsor, Pelling, Edward Fowler, John Tillotson, Thomas Tenison, John Sharp and Edward Stillingfleet were all actively involved by the year's end.⁽²⁾ Their warnings were not infrequently directed at the substantial proportion of partially conforming Dissenters in their congregations - the Latitudinarians already envisaging the necessity of a rapprochement with Nonconformity - and were doubtless not lost upon them. This style of preaching, backed up by the anti-Popish pamphlets of the Latitudinarians, who appeared to entertain a genuine fear that a Roman Catholic conversion campaign could result in inroads into their own congregations, was regarded as a healthy sign by Dissenters. As it became clear that Anglican Non-Resistance did not extend to the King's religion, and even had its limits as far as the King's policies were concerned (as had been illustrated by the opposition of men like Henry Compton in the Lords and Thomas Clarges in the Commons before the prorogation), many Nonconformists began to feel a community of interest with the established church as a whole for the first time. The polarisation of loyalties no longer turned on a political issue - royalism against parliamentarianism, hereditary succession against a Protestant succession, absolute monarchy against limited monarchy - which had cut across the ecclesiastical spectrum between Church and Dissent, and had united the Catholic minority with the Church. The

(1) Morrice P, 491; Carpenter, Compton, 82, 83. See below p.360.

(2) Matthew to Philip Henry, 10 November, 24 November, 1 December, 22 December, 1685, 5 January 1686, Henry MS.6, letters 3, 5, 6, 9, 11.

polarisation of loyalties was now beginning to turn upon a question which was quintessentially of a religious nature, and the cleavage on the ecclesiastical spectrum was beginning to appear as one between Catholicism and reformed Protestantism. The dissenting moderates and the Anglican Latitudinarians had become aware of this first.⁽¹⁾ It took the crisis of April and May 1688 to convince the High Churchmen.

The emergence of this new division was only partly brought about by the King's efforts to assist English Catholics. In addition foreign Catholics were beginning to appear in considerable numbers in London by the end of 1685, and, since their objective was clearly to commence an evangelistic effort, London Anglican clergy began to fear for their congregations. This fear, rather than the desire to draw Dissenters away from the Court (this was an incidental effect), was the initial prompter for the beginning of the anti-Popish campaign.⁽²⁾ In fact, the appearance of considerable numbers of Catholic priests in London did much to awaken insecurities on both sides of the line of conformity. Roman Catholics had long been the most conspicuously deviant element in English society, with principles and practices which rendered them incapable of absorption into the common alloy. Resistant to assimilation, displaying many foreign and cosmopolitan characteristics deriving from education and residence abroad,

(1) Morrice P, 487, 489, 490, 491, 499, 504, 506; Matthew to Philip Henry 10 November, 24 November 1685, Henry MS.6, letter 3, ff. 3-4, letter 5, ff. 9-10; Kitchin, 350, 352, 358-60. See Chapter IV.

(2) Bunyan, 345. See below 379-380; Luttrell I, 337. Nonconformists always exaggerated the extent of Catholic evangelism. Aveling puts it in perspective in asserting that for the period 1662-90 there were *very few* conversions to Catholicism in the area considered in his research (the North Riding), and one of those conformed after the Revolution. Miller, 241; H. Aveling, *Northern Catholics: the Catholic Recusants of the North Riding of Yorkshire 1558-1790* (1966), 335.

'they were conveniently fitted into a conspiracy interpretation to explain current crises, and they were always available as scapegoats on whom attention could be directed and passions assuaged'. (1)

In addition the effect of Whig propaganda during the Exclusion Crisis had been to associate Catholicism with absolutism - an association which received corroboration from the system of Louis XIV - and to present the Jesuits as the 'distillation of bigotry', capable of any degree of infamy under the sanction of a kind of ecclesiastical machiavellianism. (2) But the effects of this propaganda and the apparent nature of Catholicism through the eyes of an English Protestant, were animated and exacerbated by what seemed to be happening at the end of 1685. (3) Rather ironically, it was in January 1686, after James had begun to realise the limitations which the Anglican alliance would impose upon his programme and was probably seriously considering Penn's idea of a general toleration for the first time, that the attack on the Popish Peril reached the level of hysteria in the writings and utterances of Dissenters. The Jesuits, it was believed, represented the vanguard of the Papist attack.

'Jesuits and all sorts of ecclesiastics, like ^{the} swarms of flies, and lice of Egypt, or locusts out of the bottomless pit, cover the land: schools and seminaries are erected at London, and in [the] most considerable towns of the Kingdom... etc'. (4)

Even the dispassionate Roger Morrice was infected with the same taste

(1) Jones, 76. See Miller, 7, 78.

(2) See *ibid.* 78-9; J. P. Kenyon, *The Popish Plot* (1972), 3, 4.

(3) Matthew to Philip Henry, 12 January, 9 March 1686, Henry MS.5, letters 12, 21; BM Add MS.34512, f. 65.

(4) Bennet, *Memorial*, 323-4.

for hyperbole. Roman Catholic priests, he wrote, were preaching that God admonished the King 'to extirpate heresy and to plant in the kingdom the true grace of God'. He credulously reported a story that, in Northumberland, Catholics were dragging Protestants from their graves and feeding them to the dogs.⁽¹⁾ When Usson de Bonrepos arrived from Versailles as Louis XIV's special envoy, Morrice wrote, with accuracy, that he had come 'that all French Protestants fled hither might be ordered to depart out of the kingdom'.⁽²⁾ With less accuracy he then began to speculate as to whether this might provide an occasion for the restoration of Catholicism in England by French arms. Morrice, like many Dissenters, understood that English Catholics represented a small fraction of the population. He also knew, however, that this fact need not be significant if a foreign army came to the King's assistance or if Roman Catholics were placed in important civil and military positions and allowed to exploit the power so gained. Unlike many Anglicans, however, he never seriously entertained the idea of mass conversions to Rome.⁽³⁾ But Morrice's relatively moderate and reasonable diagnosis of the nature of the Catholic menace sets him apart from most other Nonconformists. Typically, the Dissenters' conception of it had little by way of a rational basis, but was a visceral emotion or collection of prejudices stemming only partly from events but more importantly from basic insecurities and a highly coloured version of both history and theology, taken neat. It was not a sanguine prospect for the success

(1) Morrice P, 508-9.

(2) See Instructions to Bonrepos, Recueil des Instructions aux Ambassadeurs de la France: Angleterre 1660-1690 (Paris 1929) II, 326 et seq; HMC Downshire MSS I, i, 100.

(3) Morrice P, 489, 509.

of a policy of enticement which, thanks to the Quaker courtiers, was now beginning to take form in the King's brain, that a coincidence of developments toward the end of 1685 had brought to the boil the old Popish Peril apprehension among Dissenters with a sufficient degree of realism as to make even the persecuting established Church palatable by comparison with Popery. Hence it appeared that Dissenters would have to disabuse their minds of a great deal of deep-rooted prejudice before they would agree to render support for any programme that the King might have in mind. (1)

Although it was in January 1686 that Morrice first received information (which he did not believe) that the King had given orders 'to stop all further execution of warrants for the levying of fines upon Protestant Dissenters', (2) persecution was by no means at an end. The rout that had followed Monmouth's Rebellion showed no signs of diminishing in January and February 1686. Those who frequented separate meetings in London and the home counties were particularly hard hit. (3) Any meetings which became known to the authorities were disturbed, and Dissenters found it difficult to conceal their meetings from the prying eyes of the ubiquitous informers. Some record fines were levied.

'Informers broke in upon Mr. Fleetwood, Sir John Hartop, and ~~some~~ others at Stoke-Newington, to levy distresses for conventicles

- (1) Tyrconnel's activities in Ireland (despite the fact that he was still nominally subordinate to Clarendon) were soon to be looked upon by Nonconformists as a foretaste of things to come in England, and hence to provide another element in the Popish Peril. Bennet, Memorial, 309-323; Williams I, x-xi.
- (2) Morrice P, 509.
- (3) Matthew to Philip Henry, 2 February 1686, Henry MS.5, letter 16.

to six or seven thousand pounds'.⁽¹⁾

Similar intrusions took place elsewhere, including Enfield, Hackney and 'all the neighbouring villages near London'.⁽²⁾ Non-conformists were still forced to use extreme caution in meeting; they took care to assemble in small groups; services were held either very late or very early; look-outs were always on the watch and the minister in disguise, with some pre-planned route of escape; many meeting houses had been enforcedly abandoned but even where this was not the case, many dissenting groups believed it expedient to change their place of rendezvous with each meeting.⁽³⁾

These tactics of avoidance had been practised ever since persecution had taken place, and some dissenting ministers considered themselves past masters at the game.⁽⁴⁾ In fact the success of some Nonconformist groups in the art of eluding persecution can be considered as another variable factor - together with denominational

- (1) From the number of primary and secondary sources in which this figure is mentioned it may be assumed that it was not an exaggeration. Calamy, Abridgement, 372-3; Palmer I, 67. Morrice P, 530; Bunyan, 337; T. Timpson, Church History of Kent (1859), 268-9. See T. G. Crippen, 'Sir John Hartop', CHST VII (1916-18), 262-3. Sir John Hartop's father had been an MP for Leicester 1661-78. Lyon Turner MS.89.27, f. 20.
- (2) Ivimey I, 461; Neal V, 12.
- (3) Lyon Turner MS.89.13, X43-44. See B. Nightingale, Lancashire Nonconformity (1892), Vol. on Bolton and Bury, 52; Vol. on Preston, 85; Cragg II, 158-9, 162-3.
- (4) Walter Wilson MS. I, i, 304. See Bunyan, 336-7, 337-9; E. Terrill (ed), The Records of the Church of Christ meeting in Broadmead, Bristol, 1640-87, Hanserd Knollys Soc. (1847), 458, 459, 460-1, 463, 466, 470-1, 477, 478-9.

logistics, the extent of the persecuting zeal of the local magistrate, priest and bishop and the social weighting of the dissenting congregation - in accounting for the absence of a uniform intensity of persecution in all parts of the country at a given time. Despite increased persecution in some localities in the course of 1684-5, even during this period persecution was not uniform. Hence, although Non-conformist seminaries were looked upon with extreme disfavour by 'the government' and Charles Morton's establishment in London had been broken up, ⁽¹⁾ Richard Frankland managed to operate his academy throughout the period, though he found it expedient to change its location four times between 1683 and 1686. ⁽²⁾

In Yarmouth, the records of the Congregational church show that throughout 1685-6, despite occasional prosecutions, the work of the church went on as usual; new members were admitted, infants were baptised, and back-sliders 'dismissed'. ⁽³⁾ The Church Book of a Baptist congregation at Warboys in Huntingdonshire records that 'great trouble abound[s] ... for the truth's sake' in 1685 but carries details of a considerable number of conversions and baptisms. ⁽⁴⁾ William Tong, fresh from Frankland's academy, began preaching in 1685 and was not arrested for almost a

(1) Wilson I, 157-8.

(2) All locations were in Lancashire or the West Riding: Natland, Calten in Craven, Dawsonfold, Harborough, and Attercliffe (Sheffield). CR, 212; Wilson II, 136; R. Halley, Lancashire, its Puritanism and Nonconformity (1872) II, 261.

(3) Harmer MS.76.2, 144-5.

(4) E. B. Underhill (ed), Records of the Churches of Christ.. at Fenstanton, Warboys and Hexham 1644-1720, Hanserd Knollys Soc. (1854), 280-1.

year.⁽¹⁾

Had the Anglican agencies of persecution foreseen that a confrontation between Church and Court might come and, since it would place the church in a vulnerable position politically, it would necessitate Nonconformist support, the early months of 1686 would have been the time to have used their almost exclusive control of the machinery of persecution to ensure dissenting friendship. A community of feeling was beginning to be engendered by the Church's anti-Papist campaign by the end of 1685 and, in some Nonconformist circles, this increased as the King began his 'remarkable invasion of the rights of the Church of England' by re-issuing Charles II's directions to preachers in March 1686.⁽²⁾ But, whilst Dissenters who had received harsh treatment at the hands of JP's could now appeal to 'those above' and find themselves 'more favoured than usual',⁽³⁾ Churchmen showed no signs of relenting towards them. Just before Easter 1686 special injunctions were sent out by the Bishops to all clergy in the dioceses of London and Lincoln, requiring churchwardens to keep a special check on those not present for divine service and Sacrament (especially those who 'received not the Sacrament at Easter') and to present a list of such persons to the magistrates who would, in turn, ensure their attendance at the Assizes. These injunctions were to be read publicly by the clergy.⁽⁴⁾ It is symptomatic of the curious attitude held by some Nonconformists,

(1) T.G. Crippen, 'Early Nonconformist Academies', CHST IV (1909-1910), 44; Wilson II, 23.

(2) CSPD 1686-7, 56-58; Reresby, 416-417; Bennet, Memorial, 324.

(3) Calamy, Abridgement, 373.

(4) Ibid, 374; Ivimey I, 461; Neal V, 12.

especially the 'Dons', toward the Church in this period that Baxter could quote with resignation the 'prevailing opinion that the Protestant Dissenters must be persecuted, or Popery could not be suppressed'. The juries at the Assizes 'in some places', where those indicted under the Bishops' injunction appeared, 'presented it as their opinion that unless the Dissenters were effectually persecuted, their dangers could not be remedied'.⁽¹⁾ In other words, it appeared that the Church of England establishment, apprehensive of the Popish Peril, had decided that the only way to safeguard the Dissenters against it (and themselves into the bargain), was to persecute them in common with the Papists. The two great inflexibles - the King's desideratum and Anglican uniformity - were in collision. The King's temperament would not brook any accommodation that represented a compromise of his objectives, and a redistribution of forces, to bring about a settlement satisfactory to those objectives, was about to be attempted. The King's oft-vaunted views on toleration would provide any rationalisation that his change of alliances required. But, the views of the Latitudinarians notwithstanding, the Tory Anglicans who controlled the apparatus of persecution at this stage saw no reason to make a distinction between repealing the Test and penal laws, as the King desired, and applying the penal laws with less rigour on the Dissenters, to propitiate them as potential political allies.

5

If the Church-Court Party had ever needed to justify to themselves the persecution of Dissenters as a policy they would

(1) Calamy, Abridgement, 374. Calamy's italics.

probably have done so in terms of the impact that unrestrained Dissent might have on the State and ecclesiastical polity.⁽¹⁾

Speaking to the French ambassador at the beginning of the reign, James II had contrasted the Anglicans, 'le parti royal', with the Dissenters, 'de vrais républicains'.⁽²⁾ It is logical, therefore, having discussed the incidence and effects of persecution on Non-conformity between James II's accession and the beginning of the volte-face early in 1686, that some endeavour should be made to measure, for the same period, the extent of the Nonconformist political involvement which persecution was intended to curtail.

At Baxter's trial on 30 May 1685, Jeffreys ejaculated:

'I know thou hast a mighty party, and I see a great many of the brotherhood in corners, waiting to see what will become of their mighty donne... but by the grace of God I will crush you all'.⁽³⁾

No phrase could have been less apt as a description of the Dissenters in general at this time, or the Presbyterians in particular, than 'a mighty party'. It was, of course, a perpetuation of the old equation of religious with political dissent; the thousands who were assumed to meet every Sunday in conventicles did so in defiance of the Government, and hence could be regarded as a huge political movement committed to its overthrow. But to assume that the Independents of 1685, for example, were motivated by the same spirit as, and shared the same outlook and political aims as, the Independents of the Civil Wars and Interregnum, was to be guilty of a gross distortion.

(1) See Cragg II, 12, 13, 34, 35.

(2) Barillon to Louis, 26 February, C. J. Fox, Early Part of the Reign of James II (1808), app. xxxii. See also Barillon 10 February 1687, Baschet, 168.

(3) Calamy, Abridgement, 371.

Any of that spirit or any of those aims that did live on did so, but latently, in the breasts of the laity of the dissenting 'left', the unenfranchised masses.

By the accession of James II the operation of the Clarendon Code had tended to reduce, if not destroy, the effectiveness of Nonconformity as a political force. The decline of the ministries and the social and economic decline of the laity both reduced the number of Dissenters who appeared on borough and county franchises. At the same time the former development left the mass of the unenfranchised dissenting laity without customary restraints on their political behaviour. This absence of restraint, coupled with escalating persecution in areas where the denominational ratio favoured Dissenters, had produced, before the accession of James, some rumblings of civil disobedience. In districts where the ratio was not so favourable toward Nonconformity, the devolution of congregations had contributed to the onset of quietism, a development that was fairly general among the declining ranks of the ministry. ⁽¹⁾ *Some time* before the accession, one General Baptist preacher - perhaps typical of many country pastors - with a record of military service for Parliament in the Civil Wars, said:

'I look upon it as my duty to behave myself under the King's government both as it becomes a man and a Christian...**[But]** the law hath provided two ways of obeying; the one to do that which I in my conscience do believe I am bound to do actively; and where I cannot obey actively, there I am willing to lie down and suffer what they shall do to me'. ⁽²⁾

(1) See above pp. 91-93.

(2) Cited Ivimey I, 304.

The Presbyterian ministry, however, had eschewed political involvement long before the onset of quietism. In their farewell sermons before ejection in 1662 there were few examples of political comment or even explanation as to why they could not comply. Nor in the sermons that are extant for the period between ejection and the 1688 Revolution are there any but the most abstruse examples of political exhortation.⁽¹⁾ It is, in fact, difficult to 'point to a single ejected minister who signalised himself as a political partisan', this they left to the 'wild sectaries and fanatics' who continued to be involved in political machinations and plots.⁽²⁾ The stack of sermon notes for 1685-7 left by Philip Henry can be searched in vain for the slightest hint of political exhortation.⁽³⁾ Daniel Williams, speaking on the responsibilities of the ministry, stated what may have been a generally accepted position on this subject:

'All our administrations must be managed by those laws which respect our office, otherwise we affront the Lord Jesus...

We ought not to make state affairs, human conceits or dictates of men, the matter of our preaching'.⁽⁴⁾

Those Dissenters who had attended church and taken the Sacrament with the sole aim of retaining their positions in the municipalities between 1681-5, and those like Richard Hampden, Hugh Boscowan and

(1) M'Crie, 237-8; H. H. Oakley, *Beginnings of Congregationalism in Sheffield* (1913), 41-42. This view is borne out by my own study of sermons extant for 1685-88 in DWL.

(2) M'Crie, 241-2. The one striking exception was Robert Ferguson. See below pp. 189, 197.

(3) Henry MS.I, 683-781.

(4) Williams I, 30-31. Williams admitted elsewhere, however, that he was not above 'hints' that might be subject to various inferences'. I, 57.

Sir John Maynard who sought election to the 1685 Parliament, were a race apart from the Presbyterian 'Dons'. The whole ethos among enfranchised Dissenters - reinforced by prevailing quietism - was against the idea of their being a political force; in 1685 the Dissenters were not a broken party in the face of the powerful Anglican-Court Alliance, they were in no sense a party. In March 1685 all ranks of Dissenters had quite enough to do to contend with the prevailing persecution; electioneering could be left to those few who still had enough of the Exclusionist fervour left in them that had not been drummed out by persecution.

The effects of persecution evident at the beginning of 1685 were to be compounded during the next twelve months. The destruction of many dissenting congregations, the emigration and migration of clergy, the increasing number of Nonconformists in prison: all were to contribute to the destruction of Dissent as a political force. But even if the Dissenters had decided to organise themselves effectively in support of opposition candidates in the Election of March 1685, the odds would have been heavily stacked against their success. Between the Oxford Parliament and his death, Charles II had issued fifty-one borough charters. Many more were being processed when James II succeeded so that, with elections imminent, forty-seven had to be rushed out in under three months (a further twenty-one followed in 1685-6).⁽¹⁾ Ever since the accession, Sunderland had been proving himself an aggressive

(1) House of Lords MSS, Abstract of the Charters Granted Between 1680-1688, HMC 12th Report, app. pt. VI, 298-9. See Luttrell I, 324-5, 332, 336 ; R. H. George, 'Parliamentary Elections and Electioneering in 1685', TRHS Series IV, XIX (1936), 167-195; Jones, 46, 47.

campaigner and a highly skilled electoral tactician on behalf of the Court, and other government ministers had been making what interest they could in their separate localities.⁽¹⁾ The Church also had been actively engaging in the Court's interest.⁽²⁾ With their political effectiveness reduced by persecution - many Nonconformist voters were doubtless in prison, others abroad, still more afraid of making themselves conspicuous by flouting the Corporation and Five Mile Acts at this time being vigorously enforced by local magistrates,⁽³⁾ - there was little that Dissenters could have done in the face of such a phalanx. They did not have the personnel to provide an effective parliamentary opposition, nor could they rally in support of Whig opposition elements since so many of the opposition leaders of the past were dead or in exile, and certainly discredited, and no new ones had emerged.⁽⁴⁾

A great deal of what has been described as 'dissenting political activity' in the 1685 Election can be traced to the electioneering tactics of a few Whigs like the Earl of Bedford. The Earl's influence in Bedfordshire itself was such that, in the view of Jeffreys, 'he would choose whom he pleased'. This situation necessitated a lightning trip to Bedford by Jeffreys to force the Mayor to bring the election forward to the following day.⁽⁵⁾ The Earl's influence was also in evidence at Tavistock.⁽⁶⁾ In Buckinghamshire, Presbyterian

(1) CSPD 1685, 21 et seq; J. P. Kenyon, Robert Spencer, Earl of Sunderland (1958), 114-5; Warwick CR VIII, xiv-xv.

(2) Tanner MS.XXXI, f. 4; Carpenter, Compton, 79-80.

(3) Lacey, 164.

(4) Dalrymple II, pt. 1, bk. 3, 57; Lacey, 164. See Morrice P, 371-2, 377-8, 382-7, 388, 389, 392, 393, 394, 396, 400-401.

(5) Morrice P, 457; Lacey, 165. See Luttrell I, 341.

(6) Lacey, 165.

Richard Hampden, who had been in all of Charles II's Parliaments, was elected for Wendover. Whilst many of the 'dissenting' candidates can be described as more Whig than Dissenter, Hampden's pedigree as a Dissenter is not open to doubt.⁽¹⁾ Also in Buckinghamshire, Thomas Wharton was elected one of the MPs for the county, despite the efforts of Jeffreys to prevent it. Success was achieved only at great financial cost, however: 'Wharton disbursed as much as fifteen hundred pounds in one day'.⁽²⁾ There were, in fact, a number of instances in which a feared preponderance of opposition or Nonconformist votes was dealt with by a premature adjournment of the poll, altering the place of the election without notice 'to weary the free-holders' or simply 'refusing... to take the votes of excommunicate persons and other Dissenters'.⁽³⁾

There was some dissenting electioneering in the South West. Soon after James's accession Thomas Penn, Mayor of Bridgwater, wrote in a letter to Sunderland:

'There coming some intimations of a Parliament, there did, on Thursday morning early, come into our town one Duvall, judged a base, contriving Fanatic and servant to Sir Frances Rolles, who made it his business to run up and down to the grand Fanatics at their houses; so I believe they intend to put up members [of] the populacy in opposition to us'.⁽⁴⁾

- (1) Lacey, 165. See pp. 402-403.
- (2) S.Schofield, *Jeffreys of The Bloody Assizes* (1937), 139-140; CSPD 1685, 122-3; A. Browning, *Thomas Osborne Earl of Danby Duke of Leeds 1632-1712* (1951) I, 367-9.
- (3) Luttrell I, 341; HMC 14th Report, Onslow MSS (1895), app. IX, 484.
- (4) CSPD 1685, 60. This letter is undated but, from the information it contains, was clearly written within a week of the accession. From his account of public reaction to the accession in the same letter and from the significance he attached to a relatively trivial letter written from London by 'RB' to 'one Hoare, merchant, a designing, Grindallising Presbyter' it is possible to deduce that Thomas Penn was already anticipating Bridgwater's enthusiastic support for Monmouth. See CSPD 1685, 33-34, 37.

By the end of the month Penn wrote to Sunderland that notwithstanding his efforts on behalf of Tory candidates 'the damnable crew' who were 'making ^{great} preparations for a party in Parliament' had set up Trenchard and Edward Clark as candidates for Taunton; 'They are birds of one feather, and their party is enough to decypher them what they are'.⁽¹⁾ *Whiggish candidates, possibly connected with the Trenchard family,* had also been active in the election at Christchurch, Hampshire.⁽²⁾ However, it is uncertain whether the instigator of the political activity in Bridgwater, Sir Frances Rolles, MP for the town under Charles II, was actually a Nonconformist at all,⁽³⁾ though he certainly suffered as if he had been one in the hysteria that surrounded Monmouth's landing,⁽⁴⁾ and was undoubtedly of a family of 'strong Nonconformist sympathies'.⁽⁵⁾ Elsewhere in the South West the Mayor of Chichester reported that certain 'factious spirits' in the town were 'so impudent as to set up for electing their old seditious members when Parliament shall be called',⁽⁶⁾ and Sir Charles Holt saw evidence of subtle campaigning on the part of 'our old disturbers'.⁽⁷⁾

Outside 'Monmouth country' there were stirrings here and there on the part of Nonconformists. In Harwich the 'Dissenting Party' were making 'great interest' for one candidate.⁽⁸⁾ In Herefordshire

(1) CSPD 1685, 54 (dated 28 February).

(2) Henry Hyde Earl of Clarendon, *Correspondence and Diaries*, ed. S. W. Singer (1828) I, 181-3.

(3) Lacey, 439.

(4) CSPD 1685, 178, 229.

(5) DWL MS.38.35, Quick MSS I, ii, 691.

(6) CSPD 1685, 20-21.

(7) CSPD 1685, 32.

(8) CSPD 1685, 108-109.

the Harley family were involved in some half-hearted (and abortive) electioneering,⁽¹⁾ as were the Foleys in Worcestershire.⁽²⁾ A number of other ex-MPs who had tenuous claims to a Nonconformist heritage, including Hugh Boscawen, William Strode, Sir William Ellis, Sir John Stapely and Michael Harvey, appear to have stood for election (and been defeated) in 1685, since they petitioned the House of Commons to be seated.⁽³⁾ Sir John Fagg, of Steyning, Sussex, who had a Nonconformist chaplain (and hence had some claim to be one himself), was actually elected.⁽⁴⁾ Sir John Thompson, whose reputation as a Nonconformist was to be gained by his defence of their cause in the Convention Parliament of 1689, was also elected to James II's Parliament for Gatton, Surrey.⁽⁵⁾ The only Nonconformist elected, apart from Hampden, with a very strong 'pedigree', however, was Sir John Maynard,⁽⁶⁾ whose Presbyterian chaplain, Roger Morrice, has extolled him in the highest terms.⁽⁷⁾ All in all, however, less than a handful of Nonconformists were elected to James II's Parliament. None of the dissenting clergy seem to have been particularly concerned at this. Very few, in fact, had shown more than a passing interest in the elections. Thomas Jolly noted that his congregation prayed for the elections, but were more concerned about fellow Dissenters who were appearing before the Assizes.⁽⁸⁾

(1) Lacey, 164.

(2) CSPD 1685, 23.

(3) Lacey, 165, 336 n.65. See also pp 382-3, 389-90, 409-410, 442-3.

(4) Ibid, 165; CR, 42.

(5) Lacey, 165; Morrice Q, 639. In the Convention Parliament Thompson was pronouncedly 'Whig', but in later Parliaments espoused Tory opinions; DNB XIX, 696.

(6) Lacey, 165. See pp. 422-3.

(7) Morrice P, 594, 603, 611; Q, 147 (Morrice invariably put Maynard's name in shorthand or referred to him as 'ser').

(8) Jolly, 68.

The King had reason to write with relish to William of Orange that 'most of the Parliament men *are* chose' with 'not many exclusioners amongst them'.⁽¹⁾ Those 'exclusioners' who were in the Parliament were cowed and frightened men. During the summer session they confined their activity to attempts to defend their electoral interests in disputed election cases.⁽²⁾ Richard Hampden sat silently and tried not to obtrude.⁽³⁾ Lord Wharton did the same in the House of Lords but after a fortnight of tension decided that he was unsafe and fled abroad with a number of Presbyterian ministers escaping from the escalating persecution.⁽⁴⁾

In view of the prevailing quietism and aversion to political involvement evident before James's accession, in the absence of reaction at his accession, in the election and in the opening weeks of the Parliament, the occurrence of a large-scale rebellion, supported substantially by Nonconformists, comes as something of a surprise. That rank and file Nonconformists in the West were deeply involved in the Monmouth Rebellion is certainly symptomatic of the fact that quietism was more evident in the writings and verbal injunctions of dissenting clergy and other articulate, enfranchised Dissenters, than in the thoughts of their unenfranchised followers, where there lurked, albeit latently, something of the spirit of the old Independents. The 1681-5 persecution, which had given rise to quietism and a desire to conform in some dissenting circles, had led to quite a different development in others. In the years immediately

(1) CSPD 1685, 129.

(2) CJ IX, 732.

(3) Lacey, 166.

(4) ^{Ibid;} CSPD 1685, 441; Calamy, Howe, 113. See above p. 134.

prior to the accession, areas with a high percentage of Nonconformists in the population, but where persecution was none the less bitter, had seen evidence of sedition and undercurrents of violence directed against the authorities. In no area had this been more apparent than in the West Country. The Quarter Sessions at Exeter in 1683 had been very much aware that the Nonconformists were at the centre of the movement of discontent.⁽¹⁾ In February 1684 Judge Jeffreys had arranged that he should be gazetted to the Western Circuit 'in order that he might observe the temper of the people in those parts' and had sent frequent regional reports to the Secretary of State as if expecting trouble.⁽²⁾ The monographs written on the Rebellion have inferred that Dissenters represented a major element in Monmouth's support and that excessive persecution had driven them to it.⁽³⁾ After the Rebellion the King was reported to take the same view.⁽⁴⁾ Penn certainly saw the Monmouth escapade as the response of the Western Dissenters to mounting persecution.⁽⁵⁾ It is significant that the reason given for the defection of the Somerset militia was that, like the common people, they were possessed with the 'fanatic' belief 'that their religion was at the last gasp'.⁽⁶⁾

But the Western Rebellion was more than another by-product of

- (1) See above, pp. 95-96.
- (2) S. Schofield, *Jeffreys of The Bloody Assizes* (1937), 100.
- (3) *Ibid*, 157; Roberts I, 209-210; Emerson, 16-17. See VCH Somerset II, 54; J. Murch, *A History of the Presbyterian and Baptist Churches in the West of England* (1835), 101, 156-7, 333-4.
- (4) Edward to Sir Edward Harley, 2 April 1687, HMC 14th Report, app. pt. II; Portland MSS III (1894), 398; J. S. Clarke (ed), *The Life of James the Second King of England &c Collected out of Memoirs Writ of His Own Hand* (1816) II, 26.
- (5) W. Penn, *A Third Letter from a Gentleman in the Country to His Friends in London, Upon the Subject of the Penal Laws and Tests* (1687), 9, 12, 18.
- (6) Roberts I, 290.

long years of persecution. Somerset, Devon and Wiltshire, the counties which produced the greater part of Monmouth's army, comprised one of the great industrial regions of England and the industries on which they were based were far from prosperous. Of the towns where his army quartered,⁽¹⁾ Taunton, Shepton Mallet and Frome were near the Mendip mines, as was Bristol, whence a good many of his soldiers came, and these mines were undergoing a period of depression. Whilst information is fragmentary and few accurate figures exist, it is clear that unemployment must have been high and standards of living low in the mining centres. Like the Stannaries of Devon and Cornwall, the Mendip mining communities were bound together by a common legal code and may well have been accustomed to acting together.⁽²⁾ Hence their involvement with Monmouth may have been not only occasioned by unemployment and poverty, but concerted. John Evelyn commented that the slain at Sedgemoor 'were most of them Mendip miners'.⁽³⁾

Unemployment and poverty were not restricted to the mining communities. Taunton, Shepton Mallet, Frome and Bristol were also centres of the English cloth industry. Axminster, another town where Monmouth's army quartered, was the hub of that industry, and Bridgewater, one of the first towns to declare for Monmouth, was a port based on

(1) See HMC Stopford-Sackville I (1904), 12-19.

(2) See Sir George Clark, *The Later Stuarts* (2nd edit. 1956), 120; J. W. Gough, *The Mines of Mendip* (1930), 112, 114-115, 164, 167, 215, 216; VCH Somerset II, 378; S. Schofield, *op cit*, 100; J. W. Gough, *Mendip Mining Laws and Forest Bounds*, Somerset Record Society (1931) XLV, 1-2, 16 et seq.

(3) Evelyn IV, 452.

the cloth trade. Most of the artisans involved in this are likely to have been Dissenters,⁽¹⁾ and many of them are likely at this time to have been experiencing a substantially reduced standard of living, and hence have been more prone to support rebellion.⁽²⁾ The Quarter Sessions at Exeter following the Rebellion ordered 'that all constables should strictly enquire concerning all Dissenters whether any of them were from home between 12 June and 6 July last'.⁽³⁾ The order was to apply to Devon and Somerset and the findings of the enquiry for Somerset have been published. The return deals with thirty-two Hundred districts and 134 villages. In each instance the Christian name and surname is given, and in most cases occupation. For Wellington and district alone there are a thousand names. For Taunton, a woollen town, there are 275 names, 213 of which are listed under occupations. Of these, 120 can be said to have been involved with the textile industry, worsted combers, weavers, sergemakers.⁽⁴⁾ Clearly, some West Country Dissenters who enlisted under the Protestant Duke were suffering from social and economic pressures, concomitants of depression. Hence social unrest among the dissenting communities of the woollen towns cannot be ignored as a factor in Monmouth's Rebellion.

A further explanation of the involvement of so many Western

- (1) Roberts I, 298, 301; A. Tucker, 'Porton Baptist Church, 1655-85', BHST I (1908-1909), 57. See J. Toulmin, *The History of Taunton*, ed. J. Savage (1822), 458.
- (2) Evelyn, *op cit*; *Sir George Clark, The Later Stuarts (2nd edit. 1956)*, 120; VCH Somerset II, 412; S. Schofield, *op cit*, 100.
- (3) Matthew to Philip Henry, 10 November 1685, Henry MS.6, letter 6, f. 5.
- (4) A. L. Humphreys, 'Some Sources of History for the Monmouth Rebellion and the Bloody Assizes', *Proceedings of the Somersetshire Archaeological and Natural History Society*, XXXVIII (1892), Part Two, 317-319.

Dissenters in the rebellion, despite the quietism of their pastors, may lie in the character of many dissenting congregations

Occasionally the episcopal returns sent in to Archbishop Sheldon in 1669 and 1676 revealed that the 'principals and abettors' who influenced the behaviour of 'conventiclers' and provided them with political direction were ^{rather} laymen, than the ejected ministers who had nominal charge over them. (1) There was also evidence in the returns that these 'principals and abettors' were not infrequently men who had been army officers during the Civil Wars and Interregnum, or were from families with a strong military tradition. (2) The returns of Blandford, Bishop of Oxford, Glenham, Bishop of St. Asaph, Francis Lloyd, Bishop of Llandaff and Hacket, Bishop of Lichfield, all emphasised 'the military element *in* the Nonconformists'. For example, of the two conventicles at Henley on Thames (in the diocese of Oxford), one a Quaker, the other containing 'all other sorts of sectaries but chiefly Presbyterians', 'the principal frequenters and promoters of both [of] these meetings' were 'such as were officers and soldiers in ye Parliament army'. In addition 'the leading persons' at Hooke Norton (Oxford) were 'such as were soldiers', and the promoters of other conventicles in the diocese went under designations such as 'an Anabaptistical soldier', 'a quarter master in Cromwell's army'. (3) The episcopal return for Devon revealed that, of the 'nigh 500' conventiclers at Columpton, ^{among} the chief abettors was 'William Sumpter, a captain under ye late usurper'. In the conventicles at Cavelion, Magor, St. Brides,

(1) Turner III, 77.

(2) Turner I, 45; III, viii.

(3) Turner III, vii-viii.

Caldicot, Lavanches and Dinham there were ^{either} many persons of good estates, being country gentlemen, and such as ^{were} in actual arms in the late rebellion, or bred up under such.⁽¹⁾ The return for Exeter indicated that, apart from the military sponsor, the conventicles were made up of 'inconsiderable' young persons of the meaner sort' and other persons of a 'vulgar' variety, all of whom would ^{presumably} be wafted by any political wind that blew.⁽²⁾ In Berkshire 'the abettors' as opposed to 'the teachers' were *Sometimes* 'army men'.⁽³⁾ In the returns from St. Asaph, the names of

those who had fought under Cromwell were in evidence as 'principals and abettors'.⁽⁴⁾ The military tradition among those who attended conventicles was doubtless not as strong in 1685 as it had been in 1669 and 1676; but the phrases in the episcopal returns which imply the cultivation of such a tradition between generations, and the inference that military men occupied an influential position in dissenting meetings almost ex officio, should still be borne in mind as an element in the explanation as to why West Country Dissenters were prepared to take up arms. The existence and function of 'promoters and abettors' may also suggest the source from which much of the political direction of Nonconformists came and a reason why, at this time at least, the activities of the dissenting laity were so

(1) Turner I, 42-46. My italics.

(2) ^{Ibid.,} Turner III, 81-82, See Henry Hyde Earl of Clarendon, Correspondence and Diaries, ed. S. W. Singer (1828) I, 135, 136.

(3) Turner I, 113, 114.

(4) ^{Ibid., 3,} Turner III, 77. The episcopal returns of 1669 and 1676 from which these facts are taken are to be found in Lambeth Palace Library, Tenison MS.639. Unfortunately, the returns for the diocese of Bath and Wells, which included Somerset, are incomplete and provide no information about 'principals and abettors'.

much at variance with the quietistic sympathies of the dissenting ministry.⁽¹⁾

Among Nonconformists Monmouth had always had a charismatic appeal. This appeal had been enhanced by a progress in the West in 1680, and its religious element had been strengthened in 1685 by what looked like the spectacle of a Catholic King and the Anglican Church united in the purpose of extirpating Nonconformity.⁽²⁾ In fact within days, almost hours, of the accession the esteem in which the Protestant Duke was held by lower class Dissenters was evident in mysterious, sometimes wild, talk and strange rumours. By 10 February some Dissenters thought that the Duke had already landed in the North of Scotland and were 'apt to believe the Duke would never prove so ungrateful as to see those who have stood up for his interest sink for want of his support'.⁽³⁾ Elsewhere there persisted a belief that Monmouth would land in Scotland in the summer.⁽⁴⁾ It was almost as if the belief in Monmouth was part of the Popish Peril syndrome; 'the fanatic party' near York were preaching that Monmouth would come, the nation would be divided 'and the Crown Party . . . totally routed'.⁽⁵⁾ In the same week a Londoner was put in the Tower for making a similar quasi-apocalyptic prediction.⁽⁶⁾ On 2 March John Hathaway was sentenced to be whipped and imprisoned for saying

(1) See also J. Murch, *op cit*, 168-9; S. F. Clark, 'Nottingham Baptist Beginnings', BQ (1957-8) XVII, 163; I. Sellers, 'Baptists in Liverpool in the Seventeenth Century', BQ XX (1963-4), 195, 196.

(2) See J. Toulmin, *The History of Taunton*, ed. J. Savage (1822), 438-441, 458; A. Jenkins, *Civil and Ecclesiastical History of the City of Exeter* (2nd edit. 1841), 180; W. Phelps, *The History and Antiquities of Somersetshire* (1836) I, 98-99; Emerson, 11, 19.

(3) CSPD 1685, 6.

(4) CSPD 1685, 23.

(5) CSPD 1685, 30.

(6) CSPD 1685, 37.

'I would fight for the Duke of Monmouth, and if that Monmouth had the better and the King was to be killed, rather than the King should not be killed I would do it'.⁽¹⁾

On 18 March Deborah Hawkins of Holborn was sentenced to be fined and pilloried for predicting that, 'If there were wars, as I believe there will be, I will put on breeches myself to fight for the Duke of Monmouth'.⁽²⁾ The Government reacted by arresting an old servant of Monmouth's, a Baptist minister, and a woman in Chichester who had 'a hot report' that 'the Duke of Monmouth was proclaimed King in Scotland' already!⁽³⁾ Part of the explanation for these outbursts was that Monmouth's cause was already being canvassed among the 'fanatic' party in London, and probably in the West, during the spring of 1685.⁽⁴⁾ But it is a measure of the strength of Monmouth's 'charisma' that they continued to occur months after his execution.⁽⁵⁾

From its very roots, Monmouth's was a rebellion of Nonconformists and soon became known as 'the Fanatic Plot' or 'the Dissenters' Rebellion'.⁽⁶⁾ Nevertheless, subsequent sectarian apologists have been so embarrassed by the extent of dissenting involvement in the Rebellion that they have tended to omit mention of it completely,

(1) Middx. CR IV, 284.

(2) Ibid, 285-6.

(3) CSPD 1685, 1, 5, 20, 21. The Baptist minister, Henry Danvers, was already in negotiation with Monmouth and was committed to 'raise London' when the Duke landed. He was at liberty by the time that the landing occurred. His congregation was at Newington Green and he had long been regarded as 'a disaffected and dangerous person'. Morrice P, 444; Roberts I, 297; Emerson, 10, 14, 16, 27.

(4) Emerson, 13. See Roberts I, 213; Emerson, 30.

(5) Middx. CR, 312, 315-6.

(6) Densham and Ogle, xii; Luttrell I, 354, 364. Luttrell invariably used 'Fanatic' to mean 'Dissenter'. e.g. I, 325, 327-8, 328.

concentrating on dissenting resistance to 'entice-ment'.⁽¹⁾ Those who do give details are at pains to justify incidents of involvement.⁽²⁾ In response to Anglican taunts after the Revolution,⁽³⁾ James Peirce wrote a 'Vindication' of the conduct of the Dissenters in the reign of James II in which he insisted that:

'Many Nonconformists thought King Charles was married to the Duke's mother; and so were persuaded [that] the Duke was heir of the Crown. They embraced that opportunity of shaking off the tyrannical yoke, and recovering their just liberties, after they had been miserably oppressed and persecuted for above twenty years'.⁽⁴⁾

The Court certainly saw it as a Rebellion of Dissenters from the beginning, though until 20 June they pursued a policy of rounding up individual Dissenters without making it clear that they believed that the Dissenters as a body were behind it. On 19 May, twenty-three days before Monmouth actually landed at Lyme, Sunderland gave orders to 'Thomas Atterbury or other messengers to search for and apprehend' a number of persons who were probably believed to be in sympathy with Monmouth. A number of these were Dissenters, including John and Henry Trenchard.⁽⁵⁾ On 29 May Sunderland singled out John Trenchard in particular and ordered the Sheriff of Somerset to

- (1) e.g. A. H. Drysdale, *The Presbyterians in England* (1889), Thomas M'Crie, *Annals of English Presbytery* (1872), and Bryan Dale, *A History of English Congregationalism* (1907).
- (2) e.g. Ivimey I, 434: 'No greater stigma attaches to the adherents of the Duke of Monmouth, than would have attached to those of the Prince of Orange had he been equally unsuccessful'.
- (3) e.g. William Nichols, *A Defence of the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of England* (1709), 97.
- (4) James Peirce, *A Vindication of the Dissenters* (2nd edit. 1718), 261-2.
- (5) CSPD 1685, 157.

facilitate his capture. (1) From the Trenchards, Sunderland turned to the other Dissenting politicians of the West who might have provided leaders for a Rebellion, Michael Harvey, William Strode, Edmund Prideaux and Sir Francis Rolles, and had them arrested, Rolles being conveyed to the Tower. (2) In Herefordshire and Staffordshire Nonconformist politicians Sir Edward Harley, John Swynfen and

disarmed or
Paul Foley were 'confined', probably because of their proximity to Cheshire, where a rising was anticipated. (3) Toward the end of May Nonconformist homes in the West were ransacked in search of Robert Ferguson's family, Ferguson's role in the intended Rebellion doubtless having already been anticipated. (4)

perhaps
Before the landing, the Government, in an inspired stroke of foresight, had a number of Nonconformist ministers from in and around Lyme arrested and imprisoned at Portsmouth, thus keeping them out of trouble for the duration of the Rebellion. (5)

By 11 June, when Monmouth landed, a nationwide rebellion of Whig-Dissenting elements was feared by the Government. A number of general orders were sent out for the arrest or disarming of 'disaffected and suspicious persons' but still not specifically equating such persons with Nonconformists. (6) Nevertheless it would appear that those arrested 'upon the landing of the Duke of Monmouth' were 'not only such as had been engaged in the late wars' 'but many

(1) CSPD 1685, 166.

(2) CSPD 1685, 178, 194, 229. See Luttrell I, 349.

(3) HMC 14th Report, app. pt. II; Portland MSS III (1894), 384-5, 385. See Emerson, 27, 29, 50.

(4) CSPD 1685, 157.

(5) Densham and Ogle, 146-7; CR, 440, 441; Roberts I, 223, 263. c.f. CSPD 1685, 178.

(6) CSPD 1685, 206, 207; Warwick CR VIII, lxvi.

good old ministers, and such private gentlemen as were obnoxious to the... Court, or their correspondents in the country'.⁽¹⁾ On 20 June it became quite clear how the Government viewed the Rebellion, when the King sent out letters to all Lord Lieutenants

'authorising and directing them' to give orders for seizing all disaffected and suspicious persons, and particularly all Nonconformist ministers and such persons as served against our royal father and late royal brother'.⁽²⁾

By Sunday 21 June, under one or other of these sets of warrants, over a hundred Dissenters in London had been arrested on suspicion of complicity with Monmouth.⁽³⁾ Morrice was indignant that those being

arrested were not on the lunatic 'left' of Nonconformity, 'Ranters, Fifth Monarchy Men or Levellers'; most were 'respectable citizens'.⁽⁴⁾

To be a Nonconformist in London during the summer of 1685 was to be an automatic suspect. By 1 July there were 'warrants out in the constables' hands' all over central London

'against all that were in the army against Charles I or II, and that have otherwise manifested their disaffection to this Government including all Dissenters and Nonconformist ministers'.⁽⁵⁾

Between 11 June and 4 July arrests were made in all parts of England. In most parts the magistracy and shrievalty gave effect to the warrants by a pogrom of the ejected ministers and in some parts by arresting prominent laymen too. In other areas it is likely that

(1) J. Hunter (ed), *Diary of Ralph Thoresby* (1830) I, 180.

(2) CSPD 1685, 212, 213, 228, 230; Warwick CR, lxvi.

(3) Morrice P, 469.

(4) Morrice P, 471.

(5) Morrice P, 471-2.

prominent lay Dissenters were at least cross-examined by the Sheriff.⁽¹⁾ The fact that the ejected ministry were in prison and the lay leaders of Nonconformity were either in prison or under surveillance partially explains why neither group were evident among Monmouth's supporters in the West and why most sources refer to the rebels as 'ordinary', 'mean' or 'poor' men.⁽²⁾ In London a 'great number' of Nonconformist 'merchants and tradesmen' were imprisoned. The jails of York and Hull were soon full of Nonconformist merchants and traders 'who had been known to hold liberal opinions'.⁽³⁾ Together with the ejected ministers of Lincolnshire and the East Riding, this influx rendered the prison at Hull somewhat overcrowded, and an overflow was provided in the form of Richard Astley's Presbyterian meeting house.⁽⁴⁾ In Lancashire, Cheshire and Shropshire the magistrates interpreted their warrants literally and would appear to have imprisoned all of their ejected ministry. James Bradshaw of Wigan and Henry Finch of Lancaster were imprisoned at Chester and Thomas Jolly of Altham at Preston. Henry Newcome of Manchester had his house ransacked though it is uncertain if he was actually imprisoned. Oliver Heywood, the most prominent Presbyterian in Yorkshire and perhaps in the North, was actually in prison when the rebellion began. Adam Martindale was imprisoned at Chester, despite the fact that he had written a treatise against rebellions and 'given out many reasons why he thought it ridiculous in the Duke to pretend

(1) See J. Hunter (ed), *Diary of Ralph Thoresby* (1830) I, 180.

(2) Reresby, 373; HMC Stopford-Sackville MSS I (1904), 2 ; Roberts I, 223.

(3) Neal V, 8; Miall, 95.

(4) CR, 17, 76; Palmer II, 413, 414. See A.E.Trout, 'Nonconformity in Hull ', CHST IX (1924-6), 43.

legitimacy and rebellion'. In Martindale's area, Cheshire, it would appear that prominent lay Dissenters were being arrested too (probably because Lord Delamere had been preparing to raise the County for the rebels).⁽¹⁾ Occasionally, as in Gloucestershire, an ejected minister might elude arrest by going into hiding but few had the time or inclination to do so. Philip Henry of Flintshire, John Lougher of Norfolk, Thomas Ogle of Nottingham, William Hawden of York, Richard Swynfen of Stafford, and Nathaniel Vincent of Southwark were all imprisoned and were doubtless typical of many more.⁽²⁾ Henry Erskine and Luke Ogle, arrested at Newcastle on 4 July, would appear to have been the last of the ejected ministers to be rounded up.⁽³⁾ No trials were held, and it would appear that it only occurred to one ejected minister, Samuel Clark of Buckinghamshire, to register a protest (on behalf of himself and all the other Dissenters imprisoned at Aylesbury without grounds for suspicion).⁽⁴⁾

If the nationwide arrests indicate that the Government believed that the 'Plot' itself was nationwide, and if the heavier arrests in London indicate that it assumed that Dissenters in the capital were deeply committed, both assumptions were doubtless incorrect, owing their origin to the same neurosis which had led the King to expect

- (1) CR, 69, 195, 343; Martindale, 233-4; *Henry Newcome, Autobiography, Chesham Soc. (1852) II, 260*; R. Halley, *Lancashire its Puritanism and Nonconformity* (1872) II, 276-7; Heywood III, 221. See Emerson, 14, 27.
- (2) J. Murch, *A History of the Presbyterian and Baptist Churches in the West of England* (1835), 8; Henry, *Diaries and Letters*, 326; CR, 253, 328, 373, 473, 502; Wilson IV, 305. Nathaniel Vincent is not to be confused with the Joshua Vincent of Exeter, a minister who was actually involved in the Rebellion and was arrested at Exeter in January 1686. HMC Downshire MSS I, i, 107; CSPD 1686-7, 17; Ellis I, 32, xv; 43, xxii.
- (3) CR, 184, 372.
- (4) M. Verney (ed), *Memoirs of the Verney Family with the Letters At Claydon House* (3rd edit. 1925) II, 399, *cited CR, 119*.

a national insurrection at his accession.⁽¹⁾ But the Government's fears of the disloyalty of the Dissenters were by no means groundless. If the quietist exhortation and practice of many of their pastors had permeated far into the minds of West Country Dissenters, they were certainly effectively exorcised when Monmouth landed. In fact, the conduct of Western Dissenters during the Rebellion - the only really 'grass roots' event in the history of Nonconformity during the reign - is indicative of a major bifurcation in the attitude to established authority between conventicle and pastor. This is particularly true if 'pastor' is taken to be synonymous with the section of the Nonconformist clergy about whom we have the most complete information, the Presbyterians,⁽²⁾ (though many Baptist and Independent congregations were directly involved with their pastors).

Baptist historians assume mass involvement on the part of West Country Baptists.⁽³⁾ Though dubious as an historical source in most respects, William Gifford's Western Martyrology provides compendious proof of the involvement of Bristol Baptists. Andrew and Emmanuel Gifford, grandfather and father, respectively, of the compiler, made large gifts of cash to Monmouth and encouraged him to take Bristol, urging (probably correctly) that it was the crux of the

- (1) See Barillon to Louis, 26 March 1685, James to William, 10 September 1685, Dalrymple II, app. pt. 1 bk. 2, 33, 53; CSPD 1685, 1; Barillon to Louis, 26 February 1685, C. J. Fox, *Early Part of the Reign of James II (1808)*, app. xxxi. See J. P. Kenyon, *The Stuarts (1958)*, 148.
- (2) through the detailed accounts of the lives of the Ejected Ministers of 1662 in Palmer, Calamy and CR (this is not to infer that all ejected ministers were Presbyterians: most were. CR, x), and through the biographies and autobiographies of the 'Dons'.
- (3) J. Murch, *op cit*, 333-4; W. T. Whitley, 'The Bloody Assizes of 1685', BQ V (1930-31), 26. See Evelyn IV, 452.

military campaign.⁽¹⁾ When the Baptist rebels of Bristol faced the Grand Jury at the Bloody Assizes Jeffreys said that they

'Certainly, had great encouragement from the party within..

It seems the Dissenters and Fanatics fare well amongst

you, by reason of ^{the} favour of the magistrates',⁽²⁾

an assertion which did less than justice to the persecuting ardour shown by the Tory magistrates in the preceding months and means no more than that, persecution notwithstanding, Nonconformity was still rife in the city.⁽³⁾

The almost unanimous involvement of Bristol Baptists in the Rebellion, however, served to separate them from the Presbyterians and Independents, who were more wary, and broke up a conventicle which had been made up of members of all three sects who had been prepared to forget their differences in the face of the bitter persecution of 1684-5.⁽⁴⁾

Elsewhere in the West Country, Samuel Lark and John Griffith, Baptist ministers, and Richard Rumbold and Abraham Holmes, Baptist laymen, were actively involved in the Duke's army and in promoting his cause.⁽⁵⁾ John Manley, to become better known as a Member of the Convention Parliament, and a Baptist, actually came over with Monmouth and was sent to help lead a rebellion in London.⁽⁶⁾

(1) W. Gifford, *The Western Martyrology* (1701), 264, 268-71; Ivimey I, 431-2. See S. Schofield, *Jeffreys of the Bloody Assizes* (1937), 310; Emerson, 49, 56; HMC Stopford-Sackville MSS I (1904), 14.

(2) Cited Ivimey I, 433.

(3) J. Murch, *op cit*, 101; Lyon Turner MS.89.13, IX 66-68, IX 77-78, X45.

(4) *Ibid*, IX 62.

(5) Roberts I, 259; Lacey, 172-3; J. Toulmin, *The History of Taunton*, ed. J. Savage (1822), 527. Lark was one of the twelve persons executed at Lyme. Densham and Ogle, 146-7. See CSPD 1685, 265.

(6) Lacey, 169; HMC Stopford-Sackville MSS I (1904), 24. When Manley went to London he believed that 3000 men in the City were listed as 'ready'. *Ibid*.

In William Kiffin's autobiography we have a detailed account of the involvement of his two grandsons, Benjamin and William Hewling, on the side of Monmouth and receive a considerable insight into the motives behind their involvement.⁽¹⁾ It was evident, long before Monmouth landed, that William Kiffin himself had fallen from the position of influence which he had once enjoyed at Court.⁽²⁾ Before James II's accession abortive attempts were made to fine and imprison him, once on a treason charge.⁽³⁾ His son-in-law, Joseph Hayes, was arrested, on the slenderest evidence, on a charge of complicity with Sir Thomas Armstrong and Lord Russell, and nothing Kiffin was able to do could prevent his 'ruin'. In fact, his efforts on behalf of his son-in-law were abruptly curtailed when efforts were made to prove his own involvement.⁽⁴⁾ Perhaps because of his grandfather's fall from favour, William Hewling left England for the United Provinces, and was thus removed from the quietistic influence pervading dissenting circles in England.⁽⁵⁾ From a letter sent by his elder brother, Benjamin, from Amsterdam to his sister in England (dated April 1683) it appears that he was either already living in Holland or was in the habit of frequently commuting between England and Holland.⁽⁶⁾ At all events, it is clear that both boys were involved in the plot from its inception, although Kiffin feigned to know nothing of it.⁽⁷⁾

(1) Kiffin, 56. The two boys 'were the only sons of Mr. Benjamin Hewling, a Turkey merchant of good fortune in London' who after their father's death were brought up by their mother and maternal grandfather, William Kiffin. Both Hewlings and Kiffins were Particular Baptists. M. Noble, *Memoirs of the Protectoral House of Cromwell* (1787) II, 454-460.

(2) see above, pp. 55-56.

(3) Kiffin, 50-53.

(4) Kiffin, 52-53.

(5) Kiffin, 53.

(6) W. Orme, appendix, Kiffin, 143-4.

(7) *Ibid*, 53-54; M. Noble, *Memoirs of the Protectoral House of Cromwell* (1787) II, 456-60. See Roberts I, 253.

Despite their grandfather's attempt to present them as religious martyrs their motivation would appear to have been at least partially political. Benjamin was certainly something of a political hot-head; his 'zeal for the Protestant interest' led him to aim for the deposition of James II, not merely 'as a Papist, [but] upon any terms whatever'.⁽¹⁾ After their escape and arrest following Sedgemoor, their mother and grandfather proffered '£3,000 for their lives' to 'a Great Man', but without success.⁽²⁾ They were imprisoned at Exeter on 12 July, taken by sea to Newgate on 27 July, and after a three week stay, transported back to the West to be tried.⁽³⁾ Hannah Hewling, their sister, accompanied them on this last journey and 'did everything she could to save their lives', even persuading Churchill to intercede with the King.⁽⁴⁾ Before the trial she applied to Jeffreys, who treated her with unaccustomed politeness, but without result.⁽⁵⁾ William was executed at Lyme on 12 September and Benjamin at Taunton on 30th.⁽⁶⁾ At William Hewling's trial Jeffreys told him 'that his grandfather did as well deserve that death, which he was likely to suffer, as he did', and many Nonconformists continued to believe that Jeffreys' severity to the Hewlings was partially an attempt to hit at their grandfather.⁽⁷⁾

(1) W. Orme, appendix, Kiffin, 139-42. See J. Toulmin, op cit, 512-520.

(2) Kiffin, 54.

(3) CSPD 1685, 295; Kiffin, 57-58.

(4) Kiffin, 58, 59, 147.

(5) W. Orme, app. Kiffin, 147; M. Noble, *Memoirs of the Protectoral House of Cromwell* (1787) II, 459-62. The Bloody Assizes left their mark on Hannah (later married to Cromwell's grandson) whose religious fervour led her to 'unwarrantable warmth' against the government; M. Noble, op cit, I, 223; W. Orme, appendix, Kiffin, 148-9.

(6) Kiffin, 55-57.

(7) Wilson I, 425; Kiffin, 82.

If the Baptists gave the most mass support to the rebellion among the sects, a number of Independents played key roles in its organisation. The Plot probably owed its origination and initial planning to ejected (Independent) minister Robert Ferguson who, before Dr. John Owen's death in 1683, had been his close friend and confidant.⁽¹⁾ Owen had doubtless been aware of, and may have been in sympathy with, Ferguson's championship of the Duke's cause during the Exclusion Crisis.⁽²⁾ In Holland Ferguson worked, with others, to induce Monmouth to accept their plans for a rebellion,⁽³⁾ and before the departure of the rebels from Amsterdam he presented the Duke with a Declaration which he had drawn up to be used as a political manifesto once they landed in England.⁽⁴⁾ Once in the West Country, however, Ferguson was probably disappointed that support for the Duke among the Independents was less than total. Though many went to Monmouth's headquarters at Taunton to enlist, others hung back ^{perhaps} awaiting events.⁽⁵⁾ Support among Independent pastors was certainly less than Ferguson would have expected, though when they did throw in their lot with the Duke they usually took part of their congregation with them. This was the case with

- (1) CR, 193-4; Emerson, 11-12.
- (2) See Robert Ferguson, A Letter to a Person of Honour Concerning the King's Disavowing his having married the Duke of Monmouth's Mother (1680). This pamphlet argued that Monmouth was legitimate.
- (3) Emerson, 11-12. When the King saw Monmouth at Whitehall after his capture, the latter 'laid the fault on my Lord Argyle and Mr. Ferguson for advising him to it'. Reresby, 385. Despite rumours that he had been killed at Sedgemoor, Ferguson eluded both death and justice and had been seen in Holland by 18 August 1685. Reresby, 384; Robert to Sir Edward Harley, 18 August 1685, HMC 14th Report, app. pt. II; Portland MSS III (1894), 386.
- (4) Roberts I, 232, 235-50; J. Toulmin, op cit, 451-4.
- (5) James Peirce, A Vindication of the Dissenters (2nd edit. 1718), 261.

Stephen Towgood and the Independents of Axminster, for example,⁽¹⁾ who 'hoped that the day was come in which the good old cause... that had lain as dead and buried for a long time, would revive again'.⁽²⁾ Ferguson could have little to complain about regarding the substantial Nonconformist (chiefly Independent) congregations of the woollen towns of Taunton, Chard and Bridgwater, where support was considerable. At Exeter, however, where industry was more varied and the Presbyterians were predominant there were serious divisions among Dissenters over the question of involvement.⁽³⁾ The fact that so many Independent pastors were imprisoned did not inhibit lay involvement on the part of the Congregationalists. Leadership in enlistment was superfluous for *many* congregations — *including Lyme and probably Sherborne* — in Dorset where support was spontaneous. Elsewhere, as in Beaminster, a respected layman (perhaps an ex-Cromwellian soldier) led the male members of the Congregation to enlist.⁽⁴⁾

Among the Quakers — where the incidence of persecution was highest, the impact of quietism was greatest and dependence upon the King most widely felt — there was a strong desire on the part of the vast majority to disassociate themselves from the rebel cause. In more than twenty towns in Devon, Dorset and Somerset the local Quakers pestered magistrates and clergy for, and obtained, written documents

(1) F. B. Wyatt, 'The Congregational Church at Axminster', CHST IV (1909-10), 108.

(2) Axminster Church Book, cited Roberts I, 231-2.

(3) Brockett, 47 ; J. Toulmin, op cit, 458; A. Jenkins, Civil and Ecclesiastical History of the City of Exeter (2nd edit. 1841), 180; W. Phelps, The History and Antiquities of Somerset (1836) I, 98-99; Roberts I, 301. See HMC Stopford-Sackville MSS I (1904), 25; J. Murch, op cit, 374.

(4) Densham and Ogle, 7-8, 97, 146-7, 148, 253.

to the effect that no Quaker in that area had given any support to Monmouth.⁽¹⁾ Without doubt the Quakers showed greater resistance to rebel propaganda to enlist than any other sect. When Monmouth's men arrived at Ilchester, no doubt as a gesture to encourage support and enlistment, 'they... freed all they found prisoners there on account of conscience' including 'some of the Friends'. None, however, took advantage of the open doors.⁽²⁾

Both during and after the Rebellion, there was a great deal of condemnation of Monmouth from Quaker sources, but it would appear that those Quaker historians who have asserted that no Quaker was involved were accurate only in the sense that as soon as a Quaker did become involved he was disfellowshipped by the local Society. Despite the strenuous attempts of his family and the local Quaker community to restrain him, a Friend called Francis Scott, having sold some horses to the rebels, met the Duke himself and was persuaded to enlist.⁽³⁾ George Hussey and Thomas Paul, who came from the large Quaker community at Frome, enlisted probably under similar circumstances, and were hanged after Sedgemoor.⁽⁴⁾ The Quarterly Meeting Books from Societies in Somerset contain entries about 'members concerned in the late war',⁽⁵⁾ and a Monthly Meeting at Taunton in the spring of 1686 condemned not only Francis Scott, but a John

(1) Friends MSS, Meeting for Sufferings Minutes IV (1684-5), 96-97, 101-102, 104, 111-113, 115-118, 120-125. See Braithwaite, 123.

(2) Roberts I, 296.

(3) Ibid, 306; Whiting, 181; Braithwaite, 121-2.

(4) Whiting, 181; Thomas Paul pleaded Guilty in the belief that he would be pardoned. 'The Western Rebellion', JFHS XVI (1919), 134.

(5) Whiting, 181.

Hellier, of Mark, near Highbridge, for taking 'up arms in the late Insurrection contrary to the principle of truth'.⁽¹⁾ At Glastonbury a Quaker obtained a commission in Monmouth's army.⁽²⁾ Another Friend, Thomas Plaice, was imprisoned for being 'very active and conversant' in the rebellion, though it was proved that he had refused to bear arms.⁽³⁾ As soon as the Rebellion was over the Friends issued a paper, which was given wide publicity, defending themselves against a variety of, seemingly, unjust charges made by Anglicans, including an assertion that Monmouth's Declaration had been printed by a Quaker.⁽⁴⁾

The issue of involvement with the Rebellion deeply divided the Presbyterians. Though there was doubtless a considerable amount of support forthcoming from lay Presbyterians in the West Country, and although a great many Presbyterians (laymen and clergy) were apprehended in connection with the Rebellion in various parts of the country, it is difficult to find evidence of actual involvement on the part of Presbyterian ministers. Many probably shared the attitude of Thomas Jolly - not a Presbyterian himself but an Independent with Presbyterian leanings⁽⁵⁾ - who waited until the military confrontation was over before making up his mind, and then piously wrote in his Note Book that he was pleased that he had stayed 'on the Rock of Ages and not on the broken reeds of Egypt'.⁽⁶⁾ In fact

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- (1) 'Two West Country Friends and the Monmouth Rebellion', (transcribed from the Minute Book of the West Somerset Monthly Meeting) JFHS XII (1915), 35-36.
- (2) VCH Somerset II, 222.
- (3) Braithwaite, 123.
- (4) The Christian Principle and Peaceable Conversation of the People of God called Quakers (1685).
- (5) R. Halley, Lancashire, Its Puritanism and Nonconformity (1872) II, 262-263.
- (6) Jolly, 71.

in Jolly's case, as in the case of most other ejected ministers, beyond a period of nine days after the landing at Lyme, the issue of involvement was a purely academic one; he, in common with by far the greater number of ejected ministers, had been imprisoned as a result of the letters sent to the Lord Lieutenants on 20 June. Those who were involved had either come over with Monmouth, like Ferguson, or, like Nonconformist academy-trained Stephen Towgood of Axminster,⁽¹⁾ were not ejected ministers and hence were not readily identifiable as 'Nonconformist ministers' in the pogrom after 20 June. Of the four Presbyterian ministers who were involved; William Jenkins, the son of the Presbyterian patriarch who had died in Newgate earlier in the year, was not an ejected minister;⁽²⁾ Simon Hamling of Taunton, not an ejected minister, was executed for involvement in the Rebellion but may not, in fact, have been involved at all;⁽³⁾ Joseph Bennet, an ejected minister in Sussex who eluded arrest after 20 June, belatedly gave verbal support to the rebel cause in a sermon but was acquitted of complicity in the Rebellion itself;⁽⁴⁾ and John Hicke, an ejected minister from *Saltash*, who either came over with Monmouth (having emigrated to Holland earlier in the year) or emerged from hiding (by his own testimony) to join Monmouth before the pogrom that followed 20 June.⁽⁵⁾ Thus Hicke,

(1) See F. B. Wyatt, *op cit*, 108.

(2) Jenkins was arrested 21 July, and executed 5 October. DWL MS.38.35, Quick MSS I, pt. 2, 900-902, 912; J. Toulmin, *The History of Taunton*, ed. J. Savage (1822), 521-4; VCH Somerset II, 229. Sunderland wrote twice to Jeffreys asking for clemency for Jenkins. S. Schofield, *op cit*, 190-191.

(3) DWL MS.38.35, Quick MSS I, ii, 903.

(4) CR, 48.

(5) CR, 260; Brockett, 41-2; DNB IX, 805-806; W. Penn to J. Harrison, 2 October 1685, Janney, 268-9.

who was executed at Taunton on 6 October, was the only Presbyterian ejected minister who went over to Monmouth during the nine days (between the landing on 11 June and the arrests from 20 June) whilst the opportunity lasted. This fact leaves as an open question the Anglican assertion that the Presbyterian ministry were merely biding their time and would have given their support to the Duke had he been successful at Sedgemoor,⁽¹⁾ though, on the analogy of their reaction to William's landing in 1688, the assertion may not be far short of the mark.

Among the more substantial Presbyterian laity who did not wait for the military confrontation before rendering support to Monmouth was Sir Edmund Prideaux, who owned large estates in both Devon and Cornwall and was charged with giving £500, as well as an unspecified number of horses, to the rebel cause.⁽²⁾ John Scrope, son of an eminent Presbyterian merchant in Bristol,

'satisfied that the Duke was the legitimate heir to the throne, and that, as a genuine Protestant he alone could save the Kingdom from the thraldom of Rome' joined Monmouth and 'only escaped the clutches of Judge Jeffreys' 'by the strong personal influence of the Scrope family and their friends'.⁽³⁾

Azariah Pinney, son of the ejected minister John Pinney, was accused of involvement and, from hints in his family correspondence, may have

- (1) W. Nichols, *A Defence of the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of England* (1709), 97.
- (2) Robert to Sir Edward Harley, 15 September 1685, HMC 14th Report, app. pt. II: Portland MSS (1894), 388; CSPD 1685, 328, 329; S. Schofield, *op cit*, 203; Roberts I, 263, 293. After paying £14,500 to Jeffreys Prideaux escaped the death penalty and was pardoned on 12 March 1686. CSPD 1686-7, 66; S. Schofield, *op cit*, 203-204.
- (3) DWL MS.38.35, Quick MSS I, ii, 905, 906.

had the death penalty commuted to deportation as a result of a gift in cash from the substantial wealth of his mercantile family.⁽¹⁾ Accusations were made against Henry Henly and William Strode for giving money and horses to the rebels but no evidence could be found of the transactions and neither were prosecuted.⁽²⁾ John Speke, the son of an old Whig-Nonconformist family, held^a commission under Monmouth.⁽³⁾

Whether or not the Presbyterian gentry were alienated from Monmouth by his assumption of the kingship⁽⁴⁾ or whether their reasons were more basic, Monmouth had every reason to be disappointed in them. During his earliest visits to the West Monmouth had stayed not only with the Prideaux and Speke families but with most other Whig gentry families of any prominence.⁽⁵⁾ *Probably from Holland, he sent a messenger,* Battiscomb, to visit the Trenchards, the Strodes, the Huckers, Sir Francis Rolles, Sir Walter Young and Sir Francis Drake to receive their support. The messenger returned with the information that Rolles and Strode were prisoners, Young 'was very cool in the matter' and John Trenchard, who had promised support, had fled to France. All of which made the Duke 'grow very melancholy'.⁽⁶⁾ John Hampden - who, after the Rebellion, Nathaniel Wade cited as 'an abettor' - and Sir Samuel Barnardiston were similarly sounded out. Hampden, in prison, refused to see the messenger, and Barnardiston would appear

(1) G. F. Nuttall (ed), Letters of John Pinney 1679-1699 (1939), v, 23-24, 25-27, 27-28, 28-29, 31-32.

(2) Lacey, 169.

(3) Roberts I, 293.

(4) See VCH Somerset II, 221.

(5) J. Toulmin, The History of Taunton, ed. J. Savage (1822), 439-441.

(6) Roberts I, 263-4; HMC Stopford-Sackville MSS I (1904), 22-23. See CSPD 1685, 157, 166, 168, 176.

to have rendered no support.⁽¹⁾

Characteristically, the Presbyterian 'Dons', in statements which are indistinguishable in sentiment from those made by Anglican clergy, condemned rebels and rebellion, and remained aloof. From the outset and throughout the Rebellion, Roger Morrice referred to Monmouth's supporters as 'the rebels',⁽²⁾ and left no doubt that he identified with the King's cause: 'our forces in the West...', 'we have raised thirty-six troops more of volunteers...', 'our forces... our artillery'.⁽³⁾ At the end of June he wrote: 'It is very likely there will be a speedy fight, if the rebels dare fight, and we expect hourly to hear the rebels are destroyed'.⁽⁴⁾ Once the rebels had been destroyed and the Bloody Assizes commenced, Morrice gave an account of the trial and execution of those Dissenters who had been involved. This he did in a detailed but completely dispassionate manner, without a hint of sympathy and certainly without the subjective overtones of martyrology which have characterised the style of Nonconformist and Whig historians since the event.⁽⁵⁾ It is, however, perhaps symptomatic of a certain duality in the attitude of the Dons that, having given an account of Mrs. Gaunt's execution 'for relieving Burton the rebel', Morrice modestly recounted that when his 'old acquaintance' Burton's wife, arrived at his house claiming that she and her children were 'ready to perish for the want of bread and clothing' he gave her '£5 to buy..bread and clothing', and added, 'This I count no treason

(1) Emerson, 26; HMC Stopford-Sackville MSS I (1904), 22-23; Lacey, 169.

(2) Morrice P, 469, 470, 471, 472.

(3) Morrice P, 470, 471. My italics.

(4) Morrice P, 471.

(5) Morrice P, 472, 473, 487. (c.f. Neal, Burnet, Macaulay).

but a duty, though she warned me that I was like to be brought to the stake for the deed'.⁽¹⁾

Morrice was not the only eminent Presbyterian to speak in almost 'non-resistance' terms of the Rebellion. Adam Martindale had written virulently against Monmouth's claim and throughout the second half of 1685 canvassed 'passive obedience, in lawful things' to James II.⁽²⁾ Philip Henry, in prison and pessimistic in the extreme as to the long-term implications of James II's Design for the future of Protestant Nonconformity, told Monmouth's supporters, 'God will not do his work for us... by that man'.⁽³⁾ Henry Newcome of Manchester was saddened by the news of Monmouth's landing and a few days later wrote, 'That so many that should know better, should engage in such unlawful causes, I am heartily grieved and ashamed'.⁽⁴⁾ Richard Baxter wrote to Lord Powis 'confuting' the whole affair and disowning those of his persuasion who had taken any part in it.⁽⁵⁾

The attitudes of Morrice, Martindale, Henry, Newcome and Baxter were probably typical of a wider group within the sect from whence they came - though not of the whole - and this would have included a majority of that timid handful of Nonconformists who had gained election to James II's Parliament. Of the Nonconformist politicians, the attitudes of John Hampden, Barnardiston, Young and Sir Edward Harley were more typical than those of the Spekes or the Scropes, who were more Whig than Dissenter.⁽⁶⁾ The behaviour of the

(1) Morrice P, 487.

(2) Morrice P, 468, 469.

(3) Henry, Diaries and Letters, 326.

(4) Henry Newcome, Autobiography, Chetham Soc. (1852) II, 260.

(5) R. Baxter to W. Herbert, Earl of Powis 23 June 1685, Baxter MSS (Letters) I, f. 32.

(6) The latter are not included in Lacey's list of Nonconformist MPs, whilst the former are. See Lacey, app. II. For the attitudes of Hampden, Barnardiston and Young see above pp 203-204. For the Harleys see HMC 14th Report, app. pt. II: Portland MSS III (1894), 385-6, 386.

intelligent, enfranchised 'right' of Nonconformity may, in some instances, be accounted for by a traditional attitude that had been present among the Presbyterians perhaps before, and certainly since, the Interregnum; in other cases, however, it stemmed from a purely pragmatic decision based on the irresponsibility of the Monmouth venture. Certain sections of Ferguson's Declaration would certainly conjure up old nightmares, and others gave substance to unwelcome spectres of the future: Parliaments were to be 'annually chosen and held, and not prorogued, dissolved, or discontinued within the year, before petitions be first answered and grievances redressed'; the Corporation and Militia Acts were to be repealed and new laws enacted, providing for Sheriffs to be elected by freeholders, and that the sheriffs would control the militia. The sections of the Declaration with which they could agree, such as that on the misdeeds of the present monarch, were couched in such inflated phraseology as to revive unwelcome memories.⁽¹⁾

'Responsible' Presbyterians, however, represented one extreme of a spectrum which, at its opposite extremity, had groups from whose angle of vision a 'responsible' Presbyterian looked very much like a Churchman and some Churchmen very like the Papists themselves. There is enough evidence of involvement from the section of the spectrum to the 'left' of Roger Morrice to justify the Court's initial view of the Rebellion as a rebellion of Nonconformists. However, there is insufficient evidence to justify the Court's initial view that the rebellion had nationwide implications, more especially in the capital. But to say this is not to imply that Monmouth did not have Nonconformist sympathisers outside the West, or that these

(1) Roberts I, 235-50.

sympathisers would not have become actual supporters had his rebellion gone beyond Sedgemoor. So much interest was shown by lay Dissenters in Lancashire in the outcome of the military confrontation that the authority's suspicions were aroused⁽¹⁾ and the mass arrests in London and elsewhere in June 1685, including many who were not ejected ministers, had doubtless not all been made on groundless suspicion. Perhaps the Baptist 'Colonel' Henry Danvers - on whom the authorities had kept a watchful eye since the beginning of the reign - did have enough influence to raise the lower classes of London for the Protestant Duke; the claim was widely believed.⁽²⁾ From the beginning of July until late autumn Nonconformists in all parts of England were continually being arrested 'for rebellious words against the Government'. In July fifteen, who Morrice knew well enough to mention by name, were imprisoned in Chester Castle on unspecified charges, whilst three times that number were heavily fined for speaking against the Government.⁽³⁾ In August many more Nonconformists, most of them clergy, were arrested in the provinces on the same charge and brought to London for trial; more than thirty of these are named, and at least one, named Archer, was hanged (at Cross Market).⁽⁴⁾ In all parts of England scores of other arrests

- (1) R. Halley, *Lancashire Its Puritanism and Nonconformity* (1872). II, 276.
- (2) Danvers was reported in Amsterdam to have averted 'an extempore rising' in London in May. After his return to Holland following Sedgemoor he said that Monmouth's assumption of the kingship absolved him (as a republican) of the responsibility of raising London. He died in Utrecht in February 1688. Roberts I, 297, 324-5; Emerson, 16; CSPD 1685, 5; Wilson I, 394; Crosby III, 90-97; Luttrell I, 432.
- (3) Morrice P, 472; Warwick CR VIII, lxvii.
- (4) The surnames of the 'eminent Nonconformists' given were: Smith, Shaw, Ossely, Boyer, Swinfin, Southall, Crompton, Woolsley, Oulton, Cortan, Newport, Hunt, Woodhouse, Nott and Clark. There are frequent references to 'two or three more'. Morrice P, 472-3.

were made. (1)

When the panic which ante-dated Sedgemoor - and probably represented an attempt by the magistrates to round up all Nonconformists who had shown any signs of disaffection during the revolt - had died down, releases began to take place, often of large numbers at a time. (2) But, as if the Bloody Assizes and the trials of Alice Lisle and Elizabeth Gaunt, which particularly caught the public imagination, had led to further unrest among Dissenters, more arrests were then made. Many of these were in London and included the arrest of Alderman Cornish. (3) Often those arrested were imprisoned for only a few days, but the many releases were overshadowed by the few trials that did take place, and the words and sentences of Judge Jeffreys sent a shudder down many a Nonconformist spine. (4) On 16 July orders were given to all Lord Lieutenants to discharge those who were taken up on suspicion only and retain only those who had actually abetted the rebels, (5) and as late as November and December 'some hundreds' of Dissenters were discharged who had been 'in prison about the Plot'. Cases of Dissenters continued to be brought before London and provincial courts on charges of involvement in the Rebellion, including the two Nonconformist 'politicians', John Hampden and Sir Francis Rolles, and Lord Delamere, a man widely respected among Nonconformists. (6) Up to the last moment Matthew

(1) on p. 473 Morrice lists scores of other names of persons from different parts of England who presumably do not qualify to be labelled 'eminent'. All were arrested and imprisoned.

(2) Morrice P, 476.

(3) Morrice P, 476, 477. See Luttrell I, 357, 361.

(4) Morrice P, 477-81; Burnet I, 647-50; Ivimey I, 455-60.

(5) CSPD 1685, 264; Warwick CR VIII, lxvi.

(6) Morrice P, 501, 502-4; Matthew to Philip Henry, 1 December, 15 December, 29 December 1685, 5 January, 19 January, 26 January 1686, Henry MS.6, letters 6, 8, 10, 11; MS.5, letters 14, 15; Luttrell I, 365, 368, 369, 375.

Henry and his friends at Gray's Inn believed that there was no hope for Hampden, and were very surprised at his last minute reprieve.⁽¹⁾ But despite reprieves and releases, far more than the memory of 'Judge Jeffreys' campaign in the West' remained to remind the West Country Dissenters of his visitation.⁽²⁾ In London the head of Cornish on the Guildhall and the corpses of Dissenters like Aylofffe and Nelthorp, left on their gibbets,⁽³⁾ helped to revive fears of the 'Popish Peril'. Of the other factors that contributed to the revival of this apprehension, one was the news which came from Parliament.

6

With the landing of Monmouth and the patriotic upsurge in Parliament, it took still more courage on the part of the handful of Nonconformist MPs to raise their voices. The first sign of life came from the Earl of Anglesey in the House of Lords, who entered a protest against the severity of the penalties in Monmouth's Bill

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- (1) Matthew to Philip Henry, 10 November, 29 December 1685, 5 January 1686, Henry MS.6, letters 3, 10, 11. See Ellis I, 1-5, 6-7.
- (2) In November 'an order of the Justices of Devonshire made in their Quarter Sessions at Exeter that all constables should strictly enquire concerning all Dissenters whether any of them were from home between 12 June and 6 July last, and whether they had entertained any strangers' was being put into execution, providing (or so it was anticipated) more fodder for the next Assizes. Matthew to Philip Henry 10 November 1685, Henry MS.6, letter 3, f. 5.
- (3) Matthew to Philip Henry, 10 November 1685, Henry MS.6, letter 3, ff. 2-3. See Luttrell I, 362.

of Attainder.⁽¹⁾ In the Commons, Sir John Maynard opposed a Bill, which never became law, for the Better Preservation of His Majesty's Person, on the grounds that it made words as well as acts treasonable, holding that 'words are often ill heard and ill understood'.⁽²⁾ But it was with the re-assembly of Parliament in November that an opposition began to take shape, with the support of other than purely Nonconformist elements. The appointment of Roman Catholic army officers was a red rag to Anglican Tories, as well as Dissenting Whigs, and Maynard soon had the support of a majority of the House of Commons.⁽³⁾ Sir John Reresby, staunchest of Tory loyalists, feared the worst from the King's Design, confessed that his ambition was cooled, and contemplated withdrawal, for conscience sake, from a scene that boded so much ill for the future. But whilst Reresby absented himself from key votes and contemplated a tactful retirement, other Tories, like Sir Thomas Clarges, spoke out openly in opposition to Court policy.⁽⁴⁾ On 12 November Clarges and Maynard joined forces in opposing a grant of supply for the army, being concerned that James II was violating

(1) Roberts I, 283; Lacey, 166. Arthur Annesley, First Earl Anglesey (1614-1686), was a partial conformer and a Presbyterian. During the period 1672-82 he was Lord Privy Seal and, probably in response to Court pressure, dismissed his Presbyterian Chaplain. He returned to more characteristic views during the Exclusion Crisis, re-appointed his chaplain and since that time had been one of the most influential Nonconformist politicians. K. Feiling, *A History of the Tory Party 1640-1714* (1924), 193-4; Lacey, 459-462. In April 1686 the Earl was believed to have died an Anglican, 'though he was never a member to be bragged of'. Immediately prior to his death a rumour had been circulating to the effect that he was receiving instruction from Catholic priests with a view to conversion and that the King hoped to make him Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Ellis I, 95-96, xxxvii.

(2) Lacey, 166; Roberts I, 281-2.

(3) K. Feiling, *op cit*, 210-212; Reresby, 394-8; Gazette No. 2085; HMC Downshire MSS I, i, 53, 54, 58; D. Ogg, *England in the Reigns of James II and William III* (1955), 159-161.

(4) Reresby, 395-6, 401, 405. See also 394 n. 3, 399-400, 403; CJ IX, 757.

the Test Act, and were joined by Richard Hampden on a committee directed to draw up an address asking James II to do something to relieve apprehensions resulting from this violation of the law.⁽¹⁾

The community of spirit between the moderate Anglican Tories and the articulate Presbyterians in Parliament on the central issue of the Test Act, evoked a gloomy prospect for James II's political programme, given the present state of alliances. The Anglican-Court Alliance, so strong at the accession, was breaking; even Rochester, it was said, was fighting a losing battle with the Popish Party and found it necessary to be increasingly obsequious in order to retain his office; and even servants of the Crown voted against Court policy in vital divisions.⁽²⁾ That stalwart Anglican Sir John Reresby, following the prorogation, ruminated on the awful significance for the Church of Compton's dismissal from the Privy Council and from his position as Dean of the Royal Chapel, and felt as insecure about the future as a Dissenter inspired by the Popish Peril.⁽³⁾

The old Alliance was crumbling, and no new one was yet in prospect. During one calendar year the considerable variety in the political behaviour of Dissenters was such as to render them a dubious prospect as political allies: the quietistic antipathy to political involvement evinced in the Election and the early days of the Parliament; the constant abjectness of the court Quakers in the

(1) CJ IX, 757; Morrice P, 494; Matthew to Philip Henry, 10 November, 17 November, Henry MS.6, letters 3, 4.

(2) Matthew to Philip Henry, 17 November 1685, Henry MS.6, letter 4, ff. 6, 7, 8; F. C. Turner, James II (1948), 287; Reresby, 395, 401, 402. See also 402-3; K. Feiling, *op cit*, 210.

(3) Reresby, 404, 405. See 401.

face of a prince who could grant them relief, and their seeming eagerness to please; the quasi-'Non-Resistance' of the Dons in the face of the Monmouth Rebellion; the full-blooded involvement of West Country Baptists and Independents under Monmouth; the anti-Court activities of the Presbyterian 'politicians' and their willingness to co-operate with the political wing of the Church in the face of encroachment on the Test Act. To assume that all that was necessary to unite, turn about and harness in a policy of co-operation with the Court such an agglomeration of variances was a general pardon and the cessation of persecution, was to ignore the facts, fail to grasp the depth of anti-Catholic feeling among the Dissenters, and fail to comprehend the extent to which they were already self-resistant to these tactics. But on this occasion, as on many subsequent ones, it was evident that the Court simply failed to understand the true, complex nature of Protestant Dissent and saw it merely in terms of those Dissenters closest at hand. The Dissenters themselves were totally unaware that the King was beginning to look upon them in a new light. In January 1686 they were still undergoing the most intense persecution for many years. It was not surprising, therefore, that they disbelieved the rumours that began to come through that the 'enticement' tactic was about to be used yet again.⁽¹⁾

(1) Morrice P, 509. See Luttrell I, 367.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CHANGE OF ALLIANCES

1

Philip Henry - in general one of the more purblind of the ageing ejected ministry - whilst in jail on (unjust) suspicion of collaboration with the Western Rebellion, was visited by a number of persons 'big with the expectations of the Duke of Monmouth's success'. Shocked by their enthusiasm and distrustful of their optimism, he told them, 'God will not do his work.. in these nations by that Man; but our Deliverance and Salvation will arise some other way...'. By December 1685, with unaccustomed clarity of thought, he had decided in his own mind the direction from which Deliverance was likely to come, and through which Man. In conversation with a Bishop - probably Lloyd of St. Asaph, in whose diocese he lived - he 'mentioned King Charles's Indulgence of 1672 as that which gave rise to his.. preaching in a separate assembly; and added, if the present King James should, in like manner, give [him] leave [he] would do the same again'.

The Bishop replied: 'Never expect any such thing from him; for, take my word for it, he hates you Nonconformists in his heart'. Henry retorted: 'Truly I believe it, and I think he doth not love you of the Church of England neither...'. A little later he was writing to his son Matthew at Gray's Inn, telling him to expect 'the persecuting laws to be taken off' and great changes to come about it high places.⁽¹⁾

(1) Henry: Diaries and Letters, 325-326; A. Nelson, Puritan Divines IX: The Life and Times of Philip Henry (1848), 234. See R. F. Skinner, Nonconformity in Shropshire 1662-1816 (1964), 18; S. Schofield, Jeffreys of the Bloody Assizes (1937), 60. Luttrell (I, 367) caught a similar rumour at the same time.

Yet those nearer the Court steadily discounted rumours of a toleration, and were still doing so six months later.⁽¹⁾ In February 1686 Matthew Henry advised his father that, despite rumours that the King would extend his protection to Protestant, as well as Catholic, recusants, they should 'still be prepared for evil tidings, not knowing what the day might bring forth'.⁽²⁾ The memory of Judge Jeffreys and Kirke's Lambs was recent. In December 1685 and January 1686 the persecution of Nonconformists was reaching a new high. The rebellion had been one of Dissenters, it was even arguable that the Dissenting politicians had provided the nucleus of the campaign against the appointment of Catholic army officers, making necessary the prorogation of the paragon of royalist Parliaments; if a further rationalisation of the persecution of Dissenters was required, here it was. The smell of Popish Peril was pungent. In December 1685 a General Toleration was about the last thing that most Dissenters expected.

In fact, as it turned out, Philip Henry's prediction was very much of a long shot, though he had been correct in ignoring the obvious and sensing the new trend. However, there was not to be the sudden change of alliances which Henry seemed to be predicting, and Burnet later believed had taken place.⁽³⁾ For most of 1686 Government policy was in a state of flux. There were many divergent and contrary elements, some of which must one day give way to stronger

(1) Morrice P, 509 (January 1686), 532-3 (May), 550 (June).

(2) Matthew to Philip Henry, 23 February 1686, Henry MS.5, letter 19.

(3) 'All on a sudden the Churchmen were disgraced, and the Dissenters were in high favour...'. Burnet I, 672.

ones,⁽¹⁾ but it was by no means clear from the outset that the end result would be a general toleration or that the means that the King envisaged to attain that end was an Alliance of all Dissenters.

The two constant factors evident in the Government's policy throughout 1686 were first, the importance attached to the taking of measures to ensure that as much as possible of the revenue received in the form of fines and forfeitures from Dissenters actually arrived in the Exchequer, thus putting a stop to the malversation that made persecution so lucrative an undertaking; and second, the emphasis given to the policy that the persecution of Roman Catholic recusants and the family of William Penn should cease, and any fines levied on them and not paid into the Exchequer should, where possible, be returned to them. Even as late as May 1686, however, the Quakers as a sect had not received 'any particular assurance of immunity for the future',⁽²⁾ though in the ensuing months the King endeavoured, on a selective basis, to shield them from persecution, but without complete success.

Another, more ancillary, element in Government policy in 1686, much less consistently applied, was an endeavour to placate Protestant Dissenters in general. Despite rumours that were beginning to circulate as early as December 1685, the King's first significant move in this direction was his General Pardon of 10 March 1686.⁽³⁾ In view of the remoteness of the King's control over the actual

(1) See Halifax's comments to William in a letter dated 18 January 1687, *Kenyon (ed), Halifax Works, 334*: 'The motion of public things at present hath not only variety but some kind of contradiction in it...'

(2) Morrice P, 533.

(3) London Gazette No. 2120; SP 44/336, 391-2. For the text of the General Pardon, see Appendix One, item A. Its significance, and that of the warrants that followed it, is discussed below.

persecuting agencies and the determination of those agencies to resist this control, because of the necessity of interfering with those agencies on the basis of individual cases and the comparative rarity with which the King chose to do this on behalf of Dissenters who were neither Catholics nor Quakers and, having regard to the unwillingness of most Dissenters to 'sue out' the King's 'particular pardon' in accordance with the terms of the General Pardon, the Pardon proved to be no more than a Declaration of Intent as far as most Dissenters were concerned. The set of circumstances which rendered it so, also helped to make necessary the First Declaration of Indulgence of April 1687 and a major infiltration of the Tory-Anglican establishment at all levels to make that effective. Until July 1686, the only substantial benefit felt by Dissenters who were not part of the two groups the King had chosen to favour, were a few pardons granted to Western rebels who, except for the 'poor labourers and handicraftmen' who had been 'drawn and seduced' into the rebellion by their betters, had been excepted from the General Pardon of 10 March. During and after July, however, it became clear that the King was prepared to extend limited favour to the Baptists, some of whom at that time were beginning to stoop to the courtly methods of the Quakers. But at the end of the year, the Presbyterians and Congregationalists were still living under the dark cloud of the King's displeasure, and still very much a prey to the Tory magistrate and the ecclesiastical courts.

In fact, a year after his accession, James II still entertained the same misgivings as to the political trustworthiness of Dissenters he had always felt. In February 1685 he had given the impression to a group of Anglican ecclesiastics that:

'he would never give any sort of countenance to Dissenters, knowing that it must needs be faction and not religion if men could not be content to meet five besides their own family',

as the law permitted.⁽¹⁾ In April 1686 he betrayed the same suspicions in the (abortive) negotiations to alter the religious system in Scotland.⁽²⁾ But by April 1687 there was every appearance of things having changed completely. Since his conversion to Catholicism in 1685 John Dryden had been engaged in the composition of 'The Hind and the Panther', an apology for his new religion. In this poem he had spoken in the most scathing terms of the sects:

'the bloody Bear an Independent beast.. in groans her hate expressed'; 'the Quaking Hare profess'd neutrality, but would not swear'; 'the bristled Baptist Boar .. first rebellion founded was in grace'; 'the insatiate Wolf.. pricks up his predestinating ears'.

But by the time the poem was ready for publication - April 1687 - Dryden found it necessary to add a preface in which he explained that he had directed his diatribe against the minority of Dissenters who were 'refractory and disobedient'; and that the Church of England (characterised in the poem as the Panther, 'fairest creature of the spotted kind') was 'cankered [with] malice.. ambition, interest and pride'.⁽³⁾

But in June 1686 Sir Roger L'Estrange was still quite sure that

(1) Cited F. C. Turner, James II (1948), 308.

(2) J. R. Western, Monarchy and Revolution (1972), 187.

(3) John Dryden, Poetry, Prose and Plays, selected by D. Grant (1952), 176, 177-80, 181-5.

the King regarded demands for complete toleration as demands 'for the crown from his head'. Liberty of conscience was 'in one word, a sanctuary for heretics, atheists, hypocrites, and all sorts of malefactors', and he was convinced that the King thought so too.⁽¹⁾

On the other hand William Penn was assuring the nation that the King was about to extend 'the olive-branch of indulgence', as his brother had done, as the only means of 'restoring the civil concord and unity as formerly'.⁽²⁾ In view of the depth of the King's prejudice against Dissenters, it is surprising that in the event Penn was right and L'Estrange wrong. But it is a revealing measure of the depth of the King's anti-Nonconformist prejudice, however, that the liberty of conscience Penn expected did not come until April 1687, before which time the failure of the Commission of Ecclesiastical Causes as a means of putting pressure on the clergy and of successive prorogations and 'closetting' as a means of putting pressure on the Tory politicians, had demonstrated beyond any doubt the inflexibility of the Church in the face of the King's objective and, if concessions were not an alternative, rendered the Dissenters all that was left for a political alliance. That this realisation came to the King by stages accounts for the slow transmutation of policies in 1686, and that the failure of 'closetting' did not become evident until early 1687 accounts for the fact that it was not until then that the King made a move toward the two sects who, unlike the Baptists and Quakers, had made no move toward him.

(1) The Observator, 8 June 1686, Series III, No. 46.

(2) W. Penn, A Persuasive to Moderation (March 1686), *Works, ed. Bosse (1726)*, II, 737-9, 740, 741-4.
Penn had written this pamphlet 'to prepare the nation for a free toleration of religious faith and worship'. Janney, 279, 280-1.

One of the arguments which enabled James to overcome his distaste for the Nonconformist sects was - as he told Barillon - that the sects were stronger than the Church of England.⁽¹⁾ He may well have derived this view from Penn.

⁽²⁾ Both men knew that, even allowing for distortion in the diocesan reports of 1676, however, this was not true in the numerical sense.⁽³⁾ But Penn may have convinced James that, under conditions of complete freedom of religion, the Church would lose heavily to the sects and the Catholic Communion. There is evidence in James II's advice to his son that such was his expectation, had liberty of conscience ever been 'well fixed'.⁽⁴⁾ Hence the political strength of the sects, as he saw it, was potential rather than actual. But once the decision to seek an alliance with the sects had been made, the King did not lack a rationalisation to make the change appear like a change of means rather than one of policy: his often expressed tolerationist views. It was unfortunate for James that the groups to whom the change did appear like one of policy were the Presbyterians and the Congregationalists, the last of the sects to feel the effects of the King's protection from the agents of persecution. To them it appeared that the King had exchanged a policy of persecution (to please the High Churchmen) for one of toleration (to please Dissenters) and that the only common

(1) Barillon to Louis, 17, 31 March, 29 May 1687, Baschet, 168, 169, 170.

(2) Janney, 281.

(3) The episcopal returns of 1676 had revealed: 2,477,254 members of the Church of England; 108,676 Dissenters; 13,856 Roman Catholics. A. Browning (ed), English Historical Documents 1660-1714 (1953), 413-6.

(4) J. S. Clarke (ed), The Life of James the Second King of England &c Collected out of Memoirs Writ of His Own Hand (1816) II, 621-2.

denominator throughout was a fixed resolve to facilitate the triumph of Catholicism.

It would appear that, although men as far apart as William Penn and Gilbert Burnet believed James to have a sincere desire for liberty of conscience,⁽¹⁾ James's espousal of toleration was never without an element of insincerity, or at least a strong pragmatic, rather than an ideological, base.⁽²⁾ The testimony of Thomas Cartwright, Bishop of Chester, and the alleged testimony of White, Bishop of Peterborough, Sprat, Bishop of Rochester, and of Sunderland, corroborate the view that the tolerationist avowals that abounded after the 1687 Indulgence contrasted with views expressed by the King at an earlier period.⁽³⁾ The same kind of contrast existed between the King's public pronouncements and private opinions on the issue of Louis XIV's treatment of the Huguenots, and there was certainly a marked dichotomy between what James was saying to Barillon on this issue and his contemporaneous obloquies on religious persecution to Van Citters.⁽⁴⁾ But, insincerity or no, there were strong reasons why Dissenters, Catholic and Protestant, stood to gain a great deal by making common cause against the Church in 1686.

Whilst persecution was never applied uniformly and rarely with the full force of the law's severity, there had been signs in

- (1) Penn, 112-113; Braithwaite, 117-118; M. V. Hay, *The Enigma of James II* (1938), 45, 76; L. Pinkham, *William III and the Respectable Revolution* (1954), 14.
- (2) F. C. Turner, *James II* (1948), 308; Miller, 201, 228. See above pp. 103-104, 105-107.
- (3) Thomas Cartwright, *Diary*, Camden Soc. (1843), 48.
- (4) F. C. Turner, *James II* (1948), 310-12, 314;

BM Add MS.

34512, f. 48. See above p. 158 n.2.

the course of the preceding two or three years that certain penalties imposed by Acts of Parliament - whose very severity had made them moribund in the hands of the post-Restoration persecutors who were more interested in excluding the Dissenters politically⁽¹⁾ - were being revived and applied in the persecution of Protestant Dissenters. The most important of these were the Acts of 23 and 35 Elizabeth. 23 Eliz., cap. 1, imposed the £20 per month fine for non-attendance (of which the inhabitants of the parish and the informer could each sue for one third). 28 and 29 Eliz., cap. 6, provided that this fine was to continue to be imposed to the death or conformation of the recusant; if he defaulted he was to forfeit all his goods and two-thirds of his land to the Crown, not in lieu of the fine, but as a further penalty for defaulting. Under 35 Eliz. - originally aimed against Catholic priests - imprisonment, transportation and death were the penalties for unlicensed preaching for the first, second and third offences respectively. Between 1683 and 1686 cases were still brought before the civil and ecclesiastical courts on 1 Eliz., cap. 2 (the Act of Uniformity) under which churchwardens could levy a 12d. per week fine for absence from church and persistent offenders were dealt with by the courts. The main penalty imposed by the ecclesiastical courts was excommunication which led to imprisonment on a writ of de excommunicato capiendo. In addition to the fines imposed for recusancy 3 and 4 Jac.I, cap 4, imposed another distraint on those who failed to take the Anglican Sacrament at least once a year (this could be up to two-thirds of the recusants' lands). The same Acts provided a major harassment for those with scruples over oath-

(1) J. R. Western, *Monarchy and Revolution* (1972), 158-9.

taking: one bishop or two JPs could examine suspected recusants on oath and ask whether they went to church or took the Sacrament; they could also tender the Oath of Allegiance and imprison the recusant until the next Assizes if they refused to take it. There, if they still refused, they could suffer the penalties of the Statute of Praemunire - forfeiture of all property and imprisonment at pleasure, or outlawry. Law enacted after the Restoration - 12 and 13 Charles II, cap. 1, - provided that anyone who refused to take the oath when it was lawfully tendered became subject to a £5 fine for the first offence, £10 (or imprisonment for three to six months) for the second and transportation for the third. Quakers suffered most on the point of oath-taking, as they did on the question of tithes. Refusal to pay tithes left the objector open to action either in the ecclesiastical courts (under the provisions of 27 Henry VIII, cap. 20) or in the civil courts. An action could be laid against a Quaker in the Exchequer Court, and 'then the law so operated that the defendant was often sentenced to an indefinite term of imprisonment... It was actually difficult to imprison a Quaker illegally'. The Act on which Dissenters in general were most commonly tried in 1685 and 1686 was the Conventicle Act of 1670 under which the five shilling fine for attending conventicles was doubled for subsequent offences, the £20 fine for preaching was doubled for subsequent offences, and a £20 fine was imposed on the man in whose house the conventicle was held; and which provided, in the event of inability to pay, for the reassignment of the fines on those who were able to pay or the sale of property and goods, giving informers a financial inducement and the power to compel officers of the law to act. Magistrates who regarded the fines imposed by this

Act as too mild would convict conventiclers of 'riot' under civil not ecclesiastical legislation, the maximum fine for which was £50.

In view of the resurrection of Elizabethan and Jacobean legislation and the severity with which it, and more recent penal laws, were being applied against Dissenters at the turn of the year 1685-6, James II may have convinced himself that, differences notwithstanding, he had every right to hope for the support of desperate, embittered Dissenters in a programme aimed at removing these laws, together with those enacted since the Restoration for excluding non-Anglicans politically, (as well as from the Church, Schools and Universities), and for stifling the influence of the ejected ministry.⁽¹⁾ Regardless of the behaviour of Nonconformists under 'enticement' in the previous reign, James could argue, the force of the post-1681 severities would have swept away former scruples and brought Dissenters to a position in which they would grasp at any opportunity to destroy the instruments of the persecutors.

2

Of the two constant elements in Government policy in 1686, the one most consistently and effectively pursued was the one aimed at controlling the apparatus of persecution, and rendering it more subservient to the central authority, by ensuring that fines and forfeitures distrained from Recusants and Dissenters were paid into

(1) Cragg II, 16-17, 50-51, 56; Miller, 7-8, 51-56; Penn, 8-9; G. R. Elton, *The Tudor Constitution* (1965), 401-4, 422-4, 424-7, 427-32, 447-50; J. P. Kenyon, *The Stuart Constitution* (1966), 363-4, 378-82, 383-6; J. R. Western, *Monarchy and Revolution* (1972), 158-9. See Besse I, 253, 329-30, 471-4; Brockett, 39, 41, 46, 49; Lyon Turner MS.89.13, X45.

the Exchequer. To facilitate this meant exerting greater control over the ecclesiastical courts, through the Bishops, over the civil courts, through certain officers of the law such as the Attorney or Advocate-Generals, and most importantly, over the Sheriffs and Under-Sheriffs, receivers of fines through the lower judiciary. Pressure was brought to bear by the Treasury on these latter sometimes directly, sometimes through the Lord Lieutenants and sometimes through the Pipe Office and the Receiver of Recusancy fines.⁽¹⁾

In the course of the year two investigations were begun in an effort to discover the identity of those involved in the malversation of monies distrained from Recusants and Dissenters and to arrive at the amounts in question as a basis for piecemeal action against offenders. After the Pardon in March Philip Burton and Richard Graham - two Treasury Solicitors - were 'sent out West' as 'Commissioners',

'one to enquire after rebels' estates that had been seized on and concealed from the Crown, and the other to enquire after the Pardon Merchants, that took money to obtain pardons which was concealed from the Crown'.⁽²⁾

It was not part of the Treasury's objective in sending out these commissioners to see the amounts distrained by the 'Pardon Merchants' refunded. On 7 March 1687 the Treasury lords referred to Burton and Graham (and the Attorney-General) what may be assumed to be their own findings in the West with an order to:

(1) Edward Ange was appointed Receiver of Recusancy Fines in July 1684, taking over the functions of the local receiver whose office was abolished. He was to make the receivers pay into the Exchequer the monies they had collected. Miller, 193.

(2) Morrice P, 529.

'consider of the speediest methods of bringing [the amounts in question] into the Exchequer and likewise of the means of bringing to account such persons as have received monies out of the rebels' estates on pretence of procuring the King's pardon'. (1)

The second investigation probably began in June. A Commission of Enquiry was reported to have been set up 'for the enquiry of what money has been distrained from Dissenters of all sorts for five years past'. Dissenters, at that time and subsequently, assumed that this enquiry was a part of the Government's policy in their favour and hence aimed against the Church of England. Upon this wrong assumption, many Dissenters refused to co-operate and 'would not appear against their enemies'. The Government's chief concern was, at this stage, more mundane. Their concern in determining the amount distrained from Dissenters was to find out

'how much of it has been ^{re}turned into the Exchequer, to the end that the King may know what lawful right has been done to his subjects, [the total amount distrained] and wrong to himself, [the amount not paid in]', 'punish the delinquents', and recover the difference. (2)

Another Such Commission was formed in 1688 and, if its returns for Devon were typical, it would appear that those Dissenters who came before it as plaintiffs were very humble people, hopeful of regaining small sums of money levied on them in fines. (3)

(1) CTB VIII, pt. 3, 1243-4.

(2) CSPD 1686-7, 194 (my italics); Neal V, 24-5 *See* Henry, Diaries and Letters, 327.

(3) Brockett, 52.

When orders were made to Sheriffs and Receivers to refund fines and forfeitures, the stipulation was usually inserted that the refund need only be made if the amounts in question had not ^{'answered to the King' or} already been paid into the Exchequer.⁽¹⁾ As long as a Sheriff kept his accounts in order and paid the appropriate amounts into the Exchequer - even if he had raised a record amount in fines - he could expect the commendation of the Treasury. He must not, however, extort any more for his own use than the stipulated 12d. in the £ - and this only on the £20 per month fine for non-attendance - which the Lord Treasurer had laid down on 15 February 1686, back-dated to Michaelmas 1684.⁽²⁾ In addition a further £50 might be deducted occasionally for the

'Comptroller of the Pipe, on the reward for the service of him and his clerks in issuing process against Recusants on the £20 per month and giving speedy despatch to the respective receivers for the improvement of that revenue'.⁽³⁾

When a refund was made, as it was, for example, to 'the Newington Gentleman' who had been fined a record six thousand pounds in the orgy of persecution in December 1685 and January 1686,⁽⁴⁾ it was made less the 12d. in the £.⁽⁵⁾ This refund was also noteworthy in that it was the only one on record for 1686 made to Dissenters who were neither Recusants nor Quakers.

The part of the apparatus of persecution over which the central

(1) e.g. CTB VIII, pt. 2, 718, 808-809, 1003-1004, 1005.

(2) CTB VIII, pt. 2, 596, 795. See also pp 990-1, 1004; Miller, 193.

(3) CTB VIII, pt. 2, 711.

(4) Calamy, Abridgement, 372-3; Palmer I, 67.

(5) Morrice. Q, 34.

d | Administration had least control was the ecclesiastical courts, and it is significant that only one attempt was made - for the London diocese - to ascertain how many Recusants and Dissenters were still being prosecuted for various offences and how much was being distrained from them by way of fines and forfeitures.⁽¹⁾ It was simpler for the Lord Treasurer, or his permanent assistant Henry Guy, to bring pressure to bear on local and central government officials. They were under pressure from Recusants to do this. On 23 June 1686 the Lord Treasurer referred to Richard Graham and Philip Burton, the King's Solicitors in matters relating to recusancy, 'the petition of Chris. Cotton and Sam. Hayne, gent. to the King: showing that divers years past the undersheriffs [of Stafford] and other officers had levied fines on Roman Catholics and had not returned one twentieth part [thereof] into the Exchequer and in particular that Isaac Hawkins, undersheriff of Co. Stafford, in 1683 did receive of three men [Recusants] in that county £184 and paid into the Exchequer but £4 and that many other persons had that year paid great sums of money to him, amounting to many £1000 and that Hawkins had not returned into the Exchequer above £600 and so remained accountable to the King for the overplus'.

The petitioners

'therefore prayed power to examine all Roman Catholics in Stafford, Salop, Cheshire and Wales what money they had paid [the] said Hawkins; with permission to inspect the Pipe Office gratis to see his returns'.⁽²⁾

(1) CTB VIII, pt. 2, 594.

(2) CTB VIII, pt. 2, 791.

No warrant is extant giving the petitioners the powers they sought, but such an investigation may well have been within the standing terms of reference of Burton and Graham,⁽¹⁾ which would certainly have included the power to inspect Pipe Office returns. In any event, there were instances of fines and forfeitures being refunded - probably, though not certainly, to Catholics⁽²⁾ - and Henry Guy's request of 7 September 'for a perfect extract, with all speed, of the accounts of the Sheriffs of England as declared for the year ended 1685, Michaelmas'⁽³⁾ may well have been made to facilitate such an investigation. At all events the Lord Treasurer, having warned them earlier 'concerning the due payment and certification of the King's share of Conventicle fines', told the JPs of Leicestershire on 2 December that he was now reiterating his warning that 'a fresh [information][had] been made that^a due care had not been taken' in regard to these matters within their county.⁽⁴⁾ In sterner vein on 9 November Rochester informed Messrs. Evans and Fish, late Sheriffs of Monmouthshire and Bedfordshire respectively, that the accounts they had been required to submit had not been passed, threatening them that 'for such default sheriffs have been taken by a serjeant-at-arms' and that unless they could perfect their accounts such would be their fate.⁽⁵⁾ John Langley, Receiver of Recusants' Forfeitures for Gloucestershire, may have been taken up because of irregularities in his accounts, since in March 1687 he was granted a stay of process on this charge.⁽⁶⁾

(1) See CSPD 1686-7, 194; Henry, Diaries and Letters, 327.

(2) CTB VIII, pt. 2, 808-809, 854.

(3) CTB VIII, pt. 2, 900.

(4) CTB VIII, pt. 2, 1040.

(5) CTB VIII, pt. 2, 990-991.

(6) CTB VIII, pt. 3, 1242.

There were those in the central administration itself who must have come very close to dismissal and arrest. On 18 January 1686, Henry Guy wrote to Sir Samuel Astry,⁽¹⁾ enclosing a list (now missing) 'of money levied on Dissenters... amounting in the whole to £5,380'. To this list was appended Guy's cryptic note: 'Where is this money? If it *be* not paid into the Exchequer you are to give the Lord Treasurer an account'.⁽²⁾ When Astry had replied, ^{presumably} detailing the actual sums distrained from Dissenters, Guy pressed his question by sending Richard Graham to him 'to enquire why the said sums are not paid into the King's use'.⁽³⁾ A similar situation arose in October after an informer had written directly to the King accusing Dr. Thomas Pinfold, the Advocate-General,⁽⁴⁾ of withholding funds. The Treasury took the accusation very seriously and Edward Ange was sent to Pinfold with an affidavit 'to enquire whether any of the monies therein mentioned have been accounted for'.⁽⁵⁾

Exactly how ineffective this attempt at greater financial control was in its secondary purpose of rendering the agencies of persecution more subservient to the central government, will become apparent in the way that magistrates, ecclesiastical courts, and especially, informers ignored the King's intimated, then expressed, then repeatedly reiterated wishes on the subject of the persecution of the favoured dissenting groups, let alone the other groups with which the King was less concerned in 1686. In its primary purpose - persecution as a source of revenue by ending malversation at local

(1) Attorney in the Court of the King's Bench. CTB VIII, pt.2, 1020.

(2) CTB VIII, pt. 2, 531.

(3) CTB VIII, pt. 2, 535.

(4) CSPD 1686-7, 223.

(5) CTB VIII, pt. 2, 937-938, 990.

level - greater financial control doubtless was facilitated to a limited degree. But as the King's wishes, at least as far as Catholics and Quakers were concerned, received reinforcement through the warrants for stay of process and the dispensations granted toward the end of 1686 and in the first three months of 1687, persecution as a source of revenue was supplemented from elsewhere. Those Dissenters who availed themselves of the facilities of the 'Dispensation or Licence Office' set up in November 1686 found that the standard fee for a family dispensation was fifty shillings.⁽¹⁾ Some who had to be 'bailed out' from the Assizes court by a Royal dispensation might have to pay as much as £26 for the privilege.⁽²⁾

3

The only evidence of the King's vaunted tolerationist views in action in 1685 had been the continuation of the policy which Charles II had inaugurated, but not implemented, of granting what amounted to dispensations⁽³⁾ to those who could produce certificates of loyalty. By the nature of the criterion of eligibility, because the 257 names on the warrants for stay of process did not include

(1) Morrice Q, 15; Ivimey I, 462.

(2) Ivimey I, 463-4. In the early months of 1687, however, the King was reported to have pardoned the fines and forfeitures of several Dissenters. Luttrell I, 393, 398.

(3) The instruments that facilitated the release and discharge of recusants were actually warrants for stay of process. Certificates of loyalty only procured 'what amounted to dispensations' in the sense that the judges were instructed to 'discharge and set at liberty' those who possessed them. CSPD 1685, 52-53. See above pp. 119-121.

those of any known Dissenters,⁽¹⁾ and in view of the attitude of the King to Dissenters and of Dissenters toward the King and the dispensing power during 1685 it is possible, though not certain, that the warrants for stay of process issued in 1685 were mainly for the benefit of Catholic recusants.⁽²⁾ The warrants of March 1687 which waived certificates of loyalty as the criterion of eligibility for Catholics - 'the King being well satisfied in the loyalty of all his Roman Catholic subjects' - may be taken as an indication of the purpose behind the whole expedient,⁽³⁾ as a recognition of the fact that, because of the large number of stay of process warrants issued during 1686, the expedient had by then realised its object of freeing Catholics from the weight of the penal laws and as a pointer to the fact that by that time Court policy was centred around another device intended to achieve the same freedom for Nonconformists: the dispensations (discussed below) which could be bought from the Licence Office set up in November 1686. It must be significant that until March 1687 James still found it necessary to base even the religious freedom of his co-religionists on his brother's dispensation; in other words, to rationalise and justify the toleration of Roman Catholics by asserting their individual loyalty.

One change in this policy during the early months of 1686 was indicated by an amendment on 9 March to the original dispensation

(1) This statement refers to the warrants issued in 1685. In 1686-7 warrants for stay of process were certainly issued for Quakers and at least one Independent, William Minty of Poole. CTB VIII, pt. 2, 629-634; CSPD 1686-7, 302; Densham and Ogle, 189, 190.

(2) See above pp. 121-124.

(3) CTB VIII, pt. 3, 1246, 1262. See above p. 124.

that, in pursuit of the King's intention to pardon all those who (either themselves or their families) 'had suffered in the time of the rebellion and who had been prosecuted for refusing to take the Oath of Allegiance and Supremacy', and 'mentioning the late eminent services of Sir William Penn and the loyalty and good affection of his son William Penn', the King wished to signify 'the Royal pleasure that the said William Penn, his family and servants should not be prosecuted for any of the causes above mentioned'.⁽¹⁾

The only other difference was the greater volume of stay of process warrants issued in 1686 and the first three months of 1687. As they appear in the Calendar of State Papers Domestic and the Calendar of Treasury Books these warrants would seem to divide into two types; warrants for persons (sometimes designated 'recusants') who had produced certificates of loyalty,⁽²⁾ and warrants, also for recusancy offences, with no mention of certificates of loyalty, but which like the warrants in the other category were endorsed 'Mr. Brent'.⁽³⁾ An examination of the warrants themselves in the Public Records Office confirms the existence of these two types but clarifies the nature of the distinction, which is obscured in the Calendar. One type of warrant describes the late King's intention to pardon those who were persecuted recusants and then orders that process be stayed against certain persons who had produced certificates of loyalty.⁽⁴⁾ The second type describes how the King,

(1) CSPD 1686-7, 62.

(2) CSPD 1686-7, 119, 278; CTB VIII, pt. 2, 1122-1129.

(3) CSPD 1686-7, 7-8, 66-7, 71, 119, 301, 302, 379-80, 381-2; CTB VIII, pt. 2, 626, 637, 1003-1004.

(4) SP 44/336, 332, 387-8, 393; SP 44/337, 16-17, 107-108. This applies to Calendar entries on pages 7-8, 66-67, 71, 119 and 278.

having 'received good testimony of the peaceable behaviour' of certain recusants, had decided to stay all processes against them.⁽¹⁾ According to John Miller the endorsement 'Mr. Brent' 'implies that many of the recusants involved were Catholics', apart from the fact that

'for the predominantly Tory magistracy [who signed the certificates of loyalty produced by the recusants in the first category]⁽²⁾ Dissent was closely identified with disloyalty and Catholics were far more likely than Dissenters to be able to prove their loyalty to the crown in the Civil War'.⁽³⁾

In interpreting the significance of the two types of writ it is interesting that all warrants for stay of process issued in 1685 were of the first type.⁽⁴⁾ It may also be observed that, apart from the 'Quaker warrants',⁽⁵⁾ the warrants for stay of process issued on 'good testimony' rather than certificates of loyalty were only issued during and after November 1686. It is possible, therefore, to explain the two types of warrant issued in 1686 in terms of the King's change of policy in the course of the year, and the accession to favour of the Dissenters. The only difficulty with this argument is that from November the Licence Office was in existence specifically to enable Dissenters to purchase dispensations for themselves and their families. It may have been the case that, because of the

(1) SP 44/337, 129, 171-2, 175. This applies to Calender entries on pages 301, 333, 338.

(2) CSPD 1685, 52-53.

(3) Miller, 204, 205. Robert Brent was employed by James in granting dispensations and pardons 1685-6, and in 1687-8 as an important figure in the electoral campaign. Jones, 145.

(4) SP 44/336, 66-68, 104-107, 199, 246-7.

(5) See below pp. 234-235.

reluctance of the magistracy to recognise the new 'warrants for dispensations', that some Dissenters, perhaps Quakers, preferred to benefit from a stay of process warrant through a direct application to the King.⁽¹⁾

Four warrants for stay of process issued during 1686 stand out as distinctive. One, issued on 15 March to the civil and ecclesiastical authorities of Lancashire, specifically identified its beneficiaries as Roman Catholics.⁽²⁾ Another, issued 1 May to benefit one person, her family and servants in Derbyshire, has the endorsement 'Mr. Brent' crossed out and replaced by 'Mr. Penn', possibly suggesting that the beneficiary was a Nonconformist, perhaps a Quaker.⁽³⁾ The other two - the 'Quaker warrants' - specified that the beneficiaries were Quakers. The first - doubtless representing the final reward of the efforts of the Quaker courtiers who had petitioned the Court during 1685⁽⁴⁾ - was issued on 4 March by the Lord Treasurer to the Clerk of the Pipe 'to forbear process against the following persons, Quakers, till next term'. Appended to the warrant is one of Whitehead's petitions. The King had received a report on the matter from the Attorney-General on 20 January and upon reading it had 'declared his pleasure for stay of proceedings for the future against the said subjects'. Upon the basis of this the Clerk of the Pipe was 'to stay process' until the Attorney-General had had time 'to prepare instruments to discharge the proceedings as well against the following persons as all others mentioned

(1) The dispensations issued from November 1686 are discussed below, pp. 267-269.

(2) CSPD 1686-7, 71-72.

(3) CSPD 1686-7, 119; SP 44/337, 19-20.

(4) See above, pp. 111, 113, 115-119.

in the said report'.⁽¹⁾ The 'instruments' referred to were almost certainly the warrants issued on and after 15 March which Quakers have termed 'the Mandate'.⁽²⁾ It is possible that not all of the 673 names mentioned were those of Quakers. Whitehead was in the habit of including the names of non-Quakers in his petitions.⁽³⁾ It is probable, for example, that the Brittaines of Lincolnshire were the family of Theophilus Brittain, the ejected minister from Brocklesby who, six months before, was still resident in the county,⁽⁴⁾ and that the Fra. Barnardiston mentioned under Suffolk might have been part of the family of the Presbyterian Sir Samuel Barnardiston.⁽⁵⁾ Another warrant, issued on 15 November 1686, also mentioned Quakers by name.⁽⁶⁾

The volume of stay of process warrants greatly increased between September 1686 and March 1687, doubtless an indication of the King's determination to bring the policy of protection for his co-religionists to a culmination and, perhaps, that Nonconformists were beginning to benefit from this policy. The warrants issued between January and August 1686 catered for 415 persons (plus the family and servants, unnamed, of one beneficiary) from Gloucester-

(1) CTB VIII, pt. 2, 629-634.

(2) These are discussed in a separate context below pp. 240-241.

(3) Braithwaite, 85; Whitehead, 358.

(4) Palmer II, 413-414.

(5) Lacey, 376. The 673 names in the schedule attached to the warrant of 4 March were divided into counties: Surrey, 48; Sussex, 20; Stafford, 19; Suffolk, 77; Nottinghamshire, 69; Northumberland, 52; Lincolnshire, 116; Leicestershire, 15; Gloucestershire, 21; Hertfordshire, 28; Essex, 41; Berkshire, 8; Cambridge, 3; Hereford, 36; Kent, 13; London and Middlesex, 3; Norfolk, 81; Northampton, 8; Oxfordshire, 3; Wiltshire, 7; Worcestershire, 5; CTB VIII, pt. 2, 629-634.

(6) CTB VIII, pt. 2, 1005-1006. This warrant is discussed below.

shire, Sussex, Flintshire, Lincolnshire, Derbyshire and elsewhere.⁽¹⁾
 But between September 1686 and March 1687, 800 persons (plus the families and servants, unnamed, of two beneficiaries) benefited from stay of process warrants and a further 278 from discharges, from Buckinghamshire, London, Surrey, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Warwickshire, Gloucestershire, Cheshire, Derbyshire and Newcastle-upon-Tyne.⁽²⁾

In view of the understood desire of the King that his co-religionists should not be persecuted and the host of warrants which enforced his views, it was not surprising that it was in the persecution of Roman Catholics that the actions of magistrates and ecclesiastical courts were most nearly commensurate with the King's wishes. Such persecution of Catholics as took place was spontaneous and ungovernable like that inflicted by a 'Protestant mob' on the builders of a mass house in Lime Street, calling for a night-and-day guard by the London trained-bands.⁽³⁾ One of the few magistrates who initiated the persecution of Roman Catholics - Sir John Knight 'a violent Tory in Bristol' - was himself arrested for disturbing the peace. When he appealed against his sentence

'the Court said that he was a very dangerous man, and he did raise up fears and jealousies, and did give a new resurrection to those things the Court had hoped had been

- (1) The treasury warrants include persons from all parts of England and Wales, whilst those in the State papers are grouped in counties. CTB VIII, pt. 2, 626, 637; CSPD 1686-7, 7-8, 66-7, 71, 119.
- (2) CSPD 1686-7, 268-72, 278, 301, 302, 323, 332, 333, 338, 339, 379-80, 381-2; CTB VIII, pt. 2, 1003-1004.
- (3) VCH London I, 345; Morrice P, 531, 532, 632; Ellis I, 111-112, 118-119, xli, xliii; Luttrell I, 373, 375.

already buried'.⁽¹⁾

The fact that the authorities were prepared to exercise restraint in the persecution of Catholics; - and this, at a time when, through the rapid spread of Catholic institutions and personnel in England, provocation must have been severe;⁽²⁾ - calls for an explanation more convincing than deference to the King's wishes. This is especially so since, as will be seen, during the same period they were unprepared to defer to the King's wishes regarding the persecution of Quakers. Perhaps the explanation is to be found in the fact that the old fashioned 'right' of the Church of England, which found the 'Papists' much more congenial, on historical grounds, than the 'Fanatics', had much more influence with the as yet unreformed magistracy, than the young radical element moving toward the Presbyterian 'Dons'.⁽³⁾ The sermons of the Anglican 'right' and their private fears regarding the growth of Nonconformist influence may point to this as an explanation.⁽⁴⁾ Rumours that the Anglican 'right' were endeavouring to move the Church toward an understanding with the King - to which he was reported to be far from adverse - on the basis of toleration for Recusants and continued persecution of

- (1) Matthew to Philip Henry, 18 May, 8 June 1686, Henry MS.5, letters 30, 33; Morrice Q, 15,52; Luttrell I, 379, 389; HMC 14th Report, app. pt. II; Portland MSS III (1894), 396. Knight had also been an avid persecutor of the Dissenters and had been much favoured by the government 1678-81 and in 1685 when he and the Duke of Beaufort held Bristol against Monmouth. DNB XI, 255; E. Terrill (ed), *The Records of the Church of Christ... in Broadmead, Bristol (1847)*, 492.
- (2) Morrice P, 530-2; Q, 20, 21, 22; Burnet I, 672; Welwood, *Memoirs*, 172-4; J. S. Clarke (ed), *The Life of James the Second King of England &c (1816)* II, 79-80. See H. Prideaux, *The Life of the Reverend Humphrey Prideaux Dean of Norwich (1748)*, 23-24; K. Feiling, *A History of the Tory Party 1640-1714 (1924)*, 214-215.
- (3) See above, pp. 99, 125, 129-130; Miller, 205.
- (4) Morrice P, 642; Q, 20, 28, 45, 80.

Protestant Dissenters, may not have been totally without foundation. According to Morrice at least one Bishop believed them.⁽¹⁾

Roger Morrice had a lively sense of the irony of the times. Since James II's accession, the Church of England had told Dissenters that the only way to prevent the triumph of Popery was to persecute all dissenters from the Church of England, Catholic and Protestant. 'After the strictest enquiry', however, Morrice had been able to find no instance of a Catholic Dissenter having been persecuted, although they never attended Church or took the Sacrament. Clearly, Morrice concluded, 'the best way to prevent Popery is not to persecute Papists'.⁽²⁾

4

The comparative immunity from persecution which the Catholics had enjoyed in the course of 1686 and up to March 1687 had been founded on Charles II's dispensations, backed up by James's determination to make their certificates of loyalty effective. Thereafter, until the Declaration of Indulgence, it was founded purely on the fact of their being Catholics, the King's Chosen Few.

Whilst the special status of William Penn and the assiduous lobbying of other Quaker courtiers like George Whitehead, Robert Barclay and Gilbert Latey,⁽³⁾ rendered the Quakers the most noticed and favoured of the Nonconformist sects in the first half of 1686,

(1) Morrice P, 566, 594, 638; Q, 38, 39.

(2) Morrice P, 574.

(3) CSPD 1686-7, 116; CTB VIII, pt. 2, 630; Morrice Q, 86. See Braithwaite, 125-6; R. Hawkins (ed), Friends Library: Consisting principally of Journals (1834) IX, 80, 81.

with the exception of Penn's family they had received no guarantee of immunity from persecution, and their position was still very vulnerable.⁽¹⁾ Few if any applications for certificates of loyalty on the basis of the 1685 Dispensation had been received from Quakers,⁽²⁾ and no releases or discharges were actually effected until after the Quaker warrant of 4 March.⁽³⁾

On 10 March 1686 James II issued a General Pardon. This Pardon had no special relevance for the Quakers but provided all dissenters from the Church of England with an opportunity 'to take and sue out' the King's 'particular pardon', in response to which the King undertook to authorise the Secretaries of State to draw up warrants for the Attorney General, who would secure the release of those who had sought the King's pardon and were in prison for any of a number of specified offences.⁽⁴⁾ The Pardon opened with the avowal that the King had intended to issue such a Pardon after his coronation but had been prevented from so doing 'by the late unnatural rebellion', and that its purpose was that all fears and jealousies which might concern the security of the King's subjects might 'be removed and wholly taken away' so that they might return to their due obedience. The offences specified by the Pardon were:

'all manner of treasons, felonies, misprisions of treason or felony, treasonable or seditious words or libels, seditious and unlawful meetings and conventicles, all offences whereby

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- (1) Morrice P, 533; Janney, 281. As early as 7 January, 1686, however, there were those who believed that the Quakers had 'got a sort of connivance for themselves'. HMC Downshire MSS I, 1, 95.
- (2) See above pp. 121-124.
- (3) CTB VIII, pt. 2, 629-634. See R. Hawkins (ed), op cit, 79; Besse I, 479; Janney, 281-2.
- (4) Gazette No. 2120 (11-15 March 1685/6); the text is reproduced below in Appendix One, Item A. See last paragraph.

any person may be charged with the penalty and danger of praemunire; all riots, routs, offences, contempts, trespasses and misdemeanours and all judgments and convictions for not coming to church'.

It was the King's will and pleasure that neither then nor at any time in the future should persons who had already committed such offences be charged with them. Among the persons excepted from this General Pardon were

'all and every person or persons who in a traitorous and hostile manner' invaded the kingdom with 'James Scott late Duke of Monmouth, and all and every other person or persons who in the time of the late Rebellion... were officers or had the name or repute of being officers in his army'.

The names of such rebels and their families were listed together with a number of 'fugitives and persons fled from our justice into parts beyond the seas', and a few common criminals. The list, of about 150, included Stephen Lobb, William Gaunt, John Manley, John Trenchard, John Wildman, Titus Oates and Robert Ferguson.

While this Pardon in itself did not offer the Quakers any particular favour, the King's Warrant to the Attorney-General of 15 March did:

'Whereas we are given to understand that several of our subjects, commonly called Quakers, in the schedules hereunto annexed, are either convicted... for not swearing,... or indicted.. for not coming to church', 'and that some of them lie in prison upon writs de excommunicato capiendo, and other processes for causes aforesaid, and we being willing that our said subjects, [those mentioned in the schedule 'hereunto annexed'] and other of our subjects commonly

called Quakers' at that time being, or in the past having been, convicted or imprisoned for any of 'the causes aforesaid, should receive the full benefit of our General Pardon.. with all possible ease to them'.

In consequence the King's subjects 'commonly called Quakers' imprisoned for any ecclesiastical offence were to be released, and all 'fines and forfeitures' then levied on them to be cancelled. (There was no mention of refunds).⁽¹⁾ On the basis of this warrant, the Attorney-General issued further warrants 15-20 March ordering the release of certain named Quakers.⁽²⁾

Though the King's warrant to the Attorney-General was of immense significance to the Quaker campaign to secure relief from persecution, it was entirely retrospective. Some historians of the Quaker movement would appear to have interpreted it as if it were prospective, and termed it the 'King's Mandate', guaranteeing future immunity, (a mini-Indulgence so far as the Quakers were concerned).⁽³⁾ It was, however, merely a warrant facilitating the release from prison, in accordance with the terms of the General Pardon, of the members of one particular sect imprisoned for ecclesiastical causes, together with the cancellation of fines and forfeitures at that time in process. Since no such warrant was issued on behalf of the membership of any other sect, however, it was obviously a mark of the King's special favour. The wording of the warrant makes it clear that it

(1) SP 44/336, ff. 391-2. (Summarised CSPD 1686-7, 71). See Appendix One, item B, for text.

(2) Besse I, 479-80; J. Gratton, Journal of the Life of John Gratton (1795), 111. See A. J. Eddington, The First Fifty Years of Quakerism in Norwich, Friends Hist. Soc. (1932), 220; CSPD 1686-7, 71, 75, 76.

(3) Besse I, ^{74, 164,} 479; Whiting, 182.

was intended to apply to those Quakers listed in the attached schedule 'and other of our subjects commonly called Quakers'. Any doubt that it referred to the entire sect is dispelled by the number of releases that resulted. In an Address of Thanks sent to the King in the following year, the Yearly Meeting of Quakers gratefully acknowledged that 'above 1200 [Quaker] prisoners were released from their severe imprisonments, and many others from spoil and ruin of their estates and properties' as a result of the 1686 Pardon.⁽¹⁾ Penn believed that of the 'thousands of worthy citizens belonging to the various dissenting sects' who were released, there were 'upwards of thirteen hundred Friends',⁽²⁾ though it is likely that the smaller figure (based on the meticulously kept Quaker records) was more accurate.⁽³⁾

Hence, although the Pardon had not been issued specifically to facilitate the release of Quakers, it was the Quaker sect - thanks to the King's warrant or 'Mandate' that followed the Pardon - that benefited most from it, and for which it had the most significance. In contrast to the 1200 Friends, a total of no more than thirty prisoners were released from all the other sects put together.⁽⁴⁾ But the joy and optimism of the Quakers was unbounded. Optimism for the future, however, was without justification. Knowing that on receipt of a Quaker petition Lord Chief Justice Herbert had

(1) Gazette No. 2245 (19 May 1687): as well as thanking His Majesty 'for his gracious proclamations and warrants last year', it also thanked him for his Declaration of Indulgence.

(2) Janney, 281, 282. The aged George Fox thought that 'fifteen or sixteen hundred are set at liberty'. Cited Sewel II, 468-9.

(3) From the figures provided by Besse it is clear that a total of over 15,000 Friends had been fined or imprisoned between 1660-1686, with a pecuniary loss of about a million pounds. The totals are corroborated by Whiting, 218; J. R. Western, *Monarchy and Revolution* (1972), 161. c.f. T. Timpson, *Church History of Kent* (1859), 270-1.

(4) Whitehead, 587-591. See Morrice P, 563-4.

immediately discharged all Quakers brought before the assizes in Ilchester on 30 March, some Friends believed that this was the pattern of the future.⁽¹⁾ Penn knew it was not. Although the King had made it clear that the Quakers, as a sect, enjoyed his favour, Penn was sure that they would continue to be 'grievously persecuted and despoiled of their goods by greedy informers', to say nothing of the Tory magistrates.⁽²⁾ Some less than completely satisfactory evidence exists - made much of by Professor Jones⁽³⁾ - that during late March or April the King sent letters to some JPs indicating that forbearance in their treatment of Quakers would be in order;⁽⁴⁾ but, the King's wishes notwithstanding, the Anglican persecutors were still not prepared to close their eyes to Quaker conventicles, as they often did to mass houses. So, even if the King's determination to protect Quakers had been as great as his determination to protect Catholics, his task would have been much more difficult. Persecution continued, and the only way his attention could be called to a case of persecution was through representations made to him by the Quakers at Court. It was necessary, therefore, for persecution actually to take place before the King could bring pressure to bear on the persecutors; there was no guarantee of future exemption. The circular letters were either not sent to all JPs or simply ignored. But the

(1) Sewel II, 466-8.

(2) Janney, 281-2.

(3) Jones, 103. Jones's use of HMC Downshire MSS I, i, 79, 95 and Braithwaite, 125 among the sources cited would tend to indicate that he may be confused with the General Pardon or the Mandate or that he is merely making unwarranted assumptions.

(4) Sir R. L'Estrange to Sir W. Trumbull, 24 March 1686, HMC Downshire MSS I, i, 139. See Luttrell I, 378. The King had already given some indication of his opposition to the persecution of Nonconformists in general. Privy Council Register, PC2/71, f. 413.

Quakers still enjoyed a better position than the other sects in the period up to the 1687 Indulgence; they enjoyed the King's favour and were prepared to bring cases of persecution to his notice. The other sects did not enjoy the King's favour and (with the exception of the Baptists from July 1686) would not solicit his intervention against their persecutors.

If the circular letters were sent to JPs, the ecclesiastical courts would not be affected by them. If they listed the offences mentioned in the Pardon and the Mandate as the areas in which the JPs should exercise leniency, they would in any event have provided inadequate cover for Friends. Joseph Besse's account of Quaker persecution provides ample evidence that the persecution of Quakers for refusal to pay tithes or to join the militia continued to the end of the reign.⁽¹⁾

In some counties the persecution of Quakers, for other offences, did end in March 1686 (though it continued for other Dissenters). These counties were Gloucestershire, Hertfordshire, Cambridgeshire, and Cumberland, though in the latter county eighteen Quakers remained in prison until 1688.⁽²⁾ In other areas magistrates acquiesced in the King's request - while continuing to persecute other Dissenters - but the ecclesiastical courts seemed to be endeavouring to compensate for this by higher exactions for tithes. These were Berkshire, Derbyshire, Durham, Northumberland, Somerset and Sussex.⁽³⁾

In some parts of the country, however, although the King's

(1) Besse I, 37, 38, 39, 83, 126, 145, 165, 189, 239-40, 329-30, 358-9, 483-5, 517-8, 562, 575-6, 647-9, 707-8, 734-5; II, 168-76.

(2) Besse I, 99, 135, 226-227, 253-4.

(3) Besse I, 36-9, 144-5, 189-90, 239-40, 647-9, 734-5, 761-2.

warrants made it necessary to release prisoners, ⁽¹⁾ the persecution of Quakers continued unabated. But even the releases themselves were by no means a matter of form: many difficulties were met by individual Quakers from 'clerks and other officials' who charged exorbitant fees for the legal steps of their release. ⁽²⁾ Even in districts ^h where persecution continued, however - and these included areas with the highest concentration of Quakers; London, Middlesex, Bristol and Yorkshire - the King's expressed wishes did have some effect on the persecutors. Many informers, clergy and especially, magistrates, were undoubtedly cowed thereafter. In the post-Mandate persecution the names of the persecutors and persecuted detailed in Quaker annals are recurrent, and it becomes clear that the continued persecution of Quakers was mainly the work of a bigoted or avaricious minority. In Norfolk the same persons lost money and property for non-payment of tithes in each year between 1686-1689, and ^{Since they did not move parish} the actions were ^{doubtless} instigated by the same clergymen; the record of London and Middlesex is similar. ⁽³⁾ But one respect in which Quakers were completely left alone by their persecutors after March 1686 was church-attendance: in the detailed, month by month, account of the persecution suffered by the Society of Friends catalogued by Joseph Besse, no Quaker was convicted of recusancy after March 1686; this removed from the backs of the one sect who resolutely eschewed partial conformity, regardless of the consequences, the crushing burden of

(1) To see how the 1200 releases were distributed throughout the counties, refer to Besse I, 37-8, 74, 83, 99, 126, 164, 227, 345, 481-3.

(2) Whiting, 182; J. Gratton, Journal of the Life of John Gratton (1795), 77.

(3) Besse I, 483-6, 517-8.

the £20 per month fine.⁽¹⁾

But prosecution of Quakers under the Conventicle Act continued in many localities,⁽²⁾ and for this they blamed the informers. It was decided to tackle the problem area by area beginning with London. After a petition from Whitehead and Latey containing the names of forty-three informers who harassed Quakers, James II appointed Richard Graham and Philip Burton, already involved in one commission,⁽³⁾ as Commissioners to enquire into the activities of informers. On 31 May 1686 a warrant was issued requiring three of them - Jeffrey Nightingale, Peter Lugg and Captain John Hilton - to be present at Richard Graham's chambers at Cliffords Inn on 4 June. On the day when the informers were examined a group of Quakers, with Whitehead as the spokesman, met the Commissioners. The cases of fifty Quakers were outlined in which informers had sworn falsely as to the facts, and in which excessive distresses had been levied with violence. On the basis of this evidence and the testimony of the forty-three informers named in Whitehead's petition, the Commissioners produced a draft report. This report considerably played down the conduct of the informers and in milk-and-water language proposed that a limited persecution of Quakers should continue. When it was pointed out by dissatisfied Quakers that their terms of reference had been to describe, not to legislate, the Commissioners admitted that their

(1) Besse I, 37-8, 39, 74, 82-3, 99, 126, 135, 144-5, 165, 189, 226-7, 239-40, 253, 329-30, 345, 481-5, 517-8, 561-562, 576, 646-9, 707-8, 734-5, 761-2; II, 165-70. See CTB VIII, pt. 2, 932.

(2) See W. Beck (ed), *The London Friends Meetings: showing the Rise of the Society of Friends in London* (1869), 219, 252; R. Hawkins (ed), *Friends Library: Consisting Principally of Journals and Extracts from Other Writings of Members of the Society of Friends* (1834) IX, 79, 80, 80-81.

(3) See above, p. 224.

freedom of expression had been considerably inhibited by a 'message' they had received

'from a great person, or persons, in the Church, urgently requesting them to do nothing which might weaken the power of the informers, as they were of great service to the Church'.

In consequence, the Quakers sent in a minority report of their own. ⁽¹⁾ On the basis of this minority report the Lord Chancellor, on the orders of the King, sent instructions to London JPs to discountenance the forty-three informers. ⁽²⁾ On 25 ~~September~~ ^{September} George Fox wrote to a friend that the King had 'given check to the informers: so that in many places our meetings are pretty quiet'. ⁽³⁾ Latey ^{may have} believed that the breaking of the power of the informers, more than the protection of the Court, was what enabled Quakers to enjoy greater freedom during the remainder of 1686. ⁽⁴⁾

In the ensuing months the Quakers made it their business to keep the King in touch with the activities of informers in all parts of the country - and occasionally of Sheriffs and Deputy-lieutenants too - which enabled him to send out orders that they be discountenanced. Through these orders, and through warrants for stay of process, the King was enabled to thwart the activities of the minority of persecutors still active, and, on a selective basis, shield the Quakers from the worst of the persecution in the last four months of 1686.

(1) R. Hawkins (ed), op cit, 81, 82; Braithwaite, 125-6; Whiting, 182-3; Cragg II, 63.

(2) Whiting, 183.

(3) Cited Sewel II, 468-9.

(4) R. Hawkins (ed), op cit, 82-83.

But persecution was slow dying, and releases slow to be effected. On 30 April 1686 Whitehead and Latey had presented a petition to the King pointing out that one hundred Quakers were still in prison at Bristol for non-attendance at church, attendance at conventicles, and non-payment of tithes.⁽¹⁾ By June they had all been released, though they could not meet openly, and their meeting houses were still sequestered. On 7 June the Men's Meeting of the Society of Friends in Bristol appointed two of their number 'to speak with Jno. Tilly and endeavour to prevail with him to deliver up our Great Meeting House peaceably'. Others were appointed to refurbish the Temple Street Meeting House. By 21 June the Friends had 'spoken with Jno. Tilly and had prevailed with him to clear the meeting house.. and were in expectation of the keys and full possession thereof suddenly'. A decision was then taken to refurbish the Great Meeting House when regained. By 19 July this meeting house, in Friar Street, had been regained, the work of refurbishing completed and a plan made to hold their 'next meeting at the public meeting house, or if obstructed there', at a private house. No obstruction occurred.⁽²⁾ However, although the Baptists, like the Quakers, were meeting in peace by July, the Bristol Sessions Book bears witness that other Dissenters were constantly being indicted for attending conventicles.⁽³⁾

In Buckinghamshire and Yorkshire, however, whilst magistrates

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- (1) CSPD 1686-7, 116; R. Hawkins (ed), op cit, 80-81.
 (2) Minute Book of the Men's Meeting of the Society of Friends in Bristol, 1667-1686, Bristol Record Society XXVI (1970), 187, 188-9.
 (3) Lyon Turner MS.89.13, XI 3; E. Terrill (ed), The Records of the Church of Christ Meeting at Broadmead, Bristol, 1640-87, Hanserd Knollys Soc. (1847), 494.

held back as far as persecuting Quakers was concerned, the ecclesiastical courts were levying exorbitant fines for non-payment of tithes. In the latter county between April 1683 and April 1690, 354 Quakers were fined a total of £1,963.5s.11d. for tithes.⁽¹⁾ The Sheriff of Norfolk Robert Nightingale - who, like L'Estrange, had been knighted in 1685 - was still assiduous in seizing the goods and money of the Quakers, as were the JPs of Devon.⁽²⁾ In London, whilst the precious 'Mandate' from which the Quakers expected so much was fresh off the press, two Quaker meetings were broken up in a week, and in the ensuing weeks magistrates were 'most active' in disturbing their meetings.⁽³⁾ This activity continued through June and July, but by early July Roger Morrice noted the first sign that the City magistrates were beginning to discriminate in favour of Quakers when they appeared before them. Quaker meetings were still disturbed every Sunday, but when Baptists and Quakers appeared before a JP, the Quakers were discharged and the Baptists fined; and this in the midst of the violent Anglican campaign against all Nonconformist conventicles that came as a reaction to the widespread Anglican support for the Bishop of London's stand on the issue of John Sharp's suspension.⁽⁴⁾ It was against this background that James II took the first steps to protect Quakers against the informers inveighed against in the minority report, perhaps on his part a reaction to the reaction. Certainly Compton's recalcitrance in the face of the King's order must have removed any remaining motives which the King may have

(1) Besse I, 83; II, 167-190.

(2) Besse I, 164-5, 515-518. See Luttrell I, 340, 366.

(3) Morrice P, 529, 536.

(4) Morrice P, 533, 536, 543, 550, 563, 564.

harboured for restricting his dispensation and delaying a more forceful campaign to win Nonconformist support.

The first evidence of Government intervention to protect Quakers was a Warrant by the Lord Treasurer to the Treasurer's Remembrancer, the Clerk of the Pipe and the Sheriff of Norfolk

'to supercede all process against the Quakers.. for not going to church or refusing to take the oaths of Obedience [Allegiance] and Supremacy; and to restore to them all monies levied on them remaining unanswered to the King'.

all in accordance with the terms of the earlier Warrant of 15 March.

The names of ten Norfolk Quakers to which the Warrant applied were appended. The King's cue to act would seem to have been a petition

from these ten persons - presumably complaining about the unabated activities of their incorrigible Sheriff - containing, for the

benefit of the Lord Treasurer 'certificates..of their being Quakers and of their being peaceable and quiet to the King and Government'.⁽¹⁾

Action was then begun on the basis of further complaints. Sunderland

wrote to Lord Morley, on the King's command, informing him that

Quakers had been exempted 'from the prosecutions which were

against them', and requesting him to conform to His Majesty's wishes.⁽²⁾

On 7 December the Duke of Newcastle was ordered to inform the JPs of

Nottinghamshire 'to give no sort of countenance' to an informer, John

Smith, who had been 'vexatiously' persecuting the Quakers of that

otherwise fairly peaceful county.⁽³⁾ Drummed out of Nottinghamshire,

Smith then repaired to Leicestershire, a county in which informers

(1) CTB VIII, pt. 2, 1005-1006.

(2) CSPD 1686-7, 303 (16 November).

(3) CSPD 1686-7, 315; Besse I, 562.

had been deliberately encouraged by the JPs to give information about Quaker meetings, the King's wishes notwithstanding. The Earl of Huntingdon, Lord Lieutenant of Leicestershire, wrote to Sunderland for directions and, in a letter dated 30 December 1686, was told 'to give no sort of countenance to Smith, or any other informers in their prosecution against ^{the} Quakers'.⁽¹⁾ In Lincolnshire, where fines and confiscation for tithes continued uninterrupted, the local Quakers were up in arms about the 'martyrdom' of one of their women who had died in Lincoln Jail. Probably influenced by the nationally published account of her persecutions, and the information provided by the new Commission on the Quakers, James again saw his cue for action.⁽²⁾ The Lord Lieutenant of the County was told that

'His Majesty being informed that Mr. Henry Burrill, Clerk of the Peace of the County of Lincoln, and other informers, do very vexatiously prosecute ^{the} Quakers in that county..., and being pleased to extend his favour to those of that persuasion, would have you direct the Justices of the Peace to give no countenance to Burrill or any of the other informers against the Quakers'.⁽³⁾

On behalf of 'one Thomas Cann of Cansgill and some others, called Quakers' who were 'in some trouble, if not in danger of being ruined upon account of their meetings', the Lord Treasurer informed Sir Daniel Flemming that the King's pleasure was 'not to have those

(1) Besse I, 345; CSPD 1686-7, 329.

(2) Besse I, 358-360; Whiting, 184; J. Gough, A History of the People called Quakers (1789) III, 186-7.

(3) CSPD 1686-7, 389 (15 March 1687).

poor people so troubled upon the account of their being Quakers only' but to show them what kindness he could.⁽¹⁾

From July 1686 to the Declaration of Indulgence of April 1687, though the King's piecemeal protection of Quakers had by no means completely freed them from all types of persecution, they themselves were satisfied that the King had done what he could. There is no doubt that in many Quaker communities James II was held in high regard. It was William Penn's aim in the preaching campaign, which he made through Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Yorkshire, Westmorland, Lancashire, Cheshire, Staffordshire and Warwickshire, in the winter of 1686-7, to heighten their awareness of the King's magnanimity, perhaps in preparation for the part they were to play later in the King's general programme.⁽²⁾ The Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends in June 1686 had set on foot a scheme for providing groups of Quakers whose meeting houses had been totally or partially demolished with the money to refurbish or rebuild. Collections were taken in various parts of England for this purpose.⁽³⁾ Nevertheless, with rebuilding going on elsewhere, in London persecution of Quakers for 'riotous and unlawful assemblies' continued through the autumn of 1686, but 'before the conclusion of this year, the fury of persecutions ~~as to~~ religious assemblies was much abated, and the meetings were generally held in peace'.⁽⁴⁾ Only in Lancashire can the persecution of Quakers be described as vigorous beyond the end of 1686.⁽⁵⁾

(1) CTB VIII, pt. 2, 991 (9 November 1686).

(2) W. Penn to J. Harrison, 28 January 1687, Janney, 285-6.

(3) Minute Book of the Mens Meeting of the Society of Friends in Bristol, 1667-1686, Bristol Record Society XXVI (1970), 187, 188; Brockett, 61.

(4) Besse I, 481-4.

(5) Besse I, 329-30.

Petitions presented at Court by Whitehead and Latey beyond this time said little of magistrates and informers, but complained mainly about damage inflicted on Quaker meeting-houses and private property, and occasionally on individual Quakers, by the spontaneous action of troops or mobs. This was the kind of persecution from which the King could not protect them, though he did, when troops were involved, reimburse them for their losses.⁽¹⁾ It was typically the case by now, however, that whilst Presbyterian and Independent conventicles might still be broken up, the Quakers 'who have obtained His Majesty's permission for that purpose' were left undisturbed.⁽²⁾

5

Despite rumours current at the beginning of 1686 of the King's 'change of heart' with regard to Nonconformists in general,⁽³⁾ well-informed Presbyterians and Congregationalists continued to be pessimistic. At first many were incredulous, then convinced that it could not last, and finally - and this belief persisted until the Revolution - doubtful of the sincerity of the King's tolerationist views, believing that his ultimate objective was a Catholic government and established Church. Sermons alluded mysteriously to 'the evil that is coming upon the land'.⁽⁴⁾ A group of Presbyterians

(1) Besse I, 189-190, 483; Morrice P, 643; W. Beck (ed), op cit, 220.

(2) See BM Add MS.34 512, f. 36.

(3) Owen Wynne to Sir W. Trumbull, 21 December 1685, HMC Downshire MSS I, i, 78-79; Heywood IV, 116-8; Morrice P, 519, 532, 533.

(4) Browne, 406; Matthew to Philip Henry, 9 March 1686, Henry MS. 5, letter 21; Walter Wilson MS.I, v, 121-3.

who met at Oliver Heywood's house in Yorkshire on 28 January 1686, to celebrate his release after a year in jail for preaching, heard him thank God for his release and pray for 'strength.. to do and suffer all things'.⁽¹⁾ Keeping a close eye on developments in London, Matthew Henry was making prognostications of a most sombre kind.⁽²⁾ On 13 February, despite rumours to the contrary, Roger Morrice was still anticipating a worsening of persecution.⁽³⁾ When the Pardon and 'Mandate' - made so much of by the Quakers - came in March, he did not see it as an opportunity to bring about the release of Dissenters imprisoned for ecclesiastical offences, merely as the occasion of the release of the more obscure Western Dissenters still unjustly held in connection with the Rebellion.⁽⁴⁾ Matthew Henry was even more cynical. He produced a complex legal argument - 'which most agree is the sense of it' - to the effect that one clause in the Pardon was deliberately worded 'so as to cut off Mr. Baxter and most of the King's Bench prisoners from any benefit of it'. He believed that there were 180 exceptions to the Pardon, all accused of involvement with Monmouth, and that this figure included 'Forty-five women, one of whom had the title of a school mistress, and [that] many of the rest were young gentlewomen who were her scholars'.⁽⁵⁾ To him the Pardon was far from being, as the Quakers saw it,⁽⁶⁾ a major move toward

(1) Heywood III, 221-224.

(2) Matthew to Philip Henry, 23 February, 2 March 1686, Henry MS.5, letters 19 and 20.

(3) Morrice P, 526.

(4) Morrice P, 528-9. See also HMC Downshire MSS I, i, 134, 151.

(5) Matthew to Philip Henry, 16 March 1686, Henry MS.5, letter 22, See HMC 14th Report, App. Pt. II: Portland MSS III (1894), 396; Luttrell I, 373.

(6) Janney, 281.

liberty of conscience for all Nonconformists.

Despite the thirty or so Dissenters who did 'sue out' their discharge 'upon the King's General Pardon',⁽¹⁾ there was no let up in the prevailing gloom. On 8 May Morrice noted:

'There doth begin some discourse of a toleration, but that it will be with several restrictions and limitations, and that not only the future but the present advantage will be to one party.. but things seem not to me to look that way yet'.⁽²⁾

In late June he observed that the discussion regarding a toleration continued but added: 'I see no reason to apprehend any such thing'.⁽³⁾

In July and August he found more credible the rumours 'that there would be a coalition between the Church of Rome and the Church of England' aimed at destroying the sects.⁽⁴⁾ And when, at the end of the year, the evidence of the King's dispensation for Dissenters who were neither Catholics nor Quakers was irrefutable, he believed, as did others, that 'this calm would not last long'.⁽⁵⁾ The churchbook of a Nonconformist congregation at Warboys in Huntingdonshire noted: 'We have now some prospects of peace, even when we looked for trouble'.⁽⁶⁾ On 31 January 1687 Henry Newcome noted in his diary that he was depressed by the future prospects for Nonconformists:

'Though I would fain hope *we may* not fall under

(1) Morrice P, 563, 564. ^{see} CR, 83.

(2) Morrice P, 532.

(3) Morrice P, 533, 550.

(4) Morrice P, 566, 587, 638.

(5) Morrice Q, 9; Burnet I, 702-3.

(6) E. B. Underhill (ed), Records of the Churches of Christ gathered at Fenstanton, Warboys and Hexham 1644-1720, Hanserd Knollys Soc. (1854), 281.

violence... yet when I consider what France feels, and Ireland fears, I am discouraged'.

He prayed that, in the perils to come, 'we might not be tried too closely in this nation, lest many fall...'.⁽¹⁾ On the eve of the

Declaration of Indulgence Dissenters were still preaching that

'there was great cause to expect a sudden desolation or violent persecution from the Popish Party', but 'that the Lord's arm was not shortened that He could not protect His People'.⁽²⁾

That well-informed Dissenters greeted with incredulity rumours that the King intended to grant them religious freedom was not surprising. The attitude of the Government was such that a Nonconformist minister could still be taken up on a charge of high treason for offences committed in the West,⁽³⁾ and discreet enquiries were still being made of gentry in Devon, Somerset, Dorset and Wiltshire, to find out the identity of those 'most obnoxious to the Government and [who were] either actually in arms or aided and abetted the late Duke of Monmouth'.⁽⁴⁾ As late as 29 May Sunderland requested the Lord Lieutenant of Somerset to order his Deputy Lieutenants and JPs to keep an eye on certain former rebels in their localities, and the King was believed to be trying to ascertain the attitude of the ex-rebels to William of Orange in an attempt to uncover further sources

(1) Henry Newcome, *Autobiography*, Chetham Soc. (1852) II, 264.

(2) Heywood III, 227; Sermons reported in M. Savage to P. Henry, 19 March 1687, Henry MS.4, letter 1.

(3) CSPD 1686-7, 17; Ellis I, 32, 43, xv, xxii. See CSPD 1686-7, 186; Morrice P, 522; Roberts I, 253, 300; HMC Downshire MSS I, i, 107, 109.

(4) CTB VIII, pt. 2, 545-6 (30 January 1686).

of disloyalty.⁽¹⁾ As Bishop Lloyd had pointed out to Philip Henry, the King's phobia about Nonconformists, and his tendency to equate them with rebels, was still very much alive.

Between January and June 1686 the evidence that there had been any kind of change in Government policy toward Nonconformists, other than Quakers, was: first, the 'intimations' given by the Assize judges on circuit to JPs that an abatement of the persecution of Dissenters would be in order (Burnet asserted that Chief Justice Herbert went as far as to encourage Nonconformist preachers to set up conventicles.)⁽²⁾ Secondly, an instruction from the King to the Attorney-General in March 'not to permit any process to issue in His Majesty's name against any Dissenter whatsoever';⁽³⁾ thirdly, the treasury warrant of 3 May that 'all process' remaining in the hands of the respective Sheriffs on convictions for recusancy and due to the King before the General Pardon should be superseded;⁽⁴⁾ fourthly, the Pardon which provided an opportunity for Dissenters, on application, to secure release from prison and stay of process for past and current ecclesiastical offences, as well as involvement in the Rebellion, (so long as they had not served as officers in Monmouth's army and were not specifically excepted).⁽⁵⁾ Despite the many exceptions, the warrants issued in March 1686 pardoned some Dissenters who had been involved in the Rebellion, for example, Edmund Prid^eaux and Edward Strode.⁽⁶⁾ John Hampden, whose execution

(1) CSPD 1686-7, 145; Morrice P, 527.

(2) Burnet I, 672; Morrice P, 529; Ivimey I, 461-2.

(3) Privy Council Register, PC2/71, f.413.

(4) CTB VIII, pt. 2, 718.

(5) Gazette No. 2120; HMC Downshire MSS I, i, 134.

(6) CSPD 1686-7, 66. See also CSPD 1686-7, 78, 88, 89, 103, 104, 202. The names in these pardons were not necessarily those of Nonconformists or of persons involved in the Rebellion but the fact that a considerable proportion of them came from places in the West indicates that they might have been.

had earlier seemed a certainty, was pardoned a week before the General Pardon and, by a Royal Warrant, had 'all ^{the} real and personal estate forfeited by any ~~the~~ reasons' restored to him. By the end of April he had pleaded his pardon in the King's Bench.⁽¹⁾ If the fulsome praise contained in the addresses of thanks of April and May 1687 sent by the ex-rebels in return for the King's 'Gracious Pardon and Generous Indulgence' was a reliable guide, the King had won the loyalty, if only temporarily, of many of those pardoned.⁽²⁾

However, if the King had wanted to safeguard the larger sects from the effects of the persecuting laws (in accordance with the 'intimations' passed out by the assize judges and his instruction to the Attorney-General) some at least of the names of the 415 beneficiaries of the warrants for stay of process issued between January and August 1686 should be traceable in Nonconformist sources and a general indication found that Presbyterians, Baptists and Congregationalists were benefiting from a policy of selective relief (instead of the gloom regarding future prospects that all sources contain).⁽³⁾ Until June there were so few instances of Court intervention to save non-Quaker Dissenters from the effects of persecution that it is impossible to use them as evidence of a change of policy. In May the King ordered the release of a few Baptists and Independents 'imprisoned for ecclesiastical offences' in London, and in March he issued a pardon for three Bristol

(1) CTB VIII, pt. 2, 548; Morrice P, 527, 529; Matthew to Philip Henry, 23 February, 4 May 1686, Henry MS. 5, letters 19 and 28; HMC Downshire MSS I, 1, 71-2, 96, 99-100; Ellis I, 1-5, 32, i, xv.

(2) Gazette Nos. 2235 (18 April 1687) and 2245 (23 May 1687).

(3) See above pp. 253-256.

Dissenters, exempting them from the penalties for offences covered by the General Pardon. At least one of the three, Ichabod Chauncy, was in hiding abroad. A few weeks after the latter pardon was issued, however, James issued an order to re-word it to the effect that the three Bristol Dissenters could only expect exemption from the statutes relating to Church attendance.⁽¹⁾ The King's comparative failure to protect Baptists, Independents and Presbyterians to the same extent that he protected Quakers and Catholics, may be accounted for by a variety of factors. No breach had, as yet, taken place between the Court and the Church of England, and months after this there were many reasons for believing that an accommodation might be arrived at. Hence, by restricting his dispensations to two numerically small dissenting groups, the King was doubtless endeavouring not to alienate the Church. In addition, it was doubtless the case that, despite the 'intimations' given to JPs, the instruction to the Attorney-General and the Pardon, the King still had his doubts as to the advisability of putting Nonconformists in a position to wield greater political influence by removing the restraint of persecution. Further, it is likely that he knew little of how much persecution of the three major dissenting sects actually took place, in view of the disinclination of their members to petition the Court, or in any other way to invite the intervention of the King on their behalf. It is relevant to note that the King began to issue dispensations to Baptists in July, after a series of petitions had been received thanking him for his pardon and bringing instances of persecution to his notice.

(1) CSPD 1686-7, 78, 89, 138; Morrice P, 532-3; HMC 12th Report, app. pt. vi: The MSS of the House of Lords 1689-90 (1889), 305.

The events of June 1686 represented a significant stage in the demise of the Old Alliance. The defiance of John Sharp, Rector of St. Giles, of the royal injunction against 'the bold abuses and extravagances of preachers',⁽¹⁾ and Bishop Compton's refusal to suspend him,⁽²⁾ may have been significant in convincing James that he could not achieve a tolerated, respected and politically influential status for his co-religionists with Anglican support. It was certainly a precipitating factor behind the setting up of the Commission for Ecclesiastical Causes in July, to facilitate a greater degree of control over an organisation on whose co-operation the King felt he could no longer depend.⁽³⁾ Anglican reaction to Compton's appearance before the Commission in the course of the summer could only have crystallised in the King's mind the necessity of a change of alliances, and hence the desirability of extending the policy of using the dispensing power to protect Dissenters, other than Quakers, from the effects of the penal laws.⁽⁴⁾ The Godden vs. Hales Judgement provided the necessary authority for a more thorough-going use of the dispensing power.⁽⁵⁾ Thus encouraged, the King

'entertain^{ed} all that were about him [with] .. the great happiness of a universal toleration.. ~~He~~ reflected much on the Church of England for the severities with which Dissenters had been treated',

(1) CSPD 1686-7, 56.

(2) CSPD 1686-7, 171, 233.

(3) CSPD 1686-7, 202; Ellis I, 144-150, li.

(4) Burnet I, 672-3; Morrice P, 593-8, 602, 608-609, 615; Perry II, 491.

(5) J. P. Kenyon, The Stuart Constitution (1966), 438-9; Ellis I, 122-3, xliv.

and the Quaker courtiers, who believed that the campaign to win over the King to such a policy had at last been victorious, could not contain themselves.⁽¹⁾

Of the three larger dissenting sects, the Baptists were the first to feel the benefit of the increased use of the dispensing power. Compared with the Presbyterians and Congregationalists, they enjoyed a favoured position in the King's estimation right up to the Declaration of Indulgence.⁽²⁾ This was in the first place due to initiatives taken by a section of the Baptists who were beginning to see the advantage of, and to put into practice, methods used to advantage by the Quakers since the Restoration. There is no evidence that the King, in the belief that he had already 'won over' the Quakers, was pursuing a policy of working from the 'left'. Morrice, among others, realised the precariousness of depending on the support of the Baptists only, which he thought was emerging in August 1686.

'The Anabaptists are in no way considerable, neither their number nor interest, compared either with the Independents, who do almost as far exceed the Anabaptists in both, as the Presbyterians do the Independents, and therefore it is a bold adventure in any to advise His Majesty to proceed upon the Anabaptists' suggestions alone'.⁽³⁾

The first Baptist address was presented to James at Windsor on 5 July and signed by eight Baptist ministers, probably all from the London area, who had been released from jail by the King's Pardon and

(1) Burnet I, 669, 670, 672; Janney, 284-5; Sewel II, 468-9.

(2) Lacey (pp 178-9) also found evidence to support this view.

(3) Morrice P, 615. For corroboration of Morrice's estimate of the relative sizes of the sects, see Ivimey I, 467.

subsequent warrants. 'This address was showed to many of the courtiers by the King while the petitioners were on their knees, at which they were very merry'.⁽¹⁾ Within a week this was followed by a further address from a group of Baptist ministers - laudatory in its thanks, lavish in its prostrations and generous in its undertakings of future obedience - to which the King replied that 'if they carried themselves loyally they would find protection'; and also an address presented by an individual Baptist who had been freed from prison.⁽²⁾ Between 10 and 17 July Morrice noted that it was 'commonly said that thirty Nonconformist ministers' had presented an Address of Thanks to the King for his Pardon. He was sure that the address had not come from ministers of his own sect or from the London area and hence it too might have been presented by provincial Baptists.⁽³⁾

The Baptists' efforts to outdo the Quakers in the frequency and abjectness of their addresses was not without effect. By the end of July a widely believed rumour was doing the rounds that the King had undertaken to issue a Patent to allow complete freedom of worship to Baptists,⁽⁴⁾ and a large group of Baptists, prosecuted for meetings at Abingdon, presented dispensations to the Recorder at the Abingdon Assizes, and met openly thereafter without disturbance.⁽⁵⁾ Nor was this the only case of the King granting

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- (1) CSPD 1686-7, 198; Ivimey I, 462 (names the eight petitioners). Unlike the addresses which followed the Declarations of Indulgence, these addresses were not published in the London Gazette.
- (2) Morrice P, 563.
- (3) Morrice P, 564.
- (4) Morrice P, 568.
- (5) Morrice P, 572, 577; Ivimey I, 463-4; Walter Wilson MS.I, 1, 18, 19.

dispensations to Baptists being charged with meeting in conventicles or non-attendance at church during this period.⁽¹⁾ Hence, when Gloucestershire Baptists addressed the King in August, they not only thanked him for his Pardon but for his 'late dispensations', adding that they hoped 'he would be pleased to grant the like to them, with a non obstante to all laws'. In response to the King's promise that their full liberty would be confirmed by the present or a subsequent Parliament, they undertook to lend their support 'to such men as would help to bring this about'.⁽²⁾

Any attempt to assess how far the King was prepared to go in his policy of dispensing from the persecuting laws to win the support of Presbyterians and Independents - who would neither address nor petition him - must be viewed in relation to a number of factors. First, Stephen Lobb, undoubtedly the most widely respected, if controversial Independent minister in the London area, who had given undertakings of future good behaviour and was later to become the King's 'Dissenting Manager', was not pardoned and released until 23 December.⁽³⁾ Secondly, Richard Baxter, nationally acknowledged Presbyterian veteran, was still in the King's Bench Prison in June 1686 and was complaining of 'growing distempers'.⁽⁴⁾ Baxter wrote to Sir John Baber, the Court's contact with the Presbyterians, asking him to use his influence with the King to get him released because of ill-health, and the matter was brought before the Privy Council, which

(1) - Morrice P, 563, 568, 584.

(2) Morrice P, 615.

(3) CSPD 1686-7, 326; Portland Misc. 19, PwA 2147d, 2149a/b; Wilson III, 437. He had been specifically excepted from the General Pardon.

(4) Matthew to Philip Henry, 1 June 1686, Henry MS.5, letter 32.

deferred its decision. Baber broached the matter with the King again at the beginning of October, but reported that 'His Majesty had spoken very mildly but had said it was not yet seasonable'.⁽¹⁾ Baxter's belated release was secured by the man who may have been responsible for ensuring the mitigation of his sentence,⁽²⁾ Lord Powis. He was incredulous on first hearing that Powis was willing to intercede for him - though this would not have been the first time one of the Court Catholics had brought about the release of an imprisoned Dissenter⁽³⁾ - but was prevailed upon to agree to the drawing up of a petition to the King.⁽⁴⁾ The petition was drafted by someone else and signed by Baxter on 6 October.⁽⁵⁾ Baxter believed that, in presenting the petition, Powis had assured the Court that his 'pains and weakness was so great that if he was discharged he was not like to go out of the house he was in, the question being whether he should groan and die there or in another room'.⁽⁶⁾

James was still reluctant to release Baxter at the end of October but, after repeated representations by Powis, signed the necessary warrant on 2 November. Even then, securities were required for his good behaviour, and it was stressed that he was not being released because of the injustice of his imprisonment but because the King had been 'moved with compassion towards the said Baxter in respect of his

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- (1) Calamy, Abridgement, 375; Wilson II, 125; Morrice P, 639.
 (2) See above pp. 148-150.
 (3) John Salkeld, a Presbyterian pastor from Suffolk had been 'discharged by the intercession of Lord Dover' earlier in the year. Walter Wilson MS.I, v, 121-2.
 (4) R. Baxter to 'Mr. Ridges', 10 October 1686, Baxter MSS (Letters) III, 65.
 (5) Petition to the King, 6 October 1686, Baxter MSS (Treatises) II, 99.
 (6) R. Baxter to 'Mr. Ridges', op cit, 65.

great age and infirmities of ^{his} body'.⁽¹⁾ Notwithstanding these infirmities, he was not finally released until 28 February 1687,⁽²⁾ this last delay being occasioned by the efforts of a Catholic lawyer, David Williams, to extort £100 from him in legal fees. On 21 December 1686 Baxter was forced to appeal to Lord Powis a second time but, despite the Catholic Lord's assurance that he need not, and should not, pay, he was still being pestered by Williams on 30 December. Meanwhile, Baxter told Powis, 'I continue to lay quietly in my prison'.⁽³⁾ But even his eventual release would not be a final solution to his problems. Baxter told his lawyer, Beresford, that the promise of good behaviour could not but leave him in a very vulnerable condition, still a prey to enemies like L'Estrange, who might take him up if he were to do so much as to pray in company.⁽⁴⁾

Given the King's tardiness in effecting the release of Baxter and Lobb - both with a unique status in their respective sects - and given the favour that the King was showing for his co-religionists in the autumn-winter of 1686-7, the continued scepticism of Presbyterians and Independents regarding the initial furtive moves in 'enticement' is perhaps understandable. Despite the efforts made by court 'agents' to persuade them to accept the kindness of the King, 'and to concur with him in his designs',⁽⁵⁾ at the end of September Roger Morrice knew of no Presbyterian or Independent who had solicited help from the King in the form of a stay of process

- (1) CTB VIII, pt. 2, 974; Powicke, 152; Calamy, Abridgement, 375.
 (2) Morrice Q, 80; Powicke, 164.
 (3) R. Baxter to Lord Powis, 21 December, R. Beresford to R. Baxter, 23 December, D. Williams to R. Baxter, 30 December, Baxter MSS (Letters) III, 72, 96; V, 190.
 (4) R. Baxter to R. Beresford, 17 November 1686, cited Powicke, 157-8.
 (5) Burnet I, 701; Ivimey I, 466-7.

warrant or a dispensation.⁽¹⁾ The King had already expressed his impatience and had compared them unfavourably with the Baptists.

By 18 September he was

'greatly offended with the fanatics, especially the Presbyterians and Independents, and was saying that they would not be beholden to him for their liberty but in opposition to him, were falling in with the Church'.⁽²⁾

Were not the advantages of applying for the King's 'dispensations' obvious? Morrice acknowledged that they were; Baptists were holding their services openly because of the 'dispensations' they had received.⁽³⁾ He also acknowledged that the lack of applications from Presbyterians and Independents was not because of any disinclination on the King's part to grant them; dispensations from the Penal Laws and the liberty to keep conventicles were there for the asking.⁽⁴⁾ But whilst the King had been prepared to intervene on behalf of twenty Walbrook Dissenters convicted before an ecclesiastical court in July, he was disinclined to act without a direct application. Hence there are few examples in August, September, or October of the King intervening directly on behalf of Presbyterians or Independents, despite the severe persecution in these months,⁽⁵⁾ though the King may have thought of the pardons he issued to ex-rebels as a concession to Dissenters.⁽⁶⁾ On 6 November, however, Penn was sure that the King

(1) Morrice P, 625.

(2) Morrice P, 615, 618, 625.

(3) See E. A. Payne, *The Baptists of Berkshire* (1951), 50-51, 54-55; Ivimey I, 464; E. A. Preston, *St. Helen's Church, Abingdon* (1900), 139.

(4) Morrice P, 615, 625.

(5) Morrice P, 568, 569, 616, 617.

(6) CSPD 1686-7, 212, 213, 226, 279; Morrice P, 630, 632. See Penn, 122-3.

was 'averse' to the persecution of any group and that the magistrates who 'discouraged' it were those in favour with the Court.⁽¹⁾

In November James made the first major attempt to get the support of the two sects still remaining independently aloof from the Court. He opened a Dispensation or Licence Office, putting the whole business of dispensations on a financial footing. Here, for fifty shillings, a dispensation could be bought which stopped present proceedings and guaranteed future freedom of worship.⁽²⁾ During December 1686 (none were issued in November) and the first three months of 1687 twenty-four 'dispensations' or 'warrants for dispensations' were issued for 182 persons. They are not endorsed 'Mr. Brent', are in a completely different form from the stay of process warrants already discussed and are catalogued separately in the State Papers.⁽³⁾ Though there can be little doubt that the Licence Office was primarily intended to protect groups not already receiving protection, it may have been of advantage to those who had already benefitted from stay of process warrants to avail themselves of this more complete form of protection. Hence it is possible that the incredibly small number of 182 persons who bought dispensations from the Licence Office may have included Catholics and Quakers, as well as members of the larger sects. It may also be the case, however, that some Presbyterians, Congregationalists or Baptists, because of

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- (1) W. Penn to Sir David Fleming, 6 November 1686, cited M. V. Hay, *The Enigma of James II* (1938), 72.
- (2) Calamy, *Abridgement*, 375; Morrice Q, 15. Each dispensation, though issued in the name of one man, applied to his family too.
- (3) SP 44/54, 360-1, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366 (two warrants), 367 (two warrants), 368, 370, 372, 374; SP 44/56, 360. See CSPD 1686-7, 317, 322, 332, 333, 335, 335-6, 338, 343, 346, 350, 356, 365-6, 369, 398. The warrants for stay of process appear in SP 44/336 and 44/337. Dispensations issued to enable an otherwise disqualified person from holding office are of course omitted from this analysis.

constitutional scruples or the knowledge that the Anglican judiciary were dubious about dispensations, may have solicited the Court for a stay of process warrant and been among the beneficiaries from such warrants in November and December 1686 and January 1687 who produced 'good testimony of peaceable behaviour' rather than a certificate of their loyalty in the Great Rebellion.⁽¹⁾

The first 'warrant... for a dispensation' on record was for sixteen 'recusants' from Leicestershire (10 December);⁽²⁾ the second was a 'dispensation for some recusants [seven] of Cambridgeshire' (17 December).⁽³⁾ The eight persons who benefited from a warrant for a dispensation on 2 January 1687 included Ambrose Barnes, the lay leader of the Presbyterians in Newcastle.⁽⁴⁾ Among the twenty-one persons who benefited from the three dispensations issued on 7 January was the influential Baptist minister Nehemiah Coxe.⁽⁵⁾ Among the twenty-two persons who benefited from the four 'like dispensations' issued on 9 January were Amos Short and John Kerridge, the Independent minister and schoolmaster, respectively, of Lyme Regis.⁽⁶⁾ The dispensation for eight Dartmouth persons issued on 21st named John Flavell - principal of the Nonconformist academy and the only ejected minister to avail himself of a dispensation - as a beneficiary.⁽⁷⁾ The Samuel Crisp who was among the seven Londoners

(1) See above pp. 232-233.

(2) CSPD 1686-7, 317.

(3) CSPD 1686-7, 322.

(4) CSPD 1686-7, 332. See W. H. D. Longstaffe (ed), *Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Ambrose Barnes*, Surtees Soc. L. (1866) ; above p. 168; below, pp. 462, 500.

(5) CSPD 1686-7, 335-6. See W.T. Whitley, 'Thompson's List of Conventicles in 1683', CHST IV (1909-10), 49.

(6) CSPD 1686-7, 338; Densham and Ogle, 148.

(7) CSPD 1686-7, 346. See above p. 79.

who benefited from a dispensation issued on 11 February was a member of the old Congregationalist family.⁽¹⁾ Among the names on the four dispensations issued in January, February and March for Devon were the names of twelve Presbyterians from Moreton Hampstead.⁽²⁾

However, though it is clear that a number of Congregationalists and Presbyterians did apply for dispensations, they were greatly outnumbered by the Baptist applicants. Whilst Presbyterians and Congregationalists enjoyed a new-found freedom and began to meet more openly, they did so, in the main, without licences.⁽³⁾ In his autobiography - a work so filled with chronology that it is impossible to allocate any remark, including this one, to a particular period - George Trosse wrote:

'I was resolved, that if the magistrates should disturb any of the meetings where I preached, and proceed against me as a conventicler, I would rather have suffered than have pleaded the King's licence'.⁽⁴⁾

Whether this remark applies to the 1686 licences or not, the sentiment expressed would appear to have been typical of Presbyterian and Congregationalist practice. Hence the King's anger towards them was unabated. On Christmas day James interviewed one Dissenter who had been arrested for attending conventicles and had failed to apply for

- (1) CSPD 1686-7, 365-6; Bolam, 107.
- (2) CSPD 1686-7, 333, 335, 338, 398; J. Murch, A History of the Presbyterian and Baptist Churches in the West of England (1835), 471.
- (3) Morrice Q, 15, 17, 19, 30, 74; Lacey, 178-9; Calamy, Abridgement, 375 ; A. R. Henderson, History of the Castle Gate Congregational Church Nottingham 1655-1905 (1905), 79.
- (4) G. Trosse, The Life of the Rev. George Trosse Late Minister of the Gospel in the City of Exon (1714), 92.

a dispensation. His only excuse was that 'he desired to live in peace according to the law'. In anger the King replied:

'There are some laws that are troublesome to you as to your worship, but I will relieve you in your own way, and will have these laws taken off by this Parliament, and if this Parliament will not do it, I will have it done by another.'⁽¹⁾

The independence of the two larger Nonconformist sects becomes more surprising, and the King's frustration in the face of it more understandable, when it is remembered that in many parts of the country, especially London, the Church was giving Dissenters every inducement to give in to 'enticement' by continued persecution. In the summer of 1686, contemporaneous with the period in which the last arguments for a Church-Court Alliance were disappearing, the Anglican agencies of persecution in London - more especially the informers, under the liberal patronage of the Church - undertook a renewed campaign against Dissenters similar to that with which the year had begun. The impact of the Summer campaign on the Quakers has already been noted. On 15 May Morrice wrote:

'The Church of England are full of zeal against the fanatics. All the meetings they could possibly find of all sorts have been disturbed these three or four last Lord's Days in and about the City'.⁽²⁾

In June the number of Dissenters of all sects brought before the magistrates increased considerably - the persecutors probably rendered more determined to protect the Church now that it was actually in danger. And whilst Quakers might escape with a warning, members of

(1) Morrice P, 634; Q, 36.

(2) Morrice P, 536.

the other sects were fined heavily.⁽¹⁾ The King's 'intimations' and declared wishes had, however, had an effect on some of the persecutors: the Recorder at the Guildhall sessions in July, at which 'very many Dissenters of all persuasions, Presbyterian, Independent, Baptist and Quakers, were indicted for riot', explained to the jury as each case was presented that a conventicle did not constitute a 'riot' (though in each case the jury found them guilty).⁽²⁾

It was becoming increasingly clear that apart from the informers, the real instigators of persecution were the ecclesiastics themselves. The bishops of a number of dioceses in the East and South-east of England called upon their clergy to make sure that churchwardens presented at the ecclesiastical courts 'all who come not to Church, or that receive not the Sacrament'. In London the result was a record turnover of business in the ecclesiastical courts, though in some parishes the churchwardens refused to comply with the order and the clergy found it necessary to present the Dissenters themselves.⁽³⁾ Although the persecution of Presbyterians and Independents continued for the remainder of the year, however, the standard penalty was a five shilling fine and a discharge, whilst informers convicted of perjury could be fined £20, imprisoned, or pilloried.⁽⁴⁾ Morrice believed, however, that the renewed persecution over the summer months was not caused by the avariciousness of informers but resulted

'from some superior influences, whether from the Court or from the Church - or both - it is not easy to determine.

It is well known that the Marshal is - and so is the

(1) Morrice P, 543, 550, 554, 563.

(2) Morrice P, 564.

(3) Morrice P, 564, 568, 569, 572.

(4) Morrice P, 616, 617, 623, 628, 631, 634.

Recorder - altogether under the influence of the Church'.⁽¹⁾

In circumstances like this, the arguments used by Presbyterians and Independents for not taking advantage of the King's proffered freedom had to be good ones.

In the provinces the impact of the King's intimated, then expressed wishes regarding religious persecution, differed dramatically from region to region. In Yorkshire, despite the continued activities of the ecclesiastical courts, Oliver Heywood noted that High Sheriff Tankard and the magistrates were 'much moderated' in their attitude to his sect. When the first rumours began to do the rounds among the magistracy that a de-escalation of persecution would accord with the wishes of the Court, Tankard was reported as saying: 'Have I displeased my neighbours to please the Court, and do they serve me thus?'⁽²⁾ In Lancashire, though persecution continued, some magistrates had by November read the signs correctly and were beginning to moderate their dealings with the more substantial sects, though it is interesting to note that they would make no exceptions for Quakers.⁽³⁾ In Norfolk, where only the direct intervention of the King had been able to dissuade the Sheriff from persecuting Quakers, the persecution of other Dissenters continued into 1687.⁽⁴⁾ In Suffolk it continued unabated to the eve of the Declaration of Indulgence.⁽⁵⁾

As the Church of England began to anticipate the volte-face, there were some areas in which there was a deliberate increase in

(1) Morrice P, 616, 617.

(2) Heywood IV, 116-119.

(3) Jolly, 80, 81; Besse I, 329-30.

(4) Harmer MS.76.10, 80; Morrice Q, 38.

(5) Harmer MS.76.9, 152, 153.

persecution. In the records of presentations for non-attendance in the Archdeaconry, Friars Lane, Leicester, there is evidence that (in response to repeated requests from the bishops) church wardens were tightening up on church-attendance. Some Leicestershire villages had not seen such a purge for many years. But at the Leicester Assizes of 26 July alone, three persons from Hinckley were presented for non-attendance, five from Shamford, two from Stony Stanton, four from Narborough, one from Desford (plus a second person presented for preaching), one from Kirby, one from Brainstone, three from Oadly, six from Wigston Magna and eight from Whetson. The total for the whole of the county, including Leicester itself, was fifty-six persons. According to an annotation by Lyon Turner, none of these were Quakers, and most were Presbyterians. This figure is by a considerable margin the highest for any Leicester assize since 1673.⁽¹⁾ At the last Leicester assizes before the 1687 Indulgence, twenty-two Dissenters were presented for non-attendance at church, and twenty-four for attending conventicles.⁽²⁾ In parts of Northamptonshire *Nonconformist congregations found that 'trials pressed heavily upon them'* and in the church book of the Independent congregation at Rowel many 'admonitions' are recorded, made necessary by certain of the faithful who *had 'fallen back for fear of persecution'*.⁽³⁾ In Exeter, although persecution had fallen off by comparison with the all-time high in 1685, Quarter Sessions Records show that a total of 161 persons were fined five shillings

(1) Lyon Turner MS.89.12, ff. 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40-44; MS.89.27, 32d, 32k, 41, 42. The records are complete for 1673-1687.

(2) Lyon Turner MS.89.27, 42, 43.

(3) T. Coleman, *Memorials of the Independent Churches in Northamptonshire* (1853), 53.

each for attending conventicles in the course of 1686, and two pastors were fined £20 each for preaching. (Not all of these persons came from Exeter itself).⁽¹⁾ On 7 March 1687, eighty-five persons were fined five shillings each, and the same two pastors, who were too poor to pay, were fined £20 for preaching.⁽²⁾

In London and the counties immediately adjacent, the turning point of the long campaign of persecution which had begun in May was the establishment of the King's Dispensation and Licence Office in November. Thereafter, the magistrates increasingly turned against the informers. Their determination to put an end 'to the trade of the informers' was considerably strengthened by the knowledge that a group of nine informers, under the leadership of a Captain Hilton, had presented a petition to Lord Sunderland in which they had implied the disloyalty of by far the greater number of London JPs as 'favourers of fanatics'. The attempt rebounded, the informers were arrested, and, determined to bring as many as possible down with him, Hilton gave information which damned the whole practice of informing.⁽³⁾ By 20 November

'the informers, even all that were well known in London and Middlesex, either had lately stood upon the pillory, or had been indicted for perjury or subornation of perjury'.⁽⁴⁾

Though November was the turning point, the dispensations purchased by Dissenters did not meet with automatic recognition from the judiciary. At Berkshire Assizes they were declared invalid on

(1) Lyon Turner MS.89.30, 51-57. In *ibid.*, ff. 5-27, every fine and confiscation between 1662-87 for Exeter is catalogued separately.

(2) Lyon Turner MS.89.30, 58-61, 135; CR, 277.

(3) Morrice P, 638, 650, 651, 654; Luttrell I, 387.

(4) Morrice Q, 9 (further convictions, 20, 44).

the grounds that the persons holding them had not suffered for their loyalty, but after a fortnight's adjournment 'they met again and the licences were allowed as good'.⁽¹⁾ At the session at Hicks Hall in December the Recorder accepted the dispensations, but still levied the standard fine of five shillings on those holding them.⁽²⁾ Elsewhere conventiclers were told that, dispensations notwithstanding, 'the law was plain against them' and were 'required voluntarily to pay their five shillings apiece'. This they refused to do, 'alleging His Majesty's gracious dispensation'. Afterwards they were informed that, should any attempt be made to distrain them in the future, they must get in touch with 'Mr. Brent, who would take effectual care to put a stop to it'.⁽³⁾ In January 1687 the Court did intervene to prevent a group of Middlesex Dissenters from having to pay a fine.⁽⁴⁾ But disagreement as to the validity of the King's dispensations continued among the Anglican judiciary into March 1687, and the persecution of Presbyterians and Congregationalists in London, as elsewhere, was still continuing on the eve of the Indulgence. But the fact that Baptists could meet openly with relative impunity, indicates that the unwillingness of the two larger sects to apply for dispensations, rather than the unwillingness of the judiciary to recognise them, was the main factor behind the continued persecution.⁽⁵⁾

(1) Walter Wilson MS I, i, 18, 19; CR, 156; Morrice Q, 19; E. A. Payne, *The Baptists of Berkshire* (1951), 54, 55; Ivimey I, 465-6; A. E. Preston, *St. Helen's Church Abingdon* (1900), 139-40.

(2) Morrice Q, 30.

(3) Morrice Q, 33.

(4) Morrice Q, 47.

(5) Morrice Q, 52, 71, 74, 85; *E.A. Payne, op cit, 50-51, 55;*
W. T. Whitley
(ed), *The Church Books of Ford or Cuddington and Amersham*
(1912), 226.

That the persecution of Dissenters was relatively less severe between March 1686 and April 1687 than during 1685, however, is made evident by the increased activity of many prominent pastors. Henry Newcome advised that, in the use of their 'dawnings of unexpected liberty', Nonconformist pastors should 'not be fools, but wise, redeeming the time because the days *are* evil', and forthwith set an example of so doing by undertaking a _____ preaching campaign.⁽¹⁾ His lead was followed by other Dissenting pastors in the North; Oliver Heywood undertook an itinerant evangelistic campaign which took him to _____ towns in West Yorkshire, Lancashire and Cheshire. At the beginning of 1687 he computed that in the course of the preceding twelve months he had 'travelled one thousand miles, preached one hundred and thirty-two times on weekdays, besides [the] Lord's days' and had had time to write a number of pamphlets, in sharp contrast to the enforced inactivity of previous years.⁽²⁾ After his release from prison on 23 March 1686 the Quaker John Gratton undertook an extensive preaching campaign which took in Nottingham, Hull, Brigg, Gainsborough, Sheffield, Handsworth, Chesterfield and the Home Counties.⁽³⁾

Thomas Jolly began to evangelise in 1686 _____ in Lancashire and Cheshire, though it took him until November to screw up his courage.⁽⁴⁾ The records of the Independent congregations in Ipswich show that in the last few weeks of 1686 they

(1) Henry Newcome, *Autobiography*, Chetham Soc. (1852) II, 264.

(2) Heywood III, 224; IV, 120-123. See B. Dale, 'The History of Early Congregationalism in Leeds', CHST II (1905-1906), 256.

(3) J. Gratton, *Journal of the Life of John Gratton* (1795), 111, 113-114, 114-116.

(4) _____ Jolly, 80.

were able to celebrate communion together for the first time for many years, to undertake the ordination of pastors and even to commence the building of a new meeting house.⁽¹⁾ Since 1681 the Congregationalists at Axminster had been meeting in secret; from October 1686 they met openly.⁽²⁾

But whilst Dissenters of all sorts were prepared to make the maximum use of even the smallest opening given to them many were sufficiently politically conscious to shy away even from an implied acceptance of any 'unconstitutional' method through which the opening was provided. Behind their fastidiousness was a vested interest which, in turn, was in many cases fed by a deeply-rooted prejudice. Whilst Presbyterians and Independents, like Quakers, were fond of using the word 'ruined' in connection with the names of those persecuted under the post-Restoration persecution, because they used it with less justice than the Quakers, they were more aware than the Quakers that the situation could, in fact, be far worse than it was. Far worse if, for example, the Anglican persecutors were replaced by Roman Catholic ones, and James II, backed by a Roman Catholic establishment and unrestrained by a Church and Parliament which they had helped to undermine, should endeavour in England what was then taking place in France and Savoy, and appeared to be threatening in the Palatinate.⁽³⁾ They had used restraint in the face of the 'prerogative exercise' of Charles II. Under James II, the prerogative was not only 'unconstitutional' but it might be a lever of the

(1) Browne, 370-1.

(2) F. B. Wyatt, 'The Congregational Church at Axminster', CHST IV (1909-10), 108.

(3) Braithwaite, 127; Morrice P, 577-89; Q, 20, 21, 22; Burnet I, 702.

international Catholicism which the symbols and types of their colourful eschatology taught them to fear. (1)

The Dissenter's dilemma in other respects in the face of the early stages of James II's 'enticement' was not dissimilar to the dilemma they had faced on occasion under Charles II. They believed that freedom of worship was their inalienable right, but to secure it they had to acknowledge an arbitrary and unconstitutional exercise of the royal prerogative. Placed between a Catholic King and a Protestant Parliament, by accepting their liberty from the former in the only way in which he could grant it, they would apparently repudiate and undermine the authority of the latter, when it was exercised for the protection of constitutional government. On the other hand, by acknowledging the authority of the latter, they would as apparently approve of the penal laws which punished them for doing what they believed was not a crime but a solemn duty.

The Quakers, hardly conscious of a dilemma at all, had, as has been seen, chosen to accept their liberty, acknowledge its source and offer co-operation. Many Baptists had done the same, taking advantage of dispensations from the King himself and through the Licence Office, whilst Presbyterians and Independents held back. (2) But 'enticement' had, in fact, divided even the Baptist sects, where it took the lines of a division between those who attended Anglican services and those who did not (partially conforming and nonconforming Baptists). (3)

The dilemma was most acutely apparent among the Presbyterians

(1) See above pp. 158-160.

(2) See above pp. 261-263, 265-269.

(3) Lacey, 179.

and Independents, whose failure to respond to 'enticement' was increasingly arousing the King's wrath.⁽¹⁾ At first some chose to 'redeem the time' and take any opportunities presented by a relaxation of persecution, whilst 'pursuing a course of neutrality'. But they soon found that such a course was impossible to follow and, in any event, 'was scarcely consistent with the claims either of religion or patriotism'.⁽²⁾ In an endeavour to resolve the dilemma and salve the consciences of those who feared the exercise of the prerogative by a Catholic King, Sir John Baber was sent to visit Roger Morrice in August 1686. First Morrice was assured that the Court had no intention of coming to an accommodation with the Church of England to the disadvantage of Nonconformists, and was then asked 'whether, if liberty and impunity would be granted by a law, whether the Dissenters would in a body signify their thankful acceptance thereof'.⁽³⁾ Morrice was still giving serious consideration to this question three weeks later; if the Dissenters could only bring themselves to accept their liberty together with the Catholics 'they might have it, and that by a law, if not they must continue under the King's displeasure and ... in a little time - when the Church had recovered from its present soreness - be prosecuted by them to their ruin'.⁽⁴⁾

In the ensuing weeks, however, the full complexity of the issues involved became more readily apparent to him, as did the fact that a Parliament was unlikely to confirm the unconstitutional actions

(1) Morrice P, 615, 618, 621, 625, 634.

(2) R. Halley, Lancashire, its Puritanism and Nonconformity (1872) II, 273.

(3) Morrice P, 594.

(4) Morrice P, 615.

of the King. His disinclination to show his approbation of the King's policy in any way was confirmed after Penn's return from Holland, and when rumours began to circulate that William believed the infringement of the Test Act to be a threat to the Protestant religion, and that he would not take off the penal laws without the full approval of a Parliament.⁽¹⁾

Once this fact had been assimilated into the thinking of the two larger Nonconformist sects - the old debate revived and exhausted - there began to crystallise what was to become a more or less general attitude amongst them during the months that followed. To attempt to remain uncommitted, impervious to the enticements of both Church and Court, would drive them together. This eventuality could not possibly be good, and would probably be disastrous, for Dissenters. To give wholehearted support to the measures of the Court, however, as the Quakers, and some Baptists, did, could be equally disastrous: 'they might be dragooned by the Court... when they had helped to take the laws off from the Papists'.⁽²⁾ Hence, after a number of inter and intra sectarian dialogues had taken place in the first three months of 1687 the conclusion was reached that although enticement from both Church and Court 'were things too unnatural to last long' they should endeavour, for the time being, 'not to stand at too great a distance' from either, and to hold out hopes of a reconciliation to both. If the many rumours of a 'Public Toleration' materialised, however - and after the Edict of Toleration for Scotland, issued from Whitehall on 12 February, it seemed probable that they would⁽³⁾ - 'very many

(1) Burnet I, 693, 694; Morrice P, 618, 628; Janney, 282, 284-5.

(2) Burnet I, 701-703; Morrice Q, 38, 39.

(3) London Gazette No. 2221 (28 February - 3 March 1686/7). See CSPD 1686-7, 392.

ministers' had decided that, no matter what the Baptists might do, the Presbyterians and Independents, though they would continue to meet, would not do so in church hours, nor would they build any new meeting halls, to create a climate of feeling in which, if necessary, a coalition between 'sober Churchmen' and 'sober Dissenters' might be sought.⁽¹⁾ That the 'very many ministers' who had come to this decision did not represent a fair cross-section of the two sects from whence they came, is apparent when consideration is given to the more diverse reaction that the First Declaration of Indulgence did in fact produce,⁽²⁾ and the continued reluctance of 'sober Dissenters' to coalesce with 'sober Churchmen'.⁽³⁾ Their attitude did, however, present a very poor prospect to a King who was about to use the very measure they envisaged - made necessary at once by continued Anglican inflexibility in the face of the King's wishes,⁽⁴⁾ and the reluctance of the more substantial Dissenters to be 'enticed' - as another bid for their support.

From this time until James II, realising that his plans had failed, made his last desperate moves to placate the Anglicans immediately prior to the landing of William of Orange, the Dissenters held the pivotal position in a grave constitutional crisis. With their political interest at a premium, they were in a position to tip the scales, either toward the Court and the Catholic Party, or

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- (1) Morrice Q, 84, 85; Burnet I, 702-703; Heywood IV, 124, 125.
 (2) See below pp. 287 et seq.
 (3) See below pp. 389, 391.
 (4) The Anglicans were only 'inflexible' in regard to the infringement or repeal of the Test Act, the repeal of the penal laws and the continued persecution of Dissenters; they had apparently fallen in with the King's desire to end the persecution of Catholics. In some parts of England Catholics had suffered little since 1681. See H. Aveling, *Northern Catholics: the Catholic Recusants of the North Riding of Yorkshire 1558-1790* (1966), 334.

toward the Church and William of Orange. Had the Dissenters given whole-hearted support to the King's programme, ignoring the long-term misgivings which they harboured about it, and using positions of power in Government, Parliament and the Corporations (with the numerically miniscule Catholic grouping) to enact and enforce it, the Church of England would probably not have survived in its accustomed form and (given the sanction of a dissenting Parliament, such as James later envisaged) it would have been difficult to justify an invasion. Had the Dissenters given whole-hearted support to the Church - and done so earlier - the invasion might have been brought forward or, more probably, the King forced into the arms of the Church and a return made to the position at the beginning of the reign. To a serious analyst of the situation at the end of March 1687, however, it might have seemed more probable that the King's programme was condemned because supported by politically light-weight elements only, since more substantial dissenting elements veered, if anything, toward the Church, and hence - a point of calculation which the Marquess of Halifax had reached by 31 May 1687⁽¹⁾ - any kind of outside interference would be unnecessary.

(1) Halifax to William of Orange. *Kenyon (ed), Halifax: Works (1969), 334-6.*
 (See also 336-8, 338-41, 341-2).

CHAPTER THREENONCONFORMIST RESPONSE TO THE
DECLARATION OF INDULGENCE of 16871

The King's promise of a Declaration of 'General Liberty of Conscience to all persons of what persuasion soever'⁽¹⁾ made at the prorogation in mid-March 1687 merely enhanced the Dissenters' awareness of their all-too-familiar dilemma. It raised no new issues. Both the policy envisaged and the resultant dilemma appeared to be no more than variations on an old theme; tried and discarded in the previous reign, and already given an inauspicious revival in the present one. But when 'His Majesty's Gracious Declaration to all his loving Subjects for Liberty of Conscience' began to circulate on and after 4 April⁽²⁾ it became apparent that the analogy between this and previous forms of enticement was far from perfect; the basic issues for Dissenters were the same, but there were new complications - here was something more than just enticement - and these new complications helped to give rise to a more diverse reaction than might have been predicted.

Unlike Charles II's Indulgences, this one, whilst making clear that it was being issued by virtue of the royal prerogative, made evident the King's intention to obtain parliamentary sanction for the suspension of the Penal Laws and the Test Act. This provided a conscience-salving device for those who would have balked at the

(1) Gazette 2226 (17-21 March 1686/7); Ellis I, 260-1, xcvi.

(2) Gazette 2231 (4-7 April 1687).

Declaration, had there been a clear-cut issue of Parliament versus the Royal Prerogative. Taking advantage of the Declaration, by preaching, church-building or ordaining, could be therefore construed as 'redeeming the time' until parliamentary sanction should be forthcoming, with no approval of the prerogative power even remotely implied. Thus Addresses of Thanks to the King - and pressure upon Dissenters to address was soon very strong - could be rationalised, and the charge of condoning a prerogative act avoided, by inserting a sentence in praise of 'His Majesty's Gracious Purpose to move His two Houses of Parliament to a concurrence in so excellent a work'.

Nor was the reference to parliamentary approval the only clause in the Declaration which acted as a conscience-salving device for Nonconformists trying to decide whether to take advantage of their new freedom or to address. For those prepared to ignore the dismissal of Church of England men from the inner councils of government, the setting up of an ecclesiastical commission and the first moves against the universities, the King's assurance to the Church at the beginning and the end of the Declaration might have been enough to allay fears that he was endeavouring to undermine Protestantism by striking at its main bulwark. And further, for those with fears of a Catholic-dominated Parliament, the Declaration's failure to make specific reference to persons sitting in Parliament, and the King's subsequent conduct, might have been enough to convince them that an abrogation of the Second Test Act (1678) was not intended.⁽¹⁾ Any Nonconformist in a position to compare the King's English Indulgence

(1) E. Cardwell, *Documentary Annals of the Reformed Church of England* (1839) II, 308-12; J. P. Kenyon, *Robert Spencer, Earl of Sunderland* (1958), 160 (footnote).

with the Edict of Toleration for Scotland, issued on 12 February,⁽¹⁾ which gave the 'Moderate Presbyterians', Quakers and Catholics the right to meet *'under several limitations'*, might have been struck by the former's generosity, and hence been disposed to address. Many Dissenters were, in fact, surprised how far the English Declaration met their expectations,⁽²⁾ and this may help to explain why groups who had received the 1672 Indulgence with poker-face now addressed the King in the 'abject strains' which proved so embarrassing to subsequent apologists. Though, by the same token, the Declaration's generosity to Roman Catholics - the 1672 Indulgence had only given them the right to worship in private - made other Dissenters all the more suspicious.⁽³⁾

In addition to the Declaration's actual content a factor which made it more acceptable to some Nonconformist groups in the form in which it came - a generous toleration by a prerogative act - was the fact that they had come to believe that complete relief from persecution could not come in any other form. As has been observed, the Quakers had looked to the King as the only source of relief from persecution since the Restoration. But this belief must have been reinforced in the thirteen-month period since the 1686 'Mandate' by the still clearer spectacle they had been given of the King as the only intermediary between them and their persecutors. Quakers, in common with the other sects, however, must have realised in the

(1) Gazette 2221 (28 February - 3 March 1687).

(2) Heywood III, 227; Jolly, 82; T. Rees, *Nonconformity in Wales* (1883), 176; Henry, *Diaries and Letters*, 326-7.

(3) H. H. Oakley, *Beginnings of Congregationalism in Sheffield* (1913), 68; G. Trosse, *The Life of the Rev. Mr. George Trosse Late Minister of the Gospel in the City of Exon (1714)*, 92; Brockett, 50. See Reresby, 452.

course of 1686 the limitations of a policy of giving selective grants of relief through the dispensing power. Because of the indirectness of the King's control over the agencies of persecution, the reluctance of some of the sects to take advantage of the avenues of relief provided and the determination of some Anglican persecutors to continue to persecute, persecution had by no means completely died out on the eve of the First Declaration of Indulgence. It must have seemed logical, therefore, that since selective dispensations had not worked, a prerogative act suspending the penal laws was the only alternative. It must have seemed logical to many dissenting groups also that, after such a prerogative act, the next steps would be the dissolution of an Anglican House of Commons which had resisted the first moves in the King's programme in its last sitting, and major changes in the corporations, the commission of the peace, the lieutenancy and the shrievalty to facilitate the election of a more amenable lower house and to render the prerogative act effective. That the Declaration of Indulgence was an obvious accommodation to the logic of events, therefore, must have been a fact in the minds of Nonconformists which favoured its acceptance.

The response of the sects to the Declaration is best analysed by considering it in relation to three questions, arranged in logical sequence. First, would they accept and take advantage of the Declaration? Second, would they, in response to the pressures imposed, send addresses of thanks to the King, thus giving his programme the semblance of a popular base, as well as the hope of eventual implementation? Third, would they be prepared to co-operate in implementing the King's programme by indicating their support for the repeal of the Test and Penal Laws and acting as JPs, Deputy Lieutenants, Sheriffs, and Aldermen and Common Council men in

re-modelled corporations, or court-nominated candidates in the projected elections for a biddable Parliament?

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The initial response of the overwhelming majority of Nonconformists to the King's Declaration was one of support, coupled with a determination to make the maximum possible use of the benefits it provided. Only John Howe, who returned to England in early May, and a tight group of ex-émigrés around him, spoke against the Declaration from the beginning, labelling it a Papist contrivance.⁽¹⁾ Primed before their departure by William - in fact, if Burnet is to be believed, encouraged to return by William specifically to influence co-religionists against the Declaration, with passage paid, and pockets full⁽²⁾ - this nucleus of dissenting clergy was doubtless at least partially responsible, with the assistance of Dykvelt⁽³⁾ for the reaction against the Declaration which eventually set in, when the 'Papist Design' imputation had stuck and Nonconformists had become generally more aware of the constitutional issue. The Presbyterian 'Dons', other than Howe, including Dr. William Bates, Richard Baxter and Roger Morrice, certainly did not speak against the Declaration from the first. They were not

'so fond of hard usage, as to refuse a liberty so freely

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- (1) Calamy, Howe, 131-132, 134; Morrice Q, 129; Burnet I, 708; R. F. Horton, John Howe (1895), 162-3.
- (2) Burnet I, 708, 709. See R. F. Horton, op cit, 163; L. Pinkham, William III and the Respectable Revolution (1954), 44.
- (3) Morrice Q, 124, 132, 134, 149; Burnet I, 708-712; R. F. Horton, op cit, 163 ; H. Rogers, Life of Howe (1836), 344-5; H. W. Clark, English Nonconformity (1912) II, 110. See CSPD 1687-9, 12, 13.

offered them; nor did they think it good manners, to enquire too narrowly how that Indulgence came about, so long as they were sheltered by it from *oppression*. (1)

Morrice's personal view was characteristically balanced. Whilst incredulous as to the permanence of the toleration because he believed it to be against the long-term interest of Catholicism in England, he wrote:

'I am satisfied on good information that [the Declaration] was not issued out because the Court either hoped or expected.. to gain a Parliament of the English party of Conformists or Nonconformists that would null and take off the disabling laws'.

The King knew from their past practice that the Nonconformists were the strongest asserters of the Protestant religion and would not place themselves in a position where they could be persecuted by the Pope as they had been by 'the Hierarchists'. The King's objective, he believed, was more moderate and more subtle than that attributed to him by the émigrés. The King wished to create a situation whereby 'the most likely party of men to give the government any trouble or to make any eruption' would have 'perfect ease and tranquility'. Then 'the Court might, under cover of present satisfaction, advance Popery without any considerable observation or notice taken by the people'; in this way army, church, and administration would be infiltrated by the Papists. But the King had, Morrice believed, miscalculated the probable feeling of both Nonconformists and Anglicans; the latter from vested interest, if for no other reason, would be 'greatly

(1) Calamy, Abridgement, 376; Morrice Q, 132; HMC Downshire MSS I, i, 237.

disobliged' and would implacably oppose the scheme which the King envisaged.⁽¹⁾

At this stage in the proceedings, however, few Dissenters saw things as clearly as Morrice and even he, to say the least, was looking as through a glass darkly. Their initial response was expressed in joyful declarations of support with, in some cases - thanks to the clause invoking Parliament - no more than the very vaguest misgivings. Within weeks, and sometimes days, these initial expressions of joy would seem to those who made them naive in the extreme. Thomas Jolly had exclaimed: the Edict 'was even according to our desires and above our expectations in a rational way... Some men's designs in it, time will discover, God will defeat'.⁽²⁾ Oliver Heywood, having enumerated all the benefits which had immediately accrued from the Declaration, said: 'Oh, what a change! Surely somebody hath laid hard siege by the Throne of Grace!'⁽³⁾ Philip Henry wrote: 'Whatever Men's Ends are in it, I believe God's End..is to do us good'.⁽⁴⁾ George Sharp, a Presbyterian preacher in the West Riding, 'preached his first sermon in public from Psalm 68:28; that whoever be the instruments, yet the supreme author of all good to His people is God Himself'.⁽⁵⁾ In all parts of the country rejoicing among lay Dissenters was general, 'it was not ^{to be} expected that they would scan too scrupulously the means by which it was given them, with no suggestion ~~of~~ solicitation of their own'.⁽⁶⁾ Far away from

(1) Morrice Q, 87, 88, 89. c.f. Reresby, 452.

(2) Jolly, 82.

(3) Heywood III, 227.

(4) Henry, Diaries and Letters, 327.

(5) J. Hunter (ed), Diary of Ralph Thoresby (1830) I, 186.

(6) J. Hunter, Life of Oliver Heywood (1842), 347-8; Ivimey I, 469; R. Halley, Lancashire, its Puritanism and Nonconformity (1872) II, 279-281; Miall, 96; Browne, 178, 237; Bennet, Memorial, 327-8.

the urban areas, in the rural counties of Northern England and Wales, where persecution had often been worse and lasted longest, and where the constitutional issue seemed remote, joy was unbounded.⁽¹⁾ Even in London a 'Dissenters' Jubilee' celebration took place in Spitalfields (17 May) at which the preacher, an Independent, Charles Nicholets, gave James II what must have been the most glowing eulogy he ever received: through this great King the Lord had turned again the captivity of Zion; James II was compared with Ahasuerus - 'Shall a heathen King be more tender than Protestant magistrates?'⁽²⁾ However, in view of the previous use of 'enticement' by the Court it may be significant that one observer wrote: 'I find some that are much joyed at it; but others seem to be less transported than they were in 1672...'⁽³⁾ But it is not surprising that the early expectations of the King and his Ministers of the amount of Nonconformist support available for the Court programme were somewhat over-optimistic.⁽⁴⁾

But this was a short-term reaction, and for many Dissenters there was a quite different long-term reaction. Despite significant differences between this and previous Indulgences the basic analogy held true: whatever the Declaration might say about 'making no doubt of the concurrence of Parliament when next it should meet', in itself it constituted a blatant use of the royal prerogative, and as such went

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- See*
- (1) T. Rees, *Nonconformity in Wales* (1883), 176-7; B. Dale, *A History of English Congregationalism* (1907), 449-51.
 - (2) C. Nicholets, *The Dissenters Jubilee: as it was sounded in the Audience of a Solemn Assembly .. on May 17, 1687, Being a Day of Thanksgiving for.. Liberty of Conscience* (1687), epistle dedicatory, and pp 2, 5, 30, 31, 40.
 - (3) Ellis I, 260-1, xvii.
 - (4) Sunderland to Tyrconnel 31 May, CSPD 1686-7, 442; Burnet I, 714, 715; James to William 22 April and 20 May 1687, Dalrymple II, pt. 1, app. bk. 5, 53; d'Adda 20 June 1687, cited J. P. Kenyon, *Robert Spencer Earl of Sunderland* (1958), 158.

very much against the grain of the political philosophy of informed Dissenters; and whatever assurances it might make to the Church, the fall of the Hydes and the campaign against the universities told another story. As this latter became more and more of a public scandal Dissenters capable of reading its significance became more deeply concerned,⁽¹⁾ and by the end of the year one shrewd observer believed that 'the ... business of Magdalen College' had been a decisive factor in causing the veering away of Nonconformist support from the King.⁽²⁾ Meanwhile 'sober churchmen' had not been slow to bring their influence to bear on 'sober Dissenters', and for the benefit of the less sober Dissenters through pamphlets and preaching they were utilising with a will the most potent weapon in their armoury, the Popish Peril.⁽³⁾ Taking his cue from the Anglicans, Daniel Williams was soon preaching the importance of the constitutional issue for the benefit of his more politically-conscious colleagues.⁽⁴⁾ The influence of Tillotson, Stillingfleet and the rest, together with that of the Nonconformist émigré group and the moderating influence of the Dons, including Williams, soon led to a substantial change of opinion among London and Home Counties Dissenters, which did not favour the success of the King's policies. And this change would eventually percolate outward to the provinces, where some who had formerly made rash avowals were already showing signs of returning to more characteristic attitudes.

(1) Morrice Q, 93-95, 104, 111, 112, 122-123, 144-7, 151-5, 163, 182-6, 197-8; H. W. Clark, *English Nonconformity* (1912) II, 111.

(2) Portland Misc. 19, PwA 2120b (21 December 1687); BM. Add. MSS 34515, f. 43.

(3) W. Lloyd, Bishop of Norwich to W. Sancroft, 14 April 1687, Tanner MSS XXIX, f. 8.

(4) Williams I, x.

In Yorkshire, Richard Stretton of Leeds, a friend of both Baxter and Howe, who had stood aloof throughout the initial burst of enthusiasm, had managed to disseminate a greater awareness of the constitutional issue by July, which precipitated a widespread change of attitudes to Court policy.⁽¹⁾

Perhaps Philip Henry's Diary is epitomising the long-term reaction of Nonconformists regarding the Declaration of Indulgence when it reads;

whilst those who 'had lain buried in silence and restraint' could do no other than 'rejoice in it; now that the Design of it was manifest, they could not choose but rejoice with trembling'.⁽²⁾ In Cheshire Thomas Jolly, whilst still professing his gratitude to the King, had found that he had incurred considerable unpopularity in dissenting circles by so doing.⁽³⁾ Some thought they saw clearly that the Indulgence was a part of the Papist Design: the Church would be destroyed and, that done, Nonconformity would be 'crushed'.⁽⁴⁾ In London it took Roger Morrice precisely seven days to admit to having revised his opinion. Referring to his attempt at political analysis of the previous week he wrote: 'I begin to be of the opinion [that] the true predominant motive and end is yet altogether

(1) Miall, 96.

(2) A. Nelson, *Puritan Divines, IX: The Life and Times of Philip Henry* (1848), 232-3; *Henry, Diaries and Letters*, 326-7.

(3) Jolly, 85.

(4) G. Trosse, *The Life of the Rev. Mr. George Trosse Late Minister of the Gospel in the City of Exon* (1714), 92; J. Hunter (ed), *op cit*, 186; J. Waddington, *Surrey Congregational History* (1866), 89. It is perhaps significant that, whilst the Harley family's correspondence during this period made no mention of the Indulgence, they were mainly involved in making provision for the Huguenots still arriving from France. Edward to Sir Edward Harley, 21 May, 14 June 1687, HMC 14th Report, app. pt. II: *Portland MSS III* (1894), 398-9. M. V. Hay was undoubtedly incorrect in his assertion that distrust of the King's motives in granting the Indulgence only became general after the Revolution. M. V. Hay, *The Enigma of James II* (1938), 71.

out of our prospect, and greater and larger than we can yet comprehend'.⁽¹⁾ Others believed that more was behind the Declaration than they had at first thought and were 'fearful of the issue'.⁽²⁾ Heywood noted, 'This design' 'begets displeasure in the men of the Church of England; contentment to some Dissenters, jealousies in others, who suspect a design therein...'.⁽³⁾ And by July it is likely that there were very few Dissenters who did not. By August Halifax, who, in his correspondence with William, had already noted a certain 'firmness in the nation, an aversion to change', was now vindicating himself:

'There are some things that can never prevail upon men's minds, if they have time allowed to consider them; this may be the present case, the whole kingdom being now so well-informed that all men are settled in their dislike of the unwelcome thing that is endeavoured to be imposed on them'.⁽⁴⁾

Not quite 'all men' or even 'all informed men' were settled in their dislike of the King's design, however; though it must be admitted that it is by no means clear that the handful who did not had representative followings in the sects from which they came. Men like William Penn and George Whitehead, the Quakers, Stephen Lobb and Henry Nye, the Congregationalists, and Vincent Alsop, the Presbyterian, believed it 'inconceivable that Presbytery let loose [and by far the greater proportion of Nonconformists were Presbyterians] ⁽⁵⁾ could bring in Popery'.⁽⁶⁾ But at least three out of the five had a

(1) Morrice Q, 97.

(2) Calamy, Abridgement, 376.

(3) Heywood, IV, 125.

(4) J. P. Kenyon (ed), Halifax Complete Works (1969), 336-7.

(5) Morrice P, 615; Ivimey I, 467.

(6) BM Add. MS 34515, f. 32.

vested interest - in addition to any religious or political ideal - to incline them to that belief. Both Lobb and Alsop's son Benjamin had been pardoned of treasonable activities by the King.⁽¹⁾ Not that this alone could have dictated their attitudes toward the Indulgence: there were many Dissenters who were pardoned of treason charges in the course of 1686 who did not find it necessary to expiate their offence and demonstrate their gratitude by becoming courtiers in 1687. Vincent Alsop, pastor of the Presbyterian congregation in Tothill Street, Westminster, from 1677 to 1703, had always advocated separatism and toleration, rather than comprehension, and his championship of the Indulgence was perfectly consistent with everything he had ever written.⁽²⁾ Penn, however, as has been seen, already had a position at Court, but it was very much in his material interest, as well as in accordance with his politico-religious aims, to retain it. In 1681, with the help of the Duke of York, he had gained proprietary rights to Pennsylvania. Penn's desire to retain those rights could have given James a whip hand over him: there is no evidence that he used it, but it may still have been a factor ensuring Penn's support. In May 1687 it had taken all the influence Penn could muster at Court to persuade the King to withdraw the quo warranto he had issued out against the charter of Pennsylvania (in common with those of other proprietary colonies).⁽³⁾ In March 1687 his position at Court had again proved of material value when, through Sunderland,

(1) CSPD 1686-7, 326, 440; Calamy, Abridgement II, 488; Gordon, 199; Morrice Q, 114, 126; CR, 8, 9.

(2) R. A. Beddard, 'Vincent Alsop and the Emancipation of Restoration Dissent', JEH XXIV, no. 2 (April 1973), 161, 164-5, 173, 175-7, 178-9, 180.

(3) Penn, vii, viii-ix, 108-110, 111-112, 114, 121; Morrice P, 551.

the Lord Deputy had been asked to interfere with a trial in Ireland involving Penn's interests.⁽¹⁾ During May he, with Robert Erent, was reported to have played a major part in drafting the Declaration, including the insertion of the parliamentary-sanction clause, and he 'was much at Court, and often in the King's closet'.⁽²⁾

But Penn's vested interests should not serve to minimise the genuineness of his belief in toleration, the part he had played in bringing the Indulgence about or the part he was to play in the effort to secure parliamentary sanction for it. Penn's pamphlets have been considered as important a contribution to the literature of toleration as the works of Milton, Locke or Andrew Marvel.⁽³⁾ Since the beginning of the reign Penn and Whitehead had made repeated attempts to convince James of the importance of issuing an Indulgence on the pattern of that of 1672 (which was often praised by Penn). In the late summer of 1686 Penn visited William - probably on behalf of James - to win him over to the cause of toleration for Roman Catholics and Protestant Dissenters.⁽⁴⁾ In the course of the summer of 1687, as he watched Nonconformist enthusiasm ebb away after the first optimism provoked by the Declaration, Penn wrote a number of pamphlets appealing for parliamentary confirmation and arguing the merits of

- (1) CSPD 1686-7, 391. In 1688 Penn's position at Court was to bring a financial return, by his being in the receipt of a share of the excise revenue from tea and coffee; HMC Downshire MSS I, i, 293, 301.
- (2) Ellis I, 268-9, ci; Morrice Q, 86.
- (3) Penn's most important pamphlets up to this time were: *The Great Case of Liberty of Conscience once more Debated* (1670), *England's Present Interest Discovered* (1675) and *An Address to Protestants upon the Present Conjuncture* (1679). See H. F. R. Smith's essay, *Religious Liberty under Charles II and James II*. Camb. Historical Essays XL.1911; Penn, 10, 44-47, 139-141.
- (4) William Penn, *A Persuasive to Moderation to Church Dissenters* (1686); Burnet I, 693-4; Janney, 282, 284.

toleration.⁽¹⁾ Few realised more than the Quakers the importance of gaining a Parliament which would endorse the Indulgence. Not that they had any deep concern for the constitutional issue: merely a desire to ensure the security of their much appreciated liberties in the reign of a King who, by the standards of the time, was already into old age. Until parliamentary sanction was gained their liberty was, wrote Whitehead, 'but uncertain and precarious, as it was before when we had only the King's specious promises and declarations'.⁽²⁾

Another way of rendering the Indulgence secure, however, was to canvass a more widespread acceptance of the King's prerogative to dispense and suspend. It was doubtless in the face of violent opposition from fellow Independents that Henry Nye, in the summer of 1687 when the first enthusiasm had waned, republished his father's pamphlet first issued in 1672 in support of Charles II's Indulgence: 'The King's Authority in Dispensing with Ecclesiastical Laws Asserted and Vindicated, by the late Rev. Philip Nye, a Congregational Divine.' The conclusion of Nye's argument had been:

'Although men may be tenants in common, ... none can be joint tenants with the King ... the King hath the supremacy, and is thereby enabled to such Acts and Orderings about the Penalties of our Laws, as are peculiar to the Crown and Dignity of a King; as in mitigating, exempting, dispensing, licensing, pardoning etc. and all this more especially in ecclesiastical matters'.⁽³⁾

(1) The Reasonableness of Toleration, Some Free Reflections upon Occasion of the public Discourse about Liberty of Conscience (1687) (see especially pp 12, 13-14); Good Advice to the Church of England, Roman Catholics and Protestant Dissenters (1687). (See pp 56-61). See Janney, 297-8.

(2) Whitehead, 629.

(3) Henry Nye (ed), The King's Authority in Dispensing with Ecclesiastical Laws Asserted and Vindicated, by the Late Rev. Philip Nye, a Congregational Divine (1687), 2, 3-7, 7-10.

Henry Nye, however, was out on a limb, as his father had been in the previous generation, but the republication of this pamphlet, and his Preface, in which he endorsed its argument and eulogised the King, merely represents an extreme in Nonconformist attitudes to the Declaration of Indulgence; the other extreme being represented by John Howe and the émigrés. But there was one thing which the exponents of both extremities had in common: the Declaration, and the motives behind it, might be criticised or eulogised but all found it in them to make the best possible use of it that their energies allowed. Philip Henry

'apprehended this liberty, to be of a very short continuance, and to end in trouble; and, because he could not see how his not using it would help, prevent the trouble, whereas his vigorous improvement of it would help to prepare for the trouble, he set himself with all diligence to make the best use he could of this gleam both at home and abroad'.⁽¹⁾

Daniel Williams, newly returned from Ireland, told Sir John Shorter that Nonconformists made full use of the new liberty because they were 'under a solemn dedication to the work of Christ as ministers'. He added,

'I would persuade all Nonconforming ministers not to neglect the present opportunity of exercising their ministry; their obligation and licence to it is from Christ's prior commission, and not the present removal of a physical obstacle'.⁽²⁾

Nonconformist preachers who had either been silenced or

(1) A. Nelson, *Puritan Divines IX: The Life and Times of Philip Henry* (1848), 236-7.

(2) *Williams I*, viii-ix, x, 6-7, 58.

'underground' for long periods, and had not dared to brave the sporadic persecution that continued after the Pardon of 1686, preached publicly after the King's Declaration. These included William Tong, silent since the severe persecution of 1685,⁽¹⁾ John Farrol, about whom we have little information since his ejection from Selbourne in Hampshire,⁽²⁾ and others in Wales, the border counties, and Lancashire, where the policy of selective relief had had little effect.⁽³⁾ Many Nonconformist pastors, some of whom had availed themselves of the liberty to preach before the Declaration, began to conduct itinerant evangelistic campaigns, preaching to large crowds in the open, in barns, and occasionally in special meeting houses. By the end of the year Oliver Heywood had travelled 1,400 miles through Nottinghamshire, Westmorland, Yorkshire and Lancashire and had preached 'above a hundred times' on weekdays, as well as 'Lord's Days'.⁽⁴⁾ Henry Newcome's preaching commitments increased; because of the 'great congregation' that came to hear him it was necessary to increase the size of the barn in which they met.⁽⁵⁾ And similar experiences were shared by Presbyterian clergy elsewhere, though Morrice was sure that the sudden upsurge of support at Nonconformist meetings would only last as long as the novelty lasted.⁽⁶⁾ John Bunyan's experience,

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- (1) Wilson II, 23-24.
- (2) J. Waddington, *Surrey Congregational History* (1866), 205, 212.
- (3) T. Rees, *Nonconformity in Wales* (1883), 176-7; B. Nightingale, *Lancashire Nonconformity, Volume on Manchester and Oldham* (1893), 86; CR, 83; H. Shaw, 'Congregationalism in Manchester: its beginnings and development', *CHST I* (1901-04), 66.
- (4) Heywood III, 229.
- (5) Henry Newcome, *Autobiography*, Chetham Soc. (1852) II, 264-5. Thomas Cartwright, Bishop of Chester, 'granted a licence to Hen. Newcomb de Tattenhall to be schoolmaster there'. Thomas Cartwright, *Diary*, Camden Soc. (1843), 72 (18 August 1687).
- (6) Morrice Q, 89, 90, 96, 97; Henry, *Diaries and Letters*, 328; CR, 241, 440. See G. G. Waddington, *A History of the Independent Church at Greenacres* (1854), 15.

however, was otherwise, and Thomas Jolly preached to 'a congregation of several hundreds'.⁽¹⁾

1687 was a great year for chapel building, meeting house leasing and the re-opening and refurbishing of old premises. The Broadmead Baptist congregation at Bristol returned to its old meeting place on 28 April 1687 for the first time in five years and, a few weeks later, the Castle Green Independent meeting house was re-opened, after seven years in which it had not been in regular use (its pastor, Dr. Ichabod Chauncy, having returned from his exile abroad).⁽²⁾ A congregation of Independents was 'regularly organised' in Worcester, and by February 1688, a Baptist pastor was reported to have died 'by an excess of preaching'.⁽³⁾ On 30 March 1687, as soon as rumours of the Declaration began to circulate, chapel records of the Middlegate Street Independents at Yarmouth show that orders were given 'that the meeting house should be made clean' and preparations be made for 'a great auditory' in honour of the King's Edict.⁽⁴⁾ Heywood built a

(1) Whiting, 131; Jolly, 82. See also Henry Newcome, op cit.

(2) Lyon Turner MS.89.13, X13, X14; E. Terrill(ed), The Records of the Church of Christ Meeting in Broadmead Bristol 1640-87, Hanserd Knollys Soc. (1847), 494.

(3) CR, 21, 81. See J. Noake, Worcester Sects (1861), 110.

(4) Harmer MS.76.2, 145, 146; J. E. Clowes (ed), The Chronicles of the Old Congregational Church at Great Yarmouth: 1642-1858 (1906), 44; Browne, 178, 237.

chapel for his congregation at Northowram.

He was also instrumental in *acquiring* a large Presbyterian meeting place at Halifax, and provides evidence of the building programmes of other congregations in Lancashire and Yorkshire. (1) New meeting houses were in the process of construction in Cumberland, Northumberland, and Cheshire, where the Nonconformists were 'full of projects'. (2) Everywhere congregations scattered by persecution were coming together; because this was the first 'free existence' of many congregations 1687 is when their records begin. (3) The spread of Nonconformity in Staffordshire during the three months following the Indulgence was such that Addison, Dean of Lichfield, who had had high hopes of its extirpation in 1685, had to admit to the Archbishop of Canterbury that his self-assigned mission was now impossible of achievement. (4)

The Presbyterians in some parts, having forgotten for the time being any aspiration toward comprehension, were building meeting houses with as much gusto as the separatists and, by acting like separatists, preparing themselves for the eventual accommodation to the logic of events that would have to come in 1689. In addition to Heywood's building programme, the Presbyterians constructed places of worship in Exeter (where they named it James Meeting, after the King), Dartmouth, Tiverton, Shrewsbury, Northampton, Cambridge,

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- (1) Walter Wilson MS.553 D, 138; Heywood IV, 126, 127, 128, 129, 131; J. Hunter, *Life of Oliver Heywood* (1842), 356-7.
- (2) M. Savage to P. Henry, 5 November 1687, and 10 April 1687, Henry MS.4, letters 2 and 4; Walter Wilson MS.553 D, 6, 34.
- (3) H. F. Sanders, 'Early Nonconformity in Nottinghamshire', CHST V (1911-12), 237; J. Murch, *A History of the Presbyterian and Baptist Churches in the West of England* (1835), 86, 366, 373; W. H. D. Longstaffe (ed), *Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Ambrose Barnes, Surtees Soc. L.* (1866), 175.
- (4) A. G. Matthews, *Congregational Churches in Staffordshire* (1924), 79, 80.

Shepton Mallet, Newbury, Birmingham, and Guestwick in the course of 1687-8. ⁽¹⁾ ^{evidence suggests that} In London a new Presbyterian congregation was formed in Poor Jewry Lane, and a newly formed congregation of General Baptists leased Turners Hall. A Presbyterian Church was built in **Zoar Street**, a Particular Baptist meeting house in Devonshire Square, a Presbyterian meeting house re-opened in Bridge Street, Westminster. ⁽²⁾ In Bedford, the aged John Bunyan was actively involved in the construction of a meeting house for the large congregation of General Baptists there. ⁽³⁾ Hence although some believed that 'this liberty would be of short duration and end in trouble', the actions of others seemed to indicate that they at least were confident that it was here to stay. However, it is difficult to say if their trust was in the prospect of a Dissenting Parliament, the promises of James II, the assurances of William through Dykvelt, ⁽⁴⁾ the undertakings of 'sober Churchmen', or simply in the omnipotence of God. Certainly, the preaching of John Howe and his friends, who counselled the believers to 'beware of the snares that were laid for them' and against word or deed 'that would give the Papists any assistance in the carrying on [of] their designs', was not calculated to inspire trust in the King. ⁽⁵⁾

A further indication of the confidence of many Nonconformists

- (1) Walter Wilson MS I, iv, 254, 262-3; v, 18, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28; Lyon Turner MS.89.26, a 20, a 22; CR, 200, 393, 426; Harmer MS.76.6, 1, 2; Brockett, 54; DWL MS.38.66, 8, 9; Warwick CR VIII, xc ; C. A. Kenny, 'The Earlier History of Emmanuel Church Cambridge', CHST IV (1909-10), 185.
- (2) Wilson I, ³⁵⁻57, 135-6; III, 546, 492; IV, 188 ; Ivimey I, 470.
- (3) Whiting, 131.
- (4) Morrice Q, 124, 132; Burnet I, 708, 709, 711-712.
- (5) Calamy, Howe, 131, 132, 134; H. Rogers, Life of Howe (1836), 345-9.

in their new-found security - and, by the same token, a yardstick of the King's success in restraining the agencies of persecution since the Declaration - was that the ministry was once again becoming attractive as a calling for educated Nonconformist youth and, further, that some of these youth, together with a few who were already practising pastors, were prepared to take the risk of a formal ordination.⁽¹⁾ Between November 1686 and July 1689 enrolment at Frankland's academy was fifty-one students, a considerable improvement on the previous two and a half year period.⁽²⁾ It was inevitable that the chronic shortage of ministers evident among Presbyterians and Congregationalists before James's accession - occasioned by the failure of the Nonconformist academies to supply enough candidates to cover the death rate among the ejected ministry⁽³⁾ - should appear in bolder relief in the face of the vast opportunities that presented themselves to the Nonconformist pastorate after the Declaration of Indulgence. It was doubtless in an effort to cope with these new responsibilities that so many of the ejected ministry *greatly increased their preaching commitments* as soon as the freedom to preach was official.⁽⁴⁾ The purpose of these itinerant preaching marathons was not primarily to proselytise, but to draw together the remnant of the faithful, scattered and confused by persecution and habits of conformity, in districts where there were no local pastors to draw their old

(1) See the discussion on the question of ordination and re-ordination as it affected Anglicans and Presbyterians in Every, 4-5; also above pp. 13-14.

(2) T. G. Crippen, 'Richard Frankland and His Academy', CHST II (1905-1906), 425.

(3) See above pp. 76-83.

(4) Heywood III, 229; Jolly, 82; Henry Newcome, Autobiography, Chetham Soc. (1852) II, 264-5; CR, 4, 241, 440; Simon King to R. Baxter, 16 February 1688, Baxter MSS (Letters) V, f.101.

flocks together. In the course of 1687 the shortage of pastors was somewhat relieved by the return from exile of many, though by no means all, of those who had fled in 1685-6. As soon as these men returned, there were many calls upon their services from groups of Dissenters in different parts of the country.⁽¹⁾ In the South East the shortage of pastors was such that Joseph Whiston of Maidstone advised Presbyterians and Congregationalists ~~that~~

Where there ~~was~~ a Congregational minister, Presbyterians should acquiesce in him; and where there ~~was~~ a Presbyterian minister, Congregationalists should acquiesce in him.⁽²⁾

Even the ejected ministers too sick or too old to undertake preaching campaigns found their services in great demand.⁽³⁾ Also those who had sought relief from persecution in the relative anonymity of London during 1685-6 now began to make treks to their old meeting-houses in the towns and villages of the North and West.⁽⁴⁾

But the number of ordinations in 1687 did not represent a major influx of young blood into the ministries of the two larger dissenting sects. Between April and December 1687, on his travels through the Northern counties, Oliver Heywood was involved in seven ordinations including two at Frankland's training academy; all involving only a handful of ordinands.⁽⁵⁾ Philip Henry's diary and his letters to his son refer to ordinations , as

(1) See above pp. 81-83.

(2) CR, 524.

(3) M. Savage to P. Henry, 5 November 1687, Henry MS.4, letter 2; S. King to R. Baxter, 16 February 1688, Baxter MSS (Letters), f. 101; Lyon Turner MS.89.22, 14, 15; Powicke, 164-5.

(4) Walter Wilson MS I, ii, 330; Lyon Turner MS.89.23, Notebook on Southampton, 2, 4, 10.

(5) Heywood III, 227; IV, 126; J. Hunter, Life of Oliver Heywood (1842), 351-2, 353-4, 355-6; Walter Wilson MS.553 D, 129, 136; T.G.Crippen, 'Richard Frankland and His Academy', CHST II (1905-1906), 425.

does the Notebook of Thomas Jolly: all probably taking place in private houses and involving only a few ordinands and senior ministers.⁽¹⁾ For the half dozen ordinations of which there is evidence in the South - often conducted with elaborate secrecy - the total number of ordinands is only thirteen.⁽²⁾ No ordinations took place in London. The first since the Act of Uniformity of 1662 was not to be until 1694.⁽³⁾

However, whilst the fear or threat of persecution might remain in some parts of the country, incidents of actual persecution after the King's Declaration were comparatively rare. The only significant exception to this was that Quakers continued to suffer distrains for non-payment of tithes, but in many areas even this type of persecution showed some signs of declining.⁽⁴⁾ Other incidents of persecution were few and far between. The windows of Henry Newcome's chapel were broken by Sir John Bland, an Anglican enthusiast - though not acting in any official capacity - and Newcome encountered hostility from his Anglican neighbours over the affair.⁽⁵⁾ A few Northern Baptists sent a petition to the King in June, complaining of fines.⁽⁶⁾ In November there was a complicated

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- (1) Henry, Diaries and Letters, 360; A. Nelson, Puritan Divines IX: The Life and Times of Philip Henry (1848), 237; Jolly, 84.
- (2) Walter Wilson MS I, i, 92; J. E. Clowes (ed), Chronicles of the Old Congregational Church at Great Yarmouth: 1642-1858 (1906), 45; Lyon Turner MS.89.13, XI 5; Densham and Ogle, 148; J. Murch, A History of the Presbyterian and Baptist Churches in the West of England (1835), 366.
- (3) R. A. Beddard, 'Vincent Alsop and the Emancipation of Restoration Dissent', JEH XXIV, No. 2 (April 1973), 161-2. The 1687 ordinations in places apart from London were not the first since 1662; there had been isolated instances in the period of freedom after 1672 and in 1681. Cragg II, 20; J. E. Manning, History of Upper Chapel Sheffield (1900), 27. See also 28-30.
- (4) See above pp. 112, 222; R. F. Skinner, Nonconformity in Shropshire 1662-1816 (1964), 9; A. J. Eddington, The First Fifty years of Quakerism in Norwich, Friends Hist. Soc. (1932), 263; B. Nightingale, Lancashire Nonconformity (1893), Vol. on Manchester and Oldham, 86; J. Noake, Worcester Sects (1861), 266-7.
- (5) H. Newcome, Autobiography, Chetham Soc. (1852) II, 266.
- (6) Morrice Q, 141.

case involving three Roman Catholics who were still in the King's Bench Prison petitioning release.⁽¹⁾

And

a week after the Indulgence it would appear that the irrepressible Sheriff of Norfolk was still using obstructionist tactics to prevent the refund of fines.⁽²⁾ Whilst persecution, other than for tithes, did not amount to much, however, Dissenters were still suffering the effects of persecution in the continued confiscation of goods and cattle for trading debts they were unable to pay.⁽³⁾

One factor which prevented the Indulgence from being ignored or circumnavigated by the persecutors - as, for example, they had ignored the King's wishes in regard to the Quakers in 1686 - was the King's determination to make sure that it was enforced by a thorough-going policy of enquiry and interference. What he had done for Recusants and Quakers in 1686, he did for all the sects in 1687. The first indication of the King's determination to make his will effective was a Treasury warrant, issued immediately after the Indulgence, declaring that, as it had been His Majesty's will and pleasure 'to discharge and supersede all process' against Recusants in accordance with his warrant of 8 March,⁽⁴⁾ His Majesty now 'declared that his grace and favour should extend to all his subjects as well Protestant Dissenters, as Roman Catholics' and hence he would

(1) CTB VIII, pt. 3, 1587.

(2) CTB VIII, pt. 3, 1303.

(3) A. J. Eddington, op cit, 225.

(4) CTB VIII, pt. 3, 1246. See above p.124.

not countenance any interference with them for religious causes.⁽¹⁾
 This warrant was soon reinforced by a letter from Henry Guy to the
 Attorney-General asking for information on monies received
 for recusancy.⁽²⁾ It is possible that, by the end of the year, the
 King was becoming dissatisfied with the expedition and efficiency of
 the existing Commissioners who had been investigating distrains from
 Recusants and Dissenters since the previous year, as he distributed
 commissions to over sixty other persons, divided between all the
 counties of England and Wales, 'to enquire touching the monies levied
 or received from any Recusants or Dissenters whatsoever and not
 accounted for to the late or present King [by the several sheriffs
 concerned].' The list of instructions sent with each commission
 included the commands: 'to enquire by juries and by search of records';
 to discover 'by what authority' fines had been levied 'and to whose hands
 same did come...'.⁽³⁾

Through the information fed in by the various commissioners,
 and through petitions sent in to the Treasury, the period between
 May 1687 and May 1688 saw a considerable number of fines and forfeit-
 ures restored to Nonconformists and Recusants. Some of the fines and
 forfeitures being refunded and some of the petitions for refunds
 related to money and goods distrained as long previously as 1681.⁽⁴⁾

(1) CTB VIII, pt. 3, 1321.

(2) CTB VIII, pt. 3, 1347.

(3) CTB VIII, pt. 3, 1695-1697; HMC Downshire MSS I, i, 278.

(4) CTB VIII, pt. 3, 1343, 1370, 1393, 1572; CSPD 1687-9, 117.

Restorations continued to be made, however, only when the amounts in question had not already been paid into the Exchequer. By 21 January 1688, it is likely that most amounts distrained and still held at local level had been refunded, hence a letter was sent to Edward Ange through the Comptroller of the Pipe calling upon him to provide certificates and details of all amounts distrained and paid in during the period in which he was Receiver-General.⁽¹⁾ It was probably in the course of the ensuing investigation and through the petitions which continued to flow into the Treasury that further amounts were found not to have been properly accounted for and that the final refunds were made.⁽²⁾

The King's attempt, through the Treasury, to ensure the refund, as far as was possible, of fines and forfeitures levied on Dissenters, was clearly also intended to discourage further fines, in accordance with the tenets of his Declaration. But this was not the full extent of his policy of reinforcing the Indulgence. When necessary the King was prepared, where resistance was encountered from local Anglicans, to issue special orders to Mayors, Bailiffs, Constables, etc. not to hinder the erection of a Nonconformist chapel on a particular site, or to make possible the use of an existing building as a place of worship for Nonconformists. These special orders were accompanied by a reminder 'to hinder any tumult or disturbance [to the worshippers] and to protect them in their said meetings and assemblies'.⁽³⁾ And further, in accordance with the spirit of his Declaration, the King

(1) CTB VIII, pt. 3, 1720.

(2) CTB VIII, pt. 3, 1742, 1759, 1765, 1791, 1807; HMC Downshire MSS I, 1, 287.

(3) SP 31/3, f. 107; CSPD 1687-9, 34 ; HMC Downshire MSS I, 1, 285. See also CSPD 1687-9, 40.

issued a succession of pardons to rebels involved in Monmouth's Rebellion - some of whom had been specifically excluded from the General Pardon of March 1686.⁽¹⁾ In fact, by January 1688, so few of the original rebels excluded remained unpardoned, that the Commissioners still involved in the sale of the estates of the Western rebels were finding it impossible to proceed, and petitions for a share in the takings were being withdrawn.⁽²⁾ When the King found persons to be in prison for ecclesiastical offences, he immediately ordered their release with expressions of regret.⁽³⁾ And on 16 November 1687, symbolically, an order was given 'that the head and quarters of Henry Cornish be taken down from the Guildhall', and interred in St. Lawrence's church-yard.⁽⁴⁾

By the end of 1687, regardless of what motives Dissenters might ascribe to the King's policy - and, despite the early cordiality, these were, by this time, most sinister - it was undeniable that at no time since the enactment of what Dissenters called 'the Clarendon Code' had they enjoyed greater freedom and more complete protection than now. The visible exhilaration among the sects, evidenced in their marathon preaching campaigns, large and expanding congregations, ambitious building projects and expanding ministry, might have led an observer with no particular axe to grind, had such a person existed, to endorse the view which John Bunyan had expressed in the preface of his Discourse on AntiChrist regarding Charles II's enticement policy: the King was acting from the best of intentions; it was the Tobiases

(1) CSPD 1687-4, 75, 115; Morrice Q, 167 (mentions thirty-four pardons); HMC Downshire MSS I, i, 283.

(2) CTB VIII, pt. 3, 1733.

(3) Morrice Q, 132-3.

(4) CSPD 1687-9, 103; Morrice Q, 207.

and Sanballats among the Dissenters who spread distrust and suspicion.⁽¹⁾

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This distrust and suspicion notwithstanding, however, the real and unaccustomed freedom enjoyed after the 1687 Indulgence provided an atmosphere in which - given the right amount of unobtrusive pressure - many Nonconformist groups sent Addresses of Thanks to the King. From 14 April 1687⁽²⁾ until 23 April 1688,⁽³⁾ immediately prior to the Declaration being re-issued, every London Gazette, with very few exceptions, contained at least one - usually more, often as many as eight - Addresses of Thanks to His Majesty for his Gracious Declaration. At first the going was slow, but at the beginning of June the pace quickened, and the best period for addresses was during and immediately following the King's Progress of the late summer. But over the entire period of almost twelve months a total of one hundred and ninety-seven Addresses of Thanks were published. These may be divided into ten categories: those from 'His Majesty's Loyal Subjects dwelling in..' a particular borough, county or district, of which there were nineteen; those from official bodies - Mayors, Common Councils, Corporations, Grand Juries and Chartered Livery Companies - of which there were eighty-nine; from Roman Catholic sources - only one (presented by Lords Powis, Arundell and Belasyse 'on behalf of all His Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects');⁽⁴⁾ those from Anglican sources,

(1) Cited Whiting, 131.

(2) Gazette 2234.

(3) Gazette 2341.

(4) Gazette 2246.

of which there were eleven; from Presbyterian sources, fourteen; from Independents, nine; from Baptists, seven; joint addresses from Baptists and Independents, three; from Quakers, seven; and from 'Nonconformists' who either did not care to specify their sect, or constituted all the sects of a particular district, thirty-seven.⁽¹⁾ The total number of addresses professing to come from Dissenters of all sorts or no specified sort was seventy-seven, but this figure does not, by any means, represent the total number of addresses from Nonconformist sources. The content of almost all of the addresses in the first category identify their senders as Dissenters: some contain panegyrics on Liberty of Conscience,⁽²⁾ others refer to the 'oppression of the Penal Statutes'.⁽³⁾ Hence the aggregate number is likely to be around ninety-six. But even this figure omits those addresses received toward the end of 1687 and in the first three months of 1688 from re-modelled corporations, many of which provide clues that they were Nonconformist-inspired.⁽⁴⁾

The figures as they stand, however, are very deceptive. The Nonconformist apologists of the next and subsequent generations, notably Edmund Calamy, James Peirce and Neal, following Burnet, asserted that few actually concurred in the addresses, which originated with a misled minority not representative even of the congregations, let alone the sects, from whence they came, acting without the advice of 'wiser brethren'. Fending off the attacks of the High

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- (1) See Appendix Two for lists of places of origin and references.
 - (2) HM's loyal subjects in Devon, Gazette 2242, in Tiverton *ibid.* 2249, in Coventry *ibid.* 2252, in Northampton *ibid.* 2259.
 - (3) HM's loyal subjects in Westminster, Gazette 2238, in Plymouth *ibid.* 2251, in Exeter *ibid.* 2252, in Chichester *ibid.* 2270.
 - (4) e.g. Corporations of Chard, Gazette 2292, Gloucester *ibid.* 2313, Abingdon *ibid.* 2322, Tewkesbury *ibid.* 2325, Reading *ibid.* 2327, Nottingham *ibid.* 2328.

Churchmen after the Revolution,⁽¹⁾ they were very much on the defensive, however, and wished to minimise the extent to which Dissenters had co-operated with, or appeared to have approved of, the schemes of James II; if there were 'some topping flights of compliment' in the addresses, they asserted, the Dissenters had suffered hard and long before their liberation and, in any event, were merely taking their cue from the habitually fulsome luxuriance of Anglican addresses to the Court in the days of their ascendancy.⁽²⁾ But there is some evidence to back up the assertion of the apologists; whilst a small number of addresses represented hundreds of subscribers, the vast majority represented only a handful. And while it is not true to say that those who subscribed were invariably 'mean and inconsiderable' men,⁽³⁾ it is true that the most influential persons within the respective sects - and here we can include the Nonconformist politicians, as well as their religious leaders - did not subscribe and, in some cases, endeavoured to influence others against doing so.

It is, therefore, necessary to analyse the addresses from a number of angles. First, quantitatively: how many were actually involved in each address and were they representative of their sects? Second, qualitatively: did subscribers represent substantial interests, men of intelligence and influence among the sects, capable of assisting the King's programme, or were they merely isolated, helpless groups of believers tendering their humble thanks to a King to whose

(1) e.g. Francis Lee, *Life of Mr. John Kettlewell* (1718), 146-148; W. Nichols, *A Defence of the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of England* (1709), 107-112.

(2) Calamy, *Abridgement*, 376-7; Calamy, *Howe*, 132-4, 136-7; James Peirce, *A Vindication of the Dissenters* (1718), 24, 27, 170-1; Neal V, 36-39; Ivimey I, 468-70; Burnet I, 714-5.

(3) An assertion made by Burnet (I, 715) and Kiffin (*Ivimey I*, 471).

policy they were next to useless? Third, since it would appear that the King, 'topping flights of compliment' apart, only took seriously those addresses which specifically promised support or endorsed his prerogative right in some way,⁽¹⁾ the actual content of the addresses must be analysed to determine how many actually included promises of support, how many endorsed the prerogative or upheld the necessity of parliamentary sanction, and how many were merely what they appeared to be, expressions of thanks.

While by no means all, or perhaps even the greater part, of addresses were the results of pressure, pressure was undoubtedly exerted, and hence any attempt at a quantitative analysis of the addresses must be prefaced by an attempt to assess its bearing on their origin. In his Letter to a Dissenter, Halifax asserted that

'the first draughts *are* made by those who *are* not very proper to be secretaries to the Protestant Religion, and it is your [the Nonconformists] part only to write them out fairer again.. It is unkindly done to tire all the post horses with carrying circular letters to solicit that which ~~w~~ould be done without any trouble or constraint...'.⁽²⁾

Halifax's pamphlet was obviously an exercise in political polemics and this assertion a side-blow to achieve its own purpose. There is, in fact, no evidence that pressure of such an organised and detailed character existed, though there is an example on record of a group of Independents who, having written their address, called in a court agent to 'draw it out faire' and present it to the King.⁽³⁾

(1) Morrice Q, 132. See also Bonrepos, 14 July NS, Baschet, 171.

(2) Halifax, Complete Works, ed. J. P. Kenyon (1969), 110.

(3) Harmer MS.76.2, 146; J. E. Clowes (ed), Chronicles of the Old Congregational Church at Great Yarmouth: 1642-1858 (1906), 44; Browne, 178.

What happened, in fact, was more indirect or diffuse.

For instance, one type of pressure was through 'persons ^{whom} the Court had gained'.⁽¹⁾ Of these, Sir John Baber had been a Presbyterian at Court since 1667 and ever since that time had been used by the government as a means of sounding out opinion in the sect to which he belonged. After the Indulgence in April he was the first to exert pressure on the Presbyterian ministry to address:

'Amid undiscerning chatter and wild speculation he passed purposefully back and forth among the Presbyterian ministers and their congregations doing the King's bidding'.⁽²⁾

Among those who yielded to Baber's pressure were Joseph Read, Daniel Burgess, Anthony Withers and Vincent Alsop, all of whom, and more especially the latter, were involved in the preparation, collection of 'subscriptions' and presentation of the address of the London Presbyterians in April.⁽³⁾ Among those who were under pressure from Baber and refused to address were Dr. William Bates and Richard Baxter. In the first of two letters to Baber explaining his position Baxter said:

'I abhor ingratitude to the King, and my Lord of Powis, for my present Liberty, but I find that I am not yet out of the fetters of my bonds to the behaviour' (a reference to the conditions of his release).⁽⁴⁾

Stephen Lobb was a King's man of more recent vintage; he went over to

(1) Burnet I, 714.

(2) R. A. Beddard, 'Vincent Alsop and the Emancipation of Restoration Dissent', JEH XXIV No. 2 (April 1973), 175.

(3) Gazette 2238; Morrice Q, 114, 115; Neal V, 38; R. A. Beddard, op. cit., 76.

(4) R. Baxter to Sir J. Baber, 20 October 1687, Baxter MSS (Letters) I, f. 110.

the Court soon after the Indulgence, and was the moving force behind the address of the London Independents in April.⁽¹⁾ Penn was behind both the address of the London Quakers in April and that of the Yearly Meeting of Friends in May.⁽²⁾ On 16 May he justified his action by saying:

'This Declaration seems to me no more than a Royal Bill without doors, informing the Kingdom of His Majesty's mind, and preparing both Houses to make it the subject of their next session'.⁽³⁾

And another Quaker with an acknowledged position at Court, Robert Barclay, was behind certainly one, and perhaps both of the addresses from the Friends in Scotland.⁽⁴⁾ It has also been *inferred* that Penn, Lobb and Alsop, within their respective sects, attempted to influence Nonconformist congregations in the provinces to address.⁽⁵⁾

In a letter written after the Declaration had been issued Penn admitted that he was 'engaged in the public business of the nation', and had a particular assignment to discharge that would help to make possible the final 'repeal' of the penal laws that were then 'suspended'.⁽⁶⁾ This assignment may well have been to encourage provincial Friends, and perhaps other Dissenters, to send addresses.

The fact that Penn made a tour of Berkshire, Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, Shropshire, Cheshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Oxfordshire,

(1) Gazette 2238; Morrice Q, 115.

(2) Gazettes 2238, 2245; Morrice Q, 114, 137; Sewel II, 435, 436-9; Luttrell I, 402; HMC Downshire MSS I, i, 243.

(3) W. Penn, A Third Letter from a Gentleman in the Country to His Friends in London (May 1687), 7.

(4) Gazettes 2252, 2270; Braithwaite, 134; W. F. Miller (ed), 'Records of the Yearly Meeting of Aberdeen 1672-1786', JFHS VIII (1911), 62, 63.

(5) R. Halley, Lancashire, its Puritanism and Nonconformity (1872) II, 279-281.

(6) W. Penn to J. Harrison [c. April] 1687, Janney, 298. See Braithwaite, 134.

and Hampshire in the course of the summer of 1687, and made it his business to contact the Nonconformists in all the towns through which he passed helps to validate this conclusion.⁽¹⁾

Perhaps the most successful means by which pressure was exerted was through the King's Progress, during which he 'courted the Dissenters',⁽²⁾ and the Presbyterians were 'highly caressed'.⁽³⁾ A comparison between the itinerary followed by the King⁽⁴⁾ and the places from which, and the order in which, addresses arrived during August and September 1687 make it evident that they were either presented to the King during, or resulted from pressure exerted on, the Progress.⁽⁵⁾ The actual wording of at least three addresses bears witness to their having been occasioned by the King's expected arrival in a particular area, and the necessity, in consequence, to make some kind of gesture of this nature.⁽⁶⁾ Philip Henry and John Harvey, in advance of the King's arrival in Shropshire, 'received an intimation that an address would be expected from the Dissenters', 'drew one up and with the heads of their congregations presented it at the Bishop's Palace [in Chester], where the King lodged'.⁽⁷⁾ Both Henry Newcome and Thomas Jolly felt that they were expected to give thanks in person to the King on Routon Heath, though only the latter -

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- (1) W. Penn to J. Harrison 8 September 1687, Janney, 298-9; Braithwaite, 138.
- (2) Reresby, 469-70; Warwick CR VIII, xiii.
- (3) HMC 14th Report, app. pt. II: Portland MSS III (1894), 402.
- (4) Ellis I, 336-7, cxxiii; Luttrell I, 411-412.
- (5) Luttrell I, 412, 413, 414-415.
- (6) Quakers: N.W. England and Wales Gazette 2282, Bristol Gazette 2287; Independents: Monmouthshire, Gazette 2272, North Wales and Shrewsbury, Gazette 2282.
- (7) Henry, Diaries and Letters, 327; W. Urwick, Nonconformity in Cheshire (1864), 32; CR, 251. Sources conflict as to where the address was presented.

despite the unpopularity he had incurred by presenting a formal address earlier - was prepared to do so.⁽¹⁾ The 'intimations' may well have been carried by William Penn, whose own route, as far as Chester, exactly coincided with that of James, Penn sometimes trailing and sometimes preceding the King.⁽²⁾ In the wake of the King Penn 'preached to the Dissenters, reminding them of the advantages of repeal, their duty to the King and their duty to the principle of liberty of conscience'.⁽³⁾

En route from Bistol James received two further addresses: the first presented by George Primrose (a Presbyterian) of Hereford, and the second presented by John Bryan and Francis Tallents (Presbyterians) of Shrewsbury. The latter James 'freely accepted' - all the more so since it came 'with a purse of gold supposed to be £100' - but laid

'the obligation on them to choose such members for the next Parliament as should be for taking off the penal laws and test; and to that end he left behind him William Penn, chief and head of the Quakers, who began to speak at Mardol Head; but the rabble supposing what he would be at .. gave a shout and over-bawled him'.⁽⁴⁾

Four miles from Worcester James met the 'elder Foley', presumably

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- (1) Jolly, 85; H. Newcome, *Autobiography*, Chetham Soc. (1852) II, 265; W. Urwick, *op cit*, li.
- (2) W. Penn to J. Harrison, 8 September 1687, Janney, 298-9; Braithwaite, 138-9; Penn, 123.
- (3) Penn, 123. See L. Pinkham, *William III and the Respectable Revolution* (1954), 50.
- (4) HMC 10th Report, app. pt. IV (1885), 376. See HMC 14th Report, app. pt. II: Portland MSS III (1894), 401; CR, 83, 399.

Thomas,⁽¹⁾ though he ~~would~~ not appear to have presented an address.⁽²⁾ At Bristol Penn stayed with a fellow Quaker, William Hitchcock, and was reported by his host to have addressed a number of 'great meetings'. *In addition* he convened other such meetings in Wiltshire and Berkshire. His companion, Francis Stamper, observed that he was 'very conversant with the King, whose ear was open to him'.⁽³⁾ It has been estimated that of the thirty-three addresses bearing dates in the duration of the progress (16 August to 17 September) eighteen were the result of pressures connected with the progress.⁽⁴⁾

A more subtle kind of pressure was exerted from the Court itself. On 25 July 1687 John Mendham, Mayor of Thetford, wrote a letter to Sir Joseph Williamson in which he said:

'I find it will be very well accepted by His Majesty if we should address, but before I call a hall I think it my duty to acquaint you and have your judgement and concurrence. I find it will run through the kingdom, and am not willing but to do as the other corporations do'.⁽⁵⁾

The two implications of pressure in this letter - one, of pressure on the writer and second, of a nationwide pressure to address - are the nearest we get to proof of Halifax's assertion. Nor was the Mayor of Thetford the only man to be told that an address 'would be very acceptable to the Court': Sunderland called the Bishops of Durham,

(1) See Lacey, 396-7.

(2) HMC 14th Report, op cit, 400.

(3) Gilbert Cope, 'William Hitchcock to John and Amy Harding 1687', JFHS IV (1907), 73 (letter dated 28 September).

(4) E. S. de Beer cited Lacey, 341 n.21.

(5) CSPD 1687-9, 33.

Chester, Oxford, Rochester and Peterborough and told them as much, evoking *compliance* from the first three, and a tactful refusal from the last *named*.⁽¹⁾ The Bishops of Durham, Chester and Oxford then began to spread the word among the clergy of their dioceses that addresses would be acceptable, and were soon joined in so doing by the Bishop of Lincoln, who sent out six Arch-Deacons to facilitate his purpose.⁽²⁾ The Bishop of Oxford went so far as to issue a pamphlet entitled Some Reasons for Addressing, arguing that the King had a right to expect addresses from Anglican clergy in view of the assurances he had made to them and that he, as Bishop, had a right to expect obedience to his demand through the 'canonical obedience' required of clergy. A reply was soon returned from the Oxford clergy, entitled Arguments against Addressing, and this, in turn, was followed by a counter-reply, written either by the Bishop himself or someone working closely under his direction, entitled A Reply to the Reasons of the Oxford Clergy Against Addressing, published with allowance by the King's Printer.⁽³⁾ As the regulation of the corporations got under way a new type of pressure became available to the Court. Bridgwater was one of the first corporations to be remodelled because, or so it was believed, of its failure to address.⁽⁴⁾ Grand Juries in some places were packed and cajoled to produce addresses.⁽⁵⁾ As early as June 1687:

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- (1) Thomas Cartwright, *Diary*, Camden Soc. (1843), 47, 48; *Morrice Q*, 107; *Perry II*, 493-4.
- (2) T. Cartwright, *op cit*, 50 (see also 61, 62); *Morrice Q*, 102, 106, 107, 108, 114, 118, 137; R. Halley, *Lancashire its Puritanism and Nonconformity* (1872) II, 282.
- (3) See CSPD 1687-~~7~~, 124-5; G. V. Bennett, *White Kennett 1660-1728 Bishop of Peterborough* (1957), 11.
- (4) VCH Somerset II, 231.
- (5) Miller, 225; VCH Somerset II, 231.

'the Mayor of Totnes in Devon and the Recorder, being complained of for discountenancing addressing to thank the King for his declaration, the former was discharged, and the latter suspended'.⁽¹⁾

In the capital 'emissaries' from the Court - probably Penn and Sir John Baber - were sent to meetings held by various Nonconformist groups during the spring and summer and exerted a strong influence in favour of addressing. John Tillotson's allegation that £8000 had been given to Alsop and Hurst to distribute among addressers, however, almost certainly had no foundation in fact.⁽²⁾ It would appear that Court 'agents' including the Lord Chancellor himself, were involved in persuading individuals - clergy, Nonconformist and Anglican, and some Bishops - to address.⁽³⁾ In addition James Stewart, already in correspondence with Nonconformists in the United Provinces in an endeavour to induce them to use their influence in favour of addressing, had drawn up two papers intended to serve the same end. The first was entitled Reasons why Protestant Dissenters ought to concur for the loyal establishment of ^{the late} liberty, and the second, Reasons why... ^{Orange ought to...} the Prince and Princess of A. concur for the present liberty. A copy of each of these was sent to William Carstairs in Holland, who, through Bentinck, probably passed them on to William of Orange. The contents of the first would seem to indicate that it was primarily intended for circulation among English Dissenters.⁽⁴⁾

(1) Luttrell I, 405.

(2) Morrice Q, 132; Wilson II, 199-200; B. Dale, A History of Congregationalism (1907), 451; Williams I, x-xi; Calamy, Howe, 134-5; Neal V, 37-38.

(3) Morrice Q, 20, 132, 149; T. Cartwright, Diary, Camden Soc. (1843), 46-48.

(4) CSPD 1687-9, 35-36, 40-41, 42, 44-45, 68-69. The two papers themselves are in King William's Chest, SP 8/1, pt. 2, ff. 136-140.

The only indication that any of the pressure on Nonconformist congregations, as opposed to corporations and Grand Juries, was at all sinister comes in an assertion by D. R. Lacey that 'authorities believe that the addresses from Wales were not spontaneous but engineered by the King's agents working on the fears of Nonconformists'.⁽¹⁾ The assertion actually made by Lacey's 'authority' was that the three addresses which came from Wales 'were all probably engineered in some way or other by the King's agents working on the fears or greed of a few nominal Puritans'.⁽²⁾ Even in the qualified form in which the statement is made, however, no evidence is put forward to support it. Since the whole article, actually a commentary on a work published in 1924 by Dr. T. Richards, is of a highly sectarian nature the assertion need not be taken seriously.

However, in endeavouring to discover the amount of support represented by each address - or as many addresses as the information is available for - it is important to recognise at the outset that this was not only in proportion to the amount of support for the Declaration in a given locality or sect, if signatures were a reliable criterion, but in proportion to the amount of pressure exerted. The addresses published in the London Gazette and the few which appear in the State Papers,⁽³⁾ were published or inserted minus the signatures which were doubtless appended to the original documents.⁽⁴⁾ But it is

(1) Lacey, 341 n. 21.

(2) J. Morgan Jones, 'The Indulgence of 1687 in Wales', BQ III (1926-27), 47.

(3) SP 31/5.

(4) Morrice Q, 102. An analyst of the Baptist addresses speculated that the signatures were not published with the addresses because they were 'probably..so utterly obscure that the names would have made the addresses ridiculous'. S. W. Bowser, 'A Page from an Old Newspaper: 1687', TBHS V (1916-17), 88.

significant that, of the sample of Nonconformist addresses for which we know the number of signatures, the small number of addresses with a large number of signatures were sponsored by the 'Court Dissenters'. The largest was Penn's address from the London Quakers, which was estimated to have had eight hundred signatures; the address presented from the Yearly Meeting of Quakers a month later, since it was endorsed by that meeting, is unlikely to have carried individual signatures, though it was reported to have been 'unanimously passed'.⁽¹⁾ Barclay's address from the Scottish Quakers had the backing of sixty persons, and therefore probably carried the same number of signatures.⁽²⁾ Alsop's address from the London Presbyterians was signed by none of the important Presbyterian pastors of the City, against whose advice it was drawn up, and carried no more than thirty-nine signatures, all except five of which were those of laymen.⁽³⁾ Stephen Lobb's address 'from those of the Congregational persuasion in and around the Cities of London and Westminster' carried the signatures of nine Congregationalist ministers and one hundred and forty laymen.⁽⁴⁾ Among the other addresses which are likely to have carried any considerable number of names are two from the Baptists. The first address to be presented at Court was from a group of London Baptists acting against the advice of Joseph Stennett and the influential William Kiffin.

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- (1) Gazettes 2238, 2245; Morrice Q, 114; Sewel II, 435; Luttrell I, 402, 404; Yearly Meeting Epistles, 1681-1857, 1, 33.
- (2) Gazette 2252; Braithwaite, 134. Luttrell I, 407, 411; W. F. Miller (ed), 'Records of the Yearly Meeting of Aberdeen 1672-1786', JFHS VIII (1911), 62, 63.
- (3) Gazette 2238; Morrice Q, 112, 114, 115; Neal V, 36-38; Luttrell I, 402.
- (4) Gazette 2238; Morrice Q, 115. Despite the greater number of signatures on the Congregational address, in London the Presbyterians outnumbered the Independents 2:1. R. Thomas, Daniel Williams Presbyterian Bishop (1964), 8.

This group included Nehemiah Coxe, William Collins, Thomas Plant and Benjamin Dennis, the same group which had established a convention of addressing the King the previous summer, who were believed to represent a minority opinion among the Baptist sects of London. In addition, a collective Baptist address was presented at Court in June, from the faithful in virtually all the southern counties, which had been drawn up by a special conference in London.⁽¹⁾ It is interesting that within twelve months two of the London Baptist sponsors, Plant and Dennis, had become so unpopular with their fellow believers that they found it necessary to publish a lengthy vindication of their conduct in the previous year.⁽²⁾ It is possible that an address from 'the people of Coventry' presented in June had the largest support. Sir John Evelyn was at Court when it was presented and noted that the man who handed it to the King explained

'that this was not only the application of one party, but the unanimous address of Church of England men, Presbyterians, Independents and Anabaptists... It was reported [that] the subscribers were above a thousand'.⁽³⁾

The context implies that this address was in some way unusual - doubtless because of its 'unanimity' and mass support. Evelyn goes on to describe an address which represented the other extreme; from 'that monstrous and scarce Christian sect called the Family of Love'

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- (1) Gazettes 2234, 2255; Morrice Q, 96; Ivimey I, 469; Crosby III, 197-8; Whiting, 130; S. W. Bowser, op cit, 88; Luttrell I, 400, 408.
- (2) T. Plant and B. Dennis, *The Mischief of Persecution* (7 May 1688); Ivimey I, 472. Dennis also served as an electoral agent in 1688. See below pp. 443, 508.
- (3) Gazette 2252; Evelyn IV, 553, 554.

whose adherents 'chiefly belonged to the Isle of Ely'.⁽¹⁾ If the number of 'subscribers' was a thousand it must, as its sponsor claimed, have had considerable support outside of the ranks of the Dissenters since a thousand was the number of Nonconformists in the city before the beginning of the great persecution and consequent decline; though, in view of this address's fulsome praise for His Majesty's concession of liberty of conscience (its only theme), it is difficult to see why Anglicans would subscribe.⁽²⁾

Typical, perhaps, of many Nonconformist addresses was The Humble Address of some of the Nonconforming Party in and about the Town of Northampton which began:

'We whose names are hereunto subscribed, being a very small remnant of Your Majesty's Nonconforming subjects in and about the town of Northampton; and such who are willing to live peaceably in the land (hoping our worst adversaries have no greater charge against us than in the matters of our God) shall not presume to say much, who are in capacity to do so little..'⁽³⁾

Even more pathetic in their helplessness were the Cambridge Nonconformists who sent their address to Court in October. From the records of the several parishes in the City, a Baptist historian has found evidence *which makes it likely that the address was supported by a mere handful of irresponsibles.*

And this despite the fact that in July 1687 there were

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- (1) Ibid, 554 (see editor's note 2). Perhaps because of the embarrassment caused at Court by the receipt of this address it does not appear in the Gazette. The sect was founded by Henrick Nicholas (1502-1580) and adhered to 'an anabaptist mysticism, entirely without dogma'. DNB XIV, 427, 428.
- (2) Warwick CR VIII, xcii.
- (3) Gazette 2260.

eight Nonconformist places of worship in Cambridge, each with a fair sized congregation.⁽¹⁾ A situation in which a minority claimed to represent the whole body of Nonconformists in an area may have been common. This may be why Luttrell reports the address from 'His Majesty's Loyal Subjects in Devon' as being from 'several' of Exon, and elsewhere speaks of 'several' having addressed from Kingsbridge, 'several' from 'near Plymouth' and 'several Dissenters' from Sheffield.⁽²⁾ Sir John Reresby believed that

'the King was much deceived as to the opinion of his subjects concerning the indulgence, three or four men in divers places pretending to represent the thoughts of a whole corporation or county'.⁽³⁾

According to one source the address from the Nonconformists in Nantwich represented a few signatures collected by a General Baptist, Samuel Acton,⁽⁴⁾ and that from the Baptists of Staffordshire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire was actually from a few

General Baptists only.⁽⁵⁾ It would appear that the address received in June from 'those of the Congregational persuasion in Great Yarmouth' was, in fact, from only one of the three or four Independent congregations there, all of which were probably quite small,⁽⁶⁾ and Morrice, who drew his information from his patron

(1) Gazette 2287; Luttrell I, 416; Parish Records cited B. Nutter, *The Story of the Cambridge Baptists* (1912), 78-79; C. S. Kenny, 'The Earlier History of the Emmanuel Church Cambridge', CHST IV (1909-1910), 185, c.f. H. M. Spufford, 'Dissenting Churches in Cambridgeshire from 1660-1700', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society*, LXI (1968), 69, 70, 73-4.

(2) Gazettes 2242, 2256, 2268; Luttrell I, 404, 408, 411.

(3) Reresby, 495.

(4) Gazette 2273; S. W. Bowser, *op cit*, 88.

(5) Gazette 2244; S. W. Bowser, *op cit*.

(6) Gazette 2250; Browne, 178.

Sir John Maynard, asserted that the address of 'the Barristers of Middle Temple' was in fact the work of a small group of Roman Catholic barristers, newly elevated to their positions by the King.⁽¹⁾ Despite the efforts of certain 'ministers and lay inhabitants' who were 'out in many streets taking subscriptions', even the address from 'His Majesty's loyal subjects dwelling in the City and Liberties of Westminster' was only supported by a small minority and encountered much opposition; and, wrote Morrice, 'They in our section of the town [the City itself] seem not very forward to address at all'.⁽²⁾ Many of the Anglican addresses claiming to represent the clergy of particular dioceses were also, very probably, the work of dedicated minorities under pressure from their bishops.⁽³⁾

Even when no corroborative evidence is available, the demographical size of many of the towns and districts from which addresses came bespeak their unimportance: the Presbyterians of Macclesfield or Maidstone, the Independents of Hitchin, the Nonconformists of South Molton.⁽⁴⁾ The process of devolution - the result of twenty-five years of persecution⁽⁵⁾ - had led to a situation in which 'congregations' were merely small, fragmented 'parcels' of believers.⁽⁶⁾ In 1687 the gathering together of these scattered groups did not take place immediately. The church books and records of meetings kept by many Nonconformist congregations in England until some time between

(1) Gazette 2250; Morrice Q, 121.

(2) Gazette 2238; Morrice Q, 102.

(3) Morrice Q, 101, 102, 106, 108, 114, 118.

(4) Gazettes: 2274 and 2295; 2260.

(5) See above p. 85.

(6) Harmer MS.76.9, 154; Browne, 260; R. T. Jones, Congregationalism in England: 1662-1962 (1962), 83-84. See R. E. Leader, 'Origins of Nonconformity in Sheffield', CHST VI (1913-15), 397-403.

1681 and 1686, when they were forced to 'scatter', do not recommence until after the establishment of 'parliamentary toleration' in 1689.⁽¹⁾ Hence the addresses sent by the Independents of Norwich, the 'Nonconformists' of Sheffield, and the Baptists of Nantwich and Stafford represented only fragments of once large congregations.⁽²⁾ And they were probably typical of many more.⁽³⁾ It is significant that 'the respectable as well as numerous' 'preponderance' of Independents in Hull - the one Independent congregation had had a membership of only fifty-five in 1669 and had increased to only 113 in 1698 - did not address, the only address produced by that city coming from the smaller Presbyterian congregation in Bowl Alley Lane.⁽⁴⁾ The Canterbury Nonconformists - where the Independents alone had had a congregation of 500 in 1669 - took until November to address.⁽⁵⁾ Except for the Bedford Baptists' contribution to the large Baptist address, the Nonconformists of Bedfordshire, whose numerical weighting in the population had been considerably above the average of other counties in 1676, did not address at all.⁽⁶⁾

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- (1) Harmer MS.76.9, 35-36, 89, 101, 108, 122, 130; 76.1, 58-59; Walter Wilson MS I, i, 90-92; iii, 163-164, 179, 180, 368; iv, 63; v, 211, 212; MS.553 D, 13, 16-17, 22, 130; W. T. Whitley (ed), The Church Books of Ford or Cuddington and Amersham (1912), xv.
- (2) Gazettes 2242, 2268, 2244; Walter Wilson MS.553 D, 152-5; A. G. Matthews, Congregational Churches in Staffordshire (1924), 83-84; Browne, 260. See R. T. Jones, Congregationalism in England 1662-1962 (1962), 83-84; H. H. Oakley, Beginnings of Congregationalism in Sheffield (1913), 44, 49, 53, 61.
- (3) J. Peirce, A Vindication of the Dissenters (2nd edit. 1718), 270-1.
- (4) Gazette 2287; Walter Wilson MS.553 D, 110-115; VCH Yorkshire: East Riding I, 312. See A. E. Trout, 'Nonconformity in Hull', CHST IX (1924-6), 37-38.
- (5) Gazette 2297; G. F. Nuttall, 'Dissenting Churches in Kent before 1700', JEH XIV (1963), 177.
- (6) Gazette 2255; Bunyan, 294.

The scattered, though in 1669 and 1676 considerable, Nonconformist population of Warwickshire only produced one address, that from 'His Majesty's Loyal Subjects in Coventry'.⁽¹⁾ It is interesting that a number of towns where Nonconformists were known to be numerous - Leicester, Newcastle, Tiverton, Exeter⁽²⁾ - should produce no addresses at all, and that Cumberland, where Nonconformity was notoriously weak, should produce two.⁽³⁾

Evidently it was one thing to take advantage of the King's Declaration, even express private satisfaction at the freedom to do so, but quite another thing actually to express one's thanks in an address, which might be construed as seeming to approve a prerogative act, and might even look foolish if the beneficial effects of that prerogative act proved short-lived. But there was much more to the reluctance of Nonconformists to address than this. The most influential leaders of all of the three major sects in the capital refused to address and advised others against doing so, as did some eminent pastors in the provinces. And in the stand of these informed leaders there was something more than a fear of the long-term results of seeming to approve an unconstitutional act. In his correspondence with William Carstairs in the United Provinces, James Stewart asserted that he failed to comprehend the attitude of Dissenters in regard to addressing and co-operating with the King's programme.

'No honest man can be enough concerned to help forward so good

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- (1) Gazette 2252; Warwick CR VIII, lxxvii, lxxxii-lxxxiii, lxxxiii-lxxxv, lxxxvi-lxxxviii, xcii, xcvi, xcvi.
- (2) Lyon Turner MS.89.27, 13, 14; Walter Wilson MS I, v, 18-27; MS.553 D, 16-17, 22.
- (3) West Cumberland and Leathward, Cumberland, Gazette 2270; Walter Wilson MS.553 D, 1, 3, 5, 9, 13.

a work which the consenting to this liberty ... would undoubtedly effectuate. And truly since according to the account I have given you the favour of this liberty is real, the advantage of Dissenting Protestants every way the greatest, the succession sacred, and a legal establishment of what is done growing every day to us more necessary, I cannot see upon what grounds your people can stand it out'.⁽¹⁾

In his reply, Carstairs provided a clue to the further element in the thinking of informed Dissenters toward the Declaration:

'The importance of the affair you write of is such as cannot but make a man of my circumstances, who has met with so much trouble on your side [of the North Sea] afraid to be concerned in it; it is true the Protestant interest ought to be preferred by every honest man to all particular concerns of his own ... yet sometimes it is hard to know where the interest of religion lies, and even when using the utmost of our reason as we think, in a consideration of present circumstances, [we] may run into mistakes both as to sentiments and practice that may be of no small disadvantage even to that which we prize most...'⁽²⁾

Whilst the Presbyterian Dons, and those over whom they had influence had, thanks to Charles II's 'enticement', begun to realise that comprehension was becoming less and less likely and to discuss guardedly the possibility of 'limited toleration', comprehension was still to them an issue in 1687, and complete toleration as unwelcome as it had always

(1) J. Stewart to W. Carstairs, 26 July 1687, CSPD 1687-9, 35.

(2) W. Carstairs to J. Stewart, (c.29-31) July 1687, CSPD 1687-9 40. To improve the sense of this quotation the word 'not' has been omitted from the seventh line.

been. If what was being conceded was complete toleration by a prerogative act, the infringement of their political ethic served merely to make it more distasteful. The crux of their antipathy was the belief that 'the interest of religion' - comprehension or a limited parliamentary toleration - was being jeopardised by the thing at present being attempted. Bates and Morrice believed, and endeavoured to persuade others, that to address would repudiate comprehension by approving general toleration (the constitutional issue aside) and would, therefore, alienate the 'sober churchmen', thus destroying, possibly for good, the prospect of comprehension which, through their friendship, had again begun to appear as a practical possibility.⁽¹⁾ Since Baxter was called upon by Sir John Baber to explain why he had not subscribed to the address of the London Presbyterians he had an opportunity to set down his objection to addressing in detail. There had been, he explained, five reasons:

'First, because I never saw it, nor was it offered to me.

My brethren, knowing my weakness, I suppose, justly thought me unmeet for any such employment and met about it a mile or more from me'.

Baxter ingenuously went on to remind Baber of the nature of the charge made against him in 1685 and the fact that he was still 'under £400 and £200 bonds for behaviour': if his Paraphrase of the New Testament had offended the Church, would not an address giving thanks that it had been relieved of the power to 'eject, silence, imprison and ruin us', be even more offensive? With subtle irony Baxter continued:

(1) R. Baxter to Sir John Baber, Baxter MSS (Letters) V, f. 40; Morrice P, 161, 176; H.F.R. Smith, Cambridge Historical Essays XXI: The Theory of Religious Liberty in the Reigns of Charles II and James II (1911), 5-8; Nuttall & Chadwick, 236-7.

'Second, I believe that the King would be against my punishment [now]; and that he was not for it then [June 1685] his Declaration seemeth to tell me. And yet I was near two year a prisoner or worse...

'Third, my Nonconformity, lying mostly in an averseness to such oaths, subscriptions and covenants whose truth I am unsatisfied of, it's two to one but an imposed form of address will have some word at which I shall scruple...; and what I should draw up might not satisfy others'.

His use of the phrase 'an imposed form of address' may be evidence of the accuracy of Halifax's statement that the actual form of the addresses was foisted by the Court on Nonconformist groups whomerely reproduced them, or it may only be a restrospective reference to the Letter to a Dissenter (Baxter's letter is dated 1687 and may have been written after the publication of Halifax's pamphlet), or it may have been a reference to the fact that Alsop had drawn up the address before inviting 'subscriptions'.

'Fourth, I have these thirty-five years made love, concord and peace the main study of my life; and I dare not now violate it causelessly with the body of the Conforming Clergy...'

Baxter's final point was that he had asked 'two or three' if they would sign an address if he were to draw one up, and they had declined on the grounds that an address had already been presented 'in the name of the Presbyterians' of London.⁽¹⁾ In all likelihood

(1) R. Baxter to Sir J. Baber, 1687, Baxter MSS (Letters) V, f. 40.

this was a sardonic allusion to the fact, known to both Baber and Alsop,⁽¹⁾ that this address represented a minority of the Presbyterian pastors in the capital.

In their stand against addressing Bates and Baxter were joined by another group of influential Presbyterians, many of them from the provinces, whose stand was influenced to a much greater extent by political and constitutional considerations. This group included Richard Stretton of Leeds, Daniel Williams, newly arrived from Ireland (a refugee from the 'Papist administration' of Tyrconnel), John Howe, newly arrived from Holland with the specific objective of opposing the Declaration, Joseph Bennett of Sussex, who 'prevented' his congregation from addressing, and Henry Flamank of Tavistock. These men drew analogies between this and previous forms of enticement, and believed that no religious settlement in England could last unless it had the approval of Parliament.⁽²⁾ Williams took the political argument further than the rest: like James Harrington he believed that the causes of civil and religious liberty were closely connected; Harrington had argued that where civil liberty was entire it included liberty of conscience, and where liberty of conscience was entire there must be civil liberty. At a Nonconformist meeting to consider whether an address should be drawn

(1) R. A. Beddard, 'Vincent Alsop and the Emancipation of Restoration Dissent', JEH XXIV, No. 2 (April 1973), 176.

(2) Morrice Q, 112, 143, 149, 161-2; Calamy, Abridgement, 376-7; Vol II 678, 683; Matthew Henry's Funeral Sermon for Stretton, 45, cited Neal V, 36, 37; R. Halley, Lancashire, its Puritanism and Nonconformity (1872) II, 279; Miall, 96; Wilson II, 199-200; III, 131; CR, 48, 200; S. W. Carruthers, 'Conventicles and Conventiclors', JPHS X, No. 3 (May 1954), 106.

up, *Williams argued*

'that it was with him past doubt, that the severities of the former reign upon the Protestant Dissenters, were rather as they stood in the way of arbitrary power than for ^{their} religious dissent; so it were better for them to be reduced to their former hardships, than [by addressing] declare for measures destructive of the liberties of their country; and that for himself, before he would concur in an address which should be thought an approbation of the dispensing power, he should choose to lay down his liberty at His Majesty's feet'.⁽¹⁾

John Howe, whose concern for the Dutch interest led him to attend all the numerous meetings which occurred in London on the question of addressing, applauded Williams' view and asserted that he had expressed the consensus of the meeting.⁽²⁾

Even among the Baptists, who had been the first to address, there were three stalwart opponents of addressing, William Kiffin, a Particular Baptist, John Bunyan, a General Baptist, and Joseph Stennett, a Sabbatarian Baptist. To the end of his days Kiffin laid the execution of his grandsons in the Bloody Assize at the King's door. All three men had some understanding of the constitutional issue at stake; Kiffin could certainly remember the struggle against the prerogative before the civil wars. The prerogative, however, for Kiffin, Bunyan and Stennett, who were probably typical of many rank and file Dissenters of most sects, was infinitely more distasteful

(1) Williams I, x; Wilson II, 199-200; H. F. R. Smith, Cambridge Historical Essays XXI: The Theory of Religious Liberty in the Reigns of Charles II and James II (1911), 23. After his return Williams was very closely associated with Baxter. Williams I, xii.

(2) Calamy, Howe, 132-4, 135.

now because it was equated with Catholicism. Stennett sought to draw attention to this equation, and to conjure up the horrors it implied to the popular imagination, by composing a series of doggerel verses, which were read out at Baptist meetings.⁽¹⁾

Whether it was the desire to coalesce with moderate Churchmen in the interest of comprehension which prompted many influential Dissenters to oppose addressing, or whether it was just a visceral fear of Catholicism, the common denominator was that all had become hardened against the tired weapon of enticement during the previous reign. It is no coincidence that Nonconformist sources indicate that it was the younger generation of Dissenters who addressed James II in 1687, those to whom his approach was a novelty.⁽²⁾ Hence if a quantitative analysis of the addresses points to the fact that on many occasions they were merely the work of isolated groups of believers, with little political potential, a preliminary qualitative analysis (from the negative angle of those who opposed addressing) would seem to indicate that from the outset many of the most influential sectarian leaders opted out of the King's programme. This is not to minimise the influence of leading ministers who did sponsor addresses - Penn, Barclay, Lobb, Alsop, Coxe and Collins - though it may have been the case, despite the purity of their motives, that the influence of the Court Dissenters within their sects decreased in proportion to their involvement in the Government's programme.⁽³⁾

(1) Kiffin, 84; Wilson II, 596; G. H. Pike, *Ancient Meeting Houses* (1870), 175; Whiting, 130-1; Ivimey I, 470-472; H.W. Clark, *English Nonconformity* (1912) II, 110; S. W. Bowser, 'A Page from an Old Newspaper: 1687', *TBHS* V (1916-17), 88. *See HFR Smith, op cit, 19, 20.*

(2) Morrice Q, 162; Neal V, 36.

(3) Portland Misc. 19 PwA 2126e; Calamy, Howe, 135.

In attempting a qualitative assessment of the addresses themselves it is useful to note that, in addition to the addresses which thanked the King for his undertakings in regard to the Church of England, and those which included panegyrics on Liberty of Conscience which betrayed their Nonconformist origins, there were also a great many seemingly neutral addresses, giving every appearance of having been sent merely in the interest of politeness and not betraying any political or religious standpoint. These addresses arose from the fact that between October 1687 and April 1688 James II was restoring the members of the Chartered Livery companies purged by Charles II in 1683-4.⁽¹⁾ From October it became fashionable for each of these companies to address the King in thanks for his Declaration. Between then and April 1688 twenty such addresses were received. The addresses were usually brief, with some similarity in phraseology. Despite the fact that those being appointed to the companies were mainly Dissenters, and though thankful that an end had been put to persecution, they are without a hint of any sectarian origin - or Anglican, since some of the companies may have addressed before they were purged - or anything which might be understood as a political commitment.⁽²⁾ Hence in any political evaluation of the addresses they can be ignored. Even their expressions of thanks in some cases were so general as to make it doubtful whether approbation, let alone support, was implied.

The rest of the addresses fall into one of two qualitative divisions. First, addresses from substantial interests: Mayors, Corporations, Grand Juries, Common Councils, High Stewards, Burgesses

(1) Luttrell I, 415, 416, 438.

(2) VCH London I, 347; Gazettes 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2292, 2294, 2296, 2297, 2300, 2307, 2314, 2315, 2317, 2323, 2333.

and Capital Citizens; groups capable of influencing the choice and election of MPs and directly assisting the King's programme. Between April and the end of October 1687 thirty-seven such addresses were published in the Gazette.⁽¹⁾ Of these only one - that of the handful of Catholic Barristers in the Middle Temple⁽²⁾ - spoke in favour of the Royal Prerogative, and only one - from the Grand Jury of Lincoln in October - made mention of parliamentary approval by adding, 'We doubt not but your Parliament will join with your Majesty to make [the Declaration] into a perpetual law'.⁽³⁾ However, it is significant that eighteen of these addresses thanked the King, not only or primarily for granting liberty of conscience, but, as the Corporation of Tavistock put it, for having

'graciously' signified his 'resolution of protecting, supporting and maintaining [his] Archbishops, Bishops and Clergy and all [his] other subjects of the Church... as by law established',

in return for which favours they declared, 'to the period of [their] lives, [they would] endeavour to demean themselves as became true sons of the Church of England'.⁽⁴⁾ The Corporation of Garstang undertook, in return for the assurances made to the Anglican Church, 'never to lift up our hand against our King'.⁽⁵⁾ Only the Corporation of Gloucester, the Grand Jury of Hereford (in August), the Freeman of Banbury and the Grand Jury of Northumberland (in

(1) See Appendix Two.

(2) Gazette 2250. See above, p. 325.

(3) Gazette 2286.

(4) Corp. Tavistock, Gazette 2270; the other seventeen in Gazettes 2242, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2254, 2257, 2260, 2263, 2266, 2269, 2270, 2273, 2275, 2276, 2282.

(5) Gazette 2282.

September) actually promised support for the King's programme by saying that they would,

'whenever [His Majesty] shall be pleased to call another Parliament...use their utmost interest to chose such Members as may comply ^{with} [His Majesty's] gracious inclination in repealing the Penal Laws'.

Of the four, one mentioned repealing the Tests and one worded the promise to elect compliant MPs in such a way as to make it sound like a tactful reminder to the King of the importance of having parliamentary sanction for his Declaration.⁽¹⁾

Between the beginning of November 1687 and the Second Declaration of Indulgence, the character of the addresses sent by 'substantial interests' changed considerably from those sent earlier. Of the nineteen addresses only four - three of them in November - thanked the King for his promises to protect the Church of England,⁽²⁾ and three *obliquely* reminded him that Liberty could only be permanent if enacted by Parliament.⁽³⁾ It is most significant when compared with the earlier addresses, however, that fifteen of the nineteen made specific promises of support for the King's programme.⁽⁴⁾ Contrary to Halifax's belief in the futility of the King's policy of remodelling the corporations,⁽⁵⁾ this must be taken as some indication of at least its limited success. Two of these addresses were received from the remodelled corporations of towns from whose previous

(1) Gazettes 2254, 2268, 2276.

(2) Gazettes 2293, 2297, 2329.

(3) Gazettes 2327, 2328, 2329.

(4) Gazettes 2292, 2293, 2312, 2313, 2322, 2325, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2332, 2334, 2336, 2339, 2341.

(5) SP 8/1, pt. 2, ff. 203-6, 207-8; *Kenyon (ed), Halifax: Works, 338-341.*

corporations less effusive, more non-committal, addresses had already been received.⁽¹⁾ Others were from the remodelled corporations of towns whose corporations had previously been silent. The address from the new corporation at Gloucester - more effusive than the address from the old corporation -

assured His Majesty of their 'united and utmost endeavours to elect for Parliament, when called, such Members' as they might 'reasonably hope' should 'joyfully and readily meet and join with His Majesty.. in the repeal of the two Test Acts, so subject to dangerous interpretations'.⁽²⁾

The new corporation in Tewkesbury, where the previous corporation had been silent, said;

'though *we* have before, in a private capacity, addressed ... *Your Majesty* ... [Nonconformist addresses had been received from the county of which this borough was a part]⁽³⁾ ... yet now *being entrusted by Your Majesty* with the government of the corporation'

they were in a position to make a more definite commitment to elect MPs who would repeal the Test and Penal Laws.⁽⁴⁾ From November to April addresses were received from nine boroughs - Banbury, Bridport, Nottingham, Reading, Tewkesbury, Abingdon, Hertford, Hull and Chard - where the corporations had not previously addressed.⁽⁵⁾

The willingness of many remodelled corporations to commit

(1) Newcastle-under-Line: Gazettes 2252, 2312; Gloucester 2254, 2313.

(2) Gazette 2313 (c.f. 2254).

(3) Gazettes 2243, 2282.

(4) Gazettes 2325, 2327.

(5) Gazettes 2292, 2293, 2297, 2322, 2325, 2327, 2328, 2332, 2335.

themselves more unequivocally to the King's programme can be attributed either to the influence of Roman Catholic mayors, aldermen and common council men - an influence which some contemporaries thought was considerable though moderate⁽¹⁾ - or to the fact that the Nonconformists chosen to sit on the corporations were more compliant in their views than most Dissenters, or, at least, than those, mainly ministers, who have left their views on record. Since, as will be seen, Nonconformists who had a particular aversion to serving as office-holders found it possible to avoid doing so, and since those known to be hostile to the King's programme would not be approached anyway, it is likely that many of those who became Aldermen or Common Council men in the remodelled corporations would not stop short of a commitment to secure the election of compliant MPs. The significance of the greater compliance of the small number of remodelled corporations which addressed, however, must not be exaggerated. The most significant deductions to be made from the addresses are negative ones. Whilst two Corporations sent second addresses after remodelling, the rest did not do so. And many corporations did not address at all, either before or after remodelling. Among these were Bristol, Norwich, Dorchester, Exeter, Chichester, Cambridge, Northampton, Taunton, Maidstone, Ipswich, Plymouth, Canterbury, Tiverton, Coventry, Andover, Chatford and Honiton. From all of these towns small groups of Dissenters had already sent addresses.⁽²⁾

(1) Portland Misc. 19, PwA 2110a, 2112d; BM Add. MS 34515, ff 39, 49, 50; Morrice Q, 215. N.B. Those being put into the corporations in the place of the recalcitrant Tories were from many dissident groups of which Nonconformists were only one. See below pp. 445-457.

(2) Presbyterians: Gazettes 2246, 2248, 2295; Congregationalists: Gazettes 2242, 2250, 2246; Nonconformists: (collective) Gazettes 2245, 2260, 2268, 2287, 2297; 'Loyal Subjects': Gazettes 2249, 2251, 2252, 2270, 2276, 2282, 2284, 2287.

But how many MPs could they elect? The Corporations of other boroughs from which Nonconformists had sent addresses were dragging their heels; the Corporation of the City of London did not address until October, nor did the corporations of Colchester and Yarmouth.⁽¹⁾

The addresses from Grand Juries were not always as significant as they appeared to be. Many may have resulted from pressures applied by the Judges of Assize, some were only drawn up after a fracas with elements who had no wish to 'give thanks to the King for encouraging Fanatics', others may have resulted from packing,⁽²⁾ and, even then, a lot were Anglican in their phraseology. At the Spring Assizes in Exeter one 'high loyal Church of England man' 'said he had done God and the King more service in imprisoning one Nonconformist minister than in imprisoning a thousand rebels'.⁽³⁾

The second qualitative division consists of addresses from light-weight interests. These include groups of Presbyterians and Congregationalists, two sects which had a past tradition of political involvement, but since 1681 had fallen into quietism, and ever since 1661 had suffered a social deterioration which rendered them less likely to become involved with the King's programme, and less likely to be useful to that programme if they did become involved.⁽⁴⁾ Those

(1) Gazettes 2285, 2287. An idea of the number of corporations and other official bodies which did not address in 1687-8 may be had by effecting a comparison with the addresses received by James at his accession. Between February and June 1685 he received 361 addresses from corporations, JPs, Grand Juries, chartered livery companies and clergy of the Church of England. Luttrell I, 329, 331, 332, 333-4, 335-6, 336-7, 338-9, 340, 342, 343-4. Between April 1687 and April 1688 the King received ninety-nine addresses from such sources. See Appendix Two, sections A and C. The discrepancy can by no means entirely be accounted for by the paucity of addresses from Anglican clergy in 1687-8.

(2) See above p. 318.

(3) Morrice Q, 101, 138; Gazettes 2242, 2252, 2257, 2260, 2263, 2269, 2275, 2276.

(4) See above pp. 83-93.

few who had been involved politically since that time had espoused views and taken action which seemed to make them still more likely to resist enticement than the quietists. But the light-weight interests which addressed the King also included groups of Baptists and Quakers. The seven Quaker addresses, and the ten addresses in which Baptists took part (including the three sent jointly with the Congregationalists), look fairly modest by comparison with those from Presbyterian and Anglican sources (corporations, as well as clergy) but, in fact, probably represented a greater willingness to address since both Baptists and Quakers went in for collective addresses covering wide areas and, especially in the latter case, are known to have represented large numbers of people.⁽¹⁾ In the last analysis, however, evidence of the relative willingness of each of the sects to address is disguised by the fact that in fifty-six Dissenting addresses, senders preferred to style themselves as 'Your Majesty's loyal subjects dwelling in...' a particular district, or merely as 'Nonconformists'.⁽²⁾ Roger Morrice asserted that, whilst His Majesty preferred to receive addresses which were in a more fulsome vein, he quickly realised that he 'could not expect such from Presbyterians, let alone any positive undertakings', that, in total, only a small minority of Presbyterians subscribed to addresses and that 'most of those who did address owned not the dispensing power, and none magnified the prerogative'.⁽³⁾ The Presbyterian apologist Edmund

(1) See above pp. 321-322; Quaker Collective addresses, Gazettes 2282 (Wales and N. W. England), 2270 (West Scotland), 2273 (Ireland), 2252 (Scotland), and 2245 (the Yearly Meeting); Baptist collective addresses: Gazettes 2244 (Midland Counties), 2255 (Southern Counties).

(2) See Appendix Two.

(3) Morrice Q, 143, 149. See Ellis I, 274, cii.

Calamy took much the same line.⁽¹⁾ But this is true of all the Nonconformist addresses, and the assertion that Presbyterian addresses were more restrained than those of the other sects is unfounded. And, though it is probably true that the Presbyterian addressers did not mean to commit themselves to co-operation with the King's programme, six out of the fourteen made general remarks which might be construed by a monarch expecting such commitments as promises of more than just future loyalty. In fact, it would not have presupposed a total lack of realism on the part of the King had he taken the fulsome praise of his person and policies contained in the addresses of the Bristol, Colchester, East Somerset and Hull Presbyterians as implied undertakings of support.⁽²⁾ The London Presbyterians, having thanked the King for his promise 'to engage [his] two Houses of Parliament in a concurrence with .. so excellent a work' (the only mention of parliamentary concurrence in any Presbyterian address), went on to promise to 'be most forward and faithful in [their] allegiance'.⁽³⁾ Coming as it did immediately after the reference to Parliament, the King could not be blamed had he construed this as a tactful undertaking of support. The 'highest obligations' by which the Bristol Presbyterians felt bound in allegiance to His Majesty and which they intended to discharge; the undertakings of the Colchester Presbyterians 'to answer [His Majesty's] Transcendant Grace' toward them; 'the duties of loving, faithful and obedient subjects' which the Somerset Presbyterians intended to fulfil were to them large-sounding nothings of the sort expected of them in this kind of

(1) Calamy, Abridgement, 376-7; Calamy, Howe, 136-7.

(2) Gazettes 2246, 2265, 2287.

(3) Gazette 2238.

exercise but, seen through the eyes of the King, might help to account for a certain over-optimism evident in his utterances of the early summer.⁽¹⁾ These, and corresponding phrases in the addresses of the Independents, may also help to account for the fact that, though the revulsion of opinion against the Declaration had taken place much earlier in these two sects, it was not until mid-November that foreign observers began to note that 'the Presbyterians and Independents are coming off from the fondness they had at first for the Toleration' and that the promises they had made earlier were widely believed to have been meaningless.⁽²⁾

There was one major difference between the Presbyterian addresses and those sent by Congregationalists, either on their own or in conjunction with Baptists. Of the twelve addresses sent by Congregationalists, ~~seven~~ made a central point of their thanksgiving the King's undertaking to make the liberty 'perpetual by obtaining the concurrence of the two Houses of Parliament, that it might never be in the power of any thereafter to take it from them'.⁽³⁾ The addresses of the Congregationalists in Yarmouth, Norfolk and Hitchin, however, *appeared to be* undertaking to do all in their power to facilitate the election of a compliant Commons,⁽⁴⁾ and those of the Congregationalists in London and Norwich promised to make it their 'constant endeavour' to answer His Majesty's 'just expectations' from them.⁽⁵⁾ Of the seven

(1) Gazettes 2246, 2265, 2287 (See also addresses of Dublin, Macclesfield and Edinburgh Presbyterians 2253, 2274, 2280); d'Adda, 20 June NS, cited J. P. Kenyon, Robert Spencer Earl of Sunderland (1958), 158.

(2) Portland Misc. 19 PWA 2099b (17 November); BM Add MS.34515, f.31.

(3) See Appendix Two; Gazettes 2238, 2250, 2265, 2295, 2243, 2246, 2287.

(4) Gazettes 2250, 2265, 2295.

(5) Gazettes 2238, 2242.

addresses from exclusively Baptist sources, four included similar clauses which might - with greater realism than in the case of the Presbyterians - be construed as promises of support.⁽¹⁾ It is significant, however, that the collective Baptist address, representing the whole of the South of England, contained nothing which could be remotely construed as an undertaking to co-operate but

prayed 'that the Wisdom of the Nation, when they shall meet in *Your* two Houses of Parliament will cheerfully agree... that all this may be confirmed unto the present and after ages by law'.⁽²⁾

The Baptists in Kent (and this is the only Nonconformist address which contained such a clause), thanked God for prompting the King to promise to protect the followers of, as well as the dissenters from, 'the National Way'.⁽³⁾ The seven Quaker addresses are devoid of political significance. In the past the Quakers in general (as opposed to Penn and possibly Barclay) had seen the Court as the only possible source of relief from persecution, but had had no further interest in political involvement. Hence their addresses thankfully recalled the past and present goodness of the Prince, eulogised his long-standing commitment to toleration and made no sort of commitment to help to facilitate the success of the policy of which the Declaration was only a part.⁽⁴⁾

By far the greater part of the thirty-seven addresses from 'Nonconformist' sources which did not care to specify their sect or

(1) Gazettes 2234 (London), 2241 (Leicester), 2244 (Midland Counties), 2244 (Cheshire and Shropshire).

(2) Gazette 2255.

(3) Gazette 2252.

(4) Gazettes 2238, 2245, 2252, 2270, 2273, 2282, 2287.

which represented more than one sect in a particular district were, like the Quaker addresses, merely what they purported to be; addresses of thanks and no more. Nine of them - from Taunton, South Molton, Essex, West Cumberland, Leathward, Oxfordshire, Hampshire, Cambridge and Staplehurst⁽¹⁾ - thanked the King for his promise to secure the concurrence of Parliament. Only two - from the Nonconformists of West Somerset and of Oxfordshire - made any kind of political commitment: the former, 'to answer the great obligation laid upon them'⁽²⁾; the latter 'to use their utmost endeavours to elect such persons [to the Parliament] as may abrogate and abolish such laws as have impeded the free exercise of religion'.⁽³⁾ Two addresses seemed to envisage a future conflict in which they, on the side of the King, would have to contend with their late persecutors, the Anglicans, 'who are yet to learn what it is to do to others as they would be done unto'; and one of these, from the Nonconformists of Staplehurst, in pessimistic vein hoped 'that there would not be found an English Parliament' which would 'seem to frustrate [the] Royal Resolution'.⁽⁴⁾

Of the nineteen addresses³ in which the believers not only declined to specify their sect but even eschewed the title of 'Nonconformists', designating themselves 'His Majesty's Loyal Subjects', almost all took the form of a panegyric on liberty of conscience followed by lavish helpings of fulsome flattery for the King. It was almost as if the individual sects had been afraid to implicate themselves by too fulsome an acclamation of the King's venture but, free

(1) Gazettes 2245, 2260, 2262, 2270, 2277, 2282, 2287, 2297.

(2) Gazette 2254.

(3) Gazette 2277.

(4) Canterbury. Gazette 2297; Staplehurst. *ibid.* 2297.

of the labels, felt less restrained. Almost all made reference to past persecution but did so in such a way as to indicate that the senders were Dissenting laity rather than clergy; another explanation for their lack of restraint.⁽¹⁾ Only three, however, contained anything that might be read as an offer of support. 'His Majesty's loyal Traders of Exeter', 'observing that no return of thankfulness hath yet been made.. from this Corporation', assured the King that 'every last drop of blood' would be at his disposal.⁽²⁾

His Majesty's Loyal Subjects in Dorchester, and those in Hertford, *- probably in the former case, certainly in the latter -* however, were prepared to put at the King's disposal the more practical gift of their votes.⁽³⁾

In the fifty-six addresses from 'Substantial Interests' - and, as has been observed, the Corporations of many of the larger towns did not address - James had received eighteen offers of co-operation.⁽⁴⁾ From 'Light-Weight Interests', mainly Nonconformist groups, he had received ninety-six addresses, and in them six firm promises to support compliant candidates in the envisaged Election, and fourteen very general undertakings which might mean anything or nothing - the majority almost certainly meant nothing - but which the King could not, in any event, count on.⁽⁴⁾ In addition there were the twenty-six apolitical addresses, mainly from the London Livery Companies, already alluded to, and the eleven addresses from Anglican Bishops and Clergy which merely thanked the King for his repeated assurances of the protection of their Church: all of which represented nothing in terms

(1) Examples: Coventry 2252; Northants 2259; Chichester 2270; Bath 2271; Taunton 2284.

(2) Gazette 2252.

(3) Gazettes 2276, 2300.

(4) See Appendix Two.

of political support. Except perhaps, in the case of the Anglicans, the implacable hostility of the great majority who had not addressed - and the embarrassed disapproval of those who had, but avoided even mentioning the phrase - to liberty of conscience.⁽¹⁾ If the addresses represented the barometer of political support which the King, his Ministers, and his opponents seemed to take them for, then the prospects were bleak.⁽²⁾ Even if the airy promises of the isolated groups of Dissenters could all be taken as firm, it was very doubtful if they represented enough Forty-Shilling Freeholders, Freeman and Burgage occupiers to sway the vote in the direction of Court candidates in any constituency where the Church of England were prepared for a fight. Twenty Nonconformist addresses, with varying degrees of tact, reminded His Majesty of the necessity of parliamentary concurrence, but they did not appear to be overly eager to bring it about, and those who did show willing were probably politically sterile.⁽¹⁾ The whole thing by the end of 1687 appeared to turn on the remodelling of the Corporations (which did yield some positive undertakings of co-operation, and hence, it appeared, some chance of electoral success in the Corporation Boroughs), on the changes in the Lieutenancy and among the Sheriffs at that time going forward, and, in the last analysis on how the Dissenters would respond on the key issue of repeal and to offers of public positions.⁽³⁾

The Dissenters had accepted the Declaration - initially with enthusiasm, later with suspicion - and their actions showed that they

(1) See Appendix Two.

(2) Morrice Q, 107, 124, 129, 130, 132, 143, 149; Dalrymple II, pt. 1 bk. 4, 89.

(3) Portland Misc. 19 PwA 2103, 2110a, b, 2112a, b, c; BM Add MS 34515, ff. 34, 35, 39.

attributed the force of law to it, at least until Parliament could meet. Many Dissenters, albeit an unrepresentative, scattered minority, had been prepared to address, though rarely to give anything away in terms of political commitment. Hence at the end of 1687 the question remained: would they, or could they, co-operate? At the beginning of 1687 James II had been confident of a House of Commons majority in this or a subsequent Parliament. But in the actions of his Government during the first half of the year there had been an implied pessimism in the persistent attempt to by-pass possible Parliamentary opposition by eliciting from William and Mary - or failing that, from their representatives in England - some kind of statement against the Test and Penal Laws.⁽¹⁾ Even while the initial enthusiasm for the Declaration had lasted the confidence of the Court in the prospect of a Dissenting Parliament had not been such as to cause the King to dissolve the existing Anglican one until every effort had been made, through Dykvelt, to extract the required statement from the heirs to the throne. In fact the dissolution had not taken place until William had positively refused to sanction repeal.⁽²⁾ Moreover, once preparations for new elections had begun to be considered, Sunderland had at once been unsure of his ability to obtain the sort of Parliament envisaged. He had been equally unsure of its desirability; the court would have to lean on the more 'left-wing' sects since it was clear that the Presbyterians could not be relied on; and in the unlikely eventuality of a Parliament of sectarians

(1) *J. P. Kenyon, Robert Spencer Earl of Sunderland (1958),*
147, 148, 149-152, 157.

(2) *Ibid., 157-159;* William to James,
17 June 1687, Dalrymple II, pt. 1, app. to book V, 54-55;
Jones, 128.

being elected, their assumed parsimony and quasi-republicanism would probably undermine most of what the Government was trying to do both at home and abroad even if they favoured repeal, and that could not be taken for granted.⁽¹⁾ It was to facilitate this less than attractive prospect that plans had been set in motion in the autumn and winter by Sunderland for remodelling the corporations, for making major changes in the lieutenancy, and for an extensive investigation through the Three Questions to sift out those persons of approved opinions, suitable as candidates for the eventual elections.⁽²⁾ There was talk that interference in elections and the bribery of Members would be necessary once Parliament met to ensure repeal.⁽³⁾ In an undated letter to William, written some time after Dykvelt's visit perhaps toward the end of 1687, Sir Patrick Hume said: 'I find no reason nor information as yet which can make me confident that either there [in Scotland], or in England, the Parliament Tests themselves will be struck at'; the omens - the addresses of the Dissenters and the Dissenters' reactions to offers of positions and Court probings up to that time - pointed in quite another direction. But he allowed

'If the Dissenters can be brought to this, no doubt the King and they will carry the Corporations.. and some Counties'.⁽⁴⁾

(1) J. P. Kenyon, op cit, 158-9.

(2) For a detailed discussion, see below pp. 439-445.

(3) Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2103, 2110a, b, c; J. P. Kenyon, op cit, 160; Changes in the Lieutenancy. CSPD 1687-9, 46-47 (4 August); 51, 52 (8 August); 97 (6 November); 98 (8 November); 102 (14 November); 106 (21 November); 111 (2 December); 114 (9 December); 115 (9 December); 123 (30 December). The Three Questions: ibid, 87-88.

(4) CSPD 1687-9, 127.

To him, at least, the crucial determining factor in the next few months appeared to be the attitude of Nonconformists toward the Test and Penal Laws, since upon this would depend the degree of co-operation they were likely to afford to the Court programme. To the King the attitude adopted by many influential Nonconformists on this issue - whether or not the laws which had persecuted and excluded them from office should be repealed - must have seemed totally unreasonable. Indeed it was inexplicable if 'enticement' was viewed as coming from one direction only. But in fact, by this time, it was not only the policy of the Government but of the Church of England.

CHAPTER FOUR

CHURCH AND DISSENT, 1685-1688

1

Anglican-Dissenting relations in the reign of James II should not be viewed entirely in terms of the rapport, which predated the reign and was based on the long-term politico-ecclesiastical objectives of both parties since the Restoration, existing between the Presbyterian 'Dons' and the Anglican 'left-wing', the group of clergymen whom the King styled 'the Deans'.⁽¹⁾ Sir Roger L'Estrange and Seth Ward, Bishop of Salisbury, with their spiritual compatriots, were persistent that they were the 'true sons of the Church of England', anathematising Tillotson, Stillingfleet, Patrick and their sort as 'Whigs' or 'Trimmers'.⁽²⁾ And 'true sons' or no, the resistance shown by the Tory magistracy right up to April 1687 to the King's attempts to allay the persecution of Dissenters shows that it was the reactionaries which carried more weight among the

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- (1) Simon Patrick, Works IX, 502. Those who worked most consistently for a coalition with Dissenters were John Tillotson, Dean of Canterbury, Edward Stillingfleet, Dean of St. Pauls, Simon Patrick, Dean of Peterborough and Rector of St. Pauls, Covent Garden, Nicholas Stratford, Dean of St. Asaph, Thomas Tenison, Vicar of St. Martins-in-the-Fields and Edward Fowler, Vicar of St. Giles, Cripplegate. Morrice P, 491; Q, 86, RB III, 110; DNB VII, 524-5; XV, 490-1; Nuttall and Chadwick, 233, 239-40, 245, 253.
- (2) The Observator, cited Kitchin, 350, 351, 352-3, 354, 355, 356-7; Walter Pope, The Life of Seth, Bishop of Salisbury (1697), 67-70; Birch, Tillotson, 98, 99.

influential laity of their Communion.⁽¹⁾

Between these extremes, representing perhaps a majority of the Anglican clergy, were men like William Sherlock, Master of the Temple, John Sharp, Rector of St. Giles and Dean of Norwich, and Henry Compton, Bishop of London. These, whilst apprehending a Papist threat from a very early stage in the reign, and throwing their whole weight in the scales against it, continued to preach the Church's right to persecute Dissenters and Dissenters' obligation to attend the Church - in tune with 'the Hierarchists' - until the crisis following the Second Indulgence finally convinced them that nothing short of a coalition with Dissenters would prevent the destruction of their Church. It was this, together with the contemporaneous conversion of the most prominent Churchmen, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, to the idea of coalition, that facilitated the success of the objectives of the 'Dons' and the 'Deans' in the proposals for the comprehension and toleration of Dissenters, put forward by the Church in the summer of 1688.

That the measure of accord between Church and Dissent which existed in the weeks before the Trial of the Seven Bishops was possible, however, was due not only to the exigencies of the attendant crisis, but to the groundwork of many years laid by Tillotson, Stillingfleet, Patrick, Fowler and Tenison. It was this groundwork and the consequent rapport which had been achieved with the most respected Presbyterian

(1) If, as G. V. Bennett has asserted, 'educated opinion was hardening against the coercion of respected and peaceable Dissenters' before James II's first Indulgence, it must be assumed from the evidence of persecution that 'educated opinion' was sparsely represented among the magistracy. G. V. Bennett, 'Conflict in the Church', *Britain After the Glorious Revolution*, ed. G. Holmes (1968), 158. See above, pp. 131-143, 167-168, 272-275.

leaders of the time that enabled Halifax in his Letter to a Dissenter (1687) to warn Dissenters against their 'new friends'. Court enticement was occasional and dictated by the political interests of the time; Church enticement - though he owned that the 'rigid prelates' who had persecuted Dissenters had but recently 'extinguished' their 'former haughtiness' - was based on the common interest of their Faiths; an interest which, he could have said, had led some persons, on both sides of the demarcation of conformity, to work for many years for this now vital coalition of forces.⁽¹⁾ Over the two decades since the ejection, the relationship between the Dons and the Church comprehension party had grown closer and had this been the only factor necessary to effect a coalition the comprehension of moderate Dissenters would have become ever more probable. In addition to the common attitudes of the two groups toward the parish system and the persecution of those who rejected it, there had developed close personal friendships. The impact on both groups of the ideas of the Cambridge Platonists had gradually eroded theological barriers and, by the same token, created an ever widening gulf between the Dons and the rest of Nonconformity.⁽²⁾ Further, by 1685 the point of difference which had prevented agreement on the terms of a comprehension in 1660-1, 1668 and 1673-4 - Baxter's zeal for 'the holy discipline' - had suffered a similar erosion, as the Dons had gradually come to accept that the country as a whole would never suffer 'the setting up of an independent, ecclesiastical jurisdiction of every minister over his own parish', or the organisation of

(1) J. P. Kenyon (ed), Halifax Complete Works (1969), 106-107, 113.

(2) See above, pp. 9-18.

presbyteries and synods like those in Northern Ireland.⁽¹⁾ Slowly the points of contention between the Dons and the moderate Churchmen had been reduced to the demand, which Presbyterians in general made, for the reform of some acknowledged abuses in the ecclesiastical courts, the question of the re-ordination of pastors whose orders had been conferred, not by bishops, but by presbyters during, and (in isolated cases) since, the Interregnum, and the demand for 'latitude' in the use of such ceremonies as the sign of the cross at baptism, kneeling at Communion and bowing at the name of Jesus, at which Presbyterian clergy and laity were prone to scruple.⁽²⁾

With points of difference at a minimum and with a record of many past attempts to arrive at a scheme of comprehension,⁽³⁾ it was only to be expected that the 'sober Churchmen' and 'sober Dissenters' who had sponsored past projects would canvass support for an inter-denominational coalition to save comprehension from the final destruction which was augured by James II's programme. It was also more than likely that support for such a coalition would be more widespread both in the Church and among the sects than in the past since it was believed that what was portended was not only the destruction of any hope of comprehension, but an end to the free existence of their common reformed faith. It was clearly in the interests of those working for such a coalition to foster the idea that the cause of Protestantism itself was at stake, even if the menace, in reality, fell short of that.

(1) Every, 21.

(2) Every, 21-22; Powicke, 212, 213-4; Morrice Q, 120.

(3) In 1660-1, 1667-8, 1673-4, 1675, 1680-1. H. F. R. Smith, *The Theory of Religious Liberty in the Reigns of Charles II and James II*, Cambridge Historical Essays XXI (1911), 5; Nuttall and Chadwick, 215, 219, 223.

Hence by holding out the bait of comprehension, moderate Anglicans, whose own aims lay in the direction of a broadened Church, could exert a very considerable influence on the political behaviour of the Presbyterian Dons. But beyond the 'Dons', were the 'Ducklings', and beyond them, the other sects, whose political objective was a toleration outside the Church. Over them the moderate Anglicans had no lever, except in so far as they could help re-animate the spectre of the Popish Peril. Nor would the Dons have exerted such a disproportionate influence among the groups to their left had not the special circumstances of the time made their integrity so evident, and had not other factors combined to incline the 'leftist' groups to be suspicious of enticement, not least among which was its association, through over-use, with constitutional illegality, and its overtones of Popish Peril, a prospect which they too helped to exaggerate. Perhaps the most surprising development of the reign, however, was the tardiness with which the dedicated minority of Anglican clergy whose names had long been associated with plans for comprehension succeeded in convincing their 'Hierarchist' and 'Tory' colleagues of the necessity of an understanding with amenable Dissenters; a situation which, in the long term, was to be far more significant than the eventual growth of the rapprochement after its belated start.

2

During the bleak days for Dissenters between 1681 and the spring of 1686, it was the Churchmen who kept alive the idea of Comprehension. They did this at the cost of bringing upon themselves a great deal of unpopularity within their own Communion,

and with the realisation that their scheme was unlikely to attract widespread support given prevailing conditions, among either the persecuted Dissenters or the persecuting Churchmen. Within weeks of the still-birth of the last Comprehension Bill in 1681, Stillingfleet published another pamphlet in which he advanced new arguments for what had seemed to be a lost cause, castigating the expedient of an Indulgence as a means of ending the prevailing persecution, and advancing, for the first time, the 'Popish Menace' as an argument to win Dissenters over to comprehension.⁽¹⁾ In his sermons he used other shock tactics. He accused the Dissenters of being 'schismatics and troublers of the peace of the Nation', and, perhaps hoping that the prevailing persecution would lend force to his argument, inveighed against them for 'helping the Romish Cause by standing aloof from the Church'. Having tried to shock them into comprehension, he then elaborated upon the concessions that the Church would be prepared to make to bring in the sheep that were not of its fold.⁽²⁾ Tillotson's sermons also argued that only a Church in which sober Dissenters were comprehended could 'be a bulwark of sufficient force to resist all the arts and attempts of Popery' and that 'little sects and separate congregations can never do it'.⁽³⁾ Tenison used the same arguments in a pamphlet written in 1683.⁽⁴⁾

- (1) E. Stillingfleet, *The Unreasonableness of Separation; or An Impartial Account of the History, Nature and Pleas of the Present Separation* (1681), lxxxii-lxxxiv, lxxxiv-lxxxv, lxxxviii. See Morrice P, 304.
- (2) Morrice P, 319; Perry II, 430-1; Calamy, *Abridgement*, 353-4; J. Waddington, *Surrey Congregational History* (1866), 82-83, 84-86. See E. Stillingfleet, *The Mischief of Separation: A Sermon Preached at Guildhall Chapel, 11 May 1680* (1680), epistle dedicatory and pp 3-4.
- (3) Birch, *Tillotson*, 97-98.
- (4) T. Tenison, *An Argument for Union taken from the True Interest of those Dissenters in England who profess and call themselves Protestants* (1683), 1, 18-19.

Perhaps it was the anticipated succession of the Duke of York and second thoughts after the failure of Exclusion that led other Anglicans to lend their voices. Samuel Bolde argued that only a few concessions were necessary to assimilate 'the generality of.. sober.. Dissenters' within the Church, which would thereby become 'an impregnable bulwark against Popery'. Persecution had been counter-productive and never produced 'real proselytes'.⁽¹⁾ In December 1682 Daniel Whitby, Praecenter of the Church at Sarum, published The Protestant Reconciler in which he

'humbly plead[ed] for condescension to dissenting brethren, in things indifferent and unnecessary, for the sake of peace;...showing how unreasonable it was to make such things the necessary conditions of communion'.⁽²⁾

The burden of The Naked Truth, by Croft, Bishop of Hereford, and of The Conformists Plea for the Nonconformists, by Edward Pearce was much the same.⁽³⁾ John Sharp published A Discourse Concerning Conscience in 1683, and The Case of a Doubting Conscience in 1684, which, whilst upholding the obligation of church attendance - the Church, as a branch of 'the Universal Catholic Church', was the essential channel of salvation and grace - also suggested certain minor concessions that the Church could make to facilitate the comprehension of moderate Presbyterians. Sharp concluded his second

- (1) Samuel Bolde, A Plea for Moderation towards Dissenters (1682), 11-12, 28-29. Bolde, 'a conforming minister, formerly persecuted for his moderation' was active in campaigning for the repeal of the penal laws in 1688. Duckett II, 242.
- (2) Morrice P, 348; Birch, Tillotson, 97-98; Perry II, 432-3.
- (3) H. Croft, The Naked Truth, or The True State of the Primitive Church (1675; 1683), 4, 22-4; E. Pearce, The Conformists Plea for the Nonconformists (1683), 45; Powicke, 211-213; Perry II, 432-3.

pamphlet with an appeal and a warning to Nonconformists:

'By this unnatural separation ... we offer a very fair handle and pretence to all discontented and factious men to practice against the best ^{of} governments; so we take a most effective course to ruin the best constituted Church in the world, and with it the Reformed Religion in this Kingdom'. (1)

Baxter was careful to respond to these arguments in one of the few pamphlets he published in this period. It began:

'It grieves me to the heart that neither party, Conformable or Nonconformable, is more sensible of the sin and danger of our distance... It layeth my soul in daily lamentations to see how we run further from each other, to the apparent danger of the Protestant cause'. (2)

While the Anglican pamphlets indicated continued support for comprehension among Churchmen the prevailing intensity of persecution and the fact that many of the pamphlets were publicly burned at Oxford, and one of the pamphleteers, Whitby, was forced by his Bishop, Seth Ward, to make a public retraction of his views, serves to emphasise that the movement to comprehend moderate Dissent was still very much the work of a dedicated minority. (3) But at least one prominent lay Anglican, Sir Roger L'Estrange, believed that the minority was a growing one. The Observator announced that there

(1) A. T. Hart, *The Life and Times of John Sharp Archbishop of York* (1949), 87-89.

(2) R. Baxter, *Epistle to the Nonconformists and a Vindication of the Church of England in Her Rites and Ceremonies, Discipline and Church Orders* (1682), 1.

(3) Birch, Tillotson, 98, 99; Perry II, 432-4;

Morrice P, 414.

had been a 'Whig Reaction' in the Church and traced it back to 1681 when English Protestants had first become aware of Louis XIV's campaign against the Huguenots. For the purpose of attack, the 'Whig' clergyman, favouring comprehension and apprehensive of Popery, was characterised as 'Mr. Trimmer'. The Observators of 1684 conducted a virulent campaign against Trimmer clergy in London - an area which L'Estrange believed to be infected more than any other - and, one by one, brought them, or at least the more obscure of them, before its 'bar'. At least two of the Trimmer clergy singled out, Hughes and Smithies, were forced to exculpate themselves in writing from the charges made, the worst of which was, wanting 'to raise the burden of oppression from the shoulders of the Dissenters'.⁽¹⁾

L'Estrange's campaign was temporarily damped down shortly after the accession of James II, by the publication and widespread popularity of a satirical pamphlet entitled The Observator proved a Trimmer, and the new volume of Observators, beginning in February 1685, proclaimed 'a truce of God'.⁽²⁾

But whilst L'Estrange first wanted to test the direction of the wind in the new reign, Tillotson ^{very probably} had no doubt that, the King's assurances notwithstanding, the re-establishment of Catholicism was intended - how and in what form he had no idea - and brought out the fourth edition of his Discourse against Transubstantiation.

This was somebody's cue to publish a Discourse against Purgatory, credited, for obvious reasons, though incorrectly,

(1) Observators quoted extensively in Kitchin, 350-1, 354, 355-6; W. Smithies, A Reply to the Observator (1684), epistle to the reader and pp 2-4; Philo Pater (pseud.), The Observator Reproved (1684), 1-8.

(2) Kitchin, 356-7, 358.

to Tillotson. (1) The Bishop of London was also pessimistic and, in response to a widespread desire amongst his clergy to address the King, let it be known that he 'felt it unwise to encourage the sending of innumerable effusions to the King, some of which.. might later prove an embarrassment', and drew up a short, restrained address of his own and sent it out to his rural deans 'that the whole diocese might express their unanimous thoughts in the same words'. (2) The continued persecution of Dissenters, however, reassured both Compton and L'Estrange and, whilst the former was soon playing an active part in the support of Royalist candidates in the Election, the latter recommenced his campaign against Trimmers, using as the butt of his invective the steady stream of anti-Romist pamphlets being published, and extravagantly eulogising the new King's religion, attacking in the strongest terms the notion of 'popular liberty of conscience'. (3) Meanwhile, Richard Baxter, in jail, was writing that two parties had been discernable in the Church of England during the preceding decade; those who followed the tradition of Hooker, Bilson and Jewel, and the 'new party' of self-styled 'Catholics' who 'hankered after' union with Rome. At present, he asserted, the latter have the advantage, thanks to 'the infamous Roger L'Estrange' who had fastened the name of 'Trimmers' on the former. He had been 'employed by his genius, and the Court, and the Papists, and the New Clergymen, to do a work so truly diabolical' as he had never 'read ^{of} the like in history': to sow discord between Church and Dissenters, to vilify all churchmen disposed to favour

(1) Birch, Tillotson, 118-119.

(2) Carpenter, Compton, 79.

(3) Evelyn IV, 439; Kitchin, 351, 352, 358.

Dissenters 'and to destroy them whom he nicknamed Whigs', (this expression being understood to include both Dissenters and moderate Churchmen).⁽¹⁾

Despite Baxter's dour predictions and the fulminations of L'Estrange against 'Whiggery' in the Church, the first concerted move in both the anti-Papist campaign and in the endeavour to re-achieve and utilise to good purpose a rapport with the Dons, was made on 7 November 1685.⁽²⁾ It is likely that this meeting, attended by what was to be the hard core of those who were to work toward Coalition - Fowler, Tillotson, Patrick, Stillingfleet, and Tenison - laid plans for the all-out pamphlet war that began in early 1686, and hoped to use the outcry common to the pulpits of both Church and conventicle following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes as the basis for a rapprochement with Nonconformists. It did not take the Observer long to learn that 'the Baxterians.. were now moving to meet the Whig Party in the Church on the common ground provided by Mr. Trimmer'. But L'Estrange believed that the overtures were coming from both sides, and that, on their side, the Presbyterians were endeavouring to ingratiate themselves with the clergy by more frequent church attendance and greater participation in its rites.⁽³⁾ This latter development he deplored most of all. The Deans, L'Estrange was sure, represented the most 'insidious form of Whiggery, a form no longer clumsy and anarchic, but politic to the last degree'.⁽⁴⁾ The

(1) R. Baxter, *Against the Revolt to a Foreign Jurisdiction* (1691), 324-9. Whilst this pamphlet was not published until after the Revolution, it was written during the second half of 1685.

(2) Morrice P, 491.

(3) This belief was probably correct. J. Hunter (ed), *Diary of Ralph Thoresby* (1830) I, 181-182.

(4) Kitchin, 352-3.

parishioners of St. Giles, Cripplegate, shared L'Estrange's view rather than that of their rector, and Dr. Edward Fowler, pronounced 'guilty of Whiggism', was brought before the Court of Arches and, on 9 December, suspended for 'uncanonical practices', including 'admitting excommunicated persons without absolution'.⁽¹⁾ Thus Fowler was provided with both the time and an incentive to lead the anti-papist campaign and to attempt a rapprochement with the Dons.

Despite the antipathy between the Latitudinarian or 'Whig' clergy and L'Estrange, their actions and utterances suggest that they had one thing in common; their view of the King's objective. The King, associating Dissenters with Exclusion, the Rye House Plot and Monmouth, now intended to use the Church of England to destroy them. The difference was that, whilst a large part of the Tory magistracy was prepared for the part, and showed themselves up to it in the last few months of 1685, the moderate clergy for a number of reasons - among them the assumption that the reconversion of the Church to Catholicism would follow - were not.⁽²⁾ If the King's utterances in the course of 1685 were taken at their face value, the premonitions of both wings of the Church would appear, at that stage, to have been not far short of the truth. In March, and again in July, James had enthused to Barillon over his plans for the reconciliation of the English Established Church with the Holy See, and the re-establishment of the Catholic Faith. But this was what Barillon and Barillon's Master, Louis XIV, wanted to hear. Sunderland's assertion that James II's chief aim was 'the establishment of the Catholic religion

(1) DNB VII, 524-5. Fowler had been regarded as a Presbyterian under the Commonwealth, and both his father and brother were ejected ministers. *ibid.*

(2) Kennett III, 442, 452; Perry II, 473-4.

Church or State'.⁽¹⁾ After Compton had further provoked the King by refusing to force the Huguenots flooding into his diocese to conform to the Church of England,⁽²⁾ a confrontation was a matter of time. But whilst, at the end of 1685, self-opinionated 'young divines and preachers', following the lead either of Compton's conference or the meeting of the Deans, were indulging in the 'bold abuses and extravagances' of which the King was shortly to make a public issue,⁽³⁾ very little, if anything, of significance had been done to win over Dissenters. Such, indeed, was not Compton's intention, despite the efforts he had expended in the previous reign to induce the Dissenters of his diocese to conform.⁽⁴⁾ As to the Deans, an Anglican-Dissenting coalition achieved through the Dons must have seemed a somewhat abstract aim with John Howe abroad, escaping from their Church's persecution, and Richard Baxter in the King's Bench Prison, suffering for the objection of the Anglicans to his Paraphrase of the New Testament. In fact, all that had come of the rapprochement by the end of 1685 *may have been* a pamphlet entitled A Plain Account of the Persecution, now laid to the Charge of the Church of England, asserting the tolerant attitude of the English Church in its dealings with Dissenters and contrasting it with the intolerance of Papists, as illustrated by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes.⁽⁵⁾ Coming at one of the high-water marks of persecution, the burden of

(1) Carpenter, Compton, 82-83.

(2) Carpenter, Compton, 85-86.

(3) CSPD 1686-7, 56-7; Matthew to Philip Henry, 10 November, 24 November, 1 December, 22 December, 1685, Henry MS.6, letters 3, 5, 6, 9.

(4) Carpenter, Compton, 60, 69, **82**.

(5) CSPD 1685, 432.

this pamphlet must have been less than meaningful to most Dissenters.

3

The rumours of a toleration, which came to the ears of many Anglicans for the first time in the early months of 1686, were equally unwelcome to both wings of the Church. To the Trimmers they threatened to destroy their hopes for comprehension and raised the fear that the Dissenters, in view of the harsh treatment they were still receiving from the Anglican magistracy, would readily join with a Court programme inimical to the interests of the Church. To the Old Guard, who had hoped to follow the King through a policy aimed at the final rout of the Dissenters, the rumours were no less alarming. Some resolved their dilemma by continuing to support the King, others by joining the Trimmers in their attack on Popery,⁽¹⁾ whilst others, in a state of complete discomfiture, felt that they could do neither. L'Estrange was in this latter category. His vigorous onslaughts on Nonconformity, his vilifications of individual Nonconformists, and his frequent home thrusts against Toleration itself in the previous reign, through The Observator and in individual pamphlets, made it impossible for him to follow the King in this aspect of his policy, at least.⁽²⁾ His simultaneous attacks on the Whig clergy made it

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- (1) Some preachers and pamphleteers in the anti-Popery campaign were labelled 'Tories', 'Hierarchists' or 'High-Churchmen' (terms used in opposition to 'Whig', 'Trimmer', 'sober churchmen'). Carpenter, Compton, 88; Perry II, 478-9.
- (2) R. L'Estrange, *Interest Mistaken or The Holy Cheat, proving from the undeniable Practices and Positions of the Presbyterians that the Design of that Party is to Enslave both King and People* (1661); *Toleration Discussed* (1663); Kitchin, 84, 85, 359.

equally impossible, even had he the inclination, to close with them. By the end of January 1686, many were looking with amused anticipation to see what line The Observator would take. L'Estrange's uncharacteristically milk and water answer was: 'If I find the wisdom of my superiors that way inclined [i.e. to toleration], I should never open my mouth against it'. However, he also published a letter which he had sent to the King in which he pointed out, respectfully, that, despite popular rumour, he was no Roman Catholic, but 'a true son of the Church of England'.⁽¹⁾

In the course of 1686 the Court policy of favour to Roman Catholics and Quakers, the King's occasional intervention to allay the persecution of other types of dissenter, the early moves against the Church of England, and trends which Protestants interpreted as evidence of the growth of Catholicism in England, all helped to intensify the campaign which the clergy, more especially those in London, were conducting against Popery. But this war of sermons and pamphlets was now being fought by High Churchmen as well as Trimmers, and, in any event, did not represent in itself a move in the direction of the Dissenters. The fact remains, however, that the most prolific and vociferous combatants on the Anglican side were the small group of Trimmers who had met to discuss the possibility of a rapprochement with Dissenters in November 1685, with the addition of some of the Whig clergy of London who shared their opinions. And further, the pamphlet war also served to emphasise the common ground which existed between conformists and Nonconformists, whoever was doing the fighting, and helped to incline the minds of Dissenters, who had never heard of

(1) The Observator, 25 January 1685/6, cited Kitchin, 359. Despite this testimony L'Estrange was often in company with the Court Catholics and with the pro-Catholic Bishop of Chester. T. Cartwright, Diary, Camden Soc. (1843), 4, 5, 45, 51, 52, 53, 54, 58, 64.

Tillotson and Stillingfleet, more favourably toward the clergy of a Church whose magistracy continued to persecute them.

Vigorous anti-Papist preaching by a number of the London clergy had provoked complaints from the King before the end of 1685. In the early months of 1686 the number involved in this kind of preaching increased, as more and more clergy came to believe that Catholicism really was gaining ground in England.⁽¹⁾ When, in January 1686, James complained to Archbishop Sancroft for the second time that the Anglican clergy of London 'preached too much against Popery', he replied that Roman Catholic 'priests were so busy troubling *our* people with questions, that *we* could do no less than instruct them in the established religion'.⁽²⁾ Nor was this too much of an exaggeration. It is clear that the Catholic proselytising campaign had begun, though in the early stages it was probably confined to London and involved only the chaplains of foreign embassies, plus a few Jesuits.⁽³⁾ Two of the Deans - Tillotson and Patrick - were in diligent correspondence with persons in high places, among them the wife of the Earl of Lindsay, who were being assailed by Roman Catholic priests and *had been converted or* were contemplating conversion.⁽⁴⁾ Dark rumours circulated of the army of Jesuits at Court and the building of mass houses. Tenison was soon engaged in a 'public disputation' with a Jesuit Andrew Pulton who, with Edward Hall, was to establish

(1) G. D'Oyly, Life of William Sancroft (1821) I, 219; -120

Perry II, 478-9; Richard Kidder, Autobiography, 134 in S. H. Cassan, Lives of the Bishops of Bath and Wells (1829); Matthew to Philip Henry, 2 February, 23 February, 2 March 1686, Henry MS.5, letters 16, 19, 20; Edward to Sir Edward Harley, 22 December 1685, HMC 14th Report, App. pt. II: Portland MSS III (1894), 391.

(2) Simon Patrick, Works IX, 502.

(3) Matthew to Philip Henry, 2 February, 9 March 1686, Henry MS.5, letters 16, 21; VCH London I, 345.

(4) Simon Patrick, Works IX, 501-2; Birch, Tillotson, 119, 120, 121.

a Jesuit College in the Savoy.⁽¹⁾

The feeling of suspicion in the ranks of the clergy, and the virulence of their anti-Papist campaign, increased as time went on, and was exacerbated when the directives against controversial preaching, previously issued by James I and Charles II, were re-issued by James II in March. Coming at a time when suspicions were already very much aroused and in the changed circumstances of the new reign, 'a purpose insidiously hostile to the cause of Protestantism' was ascribed to them, and there can be no doubt that they achieved the complete reverse of what had been intended. To many clergy, up to this time on the fence, this was the ultimate provocation, the casus belli.⁽²⁾ Frampton, Bishop of Gloucester, Wake and Sherlock added their voices to the campaign. Ken, Bishop of Bath and Wells, began an anti-papist preaching campaign by a sermon in the Royal Chapel condemning the French atrocities and, by implication, the Church responsible for them.⁽³⁾ Patrick, who in January had made a personal and abject apology to the King after being accused of 'leaning too much toward the two Deans' in his preaching,⁽⁴⁾ on 25 April preached and later published a sermon which not only included a violent attack on Rome, but called for an understanding with the Dissenters. The Church at Ephesus, he said, had been in danger of being overturned by the 'blasts of strange doctrine' which had come from the mouths of

(1) Morrice P, 599; Q, 20, 21, 22; Carpenter, Tenison, 50-52, 55. See Luttrell I, 404.

(2) CSPD 1686-7, 57-58; G. D'Oyly, Life of William Sancroft (1821) I, 220-1.

(3) Perry II, 478-9; S. H. Cassan, Lives of the Bishops of Bath and Wells (1829) II, 91; Evelyn IV, 503, 504.

(4) Simon Patrick, Works IX, 502-505.

deceivers; this was the situation of the English Church now, but 'notwithstanding the cunning and craftiness' of the Roman Church, with its lofty claims to authority, Anglicans must stand fast; and they must look for strength to the brotherhood of all Protestants who, 'in essential things' were of one mind.⁽¹⁾

To those who had eyes to see, the necessity of such an understanding became more and more apparent as the events of the succeeding weeks showed to Anglicans the shape of things to come. A royal dispensation to a clergyman, Edward Sclater, to enable him to continue in his living, despite his conversion to Catholicism,⁽²⁾ the elevation of Samuel Parker and Thomas Cartwright, men of dubious loyalties, to bishoprics, against the advice of the Archbishop of Canterbury,⁽³⁾ the receipt by William Sherlock, Master of the Temple, of a 'severe reproof', *together with the stopping of 'a pension he had'*, after an anti-Catholic sermon,⁽⁴⁾ were followed by more appointments against Sancroft's advice.⁽⁵⁾ John Sharp's sermon, his apology to the King, Bishop Compton's stand, and his subsequent suspension formed the climax.⁽⁶⁾ Since January Compton had been seen as the force behind the pulpit onslaught on Popery;⁽⁷⁾ his suspension was all the more awful to the public mind, and its significance was not lost

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- (1) Simon Patrick, A Sermon Preached on St. Mark's Day, 1686 (1686), 5-18, 20-22, 26, 34-35.
- (2) HMC Downshire MSS I, i, 162; J. Gutch (ed), Collectanea Curiosa (1781) I, 290-3. On 5 May 1689 Sclater was reported to have recanted. Luttrell I, 530.
- (3) G. D'Oyly, Life of William Sancroft (1821) I, 235-7; T. Cartwright, Diary, Camden Soc. (1843), 1, 5.
- (4) Henry Hyde Earl of Clarendon, Correspondence and Diaries ed. S. W. Singer (1828) I, 258; Perry II, 481.
- (5) G. D'Oyly, op cit, 239.
- (6) HMC Downshire MSS I, 185, 186, 197, 200, 203, 207, 210-211, 216, 217; Ellis I, 160-162, lvii; ST IV, 243-5.
- (7) Ellis I, 1-5, i.

upon Nonconformists. The anti-Catholic preaching of the Anglicans acquired enough boost to continue its momentum into the following year.⁽¹⁾ During a visitation in Dorset Trelawney, Bishop of Bristol, reprimanded his clergy for their 'reflecting discourses' which he may have sensed would prove the undoing of the Church in the estimation of the King.⁽²⁾

The crisis of the summer of 1686, which began with the Godden vs. Hales Judgement in June and the establishment of the Commission for Ecclesiastical Causes, and lasted until Compton was finally suspended in September, proved to be a water-shed in the reign of James II.⁽³⁾ It was the Anglican stand prior to and during the crisis that finally convinced the King that his programme could not be carried out with the Church's support and removed his doubts about a more thorough-going use of the dispensing power to protect Dissenters from persecution.⁽⁴⁾ And it was the Court policy which had precipitated this crisis that led the Churchmen to realise that, to save the Anglican Establishment from the incursions of Popery, they must come to a decision regarding their relations with the Nonconformists. It augured well for the King's success, however, that the two wings of the Church came to diametrically opposite decisions. While the Trimmers, predictably, thought that now was the time to make concessions and strengthen their rapport with sober Dissenters, the 'Tories' and 'Hierarchists' took the view 'that Dissenters must be persecuted

(1) See Evelyn IV, 522, 529, 538, 539, 541; Henry Hyde, op cit, I, 258.

(2) CSPD 1686-7, 134-5.

(3) CSPD 1686-7, 171, 174, 202, 233-234; HMC Downshire MSS I, 1, 184, 170, 169, 216, 217.

(4) See above, pp. 260-261.

in order to prevent the advance of Popery'. This, indeed, 'was an auspicious moment for the King to commence his new policy'.⁽¹⁾

Roger Morrice's Ent'ring Book portrays a veritable orgy of persecution through the summer months of 1686.⁽²⁾ It was evident to Dissenters more than ever before who their persecutors were. And in case any were still in doubt a Catholic author published a book to identify them.⁽³⁾ However, Dissenters were aware of enticement, from both the Church and the Court, as well as persecution, and for the first time became aware of the pivotal position in which they had been placed between the parties.⁽⁴⁾ In fact, in the course of July and August 1686 Morrice and his patron Sir John Maynard were wooed in turn by Bishop Compton, seeking legal advice and sounding out Dissenting opinion on the issue of the Commission,⁽⁵⁾ by Dr. Edward Fowler, aiming to consolidate an alliance with Dissenters in the face of the common threat,⁽⁶⁾ and by Sir John Baber, from the Court, assuring them of the impossibility of the King ever reaching an understanding with their persecutors and enquiring 'whether, if liberty and impunity would be granted by a law, the Dissenters would in a body signify their thankful acceptance thereof'.⁽⁷⁾

Regarding Compton's appearance before the Commission of Ecclesiastical Causes, Morrice noted that

'it was never known of late years that so universal an interest

(1) Perry II, 493.

(2) Morrice P, 569, 573-4, 578, 581, 584, 634. See above pp. 270-271.

(3) Morrice P, 567.

(4) HMC Downshire MSS I, i, 95; Matthew to Philip Henry, 4 May, 18 May, 8 June, 15 June 1686, Henry MS.5, letters 28, 30, 33, 34.

(5) Morrice P, 594. Maynard was referred to by Morrice as 'Ser'.

(6) Morrice P, 593.

(7) Morrice P, 594.

of Churchmen, Tories, Trimmers and Dissenters as did follow the Bishop's case', for 'all think themselves struck at by it'.

During Compton's visit, Morrice assured him of the support of Nonconformists and their concern that 'he made a resolute defence of himself'.⁽¹⁾ But despite Morrice's assurances and Maynard's advice, Compton, his conduct symptomatic of a man caught between the two wings of the Church, prior to his first appearance before the Commission and in an attempt to avert it, repeated that 'he would drive the Dissenters either to the Church or to the Devil', and was reported to have sent letters to the clergy in his diocese urging them to encourage persecution.⁽²⁾ Far from entertaining notions of a coalition with the Dissenters against the Court and Romanism, it appeared that, had persecuting Dissenters been all that was necessary to put him back into the King's good graces, Compton was prepared to do it. However, Morrice did misjudge Compton when, after the Bishop's first appearance before the Commission, he asserted that he was likely to be cowed into complete subservience to the Court's policy.⁽³⁾

The prevailing persecution, and Compton's seeming cowardice in the face of Court pressure, made any broad based coalition with Dissenters out of the question and a rapport with the Dons difficult. Fowler visited both Baxter (in prison) and Morrice, but despite the common ground they shared in opposition to the Commission, their discussions of a possible theological compromise could not but seem hypothetical. When Fowler reported back to his Anglican colleagues

(1) Morrice P, 593-4, 601-603, 611, 613.

(2) Morrice P, 602.

(3) Morrice P, 608, 609. (See also 615).

he was disappointed, but not too surprised, to find them 'very little concerned; but every man shifts for himself and no man hath any respect for the common interest of religion, property and liberty'.⁽¹⁾

After his visit from the Court representative, Baber, it is understandable that Morrice, in his prognostications, should place Fowler's suggestion of an Anglican-Dissenting Alliance on an equal footing with the offers of the Court.

'If the Church and the Dissenters join, they certainly will break the measures of the Court, and, therefore, if the Dissenters deliver the Church from the Papists, they will expose themselves to the malice and persecution both of the Church and the Court'.

There seemed to be four possibilities:

I. Whether the Church will fall in with the Court and the Papists and utterly destroy the Dissenters.

II. Or whether the Dissenters will fall in with the Church and help to give check to the Court; and thereby constrain the Court to fall in with the Church and utterly destroy the Dissenters.

III. Whether the Dissenters will sit still and take present quiet from the Court against the bitter persecution of the Church and wait what Providence will do in the process of time for their deliverance.

IV. Whether the Court and the Dissenters will join together and so the latter have an unalterable liberty given unto them by a law (this Parliament being dissolved and another chosen that would by a law establish liberty and restrain the Church

(1) Morrice P, 593.

from persecution)', (1)

Looking at events this way, and reassured by the undertakings of Baber and the taunts of 'a doctor of considerable note in the Church of England' that the Church would survive its present set-backs to persecute again, (2) it is not surprising that the crisis of the summer of 1686 left Roger Morrice with a quiet preference for the third and fourth eventualities in his analysis - and this despite a life-long friendship with the small group of Anglicans whose long-term aims were the same as his. He knew that these were not the Church, nor were they representative of it. He also understood that to preach against Popery might recommend Anglicans to the good graces of Dissenters, but did not mean that the Churchmen would not consign Dissenters to the same hell fire as the Papists, perhaps first.

After the dissolution of the Parliament which was to take place in the following July (1687) things at Court were to be in a limbo with everyone uncertain as to whether co-operation with Dissenters was, after all, to prove possible. To the small group of Anglicans who believed that the continued existence of their Church depended on a united front with the Dissenters, there appeared to be an even greater cause for pessimism in September 1686 as to the feasibility of co-operation. It was impossible for Dissenters to forget that the Church of England was a persecuting church, because persecution was still intense. In fact, in the remaining months of 1686 there were signs of a hardening of attitudes on the part of the 'Hierarchist' or 'Tory' section of the Church. They refused to make a distinction

(1) Morrice P, 594.

(2) Morrice P, 598.

between 'Sober Dissenters' and 'Fanatics', as the moderates did, and their determination to persecute increased as the rumour began to circulate amongst them that 'some Fanatics were about to be put into the Commission of the Peace upon the great change that was like to be made'. This attitude was all the more surprising in consideration of the fact that they now appeared unconcerned about the Roman Catholic appointments which had already taken place. By mid-November the Churchmen were 'extraordinarily afraid' that, in the projected remodelling of local government 'some fanatics' would be allowed into important civic positions.⁽¹⁾ Even if the Dissenters could separate in their minds the Church itself from the works of its magistracy, it was all too easy for most of them, to whom the personal sincerity of the Deans was unknown, to believe that the half-hearted overtures of the Church were merely provoked by the current crisis. Intelligent Dissenters, however, were beginning to be aware of the axial position into which bids from both sides had put them: fanatics in the Catholic camp might speak of using them now and dropping them later, but the paucity of Roman Catholics (unless thousands were to be converted in a day) would ensure the continued usefulness of the Dissenters for some time to come; while the Churchmen, when their immediate usefulness was over, had no such need of them. Wooing from the Anglican camp was too obviously a reaction to the Court's efforts. And further, the Church had less to offer than the King in the immediate sense at least: James offered toleration here and now; the Church only made promises, and did not do that with one voice. The Court was beginning to undertake a conscious, organised effort to win over the Dissenters; the Church of England had no policy, only the isolated efforts of

(1) Morrice P, 642; Q, 20, 28, 49, 52.

some perceptive individuals. Hence, when the question of a coalition with the 'sober part of the Church' was put to him again in the autumn, Morrice decided that even this must be viewed with suspicion. And when, to add greater force to the argument, the cause of William of Orange was linked with that of the Church, he decided that he deeply distrusted both. (1)

But during the winter months of 1686-7 a great deal occurred to make Morrice re-think his attitude and to shake the self-confidence of those who continued to persecute. The suspension of Compton, the concern expressed by the Protestant Government at The Hague, and Compton's clandestine efforts, despite suspension, to preserve his diocese from Popery; all appeared as shades of a new order. (2) Widespread concern amongst Anglicans at 'the Romish priests [who were] very busy in practising upon the people', led to the publication of a pamphlet written as a catechism, 'aiming to enable the parishioner to withstand Rome's seduction' by drilling him in the pat answers to standard arguments. (3) What was probably of greater concern to Churchmen, however, was Sunderland's tirade against 'Trimmers' who were not working wholeheartedly for the King's project and, what followed, the attempt to convert the lay leader of the Church to Catholicism. (4) It is significant that the Earl of Rochester selected to argue the Church's case in the disputation which was to decide the issue, Stillingfleet, Tillotson, Patrick and Jane (Dean of Gloucester), all

(1) Morrice P, 678.

(2) Carpenter, Compton, 100, 108, 109.

(3) A Plain and Familiar Discourse by Way of a Dialogue Betwixt a Minister and His Parishioner concerning the Catholic Church, by a Divine of the Church of England (4 December 1686), DWL 7.39.9, see especially Preface and p 2.

(4) J. P. Kenyon, Robert Spencer Earl of Sunderland (1958), 140.

participants in the anti-Papist campaign. It is also significant that the King refused to have the first two, and settled for the second two under protest.⁽¹⁾ Though Rochester's decision must have been reassuring to Churchmen, his resultant fall, followed as it was by the recall of his brother Clarendon from Dublin,⁽²⁾ must have shattered any illusions of the strength of the Old Alliance between Church and King. The Hicks Hall assizes in January 1687 had also convinced London Anglicans of the seriousness of the King's intention of winning over Dissenters; toleration of Dissenters would come.⁽³⁾ With their illusions broken, even the more die-hard Tories began to realise that by continuing persecution they were forcing Dissenters into the arms of the Court, though some were not fully aware of this until the Indulgence came, and it was too late to make the gesture.⁽⁴⁾ Meanwhile, many broad-church and moderate clergy began to contemplate joining the propaganda war against the Papists to draw Dissenters away from the Court, though few actually thought of going as far as a coalition.

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In the course of 1686 the pamphlet war reached a new intensity, as the army of theological pugilists, most of whom contrived to publish anonymously, swelled to include a forceful group of young

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- (1) Simon Patrick, Works IX, 491-6; Henry Hyde Earl of Clarendon, Correspondence and Diaries, ed. S. W. Singer (1828) II, 89-91.
 (2) Ibid, 87-89, 132-3, 134, 142.
 (3) Morrice Q, 52.
 (4) See above, p.275.

Tory clergymen. Among them were Francis Atterbury, Henry Aldrich, Gee and Hooper.⁽¹⁾ The Dissenters, however, despite their volubility in previous contests of this kind,⁽²⁾ and despite their historical and theological aversion to Catholicism, played no part in the pamphlet war. Although their silence caused little reaction among Churchmen at the time, it provided a powerful argument against Dissenters after the Revolution, and thirty years later Nonconformist apologists were still having difficulty fending off Anglican attacks on this score.⁽³⁾ One West Country Anglican divine went so far as to quote in full a letter, allegedly written by a French Jesuit, arguing that if the Catholic Cause had had only the Presbyterians to deal with in 1688 there would have been no obstacle in the way of the Grand Design, for they were already half-subverted.⁽⁴⁾

The justifications provided by the apologists were stereotyped and unconvincing. Edmund Calamy argued that the Dissenters 'thought it not proper to take this work out of the hands of divines of the Church of England, who not only did it well, but who were duty bound to do the more in opposition to the common danger, because they had done so much to hasten and occasion it'.⁽⁵⁾

James Peirce argued

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- (1) Burnet I, 674; Neal V, 14-15. See Nuttall and Chadwick, 294. William Sherlock, Master of the Temple, was almost certainly the most prolific of the anti-papist pamphleteers. DNB XVIII, 95-97.
- (2) Calamy, Abridgement, 373; Neal V, 15.
- (3) James Peirce, A Vindication of the Dissenters (2nd edit. 1718), 266-7; Miscellaneous Tracts (1717-1720), Tract IX: The Dissenters Reasons for not Writing; *Calamy, Abridgement, 373. See* Howe, 138, 139; Bennet, Memorial, 324-5n.; Cragg II, 221.
- (4) W. Snape, Vindication (1716), 67 cited James Peirce, Miscellaneous Tracts (1717-1720), Tract IX.
- (5) Calamy, Abridgement, 373.

that the Nonconformist ministry had only

'just [been] delivered from the Church's nasty gaols, or crept out of the corners where' they had been 'glad to hide themselves': they had 'newly returned to their families and studies, from which the malice and cruelty of their enemies had long banished them'.

In such circumstances, how could they come to the rescue of Churchmen

'by whom they had been plundered of their books, or forced to sell them, either to prevent them being made a prey, or to raise money to maintain their distressed families? '(1)

This kind of argument was reproduced elsewhere ad nauseam. (2)

Perhaps James Peirce came nearest to the motive behind the Nonconformists' preference to remain spectators in the war of words when he admitted that

'nothing can be more serviceable to our cause, than to have the Churchmen most thoroughly verst in the Popish controversy. For the further they go from them, the nearer they come to us'. (3)

In accordance with Morrice's prognosis; the greater the alienation between Church and Court, the more useful the Dissenters would be to both, and the higher both sides would be prepared to bid for their

(1) James Peirce, *A Vindication of the Dissenters* (2nd edit. 1718), 266-7.

(2) Calamy, *Howe*, 138-139; James Peirce, *The Dissenters Reasons for not Writing*, Tract IX, *Miscellaneous Tracts* (1717-20); Bennet, *Memorial*, 324-5; Neal V, 15.

(3) James Peirce, *A Vindication of the Dissenters* (2nd edit. 1718), 267.

support. But the Church had, in any event, far stronger motives for taking the offensive than the Dissenters. It was the Church which felt itself most threatened by the policy of the Court and by the advance of Popery. Their great proximity to Rome in the ecclesiastical spectrum made their membership correspondingly more vulnerable to the proselytising campaign being conducted by the secular priests. They had a great many 'notions' to 'unteach', not least of which was Non-Resistance.⁽¹⁾ And, as the need to provide a wedge between the Dissenters and the Court - to replace the bludgeon they had used to drive them together - began to dawn on even the slowest, what better wedge than the Popish Peril?⁽²⁾

At no time in the reign, either before or after the 1687 Declaration of Indulgence, is there evidence that the Dissenting clergy feared the loss of any of their flock by conversion to Catholicism; on the contrary, some were confident that, through the King's actions, they would gain converts from the Church.⁽³⁾ But the approach and contents of the great majority of Anglican pamphlets and sermons published in 1687 and 1688, as well as the personal letters and annotations of Anglican ecclesiastics, make it transparently clear that the most important single motive behind their campaign was the fear of mass conversions to Catholicism.⁽⁴⁾ On 15 September 1687

- (1) Calamy, Howe, 138; Welwood, Memoirs, 172-4.
- (2) See Burnet I, 672-3; N. Sykes, William Wake Archbishop of Canterbury 1657-1737 (1957) I, 43; A.T.Hart, The Life and Times of John Sharp Archbishop of York (1949), 92, 99, 100.
- (3) Heywood III, 228. However, Daniel Williams once urged his congregation *against* 'blindly giving up [their] faith..to such *who can* most daringly pretend to dominion over them'. Williams I, 11.
- (4) H. Prideaux, The Life of the Reverend Humphrey Prideaux Dean of Norwich (1748), 29. (See also 23-28, 30-35); Carpenter, Tenison, 50-55; Richard Kidder, Autobiography, 134 in S.H. Cassan, Lives of the Bishops of Bath and Wells (1829); HMC Downshire MSS I, i, 269. See N. Sykes, From Sheldon to Secker (1959), 31; J. Gutch (ed), Collectanea Curiosa; Misc. Tracts Relating to the History.. of the Church of England.. Chiefly collected from the MSS of Archbishop Sancroft (1781) I, 326-8.

'a Real Catholic of the Church of England' published A Few Plain Reasons Why a Protestant of the Church of England should not turn Roman Catholic, and on his first page, even had the title not made it evident, claimed that his objective was to counter the Catholic attempt to convert Anglicans to the 'Mother Church'. On 9 July a pamphlet had been published entitled Reasons Why a Protestant Should not Turn Papist, and in September, A Discourse Showing that Protestants are on the Safer Side, and that their Religion is the Surest Way to Heaven, in the preface of which the Anglican writer makes it clear that his object is to reassure his flock in the face of the conversion campaign of the Catholic priests. In addition to these more general pamphlets, others were written on individual points of doctrine; some for the sake of academic debate or to answer an earlier Catholic treatise, but many to reassure the faithful; as, for instance, A Treatise Showing that the Roman Church falsely claims to be that Church.. mentioned by St. Paul in 1 Timothy III:15, An Answer to the Compiler of the Nubes Testum, A Discourse concerning Penance, showing how the Doctrine of the Church of Rome makes void True Repentance, or The Fallibility of the Church of Rome Demonstrated. At least one of these, the last, was written by Dr. Daniel Whitby, would-be pamphleteer of 1682, now no longer restrained by his Bishop, the formidable Seth Ward, who *had by* 1687 suffered 'an almost total decay of his reason'. This timely senility, quite apart from leaving a fluent Anglican writer unrestrained, also removed from the scene of action at a vital juncture one of the most outspoken opponents within the Church of the comprehension of sober Nonconformists. (1)

(1) Walter Pope, Life of Seth, Bishop of Salisbury (1697), 171, 184.
See DNIS LX, 339.

Whilst Nonconformists lacked the strong motives which Anglicans had to involve themselves in the anti-Papist campaign, it should not be assumed, as some post Revolution critics and apologists did,⁽¹⁾ that their tongues and pens were completely inactive. The anti-Papist preaching, interlarded with the esoteric expositions of Daniel and the Revelation, which was always a part of Nonconformist preaching, did not cease in the course of 1687 and 1688, and with the increased freedom to preach, may have become even more of a pre-occupation.⁽²⁾ Preaching before Sir John Shorter on 20 November 1687 Daniel Williams made an attack on externalism which was transparently aimed against the Catholics.⁽³⁾ A number of books and pamphlets were also published by Nonconformists in the course of the reign. It is significant, however, that only one of the anti-Papist pamphlets extant has been attributed to a Nonconformist author, and that this was a commonplace attack on transubstantiation published after the 'understanding' had been reached with the Church in the summer of 1688.⁽⁴⁾

By far the greater part of the works published by Nonconformists in the reign of James II were of a non-controversial nature: devotional works, moderate apologetics, attacks on the distinctive doctrines of other sects. The Dissenters not only resisted the temptation to write

- (1) James Peirce, *A Vindication of the Dissenters* (1718), 266-7; W. Nichols, *A Defence of the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of England* (1697), 85, 106; Bennet, *Memorial*, footnote, 324-5.
- (2) DWL *Catalogue of Sermons: 'Sermons on Last Things'*, 1687-8: W. Allen, 1035.G.4; R. Baxter, 1037.F.8 (7); O. Heywood, 20.75.C; Calamy, *Abridgement*, 376; Anon, *An Apology for the Pulpits: Being an Answer to a late Book entitled Good Advice to the Pulpits* (1687), 1, 2, 8; Powicke, 159-163; Walter Wilson MS I, iv, 264.
- (3) Williams I, 34-35.
- (4) 'Transubstantiation, A Peculiar Article of the Roman Catholic Faith' (October 1688), attributed to John Goodwin, Independent Minister at Pinner, in 'Popery: Pro and Con', DWL 7.66.4, tract 6. On John Goodwin's views see J. Hunt, *Religious Thought in England* (1870) I, 259-60, 261.

against Rome, they resisted the very considerable pressure of the Court after 1686 to take their revenge on the Church of England by exposing Anglican persecution.⁽¹⁾ One *authority*

believed that a 'pastor' had been sentenced to whipping for writing an anti-Catholic pamphlet. However, the clergyman in question was Samuel Johnson, degraded from his Anglican living in 1686 for writing a pamphlet which allegedly incited members of the armed services to mutiny rather than serve with Catholics.⁽²⁾

With the exception of the pamphlets of William Penn and Stephen Lobb, and the posthumous republication of Philip Nye's tract on the dispensing power, it is difficult to find any evidence of political advice or exhortation in the sermons, letters and pamphlets of Dissenting clergymen. Dissenters were certainly averse to using published works as vehicles for such advice. When John Howe fled to the Continent in August 1685 he sent back an 'open letter' to his flock in London which contained only the most oblique references to the political situation. In response to requests for guidance as to how they should behave he told them to put their beliefs into practice and not to content themselves with only a 'notional knowledge of practical matters': to study the Scriptures daily that 'the future state of the unseen world, and eternal things', might be 'made more lively'; 'that, how grievous and bitter soever' might be their lot at any time, 'there could not be but kindness at the bottom': and that they must bear in

(1) Wilson I, 207; III, 496-7; IV, 247; Palmer I, 211; Neal V, 22; W. Urwick, *Nonconformity in Hertfordshire* (1884), 270.

(2) Ellis I, 197-8, lxxix (See also 190-1, lxxvii); J. S. Clarke (ed), *The Life of James the Second King of England &c Collected out of Memoirs Writ of His Own Hand* (1816) II, 70.

mind that whilst the severities imposed by the Churchmen were a genuine grievance to Dissenters, the Churchmen were genuinely grieved by the 'errors' of the Dissenters.⁽¹⁾ When Oliver Heywood, liberated from the threat of persecution in 1687, took the opportunity to write, he produced two involuted devotional tomes. The nearest approach to a practical exhortation in either was when he counselled against 'pepper-professors: hot in the mouth, but cold in the stomach', and called his readers away from an over-involvement in temporal affairs to the pursuit of spiritual ideals.⁽²⁾ The same strain of almost mystical abandonment of the harsh realities of this life is also found in Samuel Hardy's A Second Guide to Heaven. The Devil, he said, was out to seduce the believer away from the Christian path by the allurements of temporal advantage; such advantages as peace and prosperity would not last - there was a lull before the final storm; to withstand the fiery trials which were to come, concomitants of the Second Coming, they must be truly converted.⁽³⁾

That the published work of Dissenters at this critical juncture in their history, which men like Morrice believed would be decisive one way or the other, was spiritual rather than political does not preclude the possibility that political advice was offered through other channels, nor does it indicate a complete absence of political awareness. But it is symptomatic of the fact that the silence of Dissenters in the war of words was not entirely the product of the conscious calculation that to obviate the perils which would arise

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- (1) Calamy, Howe, 116-125: See especially 118, 119, 120, 121.
 (2) Oliver Heywood, *Closet Prayer: A Christian Duty* (1687), preface; *Baptismal Bonds Renewed* (1687), Epistle to the Reader.
 (3) S. Hardy, *A Second Guide to Heaven* (1687), introductory epistle, and 8-9, 198-9, 200, 226-7.

from alienating either side (Church or Court) or from driving them together, silence was the best policy. The clarity of the political cognition of Nonconformists was often, though not invariably, clouded by the subjective theological standpoint from which a situation was viewed: a crisis of essentially geocentric proportions was often viewed as part of their own sectarian - usually chiliastic - scheme of things. This other-worldly preoccupation was inhibitive of action and was probably a contributing factor to the febrile indecision which, in the summer of 1687, Morrice believed would lead Nonconformists to waste the opportunity that was theirs by preventing them from closing with either Church or Court.⁽¹⁾

One point of view from which the failure of Dissenters to take part in the pamphlet controversy was especially inexpedient - whether their inaction was dictated by art or preoccupation - was that of the Dutch interest. To Dykvelt the rapid crossfire of pamphlets was constant, tangible evidence of the Church's fight for survival. On 4 June 1687, when present at a friendly discussion between William Bates and Thomas Tenison, Dykvelt severely criticised the Presbyterians in particular for their silence. In answer Bates asserted that 'some Presbyterians had written but the Churchmen had refused to licence their books'.⁽²⁾ Bates was not the only Presbyterian to make this assertion. Baxter said that he had offered to write 'a piece against Popery every month' but that those in charge of licencing had refused their imprimatur. Jonathan Hanmer also professed to have produced a discourse against the Papacy and been refused a licence.

(1) Morrice Q, 128, 161, 162.

(2) Morrice Q, 140.

Bunyan published only two pamphlets during the reign; according to his biographer 'an unusual circumstance for his facile pen, which may possibly be accounted for by the troubles of the stormy intervening years'. Henry Pendlebury published a treatise on transubstantiation after the Revolution with a note that he had prepared it in 1687 but had failed to get a licence.

'The Licencers of the Press, being Churchmen' refused licences to Nonconformists because they wished 'to secure to themselves the entire glory of the triumph. And the repulse of some was a good reason why all others should save themselves the labour of writing to no purpose'.⁽¹⁾

Of these, only Bates's testimony is contemporary; the other evidence was inserted into the works of the apologists as an afterthought, in two cases in the form of a footnote, after much play had been made with the reasons why Dissenting clergy should not have been expected to take part in the controversy. In their favour, however, it may be said that Sir Roger L'Estrange was still continuing his campaign against Baxter's works - he confiscated a collection which had been made by the Earl of Anglesey, and were being auctioned following the Earl's death⁽²⁾ - and hence could be depended on not to let any new ones past. In fact, there had been some tightening up on censorship after the accession. The expiry of the 1662 Censorship Act in 1679 had been followed by a six year period in which censorship had taken the form of ad hoc pronouncements. But the

(1) Calamy, Abridgement, 373 ; Bennet, Memorial, footnote 324-5; James Peirce, A Vindication of the Dissenters (2nd ed. 1718), 265-6; Neal V, editor Toulmin's footnote, p. 15; Bunyan, 342-3.

(2) Morrice Q, 14.

Act of 1662 had been renewed by Parliament in 1685⁽¹⁾ and, in addition, L'Estrange had been ordered on 21 May to put an end to 'the late scandalous and intolerable liberties of the press'.⁽²⁾ On 10 February 1688 a proclamation was issued for suppressing 'seditious and unlicensed books and pamphlets'.⁽³⁾ Hence it is possible that, whilst censorship continued to be less than completely efficient, L'Estrange could have exerted his authority in banning any Nonconformist works of a remotely controversial nature.⁽⁴⁾ However, though he retained his position as Surveyor of the Imprimery until *the Revolution*,⁽⁵⁾ he had fallen from grace by March 1687,⁽⁶⁾ and, in any event, he was not the only person concerned with censorship, especially with regard to works of an ecclesiastical nature.⁽⁷⁾ Four other persons concerned with the Press licence, Isham, Alston, Batteley and Needham, claimed that no anti-papist tract written by a Dissenter had been brought to them for their attention, and that no book had been refused a licence purely because it was written by a Dissenter.⁽⁸⁾

(1) J. R. Western, *Monarchy and Revolution* (1972), 61-62.

(2) CSPD 1685, 158-9.

(3) Luttrell I, 431.

(4) J. R. Western, *op cit*, 62-63.

(5) DNB XI, 1005.

(6) Luttrell I, 392, 396; Kitchin, 365-6.

(7) The Secretaries of State and the Archbishop of Canterbury were among those who could license books. J. R. Western, *op cit*, 62.

(8) Zacharay Grey, *An Impartial Examination [of Neal]* (1736-9) II, 424-434.

But the inaction of the Dissenters in the pamphlet war was symptomatic of something more basic than the discrimination of Anglican licensers. The political aims of the sects in 1687 were, as always, confused: some wanted comprehension through Convocation and a Parliament; others toleration, from King or from Parliament. And this confusion was compounded by the First Declaration of Indulgence. Confusion of aims produced a corresponding variety of political leanings, and this, in its turn, produced the utter muddle which characterised the political behaviour of the several Nonconformist sects for the remainder of 1687. The behaviour even of those who had previously aimed at comprehension was far from uniform or consistent over a period of time. During Dykvelt's visit in the spring and early summer of 1687 hopes of an agreement between the Dons and the moderate Churchmen gradually increased, though such hopes were not even a subject of interest to anyone else. Disillusion and mutual suspicion set in, however, before Dykvelt's departure, and hopes did not revive again until the end of the year.

Opinion among Churchmen on the prospect of 'an understanding with sober Dissenters' was equally fluid. Despite the aspirations of the Deans at the end of 1685, only Fowler had made any serious attempt to establish a rapprochement in 1686, and without success. In January and February 1687, although most Anglicans had recognised the inevitability of a toleration for Dissenters,⁽¹⁾ the pulpit fulminations at Anglican churches produced the same cacophony of

(1) Morrice Q, 52

sounds each Sunday. On 15 January Rev. ^{Mr.} Pelling, at Mercers Chapel, 'preached about Popery, and very fervently against placing any confidence in the promises that Papists made to heretics', clearly endeavouring to draw Dissenters away from the Court. But on the same day, at Lincolns Inn, Dr. Hestcard was still inveighing 'in the old strain.. against schismatics and Dissenters'.⁽¹⁾ But when, at the end of February, Rev. Stains still preached vigorously in favour of persecuting 'Fanatics' it was 'much wondered at, at this time of the day, not only by Nonconformists, but by the conformists themselves'.⁽²⁾ On 2 March The Observator, still strongly in favour of putting the Dissenters to rout, was published for the last time. It was rumoured that the King had ordered its closure and L'Estrange himself admitted that his views had lost support within the Church and that he had failed to gain the support of the King.⁽³⁾ By the beginning of 1688, though still 'a loyal son of the Church of England', L'Estrange was operating a Catholic printing press at Holyrood⁽⁴⁾ and, by June 1687, along with the Bishops of Oxford and Chester, the 'persecuting party ⁱⁿ ~~the~~ Middlesex Justices' and the pro-Catholic lawyers, Warcup and Withans, formed an 'absolutist party', in opposition to the notion of an understanding with Dissenters and perhaps hoping to be of use to the King in the future should he wish to extirpate them.⁽⁵⁾ But they were barking up the wrong tree.

On 26 March 1687 Morrice noted:

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- (1) Morrice Q, 45.
 (2) Morrice Q, 80.
 (3) Kitchin, 365-6; Luttrell I, 392, 396.
 (4) Morrice Q, 91; DNB XI, 1005.
 (5) Morrice Q, 120; Thomas Cartwright, Diary, Camden Soc. (1843), 4, 5, 45; Kitchin, 366.

'There is much lax discourse as if the sober Churchmen were willing (which most have been peremptorily averse from) to come to some good understanding and coalesce with the sober Dissenters'.

But the understanding envisaged was to be based on certain conditions; 'they should expect the Dissenters should not erect great new meeting places, nor meet ordinarily in Church hours'. Morrice was sceptical, however, taking the view that the offers were made by a minority;

'Most Churchmen expect and desire that the Dissenters may abuse their liberty and break out in some eruptions against the state, and, thereby, necessitate the State to take in the Churchmen and make them trump once more'.⁽¹⁾

But in the ensuing weeks there was much to make the Churchmen think more seriously about the coalition. The Edict of Toleration itself, and the initial response to it from Dissenters, made any 'eruption against the State' most unlikely. The arrival from France of 'a large number of Jesuit priests and scholars', which coincided with the publication of the Edict, made some think that

'Jesuits and Priests (of which there were some thousands in the kingdom)... would soon fill all the bishoprics and deaneries, all ecclesiastical dignities, prebends and livings' and, since 'they were men of policy and learning', 'if they were once settled therein, they would have to be acquiesced in'.⁽²⁾

(1) Morrice Q, 84. See G. V. Bennett, 'Conflict in the Church', Britain after the Glorious Revolution, 1689-1714, ed. G. Holmes (1968), 159.

(2) Morrice Q, 87, 88, 89; Perry II, 493, 498.

The activities of Dykvelt were also aimed at bringing about a coalition.⁽¹⁾ On 19 March William Wake was exhorting Anglicans 'strenuously^{to} behave themselves' in times of persecution: such as this now threatened to be'.⁽²⁾

Among the Anglican converts to the idea of a coalition at this time was the Dean of St. Asaph, Nicholas Stratford, who immediately began to preach the advisability of 'coming to a good understanding'.⁽³⁾ Tillotson, Stillingfleet and Patrick, who in the preceding months had been concentrating on attacking Catholicism rather than coalescing with Dissenters, came to life simultaneously. Even now, however, their objective seemed to be to draw Dissenters away from the court rather than to reach an 'understanding'.⁽⁴⁾ For the remainder of the year their efforts in the direction of a rapprochement were less than striking, though two of them had family disasters to contend with.⁽⁵⁾ The statements of Ken, Bishop of Bath and Wells, in which he spoke favourably of 'sober Dissenters', but distrustfully of 'fanatics', were interpreted as implying the availability of his powerful support for an 'understanding'.⁽⁶⁾

The implications of Dissenters of all sorts making full use of their liberty after the Indulgence, and of the new influx of priests from France, was pushed home by Dykvelt during his interviews in

(1) Burnet I, 708, 709.

(2) Evelyn IV, 543-4.

(3) Morrice Q, 86.

(4) Simon Patrick, Works IX, 505-6 (See also pp 317-9); Morrice Q, 94.

(5) Simon Patrick, op cit, 507-8 ; Birch, Tillotson, 126-130.

(6) Morrice Q, 90; H.A. L. Rice, Thomas Ken Bishop and Non-jurer (1958), 94-95.

April and May, ⁽¹⁾ during which he was reported to have 'carried himself very high' and been 'fondest of those that the Court think worst affected'. ⁽²⁾ The announcement that Roman Catholic priests had been given livings in Warwickshire and Worcestershire, the news of heavy fines levied on Dissenters found in possession of Burnet's pamphlets, the stories of the misdemeanours of the Catholic Lord Dunbarton's regiment quartered near London and rumours that the Lord Chancellor was speaking openly of the imminent restoration of the Old Religion, lent force to his arguments. ⁽³⁾ In no time Protestants of all parties were communicating 'their innermost thoughts, hopes and fears' to him. Soon the project of a coalition had found more converts, and the 'Whig' clergy began to join with John Howe, and Dissenters newly arrived from Holland, in endeavouring to restrain those who planned to address. Nonconformists were reminded that if they helped the Papists to destroy the Church, their turn would follow. ⁽⁴⁾ Some Anglicans even became impatient; 'the Dissenters talked to them of Concord and Union upon common principles, but that discourse was altogether in vain when the Dissenters perpetuated the separation' through their inaction and doctrinal rigidity. On three occasions in the previous twenty-four years comprehension had been possible, but the Dissenters had not seized their opportunities. Their very inaction would 'force the moderate Churchmen to go over

(1) Everard van der Weede, sieur de Dykveld arrived in England during the second week in February as a special emissary from The Hague. Ellis I, 242, lxxxviii; Dalrymple II, pt. 1, app. to bk V, 52.

(2) Ellis I, 289, cviii.

(3) Morrice Q, 109, 110, 113, 115, 116, 119, 132; HMC Downshire MSS I, i, 240.

(4) Morrice Q, 116; Calamy, Howe, 134; J. Fitzpatrick to William, 30 May 1687, Dalrymple II, pt. 1, app. to bk V, 66.

entirely to the Hierarchists'.⁽¹⁾ On one Sunday in mid-May, whilst a number of clergy, including the Bishop of Exeter, were preaching violently on the theme of the Popish Peril (with the transparent object of scarifying impressionable Dissenters), another group was encouraging parishioners to 'grow up into a coalition' with Dissenters, a further group, including Rev. ^{Mr.} Moore of Hackney, *Dr. Nicholas* and Stratford, were discussing practical concessions which would facilitate the comprehension of moderate Presbyterians. (Moore was prepared to 'relax kneeling at the Sacrament, and coming up to the Altar, and crossing in Baptism').⁽²⁾ But on the following Sunday William Sherlock was still thundering on the subject of the Dissenters' obligation of church attendance and the right of the Church to persecute them if they absented themselves.⁽³⁾

The overtures of men like Stratford and Moore, the expressed fears of other Anglican clergymen that the Indulgence would empty their congregations, and the threats of Tories like Sherlock, were taken sufficiently seriously by Nonconformist preachers to induce them to take great care to avoid incurring the Church's displeasure, even after the Declaration, by holding their meetings out of Church hours and, not infrequently, by continuing to attend Church themselves.⁽⁴⁾

Reresby noted that 'the Presbyterians or Calvinists, who most of them had begun to conform, continued to come to our churches'.⁽⁵⁾ In Exeter George Trosse continued to attend 'prelatical

(1) Morrice Q, 115, 116.

(2) Morrice Q, 120.

(3) Morrice Q, 121. See G. M. Straka, *Anglican Reaction to the Revolution of 1688* (1962), 17.

(4) Morrice Q, 89, 90; Brockett, 49, 50.

(5) Reresby, 452.

assemblies with great constancy' and observed; though other 'Nonconforming ministers in The City' preached 'in the very time of public worship upon the Lords Days; yet I forbore it'.⁽¹⁾ At Whitwell, though taking advantage of the Indulgence to preach, Philip Henry was careful not to do so in Church hours, to continue to attend church, and 'never in the least changed his judgment as to the lawfulness of joining in..Common Prayer,' and continued to do it occasionally . When he continued this practice after the immediate prospect of a coalition had receded in the late summer, he noted in his diary that he was

'greatly clamoured against by..the rigid separatists, and called a dissembler...One side told him, he was the author of all..mischief in drawing people from the Church; and the other side told him, he was the author of all..mischief in drawing people to the Church'.⁽²⁾

Along the same lines Trosse noted: 'By this my moderation, and associating with both parties, I got no respect from either side, but fell under the censures and condemnations of the zealots of both'.⁽³⁾ The Deans, however, regarded the continuation of habits of conformity as a hopeful sign and 'magnified those who at this hour of temptation stick so close to the Church of England as to choose rather to be God's favourites than the King's'.⁽⁴⁾ The Harleys, and possibly the Foleys, were still attending church in September.⁽⁵⁾ Henry Newcome

(1) G. Trosse, The Life of the Reverend Mr. George Trosse, Late Minister of the Gospel in the City of Exon(1714), 92.

(2) Henry, Diaries and Letters, 328-9.

(3) G. Trosse, op cit, 92-93.

(4) T. Cartwright, Diary, Camden Soc. (1843), 44.

(5) HMC 14th Report, app. pt. II: Portland MSS III (1894), 403-4.

of Manchester also persisted in attending church and in holding his own services outside of church hours. He would have done so beyond the onset of disillusionment in July had not the local Anglican clergyman chosen to extend the length of his sermons to make Newcome's services impossible. Eventually he was 'forced into public time' and ^{from} 31 July ceased to attend church.⁽¹⁾ In London, William Tong had a similar experience.⁽²⁾ The practice of partial conformity, however, continued long enough for Sir John Shorter and various other Nonconformists admitted to the City Corporation in November 1687 to continue to attend church regularly, and take the Sacrament in order to qualify legally for their offices and avoid the appearance of taking advantage of the dispensing power.⁽³⁾

Despite the distrust of both the moderate Churchmen and the Dutch cause expressed by Morrice during the autumn of 1686, and the coolness with which he had greeted the talk of coalition when it was revived in March 1687, between mid-May and the end of June he was an exponent both of an Anglican-Dissenting coalition, and, grudgingly, Dissenting support for the Dutch interest. Dykvelt had arrived in England in February 1687 'with directions how to talk with all sorts of people: to the King, to those of the Church, and to the Dissenters'. His instructions had been drawn up by Burnet and his arrival was accompanied by the return to England of a number of the émigré Dissenting clergy of 1685 and before. They were returning at William's request, and from William's coffers they were possessed of 'such

(1) Henry Newcome, *Autobiography*, Chetham Soc. (1852), 264, 265; B. Nightingale, *Lancashire Nonconformity* (1893), Vol. on Manchester and Oldham, 86.

(2) Wilson II, 23.

(3) Morrice Q, 189, 190, 196.

presents as enabled them to pay their debts, and to undertake the journey'. William's purpose in encouraging their return, perhaps put into his mind by Anglican correspondents in England, was to use them to offset the influence among Dissenters of certain 'false brethren, whom the Court might gain to deceive the rest'. Dykvelt's own Instructions included orders to 'press' Dissenters to 'stand off, and not to be drawn in' by the promises of the Court and to remove from their minds 'the ill characters that had been given them of the Prince', for the Dissenters had been 'possessed with a conceit of his being arbitrary, and imperious'.⁽¹⁾ Roger Morrice and his patron Sir John Maynard, who was probably one of the most influential Nonconformist politicians, received a visit from Dykvelt in the third week of May. His chief concern was to assure them that 'the Prince was very well inclined to Protestant Dissenters and desired they might be possessed with a sense thereof'. Maynard, with Morrice's concurrence, then assured Dykvelt that, in the event of James II's demise,

'he might rest assuredly confident that the Protestant Dissenters were universally fixed for the Prince and Princess's succession, and would do all in their power to promote it against all whomsoever'.

Despite the enthusiasm of the words, however, this was not really saying a great deal; merely that Dissenters would support the legal succession. Dissenters continued to be suspicious of William despite Dykvelt's assurances. Morrice did not trouble to conceal his fear that, if James died, William might find himself under the twin temptations of 'leaving the Penal laws on because he found them on', and falling in with 'the Prerogative Party' and hence governing against

(1) Burnet I, 708-709.

the interests of Dissenters. Maynard retorted that William's 'own judgment, inclination and interest would induce him to take off the laws on Protestant Dissenters, and his desire to reign in the affections of his people would dispose him to govern by law and to infringe no man's liberty'.

And Morrice thought that he had been convinced.⁽¹⁾

During the same week as his grudging conversion to the Dutch interest, the preaching of Moore and Stratford, certain private assurances made to 'sober Dissenters' by 'sober Churchmen' that 'in a better time' comprehension would be offered to those who would accept, and toleration to those who would not,⁽²⁾ as well as the trend of public events, had convinced Morrice of the urgent expediency of an Anglican-Dissenting coalition. He wrote:

'It is plain to all mankind that a coalition between the sober Conformists and Nonconformists is the only expedient that is within the reach of human prospect to save this nation, together with impunity to those who cannot come within that coalition or comprehension'.

Only this would restrain the King in his Catholic Design; even the moderate Catholics would be pleased at some restraint.⁽³⁾

But

believing that a coalition was 'the only expedient' to save the day was not the same thing as saying that such a coalition could and would be achieved. There had been a number of occasions in the previous

(1) Morrice Q, 124, 125.

(2) Burnet I, 708; ^{Morrice Q, 128.} A number of Anglican Pamphlets at this time contained broad hints regarding comprehension; G.M. Straka, Anglican Reaction to the Revolution of 1688 (1962), 21.

(3) Morrice Q, 128.

reign when some kind of mutually satisfactory final agreement between Conformist and Nonconformist had been desirable, but on each occasion the hard work of the moderates had been thwarted by the intrigues and utterances of the extremists on both sides. It was this that was inhibiting a rapprochement now, Morrice was sure. The extremists on his own side in particular, he was certain, would induce 'Nonconformists [to] refuse this blessed opportunity as they had done others.'⁽¹⁾

Despite Maynard's firm convictions, Morrice continued to have his doubts as to William's intentions, since Dykvelt's assurances had been of so general a nature. In a subsequent interview Morrice said, very pointedly, that the Dissenters 'hoped to be set upon equal terms with other subjects by a law' on William and Mary's accession, but Dykvelt still did not rise to the bait.⁽²⁾ Dykvelt's reluctance seems even more mysterious in view of the fact that, according to Burnet, his instructions said that Dissenters were to be told that 'whenssoever the crown should devolve on the princess' 'full toleration' and 'comprehension' would 'if possible' be accorded to them.⁽³⁾ Only at a third interview, in early June, at which William Bates and John Howe were also present, did Dykvelt give Morrice the impression that William would in fact 'set the Protestant Dissenters on equal terms with other subjects'.⁽⁴⁾ It is possible that Dykvelt deliberately held off on this point until he knew the upshot of the rapid exchange of correspondence between the Court of St. James and The Hague then

(1) Morrice Q, 128-9.

(2) Morrice Q, 125.

(3) Burnet I, 709.

(4) Morrice Q, 132.

in progress on the question of the Test Acts.⁽¹⁾ He may have been expecting the public pronouncement on this issue which, in November 1687, James Johnston believed was overdue. Any commitment on his part might, in any event, impair William's bargaining position with his father-in-law, inhibit his freedom of action in the event of an imminent succession, or prove harmful to his relations with the Churchmen, some of whom, thanks to Dykvelt, were beginning to enter into correspondence with him.⁽²⁾

Whatever the motive, Dykvelt's hedging did nothing but harm both to the prospect of an Anglican-Dissenting 'understanding' and to Dissenting support for the Dutch interest. Hence, by the time of his departure at the end of June many Dissenters were deeply suspicious of all the political interests. The early enthusiasm for the Edict of Toleration had given way to cynicism.⁽³⁾ The habitual distrust with which they regarded William of Orange - ever since 1679 many Nonconformists had had little room for him - was intensified,⁽⁴⁾ and an understanding with the Anglicans was beginning to appear, not only impossible of achievement, but an undesirable capitulation to an alien interest. After Dykvelt's departure, Dr. Bates told Morrice that when he had last spoken with him the Dutch agent had pointed out that although 'the Prince would give them some liberty by law... it was his opinion that if ever the Prince came to the throne he would fall for all intents and purposes with the Prelatists'. According to Morrice, most Presbyterians believed Dykvelt to have been 'a man of

(1) Dalrymple II, app. to bk V, 54-55; CSPD 1687-9, 5, 12-13.

(2) Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2110b; CSPD 1686-7, 436; 1687-9, 12.

(3) See above, pp. 290-293.

(4) Lacey, 343 n.41.

very much art and inconsistency' - a view shared by the King - and, for himself he believed that his suspicions of the previous autumn had received striking confirmation.⁽¹⁾ One of the émigrés newly arrived from Holland helped to confirm Morrice in his suspicion of the Dutch interest by recounting an interview he had had with the Princess Mary immediately prior to sailing. The Princess had told him that

'if ever the crown should descend upon her, she thought she should never be severe to any that were religious, ... but she knew not the power of temptations, but hoped none would ever prevail with her to do otherwise'.

Mary's refusal to answer a request to be more specific as to 'how she would carry towards Dissenters and Hierarchists', was interpreted by the émigré to imply the probability that she and her husband would not only reject comprehension, but would re-introduce persecution.⁽²⁾

In July, August and September 1687 the Dissenters, already disenchanted with the Court and the Dutch interest, reacted strongly against the Church, and 'sober Dissenters' and sober Churchmen' ceased to canvass the idea of an understanding. Hence, despite preaching campaigns and church-building, politically Dissenters were in a state of stupefaction; only those completely innocent of politics were prepared to commit themselves, and they under pressure. The violent utterances of the Tory magistracy and of certain Tory politicians like Sir Edward Seymour on the subject of the Indulgence, had made Dissenters realise that their objection was not to the prerogative exercise itself but to the fact that it had been a prerogative

(1) Morrice Q, 134, 140. See CSPD 1687-9, 12-13.

(2) Morrice Q, 131, 319, 149.

exercise to free Dissenters from persecution.⁽¹⁾ Throughout the summer and early autumn all-too-credible reports were constantly circulating among informed Dissenters that the 'Hierarchists were treating with the Court' and bending over backwards to meet the King's wishes. On 27 August Morrice wrote that such negotiations had been going on 'for a month or two', and that those participating in them were, in many cases, the very persons who had advocated 'an accommodation' with the Dissenters in April and May, and that they were 'now at a greater distance from Dissenting Protestants than formerly', and had 'utterly disclaimed not only all hopes and all endeavours after an accommodation with them but had said that all such attempts were altogether in vain'.⁽²⁾

From the beginning of July an Anglican pamphlet had been in circulation which argued that the 'true interest of the Church' lay in compliance with the Crown - not in an 'understanding' with Dissenters.⁽³⁾ By 17 August John Swynfen, who, as a Nonconformist politician had in the past co-operated with the 'sober' wing of the church, had decided 'that the Churchmen must not be trusted'.⁽⁴⁾ What sickened Roger Morrice more than anything else was the inaction of the Deans, whom he believed had been alienated by the initial enthusiasm which Dissenters had shown for the Indulgence and the laudatory addresses, which made their 'wiser brethren' crawl with embarrassment, that continued to be sent to the Court throughout the summer.⁽⁵⁾ In some areas

(1) Morrice Q, 138.

(2) Morrice Q, 166, 167, 178.

(3) Morrice Q, 154, 155.

(4) Robert to Sir Edward Harley, 17 August 1687, HMC 14th Report, app. pt. II: Portland MSS III (1894), 400. See Lacey, 443-447 on Swynfen.

(5) Morrice Q, 162, 167.

feeling between Dissenters and Churchmen ran high. In Blackburn and Manchester outrages took place in which groups of Dissenters, including at least one Presbyterian minister, took over Anglican churches by force, proceeding to use them as their own places of worship until first the Bishop of Chester, and finally the King, intervened.

(1) But those who had previously pinned their hopes on plans for comprehension merely assumed that they had been unrealistic: the problems were too great. Even when the desired aim had been within their grasp, when they had joined with the Anglicans in Parliament to destroy Charles II's Second Declaration of Indulgence, the Churchmen had promptly forgotten their pledges. (2) In fact, in the summer of 1687, comprehension must have seemed to moderate Presbyterians as far away as it had been at any time since the Restoration.

It was at this time, amid the background of these events, that the Marquess of Halifax chose to publish his celebrated Letter to a Dissenter. (3) In view of the prevailing climate of distrust, the timing could not have been worse. Even the elaborate arguments he put forward to lead Dissenters to distrust their 'new friends' either misfired or were superfluous. (4) Based, as they were, on the assumption that some Anglicans at least had always worked for a coalition - hence the Church did not come into the category of a

(1) CSPD 1687-9, 34, 65, 85-86.

(2) Morrice Q, 155, 156. See J. Hunter, *The Rise of the Old Dissent*, exemplified in the Life of Oliver Heywood (1842), 345.

(3) *A Letter to a Dissenter*, Upon occasion of His Majesty's late Gracious Declaration of Indulgence, published anonymously. J. P. Kenyon (ed), *Halifax Complete Works* (1969), 105-117. Though the precise date of publication is uncertain, it must have been published after the dissolution of Parliament on 6 July, and before the first of many answers to it was published in September; *ibid*, 104.

(4) *Ibid*, 106-111.

'new friend' - they misfired in that the Deans were, at this time, inactive. And aimed, as they were, to cause Dissenters to distrust the Court's intentions, they were unnecessary: among many groups of Dissenters the distrust had been present from the beginning; among others, the reaction had come during the early summer; and, ingrained into the minds of Dissenters and vivified by the anti-papist campaign, no Dissenter needed lessons in the Popish Peril. Further, Halifax's exhortation to co-operate with the Churchmen illustrated his own political isolation and paraded his ignorance of prevailing opinion within the Church.

'If you had now to do with those rigid prelates who made it a matter of conscience to give you the least indulgence, but kept you at an uncharitable distance, and even to your most reasonable scruples continued stiff and inexorable, the argument [against co-operation] might be fairer on your side; but since the common danger hath so laid open that mistake that all the former haughtiness towards you is forever extinguished, and that it hath turned the spirit of persecution into a spirit of peace ... shall this happy change only affect the Church of England? And are you so in love with separation as not to be moved by this example?'⁽¹⁾

Whilst the Dons might still bewail the failure of Dissenters to close with either side, and hence improve their 'quarters' with both whilst the chance had lasted, not even they were prepared openly to advocate a coalition with the Church at this time.⁽²⁾ Hence, with the 'sober churchmen' also out of action, Halifax was canvassing a cause which

(1) Ibid, 113.

(2) Morrice Q, 161, 162.

had no supporters, cheering a game which had no players; and in circumstances which, in view of mutual suspicions, seemed less than promising for the commencement of play. In advising the Dissenters to prepare themselves to co-operate with the Churchmen in defence of their common interest, Halifax was also making the supposition that the Churchmen themselves were prepared for such a policy. By way of proof, he reminded Dissenters that some of them had written pamphlets against the Church but, distinguishing between 'the body of Dissenters... and these small skirmishers', the Church had chosen not to reply; this, surely, he argued, was evidence enough of the changed spirit.⁽¹⁾ But the Churchmen had not resisted the temptation to reply from any desire for coalition. The only pamphlets written by Dissenters in 1686-7 which reflected on the Church were those which also called upon Dissenters to support the King's programme: the efforts of Penn and Lobb.⁽²⁾ In October and November the 'Hierarchist' faction of the Church was as voluble against Nonconformists as it had ever been, and if there were Churchmen who still advocated an 'understanding' they did not show themselves.⁽³⁾ Churchmen still intriguing with the Court were prepared to go as far as approving the removal of the Charters in order to reach 'a temperament' with the King and regain his favour.⁽⁴⁾ On 5 November Roger Morrice had evidence that a 'noble peer', on behalf of the Church of England, had offered 'to take off the Penal Laws and the Test from the Papists,

(1) Halifax, *op cit*, 114.

(2) W. Penn, *Good Advice to the Church of England, Roman Catholics and Protestant Dissenters* (1687), W. Penn, *A Letter from a Gentleman in the Country* (1687); Stephen Lobb, *A Second Letter to a Dissenter* (1687).

(3) Morrice Q, 176, 178, 181.

(4) Morrice Q, 178.

and leave all the laws on the Protestant Dissenters as they were'. He had told the King that the Church had reached this decision because of its grief at living under the King's displeasure. The King had replied, 'They have hard thoughts of me that think I can so easily depart from my public Declaration'. Within a week Morrice had been provided with proof of the authenticity of the story. Shortly afterwards 'it was most commonly reported' that the 'Hierarchists' had made a second application to the King in which they had gone as far as to approve the complete abolition of the Test Acts. The accuracy of this allegation was vouched for by 'Dr. Walker, minister in Essex, Chaplain formerly to the Earl of Warwick'.⁽¹⁾ On 26 November Morrice wrote:

'I do not find that any of the Tories, especially of the clergy, are come one inch further toward the Reformed Protestant interest, but still have as great an enmity and disgust against all the reformed churches as ever they had, and even the best of the clergy cannot forbear frequent reflections of that kind in their sermons'.

Even John Sharp, who, Morrice believed, was 'deservedly counted to adhere as firmly to the Protestant interest as any of them', advocated zeal against both Popery and the reformed churches, and Sherlock, though virulently anti-papist, still defended the right of the Church of England to persecute 'fanatics'.⁽²⁾ When the Dutch agent James Johnstone in the second week of December was inviting opinions on Fagel's letter - which advocated the abolition of the Penal Laws but the retention of the Test Acts as a safeguard of the Protestant

(1) Morrice Q, 181, 194, 195. *Morrice does not mention what his 'proof' was.*

(2) Morrice Q, 203.

interest, and hence might have provided the basis for an Anglican-Dissenting agreement⁽¹⁾ - the initial response of the Dissenters to whom he showed the letter was overwhelmingly favourable, whilst the Anglicans condemned it as 'too temporising'.⁽²⁾ If the purpose of the Letter to a Dissenter was to draw Dissenters away from the Court, for those who would read it it was unnecessary. If it aimed to bring about an Anglican-Dissenting agreement to block the King's programme, it was wrongly directed; the Churchmen required as much, if not more, convincing than the Dissenters.

Despite the view expressed by James Johnstone on 30 December that 'the paper about the Test [Fagel's letter] and the Letter to a Dissenter did more service than ever was done in England',⁽³⁾ it would appear that the latter's influence on Dissenters was minimal.

Philip Henry

'read and considered the letter of advice to the Dissenters... but concluded that he would continue as formerly. He remembered the experience he had had of the like in King Charles's time, and that [the Indulgence] did good, and no hurt. And why might not this do so too? ... Doubtless it was intended to introduce Popery; but it [was] certain that nothing could arm people against Popery more effectually than the plain and powerful preaching of the Gospel'.

As things stood the 'want of kindness' among the Churchmen for Non-conformists, made it difficult for him to see why he should join with

(1) Written by Grand Pensionary Fagel probably before 4 November; circulated by Johnstone during December and published in early January 1688. SP 31/3, ff. 333-4; Portland Misc. 19 PWA 2112d, 2118b.

(2) Portland Misc. 19 PWA 2118b.

(3) Portland Misc. 19 PWA 2124e.

them to destroy the Indulgence.⁽¹⁾ Roger Morrice, who provides what is virtually a blow by blow account of public events at the time, hardly gave Halifax's pamphlet a mention. He dismissed it by saying that Halifax spoke on no one's behalf but his own: he carried no weight in the Church, nor with the Tory Politicians.⁽²⁾ When he noted on 14 January 1688 that 'the Marquess of Halifax hath several times been at Court of late', he added:

'His coming in may be more prejudicial than all others, for he hath most highly disobliged the Protestant Dissenters, and therefore thinketh himself to be distrusted and neglected by them. He hath been the principal in all mischief, and particularly in advising the continuance of the late long Parliament, in proroguing the two good Parliaments following and in the taking away of the charters'.⁽³⁾

Lacey points out that 'statements that Halifax's Letter had a major influence upon Dissenters are not based on Nonconformist sources'.⁽⁴⁾

Calamy observed that, though Halifax's 'cautions' were taken seriously by Baxter and 'the wiser part' of the Dissenters, they were suspicious of his motives and aware of his vested interest.⁽⁵⁾

The impact of the Letter to a Dissenter must have been lessened

- (1) A. Nelson, *Puritan Divines IX: Life and Times of Philip Henry* (1848), 235-6.
- (2) Morrice Q, 182.
- (3) Morrice Q, 227. On 5 January 1688 Clarendon wrote in his diary that a 'rumour was very hot about the town, that Lord Halifax had been very lately with the King in private'. *Correspondence & Diaries*, ed. S.W. Singer (1828) II, 153. Morrice refers to Halifax's attitude to the first three of Charles II's Parliaments. His presence in the ministry and his support for the Government's electoral campaign in 1685 had also discredited him in Nonconformist eyes.
- (4) Lacey, 343-4, n. 47. See also p 188.
- (5) Calamy, *Abridgement*, 376.

by the published answers which it provoked (sixteen by 8 December 1687), some of which were well written and had a good circulation.⁽¹⁾ Among the first of these was one by Sir Roger L'Estrange, speaking as 'a true son of the Church of England'.⁽²⁾ Halifax had pointed out that Dissenters were 'the refuge', not 'the choice' of the Papists: L'Estrange argued that this was equally true of both Church and Court and hence Dissenters had cause to suspect both. The offers of the Court were more trustworthy, however, resting as they did on the long-standing commitment of the King to religious toleration, and 'His Majesty's gracious promises' made in the late Declaration: 'so that they are all as safe as the word of a King in a Royal Act of Grace, signed, sealed, and delivered in the presence of God, angels, and men, can make 'em'.

For himself, Sir Roger avowed that his 'religion was the same as in former times', but his conduct was different now, 'under a Roman Catholic Prince, than it had been under an Anglican prince', because the 'interest' of his religion had changed. That 'interest' now lay in the direction of a full-hearted support for the King's programme, commensurate with the Church's long-standing avowal of 'the principles.. of monarchy'.⁽³⁾ A further pamphlet, whose author identified himself as a Congregationalist of forty years' standing,⁽⁴⁾ made a great deal

- (1) Portland Misc. 19, PwA 2112d. See T. Cartwright, *Diary*, Camden Soc. (1843), 85. By this time Johnstone knew that Halifax was the author of the Letter to a Dissenter. As early as 8 October Robert Harley had written: 'The Papists say, the Letter to the Dissenters is written by a club. Lord Halifax has most ink in it'. HMC 14th Report, app. pt. II: Portland MSS III (1894), 404.
- (2) Sir Roger L'Estrange, *An Answer to a Letter to a Dissenter upon Occasion of His Majesty's late Gracious Declaration of Indulgence* (1687), 1.
- (3) *Ibid*, 1, 6, 7, 10-11, 12, 13, 16-17.
- (4) DWL Catalogue credibly attributes the pamphlet to Stephen Lobb; *A Second Letter to a Dissenter upon His Majesty's late Gracious Declaration of Indulgence* (1687), DWL.8.57.13.

of Anglican persecution in former times and their ill-intentions toward Dissenters at that time; the Anglicans had deliberately brought the hatred of Catholicism among Dissenters to a fever heat by assertions that were 'groundless and absurd', to facilitate the destruction of the present King's Indulgence in the manner in which they had destroyed the late King's Indulgences. The rapid growth of the Roman Catholic interest predicted by Churchmen had not taken place (despite the inducements of office), and would not. The interest of Dissenters lay in taking advantage of the King's Indulgence, addressing him thankfully for it, and using their 'utmost endeavours by all lawful ways and means to extirpate all those laws and Tests' that deprived them of their freedom, or laid 'any restraint on conscience in matters of religion'.⁽¹⁾ Animadversions on a Late Paper Entitled Letter to a Dissenter⁽²⁾ went so far as to imply that A Letter to a Dissenter was part of the Anglican campaign to convince Dissenters that their own persecution was an essential to the safety of Protestantism and the English Constitution; it had been industriously printed and disseminated on a pre-made plan by specially appointed 'interlopers' and 'hawkers'.⁽³⁾ The King's Declaration had not been 'a sudden or occasional overture to serve the present turn', but the result of a life-time's determination on the part of the King, against the frustrations of the Church;

'The best actions frequently happen to be traduced by the sinister interpretations of those that postpone the public

(1) Ibid, 1-5, 6, 9-10.

(2) Published December 1687 by 'H.C', probably Henry Care, an ex-Whig pamphleteer, recently converted to Catholicism and the King's cause. c.f. Jones, xiv.

(3) Ibid, 6, 7.

tranquility to their own pettish humours and little self-interests'.

The 'Malcontents' of the Church, having prolonged persecution just as long as they could legally do so, were deliberately seeking a rapprochement with the Dissenters to destroy the Indulgence, thus making possible the re-commencement of persecution: the Churchmen were both 'new' and 'false' friends. (1)

The cogent arguments of the court pamphleteers must, for those Dissenters who read them, have carried the ring of truth. Although they did not achieve their objective of encouraging mass support for the King's programme among the Nonconformists, the pamphlets perhaps provided a short-term counter-balance to the Popish Peril, thus weakening the Church's most powerful lever on lay Dissenters. Penn's persistent re-affirmation of the sincerity of the King's tolerationism must have helped to allay the fears of some, and his clinical exposure of the Church's vested interests and the illogicality of her stand, must have helped to revive the suspicions of others. (2) The Church of England

'says she is afraid of Popery because of its violence, and yet uses force to compel it; is not this resisting Popery with Popery?... 'Twere happy that all parties were disarmed of this sword... (3)

Should not the Church's 'piety be *ABC* to maintain her upon equal terms?' Even were the Penal Laws to be abolished the Anglicans would

(1) Ibid, 3-6, 10-12.

(2) W. Penn, Good Advice to the Church of England, Roman Catholics and Protestant Dissenters (30 June 1687), 1-8, 37-61; A Letter from a Gentleman in the Country (1687), 3-4; Buranelli, 121.

(3) W. Penn, A Letter from a Gentleman in the Country to his Friends in London, upon the subject of the Penal Laws and Tests (1687), 5.

'keep the churches...; all the difference is, they could not force: they *might* persuade and convince [whom] *she* could'. Was not 'that enough for a true church, without gaols, whips, halters and gibbets?' (1)

If the effect of the court counter-blast to the Anglican pamphlet war was merely to help to confuse Dissenters, to confirm the divisions in their ranks which had emerged after the Indulgence, or merely to illustrate the tactical advantages of the position on the fence between Church and Court occupied by many, including the Dons; since Dykvelt's departure at the end of June 1687, something had been achieved. The rapprochement between 'sober' Churchmen and 'sober' Dissenters which had seemed imminent in the spring and would, if it became more broad based, have provided an insurmountable barrier to the success of the Court programme, had been delayed. In achieving this limited objective, however, the Court pamphleteers had had the indispensable assistance, far more significant than their own efforts, of Dykvelt's perverse clumsiness in dealing with the Dons, the old-fashioned royalism and intolerance of the Anglican 'right', and the inactivity of those who were alone capable of effecting a detente - the Anglican 'left'.

6

The early signs of a 'thaw' in the frosty relations between Churchmen and moderate Dissenters which had characterised the second

(1) W. Penn, Good Advice to the Church of England, Roman Catholics and Protestant Dissenters (30 June 1687), 8, 9, 20.

half of 1687 were becoming apparent by the end of the year. Even in November the 'sober' element in each camp was reported to be concerned about the present state of things.⁽¹⁾ A contributory factor to this concern was the revived apprehension of the spread of Catholicism after the return to London from his Northern Visitation of Bishop John Leybourn, laying claim to 20,000 confirmations.⁽²⁾ But the attempt in December to reach an 'understanding' between the moderates only served to illustrate how far apart 'sober' Anglicans and 'sober' Dissenters still were. The initiative had come from Stratford, Dean of St. Asaph, who arranged a meeting at his London house between his Bishop, William Lloyd, and Dr. Bates, the old Presbyterian die-hard. Bates set the tone of the meeting by pointing out to the Bishop that, in view of past betrayals and maltreatment, it was too late for anything more than 'a concord of desire and affection' in the face of the present adversity, with the 'public ministry' of Church and Dissent 'aiming at the same ends..., to confirm persons in the true religion'. Lloyd then laid down his two conditions, that Dissenters should approve the retention of the Tests and should agree not to 'keep their meetings in church hours', and the meeting foundered.⁽³⁾ But Nonconformists noted with satisfaction the changed tone of Anglican preaching and were pleasantly surprised to discover that one of their number, John Swynfen, had been adopted as a parliamentary candidate by the Dean, Chapter and Church of Lichfield. It

(1) Morrice Q, 203, 211.

(2) ... Morrice Q, 203. This figure did not represent converts. Leybourn was the first Catholic bishop to visit the area in fifty years, 'so the great majority of the Catholic population could not have received the Sacrament of Confirmation before and would probably have taken the opportunity to do so'. Miller, 10.

(3) Morrice Q, 214. See Portland Misc. 19, PwA 2119b.

was no less significant, in view of his former suspicions of Churchmen, that Swynfen had agreed to stand. (1)

But relations continued strained. The Churchmen were prickly over the Nonconformist use of the Guildhall Chapel under the mayoralty of Sir John Shorter. When Daniel Williams preached there he began by emphasising that he hoped, by accepting the invitation to preach, he had not given offence to any. When Anglicans did take offence at the content of his sermon he was concerned to 'prevent or remove any such offences, which *are now* at least more fatal than any imprudent propagators thereof ^{do} apprehend'. He had only delivered his sermons before the mayor after spending two days 'debating' with himself 'the expediency thereof'. The burden of his second sermon was that Anglicans should disown persecution and those in their midst who wanted it to continue. Popery was the great evil in the face of which Protestants must unite. But unless Anglicans repented of 'that profane and persecuting spirit' 'all healing methods for accord' would be 'impossible' and God would 'level his arrows against the guilty in a manner too extra-ordinary to be disregarded.' (2)

In the course of December a number of rumours, most of which probably emanated from the Court, speeded up the thaw. James Johnstone reported that many Bishops believed that the King was about to 'lay them aside', anticipating their opposition in the projected Parliament. The Bishop of Chester, they believed, was about to be given the bishopric of London. The London clergy were 'mightily

(1) Morrice Q, 185, 195, 209, 215; Lacey, 193.

(2) Williams I, 4, 6, 59, 60, 78, 86, 102-104, 106; Luttrell I, 422, 427-8.

afraid' that the complete removal of Compton would inhibit their campaign against Popery 'by which they had roused a spirit against it all over the Nation'. Many Anglican clergymen believed that the King was about to call a Convocation of the Clergy, as Henry VIII had done, to force them to acknowledge his dispensing power, under pain of praemunire.⁽¹⁾ Meanwhile it was credibly reported that the King, angered by reports of a rapprochement and by the answers to the Three Questions, had

'a project of a new Proclamation on foot declaring all such Dissenters who were not for taking off the laws and the Test unworthy of the favours granted by His Majesty's Toleration, and liable to all the laws against Dissenters'.⁽²⁾

These rumours put both sides in a mood for compromise. The Presbyterians, although 'much solicited' with 'great offers' from the Court, were prepared to show willing to arrive at an agreement with the Churchmen on the basis of retaining the Test Acts and abolishing the Penal Laws. Many Churchmen, accepting the advice of Fagel's Letter, then began to express their willingness to support this compromise. The conclusion of an agreement on this basis was made all the more likely when, having read Fagel's Letter, the King expressed a firm opinion that the penal statutes and the Tests could not be separated, and even Penn and Stewart 'lost all their hopes of separating them'.⁽³⁾

But the moderates were by no means home and dry. The whole thing had happened too quickly. The extremists on both sides had

(1) Portland Misc. 19, PwA 2112d.

(2) Portland Misc. 19, PwA 2120b, c.

(3) Portland Misc. 19, PwA 2112d, 2113a, 2121b, 2124; BM Add MS. 34, 510 ff. 65, 66.

still to be won over. Despite the 'peremptory denials' of the Hierarchists, and the cries of 'odious scandal' from the moderate Churchmen, many Dissenters were disposed to believe the rumours, (which Morrice believed were being deliberately put about at the King's orders to kill the nascent rapprochement), that the High Churchmen had again been at Court offering 'to take off the Penal Laws and the Test from the Papists, if they might be left upon the Protestant Dissenters'.⁽¹⁾ Dissenters of all sorts also wagged their heads when they learned that the Princess Mary's Chaplain, on an ill-fated visit to England aimed at winning over the 'high prelatical' element in the Church to William's cause, was assuring the High Churchmen that William was 'invincibly attached to the slightest bagatelle of the ceremonies of the Church', which they took to include the Penal Laws. Dr. Edward Fowler, who was already beginning to take the leadership of the movement towards a rapprochement, was incensed at this.⁽²⁾ But many Churchmen, including the Bishop of Ely and William Sherlock, continued to jib at any suggestion that the Penal Laws be repealed. James Johnstone noticed, however, that such persons were increasingly seeing the wisdom of keeping their views to themselves so as not to give offence to Dissenters.⁽³⁾ Sherlock, in fact, had taken it upon himself to write a pamphlet in answer to a book entitled An Agreement between the Church of England and the Church of Rome in which he, in common with other Tory Churchmen, WAS

(1) Morrice Q, 232.

(2) Portland Misc. 19, PwA 2126d, e.

(3) Portland Misc. 19, PwA 2126c, d.

charged with taking the lead in the negotiations with the Court the preceding August, September and October. The book, he argued, had been a blatant attempt 'to revive some old disputes between us and the Dissenters, and to raise new jealousies in them'. There was nothing that the Papists dreaded more 'than that the Dissenters should at this time entertain any kind thoughts of the Church'. 'The plot, is well laid, were not all wise men of both parties aware of it', and the accuser must have been 'weak' at 'this time of Day' *when the Church's opposition to Popery was so evident*. The time when the Anglicans could 'patch up' a peace with the Government was long passed. ⁽¹⁾ On 13 January 1688 Oliver Heywood noted;

'The high Church of England men say that the Dissenters must either stick to them in this [the abolition of the Tests], or they are undone. Yea, tis verily thought this will be an occasion *of* a greater union amongst both parties than hath been'. ⁽²⁾

At the end of the month Van Citters reported that Dissenters and Churchmen were 'uniting more and more', and that the basis of their union *was* the principles expressed in Fagel's Letter. ⁽³⁾

During February, March and April gestures of good will - by no means limited to the two groups of moderates who had been associated with schemes for comprehension during Charles II's reign - continued on both sides though, despite the widespread agreement on terms, no formal negotiations took place. The London clergy in their Sunday

(1) William Sherlock, A Vindication of Some Protestant Principles (January 1688), Preface and pp 1-3.

(2) Heywood III, 228.

(3) BM Add MS 34, 512, f. 69.

sermons now spoke with considerable unanimity of their 'brethren the Nonconformable, or Dissenting, Protestants' who, unlike the Papists, were of 'the same persuasion' with them and 'differed only ... in matters indifferent'.⁽¹⁾ Samuel Jones, 'in many respects the most eminent of all the Welsh Nonconformist ministers of the 17th Century', was in correspondence with Dr. Robert Smith, one of the erstwhile persecuting clergy of the London area, and their letters abounded with good will.⁽²⁾ There is some evidence that Nonconformist magistrates, even where they had not done so before their appointment to office, made a point of attending Church services.⁽³⁾ At the end of February James Johnstone reported that

'those that are wise among [the Anglican clergy] are at present so frightened, and so sensible that only the Dissenters can ruin them, that they will bear with many things (which they would not do at another time) to take the Dissenters off'.⁽⁴⁾

The King, perhaps fearing the death of his scheme, called John Howe for a secret interview to discuss a possible compromise,⁽⁵⁾ and in response to Penn's arguments, even let it be known that he might consider allowing the Test Acts to remain.⁽⁶⁾ This was in February. By 12 April Halifax believed that the *Court*, 'not finding *YACIR*

- (1) Morrice Q, 248.
- (2) Correspondence in BM Ayscough MSS, cited T. Rees, Protestant Nonconformity in Wales (1883), 230-1, 240-1. South was coming into prominence as a controversial pamphleteer and preacher. G. M. Straka, Anglican Reaction to the Revolution of 1688 (1962), 17.
- (3) Perry II, 499.
- (4) Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2147d. A group of Quakers acquired a lease for a meeting-house direct from the Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey. W. Beck (ed), The London Friends Meetings: showing the Rise of the Society of Friends in London (1869), 242.
- (5) Lacey, 194, 197, 199.
- (6) Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2142; Morrice Q, 238, 239.

expectations answered by the Dissenters', was considering making overtures to the High Churchmen. He added,

'but the truth is, the Papists have of late been so hard and fierce upon them, that the very species of those formerly mistaken men is destroyed; they have broken that loom in pieces, that they cannot set it up again to work upon it'.⁽¹⁾

I

In fact Halifax was anticipating events and overstating the case. What temporarily converted the broad church and 'Hierarchist' clergy of 1687 into the 'sober churchmen' of the summer of 1688 was the Second Declaration of Indulgence of 27 April, and the Order in Council of 4 May,⁽²⁾ though the early stages of the transformation were obviously apparent by the time Halifax wrote. But there was no destruction of the species, just a temporary - for some, Machiavellian - accommodation to the logic of events. The species was very much alive in 1689. The Declaration of Indulgence of April 1688 and the command that it be read in churches were probably aimed at driving a final wedge between Conformists and Nonconformists, and hence destroying the coalition. They would have the effect of, first re-affirming the King's earnestness and, second, by not allowing Anglicans to take the Declaration silently as they had done in 1687,

(1) *Kenyon (ed), Halifax: Works, 339.*

(2) *Gazettes 2342, 2344; E. Cardwell, Documentary Annals of the Reformed Church of England (1839) II, 313-5.*

it would force them to show their true colours, and make the Dissenters realise that Anglicans were inalienably opposed to Toleration. In the event the converse happened. The crisis which resulted from the King's Order in Council convinced many waverers among the Anglicans of the absolute and immediate necessity of making concrete concessions to the Dissenters, and actually setting on foot plans for comprehension and a generous toleration. Hence both the political ends now held out before the Dissenters, and the means envisaged by Anglicans to achieve these ends (Parliament and a Convocation), were far more acceptable to most Nonconformists than the Court's allurements, obviating as they did their qualms of conscience on the constitutional issue, and on the charge of abetting the Popish Peril, as well as facilitating the realisation in an acceptable way of the diverse politico-ecclesiastical aims of the sects since the Restoration; comprehension for the 'Dons', and a parliamentary toleration for the more 'indigestible' elements.

Had the King stopped short after the Second Indulgence, however, it is likely that no crisis would have occurred. The only major difference between the two Indulgences was that the Second put greater emphasis on parliamentary support, and might even have been interpreted as implying that such support was essential to the permanence of the prerogative act. The Indulgence concluded with the exhortation that His Majesty's subjects should 'choose such Members of Parliament as may do their part to finish what we have begun., [we] being resolved to call a Parliament that shall meet in November next, at furthest'.⁽¹⁾ This may have been a deliberate concession to conscience-ridden

(1) Gazette No.2342; Lacey, 209-210.

Presbyterians and Independents to win over those who choked on the constitutional issue, before alienating them from the Churchmen through the crisis which would follow the order to read the Declaration in parish churches. In fact the assize judges setting out on their circuits after the Declaration had been published were issued with instructions to push home the great palatability of the Second Indulgence and to call upon 'all persons' to support it.⁽¹⁾ Despite the feverish activity among London Dissenters and Churchmen which followed the Order in Council on 4 May, the Court circulated reports that the King had been successful in winning more Dissenting support and in driving a wedge between Church and Dissent.⁽²⁾ The King may have believed that he had. Even when he heard that the Bishops intended to petition him, there is evidence that James was expecting that the petition would express itself strongly against toleration for Dissenters⁽³⁾ and hence achieve the end envisaged.

That the crisis which followed 4 May had the opposite effect to that anticipated by the King, was due to two factors: that a rapprochement between Churchmen and Dissenters had been growing gradually over the preceding four months, and that there was a widespread awareness among Dissenters that the King was using the Order in Council to destroy that rapprochement, having apprehended its potential danger to his programme.⁽⁴⁾ On 12 May an informal conference was held at Lambeth involving the Bishops of London, Ely,

(1) E. Cardwell, *Documentary Annals of the Reformed Church of England* (1839) II, 314.

(2) Lacey, 352-3 n. 6.

(3) R. Thomas, 'The Seven Bishops and their Petition', *JEH* XII (1961), 56-70; Nuttall and Chadwick, 239.

(4) Lacey, *op cit.*

Peterborough, Chester and St. David's, Lord Clarendon and possibly other laymen - probably Halifax, Rochester, Danby and Nottingham - and Thomas Tenison, in company with other activists from the London clergy of whom he was the spokesman. The Bishops of Chester and St. David's 'discomposed the company, nobody caring to speak before them'. After a period of embarrassed silence they left. 'Then the archbishop and the rest', according to Clarendon,

'took into consideration the reading of the Declaration in the churches... After full deliberation, it was resolved not to do it... The resolution was to petition the King in the matter; but first to get as many bishops to town as were within reach: and in order thereto, that the Bishops of Winchester, Norwich, Gloucester, St. Asaph, Bath and Wells, Bristol and Chichester should be written to, to come to town'. (1)

In consequence Archbishop Sancroft wrote to the Bishops named:-
 'My Lord; this is only in my own name, and in the name of some of our brethren now here upon the place, earnestly to desire you immediately upon the receipt of this letter to come hither with what convenient speed you can, not taking notice to any, that you are sent for'. (2)

- (1) Morrice Q, 255; Henry Hyde Earl of Clarendon, Correspondence and Diaries, ed. S. W. Singer (1828) II, 171.
- (2) J. Gutch (ed), Collectanea Curiosa; Misc. Tracts Relating to the History... of England... Chiefly Collected... from the MSS of Archbishop Sancroft (1781) I, xii, 329. The Bishop of Winchester first promised to 'come part of the way towards you', then pleaded sickness. (letters written 13 and 14 May). The Bishop of Norwich waited until after the petition had been presented to the King before *writing to Sancroft*; though it is possible that he received Sancroft's letter too late to act. Ibid, 329, 330, 342; H. Prideaux, The Life of the Rev. Humphrey Prideaux Dean of Norwich (1748), 39-40.

Of the laymen present at the meeting of 12 May Nottingham and Rochester expressed themselves in favour of caution, and believed, on the whole, that the clergy would be best advised to read the Declaration on the prescribed Sundays in compliance with the Order.⁽¹⁾ It is likely that Halifax opposed reading since he wrote letters to certain clergymen - later to be printed and distributed - advising them not to read.⁽²⁾ Between 11 and 17 May smaller meetings of London clergy were convened to discuss the issue of reading, one at Clarendon's house, another at Sherlock's house at the Temple. At these meetings the 'fiercer' Anglicans - who warned that if they obeyed the Order they would soon have things to do which they could stomach still less - gradually won over many of the 'milder' sort, who were for reading. The most potent argument in favour of reading was that to do otherwise would permanently alienate the Dissenters.⁽³⁾ At the meeting at the Temple on 14 May twenty clergymen were chosen to 'feel the pulse' of their brethren in London not present.⁽⁴⁾

The crisis among London Anglicans had produced a complementary one among Dissenters. Meetings took place in which Richard Baxter, William Bates, John Howe and George Griffiths (an Independent) expressed themselves in favour of the faction within the Church who opposed reading. In sermons and messages of support Baxter, Bates, Stretton, Williams and Griffiths expressed their sympathy for the campaign of the 'fiercer' Churchmen. Anglicans should not judge

(1) Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2161d, 2163.

(2) H. Prideaux, op cit, 39, 41, 43.

(3) Henry Hyde, op cit, 172; Morrice Q, 255, 256; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2161d; BM Add MS. 34, 515, f. 65; G. D'Oyly, Life of William Sancroft (1821) I, 260-1; Simon Patrick, Works IX, 510.

(4) Carpenter, Tenison, 85.

Dissenters 'by the tattle of a handful of men who, being corrupted by the Court, had assumed to themselves the name of Dissenters'.⁽¹⁾ Thus encouraged, it would appear that the twenty clergymen, including Fowler, Tenison, Patrick, Stillingfleet and Grove, who were 'feeling the pulse' of their colleagues in the Anglican ministry in London, decided to widen their terms of reference by sounding out opinion among Dissenters. In doing so they received 'full satisfaction'; by far the greater part of the Dissenters to whom they spoke undertook 'to come up to a national temperament, and keep the Papists out of government, and to concur to a due liberty to others'.⁽²⁾ This concern for the opinion of Dissenters was by no means limited to London. The Bishop of Hereford was careful to ascertain that Sir Edward Harley was against reading before refusing to do so himself. The Bishop of St. Asaph on his way to London would appear to have paid a visit to James Owen of Oswestry, possibly ^{partly} for the same purpose.⁽³⁾ When Fowler visited Sir John Maynard in London Roger Morrice was so eloquent against reading that Fowler asked permission to note down what he said, in order to present it to his colleagues. The gist of Morrice's statement was that to read would imply compliance with something declared illegal by Parliament, would 'encourage the laying of more snares' and would sanction an 'unlimited toleration' which

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- (1) BM Add MS. 34515, ff. 65, 66; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2161d, e; Morrice Q, 255-8, 263; J. E. Manning, History of Upper Chapel Sheffield (1900), 8; R. Thomas, Daniel Williams Presbyterian Bishop (1964), 4-5; Mackintosh, 253. George Griffiths, 'a noted Independent', pastored a congregation at Girdler's Hall, Basinghall Street, London. H. H. Oakley, Beginning of Congregationalism in Sheffield (1913), 62.
- (2) BM Add MS. 34515, ff. 65, 57; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2161d; Simon Patrick, Works IX, 510; Perry II, 515; Morrice Q, 258, 259. See VCH London I, 347.
- (3) BM Add MS. 34515, f. 119; Neal V, 64.

was 'pernicious to religion and the souls of men', involving as it did 'liberty for idolatry'. 'Silent connivance' to the Design was evil, but publication would be 'unpardonable'.⁽¹⁾

The reports of the twenty were handed in and discussed at a meeting of clergy on 17 May held at Stillingfleet's deanery in St. Paul's Churchyard. A number of the Bishops sent for by Sancroft would by this time have arrived and were doubtless present. The findings, *probably including* Morrice's paper, were effective in 'stopping the mouths' of those who had advised compliance.⁽²⁾ Fowler clinched the matter by saying:

'I must be plain. There has been argument enough. More will only heat us. Let every man say, "Yea" or "Nay". I shall be sorry to give an occasion *to* schism, but I cannot in conscience read the Declaration; for that reading would be an exhortation to my people to obey demands ^{which} I deem unlawful'.⁽³⁾

At smaller meetings of clergy before 17 May Morrice's paper, as transcribed by Fowler, was discussed. In an abbreviated form it was printed; Morrice certainly received a printed copy, and James Johnstone may have obtained one too.⁽⁴⁾ Immediately before the Bishops presented their petition various of the leading Nonconformist clergy were in the receipt of a document entitled 'The Comprehensive Sense of the Clergy' - probably the Church's answer to Morrice's paper - which began:

(1) Morrice Q, 258-9. See Portland Misc. 19, PwA 2162b.

(2) Portland Misc. 19, PwA 2162b; Carpenter, Tenison, 85. See Henry Hyde, *op cit*, 172.

(3) A. T. Hart, William Lloyd, 1627-1717, Bishop, Politician, Author and Prophet (1952), 94.

(4) Morrice Q, 258-9; Portland Misc. 19, PwA 2162b.

'We are not averse to the publishing of the Declaration for want of due tenderness towards the Dissenters, in relation to whom we shall be willing to come to such a temper as shall be thought fit when that matter comes to be considered and settled in Parliament'.

Morrice was surprised to find that the Churchmen even admitted, and repented of, the post-Restoration persecution.⁽¹⁾ This document was in fact the first draft of the petition of the seven bishops, presented at Whitehall on 18 May. This petition, whilst not promising comprehension, was interpreted by both Churchmen and Dissenters as implying it.⁽²⁾

Years afterwards (1706) Daniel Williams had occasion to remind the government through Sir Robert Harley of the Dissenters' loyalty during the crisis of May 1688. In his letter he asserted that, whilst the bishops were in the Tower (8-29 June)⁽³⁾ the King 'sent a message to us... that we should engage to stand by his Declaration'. Williams added, 'We humbly refused it, yea and declared by our answer that we were firmly resolved to lose our liberty rather than comply with that demand'. In view of his close association with Baxter this may be taken as the opinion of the Dons.⁽⁴⁾ Clearly, if they were as categorical as Williams asserted, they were positive that a better alternative to that proposed by the King was immediately in prospect.

The behaviour of Nonconformists of all kinds during the period

- (1) Morrice Q, 259-60; Portland Misc. 19, PwA 2162b; G. D'Oyly, Life of William Sancroft (1821) I, 253, 255-8.
- (2) E. Cardwell, Documentary Annals of the Reformed Church of England (1839) II, 316-319; Simon Patrick, Works IX, 510; HMC Downshire MSS I, i, 293; J. Gutch (ed), op cit, I, 335-7.
- (3) Luttrell I, 442, 443-4, 446-8.
- (4) BM MSS Loan Collection, Portland Papers 29/160 cited R. Thomas, Daniel Williams Presbyterian Bishop (1964), 4-5.

of the imprisonment and trial of the seven bishops may have been the deciding factor in prompting Sancroft to commence comprehension negotiations on his acquittal. Dissenters provided the King with visible evidence that enticement had failed by visiting the bishops in the Tower, preaching their cause and by popular demonstrations in their favour; three Dissenters offered to stand bail for them. Among the jury that acquitted the bishops were those who were, or had been, Dissenters. In the Protestant euphoria which surrounded the imprisonment, trial and acquittal of the bishops Nonconformist diarists allowed the birth of the Prince of Wales to go by without comment. The melodramatic fears that they had entertained regarding the King since his accession hardly required this pointer that Catholic rule might be perpetual. The crisis that followed the Second Declaration of Indulgence had completed their alienation from the King; even the staunchest of the King's Nonconformist supporters were out of sympathy with his electoral tactics by the time that the Prince was born. Any significance which the birth had for Nonconformists was for their politicians; for many caution and restraint could now be thrown to the winds and their last misgivings about William of Orange left behind them. Not the birth of the prince nor even the 'offers' emanating from the Church but 'the Affair of the Seven Bishops' and the realisation it seemed to provide for their visceral fears brought the main body of Dissenters onto the side of the Church.⁽¹⁾ On

(1) Evelyn IV, 590; Every, 22; Reresby, 500; Calamy, Abridgement, 383-386; Neal V, 63-65; E. Cardwell, Documentary Annals of the Reformed Church of England (1839) II, 318, 320; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2171a, b; 2175a, e; Calamy, Howe, 139-42; Jolly, 90; Morrice Q, 263, 265 (See also 281, 285, 286); Ellis II, 2-3, cxxxviii; Lacey, 213, 220, 353. See Perry II, 530; BM Add MS. 34515, ff. 72-77; Edward to Lady Harley, 30 June 1688, HMC 14th Report, app. pt. II: Portland MSS III (1894), 412-4; ST IV, 300-392.

25 July Halifax wrote that the affair had

'brought all the Protestants together, and bound them up into a knot that cannot easily be untied'; and 'the several parties though differing never so much in other things, seem to agree in their resolution of preserving by all legal means' the security of their religion and laws.⁽¹⁾

After the bishops' acquittal news of the Church's new tolerant attitude to Dissenters became known outside London.⁽²⁾ With churchmen the sense of crisis continued after the acquittal; the Commission for Ecclesiastical Causes might take action against those who had not read the King's Declaration.⁽³⁾ Fears such as this were a spur to the comprehension scheme. At dinner with William Sherlock, Master of the Temple, John Howe was asked by his host 'what he thought the Dissenters would do, supposing the preferments of the Church should be made vacant, and an offer should be made of filling them out of their number?' When Howe hesitated, Sherlock explained that he foresaw the ejection of all clergy who had refused to read the Declaration, and the offer of their vacant preferments to Dissenters. He concluded by asking: 'Who knows.. but Mr. Howe may be offered to be Master of the Temple?' Howe replied that he considered his host's predictions unlikely of fulfilment, but he asserted that if the situation did occur

'he could not pretend to answer for the conduct of the Dissenters, among whom there were several parties, that acted upon different

(1) Kenyon (ed), Halifax: Works, 341-342.

(2) J. Waddington, Surrey Congregational History (1866), 90; B. Dale, A History of English Congregationalism (1907), 455; Jolly, 90; Morrice Q, 286.

(3) Ibid. See CSPD 1687-9, 219.

principles; and that therefore it was most reasonable to suppose [that] their conduct might be different. He signified to him that he could answer for none but himself; and that he thought for his part, if things should ever come ^{we he mentioned} to pass, he should not bawl an opportunity of more public service (which he was not aware he had done anything to forfeit) provided it was offered to him upon such terms as he had no just reason to except against; but then he added, that as for the emolument thence accruing, he should not be for meddling with that, any otherwise than as a hand to convey it to its legal Proprietor'.

Whereupon, Sherlock 'seemed not a little transported to joy'.⁽¹⁾ The fears of other Anglicans were rather more melodramatic. After the acquittal the Bishop of St. Asaph went into hiding at the house of Richard Kidder 'and lay concealed there for several weeks', believing that 'the danger was not over (as was conceived) although they were acquitted in Westminster Hall'.⁽²⁾

By 21 July 1688 'the Archbishop [of Canterbury] and the Clergy of London', along with 'some bishops', had had 'several conferences' with 'the chief of the Dissenting ministers' and 'the heads of the Presbyterian party' 'in order to agree such points of ceremonies as were indifferent between them, and to take their measures for what is to be proposed about religion at next Parliament'. As soon as the matter was reported there was 'a discourse as if they were near some accommodation'.⁽³⁾ This was doubtless 'the matter of very great

(1) Calamy, Howe, 139-41.

(2) Richard Kidder, Autobiography, 139, in S. H. Cassan, Lives of the Bishops of Bath and Wells (1829).

(3) Luttrell I, 452; Ellis II, 63, clii.

moment' which kept Bishop Lloyd, by the mediation of Richard Kidder, in touch with Sancroft from his place of concealment.⁽¹⁾

It is significant that behind all these discussions and negotiations regarding the terms which would bring some, if not all, Presbyterians into the national church, there was one common assumption; that, whatever might come of the negotiation and regardless of future contingencies, toleration was there to stay, and even those Dissenters who would not accept the most generous terms of comprehension would continue to enjoy the benefits of complete religious freedom. This bears witness to a silent revolution which had been taking place in Anglican thinking (and in the thinking of the Dons), ironically, in no small way the achievement of the King. Except for a few Tory backwoodsmen who voiced their prejudices immediately after the 1687 Indulgence, no Anglicans had publicly attacked toleration itself since before the Indulgence was issued. The innumerable Anglican pamphlets published since that time had warned the Dissenters that by taking advantage of toleration they might destroy the bulwark against Papism, but none had attacked the idea of toleration.⁽²⁾ Roger Morrice believed that the great majority of Anglicans had come to accept the permanence of toleration by December 1687.⁽³⁾ It is of interest that, immediately following the acceptance of this idea, serious talk of 'the comprehension of sober Dissenters' began.⁽⁴⁾ This emphasises the truth of Every's statement that 'in 1688 toleration and comprehension were complementary'.⁽⁵⁾ From the Anglican

(1) Richard Kidder, op cit.

(2) Every, 19-20; Morrice Q, 138; Reresby, 497; H. Prideaux, The Life of the Reverend Humphrey Prideaux Dean of Norwich (1748), 31-34.

(3) Morrice Q, 214.

(4) Morrice Q, 214, 243.

(5) Every, 19.

view-point the latter was to some extent a safeguard against the consequences of the former. At a time when the Church was under attack, and forced to accept incursions into her membership and status through toleration, there was no better way of strengthening her position than by assimilating the most moderate and responsible element among the sects newly tolerated.

It was perhaps the acceptance of the fact of toleration, and the desire to safeguard the Church against its effects - as well as the highly vulnerable situation in which the Church found herself - which led High Churchmen to expound the idea of comprehension in 1688, a policy heretofore the preserve of the Latitudinarians. One High Churchman, John Kettlewell, sought to rationalise the change.

'Even that Church which asserts herself infallible', he argued, 'is not thereby so tied down against all alteration, as to reject a reformation of discipline or even new Orders and Constitutions for the use of certain of its members', and since the Church of England never pretended infallibility, there could not be wanting a pretence for such a review at this time .⁽¹⁾

For information on the actual terms of comprehension negotiated in July and August 1688 we are to a large extent dependent on the testimony of William Wake. He was at this time preacher at Gray's Inn, later Bishop of Lincoln and Archbishop of Canterbury, and a close friend of Thomas Tenison and John Sharp.⁽²⁾ Since Wake's

(1) Cited N. Sykes, *From Sheldon to Secker* (1959), 85. Until he became a Non-Jurer John Kettlewell was Vicar of Coleshill in Warwickshire. M. V. Hay, *The Enigma of James II* (1938), 44.

(2) *Morrice Q*, 249; *Luttrell I*, 436; N. Sykes, *William Wake Archbishop of Canterbury 1657-1737* (1957) I, 48, 49.

active part in the scheme was quite a small one, it was doubtless from them that he derived his information. When in September Wake heard from Dr. William Clagett of the intended invasion, he recollected that Sancroft had been among those who had been acting throughout the summer as if they were anticipating a change. Whilst his suspicions of Sancroft's direct complicity in the plot were groundless, his recollections are useful. Sancroft had engaged several of the clergy 'to make a review of our Liturgy, to look over the daily Service and the Communion Book, and to consider what might be fit to be added or altered in either'. At first it had seemed to him strange 'at this time, when we had so much other business against Popery upon our hands' that such a work of revisionism had been undertaken. He could

'well remember that, intimating somewhat to this purpose to a Bishop, he told *me* that things could not long stand in their present posture; and when *I* pressed him farther,

I got only this obscure, yet remarkable answer;

"That men who rode over precipices, would in a little time either break their necks, or come to their journey's end".

On mature reflection, Wake decided that Sancroft's strategy had been to be well prepared for the meeting of Parliament; in 1660 the Church had been unprepared, and had 'considered too little, what they did'. Come the meeting of Parliament in November they would be in a position not only to improve their 'own constitution', but to 'bring over the truly honest and well-meaning Dissenters to join in Communion' with them. (1)

(1) Cited N. Sykes, *From Sheldon to Secker* (1959), 34.

By the time Wake gave evidence at the impeachment of Sacheverell in the House of Lords in 1710, he had more precise information. The 'design' of July and August 1688 had been

'to improve and if possible, to enforce, our discipline; to review and enlarge our liturgy by correcting some things, by adding others; and, if it should be thought advisable by authority when this matter came to be legally considered, first in Convocation, then in Parliament, by leaving some few ceremonies, confessed to be indifferent in their nature, as indifferent in their usage, so as not to be necessarily observed by those who made a scruple of them, till they should be able to overcome either their weaknesses or prejudices, and be willing to comply with them'.⁽¹⁾

Feeling among Churchmen at this time may, however, have been even more disposed to generosity than Wake remembered. A paper in Sancroft's handwriting entitled 'For the Regulation of Ecclesiastical Affairs' and dated from this time, contains plans for the reform of the church administration in response to Nonconformist criticism, which involved considerable concessions.⁽²⁾ The most reliable guide of what was achieved at the July conference in 1688 is contained in certain personal notes reproduced in the biography of John Kettlewell, though assigned to an impossible date. The terms indicated were that the government of Bishops was to be retained, but 'the terms of communion' were to 'be as large as was consistent with the constitution of a National Church'. The liturgy was to be reviewed

(1) Cited *ibid*, 84. See Every, 24; N. Sykes, *William Wake Archbishop of Canterbury 1657-1737* (1957) I, 48.

(2) E. Cardwell, *Documentary Annals of the Reformed Church of England* (1839) II, 320-326.

and a new Book of Canons prepared. Alterations in both were to be such as to facilitate the assimilation of as many Dissenters as possible. A new 'less exceptionable' form of 'subscription' was contained, with the annotation that those who still dissented, despite the concessions made, were not to be barred from public office. (1)

It would appear that John Kettlewell had, in fact, taken a detailed interest in the 'several consults at Lambeth' upon the subject of improving the doctrine, discipline and liturgy of the Church; or that he had left a contemporary reference to

'certain articles [which] were drawn up for the better securing and strengthening of the Protestant Interest and Religion and for making the Church of England the head of that Interest; which were communicated to some of the chiefs among the Protestant Dissenters for their approbation'. (2)

In fact, this may represent a slight over-statement. No hard and fast decisions could possibly have been arrived at at that stage. A great deal of research still needed to be done. Hence in August, Tenison, Patrick, Sharp, Wake and Moore were set to work by Sancroft, to draw up a scheme 'to improve and, if possible, to amend our discipline; to review and enlarge our liturgy, by correcting some things and adding others', a task which was still incomplete at the end of the year, (3) and temporarily forgotten.

(1) Francis Lee, *Life of John Kettlewell* (1718), 392-5 cited Nuttall and Chadwick, 241.

(2) G. Hicke and R. Nelson (eds), *The Complete Collection of the Works of John Kettlewell* (1719) I, 53-54 cited N. Sykes, *Sheldon to Secker* (1959), 85.

(3) G. D'Oyly, *Life of William Sancroft* (1821) I, 328, 329; Perry II, 544; Norman Sykes, *From Sheldon to Secker* (1959), 85.

Nonconformist apologists of a later period tended to assume that, since comprehension was ultimately a failure, the negotiations of the summer of 1688 had been merely a Machiavellian exercise on the part of the ^{High} Churchmen. (1) For some at least Sancroft's scheme had only a short-term utility. But there can be little doubt that, in addition to the latitudinarian clergy directly involved in the project, Sancroft, as sponsor, was making a wholly serious and conscientious attempt to arrive at terms for comprehension. On 27 July he issued to his bishops a series of twelve Articles entitled 'Some Heads of Things to be more fully insisted upon by the Bishops in their Addresses to the Clergy, and People of their respective Dioceses'. Article XI and the letter which accompanied the Articles make it clear that Sancroft was endeavouring to prepare the minds of Bishops, clergy and laity of the Church of England to accept the idea of the comprehension of moderate Dissenters and toleration for those who refused comprehension, when it was enacted in the November Parliament. (2)

At all events, many Dissenters at the time placed a great deal of hope in the great day about to dawn as a result of Sancroft's scheme. (3) The King, who had soured toward the Dissenters as a result of their attitude to the Seven Bishops, (4) was reported later to have dated his total disenchantment with them from the time when Sancroft's scheme made their Coalition with the Church (for him) a

(1) Neal V, 66, 78 ; Calamy, Abridgement, 387-91, 428, 444-6, 451, 468-9.

(2) J. Gutch (ed), Collectedanea Curiosa; Misc. Tracts Relating to the History and Antiquities of the Church of England... Chiefly Collected from the MSS of Archbishop Sancroft (1781) I, 386-390.

(3) Cragg II, 30.

(4) Reresby, 500.

sorry reality.⁽¹⁾ In July Sunderland was sufficiently on edge on the subject of Anglican-Dissenting relations to have a pamphlet entitled A Way to Peace Among All Protestants seized immediately after publication.⁽²⁾

But what was of importance for the present reign was that by converting almost everyone to toleration, the Anglican High Church included, the King had all but destroyed toleration as a lever for inducing Dissenters to play the part prepared for them in his own programme; and further, he had given the Churchmen the incentive to better his terms by launching a scheme for comprehension. And by his Order in Council - aimed at effecting the final separation between Church and Dissent - the King had then created the circumstances in which the scheme for comprehension would have some hope of final success; through a coalition between the Church-in-Danger and that influential faction of Nonconformity which had aspired to assimilation into the national Church since its hopes had initially been dashed at the Restoration.

(1) See J. S. Clarke (ed), *The Life of James the Second.. Collected out of Memoirs Writ of His Own Hand* (1816) II, 169; E. Cardwell, *Documentary Annals of the Reformed Church of England* (1839) I, 321.

(2) Birch, Tillotson, 131.

CHAPTER FIVECO-OPERATION WITH THE KING'S PROGRAMME1

At the time when Church and Dissent were furthest apart, during the summer and autumn of 1687, the feverish outburst of activity among Nonconformists, and the plans afoot all over England for the construction of meeting houses, had made it clear that, at least until a Parliament should meet, Dissenters of all shades and nuances were prepared to attribute the force of the law to the first Declaration of Indulgence. The addresses of thanks, while representing no more than a scattered remnant of the faithful, had further demonstrated that a part at least of each of the sects ^{was} ~~were~~ prepared to indicate their public acceptance of it. The reluctance of a great majority of the addressers to commit themselves specifically to the King's programme, however, left the issue of whether or not the Declaration had been successful in its primary objective of enlisting the Dissenters as political allies as very much an open question. Before the dissolution of Parliament the Court's actions had tended to give the lie to the pseudo-optimism of the King's public statements. The beginning of regulation in the summer of 1687 had been against the background of the severest misgivings at Court as to the amount of support likely to accrue from Dissenters. ⁽¹⁾ And even at the end of the year the question of whether an articulate, politically viable party could be culled from the ranks of the so recently prostrate

(1) see above, pp. 346-349.

Nonconformists - which would work with Catholics in local government to ensure the election of a House of Commons that would abolish the Test and Penal laws - could elicit the most diverse answers.

That this should have been the case nine months after the Declaration of Indulgence was owing to the fact that opinion among the Dissenters themselves was less than decisive on the key issue of repeal. And this indecision was, at least partly, due to the failure of those accustomed to giving direction to opinion in the two larger sects to act authoritatively. During the second half of 1687 the comprehension parties in Church and Dissent, despite the urgency of the crisis, were further apart than they had been in years,⁽¹⁾ and hence moderate Presbyterians thought it pardonable to weigh the advantages of flirtation with the Court, to ensure the continuance of toleration, against the remoter prospect of co-operation with the Church, to facilitate comprehension.⁽²⁾ The hardening of opinion among the moderates, in favour of retaining at least the Test Acts, which took place between November 1687 and February 1688, was due to a variety of factors, the most important of which was a belated rapprochement with the moderate Churchmen, which made the prospect of comprehension less remote.⁽³⁾

In the course of 1688 the issue of collaboration with the Court, which some saw as 'the great test' for English Nonconformity,⁽⁴⁾ deeply divided all the sects. The influence of the Dons against

(1) See above, pp. 398-401.

(2) Morrice Q, 161-2, 167, 176, 178-9, 181. See Nottingham to William, 2 September 1687, Dalrymple II, pt 1, 77-80; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2099b.

(3) See above, pp. 410-417.

(4) Morrice Q, 154-5.

co-operation was disproportionate to their numbers, but the cleavage was not one between the anti-collaborationist (Arminian) Dons and their followers, and the collaborationist (Calvinistic) sects. The issue of collaboration divided each individual sect in the course of 1688. Each sect contained those for and those against, the Presbyterians and Congregationalists, whose union was all but effected in 1688,⁽¹⁾ being considered as one sect. That many sectarians, whose political aim was toleration, refused to co-operate with the King's programme, suggests the importance of issues other than those raised by the imminent prospect of comprehension as catalysts of their political behaviour: notably, the anti-Catholic factor, inflamed by the flood of pamphlets from Anglican sources; the familiarity of the political dilemma posed by 'enticement'; the effect of the Presbyterian-Congregationalist union as an influence for restraint on the Congregationalists; and what remained among Dissenters, from the years of persecution, of the quietistic aversion to political involvement.

The optimism or otherwise of the Court as to the probability of a biddable Dissenting Parliament took little or no account of the hardening of attitudes at the beginning of 1688 and the emergence of the intra sectarian fissures. Sunderland, who had been pessimistic as to the probability, and doubtful of the advisability, of such a Parliament in the course of the summer of 1687, believed by November that the prospects had improved.⁽²⁾ The King was most uniformly

(1) See above, p. 42.

(2) Mackintosh, 182-184; J. P. Kenyon, Robert Spencer Earl of Sunderland (1958), 160; BM Add. MS.34515, f. 32; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2099b; Morrice Q, 129.

sanguine throughout; though the better informed Court Catholics exuded a qualified pessimism by December.⁽¹⁾ During December, while James babbled about an April Parliament, Robert Brent, one of the key figures in the electoral campaign, was predicting that no Parliament could meet until October 1688 at the earliest.⁽²⁾ Brent's prediction, the early responses to the Three Questions, and his estimate of the importance of the Presbyterians to any Dissenting alliance, had reclaimed Sunderland from his flights of fancy of the previous November, and by January 1688 he was discussing the policy of an 'expedient' as a concession to Presbyterian opinion. The idea had been mooted by Sunderland in conversation with d'Adda the previous Summer,⁽³⁾ and had been under discussion among the moderate Catholic nobility in November.⁽⁴⁾ The 'expedient', aimed at conciliating moderate Nonconformist opinion, being canvassed in January 1688 was that the Tests should be abrogated but Roman Catholics barred from membership of the House of Commons.⁽⁵⁾ Penn and James Stewart believed that 'the expedient' was too half-hearted to influence Presbyterian opinion and, taking their cue from Fagel's Letter,⁽⁶⁾ began to canvass the separation of the Tests and the penal laws and the repeal only of the latter.⁽⁷⁾ James, paying more attention to the false optimism of the extremists, opposed this separation of the Tests from the Penal Laws and it was not until April 1688 that he was

(1) CSPD 1687-9, 66; Morrice Q, 129, 130, 254; Bonrepos, Memoire au Roi, Archives Nationales K 1351, No. 4, f. 53; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2103, 2112b; BM Add MS.34515, f. 38.

(2) Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2120.

(3) J. P. Kenyon, Robert Spencer Earl of Sunderland (1958), 186-7.

(4) Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2099b.

(5) Kenyon, op cit.

(6) Burnet I, 731-2, 734.

(7) Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2099b, 2112d, 2141a.

convinced that a Nonconformist Parliament was, at that stage, out of the question.⁽¹⁾ Sunderland's 'expedient', however, although it was ignored at the time, was adopted as Court policy in August or September, by which time it was much too late to influence Presbyterian opinion toward the Court.⁽²⁾ But even then James was still confident that the forthcoming Parliament would repeal the Tests.⁽³⁾

The King's confidence in the prospect of an amenable Parliament, when those nearer to the Nonconformists were predicting disaster,⁽⁴⁾ doubtless owed something to the studied optimism of the courtiers, who were playing their own game,⁽⁵⁾ but a great deal more to the reports being received (as late as September 1688) from electoral agents operating in various parts of the country which rang with confidence of widespread support for the King's programme.⁽⁶⁾ The optimism of these reports, and the people named in them as 'suitable' parliamentary candidates, the names of persons recommended by the various commissions and commissioners concerned with regulation, and the names of persons appointed as JPs, Sheriffs and to the corporations (where information regarding them is available) make it clear that the catchment area from which the Government was drawing the

(1) Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2112d; Kenyon, op cit, 192.

(2) Gazette 2384, 20 September 1688.

(3) Bonrepos, Memoire au Roi, Archives Nationales K 1351, No. 4, f. 53; Morrice Q, 291.

(4) Halifax to William, 31 May 1687, 12 April 1688, Nottingham to William, 2 September 1687, Dalrymple II, pt. I, 77-80, Kenyon (ed), Halifax, 334-b, 338; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2112c; 2120b; 2145c; Morrice Q, 140, 181, 247, 288-9.

(5) BM Add. MS. 34515, 38; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2112a.

(6) Duckett II, 213-234, 234-253; Morrice Q, 291. These reports are discussed in detail below. They were printed in Sir George Duckett's Penal Laws and Test Act, Questions Touching their Repeal Propounded in 1687-8 by James II. This work, one of the few surviving copies of which has recently been 'lost' by the British Museum, was published in two volumes in 1882-83.

personnel to replace the Tory-Anglican land-owning interest in local government, and from which it was seeking to cull a new House of Commons, was a wide one containing many formerly excluded political, religious and social groupings of which Protestant Dissenters were only one. It is also clear that, since they designated Nonconformists as 'suitable' who are known to have been opposed to the King's programme, and since they estimated Nonconformist support as 'strong' in areas where influential ministers and laymen did not favour repeal, the reports of the King's agents were superficial, and their questioning unthorough. Probably the reports were merely meant to be interpreted as rough estimates of Whig and Nonconformist political strength in a particular district, the assumption being that this strength could be harnessed by the Court given the right inducements.

The Court campaign undertaken between July 1687 and September 1688 to ensure the election of a House of Commons that would confirm the King's Declarations of Indulgence and repeal the penal laws and the Test Acts was, perhaps, the most organised, and certainly the most complex, effort of that kind undertaken by any government up to that time.⁽¹⁾ Nevertheless it is likely that from first to last James II seriously underestimated the difficulties involved in winning over the Nonconformist and Whig interest which had been removed from local administration between 1681-5. During this previous purge Charles II had concentrated on the regulation of the large Whig strongholds - London, Portsmouth, Derby, Nottingham, Norwich, Bristol, Ipswich, Exeter and Lincoln - leaving to James a number of small boroughs,

(1) Jones, 11, 14, 17, 41, 49-50, 114-5, 128-175; J. Carswell, *The Descent on England* (1969), 106, 113.

mainly in the West Country, incapable of resistance. The speed and success with which the regulation of these boroughs had been accomplished in the weeks prior to the 1685 Election was probably a major factor in explaining the King's assurance of a successful outcome of his more sweeping campaign in 1687-8.⁽¹⁾

In the course of the fifteen months of the Court's electoral campaign a total of approximately 200 constituencies, returning 400 out of the 515 MPs, were subjected to some kind of direct governmental pressure.⁽²⁾ The form of pressure employed throughout the period was the regulation of borough corporations,⁽³⁾ and purges of the lieutenancy,⁽⁴⁾ and the shrievalty.⁽⁵⁾ Some borough charters were surrendered voluntarily, but more often the King and his legal officers would have to instigate actions of quo warranto against the charters of corporations who refused to surrender them.⁽⁶⁾ The royal claim to be able to dispense with statutory oaths was written into the new charters to facilitate the admission of Catholics and Dissenters, and to the power of dismissal was added the power to appoint new members to corporations by letters mandatory, and to veto those elected.⁽⁷⁾

(1) Jones, 46-47.

(2) Ibid, 166.

(3) CSPD 1687-9, 138, 150, 154, 157-8, 159, 160-1, 174, 177, 178, 196, 204, 206, 213, 223, 229, 236-7, 244, 246-8, 252-3, 255, 256, 257, 259, 262-264, 268, 269.

(4) Changes in Lord Lieutenants and Deputy Lieutenants. CSPD 1687-9, 46-47, 51-52, 97, 98, 100, 102, 106, 111, 114, 115, 116, 123, 131, 132, 136-7, 141, 142, 144, 146, 148, 152, 161, 168, 172, 187, 201, 213, 220, 226, 229.

(5) CSPD 1687-9, 115, 134, 179.

(6) HMC Downshire MSS I, pt. i, 286-7; Jones, 45; J. P. Kenyon, Robert Spencer Earl of Sunderland (1958), 189-90.

(7) e.g. SP 44/338, 47-9 (Oxford), 44/338, 49-52 (Hertford), 44/338, 87 (Taunton), 44/338, 90 (Grantham), 44/338, 94 (Hull). See R. H. George, 'The Charters granted to the English Parliamentary Corporations in 1688', English Hist. Review lv (1940), 47-56; Jones, 45.

The first device employed to ascertain the identity of persons in the various localities who were prepared to support repeal, fill positions in the corporations, magistracy or lieutenancy, stand for Parliament as court candidates or vote for court candidates in the elections, was the Three Questions.⁽¹⁾ Between August and November 1687, however, James had made eleven changes in the Lord Lieutenancy, and had not given the new Lord Lieutenants time to settle in before the questioning process began. Further, by February 1688 thirteen Roman Catholics, lacking in experience and local éclat, held fifteen lieutenancies.⁽²⁾ It was therefore not surprising that this was the most sluggish and inefficiently executed part of the campaign. That it would be a failure as a means of ascertaining the identity of articulate personnel on whom the Court could depend, must have become apparent quite early. Between 19 and 26 November a 'Commission for the Regulation of Corporations' was set up to draw up lists of persons suitable to fill municipal offices and act as JPs and Deputy Lieutenants. It was to work through a network of agents located in boroughs all over the country. The work of these agents was to be co-ordinated by Robert Brent, (a Catholic lawyer who had, up to the April Indulgence, been responsible for distributing dispensations to persecuted Recusants and Dissenters), from his rooms at the Temple. Sir Nicholas Butler, an ex-Baptist convert to Catholicism, and Duncombe, a banker,

(1) CSPD 1687-9, 87-88.

(2) Jones, 136.

were to have particular oversight of the City of London. After February 1688 Brent and Butler also had to work in conjunction with a committee made up of 'old sectaries, most of them... Anabaptists', who were to ascertain the extent of, and to encourage support for the Court's programme among Dissenters in the various localities and to report back at intervals. Nehemiah Cox and James Clarke went to Wiltshire and Dorset, Benjamin Dennis and Richard Adams to Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex, Nathaniel Wade, John Jones and Richard Andrewes to Somerset and Devon and Edward Nosworthy to Cornwall. The names of those who went to other counties are unknown. It is likely that William Penn, and probably Sir John Baber, had a more general function; working with the leaders of the sects in London. In addition, Stephen Lobb acted as a 'Dissenting Organiser'.⁽¹⁾ In their respective counties Brent's agents were to establish contact with all sections, but more especially with Dissenters. They were to appoint 'correspondents' in each borough who could feed them with any relevant details of local politics and make recommendations. The agents themselves were to interrogate existing common councilmen, Aldermen, JPs and Deputy Lieutenants, canvass suitable alternatives and send back lists of names on the basis of which regulation could proceed.⁽²⁾ By March 1688 over 1200 persons, having been judged unreliable, had been ejected from public office.⁽³⁾

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- (1) Duckett I, 218, 221, 234, 236; BM Add MS. 34515, 34, 39; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2147d; Mackintosh, 187; Morrice Q, 207, 227, 239, 243, 244, 245, 249; F. C. Turner, James II (1948), 331; J. R. Jones, 'James II's Whig Collaborators', Historical Journal III (1960), 67, 69; Luttrell I, 420-1, 423; Warwick CR VIII, xix, xxviii-xxix. See CSPD 1687-9, 286-7, 304-5.
- (2) Duckett I, 216-217 note 220. See also 221-34, 234-5; Morrice Q, 236, 238.
- (3) Jones, 149.

It is interesting that the two Dutch observers, Van Citters and James Johnstone, were adamant from the beginning that the whole system of agents and regulation would be a failure, unless the Court were to resort to corrupt or 'irregular' practices to ensure a successful election.⁽¹⁾ For the greater part of 1688 pamphlets were appearing warning electors of the corrupt devices likely to be employed.⁽²⁾ One such device widely anticipated was that sheriffs would be called upon to falsify returns.⁽³⁾ There were some grounds for the popular suspicion. There can be no doubt that the new charters of 1688 did reduce (sometimes drastically) the number of electors on borough franchises,⁽⁴⁾ and it was not until 20 September 1688 that James finally conceded, to the surprise of many, that Roman Catholics would not be allowed to stand.⁽⁵⁾ At one stage there was a rumour 'that Charters would be granted to towns that never sent Members to Parliament'.⁽⁶⁾ In the last phase of the electoral campaign, in September 1688, there was also talk of the use of itinerant voters and dragoons, and a disproportionate number of the 106 candidates who had been allocated to their constituencies before the writs for the elections were withdrawn, were military men.⁽⁷⁾

Hence the King's optimism, so late in the day, was not founded

- (1) BM Add MS. 34510, f. 63 (28 November 1687), f. 75 (6 January 1688), f. 87, (28 February); MS. 34512, f. 77 (11 May 1688); Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2112b (8 December 1687) PWA 2145c (February 1688).
- (2) Bonrepos, Memoire au Roi, Archives Nationales K, 1351, No.4, f.58.
- (3) Morrice Q, 251; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2110b, 2112b, 2112c.
- (4) BM Add MS.34515, ff. 49, 50; MS. 34487, f. 29; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2145c; J. R. Western, *Monarchy and Revolution* (1972), 77.
- (5) Gazette No. 2384; BM Add MS. 34487, f. 29; MS. 34512, f. 100.
- (6) Morrice Q, 235.
- (7) J. R. Jones, 'James II's Whig Collaborators', *Historical Journal* III (1960), 71-73. See CSPD 1687-9, 267, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 279.

solely on his expectations of the Nonconformists. Nor were the 106 candidates who had been allocated to their constituencies, with the exception of a handful, men who had any claim to be considered Nonconformists. The great majority could not even lay claim to anything approaching a Dissenting heritage. Irrespective of the purpose of the electoral machine, a high percentage of the men it sifted through could have been gained had there been no Declarations of Indulgence. Dissenters undoubtedly sat on the reformed corporations and a few would have stood for Parliament had there been an Election, but they represented a minority - and probably a small one - of the aggregate of Aldermen, Common Councillors, Sheriffs, and prospective parliamentary candidates in 1688, and, certainly in the case of the Presbyterians and Congregationalists, and possibly even in the case of the Baptists and Quakers, they were collaborating in the face of the consensus of opinion in their own sects, or, in some instances, were collaborating despite the fact that they held views on the key issue of repeal which were unlikely to lead them to help facilitate the election of a Parliament commensurate with the King's wishes.

2

Whilst Nonconformists had co-operated with the Whigs during the Exclusion Crisis and been dislodged from all public positions with the Whigs in the Tory reaction, Nonconformity was not the same as Whiggery, nor was the latter the political front for the former. Most Nonconformists regarded themselves as being 'outside of politics', their religious status not denoting any kind of political

affiliation. Even from Sir Roger L'Estrange's warped angle of vision Whiggery and Nonconformity were not synonymous, and Nonconformist politicians were not ipso facto exponents of ideas he chose to label 'Whig'.⁽¹⁾ And the nervous bunch of Nonconformist families still in politics in 1685 had nothing to do with the ejected ministry and were worlds apart from the politically innocent rank and file.⁽²⁾ With the exception of Lobb and Alsop, and in 1688 a few Baptists, the ministries of the sects to the right of the Quakers saw in the Court, the Administration, Politics, central or local, something that was intrinsically vain, soiled with corruption, and irrelevant, perhaps a hindrance, to otherworldly aspirations and, as such, something to be shunned.⁽³⁾ James II's failure to understand this attitude of mind, and perhaps the urgings of his Quaker courtiers, led him to embark on an Indulgence policy aimed at enlisting Nonconformist electoral support. But the political allies, especially at local level, enlisted by Robert Brent's agents in 1687-8, and many of those agents themselves, when they were not Catholics, could often more accurately be described as 'Whig' than 'Nonconformist'. And, hence, whilst some Dissenters undoubtedly were enlisted, a majority of those who collaborated with the Court were Anglicans and pseudo-

(1) Alan Cole, 'The Quakers and the English Revolution', *Crisis in Europe 1560-1660*, ed. T. Aston (1965), 355, 356. See Kitchin, 350, 351, 352-3, 354-6; Sir Roger L'Estrange, *An Answer to a Letter to a Dissenter upon Occasion of His Majesty's Late Gracious Declaration of Indulgence (1687)*, 6, 10-11, 13, 16-17. Even Lucile Pinkham, in the spectrum of historiography perhaps comparable with L'Estrange, recognised 'the Shaftesbury Whigs', 'the Presbyterians' and 'the more rabid republicans' as separate political groupings; *William III and the Respectable Revolution (1954)*, 11.

(2) See above, pp. 171-175.

(3) Williams I, 52, 57-58; Harmer MS.76.9, 155-6; Walter Wilson MS. I, v, 158-9, 221-3. See Henry, *Diaries and Letters*, 327-8; Whiting, 131; Braithwaite, 144-5; H.W. Clark, *English Nonconformity (1912)* II, 110.

Anglicans, along with the Catholics, whose support was taken for granted.

The returns to the Three Questions reproduced in Duckett⁽¹⁾ do not contain those for Cheshire, Hertfordshire, Lancashire, Middlesex, Rutland, Suffolk, Surrey, Warwickshire and the City of London, and hence estimates of both compliance and opposition are bound to be conservative. It is also worthy of note that, in counties for which returns are available, magistrates often avoided answering, and 'absent' had to be entered by the side of their names.⁽²⁾ The Government grouped the returns into 'consent', 'refuse', and 'doubtful'. The three groups were of roughly comparable size, the 'consenters' being marginally the largest and the 'refusers' the smallest, the 'consenters' being inflated by the inclusion of Roman Catholics, whose electoral efficacy was likely to be limited, though some of their answers pre-supposed that they would be allowed to stand for Parliament. It is significant that the 'consenters' were strong in the fringe counties, especially Northumberland, Westmorland,

Herefordshire and *Cumberland*,⁽³⁾ and that the percentage of 'doubtfuls' was high, and the number of outright refusals small, in Cornwall, Devon and Somerset. From the counties covered, *more than 160* persons (excluding Roman Catholics) had agreed to give the undertakings demanded and rather more than 300 were taken to have favourable opinions.⁽⁴⁾ The list of names which, on the basis of these answers,

(1) From Rawlinson MSS, a, 139A, in the Bodleian Library.

(2) See J. Carswell, *The Descent on England* (1969), 110-111.

(3) Nonconformity was very weak in these counties, with the exception of Herefordshire. Walter Wilson MS.553D, 1-14, 16-22,

(4) *J.R. Jones, op cit, 66; Duckett I, 28, 31-48, 119-120, 126-140, 263-6, 369-70, 373-81; II, 11-15. See also, 166-8; M. V. Hay, 'The Enigma of James II' (1938), 118.*

was drawn up to act as a guide to the selection of magistrates and parliamentary candidates contained those of sixty-seven former Whig MPs,⁽¹⁾ and the appointments made on the basis of this list were of persons more often labelled 'Whig' than 'Dissenter'.⁽²⁾ Robert Brent's electoral machine, more especially in the phase between the agents going out into the provinces in March and April 1688 and the receipt of their final reports in September, was staffed with Whigs, many of whom had worked under Shaftesbury and were now using his techniques in support of the opposite interest: Nathaniel Wade, the Spekes, James Vernon, Ralph Montague, Sir John Trevor, John Jones, Nehemiah Coxe, the Rotherams, William Stokes, Edward Nosworthy, and Henry Care.⁽³⁾

If 'Whig' was not the political counterpart of 'Dissent', 'Tory' was by no means the political counterpart of 'Anglican'. There was a powerful Whig faction in the Church,⁽⁴⁾ and in the course of the reign of James II there had also emerged a jure divino faction who, in the event of a clash of loyalties, saw their first allegiance as being to the King rather than to the Anglican-Tory interest.⁽⁵⁾

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- (1) J. R. Jones, 'James II's Whig Collaborators', Historical Journal III (1960), 66, n. 8.
- (2) Edward to Sir Edward Harley, 25 February 1688, HMC 14th Report, app.pt. II: Portland MSS III (1894), 405; Morrice Q, 239, 247. See J.P. Kenyon, Robert Spencer Earl of Sunderland (1958), 188-9.
- (3) Duckett II, 218, 234 note; Morrice Q, 238, 239, 245, 249, 285; J. R. Jones, 'James II's Whig Collaborators', Historical Journal III (1960), 65, 68-9. Wade and the Spekes had been involved with Monmouth, and Coxe and perhaps Nosworthy were, or had been, Nonconformist pastors. Roberts I, 211-212, 293; E. Windeatt, 'Early Nonconformity in Ashburton', Transactions of the Devonshire Association XXVIII (1896), 1-6; S. Schofield, Jeffreys of the Bloody Assizes (1937), 100, 194; Lacey, 337, 429-30; Jones, 144, 162-3; Whiting, 84; Luttrell I, 430; W. T. Whitley, 'Thompson's List of Conventicles', CHST IV (1909-10), 49.
- (4) Kitchin, 350-358.
- (5) F. C. Turner, James II (1948), 332; Kitchin, 366. See T. Cartwright, Diary, Camden Soc. (1843), 4, 5, 45, 47, 49, 51, 52, 58; K. Feiling, A History of the Tory Party 1640-1714 (1924), 217.

The existence of these two groups, the determination of many provincial 'Tories' to maintain their dominant position in local politics come what may, and the paucity of support available from articulate, enfranchised Dissenters in certain regions, (thanks to devolution and social deterioration⁽¹⁾), accounts for the number of Churchmen and Tories on the reformed corporations and magistracy, which surprised many observers. It is also probable that some of the Anglicans who co-operated with the Court represented urban-commercial interests, as opposed to the landed interests they had replaced.⁽²⁾ Keith Feiling has acknowledged that the 'new political bloc' which the King was seeking to create in 1688 was to include, not only Catholics and Dissenters, but 'apostate Tories'.⁽³⁾

Whilst some were worried at the number of Catholics on the list of Sheriffs issued in November 1687,⁽⁴⁾ Roger Morrice was interested to see that in some counties the number of 'Tories' outweighed the number of Catholics.⁽⁵⁾ Regarding the list of Sheriffs issued on 2 December he noted, 'above one half of these are Protestants (about one third part thereof Whigs and the other two parts Tories), near the other half are Papists'.⁽⁶⁾ In January 1688 he observed that the sort of Dissenters being put into the regulated corporations were persons unlikely to co-operate with the King's programme, and that the Anglican influence was still strong on many corporations simply for lack of suitable alternatives to take their places.⁽⁷⁾

(1) See above, pp. 82-91.

(2) See Jones, 11, 14, 114-115.

(3) K. Feiling, *A History of the Tory Party 1640-1714* (1924), 217.

(4) Portland Misc. 19, PwA 2112d.

(5) Morrice Q, 193.

(6) Morrice Q, 215.

(7) Morrice Q, 234.

The new Commission of the Peace for Staffordshire published in February 1688 included seven Anglicans, five Dissenters, and three Catholics.⁽¹⁾ When the special committee

'commissioned to manage the whole scheme of the regulation of the corporations... offered to His Majesty a list of the most settled, rich and best qualified men in the kingdom for Deputy Lieutenants and Sheriffs'

in February, Morrice was pleased that it was 'made up of sober churchmen, which are two parts in number, and of Dissenters'.⁽²⁾ A week later Morrice was waxing almost lyrical on the subject of this list and foreseeing all manner of beneficial consequences for the nation, including the establishment of the government on a 'national bottom'; a system in which the government at local level would be carried on by the 'sober' element in both Church and Dissent, with the 'Papists', 'giddy fanatics' and 'Hierarchists' completely excluded. The King, he was sure, could not do better. Within days, however, he was forced to admit that whilst the Churchmen seemed 'keen to serve', all the Presbyterians and most of the Independents had shown no interest.⁽³⁾ At the end of August 1688 he admitted that the scheme of the 'national bottom' had been a non-starter and that he had over-estimated its implications, concluding:

'Public affairs seem now to be in a very tottering posture, there seems to be no party engaged to the Crown. The Hierarchists are disobliged, the English interest [the 'sober' Churchmen and Dissenters of the 'national bottom'] are not

(1) Morrice Q, 239 (iii).

(2) Morrice Q, 239 (ii).

(3) Morrice Q, 243-4, 244.

closed with: so few of them are put into the Lieutenancy, or into the lists for Justices that they cannot in prudence act, being overnumbered by Papists and Tories'. (1)

The importance attached by Morrice to the part played by Churchmen and Tories in the remodelled corporations and Commission of the Peace and to the number of Churchmen and Tories named as 'suitable' for office or candidacy by the Commissioners, is borne out by other sources. The aggregate number of persons ^{specifically} designated 'right' for election candidacy by Brent's agents in the reports presented to Sunderland in April 1688 was sixty, and of these twenty-six were known Anglicans. (2) In Norwich, Bristol, Colchester, Coventry and Nottingham the persons appointed to the remodelled corporations in 1687-8 included a balance of Anglicans and Dissenters, the difference between the Anglicans removed and the Anglicans inserted being one of economic interest. Urban-commercial Anglicans replaced the Anglican gentry, and the urban tradesmen who depended on their patronage. (3) Among those designated by Brent's agents as 'suitable' to serve as JPs in Bedfordshire there would appear to have been a considerable number of what Feiling would call 'apostate Tories'. (4) Since Luttrell did not use the term 'Whig' as a synonym for 'Dissenter' it is probable that many of the 'Whigs' who replaced the 'Tories' on the ^{for the peace} commissions _h in January 1688 were Anglicans. (5) The remodelled magistracy of Newcastle included 'Conformists and Nonconformists', and 'a great many' of those on the list of persons 'suitable' to be on the

(1) Morrice Q, 286.

(2) Duckett II, 221-34; Lacey, 204-5.

(3) Jones, 153-4. See 114-115, 156.

(4) Bunyan, 348 n. See 182, 200-1, 219, 347-8.

(5) Luttrell I, 429.

corporation 'were known to be zealously affected to the Church of England'.⁽¹⁾ Of the 106 'suitable' candidates recommended to Sunderland in September 1688 forty-seven had been in the 1685 Parliament and, by the nature of that Parliament, the greater part of them were perforce Anglicans.⁽²⁾ Certain Anglican families and individual Anglicans co-operated with the Court on corporations and promised to use their local influence for the electoral benefit of the Court in the election. Among these were the Howard and L'Estrange families of Winchester, the Duke of Norfolk in Norfolk and Suffolk, and the Duke of Albe marle in Essex, Nathaniel Crewe, Bishop of Durham, Sir Robert Holmes, Governor of the Isle of Wight, and Sir Stephen Fox of Cricklade.⁽³⁾

It was widely assumed, however, that where the catchment pool of local government officers permitted of choice, the King much preferred to employ his co-religionists and the jure divino Churchmen, from whom he hoped for conversions, and employed Dissenters and other groups only as numbers and availability necessitated.⁽⁴⁾ This may have been so initially, but by December 1687 'several' Catholic gentry had refused to serve as Sheriffs and Deputy Lieutenants, and by February 1688 seventeen Catholic office holders had been removed, possibly as a result of inefficiencies brought to light during the questioning process. Of the 455 new commissions issued to JPs in

(1) W. H. D. Longstaffe (ed), *Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Ambrose Barnes*, Surtees Soc. L. (1866), 175-6, 178.

(2) Duckett II, 235-53; CSPD 1687-A, 267, 271-6, 279; Jones, 159-60.

(3) CSPD 1687-A, 257, 259; Gazette No. 2350; Jones, 159-161.

(4) Morrice Q, 133, 234, 286. See *Jones, 101-102*.

February 1687, 290, just less than 64%, were to Catholics; of the 709 new JPs put in between February and April 1688, only ninety-nine, 14%, were Catholics.⁽¹⁾ For the same reasons, although the electoral machine continued to be in the hands of its original Roman Catholic controllers, Catholic agents were gradually edged out and more and more reliance placed upon Whig professionals.⁽²⁾ But English Catholics, despite the misgivings of some,⁽³⁾ continued to be the staunchest supporters of the King's programme, and this was amply illustrated by the replies to the Three Questions. Kent had the highest number of 'consents' because it had fifteen Catholics as JPs; in Herefordshire thirteen out of the twenty-one favourable replies came from Catholics, in Flintshire five out of five, in Northumberland five out of twelve, and in Worcestershire twelve out of nineteen.⁽⁴⁾ Hence it was not surprising that, electoral agents apart, a disproportionately large number of Catholics (vis à vis Whigs and Dissenters), should occupy lieutenancies and deputy lieutenancies,⁽⁵⁾ between a third and a half of the shrievalties⁽⁶⁾ and, whilst not being in a majority, may have been in a position to sway

(1) BM Add MS. 34515, f. 39; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2112c; Miller, 209, 218; G. E. Cockayne, *The Complete Peerage*, ed. V. Gibbs (1912) II, app. G, 656-7. See Warwick CR VIII, xxviii.

(2) J. R. Jones, 'James II's Whig Collaborators', *Historical Journal* III (1960), 67, 72.

(3) Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2112c.

(4) Luttrell I, 420; Jones, 167-8.

(5) Miller, 219, 220; Morrice Q, 168, 246. See CSPD 1687-9, 114, 116, 123, 142, 144, 146, 148, 152-3, 156, 161, 168, 187, 201; Duckett, 254, 256-7, 258, 259-60, 260, 262, 263, 265-6, 267, 269-70, 271, 273-4, 275, 276-7, 279, 281, 282, 288, 289-90, 291, 292-3, 293, 294-5, 296, 299.

(6) Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2110a, 2112c, d; BM Add MS. 34515, ff. 33, 39; Morrice Q, 193, 215; Luttrell I, 422.

a sizeable number of remodelled corporations.⁽¹⁾ It was certainly the case that the maximum use was made of any Roman Catholic talent that was available. In Buckinghamshire only two members of the prominent Catholic families did not occupy a local government position; one a minor, the other a lunatic.⁽²⁾ In the North Riding *thirteen* JPs were Catholics; *and among the others* one had a Catholic brother, *another* a Catholic wife.⁽³⁾

In addition to Dissenters, Whig and jure divino Anglicans and Roman Catholics, the court also drew on an incongruous motley of other groups to act as electoral agents and local government officers, men over whom it could exercise some kind of leverage or to whom it could offer some kind of attractive inducement. Perhaps the largest of these groups, which must have included a good many Dissenters, were ex-rebels, of Monmouth and Rye House vintage, who had felt the benefits of the King's pardon and, in 1688, through gratitude, fear or a desire to benefit further from the King's generosity, were jumping on the Court bandwagon.⁽⁴⁾ On 18 February Morrice was surprised to discover that

'Mr. Edward Stroud, who had been charged with aiding and abetting Monmouth's Rebellion, and thereupon committed to the Tower, had now gained the King's pardon and was Sheriff of Somersetshire'.⁽⁵⁾

- (1) Morrice Q, 286; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2145c. See Miller, 222.
- (2) Miller, 219.
- (3) H. Aveling, *Northern Catholics: The Catholic Recusants of the North Riding of Yorkshire 1558-1790* (1966), 335-6.
- (4) Duckett II, 218, 234 n., 241n.
- (5) Morrice Q, 239 (1).

He later noted that an ex-Monmouth supporter, recently pardoned, had become Mayor of Lyme, that Aaron Smith had been pardoned by His Majesty for involvement with Monmouth and then

'sent [as] a Commissioner or agent into several counties to inspect the proceedings in corporations, and to signify what fit persons are left out in corporations, or in the Commission for the Lieutenancy, and the Commission for the Peace, or what unfit persons were still in any of these offices or trusts',

and that, having pardoned Henry Brown for the same offence, the King had 'sent him upon the like errand... into Oxfordshire and Leicestershire'.⁽¹⁾ On 31 January 1688 Luttrell noted; 'Captain [Nathaniel] Wade, one that **was** in the late rebellion, is made town clerk of Bristol'.⁽²⁾ Hugh Speke, who, like his brother who had been executed, had been deeply involved with Monmouth, also served the Court in some capacity; a crippling, and probably unpaid, fine of '2000 marks' levied ^{on 'Old Speake'} in November 1686 might have provided his motive.⁽³⁾ Henry Care switched from an extreme Whig position - though not necessarily that of a rebel - to serve the King.⁽⁴⁾ There is evidence that the King capitalised upon the pardon he had given ^{to John Trenchard to} attempt to win him over to the royal cause; both John and Henry Trenchard were **accepted** as Court candidates, for Taunton and Poole, respectively, in September

(1) Morrice Q, 249, 285.

(2) Luttrell I, 430. The electoral agents believed that Wade was prepared to stand as a Court candidate for Barnstaple. Duckett II, 241.

(3) Ellis I, 194-5, lxviii; J. P. Kenyon, Robert Spencer Earl of Sunderland (1958), 188. *See Jones, XIX, 301-302.*

(4) Luttrell I, 453; Jones, xiv.

1688. (1)

Also part of the strange miscegenation that comprised James II's supporters in 1688 was a group of radicals, some of them wearing a 'Catholic' or 'Nonconformist' label to enhance their usefulness, who were employed as agents or common councilmen. (2) In addition, the lists of those recommended as suitable for election candidacy included many office holders and ^{possibly some} army officers, thus arousing the particularist and anti-militaristic sentiments of the localities. (3) Elsewhere court agents deliberately took advantage of the particularist sentiment in boroughs, and those who emerged as crown supporters were prominent local figures (sometimes Dissenters), who wished to exclude non-resident Tory gentry from their corporations, (4) or who preferred the more remote control of the central government to the oppressive domination of the local landed oligarchs and their urban associates. (5) In the western counties, there is evidence that those touting electoral support for the court were persons who had suffered in the Bloody Assize and had old scores to pay off. Elsewhere Whigs and Dissenters were seeking to pay off old scores consequent upon

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- (1) CSPD 1687-9, 115; Morrice Q, 285; Luttrell I, 451; Duckett II, 229, 242, 243; S. Schofield, *Jeffreys of the Bloody Assizes* (1937), 252; HMC 12th Report, app. pt. vi: *The MSS of the House of Lords 1689-1690* (1880), 307; Penn, 122.
- (2) Morrice Q, 189, 243-4; DNB XIX, 1149-50. See J. R. Jones, 'James II's Whig Collaborators', *Historical Journal* III (1960), 69-71; J. S. Clarke (ed), *The Life of James the Second King of England & Collected out of Memoirs Writ of His Own Hand* (1816) II, 139.
- (3) J. R. Jones, op cit, 71, 72; ^{Jones, 157-8.} See J. P. Kenyon, op cit, 188-9; CSPD 1687-9, 275, 276, 279; Duckett II, 234-53.
- (4) Alderman Barnham of Norwich, Alderman Barnes of Newcastle, Thomas Day the Mayor of Bristol and Sir Samuel Barnardiston may have been selected with this idea in mind. Duckett II, 223, 225-6, 228-9. See also W.H.D. Longstaffe (ed), *Memoirs of the Life of Ambrose Barnes, Surtees Soc. L.* (1866), 177.
- (5) Jones, 139.

their exclusion from office during the period of the Tory reaction, 1681-5. In Somerset the Court received a great deal of electoral support as a result of the King's appointment of commissioners to redress the grievances of those suffering from the depression in the textile industry,⁽¹⁾ many of whom were Dissenters.⁽²⁾

But whilst the over-employment of Roman Catholics, the existence of a collaborationist party within the Church, the support of a miscellany of multi-religious fringe groups, and the presence of a variety of local inducements, help to explain the majority of 'consents' in the answers to the Three Questions and the availability of personnel for the electoral machine and local government positions, and though the term 'Whig', applied by contemporaries to one faction of collaborationists, covered a multitude of sinners - Churchmen as well as Dissenters - the fact remains that a proportion of Dissenters from all the sects were won over to James II's programme. Indeed, with the exception of the first two, Dissenters were almost certainly present in all these groups, and the local inducements, rationalisations of Dissenting, as well as non-Dissenting, support in these regions. What remains is to examine the attitudes of Nonconformists in each separate sect to collaboration and to the key issue of the repeal of the Test Acts and the penal laws; then to estimate the extent to which each sect was involved, to examine the significance for the King's programme of the total Nonconformist involvement, and to discover the degree of reliance that can be placed on the assessments and prognostications of the electoral agents.

(1) Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2141a; Jones, 156-7. See Duckett *II*, 218, 224, 229, 232-3, 243.

(2) See above, pp. 182-183.

Despite the early enthusiasm with which many Presbyterians and Congregationalists - with the exception of the émigrés working under William's direction⁽¹⁾ - had received and taken advantage of the 1687 Indulgence, there had always been an element of suspicion and uncertainty.⁽²⁾ A variety of factors had combined together to increase this suspicion and uncertainty by the time of Dykvelt's departure at the end of June.⁽³⁾ But Dykvelt's departure also signalled another reaction. The hopes of the moderate Presbyterians for a rapprochement with the Latitudinarian Churchmen that might lead to comprehension, and the conversion of many to the Dutch cause, had given way to a deep-rooted suspicion of both the Church and the Dutch interest. This suspicion led to an estrangement between the 'sober' element of Church and Dissent and, since it was shared by the greater part of the Congregationalist and Presbyterian sects, led to the confusion that characterised the political behaviour of the two larger Nonconformist sects in the second half of 1687.⁽⁴⁾

The reaction against the Dutch interest in July 1687, also inescapably involved the onset of doubts on the policy which Dykvelt had advocated - a parliamentary toleration with the retention of both Test Acts⁽⁵⁾ - and a tendency to temporise, and take seriously compromise solutions mouthed by Court representatives.⁽⁶⁾ Those

(1) Calamy, Howe, 130-132; Burnet I, 708, 709.

(2) See above, pp. 287, 397.

(3) See above, pp. 290-293.

(4) See above, pp. 398-401.

(5) See Morrice Q, 124, 125,
132, 134, 140; Burnet I, 708, 709.

(6) Morrice Q, 155-6, 161-2, 166-7, 176.

Presbyterians who in June 1687 had opined that the sect would never support the taking off of the Tests, were, by August, themselves prepared to consider a number of alternative solutions to the constitutional crisis.⁽¹⁾ But it is significant that even at this stage, when the inflexibility of the Church⁽²⁾ and the Court's enforcement of complete toleration⁽³⁾ could have led to a massive redirection of opinion, the examples of Hurst, Rosewell, Alsop, Lobb and Nye in openly advocating public acceptance of the Declaration by the Presbyterian and Congregationalist sects, and, in the case of the last three, advocating collaboration, were not followed. Quite apart from the opposition of John Howe and the émigrés, and of the Dons, Baxter and Bates, to such courses, Dr. Samuel Annesley, a 'Duckling', leader of the 'toleration' party among the Presbyterians, declared against public acceptance and collaboration.⁽⁴⁾ Even the addresses from Presbyterian and Congregationalist sources represented no more than the genuine thankfulness for relief from persecution of a politically sterile minority, and did not denote undertakings to collaborate.⁽⁵⁾

Among some Presbyterians and Congregationalists in the autumn of 1687 there was still an element of uncertainty as to the precise

(1) Morrice Q, 129, 140, 178-9.

(2) See above, pp. 387-388, 391, 393, 400-401, 402-403.

(3) See above, pp. 305-308.

(4) R. Baxter to Sir J. Baber, 20 October 1687, Baxter MSS (Letters) I, f. 110; Same to Same, 1687 (no date), Baxter MSS (Letters) V, f.40; Morrice Q, 112, 114, 115, 126; Wilson III, 438, 439; IV, 65; H. Nye, *The King's Authority in Dispensing with Ecclesiastical Laws Asserted and Vindicated* by the late Rev. Philip Nye, a Congregational Divine (republished 1687), preface; J. Peirce, *A Vindication of the Dissenters* (2nd ed. 1718), 269, 270.

(5) See above, pp. 321-327, 333.

course to be taken between Church and Court.⁽¹⁾ This was reflected in the Earl of Nottingham's letter to William on 2 September, though he conceded that if past practice was a reliable guide, because of their sensitivity to 'the reproach of having been factors for Popery', they were unlikely if elected to Parliament to sanction the repeal of the penal legislation, let alone the Tests.⁽²⁾ In October veteran politician John Swynfen, after consultation with Richard Hampden and John Howe, still distrusted both sides but concluded that since Nonconformists were clearly in a position to act decisively 'one end of this sunshine is to melt the other side into compliance'. His ensuing reference to the 1685 Parliament makes it clear that he was referring to the Church.⁽³⁾

By late November Swynfen's advice had been taken, Church and Dissent were drawing together;⁽⁴⁾ and as they did so attitudes began to crystallise. Sir John Baber told the King that the Presbyterians had regained their accustomed self-assurance in opposition to the repeal of the Tests.⁽⁵⁾ James Johnstone told William that attitudes toward repeal, formerly more fluid, were beginning to solidify against the repeal of the Tests and that 'people generally' were questioning

- (1) Morrice Q, 178-9, 181; Robert to Sir Edward Harley, 17 August 1687, Newsletter, 13 September 1687, HMC 14th Report, app. pt. II: Portland MSS III (1894), 400, 401-402. See BM Add MS. 34515, f. 31; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2099b.
- (2) Nottingham to William, 2 September 1687, Dalrymple II, pt. 1, app. to bk v, 77-80.
- (3) Robert to Sir Edward Harley, 8 October 1687, HMC 14th Report, op cit, 404. When Robert Harley reported Swynfen the confusion of his reported speech conveys something of the confusion of the old man's direct speech. My interpretation of his meaning is not the only one which this letter could give rise to, but I regard it as the most likely one.
- (4) See above, pp. 410-417.
- (5) Morrice Q, 181; Lacey, 190.

the advisability of 'cutting up the Reformation by the roots' by giving Catholics complete freedom of religion through the removal of all the penal laws and oaths.⁽¹⁾ And in December Morrice was ruminating on the probability of the support of the Presbyterians, and the possibility of the support of the sects, for a Dutch invasion to safeguard Mary's succession, to prevent the abrogation of the Tests by a packed Parliament and to obviate the destruction of English liberties through a Catholic establishment.⁽²⁾ The Dutch interest, however, thought it advisable that William should 'publish something' to 'confirm the doubtful and keep up the spirits of the fearful', thus helping to prevent the election of a Parliament 'of the Court's complexion'.⁽³⁾

By January 1688 it is likely that the 'doubtful' and the 'fearful' were chiefly in the sects to the left of the Presbyterians. Despite the near union of the Presbyterians and Congregationalists the two sects did not invariably act together. Whilst there was undoubtedly a party amongst the Independents who, influenced by the constitutional issue and the Popish Peril, wanted no truck with the Government, there were those who showed a willingness to co-operate. Sir John Baber told the King that the Presbyterians 'desired a good understanding with the sober Churchmen' and could not be depended on by the Court; support was more likely to accrue from the Congregationalists and the other sects.⁽⁴⁾ The returns to the Three Questions in Lancashire showed that in some areas 'all the Protestants were negative', while in others the Presbyterians gave negative answers

(1) Portland Misc. 19, PwA 2110c.

(2) Morrice Q, 207.

(3) Portland Misc. 19, PwA 2110b, c.

(4) Morrice Q, 181; Lacey, 345 n 54.

like Churchmen, and the Congregationalists gave positive answers like sectarians.⁽¹⁾ The division among the Cornish Dissenters may have been along the same lines;

'some were positive, others doubtful, desiring that the questions might be debated by a free Parliament, and in case a reasonable expedient or equivalent could be found, they were ready to serve His Majesty in all things'.

The answer of the second type of Nonconformist 'was also the unanimous answer of those of the Church of England'.⁽²⁾ In Wiltshire, Dorset, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Somerset and Devon it would appear that Congregationalists, though not Presbyterians, indicated a willingness to co-operate.⁽³⁾ Presbyterians, like Ambrose Barnes of Newcastle, who gave positive answers were rare. But even Barnes supported the idea of an 'equivalent', which he associated with James Stewart. His willingness to collaborate stemmed from his unusually clinical view of politics; he saw the Popish Menace as no more than a figment of the Protestant imagination, viewing the political scene in Balance of Power terms. The threat to England came from Louis XIV, against whom Spain, the Emperor and the Pope were aligned with Holland.⁽⁴⁾ Barnes, however, was something of a curiosity and may not represent such a glaring exception to Presbyterian political behaviour as at first appears. Though he used the Presbyterian label

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- (1) HMC 12th Report, app. pt. vii: MSS of S. H. Le Fleming (1890), 206-207; Lacey, 349 n. 95.
- (2) Lord Granville to Sir William Leveson, 5 May 1688, HMC 5th Report (1876), pt. 1, 197. The 'expedient' was a reference to Sunderland's scheme (J.P. Kenyon, Sunderland, 186-7) and the 'equivalent' to Penn's scheme. (Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2141a).
- (3) Lacey, 203, 350 n. 96.
- (4) W. H. D. Longstaffe (ed), Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Ambrose Barnes, Surtees Soc. L (1866), 178-9.

and had been a partial conformer, from his favourable references to John Goodwin and John Owen and his attacks on 'Baxterians' it is possible to deduce that he was more of an old fashioned Independent in practice.⁽¹⁾

In some regions, however, the Congregationalists, perhaps under the influence of the nascent union, followed the Presbyterians rather than the sects. In Staffordshire, according to Morrice, 'Protestants of all sorts' gave negative answers to the Three Questions, while in Yorkshire, according to James Johnstone, no 'Dissenter of quality' supported the repeal of the Test Acts.⁽²⁾

From January 1688, despite the uncertainties of the preceding six months, there was never any doubt on the stand of the vast majority of Presbyterians, both the 'comprehension' and 'toleration' groups, on repeal. It was reported that the Court was

'so angry with them, since their combined answers to the Lord Lieutenants, that... when the time of kindness is over they may be the first to feel the weight of His Majesty's displeasure'.⁽³⁾

From a number of boroughs the electoral agents reported either that the Presbyterians were supporting an opposition candidate or merely omitted mention of them as supporters of the Court candidate. By late February it was clear that if a Parliament met it would not even sanction the repeal of the Penal Laws, let alone the Tests. The electoral agents prefaced the report they presented on 19 April by saying that Catholics, Independents, Baptists and Quakers were

(1) Ibid, 8 n. 9, 17, 19.

(2) Morrice Q, 234; Lacey, 349 n. 95.

(3) BM Add MS. 34515, f. 43.

'generally in His Majesty's interest notwithstanding the many rumours and suggestions to divide and create jealousies among them'; *presumably* Presbyterians and Anglicans were not *to the same extent* ⁽¹⁾ The Presbyterians being put into the corporations were not infrequently as strongly opposed to the repeal of the Tests as the Anglicans put out. ⁽²⁾ The returns to the Three Questions which came in from strongly Nonconformist counties like Somerset, Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire carried either a majority of straight negatives, or affirmatives that were made conditional upon 'hearing the debates in Parliament'. ⁽³⁾ When individual Presbyterians, despite their views, were pressured into accepting local government positions or election candidacies there was counter pressure on them from co-religionists to withdraw. ⁽⁴⁾ That Presbyterians, despite expressed opposition to the King's programme, were nonetheless appointed to borough corporations, may help to explain why so many corporations had to be re-regulated. ⁽⁵⁾

The hardening of attitudes against the repeal of the Test Acts which took place between November 1687 and February 1688 may be accounted for by a variety of factors. First, after the months of estrangement, the initial moves were being made in the detente between the Dons and the moderate churchmen, and the example of the

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- (1) Duckett II, 219, 220, 237; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2143c; Morrice Q, 239 (ii), (iii), (iv), 244, 288-9. See HMC Downshire MSS I, i, 298; J. Carswell, *The Descent on England* (1969), 114.
- (2) Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2147d; J. S. Clarke (ed), *The Life of James the Second King of England &c Collected Out of Memoirs Writ of His Own Hand* (1816) II, 139-40.
- (3) Bunyan, 347-8; Luttrell I, 422; VCH Somerset II, 230-1; K. Feiling, *A History of the Tory Party 1640-1714* (1924), 219.
- (4) Walter Wilson MS I, v, 158, 159, 223; Harmer MS.76.9, 155-6; W. Urwick, *Nonconformity in Cheshire* (1864), 32-3.
- (5) Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2161e; Morrice Q, 234. See J. P. Kenyon, *Robert Spencer Earl of Sunderland* (1958), 189-190.

Dons, who had distinguished themselves by their refusal to have any contact with the Catholic Court and whose leader had been apotheosised by Nonconformity in general after his trial and imprisonment, had an influence that stretched beyond the confines of their own sect.⁽¹⁾ The second factor, which arose from the first, was that by January 1688 the Churchmen were for the first time beginning to realise the inevitability of toleration for Dissenters and hence, for the first time, were not positively alienating the sects.⁽²⁾ Thirdly, the announcement of the Queen's conception provoked an outburst of hysterical forecasts by all sorts of Nonconformists of a new 'Popish Peril'. Like 1588, 1688 would be a 'year of destiny' in which a decisive round against the Beast would be fought. Morrice wrote:

'In most kingdoms and states the Protestant Interest is utterly suppressed, and in others dangerously threatened. In Bohemia, Wallachia, Moldavia, all Hungary and several other countries it is quite utterly destroyed. So it is in France where there were lately at least 1,800,000 Protestants'.

James II's 'toleration' was a ruse, his utterances mere tergiversations and his plan was to complete the triumph of the Counter Reformation by the establishment of a Catholic dynasty to rule a re-converted England.⁽³⁾ Some believed that 'the Magdalen College affair' had

(1) Bolam, 100.

(2) Morrice Q, 214, 232, 243. See Every, 19. It is significant that 'everyone' gave an 'enthusiastic affirmative' to the last of the Three Questions 'about living peaceably with other denominations'. J. Carswell, *The Descent on England* (1969), 110.

(3) BM Add MS. 34515, f. 35; Morrice Q, 226, 231, 232-3, 234-8, 239-242, 247, 249, 252; Welwood, *Memoirs*, 183, 187; Burnet I, 727-728. See Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2120b, 2141c, 2145b.

laid bare the King's true intentions, and done more than any other single factor to alienate Dissenters from his cause.⁽¹⁾ The fourth factor was that in December 1687 and January 1688 Fagel's Letter, despite the efforts of the Court, was being widely circulated and read by Nonconformists. Coming at a time when William Penn and James Stewart had had to give up their cherished compromise (the King had quashed the scheme) and even Sunderland's 'expedient' had been ignored,⁽²⁾ it served to reinforce and popularise the standard Presbyterian viewpoint and emphasis the advantage of the Dutch succession. Certain Dissenters who had been won over to the Court now left it, and John Howe began to ruminate on the advantages of a scheme he believed to be in the offing 'for bringing about a great Revolution in His Majesty's family'.⁽³⁾

The impact of Fagel's Letter went right across the Nonconformist spectrum. For comprehension-orientated groups, it offered protection for the Church and the political exclusion of Roman Catholics. For toleration-orientated groups, it offered a permanent, 'constitutional' parliamentary toleration and a bulwark against Catholic advance. Hence it helped to 'confirm the doubtful' among the Congregationalist and Baptist sects who, whether through constitutional scruples, fear of the Popish Peril or quietism, had not as yet committed themselves to the Court.⁽⁴⁾ But a great many, especially among the Baptists,

(1) BM Add. MS. 34515, f. 43; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2112d.

(2) See above, pp. 438-9; J. Carswell, *The Descent on England* (1969), 109; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2124e, 2141c.

(3) Duckett II, 219-20; Burnet I, 734; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2099b, 2101a, 2112d, 2118b, 2126e, g, 2141a, b; Morrice Q, 207, 234, 239; Welwood, *Memoirs*, 220; J. P. Kenyon, *Robert Spencer Earl of Sunderland* (1958), 179, 180; L. Pinkham, *William III and the Respectable Revolution* (1954), 61.

(4) Burnet I, 734; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2124e, 2141c, 2147d; Whiting, 131; Lacey, 204. See *Devonshire to William*, circa January 1688, Dalrymple II, pt. 1, app. to bk v, 88-9.

already had. The Baptist sects had not only been the first to address, but individual Baptists had, by June 1687, showed willing to co-operate with Catholics in local government. It is significant, however, that this co-operation was made conditional. In negotiations between groups of Baptists and local Catholic gentry in the North, the Baptists, whilst 'readily concurring in the taking off of the laws that were made against religion merely', had opposed 'the taking off of the disabling laws', and insisted on presenting the King with a 'list of grievances' to be redressed.⁽¹⁾ In October 1687, those Baptists already co-operating with the Court on the corporations, 'would do no more than let others have the free exercise of their religion', but despite their aversion to 'going all the way' with the King's programme, they continued to show themselves willing to occupy positions on the corporations.⁽²⁾

By the early months of 1688 the issue amongst the Baptist sects had resolved itself into one of support for, or opposition to, collaboration; anti-collaborationists rationalising their stand either in terms of quietistic premises, or the arguments of Fagel's Letter. The staunchest opponents of involvement were the influential Stennet family, the revered John Bunyan, (though there is contradictory evidence on Bunyan's stand), and William Kiffin - until his own appointment (under duress) to the City of London corporation.⁽³⁾

(1) Morrice Q, 96, 141; Crosby III, 198-200; Luttrell I, 400.

(2) Morrice Q, 181.

(3) Bunyan, 348-9, 352-353; Ivimey I, 473-7; R. T. Jones, Congregationalism in England 1662-1962 (1962), 104; H. W. Clark, English Nonconformity (1912) II, 110; Whiting, 130-131; M. Noble, Memoirs of the Protectoral House of Cromwell (1787) II, 463; Kiffin, 84, 85-88; G. H. Pike, Ancient Meeting Houses (1870), 175. See a discussion of the evidence on Bunyan's position below, pp. 503-507.

Hence, though a considerable number of Baptists had given indications in their answers to the Three Questions or in conversation with electoral agents that their support was available, by mid-March 1688 they were having second thoughts. This gave rise to a situation in which, by the time the King had received the lists of 'suitable' persons from the Committee on Regulation through Baptist defections they were already outdated; therefore, many of those whose names were on them were never actually put into corporations, or were speedily removed if appointed. Concern at Baptist and Congregationalist defections may well have been a factor in convincing the Court that an April Parliament would, after all, be impracticable.⁽¹⁾ Nevertheless the reports of the electoral agents *in the Spring of 1688 still provide instances where* moderate Dissenters and moderate Churchmen were supporting one candidate, *while 'strict Dissenters', probably Baptists,* were tending to join with Roman Catholics in the support of another.⁽²⁾ But some 'strict Dissenters' were prepared to admit that their motive in making electoral undertakings to court agents was fear of the consequences of a negative answer, and that such undertakings would not be kept.⁽³⁾ Others who made undertakings and seemed keen to serve were stigmatised by co-religionists as social climbers.⁽⁴⁾ What finally alienated many Baptists from the Court, and confirmed the aversion of all types of Dissenter, was the Affair of the Seven Bishops.⁽⁵⁾

(1) Morrice Q, 239 (ii), 243-4; Portland Misc. 19, Pwa 2141c, 2143c, 2145c, 2147d, 2161e; d'Adda, 12 March 1688 NS, cited J. P. Kenyon, Robert Spencer Earl of Sunderland (1958), 191-2.

(2) Duckett I, 409-410; II, 237; Lacey, 206.

(3) BM Add MS. 34515, f. 67; Portland Misc. 19, Pwa 2161e.

(4) Morrice Q, 254.

(5) d'Adda, 1 June NS, cited Mackintosh, 253; J. Carswell, The Descent on England (1969), 137, 143-4. See above, pp. 424-427.

The move among the Baptists away from the Court, however, had begun earlier; Baptist response to the Declaration of Indulgence in April made that evident. There can be no doubt that the King expected addresses of thanks from Nonconformists for his second Declaration on the scale of those he had received for his first, and that he was disappointed when he did not receive them.⁽¹⁾ It would also appear that pressure was applied to elicit such addresses. By 16 June all major Nonconformist leaders had been 'pressed fervently to sign a congratulatory address to the King for the confirming of His Declaration'.⁽²⁾ Involved in applying this pressure were Sir John Baber, Stephen Lobb, William Penn and Charles Trinder.⁽³⁾ Pressure notwithstanding, however, only two addresses were received from purely Nonconformist sources, neither of them from Baptists. The first was from the 'Old Dissenting Officers and Soldiers of the County of Lincoln', who offered to influence elections in His Majesty's favour; an offer that was vain in view of the paucity of Dissenting interest in their county.⁽⁴⁾ The second was from the Yearly Meeting of Quakers, which met on 9 June, praising God and His Majesty that the goals were 'everywhere clear, except in cases of tithes, and ^{the} repairs of parish churches, and... oaths' and promising co-operation in the elections.⁽⁵⁾ Apart from one other, from 'the inhabitants of Wapping, Shedwell, Ratcliff and Limehouse', who promised loyalty but not support,⁽⁶⁾

(1) Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2169. The second Declaration of Indulgence, issued 27 April 1688 (Gazette No. 2342) is discussed in detail in Chapter IV, pp. 417-424.

(2) Morrice Q, 269.

(3) Lacey, 215; J. R. Jones, 'James II's Whig Collaborators', Historical Journal III (1960), 69.

(4) Gazette 2344; Walter Wilson MS. I, iii, 163, 164.

(5) Gazette 2354; Braithwaite, 145-6; Luttrell I, 443.

(6) Gazette 2353.

the remaining forty-eight addresses published in the London Gazette between the last week in April⁽¹⁾ and the *Yurd week* in September 1688⁽²⁾ were from 'substantial' interests, mainly official bodies or local government officers.

Following the pattern set in the addresses to the 1687 Indulgence received from remodelled corporations,⁽³⁾ a majority of these - twenty-*SIX* out of the forty-eight - contained specific promises that they would help to secure the election of MPs who would repeal the penal laws and the Test Acts. Unlike the earlier addresses, however, very rarely did the salutation indicate that the address was being sent by the complete corporation of a particular borough. (Some, of course, were not received from the members of corporations at all, but from JPs, Lord Lieutenants, Grand Juries, etc). The twenty-*SIX* addresses which included undertakings of support were from the Bailiffs and Burgesses of Droitwich, the West Riding JPs, the Mayor and Burgesses of Lyme, the Mayor, *and Burgesses* Aldermen of Northampton, the Mayor and Aldermen of Carlisle, the complete corporations of Scarborough and Canterbury (i.e. including Mayor, Aldermen and *and others* Common Councilmen), the Howard family of Winchester, the Mayor and Capital Burgesses of Devizes, the Corporation of Cambridge, the Mayor, Recorder, *and Burgesses* Aldermen of Bedford, the Mayor and *Burgesses* of Thetford, the Mayor, Recorder and Aldermen of Rochester and of Malden, the Bailiff, Recorder, *Burgesses* and JPs of Leominster, the Corporations of Berwick, and of Dartmouth, the Lord Lieutenant and JPs of the North Riding, the Grand Inquest of Middlesex, the Lord Lieutenant

(1) Gazette 2343.

(2) Gazette 2383.

(3) See above, pp. 336-339.

and Deputy Lieutenants of Kent, the Corporations of Bath,
and King's Lynn

and the Freemen of Bath.⁽¹⁾

The altered style of the salutation may have been indicative of division in the corporations on the issue of addressing. If it was, it considerably down-values the addresses in terms of parliamentary seats. It also cannot be without significance that the offers of support came less often after the birth of the Prince of Wales. Thirty of the total of forty-eight addresses were received after the birth of the Prince on 10 June, but these contained only *eight* of the twenty-~~SIX~~ offers of co-operation.⁽²⁾ The Corporation of Exeter, which made no promises of support and was one of the few corporations for which we can be fairly certain that there was a Nonconformist majority, *implied* in their brief address that the birth of the Prince would itself make the Indulgence permanent.⁽³⁾

The silence of the Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Baptists, except insofar as individuals from these sects may have helped to sponsor the addresses from public bodies, left the Quakers as the only Nonconformist group prepared to show their gratitude for the Indulgence of 1688. But even had every Quaker (and every Baptist for that matter) undertaken to support the King's programme they were thinly spread all over the country and so few would be on the franchise (except for those on the corporations), that it is unlikely they would have counted for much in an election.⁽⁴⁾ Moreover,

(1) Gazettes 2343, 2345, 2346, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2356, 2357, 2359, 2360, 2362, 2364, 2368, 2370, 2371.

(2) Gazettes 2358-2361, 2362, 2364, 2368-2371.

(3) Gazette 2358; Morrice Q, 235; Brockett, 50-51. See CSPD 1687-9, 304-5.

(4) See above, pp. 83-93.

quietism was a more ingrained part of the Quaker outlook, than it was of that of any other type of Nonconformist.⁽¹⁾ Hence the division in the Society of Friends in 1688 was not between those favouring repeal and those favouring either the retention of the Test Acts or the retention of the Test Acts and the penal laws and oaths insofar as they affected Roman Catholics, as it was among Presbyterians and Congregationalists, and, to a lesser extent, Baptists. The division was between those who followed the quietist tradition, typified by George and Margaret Fox, and those who followed the tradition of ingratiating with the Prince in order to secure a better lot for fellow Quakers, typified by William Penn and Robert Barclay, who now favoured whole-hearted collaboration. It is unfortunate for the clarity of this distinction that it is not apparent which faction had the support of the erstwhile Quaker courtiers, George Whitehead and Gilbert Lacey. But it is probable that Whitehead, at least, favoured collaboration.⁽²⁾

Once William Penn had convinced himself that he must remain in England until 'toleration be established' he had worked unceasingly to bring about a Declaration of Indulgence.⁽³⁾ Once the Indulgence itself had been achieved he had seen the importance of securing parliamentary sanction through a Nonconformist alliance and, in the course of the latter half of 1687, had written a number of pamphlets to elicit support from fellow Dissenters.⁽⁴⁾ Also with this end in mind he had backed the regulation of the corporations.

(1) See above, pp. 64-66.

(2) Whitehead, 618-22; Lacey, 350 n. 98.

(3) Janney, 279-280, 280-2, 284-5, 297-9.

(4) See above, pp. 295-296.

The King was 'unpacking for the good of the whole' that which had long been 'packed for the ^{sole} good of a party'.⁽¹⁾ Unlike the King, however, Penn saw the importance of Presbyterian support for the Nonconformist Alliance and, with James Stewart, canvassed his compromise idea between December 1687 and February 1688. Penn was the last to give way in the face of royal pressure to drop this project, and continued privately to advocate the separation of the penal laws and the Tests.⁽²⁾

That Penn had a following of considerable size within the Society of Friends is very clear, though the Quakers who were prepared to collaborate saw no point in making Penn's clinical distinction between the Tests and the penal laws. Brent's agents reported from Wiltshire, Dorset, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Somerset and Devon that Quakers ^{among others} were 'unanimously agreed to elect such Members of Parliament, as will abolish these tests and laws'.⁽³⁾ Whilst fellow Quakers may well have believed it wise to restrain Penn in his involvement at Court, and whilst the consensus of a majority of the sect may well have been opposed to accepting political office of any kind,⁽⁴⁾ Penn did not suffer the ostracism from fellow Friends that outside observers thought they saw.⁽⁵⁾ Penn may

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- (1) W. Penn, *The Great and Popular Objection Against the Repeal of the Penal Laws and Tests* (1688), 14; Buranelli, 91.
- (2) BM Add MS. 34515, ff. 32, 33, 47; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2099b, 2112d, 2126b, 2141b. The retention of the Tests he saw as a short term measure aimed at encouraging support among moderate Dissenters. His pamphlet *The Great and Popular Objection Against the Repeal of the Penal Laws and the Tests Briefly Stated and Considered* (1688) argued, at length, for the repeal of the Tests.
- (3) Duckett II, 219.
- (4) Braithwaite, 143; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2112d, 2161e.
- (5) Bonrepos au Roi, September 1688, Archives Nationales K.1351, No. 4, 55; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2112d, The New Examen (1861), 306-309. See J. Paget,

well have been despised by Anglicans and Presbyterians, and even by a Baptist like William Kiffin, for his position at Court, but he was not despised within his own sect.⁽¹⁾ The collaborationist faction among the Quakers was strong as late as the end of September 1688. When the Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting was held on 26 and 27 September, the resolution was taken to encourage all enfranchised Friends to vote in the forthcoming elections. A sum of money was also voted for a supply of political pamphlets to be bought in London, including fifty each of two leaflets, and a hundred of one entitled, Three Letters tending to Demonstrate how the Security of this Nation, against all Future Persecution for Religion lies in the Abolishment of the Present Penal Laws and Tests, and in the Establishment of a New Law for Universal Liberty of Conscience.⁽²⁾

But the quietist tradition was also strong, perhaps stronger. George Fox, despite old age, influenced the behaviour of Friends in all parts of England against involvement by keeping up a massive correspondence. Margaret Fox, through correspondence and by visiting the faithful, also wielded a considerable influence for restraint.⁽³⁾

^{South}
In Lancashire the negative or non-committal answers of some Friends

(1) Whiting, 184-5; J. Paget, *The New Examen* (1861), 288-291; Sewel II, 482-3; G. Croese, *A History of the Quakers* (1696) II, 106-107; Braithwaite, 144-5, 146-9; W. H. Dixon, *William Penn: An Historical Biography* (1851), 265-8; Janney, 337-341; Kiffin, 84.

(2) Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting Minutes, 26, 27 September 1688, cited Braithwaite, 146; Whitehead, 618-22.

(3) Sewel II, 468-9, 473-4; H. van Etton, *George Fox and the Quakers* (1959), 113; Braithwaite, 143, 144, 144-5; Margaret Fox, *A Brief Collection of Remarkable Passages and Occurrences Relating to the Life of Margaret Fell, by her second marriage, Margaret Fox (1710)*, 11 et seq. See W. Beck (ed), *The London Friends' Meetings: Showing the Rise of the Society of Friends in London* (1869), 52-3.

The opposition of the older Quaker leadership to political activism had been consistent since Exclusion. See Penn, 74.

to the Three Questions were put down to her quietistic influence.⁽¹⁾ Although the King gave orders that the Quakers were to be allowed to hold office without taking the oaths, only a few accepted, many more refused.⁽²⁾ Something by way of a confrontation, copiously inter-larded with the usual unctuous phrases and verbal genuflexions, took place between Penn and Fox at the Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends in June 1688. Whilst Penn argued that Friends should be prepared to accept office as JPs and stand for Parliament if invited to do so, Fox came out in favour of withdrawal from all things political, and asserted that in any event it was

'not safe to conclude such things in a Yearly Meeting. But [that the meeting should] keep to the Power of God, and discourse.. such things... that are concerned in them... It was not in the wisdom of God to propound such things there. [They should] serve all men in the truth and righteousness', and leave 'Caesar' to his own affairs.⁽³⁾

In the involuted language of the Friends this was fighting talk, and it is possible that this seasonable rebuke from the Founding Father served to lead Penn to be still more cautious in his advice to the King.⁽⁴⁾ At the very least, since the disagreement prevented the meeting from coming to a decision, George Fox had averted a formal commitment to collaboration on the part of the only sect to whom the anti-Papist apprehensions and constitutional scruples

(1) HMC 12th Report, app. pt. vii: MSS of S. H. Le Fleming (1890), 207; Lacey, 349 n. 95.

(2) HMC 7th Report, Verney MSS (1878), 505; Lacey, 350 n. 98.

(3) Minutes of the Society of Friends Yearly Meeting, June 1688, cited J. B. Braithwaite, Bi-Centenary of the Death of George Fox (1891), 47-49.

(4) J. Paget, The New Examen (1861), 330-331.

that inhibited involvement on the part of the other sects had no meaning.

4

The issues involved in repeal and collaboration had brought division to all the Nonconformist sects. These divisions had been apparent in intra sectarian conflicts and frictions, in responses to the various forms of court pressure and in the addresses that followed the 1688 Indulgence. But the attitudes that prompted Dissenters to resist enticement do not, on their own, account for the exiguity of Nonconformist participation in the King's programme and the fact that the remodelled local government of 1688 was staffed, instead, with a motley of groups of whom Nonconformists were only one. The results of the Great Persecution had rendered them less able to play an effective part even had the will been there.⁽¹⁾ The Court and the operators of the electoral machine, however, underestimating the stubbornness of Dissenting attitudes in the face of the inducements of power from which they had been excluded since the Restoration Settlement, and over-estimating the electoral viability of Dissenters and the temptation of a rash amendment of that Settlement to their advantage, gave many the opportunity to turn down offers of political positions, placed many in positions for which they were conceptually unsuited, and took seriously offers of support from others incapable of rendering effective support. Nor were the courtiers the only persons guilty of these tactical miscalculations. There were those

(1) See above, pp. 83-91.

among the Nonconformists who convinced the King that they could 'manage' their co-religionists on his behalf.

The first of James II's 'Dissenting Managers'⁽¹⁾ was Vincent Alsop. Alsop was a Presbyterian separatist or 'Duckling', and hence aspired toward toleration, not comprehension.⁽²⁾ During the reign of Charles II he had suffered from a victimisation campaign on the part of the Anglican persecutors. This confirmed his belief in separation, and enhanced his bitterness against the Church.⁽³⁾ By 1685 his opinions on ecclesiastical government had led many fellow Presbyterians to describe him as an 'Independent'; he believed that the Presbyterian ecclesiastical system was not only impractical at that time, but undesirable, and spoke and wrote in favour of the complete autonomy of the local congregation.⁽⁴⁾ The involvement of a wayward son in 'treasonable activities', the desire to secure his pardon, and afterwards, gratitude for the pardon granted, would appear to have been a motive for his collaboration with the Court, though his involvement in political activity in 1687-8 was perfectly consistent with views he had expressed for more than a decade.⁽⁵⁾ In contrast with Macaulay's exaggerated view of the extent of Alsop's involvement,⁽⁶⁾ it would appear that his role was very limited. In April and May 1687 he was involved in canvassing for support for an address among other

(1) Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2147d, 2149a, b, 2167g.

(2) Wilson IV, 63-65; R. A. Beddard, 'Vincent Alsop and the Emancipation of Restoration Dissent', JEH XXIV, No. 2 (April 1973), 161-180. See above, pp. 293-294.

(3) Wilson IV, 65; R. A. Beddard, op cit, 176.

(4) R. A. Beddard, op cit, 176-7.

(5) Morrice Q, 126; Wilson IV, 65; Lacey, 341 n. 23; R. A. Beddard, op cit, 180.

(6) T. B. Macaulay, A History of England, ed. C. H. Firth (1914) II, 873, 992; III, 1376.

Presbyterian separatists, and subsequently presented the address along with Joseph Read, Daniel Burgess and Anthony Withers, (none of whom played any part in the King's programme hereafter).⁽¹⁾

The wording of the address avoided political connotation, let alone commitment, and hardly merits Macaulay's description ^{of Alsop as} 'zealous for the dispensing power'.⁽²⁾ During the remainder of 1687 Alsop was involved in canvassing and writing in favour of collaboration, though not ^{necessarily} for any particular view of the dispensing power or the Tests.⁽³⁾ In the course of November and December the frequency of his appearances at Court led to the assumption that he was helping to 'manage' Nonconformist electoral support.⁽⁴⁾ But at the beginning of February 1688 he had not been seen at Court for some weeks⁽⁵⁾ and in June 1688 he, and a group of other Presbyterian separatists involved in enticement, were warned by their congregations that if they involved themselves further, they would neither be 'heard' nor 'paid'. This warning was considered to have been superfluous in Alsop's case since he was already 'gone with melancholy' for the part he had played and was 'meddling in nothing'.⁽⁶⁾ After the Revolution, however, he continued to speak with gratitude of James II's clemency and was looked on with suspicion by fellow clergy.⁽⁷⁾

(1) Morrice Q, 102, 112, 114, 115; Wilson IV, 65; R. A. Beddard, op cit, 175, 176.

(2) Gazette 2238; T. B. Macaulay, A History of England, ed. C. H. Firth (1914) III, 1376.

(3) ^{See} Wilson III, 438.

(4) Morrice Q, 201, 227. Perhaps Alsop was one of the 'new Protestant favourites' at Court in November 1687. Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2099b.

(5) Morrice Q, 227, 239.

(6) BM Add MS. 34515, f. 79; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2167g; Mackintosh, 259.

(7) Wilson IV, 65.

Whilst Alsop's contribution to the King's programme was minimal, short-lived and ultimately regretted, Stephen Lobb's activities as a 'Dissenting Manager' for the Court were given more prominence by the Dutch observers than those of Penn himself, whose influence did not extend beyond his own sect.⁽¹⁾ Lobb

had studied at a private Non-conformist academy, was the son of Richard Lobb (who had been High Sheriff of Cornwall and an MP during the Protectorate) and had become pastor of the Fetter Lane Independent congregation in 1681.⁽²⁾

Despite his youth, Lobb's defiance of the Anglican persecutors had won him a place of respect within his sect in a very short time.

Sir Roger L'Estrange had branded him among 'the most violent pastors of 1685'.⁽³⁾ Like Alsop, he was initially attracted to the Court by

a pardon, somewhat belatedly conferred for offences in connection with Monmouth's Rebellion, (he had been excepted by name from the General Pardon of March 1686).⁽⁴⁾ Also like Alsop, his first involvement

with the Court was in touting for 'subscribers' for an address to the King in April 1687 purporting to be representative of his sect in the London area. It was, perhaps, a measure of Lobb's influence that,

in contrast to Alsop's modest nine, he found 149 subscribers for his address.⁽⁵⁾ From the presentation of this address, he was in constant touch with the Court, and was soon regarded by the King as 'a man of

(1) Portland Misc. 19, PwA 2147d, 2149a, b, 2167g; BM Add MS. 34515, f. 79.

(2) Wilson III, 436-438.

(3) Kitchin, 352; Wilson III, 436-8.

(4) Gazette 2120; CSPD 1686-7, 326. See above, pp. 240, 263. and Appendix One.

(5) Morrice Q, 114, 155; Wilson III, 439.

influence among the Nonconformists'.⁽¹⁾ (James seemed to be incapable of understanding that there were many shades and nuances covered by the blanket term 'Nonconformist'). Lobb's was one of the most effective answers to Halifax's Letter to a Dissenter.⁽²⁾ The bitterness shown by this pamphlet against Anglican persecution and what he thought of as the cynical use by Churchmen of the 'Popish Menace' to undermine the Indulgence⁽³⁾ was increased during the autumn of 1687 by his personal knowledge of the 'base offers' made by the High Churchmen to induce James to 'drop the Dissenters'.⁽⁴⁾ Lobb never worked with Penn to exercise restraint at Court, but frequently ran with the extremists. Whilst Penn was canvassing his compromise, Lobb was asserting that the Test Acts and the penal laws must stand or fall together. The Test Acts, he said, gave 'occasion... to the abominable profanation of one of the most sacred institutions of our holy religion', by compelling 'the vilest debauchees' to take the Sacrament as a qualification for civil office.⁽⁵⁾

During the first half of 1688 Lobb sought to encourage electoral support from Dissenters and tried to elicit addresses of thanks after the 1688 Indulgence.⁽⁶⁾ James's opinion of him was such that he consulted him on various points of electoral policy, and during the

- (1) Wilson III, 438-441; J. Peirce, *A Vindication of the Dissenters* (2nd edit. 1718), 269-270; W. Nichols, *A Defence of the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of England* (1718), 108-109; Morrice Q, 115, 178, 227.
- (2) See above, pp. 407-408.
- (3) Stephen Lobb, *A Second Letter to a Dissenter upon His Majesty's late Gracious Declaration of Indulgence* (1687), 1, 3, 5-6, 9-10.
- (4) J. Peirce, *A Vindication of the Dissenters* (2nd edit. 1718), 269. See above, pp. 412-414 ; Morrice Q, 178, 181.
- (5) Wilson III, 439, 440; J. Peirce, *op cit*, 270.
- (6) Lacey, 215; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2147d, 2149a, b.

crisis over the Bishops' petition Lobb's advice, like Petre's, was that the Bishops should be conveyed to the Tower and ultimately 'prosecuted'.⁽¹⁾ Perhaps apprehending something of the depth of Nonconformist opinion against the Court after the Trial of the Seven Bishops - on the eve of which he was still 'the great courtier'⁽²⁾ - Lobb may well have withdrawn from Court involvement thereafter. During the reign of William III he wore without embarrassment the epithet 'The Jacobite Independent' and, though distrusted, continued to exercise a considerable influence within his sect.⁽³⁾ Stephen Lobb was one of the few Nonconformists during the reign of James II who realised that Nonconformity's greatest predator in his generation had been, and would be, the Church of England, rather than the miniscule representation in England of the Church of Rome, and inspired by his bitterness against the Anglicans, and refusing to believe that the Catholic interest would undergo significant growth, was prepared to take this analysis of affairs to its logical conclusion.⁽⁴⁾

In contrast with Alsop and Lobb, William Penn - the third and last of James II's 'Dissenting Managers' - had not been won over to the King by his policy of clemency and toleration, but had himself, in all probability, persuaded the King to pursue such a policy. Despite the convictions of the King and foreign observers, however, and his influence at Court notwithstanding, his influence among the

(1) Burnet I, 739-740; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2147d, 2149a, b, 2167g; Morrice Q, 227, 263; Wilson III, 443; Neal V, 62; Mackintosh, 259-60.

(2) Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2167g.

(3) Wilson III, 439, 444; DWL MS.38.66, 33; Mackintosh, 259.

(4) See Stephen Lobb, A Second Letter to a Dissenter upon His Majesty's late Gracious Declaration of Indulgence (1687), 1-3, 9-11.

sects was probably not as great as Lobb's.⁽¹⁾ The only possible example of his having exerted an influence beyond the confines of his own sect was his preaching campaign in the Midland and Western counties undertaken contemporaneously with the King's Progress in 1687, and during which he may have helped to encourage Nonconformist groups to address.⁽²⁾ There is no evidence to support the assertions that Penn was 'the principal go-between' between James and the Dissenters in 1687-8⁽³⁾ or that he organised the addressers of 1687 to become the JPs and Common Councilmen of 1688, or that he advised on their use.⁽⁴⁾ Nor does Macaulay's highly coloured account of his involvement in the attack on Magdalen College hold up under scrutiny: his most subjective action was to argue the case for opening up the universities to non-Anglicans. His actions were moderate, not imperious.⁽⁵⁾ Apart from his influence on Government policy, Penn's most positive contribution to enticement was to prepare the minds of fellow Quakers to receive a court-conceded toleration - in view of their traditions not a difficult task - to encourage them to address and to collaborate; and, through his pamphlets, to offset the influence of the Anglican campaign on attitudes to the King's programme and, through the same medium, to argue cogently the advantages of repeal.⁽⁶⁾ Though it would also appear that Penn did the

(1) See Bonrepos au Roi, September 1688, Archives Nationales K 1351, No. 4, 54, 55; BM Add. MS. 34515, ff. 34, 47; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2161e.

(2) See above, pp. 314-317.

(3) Penn, 121.

(4) Jones,¹³¹ 132, 134, 144.

(5) Quaker historians have been meticulous, and convincing, in their defence of Penn on this score. See Janney, 308-335; Braithwaite, 138-141; Penn, 123-126. For a collection of the documents concerning Penn's 'intervention' in the Magdalen College Affair, See J. R. Bloxam, 'Magdalen College and King James II', Oxford Historical Society (1886), 88-106.

(6) Janney, 285, 298-9; Braithwaite, 144-5; G. Croese, A History of the Quakers (1696) III, 106-108; Buranelli, 90-92. See above, pp. 111, 113-115, 295-296, 409-410.

King a dubious service *by winning over* some of the ex-Whigs who worked his electoral machine.⁽¹⁾

Although Penn remained at Court right up to the Revolution, his advice was increasingly being ignored after November 1687. During the first half of 1688 he was being outpaced by events and by June he had been left behind, somewhat bemused, having been forced to abandon most of his cherished projects. Whilst he sympathised with the King's objectives and had approved of the regulation of the corporations,⁽²⁾ Penn had none of James's reckless fanaticism that ignored adverse realities and impending disasters. In the summer of 1687 he had warned the King against the very courses being pursued by January 1688.⁽³⁾ He had disapproved of the Three Questions and the questioning techniques used by the electoral agents as tending to excite antipathies, rather than encourage support.⁽⁴⁾ When he became aware in December 1687 that neither the Presbyterians, who were essential to a successful Dissenting coalition, nor William, would countenance the abrogation of the Test Acts, he had begun to work on a compromise proposition: first, that the penal laws alone should be repealed,⁽⁵⁾ then, when the King had indicated his opposition,⁽⁶⁾ a scheme elaborated in the first week of February 1688 whereby 'equivalents' should be offered 'that all the nation would

(1) *See Penn, 122.*

(2) W. Penn, *The Great and Popular Objection Against the Repeal of the Penal Laws and the Tests (1688)*, 14; Buranelli, 91; Braithwaite, 142.

(3) T. Clarkson (ed), *Memoirs of the Public and Private Life of William Penn (1849)*, introduction (by W. E. Forster), liv - *lv*.

(4) BM Add MS.34515, ff. 31-33; Portland Misc.19, PwA 2103; Penn, 126.

(5) Portland Misc. 19, PwA 2099b; Morrice Q, 239 (11), (111).

(6) Portland Misc. 19, PwA 2112d.

accept of... for such parts of the Test as should be desired to be taken off'.⁽¹⁾ At the same time, he was endeavouring to offset the influence of a party at Court which wanted war with the Dutch. This system of 'equivalents', Penn was sure, was what was needed to secure the support of William and of the English Presbyterian Party for the Court's campaign.⁽²⁾ By May Penn was forced to recognise that the Church had won the Presbyterians,⁽³⁾ and, by early June, he was forced to abandon completely his hopes for effecting a reconciliation between James and William.⁽⁴⁾ The first of these objectives had been the aim of six months; the second, (to ensure agreement between James and William on the toleration issue), had been the aim of two and a half years.⁽⁵⁾ In the course of the first half of 1688 neither objective was regarded as practicable or desirable by the King, and hence William Penn and his schemes had become almost irrelevant to the Court's programme.

During the same period of time Penn had come to dislike, despite his earlier support, the turn that the electoral programme had taken, and by June he opposed it.⁽⁶⁾ The temptation to abandon the Court to its fate must have been strong, but, in the course of the summer, Penn was still endeavouring to exercise restraint on policy on an ad hoc basis. He opposed the commitment to the Tower of the Seven Bishops,⁽⁷⁾ during their stay in the Tower he sent

(1) Portland Misc. 19, PWA, 2141a; Penn, 127.

(2) BM Add MS. 34515, f. 47; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2141a, b.

(3) Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2161d, e.

(4) Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2168d; Lacey, 213.

(5) Lacey, 213; Burnet I, 693-4; Janney, 282, 284.

(6) Buranelli, 91; J. R. Jones, 'James II's Whig Collaborators', Historical Journal III (1960), 67. See Penn, 127-9.

(7) Janney, 337.

Robert Barclay to explore the possibility of a face-saving modus vivendi⁽¹⁾ and he advised the King to use the birth of the Prince of Wales as an excuse for their release.⁽²⁾ In ^{late} June Penn and Barclay were busy arranging a reconciliation between Sunderland and Melfort which, so Barclay told Clarendon, they 'hoped would be the ruin of Father Peters'.⁽³⁾ Since May Penn had been gathering evidence of the popular hostility felt toward the electoral campaign, and this he now presented to the King. At the same time he brought Whig and Anglican spokesmen to the Court who, on his advice, first expressed their loyalty and then frankly confessed their opposition to the nature of the Court's 'tampering with elections'.⁽⁴⁾ By September Penn's mood was profoundly pessimistic but Bonrepos could still report that the King, who persisted in the belief that Penn's earlier boasts of widespread influence among Dissenters were true, intended to use him as some kind of 'manager' of the Nonconformist Party in the forthcoming Parliament.⁽⁵⁾

With the exception of Penn's influence on Quaker collaboration and the encouragement from Alsop, Lobb and Penn of addresses in April and May 1687, it would appear that the influence of James II's three 'Dissenting Managers' upon the political behaviour of the sects was

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- (1) Sewel II, 484-5; Braithwaite, 144; Morrice Q, 266-7.
 (2) Janney, 337; Penn, 129.
 (3) BM Add MS.34515, ff. 89-90; H. Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, Correspondence and Diaries, ed. S. W. Singer (1828) II, 178.
 (4) Buranelli, 91-92.
 (5) Bonrepos au Roi, September 1688, Archives Nationales K 1351, No. 4, 54, 55. Penn was not, however, a candidate for the Election. Before William's landing Penn, Whitehead and Latey had a meeting with James. Latey expressed the hope that God would show the King the same 'mercy and favour in the time of his trouble and sore distress' that the King had shown to the Quakers. R. Hawkins (ed), Friends Library: Consisting Principally of the Journals and Extracts from Other Writings of the Members of the Society of Friends, IX (1834), 83-84.

minimal, if it existed at all. In each case the pattern evident in the political attitudes of the sect was born out by the extent of its political involvement. Any instances of Presbyterian involvement tended to be during the period of uncertainty before January 1688, and many of those approached after this date declined or, if they were appointed or listed as 'suitable', continued to hold opinions that were incompatible with the King's objectives. Among the Congregationalists the pattern was not nearly as definite, since it varied from region to region, but there is still evidence of a revulsion of opinion among office-holders after the beginning of 1688 as well as greater opposition to collaboration. It is probable that some Baptists and Quakers collaborated throughout - though Baptists might refuse to serve side by side with Catholics, but the unhealthy prospects which seemed to be portended by the birth of the Prince of Wales and the Seven Bishops affair may have tended to deter both sects from further involvement. The laity of all the sects gave commitments of electoral support to Brent's agents which they did not intend to fulfil, or gave undertakings of support when they were not on the franchise,⁽¹⁾ thus artificially inflating the hopes of a Dissenting Parliament.

The contrast between the political behaviour of Presbyterians in the period of uncertainty in 1687 and the period following the Anglican rapprochement is nowhere more sharp than with the Presbyterian 'politicians'. Paul, Philip and Thomas Foley, the politically prominent sons of a Nonconformist iron manufacturer of Worcestershire, had all been members of the Exclusion Parliaments, ^{almost certainly} in support of the

(1) Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2099b, 2103, 2120b, 2161e.

Whig interest.⁽¹⁾ Nevertheless, at least two of them, Thomas and Philip, and possibly all three, committed themselves, during the King's Progress, to stand as parliamentary candidates.⁽²⁾ These commitments were probably made hastily out of a desire for revenge on the Churchmen and in the belief that only by standing could they influence the outcome of the constitutional struggle.⁽³⁾ In the event only Thomas Foley was put forward as a candidate at a meeting with Court representatives in October. His opinion on repeal, however, though it is uncertain precisely what it was, was enough even at that stage to disqualify him in the Court's eyes for parliamentary candidacy, though he did serve for a time as a JP.⁽⁴⁾ It is ironic that the Foleys ^{though put forward as JPs} either returned negative answers to the Three Questions or were absent when they were put in January 1688, and that later in the year Thomas Foley was adjudged one of the most 'eminent commoners throughout the country who were opposed to James II'.⁽⁵⁾ Behind the projected candidature of the Foleys had been John Swynfen, of Staffordshire, who had been expelled from the Long Parliament as a Presbyterian during Pride's Purge and had been part of the Presbyterian group in the Cavalier Parliament and the first and last of the Exclusion Parliaments.⁽⁶⁾ During August and September 1687 Swynfen (who had had 'an apoplectic fit') was encouraging both the Foleys and

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- See*
- (1) Lacey, 395-8.
- (2) Morrice Q, 177.
- (3) See Robert to Sir Edward Harley, 17 August, 7 September, 8 October 1687, HMC 14th Report, app. pt. II: Portland MSS III (1894), 400, 401, 404; Lacey, 188-9.
- (4) Morrice Q, 176-7; Lacey, 190, 396-7.
- (5) Duckett I, 241; II, 180, 255; A. Browning, Thomas Osborne Earl of Danby Duke of Leeds 1632-1714 (1951) III, app. iv, 152-163 (See especially p. 162); Lacey, 344 n. 52.
- (6) Lacey, 443-7.

the Harleys to stand for Parliament to avenge the treatment they had had at the hands of the Churchmen.

'Those that can should get ^{into} the House', he told them, 'the case is something like [16]60, when honest men declined;..to lie still will betray the interest of England. Every person is now valued according to his interest and what he can do.

The eyes abroad are on this scene and will accordingly hereafter esteem men by their interest, and it is to be feared that if the country be deserted now they will fix their favours on others another time'.

it is possible that
 By early October Swynfen was urging this view on Richard Hampden, as well as the Foleys and the Harleys.⁽¹⁾ But in the October interview it would appear from the ambiguous words of the old politician that his object in recommending parliamentary candidacy was not so much to thwart the Churchmen (as it had been in August) but to defend 'the interest of England' - by no means synonymous with the Court's programme - and to keep in the good books of William of Orange. Nevertheless, Swynfen's name was considered as a Court candidate for Tamworth, his old seat, and dropped only because of his advanced age.⁽²⁾ The change in Swynfen's opinions, however, was to be even more dramatic than that in Thomas Foley's: in December 1687 he was writing to his old friend Roger Morrice to inform him that he had been adopted as a parliamentary candidate by the Dean, Chapter and Church of Lichfield and that he intended to stand, despite his former suspicions of

(1) Robert to Sir Edward Harley, 17 August, 5 September, 8 October 1687, HMC 14th Report, app. pt. II: Portland MSS III (1894), 400, 401, 404.

(2) Duckett II, 253.

Churchmen, in defence of the Test Acts.⁽¹⁾

There is some evidence of a similar alteration of opinion, from 'compliance' to 'obstinacy', on the part of Presbyterians who were put into the corporations. A 'leaven' of Presbyterians were placed in the corporation of Lancaster towards the end of 1687 and, although they had appeared compliant when appointed, the corporation was beginning to behave obstinately by March 1688.⁽²⁾ Presbyterians appointed to York Corporation as compliant, whilst continuing 'loyal', by April 1688 could not be relied on to support candidates who backed the removal of the Tests and by 1 September 1688 had 'refused to subscribe consent to repeal the Penal Laws'.⁽³⁾ Elsewhere Presbyterians and Congregationalists who accepted appointments as JPs (in Essex for example) appeared 'eager to comply' at first, but were behaving more independently and sticking on the issue of the Tests by the first weeks of 1688.⁽⁴⁾ Ambrose Barnes, who became an Alderman on the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation and the 'correspondent' who recommended other nominations to the election agents, though never losing royal favour, was eventually reported to the Court as 'not to be depended on'.⁽⁵⁾ Whilst the numerical strength of the Dissenters in Cornwall and Devon, and their harsh treatment by the Churchmen during the years of persecution,⁽⁶⁾ made them eager to

- (1) Morrice Q, 185, 195, 209, 215. See above, pp. 411-412.
- (2) B. Nightingale, Lancashire Nonconformity (1890), Volume on Preston and Lancaster, 213; CSPD 1687-A, 174, 323; *Morrice Q, 233.*
- (3) HMC Downshire MSS I, i, 298; Morrice Q, 252-3; Duckett I, 76-80. See VCH The City of York, 176, 194. See also 179-180, 192, 200-1, 205.
- (4) Morrice Q, 169, 231; M. Savage to M. Henry, 12 February 1688, Henry MS.4, Letter 3.
- (5) W. H. D. Longstaffe (ed), Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Ambrose Barnes, Surtees Soc. L. (1866), 176-7, 178-80; CSPD 1687-A, 175.
- (6) See above, pp. 72-73, 98.

displace Anglicans on the borough corporations and probably led them to play a more prominent part on the corporations of these counties than Dissenters did elsewhere, they stiffly resisted Court domination.⁽¹⁾ The new charter given to Exeter in 1683 had left the Crown with the right to nominate city officers and councillors and hence only a Privy Council Order was necessary on 28 November 1687 to remove the 'High Church Royalist' Mayor, John Snell, and a majority of the Aldermen and Common Councilmen. This order required the election of 'Thomas Jefford, Esq; to be Mayor'. Jefford himself may not have been a Nonconformist, but the names of many of those nominated as Alderman and Councillors appear on the Exeter Sessions Records as having been fined for Nonconformity. These included Edmund Starr, Humphry Bawden, John Starr, John Pym, John Bayland, Jeremiah King, Robert Tristram, Tobias Allen and Hugh Bidwell. The surnames of five others appear frequently in the records of the local Presbyterian congregation, probably indicating that they were from Presbyterian families.⁽²⁾ It is interesting that, when a new Charter was finally given to the Exeter Corporation on 8 March 1688 - and despite a bitter quarrel with the displaced Churchmen - six of the Dissenters appointed on 28 November were no longer considered 'suitable', and their names do not appear.⁽³⁾ It is also significant that, although there was still a clear Nonconformist majority, the address sent to the King by the Exeter Corporation after

(1) CSPD 1687-9, 304-305; Lyon Turner MS.89.30, ff. 58-61, 67.

(2) R. Izacke, Remarkable Antiquities of the City of Exeter, revised S. Izacke (1724), 183-7; Lyon Turner MS.89.30, ff. 5-27, 49-50, 51-61, 135; Brockett, 50-51; A. Jenkins, Civil and Ecclesiastical History of the City of Exeter (1841), 181, 182 note.

(3) CSPD 1687-9, 150, 154, 157-158, 160-1; DWL MS.38.34, Quick MSS I, i, ff. 247-8; Luttrell I, 435.

the 1688 Indulgence was brief and formal and did not commit the corporation to support court candidates in the election.⁽¹⁾ And it is worth noting that the names of Goswell, Trosse, Serle, Bartlett, Ford, Atkins, Hallett and Stuckley, the principal Presbyterian and Congregationalist families in Exeter,⁽²⁾ are conspicuously absent from the list of those appointed in November and the list of those named in the new charter of March. Morrice's reference to the Exeter Corporation implies that the fact that it was 'dominated' by Dissenters made it either out of the ordinary or, perhaps, unique,⁽³⁾ hence its account may be taken as unusually suggestive, though, because of the exceptionally bad relationship between Church and Dissent in the City, not typical.

Whereas the behaviour of the Foleys and Swynfen, the Essex JPs, and the corporations of Lancaster, York and Exeter may provide examples of a change of opinion on the part of Dissenters (primarily Presbyterians and Congregationalists) after initial commitments or appointments had been made, there are other examples in which men were appointed who already held opinions that made them unlikely 'to come up to the King's expectation'. The editor of the Warwick County Records has asserted that the policy of appointing as JPs in the new commission only those who would support repeal of the Tests 'does not seem to have had time for complete realisation'; there were certainly those put in to the new commission of the peace for Warwick

(1) Gazette 2358. See CSPD 1687-9, 305. Nevertheless within days of the receipt of this address Thomas Jefford, the Mayor, was knighted. Luttrell I, 443, 446.

(2) J. Murch, A History of the Presbyterian and Baptist Churches in the West of England (1835), 375-6. See Brockett, 46-7, 49-50.

(3) Morrice Q, 235.

who opposed repeal.⁽¹⁾ Ralph Thoresby noted that 'the rigid Dissenters' who had been put into the Leeds Corporation put his name 'in the fag end of their reformed list'. 'Mr. S. J.', presumably without consulting him, put Thoresby's name 'among the Aldermen'. He added: 'for which I was far from thanking him'.⁽²⁾ It would appear that when Penn effected the reconciliation between John Trenchard and the King in July 1688, and Trenchard became one of the two Court candidates for Taunton, he was 'at that very time deep in the counsels of William of Orange'.⁽³⁾ Barnes was made an Alderman and the main Nonconformist contact in Newcastle although 'he could never... think of more than a toleration for English Papists' through a repeal of the penal laws.⁽⁴⁾ The corporation of Reading and the magistracy of Berkshire were first regulated in December 1687 'on the advice of one Miles, a local Dissenter with an estate', but with views so extreme that he was not owned by any of the sects.⁽⁵⁾ But, accepting the direction of Miles, the agents had made no further enquiry, and the Dissenters appointed were men 'as obdurately against repeal as any that could be found in the county'. By January 1688 the deputy lieutenants, JPs and corporations (including Reading) of Berkshire were all giving negative answers to the Three Questions when put by their Lord Lieutenant. Hence Reading was re-regulated (in January) again without thorough enquiry, those appointed 'saying plainly that they were sure of the same opinion with their

(1) Warwick CR VIII, xxix, xxxiii.

(2) J. Hunter (ed), *The Diary of Ralph Thoresby* (1830) I, 186-7.

(3) S. Schofield, *Jeffreys of The Bloody Assizes* (1937), 252; Duckett, 243; Penn, 122.

(4) W. H. D. Longstaffe (ed), *Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Ambrose Barnes, Surtees Soc. L* (1866), 180. See also 178-9.

(5) Morrice Q, 234.

predecessors'. In February another regulation was necessary, and even then dismissals had to be made in May and August.⁽¹⁾ Seven men - Timothy Bird, Richard Buckman, John Hookey, John Lenthorn, Richard Sutton, Abraham Smith and George Oliver, all listed as trustees of the Congregationalist meeting house in Hill Street, Poole - were appointed to Poole Corporation 'on the advice of one George Minty, mercer of Poole', a one-time Independent. Minty, however, was clearly out of touch with the group, who were all 'under the influence of the advice coming from Holland' (Fagel's Letter).⁽²⁾ By the time the charter for Poole Corporation was renewed on 31 August 1688 none of these men remained on the Council, though Minty himself was an Alderman and Henry Trenchard was the Recorder.⁽³⁾

Whilst the 'alterations' made in the Corporation of the City of London in August 1687, were reported to be 'much to the King's satisfaction' and were confirmed in the new charter of November,⁽⁴⁾ his satisfaction would have been lessened had he been aware - as his agents should have been - of the opinions of those appointed. Of the new (November) corporation

'Sir John Shorter [Lord Mayor], Mr. Underhill, Mr. Berry were Independents. Sir John Bowden, Sir William Ashurst, Mr.

- (1) PC Reg 16 December 1687, 8 January, 17 February, 4 May, 24 August 1688; BM Add MS.34515, f. 49; Morrice Q, 234; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2145a.
- (2) DWL MS.38.66, 26, 31; Densham and Ogle, 189, 190-2(footnote).
- (3) CSPD 1687-9, 259, 290-1.
- (4) CSPD 1687-9, 62; Morrice Q, 189-90. The first change in the City Corporation had been on 24 July when six aldermen were displaced 'for opposing the address for liberty of conscience'. The first Nonconformists were appointed on 1 August. Luttrell I, 410-411, 412, 414, 418. Those Nonconformists appointed were those removed by Charles II; hence it seems likely that no enquiry had been made as to their opinions. See J. Carswell, *The Descent on England* (1969), 105 note.

Rodbard, Mr. Gardener, Mr. Edwin, Mr. Joliffe were Presbyterians. Sir John Eyles, Mr. Kiffin, Major Bristow and Mr. Page were Anabaptists. Sir John Peake, Sir Peter Daniel, Sir Thomas Kensey, Sir Basil Firebrass, Mr. Amond and Sir John Parsons were Churchmen. Mr. Alawson was a Papist'.⁽¹⁾

It seems clear that the expectations of the King and his agents as to the political behaviour of the thirteen Dissenters once in office must have been similar to the Anglican fears.⁽²⁾ Both were equally ill-informed. It ought to have been possible to have predicted the Lord Mayor's behaviour after his inauguration from his practice of partial conformity after the 1687 Indulgence and from his expressed beliefs on the power of Parliament vis á vis the monarchy. On 17 August one observer had opined that Shorter 'would not be content to take the oath proper to [be] an alderman, but [would] require to take those of allegiance and supremacy too, so they doubt whether he will be Lord Mayor'. The rumour, current as soon as his appointment was announced, that he wanted Baxter as his chaplain was significant. At all events the new Lord Mayor at his inauguration in October

(1) Morrice Q, 189. Ashurst was knighted on 29 October. Luttrell I, 419. Then and subsequently there has been some confusion over the religious affiliation of Shorter. Evelyn considered him 'an Anabaptist very odd', who was an 'ignorant mechanic'. Luttrell thought he was a Presbyterian, as did Jeffreys' biographer. Certainly he was not as obscure as Evelyn thought. Shorter was a goldsmith who had been knighted in 1675, had been Sheriff of London 1675-6 and had served as an alderman on the City Corporation 1676-83. Morrice may have been correct in calling him an Independent; he attended Wavell and Mead's meeting in Grocers' Hall and they were Independents. Evelyn IV, 562-3, (See editor's note); Luttrell I, 411, 419; S. Schofield, Jeffreys of The Bloody Assizes (1937), 244; Morrice Q, 196. On Matthew Mead see R. T. Jones, Congregationalism in England 1662-1962 (1962), 97, 100.

(2) Thomas Bruce, Earl of Ailesbury, Memoirs, ed. W. E. Buckley, Roxburghe Club (1890) I, 175-6; Richard Kidder, Autobiography, 138-9 in S. H. Cassan, Lives of the Bishops of Bath and Wells (1829).

showed his respect for both Parliament and Church 'by taking the Test, the Oaths and the Sacrament' in order to qualify legally for his office. After some hesitation, 'his friends' among those appointed (including all of the Aldermen) followed suit. Nor was this an isolated gesture, since Shorter, whilst continuing to 'hear [the preaching] of Mr. Wavell, a warm Independent pastor', also 'continued to take Sacrament and go to Church' each Sunday. The only innovation was that 'the Lord Mayor and the Court of Aldermen' asked permission of those given authority over the diocese of London during Compton's suspension to hear Nonconformist as well as Anglican preachers in the Lord Mayor's chapel. (1)

If Shorter was unsuited for the part James II intended him to play, and predictably so, the same can certainly be said for the Presbyterian, Sir Henry Ashurst. Ashurst was one of the few Presbyterians in politics who had any connections with the venerable Dons. He was a personal friend of Baxter's, had stood by him at his trial and, though a believer in toleration for the sects, was firmly committed to the cause of comprehension for moderate Presbyterians and opposed to toleration for Roman Catholics. (2) He was also related by marriage to the Foleys and the Hampdens, and tended to follow their political lead; (3) and by the time Ashurst was appointed in November the Foleys

(1) HMC 7th Report, Verney MSS (1878), 504-505; Morrice Q, 187-8, 189, 190, 196, 201; HMC Downshire MSS I, i, 279; Richard Kidder, Autobiography, 137, 138-9, in S. H. Cassan, Lives of The Bishops of Bath and Wells (1829); Burnet I, 718, 719; Luttrell I, 424; R. Thomas, Daniel Williams Presbyterian Bishop (1964), 3-4.

(2) Calamy, Abridgement, ^{368-q, 371,} 404; Henry, Diaries and Letters, 360-1; F. F. Powicke, 'The Rev. Richard Baxter and His Friend Mr. Henry Ashurst', Bulletin of John Rylands Library, XIII (1929), 324-5; S. Schofield, Jeffreys of The Bloody Assizes (1937), 155.

(3) Morrice Q, 369; Lacey, 375, 469.

had already reacted against the Court. The 'Anabaptist' Sir John Eyles, like Ashurst, had been in one of the Exclusion Parliaments.⁽¹⁾ After the initial purge of London in August he *was accepted as a JP and Parliamentary Candidate* and on Shorter's death in September 1688 was Lord Mayor for a few weeks before the Charter was restored. But even he, though part of the collaborationist faction among the Baptists, had expressed views strongly opposed to Catholic appointments to the army and administration both before and after his appointment to the Corporation of London, and was reported to entertain misgivings about the toleration of Roman Catholics.⁽²⁾

The other Baptist Alderman, William Kiffin, can even be described as having been bitterly opposed to the King's person and policies. A prosperous merchant, Kiffin had been on friendly terms with James before his accession but, by 1684, had fallen from favour.⁽³⁾ Since James II had refused to listen to the supplication of Kiffin's granddaughter for the lives of his two grandsons, the Hewlings, at the time of Monmouth's Rebellion, Kiffin held him personally responsible for what he believed to have been their unjust executions, and hated him for it.⁽⁴⁾ This hatred had enabled him to 'see through' the favour extended to the Baptist sects from the summer of 1686 and the Declaration of Indulgence, believing that 'this was in the tail of it, to engage them thereby to promote

- (1) Ashurst was in the third, Eyles was in the second. Lacey, 375, 390-1.
- (2) Ibid; Morrice P, 104, 331; Q, 163-4, 165-6, 174, 189, 291; Duckett I, 210n, 220, 228; Luttrell I, 459. See K. Feiling, A History of the Tory Party 1640-1714 (1924), 228.
- (3) See above, pp. 55-56, 195.
- (4) Kiffin, 85; Ivimey I, 473-4; M. Noble, Memoirs of the Protectoral House of Cromwell (1787) II, 463.

the taking off [of] the Test; and to strengthen the Popish interest, by setting the Protestant Dissenters against the Protestants of the Church of England'.⁽¹⁾

Kiffin would appear to have been a tolerationist (for all except Catholics), and to have had no great love for the Church, but was prepared to support it (including the Tests) as a break-water against the insurge of Catholicism. Since the Indulgence he had opposed both addressing and collaboration:

'I thought it my duty, to do all I could to prevent those Dissenters of my acquaintance from having any hand therein; but from the sense they had of their former sufferings, and the hopes of finding all things as was promised, could not prevail'.⁽²⁾

Kiffin's activities and opinions account for his surprise at 'receiving a commission from the King to be an Alderman of the City of London' in August 1687. He used 'all the means he could to be excused, both by some lords near the King, and also by Sir Nicholas Butler and Mr. Penn, but it was in vain'. He was told 'that they knew he had an interest', and could render effective service to the electoral campaign.⁽³⁾ As in other cases, because Kiffin had influence that could be used for the Court's benefit, it was assumed as a matter of course that he would use it, given the right inducement. The inducements proffered were that the estates of his late grandsons would be turned over to him, and that any 'advantage' he could

(1) Kiffin, 84.

(2) Kiffin, 84-5, 155; Ivimey I, 473-4.

(3) M. Noble, op cit, II, 463-4; Ivimey I, 473-4; Kiffin, 85; Morrice Q, 165-6; Luttrell I, 411.

'reasonably desire' for himself would also be forthcoming. Kiffin nevertheless held out for six weeks before committing himself. During this period he had an interview with Sir John Peake, the then Lord Mayor, who made dark hints on the undesirable consequences that would ensue from a rejection of the Court's offer. This threat was taken seriously by Kiffin, who in consequence sought legal advice. The advice given was that if he accepted he 'ran the hazard of £500'; if he rejected, 'as the judges were', he might lose as much as £30,000. On the basis of this advice he resolved to accept but nevertheless, having delayed his appointment for six weeks already, 'forebore taking the place of Alderman for some time after'.⁽¹⁾ When he was told that his name would be in the November Charter, he sought an interview with James and pleaded age and inexperience in local government (he was 71) and informed the King that the wound created by the death of his grandsons would never close 'but in the grave'. When he recovered his composure, James promised 'a balsam for that sore'.⁽²⁾ Nevertheless, though deeply offended by the King's assumption of his intrinsic cynicism, he planned to delay the inevitable acceptance of his position: he even paid £50 toward the inaugural banquet for the new Lord Mayor, Sir John Shorter, without attending and without taking his seat on the Aldermanic bench for the Ward of Cheap. He finally did so, but not without 'taking the Test' first.⁽³⁾ It is indicative of the electoral agents' disregard of men's known opinions that, despite Kiffin's continued efforts to 'get off' from

(1) Kiffin, 85-86; Morrice Q, 165-6; Ivimey I, 473-4.

(2) Kiffin, 86-7; H. Luson's testimony, M. Noble, op cit, II, 463-9; Crosby III, 4-5; Morrice Q, 173, 187-8, 189.

(3) Kiffin, 86-7; Morrice Q, 189-90, 196-7.

his appointment, he became a JP and 'one of the lieutenancy' in the course of 1688, and that he was not allowed to vacate his position until September 1688, not long before the old charter was restored. (1)

The fact that, out of the thirteen appointed to the City Corporation, the four Nonconformists, on whom information (beyond their sectarian label) is available, held opinions that made them unsuitable for the roles for which they had been cast is indicative of the lack of attention paid by the agents of the electoral machine to the opinions of those persons they were prepared to declare 'suitable' and recommend for appointment or candidacy. This throws doubt on the validity of their reports - and hence the realism of the Court's optimism regarding the prospects of a biddable Parliament at any given time. In February 1688, 'the Popish Mayor of Newcastle' had come to Court to complain that, of those newly inserted into the corporation 'the Dissenters were all knaves and rebels, [and] that if the Prince would come over they would all join with him'. (2) By 21 February 1688 'the power of electing' at Tewkesbury had been 'put in the hands of thirteen' but Johnstone believed that 'all this would not do their business, for even these thirteen would fail them'. (3) The lack of concern shown by the regulators in their selection of a mayor for Cambridge was such that the corporation petitioned the Lord

(1) Morrice Q, 293; Kiffin, 87-8; Ivimey I, 473-7. In April 1688 it was reported; 'there are five aldermen of London turned out', but neither Kiffin, nor any of the Nonconformists were among them. They were Sir John Peake, Sir William Hooker, Sir Jonathon Raymond, Sir Thomas Kensey, and Sir William Gostlyn. Luttrell I, 437.

(2) Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2145c. See CSPD 1687-A, 175, 309.

(3) BM Add MS. 34515, ff. 49, 50.

Chancellor pointing out that the person recommended 'had been a Quaker, an Independent, a Presbyterian, a son of the Church of England and was then a Papist', and Jeffreys, in some confusion, was forced to recommend his withdrawal.⁽¹⁾ As boroughs were being regulated and re-regulated in the first eight months of 1688, on the advice of the commission, those aware of Nonconformist opinion were emphatic in their predictions that each new influx would not improve matters and might make them worse; the King could not look for supporters among the great majority of Nonconformists.⁽²⁾

Those Presbyterians and Independents who had committed themselves to the Court in the period of uncertainty in 1687 and had failed to show proof that they had mended their ways - as, for example, Ambrose Barnes in Newcastle, and Edmund Whincop in Suffolk - found themselves ostracised by their congregations by the spring of 1688.⁽³⁾ But even this late, Brent's agents were still pestering prominent members of these sects to accept candidacies or office. The regulators, with the support of Lord Dover and the Nonconformist group on the Bury St. Edmunds Corporation, were 'importuning' Stanley Baker, a Congregationalist pastor from Wattisford, to become a parliamentary candidate for Bury St. Edmunds. Baker saw the disadvantages of becoming 'entangled' with the Court, but whilst he weighed the pros and cons, the 'many

(1) Morrice Q, 173.

(2) BM Add MS. 34510, ff. 63, 75, 87; Add MS. 34512, f. 77; Add MS. 34515, ff. 31, 49; Morrice Q, 235, 236, 239 (iii), 246, 264, 280. See Burnet I, 719; R. H. George, 'The Charters Granted to English Parliamentary Corporations in 1688', EHR lv (1940), 47-56.

(3) Walter Wilson MS. I, v, 158, 159; BM Add MS. 34515, f. 79; W. H. D. Longstaffe (ed) Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Ambrose Barnes, Surtees Soc. L. (1866), 180.

reproaches' heaped upon him by his congregation made the decision for him.⁽¹⁾ The total failure of the electoral agents to consider the opinions of those they invited into local office was illustrated in the case of Philip Henry. Henry was a partial conformer, a believer in comprehension and, though vigorously taking advantage of the Indulgence, had adopted the belief in July 1687 that it was a part of the 'Papist Design'.⁽²⁾ But

'in May 1688, a new Commission of the Peace came down for the County of Flint, in which (by whose interest or procurement, *was not known*) Mr. Henry was nominated a Justice of [the] Peace for that County'.

With conscious sarcasm, Henry replied 'that he was very sensible of his unworthiness of the honour, and his unfitness for the office which he *was* nominated ^{to} and begged to be excused. In fact the offer itself was such an embarrassment that he took great pains 'that it might not be spoken of in the country'.⁽³⁾ Nevertheless, in August 1688, just before the Chester Corporation was remodelled, a court agent called on Philip Henry, saying that 'the King thought that the government of the City needed reformation, and that if he would specify what individuals should be removed, it *should* be done'. Henry received this as an impertinence and declined to interfere. By 28 August, however, Henry presumed that the agent had 'procured his information elsewhere' since the new charter for the borough of Chester included 'the names of all the Dissenters of note, the seniors

(1) Harmer MS.76.9, 155, 156.

(2) See above, pp. 289, 292, 393.

(3) Henry, Diaries and Letters, 327-8; Walter Wilson MS.I, v, 221-223; R. F. Skinner, Nonconformity in Shropshire 1662-1816 (1964), 19.

as Aldermen,..the juniors as Common Councilmen'. The charter was brought down and the persons nominated 'called together..to have the time fixed for being sworn'. The nominees, however, 'refused to accept it and desired that the ancient Charter might be restored'.⁽¹⁾ Among the names of thirty-two boroughs in a warrant issued on 6 September 'signifying the King's pleasure that the Charters for the Corporations mentioned..be..renewed' was that of Chester.⁽²⁾

In fact James II's agents had been hopelessly out of touch with opinion among the two major Dissenting sects. On 17 November 1687 James Johnstone had reported that 'the Presbyterians and Independents' were 'coming off from the fondness they had... felt for toleration', and, on 23 May 1688, that the hardening of opinion against the Court and its programme, was such that 'everywhere the Presbyterians and Independents that had latterly been put into the Corporations' were being 'turned out'.⁽³⁾ On 24 March 1688 Morrice had noted that the Presbyterians and Congregationalists who had been given local government positions were being 'edged off', having proved themselves 'unsatisfactory', and were leaving the field open to 'the Anabaptists and old sectaries'.⁽⁴⁾ 'John Tompkins and four other prominent Baptists' had been 'made Aldermen by Royal Warrant' of Abingdon Corporation as early as November 1687, however,⁽⁵⁾ and the

(1) Philip Henry's correspondence cited, W. Urwick, *Nonconformity in Cheshire* (1864), 32-33; CSPD 1687-9, 256.

(2) CSPD 1687-9, 265-6. See Ellis II, 163.

(3) Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2099b, 2161e.

(4) Morrice Q, 244.

(5) E. A. Payne, *The Baptists of Berkshire* (1951), 55. See Letter to Lady Harley, 17 February 1688, HMC 14th Report, app. pt. II: Portland MSS III (1894), 405.

four Baptists' appointments to the City of London Corporation had been made, initially, in August.⁽¹⁾ In the same letter in which he referred to the Abingdon changes (dated 17 February 1688), a correspondent of Lady Harley also indicated that 'one Titmarsh, an Anabaptist minister' had been put into the Common Council at Oxford, together with others who were socially inferior to those put out.⁽²⁾ On the day after Morrice wrote that the corporations were now open to the Baptists, 25 March, 1688, three Baptists were appointed to the Bedford Corporation; but among the six men put out was John Fell, another Baptist.⁽³⁾

The strength of Nonconformity in Bedford and the influence of John Bunyan in the city justifies a more detailed examination of the impact of regulation on the Bedford Corporation. The evidence regarding Bunyan's stand is conflicting unless it is assumed that he, like the Presbyterians and Congregationalists discussed elsewhere, underwent a change of attitude between November 1687 and March 1688. On 22 November John Eston (a Whig, though not necessarily a Nonconformist⁽⁴⁾) who had clearly been chosen by Brent's electoral agents as the 'correspondent' to report on opinion in Bedford, wrote a letter to the Earl of Peterborough⁽⁵⁾ regarding the proposed election. In it he said:

(1) Morrice Q, 165-6, 189; Luttrell I, 411; CSPD 1687-9, 62.

(2) Letter to Lady Harley, 17 February 1688, op cit.

(3) Bunyan, 352. It is likely that the other three persons put in on 25 March were also Nonconformists. W. M. Wigfield, 'Recusancy and Nonconformity in Bedfordshire', Publications of the Bedfordshire Historical Record Society XX (1938), 153.

(4) Bunyan, 219; W. M. Wigfield, op cit, 153.

(5) The salutation does not make it clear who the letter was to, but subsequent correspondence does. Ibid, 198, 200.

'Since your honour spake with me at Bedford, I have conferred with the heads of the Dissenters, and particularly with Mr. Margetts and Mr. Bunyan whom your lordship named to me. The first of these was Judge Advocate in the army under Lord General Monk when the late King was restored; the other is Pastor to the Dissenting congregation in this town. I find them all to be unanimous for electing only such Members of Parliament as will certainly vote for repealing all the Tests and penal laws touching religion; and they hope to steer their friends and followers accordingly; so that if the Lord Lieutenant will cordially assist with his influence over the Church party there cannot be, in human reason, any doubt of our electing two such members'.

As candidates he proposed himself and Sir Edmund Gardiner 'our present Recorder' who, though not a Nonconformist, he believed was subject to pressure.⁽¹⁾ Bunyan's biographer *includes* this letter but does not comment on the uncharacteristic stand which Bunyan appears to have taken.⁽²⁾

Eston's candidature, despite the assurance of the letter, did not prosper and both Sir Edmund Gardiner and Robert Audley declined invitations to stand.⁽³⁾ Gardiner, like many of the Bedfordshire gentry, said in answer to the Three Questions that he could not commit himself on the issue of repeal until it had been debated in Parliament.⁽⁴⁾ The only person to return a positive answer, without qualification,

(1) Wigfield, op cit, 198-199.

(2) Bunyan, 349.

(3) Ibid.

(4) Bunyan, 347.

was Dr. William Foster, who 'submitted all to His Majesty's pleasure'.⁽¹⁾ Foster was then chosen as the second candidate to be recommended, with Eston, to the Bedford Corporation.⁽²⁾ It was probably with the nomination of Foster that the sea-change in Bunyan's attitudes began. Ever since the Restoration Foster, Commissary of the Archdeacon's Court at Bedford, had been the scourge of Bedfordshire Dissenters, unrelenting in the severity of his persecution.⁽³⁾ Bunyan referred to him as 'a right Judas' and is thought to have been satirising him in some of the more execrable characterisations in Pilgrim's Progress.⁽⁴⁾

On 6 December Eston wrote a second letter to the Earl of Peterborough complaining that the clergy and several members of the Corporation were campaigning against him; 'The Dissenters are firm for us; but the Churchmen are implacable against us' because 'the Doctor and myself are professedly for repealing'.⁽⁵⁾ Probably as a result of this the Earl of Ailesbury, Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire, wrote to the Bedford Corporation recommending the candidatures of Eston and Foster, probably in an endeavour to isolate the opposition on the corporation in preparation for regulation.⁽⁶⁾ On 19 December a letter was sent to Ailesbury from the Corporation *indicating awareness that Eston and Foster had been designated* 'fit persons to serve for Burgesses of this Borough in the next Parliament' but adding 'that the election for this town is not in the Corporation alone but that every inhabitant

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- (1) Bunyan, 348.
 (2) Wigfield, op cit, 201.
 (3) Bunyan, 70-71, 136-7, 182, 200-1.
 (4) Bunyan, 182, 348.
 (5) Wigfield, op cit, 199-200.
 (6) Bunyan, 351.

(not taking collection nor being a sojourner and no free-man) hath a vote'.

Therefore the Common Council could not 'give assurance how the majority of voices' would determine. They concluded that they would 'endeavour the election of such members as they [should] believe to be of undoubted loyalty and ^{that} [should] be serviceable to the King and Kingdom'. (1)

It was as clearly understood at Whitehall as at Bedford that the Corporation had their own ideas about the meaning of 'undoubted loyalty' and the sort of persons likely to 'be serviceable to the King and Kingdom'. By an Order in Council at the end of January 1688 the Mayor, three aldermen, and four common councillors were removed and replaced by Nonconformists (including one Baptist) and Catholics. (2) On 25 March they too were removed. (3) A continuation to Bunyan's earlier published work Grace Abounding indicates that by the time three members of his own congregation were appointed to the Corporation he was opposed to regulation and endeavoured to dissuade them. (4) Another account dating from 1692, four years after his death, indicates that 'some place under government' was offered to Bunyan in 1688 'to secure his influence' but that he refused it. It would also appear that 'when a great man in those days', probably Ailesbury, went to Bedford in connection with regulation, Bunyan was sent for but 'would by no means come at him but sent his excuse'. (5)

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- (1) Bedford Town Hall Archives, Minutes 1664-1688, ff. 287, 294 cited Wigfield, op cit, 201-202. See Bunyan, 351.
- (2) Bunyan, 351. See Wigfield, op cit, 202-205.
- (3) See above, p. 503.
- (4) Bunyan, 352.
- (5) Life of Mr. John Bunyan (1692) cited Bunyan, 353 and Whiting, 131.

This may indicate that Bunyan had changed his mind since November but the evidence is inconclusive. Eston's letter of 22 November may, in indicating his willingness to support candidates who favoured repeal and to persuade his congregation to do the same, have been as wildly optimistic as the reports of April and September 1688 sent to the regulators in London - and based on the letters of similar 'correspondents' to Eston - undoubtedly were. On the other hand the two sources which indicate Bunyan's opposition to regulation by March 1688 both post-date the Revolution and may be in the character of an apologia. In any event any disinclination to cooperate on Bunyan's part is unlikely to have stemmed from opposition to repeal; but from earlier expressed quietistic views, from a distaste for politics and politicians and from a refusal to work side by side with such base turncoats as William Foster. Though the Test Acts are unlikely to have concerned Bunyan, his past would almost certainly have caused him to support the repeal of the penal laws.⁽¹⁾

It is significant that, though Morrice had indicated that, from March 1688, the moderate Dissenters were leaving the field open to the Baptists, he gave no indication thereafter - and the section of the Entr'ing Book for 1688 is replete with detail regarding regulation - that Baptists were actually being appointed. In August 1686, when it had appeared that only the Baptists, apart from the Quakers, were prepared to be 'enticed' he had indicated that there were insufficient in terms of 'substance' and 'interest' among the Baptist sects to enable the King to put any reliance upon them.⁽²⁾ It may

(1) See Bunyan, 353; Ivimey I, 304; R. T. Jones, Congregationalism in England 1662-1962 (1962), 104.

(2) Morrice P, 615, See above, p. 261.

well have been that this was the King's dilemma in the spring of 1688. During the first fortnight in February a committee had been formed in London

'to inform themselves what persons in all corporations and in the Commission of the Peace were fit to be put out or kept in, and [to draw up] a list of names of fit persons of substance who would serve'.

This committee was made up of Nehemiah Coxe, Benjamin Dennis, William Kiffin, Roberts and Marner: 'all old sectaries, most of them by their profession, Anabaptists'. Robert Brent and Henry Trinder were to present

'what matter these humbly offer, to His Majesty, and afterwards ... to the Lords Commissions at Whitehall: the Lord Chancellor, the Earl of Sunderland, Powis, Castlemaine, Lord Godolphin, and Father Peters'.

The unofficial committee had presented its report to Brent and Trinder by the end of the month. It is of interest that the Baptists and Quakers it had been able to recommend as 'substantial' and 'fit to serve' were 'few in every county'.⁽¹⁾ In the course of its deliberations some of the members of this committee had 'told His Majesty that they could not concur in bringing in Popery' and that they were against letting Roman Catholics into 'any civil or military office'.⁽²⁾ This illustrates both why the King did not act upon their recommendations and the existence of a cleavage even among the collaborationist Baptists. The same cleavage upon the same issue had been illustrated

(1) Morrice Q, 238, 239 (i), (ii), 243, 244.

(2) Morrice Q, 239 (ii).

in the answers to the Three Questions: the Dutch agent reported that even the Dissenters who were 'for the taking off of the Test' would 'not act for it', especially in conjunction with Roman Catholic office-holders.⁽¹⁾ Feeling was so strong among Nonconformists favouring repeal that many of them were reported to have refused to attend, and expressed strong disapproval of, a conference with Catholic leaders to decide upon electoral tactics.⁽²⁾ Making ample allowance for the exaggeration implicit in these over-generalisations, the pezzonovanti of the Baptist sects were unlikely to lend decisive support to James II's programme. As Morrice had pointed out in 1686, the Baptists lacked 'both the numbers and the interest'.⁽³⁾

It is probable that the one million pounds distrained from English Quakers, as well as the repeated imprisonments suffered by them, between 1660-1687,⁽⁴⁾ would have made this an understatement had it applied to them and not to the Baptists. Nevertheless, the political innocence of the Quakers and their willingness to serve side by side with Roman Catholics, because of their common hatred of the 'old Puritans',⁽⁵⁾ made it possible for James to make use of those among them who resisted the quietistic injunctions of the Foxes, as their 'numbers' and 'interest' allowed. By November 1687 a few were already in inferior offices in London 'as constables and the like', and were being plagued by Anglicans left among the judiciary who were wanting them to take the oaths.⁽⁶⁾ There were also a few isolated cases of 'fanatics' who did not come within the categorisations

(1) BM Add MS. 34515, f. 34.

(2) BM Add MS. 34510, f. 64.

(3) Morrice P, 615.

(4) J. R. Western, *Monarchy and Revolution* (1972), 161.

(5) Morrice Q, 236.

(6) CSPD 1687-9, 96.

'Presbyterian', 'Congregationalist', or 'Baptist', who sat on corporations. These may have been Quakers.⁽¹⁾ Whilst many Quakers declined to accept any kind of office⁽²⁾ the King's agents found a great willingness among Friends to make election commitments,⁽³⁾ but there is no indication in the agents' reports exactly how many Quakers were so committed; and they may have been generalisations from isolated instances. In view of the tendency of the new charters of 1688 to restrict the franchise to corporation members⁽⁴⁾ and in view of the dearth of evidence of Quaker involvement in the corporations, these commitments may well have been empty ones. Realising this, forty Norwich Quakers attempted to get themselves enfranchised by petitioning the King that they might be made Freemen of the City. On 13 July 1688 Sunderland issued a warrant ordering that thirty-eight of them might be given this honour. The Corporation refused to admit them, and petitioned the King not to insist. As there is no further record of the affair, it has been assumed that they were not admitted.⁽⁵⁾ This serves as an example of the pathetic helplessness of the one sect to whom the King and what he represented was not anathema; it was unfortunate that part of their helplessness, as Bonrepos realised, was that they themselves were 'held in horror' by

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- (1) Morrice Q, 236, 244, 245, 247. See A. Cole, 'The Quakers and the English Revolution', *Crisis in Europe 1560-1660*, ed. T. Aston (1965), 356.
- (2) Braithwaite, 143; HMC 7th Report, Verney MSS (1878), 505; HMC 12th Report, app. to pt. vii: MSS of S. H. le Fleming (1890), 207.
- (3) Duckett II, 219.
- (4) J. R. Western, *Monarchy and Revolution* (1972), 77.
- (5) Sewel II, 487-8; Whiting, 184; F. Platt, *The Quakers of Norwich* (1926), 13; A. J. Eddington, *The First Fifty Years of Quakerism in Norwich*, *Friends Hist. Soc.* (1932), 259-60, 261, 281 (appendix J).

almost everyone.⁽¹⁾

Despite the divisions evident in all the sects on the issue of involvement all were still united in a resolve to make use of the toleration for religious purposes. But observers noticed that as 1688 progressed there was, even in this, a greater 'wariness', and a certain 'restraint'. Meeting-house building projects went forward, however; ordinations took place, new companies of believers were formed, and existing companies reported expansion; itinerant proselytising campaigns were still in the fashion, and the emigres of 1684-6 were returning home.⁽²⁾ Philip Henry's comment, though made later, may have epitomised Nonconformist feeling in 1688; 'Our opportunities are passing away and we must work while it is day, for the night cometh'.⁽³⁾ But few Dissenters felt a shred of gratitude toward the source whence their opportunities came, and after the emotive Trial of the Seven Bishops hardly any dared openly espouse the King's cause.⁽⁴⁾ Despite Henry's pessimism, by July and August many Dissenters were concentrating their hopes on the offers of comprehension and toleration being made by the High Churchmen, notably the Archbishop of Canterbury.⁽⁵⁾ Bonrepos knew that the impact that the offers of the Churchmen had had upon the Dissenters had 'diminished drastically the party which the Court had thought they had among

(1) Bonrepos au Roi, Archives Nationales K, 1351, No. 4, f. 55.

(2) DWL MS.38.66, 31; Harmer MSS.76.2, 150-2, 153-4; 76.9, 50, 155; B.S. Snell (ed), The Minute Book of the Monthly Meeting of the Society of Friends for the Upper Side of Buckinghamshire, 1669-1690 (1938), 199, 201; Heywood III, 234; A. Nelson, Puritan Divines IX: Life and Times of Philip Henry (1848), 243; Densham and Ogle, 63.

(3) Henry, Diaries and Letters, 329.

(4) Jolly, 90; Henry Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, Correspondence and Diaries, ed. S. W. Singer (1828) II, 179.

(5) See above, pp. 426 et seq.

them'.⁽¹⁾ But the Court was still oblivious to the dour forebodings and predictions of Nonconformist opposition and recalcitrance that came from informed observers, and continued to believe in the prospect of a Nonconformist Parliament into September.⁽²⁾ In the period before the euphoric delight that set in on the receipt of the agents' reports, however, three developments had occurred which tended to demonstrate that, behind the expressions of optimism as to the amount of Nonconformist support forthcoming, there were underlying misgivings.

The widespread rejoicing among Nonconformists at the acquittal of the Bishops shocked Sunderland into the belief, latent since the preceding January, that the Court must make some gesture to recover support among moderate Dissenters.⁽³⁾ His pressure to this end was so great that, although his plan for an 'expedient' had not been taken up in January, the King now acceded to his suggestion that a number of Nonconformists be appointed to the Privy Council. Therefore, on 6 July Sir Christopher Vane, Silas Titus, and Sir John Trevor, believed by some observers to be Dissenters, became Privy Councillors.⁽⁴⁾ Nonconformists, however, did not regard any of these men as being Dissenters and, having caught the rumour that certain

(1) Bonrepos au Roi, Archives Nationales K, 1351, No. 4, f. 55.

(2) Ibid. ff. 53, 55, 59; Morrice Q, 291-2; J. P. Kenyon, Robert Spencer Earl of Sunderland (1958), 208-209.

(3) *Ibid.*, 200-201; Lacey, 216.

(4) Evelyn IV, 590. Luttrell, a correspondent of John Ellis, the Earl of Clarendon and Edward Harley, reported their appointments but did not refer to them as Dissenters; though Clarendon commented; 'Good God bless us! What will the world come to'. Luttrell I, 449; Ellis II, 23-24, cxliv; Henry Hyde Earl of Clarendon, Correspondence and Diaries, ed. S. W. Singer (1928) II, 180; Edward to Lady Harley, 7 July 1688 HMC 14th Report, app. pt. II; Portland MSS III (1894), 414. Some historians have believed that these men were Dissenters of some sort. Penn, 122; S. C. Carpenter, The Church of England, 597-1688 (1954), 468; J. P. Kenyon, Robert Spencer Earl of Sunderland (1958), 200.

Dissenters were to be elevated to the Privy Council, continued to anticipate the elevation of Sir Edward Harley, the Earl of Bedford, and Philip Lord Wharton to that dignity.⁽¹⁾ That Dissenters did not regard Vane, Titus and Trevor as Dissenters was not surprising. The nearest point of contact between Vane's antecedents and Nonconformity was his family's association with republicanism; his appointment was perhaps an example of the equation which James II continued to make between this and Nonconformity. But even on this score the appointment was ill-informed. In 1675 Vane had moved so far away from his family's traditions as to stand for election to Parliament for Co. Durham with the support of the Divine Right faction of the Church. When William landed he stood with the Yorkshire Anglicans as a supporter of Danby.⁽²⁾ The case history of Silas Titus is still more abstruse. He had been a Presbyterian but had apostacised in 1668.⁽³⁾ As recently as February 1688, however, he had been at Court masquerading as some species of Dissenter, but had left in a huff after a disagreement with William Penn.⁽⁴⁾ The Court's hold on him may well have lain in the simple fact that he was in debt to the Crown to the tune of £8,000.⁽⁵⁾ There is no reason to suppose that Sir John Trevor had ever been or claimed to have been a Protestant Dissenter. He was first cousin to George Jeffreys. Apart from a flirtation with the Whigs during Exclusion, he had been very much under the influence

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- (1) Morrice Q, 281, 282; Robert to Sir Edward Harley, 21 July 1688, HMC 14th Report, op cit, 415. See Ellis II, 34, cxlvii.
- (2) Lacey, 216, 354 n. 23; Duckett^{II}, 308. On 18 October 1688 Vane prudently elicited from the King - along with Nathaniel, Bishop of Durham and Thomas, Bishop of Chester - a pardon 'of all treasons'. CSPD 1687-9, 323.
- (3) Lacey, 216, 348-9 n. 91.
- (4) Portland Misc. 19, PwA 2141b.
- (5) J. R. Western, *Monarchy and Revolution* (1972), 223.

of Jeffreys and owed his advancement to the rank of King's Counsel in 1683 to Jeffreys' patronage. He had been elected unanimously as Speaker of the 1685 Parliament and 'was supposed, and probably with truth, to have been advised by Jeffreys, and was highly acceptable to the King'. Since 20 October 1685 he had been Master of the Rolls.⁽¹⁾ Unless it was intended as a reward for the first ex-Exclusioner to support his cause, it is difficult to see why James appointed Trevor to the Privy Council at all. The three appointments in total represented the bankruptcy of James II's efforts to win the political support of the Nonconformists and the fact that he had no understanding of them. Clearly, appointments such as these were merely demonstrations of the Court's weakness, and evidence of floundering. At all events, Nonconformists were unlikely to be impressed by them.

The second evidence that the Court was not as sure of Nonconformist support as the tenor of its public utterances suggested was that, again under pressure from Sunderland, and probably Jeffreys, the King agreed to settle for the repeal of the penal laws and the 1678 Test Act, and to leave the 1673 Test Act in force.⁽²⁾ The reason for leaving the first Test Act on was to palliate one of the causes of Nonconformist objection (shared even by the Baptists) by prohibiting Roman Catholics from holding office or rank (except by individual royal dispensation); and by preventing them from seeking election to the House of Commons by leaving untouched the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy and the Test.⁽³⁾ James sadly underestimated the

(1) DNB XIX, 1149; S. Schofield, *Jeffreys of The Bloody Assizes* (1937), 151; Ellis I, 264 note; Luttrell I, 343.

(2) J. P. Kenyon, *Robert Spencer Earl of Sunderland* (1958), 201; Lacey, 216-217. See Luttrell I, 462; S. Schofield, *op cit*, 253.

(3) See 25 Car. II c. 2 in J. P. Kenyon, *The Stuart Constitution* (1966), 461-2.

sagacity of the Nonconformist politicians and ministry if he expected them to trust him to exercise restraint in the use of dispensations or believed that they had forgotten that the 1678 Test Act had been passed primarily because the Oaths contained in the 1673 Test Act had been less than completely effective in excluding Catholics from Parliament.

Had James been as confident as he pretended to be when writs for an election were issued on 24 August 1688 it would not have been necessary to have regulated twenty boroughs thereafter which had already been purged. (1)

Whether the expressed optimism of the Court overlay deep-rooted misgivings, or whether the reports of the electoral agents which came in in early September gave a new fillip to fading hopes, is open to debate. Those agents had been despatched into the provinces in July and were now presenting their final reports on the extent to which the Court could count on Nonconformist electoral support. As to the verdict of the reports;

'We do find that the Dissenters are firm in their resolutions, and not shaken by any endeavours that have been used to the contrary. That the books that have been dispersed have had very good effect, to the satisfying and establishing very many, though many endeavours have been used by the Church party to dissuade people from reading, them. That a great inconvenience attending this affair, is the suggestions that are propagated by Churchmen, and some others disaffected, residing about London. However, we

(1) HMC 12th Report, app. pt. vi: The MSS of the House of Lords 1689-1690 (1889), 300; CSPD 1687-9, 255-280.

have no reason to doubt but there will be an election of members for the Parliament, that will readily concur with Your Majesty in establishing the Liberty proposed by Your Majesty's most gracious Declaration'.⁽¹⁾

The Presbyterians and Congregationalists who had opposed the repeal of the Test Acts when the Three Questions had been presented to them had now 'altered their minds' and could be considered reliable. This group included Richard Hampden, Sir Richard Norton, Sir Walter Young, Sir John Gell, and Sir Samuel Barnardiston.⁽²⁾ In the first group of eight counties analysed by the agents they predicted the election of 100 men who would comply with repeal, out of a total representation of 140 MPs; in the second and third groups there would be a similar proportion of 'right men', out of a representation of 172 MPs.⁽³⁾ Clearly, had those reports been accurate James had every reason for optimism; the Nonconformists - even the recalcitrant Presbyterians and Congregationalists - had been won over; and, as both James and Sunderland told Bonrepos, a majority for repeal of the Test in the November Parliament was assured.⁽⁴⁾

Doubts have already been cast on the agents' methods of investigation as evidenced by their inattention to the opinions of the persons they had been prepared to designate 'acceptable' for public office.⁽⁵⁾ Their methods of investigation had never been less scientific, and they had never been more inattentive to opinions,

(1) Duckett II, 235.

(2) Duckett II, 234-53; Lacey, 218.

(3) Duckett II, 234-53; Jones, 165.

(4) Bonrepos au Roi, Archives Nationales K, 1351, No. 4, ff. 53.

(5) See above, pp. 487-500, 501-503.

than in the preparation of the previous report, in April 1688, on election prospects and candidacies, on the basis of which the plans for an April election had been abandoned. Of the sixty persons ^{backed by dissenters and} designated 'acceptable' for Court sponsorship in the Election, ^{ten} were Nonconformist MPs who had been in the Parliaments of Charles II and had voted for the Exclusion Bill. These were Michael Harvey, John Trenchard, William Trenchard, William Strode, Oliver St. John, Edward Nosworthy, Sir Samuel Barnardiston, Thomas Reynell, Sir Walter Young and Sir John Eyles (the City Alderman). Of these ten, only ^(probably) St. John and Nosworthy had 'promised to comply' with 'His Majesty's just desires'. ⁽¹⁾ And, despite James Johnstone's belief that Presbyterians and Congregationalists who had made undertakings at this time did not intend to 'keep to them', ⁽²⁾ other evidence suggests that Nosworthy, at least, had been in earnest. ⁽³⁾ But the answers given by the remaining eight to the Three Questions showed that none were wholeheartedly in favour of repeal, and that some were emphatically against it. ⁽⁴⁾ The agents, despite the optimism of their recommendations, had only been able to find sixty suitable candidates in April. If the agents who reported in September had located, as they claimed, a sufficient number of candidates and a sufficient degree of support to have added up to a majority in the November House of Commons, then there should be evidence of a major redirection

(1) Lacey, 204-205, 351n.100, Appendix II; Morrice Q, 291;

Duckett I, 371, 430; II, 217, 270, 300.

(2) Portland Misc. 19, PwA 2161e. Miller has asserted that the methods of regulation encouraged men to lie about their opinions. Miller, 250.

(3) CSPD 1687-9, 286-7; Lacey, 429-30; E. Windeatt, 'Early Nonconformity in Ashburton', Transactions of the Devonshire Association XXVIII (1896), 228-237.

(4) Lacey, 206; Morrice Q, 211. See Lacey, Appendix II, 409-10, 449-50, 452, 442-3, 441-2, 429-30, 376-7, 438, 459, 390-1.

of opinion in favour^{of} the Court between April and September. During these months the crisis over the order to read the Second Indulgence in the churches had led to the Bishops' imprisonment and trial; the High Church had come to espouse the causes of comprehension and toleration;⁽¹⁾ and a Catholic heir had been born who was widely believed to have been supposititious.

Any movement of opinion among Presbyterians and Congregationalists since the Lord Lieutenants had put the Three Questions had been away from rather than toward, the repeal of the Test Acts. And even when the Three Questions had been put there had been no room for complacency on the part of the Court.⁽²⁾ Evidence from sources other than agents' reports indicate that there was a tendency on the part of those who had committed themselves to repeal before May 1688 to go back on their commitments thereafter.⁽³⁾ In one respect, even the September reports themselves, despite the confidence expressed in the general introduction, inadvertently betrayed unease about Nonconformist support. In the April reports the assumption had frequently been made that, because Nonconformists were 'numerous' or in the majority in a particular area, success for Court candidates was automatically assured; this had been so with the Dorchester, Malcombe Regis, Bridport, Wareham, LYNN Regis, Ipswich, Sudbury, Bristol, Taunton, Totnes, Plymouth, Barnstaple, Honiton, Tavistock and the county seats in Dorset and Norfolk.⁽⁴⁾ In the

(1) Every, 19-21; See above, pp. 417-426, 427-429.

(2) See above, pp. 438, 447, 460-464.

(3) Ellis II, 56, cli; Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2161e; BM Add MS. 34515, f. 67; SP 44, Entry Book 56, 430-440, cited J. R. Jones, 'James II's Whig Collaborators', Historical Journal III (1960), 71, n. 45.

(4) Duckett II, 221, 221-2, 222, 223, 224, 226-7, 228-229, 231-232, 232-3.

September reports this assumption was made in only one instance, the county seats in Somerset.⁽¹⁾ Evidence, apart from the September reports, would also seem to indicate the improbability of those named in them as having 'altered their minds', actually having done so. Andrew Browning has discovered two lists of names; these are believed to represent estimates of the extent of opposition to James II. One list was drawn up by Danby, the second by an 'unknown compiler'. William had insisted on being invited over by 'some of the best interest and the most valued in the nation'; the second was probably a list of such persons.⁽²⁾ Since [Thomas] Wharton, Sir Thomas Lee, Richard Hampden, John Trenchard, Sir Samuel Barnardiston, and Sir John Thompson, who were *named* in the September reports *and* *accepted specifically or by inference* *as* suitable to stand as Court candidates, were also on Danby's lists, if they had indicated a change of opinion to James II's agents it may have been an act of deliberate deceit.⁽³⁾ Barnardiston, at least, had a motive for avoiding giving deliberate offence to the Court; since 1684 he had 'lain under a fine of £10,000' and had but recently *induced the Court to accept a residual bond for part of*⁽⁴⁾ *it.* It is also

(1) Duckett II, 243.

(2) A. Browning, Thomas Osborne Earl of Danby, Duke of Leeds 1632-1712 (1951) III, App. IV, 152. Since the 141 names on the first list include those of Sir John Reresby, Sir Roger L'Estrange and the Dukes of Norfolk and Somerset it is obviously not made up of people actively in opposition. The Dissenters listed on it were Wharton, Lord Pagett, Edward Russell and Sir Thomas Barnardiston. Ibid, 153-7. See Lacey, 354 n.21.

(3) Duckett II, 238-9, 240, 243, 246, 250; A. Browning, op cit, 153-7, 157-63. See Miller, 250. It is worthy of note, however, that beside the names of Wharton and Lee the agents had written 'their sentiments we do not fully understand'. Duckett, 238-9. For a complete list of all the Nonconformist politicians who served in the Parliaments of Charles II and James II see Lacey, Appendix II.

(4) Luttrell I, 441-2; Ellis II, 103, clxii; Morrice P, 431, 433, 442; HMC 14th Report, app. pt. II; Portland MSS III (1894), 377, 378-9; HMC Downshire MSS I, i, 268; DNB I, 1164-1166. See CSPD 1684-5, 177; 1686-7, 116. The judgement on Barnardiston was not finally reversed until May 1689. Luttrell I, 534.

just possible, however, that his commercial interest may have predisposed him against the Dutch and in favour of James.⁽¹⁾ But both Barnardiston and Richard Hampden had *opposed similar Court policies in the past* and if they did in fact make undertakings of support to James II at this time, it was out of context with every other move of their long careers.⁽²⁾ Similarly, Sir Richard Norton, as an old friend of Cromwell's, a Congregationalist politician always suspicious of the Stuart Court and an earlier opponent of the repeal of the Tests, was unlikely to have made a dramatic deviation during the summer and early autumn of 1688 in an otherwise consistent career.⁽³⁾ Sir Walter Young was a satellite of Baxter's circle, and was believed to take his political lead from John Hampden, and hence he was unlikely to have committed himself to repeal of the Tests.⁽⁴⁾ Only in the case of Sir John Gell - already a JP and Deputy Lieutenant - is there any indication that a commitment to repeal of the Tests may have been made; and the evidence is entirely based on agents' reports as to his 'suitability' for the position he filled and for election candidacy.⁽⁵⁾

In early September 'a Presbyterian devoted to the Court' whom Bonrepos styled 'Chevalier Jean Beuer', and could only have been Sir John Baber, told him that James II 'would not get from Parliament

- (1) L. Pinkham, *William III and the Respectable Revolution* (1954), 37.
- (2) Duckett II, 149-150n, 225-6; Lacey, 376-7, 402-403; DNB I, 1164-1166; VIII, 1150-1151.
- (3) M. Noble, *Memoirs of the Protectoral House of Cromwell* (178) II, 433-5; Duckett I, 425, 431 ; Lacey, 427-8.
- (4) Morrice P, 464; Lacey, 459. Young may have been opposed to regulation. HMC 14th Report, app. pt. II: Portland MSS III (1894), 404.
- (5) Duckett I, 168, 440; II, 293; Lacey, 218-219.

the suppression of the Test, and that all he could hope for was the abolition of the Penal Laws for the Catholics already in office'.⁽¹⁾ Bonrepos himself realised by the end of August that Sunderland at least was wildly over-estimating the amount of support the Court would get from Dissenters, and believed he had been misled by Penn and Barclay.⁽²⁾ On 8 September Roger Morrice noted that on the preceding Saturday 'the Committee for the Regulation of the Corporations had sat down at Whitehall' to consider the agents' reports and 'to make preparation in order to a Parliament'. He was amazed at their optimism, and the credence they gave these reports:

'His Majesty and his Ministers of State, particularly the Earl of Sunderland, remain firmly persuaded that he shall carry his point by the Parliament... but it is certain they are mis-informed and have no reason at all to be of that persuasion'.⁽³⁾

Bonrepos seemed to be saying that the Court's lack of realism in its approach to Nonconformist support in the forthcoming Election and Parliament was of a piece with the King's inability to look in the face the prospect of a Dutch descent on England.⁽⁴⁾ James had lost the Dissenters who had been 'for the suppression of the Tests' over the Seven Bishops Affair. These Nonconformists now believed that the Bishops would support the Prince of Orange's Party in their undertaking to grant toleration. They had always had misgivings

(1) Bonrepos au Roi, Archives Nationales K, 1351, No. 4, f. 54.
 (2) J. P. Kenyon, Robert Spencer Earl of Sunderland (1958), 208-9.
 (3) Morrice Q, 291. See *Lacey*, 355 n. 31.

(4) Bonrepos au Roi, Archives Nationales K, 1351, No. 4, ff. 45, 46-47, 49, 51, 53.

that King James would go back on his word; they were sure that the Bishops and the Prince would not go back on theirs.⁽¹⁾

By 21 September Van Citters believed that James II had at last realised that 'the Dissenters were too powerless or too unwilling to procure him a favourable parliament'.⁽²⁾ In fact, the long years of sporadic persecution before 1687 and the issues raised by the over-use of 'enticelement' (with the additional complication of the ingrained apprehension of a 'Popish Design'), had rendered them both 'too powerless' and, as far as the greater part of them were concerned, 'too unwilling' to facilitate the success of the King's programme through the sanction of a Nonconformist Parliament. The pretended optimism notwithstanding, the letters sent out between 8 September (two days after the receipt of the agents' reports) and 21 September (the day on which Van Citters wrote) to Lord Lieutenants ^{and others} recommending Court candidates, and to the candidates themselves, tacitly recognised this fact.⁽³⁾ Only two Nonconformists who had been in previous Parliaments were recommended, despite the list of those in the agents' reports alleged to have 'altered their opinions': Sir John Gell was recommended to the Earl of Huntingdon,⁽⁴⁾ and Sir Samuel Barnardiston was asked to stand for Suffolk.⁽⁵⁾ In addition

(1) Bonrepos au Roi, Archives Nationales K, 1351, No. 4, f. 54.

(2) BM Add MS.34512, f. 101. The proclamation announcing the Elections on 20 September had contained the undertaking that His Majesty had resolved 'inviolably to preserve the Church of England, by such a confirmation of the several Acts of Uniformity, that shall never be altered any other ways, than by repealing the several clauses which inflict penalties upon persons...for using and exercising their religion contrary to the tenor and purpose of the said Acts of Uniformity'. Gazette 2384; Ellis II, 207, 209-213, clxxxix, cxc.

(3) CSPD 1687-9, 267, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 279. See also SP 44/56, 431.

(4) CSPD 1687-9, 273.

(5) CSPD 1687-9, 276. See Lacey, 218-219.

Sir John Trevor, who was recommended as one of the MPs for Droitwich,⁽¹⁾ may have been thought of by the King as a Nonconformist. This he almost certainly was not, and, in the cases of Gell and Barnardiston, there is no evidence, except the notoriously inaccurate agents' reports, to indicate that they were prepared to comply if elected. On the other hand according to Morrice, by 22 September certain (unnamed) Nonconformists were said to be putting up in opposition to court candidates in four constituencies.⁽²⁾ One of these was probably Paul Foley.⁽³⁾

That enticement and, more specifically, the project of a Nonconformist Parliament, would reach this inglorious denouement, and that James II's programme would, thereby, fail in a nimbus of confusion, had been predicted by informed persons of most shades of opinion in the course of 1687-8. By mid-August 1688 Morrice was sure of the Court's complete isolation, and that only 'such force as the King had at home or could get from abroad' could prevent the forthcoming Parliament from an outright refusal 'to take off the Tests and penal laws'; and he believed that force was unlikely to be used.⁽⁴⁾ Few men had been as consistent in 1688 as Van Citters, who had repeatedly assured William that regulation could not succeed.⁽⁵⁾ James Johnstone had often expressed the view in his intelligence letters that, unless false returns were made, the lack of Nonconformist support would doom the prospect of a pliable

(1) CSPD 1687-9, 279.

(2) Morrice Q, 292.

(3) Robert to Sir Edward Harley, 10 September 1688, HMC 14th Report, app. pt. II: Portland MSS III (1894), 417.

(4) Morrice Q, 286, 288-9.

(5) BM Add MS. 34510, ff. 63, 75, 87; MS. 34512, f. 77.

Parliament.⁽¹⁾ In January 1688, the Imperial ambassador asserted that there was 'neither appearance nor hope of things being carried out in the form or manner the Court..imagined'.⁽²⁾ The Anglican, William Wake, wrote in July 1688 that he wondered that any could 'repine' at the prospect of a Nonconformist Parliament or the possibilities contingent upon the birth of the Catholic heir. He concluded:

'I cannot see any of these desperate things they suppose ever the more likely to fall upon us. On the contrary, I pray God the heat and indiscretion of the Roman Catholics... do not make them accelerate their own ruin'.⁽³⁾

Also in July, Humphrey Prideaux, Dean of Norwich, in a letter to an Under-Secretary of State wrote:

'Things look cloudy upon us here, and the matter of the Declaration hath I fear put us much under the King's displeas- ure.. [but] at present we are only hurt in imagination, and our greatest torment is our fears of what may after happen; but I hope they will prove to be only fears and nothing else'.⁽⁴⁾

As early as 31 May 1687 Halifax had predicted in a letter to William that there would be no Nonconformist Parliament. This view had been repeated in another letter of 12 April 1688; regulation, he argued, had been counter-productive. 'The great thing to be done' at that time was 'to do nothing, but wait for the good consequences of their divisions and mistakes. Unseasonable stirrings or anything'

(1) Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2112a, c, 2120b, 2145c.

(2) Hoffman, 16 January 1688 NS, cited J. Carswell, *The Descent on England* (1969), 112.

(3) N. Sykes, *William Wake Archbishop of Canterbury 1657-1737* (1957) I, 43.

(4) Cited M. V. Hay, *The Enigma of James II* (1938), 55.

that made the Protestants look like 'aggressors' could only unite the King's supporters 'and by that means' would 'bring disappointment to those hopes' that could otherwise 'hardly fail'. On 25 July Halifax could report little change except that 'every new attempt' had brought 'a fresh disadvantage upon the great design'.⁽¹⁾

William heard the same message from the Earl of Nottingham, who had emerged as the lay leader of the Anglican Church. On 2 September 1687 he predicted that Anglicans would 'prevail in most elections; so that few Dissenters... will be chosen; and further... that few Dissenters will attempt it'. In the unlikely eventuality of a Non-conformist Parliament being elected he was sure that they would not repeal 'so much as the penal laws'. In the still more unlikely eventuality of the penal laws being repealed, he was sure that there would be no threat to the Test Acts and that such a Parliament would, instead, prove a threat to 'the present interest... of the Papists'. On 27 July 1688 Nottingham wrote to William:

'The birth of a Prince of Wales, and the designs of a further prosecution of the bishops, and of new modelling the army and calling of a parliament, are matters that afford various reflections. But I cannot apprehend from them such ill consequences to our religion, or the just interests of Your Highness, that a little time will not effectually remedy, nor can I imagine that the Papists are able to make any further considerable progress'.⁽²⁾

In September Bonrepos reported to Louis that, in the absence of any

(1) Kenyon (ed), *Halifax: letters*, 334-6, 338-41, 341-2.

(2) Dalrymple II, app. pt. I, 77-80, 117-118.

significant Nonconformist support for the Court, although 'the Prince of Orange's party' and the common people were 'not satisfied with the government', they did not believe the Protestant religion to be in peril, 'because they did not believe the King of England strong enough to destroy it' and hence would regard a Dutch invasion as an unwelcome intrusion.⁽¹⁾

Whatever the withdrawal of the writs for the elections obviated, it was not a Nonconformist Parliament: if the aim of enticement and regulation had been to create a consensus among enfranchised, articulate Dissenters in favour of repeal, and an electoral structure capable of turning that consensus into legislative form, they had been an all-round failure. And whatever the Dutch invasion came to safeguard, it was not the Protestant religion; that was not considered to be in danger. What the withdrawal of the writs and the coming of William did do was to remove the conditions which had given the scheme for the comprehension of moderate Presbyterians a good chance of success; and to initiate a process which led to the imposition of limits upon the toleration and political emancipation of the religious groups excluded by the Restoration Settlement, which before the landing at Torbay had been complete.

(1) Bonrepos au Roi, Archives Nationales K, 1351, No. 4, ff. 51, 53.

CONCLUSIONDISSENT AND THE REVOLUTION1

The withdrawal of the writs for the elections and James II's moves to conciliate Anglican opinion in late September and early October 1688⁽¹⁾ removed the Nonconformists from the pivotal position between the Church and Court interests which they had occupied since 1686. But the renewal of old charters and the removal of Nonconformists from local government⁽²⁾ did not mean that the King had peremptorily abandoned them and the tolerationist policy which he had hoped to consolidate in conjunction with them. In the febrile atmosphere at Court in the weeks prior to the invasion, it seems to have been the King's concern that no significant group be left alienated. Hence, though he was conscious that the Nonconformists had let him down, James invited ministers from the Presbyterian, Congregationalist, Baptist and Quaker sects to attend him. There can be no doubt that his objective in extending these invitations

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- (1) The letter from Sunderland to the Archbishop of Canterbury and eight Bishops (including Compton) was despatched on 24 September. CSPD 1687-9, 281. The decision to make an appeal to the Anglicans was made on 21st or before. BM Add MS.34512, f. 101. The concessions to the Anglicans were made public through the London Gazette: No. 2385 (26 September) the re-instatement of Anglican Deputy-Lieutenants and JPs; 2386 (30 September), the removal of Compton's suspension and the writs for a Parliament recalled; 2388 (5 October), the dissolution of the Commission for Ecclesiastical Causes; 2388 (6 October), the restoration of the old charter to the Corporation of the City of London; 2389 (10 October), Lord Lieutenants authorised to investigate the 'abuses and irregularities' of the electoral agents; 2390 (12 October), the Bishop of Winchester, as Visitor, ordered to 'settle' Magdalen College 'regularly and statutably'; 2391 (17 October), the reversal of quo warrantos; 2393 (22 October), a public attestation of the 'genuineness' of the birth of the Prince of Wales.
- (2) d'Adda, 15 October 1688 NS, BM Add MS.15397, ff. 328-31; CSPD 1687-9, 286-7.

was to convince them of the legitimacy of the Prince of Wales and of the essential moderation of his intentions. It is significant, however, that the only ministers who presented themselves at Court in response to these invitations were the anti-Court tolerationist Presbyterian Dr. Samuel Annesley, the émigré, pro-Williamite John Howe, the 'Don' Dr. William Bates and the anti-Court leader among the Congregationalists George Griffiths. Across the spectrum of Nonconformity James could scarcely have found less sympathetic listeners and his assurances were received as further evidence of his duplicity and desperation.⁽¹⁾ Despite their imperviousness, and the failure of the other ministers to respond to his invitation, on 23 October the King still took up the cause of a group of Dissenters in Derby who Sir Simon Degg, Deputy-Lieutenant of Staffordshire, had forbidden to meet. Degg, who, as an Anglican, may have been acting in anticipation of William's landing, was asked 'not for the future [to] give them any interruption in their meeting peaceably to serve God according to their consciences', a right allowed them by the Declaration of Indulgence, upon the precepts of which it appeared His Majesty's policies yet rested.⁽²⁾

William's landing did not make the political allegiances of the great majority of Dissenters any more clear-cut than they had been previously. Only two Nonconformist groups welcomed the invasion without reservation. It was ironic that one of these was the 'Dons' who, in the long-term, lost most by the conditions created by the Revolution. Among the first in London to hear of the landing, they believed that it would lead to the consummation of their hopes for

(1) Lacey, 219-220, 355-6 n. 37; Morrice Q, 309.

(2) CSPD 1687-9, 141, 329.

comprehension based on the scheme set in motion by Sancroft during the summer.⁽¹⁾ Two years later Richard Baxter was to write what could have become one of the classic apologias for the Revolution, King James His Abdication of the Crown Plainly Proved.⁽²⁾ Ostensibly directed toward the ejected Non-jurors, with whom he compared the ejected ministry of 1662, this pamphlet was, in fact, a detailed justification of the political events between the landing in Brixham and the coronation of William and Mary. The basic premise upon which the rationalisation of James II's deposition was based was that as a Catholic prince, his first responsibility had been toward his Church and its head. It had, therefore, to be assumed that all acts of policy were necessarily bent to the betterment of his Church's status in the nation and that all statements on policy that tended to indicate contrary or conflicting ends could only have been short-term ploys, which would be pardoned by the all-glorious climax to which they led. And further, even if it were assumed that the King himself had intended to stand by his undertakings to non-Catholics - including his undertakings to preserve the Church of England for the Anglicans and toleration for the Nonconformists - it would have been the aim of the Roman Catholics who were elevated by the King to high positions to pervert his intentions. Having regard to these dangers, it behoved all responsible men not to wait until the situation was

(1) H. Wilcox to R. Baxter, Dartmouth 6 November 1688, Baxter MSS (Letters) VI, f. 20; Morrice Q, 299-300, 311.

(2) Baxter dated this pamphlet 1 October 1691. He died 8 December 1691. The pamphlet is contained in the Baxter MSS (Treatises) VII, ff. 230-35. It is subdivided into chapters (and some of the chapters into sections) but the pages are not numbered. It is reproduced in Appendix Three. Since it does not appear in the list of Baxter's works in G. F. Nuttall, *Richard Baxter* (1965), app, 132-6 it is probable that it was never published.

'past remedy', but to take steps for the 'self-preservation' of the kingdom. To those who refused to swear allegiance to William and Mary Baxter said, that treachery 'only against the person of a King' was not nearly as bad as being 'a traitor against the Commonwealth'; by avoiding the former they had made themselves guilty of the latter. 'We may easier have another King than another kingdom'; by bringing about the probability of subservience to France and the Papacy, it was clear that James II had intended 'another kingdom'; supporters of the Revolution had chosen instead the less drastic alternative of 'another King'.⁽¹⁾ Because it was not published, and was written two years after the event, Baxter's pamphlet had no impact at all on contemporary opinion, as similar apologies written by Churchmen did,⁽²⁾ but it serves as an illustration of how the Presbyterian monarchists, who at the beginning were William's firmest adherents, rationalised for themselves the change of allegiance. In fact, despite the reaction against the Dutch interest following Dykvelt's departure at the end of June 1687, the impact of Fagel's Letter, (which expressed exactly their own opinions), and of the rapprochement with the Anglicans, had brought the Dons to a strongly pro-Dutch position by the spring of 1688. James Johnstone found them eager to have William's approval of their stand in the crisis during May, and concerned that he be made aware that they 'disowned' all collaborators among the Nonconformists. They had also expressed a

(1) A large part of this pamphlet is superfluous to its central line of argument. See especially Chapter One, and Chapter Two sections xvi, xvii, xix, xxi.

(2) See G. M. Straka, *Anglican Reaction to the Revolution of 1688* (1962), viii, 3, 4, 5, 12, 16.

desire that some explanation be made to William of the fact that they were not actively in opposition to the Court. Johnstone reported:

'At present, since they are sheltered from the laws by this Court, decency obliges them not to seek an occasion to show their dislike, but they say whenever the Court puts them to a trial that it will appear that such men [the collaborators] have no credit among them'.

At all events, their refusal to address after the second Indulgence, their refusal to read the Declaration in their own meetings when the suggestion that they should do so was put to them, and their open avowals of support for the Bishops, had convinced Johnstone that the moderates would 'do all that was desired of them'.⁽¹⁾ John Howe would appear to have envisaged that 'a great Revolution in His Majesty's family' was a probable solution to the crisis in England as early as February or March though it is not clear what he meant by it.⁽²⁾ Roger Morrice believed that a mysterious meeting had been convened at the home of John Howe on 23 May: the fact that he found it necessary to write the names of those who attended this meeting in code and that he left the remainder of the page blank may indicate that he had regarded its purpose as treasonable. In the course of June, Howe was exhorting fellow Presbyterians that they should do

- (1) Portland Misc.19, PWA 2161e, 2162b; Morrice Q, 269. See also PWA 2112d, 2118b, 2124e, 2147d.
- (2) Portland Misc 19, PWA, 2147d. A letter to William written by the Earl of Devonshire on 13 March 1688 was sent via a 'Mr. Howe'; though there is no evidence that John Howe made any further visits to the United Provinces after his return in 1687 it is not impossible that he did make such a visit, or arranged for the delivery of the letter by a third person. Dalrymple II, pt. 1, app. bk v, 94-5.

everything in their power to keep all Dissenters away from the Court, that they might not lose the 'friendship' and 'interest' of their 'Great Friends over the seas'.⁽¹⁾

The second Nonconformist group that welcomed the Revolution was a multifirmity of Presbyterian and Congregationalist politicians who in all probability had varying degrees of foreknowledge of, and had accorded varying degrees of advance support to, William's venture. Immediately following the birth of the Prince of Wales, a Dutch agent interviewed Sir Thomas Lee⁽²⁾ and John Hampden. Both seem to have been already committed to William's cause. It was the concern of Hampden, however, that the invasion take place as soon as possible. The rationalisation for an invasion would have to be the supposititious birth and William should capitalise upon the popular disbelief in this birth immediately: within three months, Hampden believed, the nation would have 'accepted the Prince', a Parliament would have been 'forced', a Regency established, the revenue augmented, and the army and fleet 'modelled' and expanded. 'The spirit of the nation', he felt sure, was 'like a tide which must have an ebb'. France was ready to intervene and the people could not be counted on indefinitely: for the time being the entire nation was alienated from the Government and, if the invasion were to take place in the near future, the 'Church of England ... would furnish hands enough'.⁽³⁾ Perhaps the most surprising aspect of Hampden's analysis were his fears - in sharp contrast to the views of many informed observers⁽⁴⁾ - of the

(1) Morrice Q, 263, 269.

(2) See Lacey, 418-419. See also 214, 250.

(3) Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2173b; BM Add MS.34515, ff. 80, 81. See Lacey, 215.

(4) See above, pp. 523-526.

upshot of the Parliament for which the Court was preparing.

However, it would appear that Lee and the younger Hampden were by no means the only Nonconformist politicians who had become involved to some degree (the extent and nature of which is uncertain) in William's conspiracy by the end of June 1688. The second of Browning's two lists, found among Danby's papers⁽¹⁾ included 173 names. Of these, fourteen appear in Lacey, Appendix II, as ex-MPs who were Nonconformists. They are the Earl of Bedford, Lord Pagett, Richard Hampden, Hugh Boscawen, Sir Edward Harley, Paul Foley, Sir John Thompson, Sir John Hartop, John Trenchard, Sir William Ellis, Thomas Papillon, Sir Samuel Barnardiston, Sir John Fagg and Thomas Foley. The list of ex-MPs is headed 'Commoners eminent in Parliament, useful men but not to be trusted'.⁽²⁾ From this it is clear that this was in no sense a list of William's supporters but, at best, a list of probable supporters. In early August Robert and Edward Harley dined with Lord Chandos in London and discussed elections. The latter said that he 'adhered to the Prince's interest' and 'would steer as Sir E[dward] would desire', an indication of the political bent of the Harley family.⁽³⁾ Sir John Thompson would appear to have been *'one of the earliest subscribers to the Invitation of William of Orange'*.⁽⁴⁾ From 1 October Thomas Wharton,

(1) See above p. 519; Lacey, 215, 354 n. 21.

(2) A. Browning, *Thomas Osborne Earl of Danby and Duke of Leeds 1632-1712* (1951) III, 157-163. See Lacey, Appendix II. Sir Thomas Lee, like Lord Delamere who was also on the list, may have been a Low Churchman with Nonconformist leanings. Lacey, 214, 250, 320 n. 36, 418-419.

(3) Robert to Sir Edward Harley, 4 August 1688, HMC 14th Report, app. pt. II: Portland MSS III (1894), 416. It is difficult to accept Lacey's deduction from this letter that 'as early as the beginning of August, Sir Edward Harley and his sons Robert and Edward were working to organise support for William'. Lacey, 217.

(4) DNB XIX, 696.

not on the list, was involved with the Earl of Devonshire in preparing for William's landing.⁽¹⁾

Only a few of those on the second list were actively supporting William a fortnight after his landing. Others not on the list did come in. The Foleys were probably the first to make a move. Paul and Thomas Foley 'raised Worcestershire for the Prince' and, by the time William had arrived at Hungerford, Thomas Foley was in support, backed by 300 horse. It is likely that William and John Trenchard, Sir Walter Young, Philip Gell and Sir William Waller tendered 'their support during the second half of November'.⁽²⁾ (Waller may have come over with William: he had fled to Holland in 1686 and there is no evidence of his having returned subsequently).⁽³⁾ Thomas Dore (or Dare), 'a great Dissenter' recently removed from his place as Mayor of Lymington - and *possibly of the family of the man* who had proclaimed Monmouth King in that town - joined William at Brixham and offered to lead a troop of horse. Another 'conspicuous Dissenter' (unnamed) from South Devon had 'done even more'.⁽⁴⁾ Henry Booth, Lord Delamere, had been making preparations to 'raise Lancashire and Cheshire' as early as 8 October, and on 16 November he rode south to join William.⁽⁵⁾ On 7 November Thomas Wharton led a 'party' of sixty 'Buckinghamshire gentlemen' through Oxford bound

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- (1) A. Browning, Thomas Osborne Earl of Danby Duke of Leeds 1632-1712 (1951) I, 390-1.
- (2) Morrice Q, 333, 343, 344, 370; Lacey, 221.
- (3) HMC Downshire MSS I, 1, 143.
- (4) Morrice Q, 333-4. See Roberts I, 253, 321; VCH Somerset II, 220, 361 n. 116.
- (5) Henry Newcome, Autobiography, Chetham Soc. (1852) II, 268, 269; R. Halley, Lancashire its Puritanism and Nonconformity (1872) II, 284; Luttrell I, 477, 478; A. Browning, op cit, 397; J. Carswell, The Descent on England (1969), 193.

for William's camp.⁽¹⁾ The Harleys were not prepared when William landed, and Robert and Edward had to be despatched to London to acquire arms and ammunition. During the last week in November Sir Edward, flanked by his two sons, appeared 'in arms at Hereford for the Prince', and soon joined William at Salisbury, taking the credit for having 'raised Herefordshire'. As William left Salisbury he was joined by the Presbyterian Sir Robert Pye. Before the end of November Philip Prime had recruited 'a troop' from the Dissenters of Derbyshire and had joined the Earl of Devonshire's forces.⁽²⁾ But by the time William arrived at Hungerford others among the Nonconformist politicians had become conspicuous by their absence. These included Philip Lord Wharton, John Swynfen and Hugh Boscawen.⁽³⁾

Clearly, opposition to James II and the repeal of the Test Acts was not the same thing as support for William of Orange. John Hampden had been right to warn Johnstone that

'all would depend on the first brush': 'the whole nation was alienated from the government... but... they had lost both virtue and courage, and would stand in need of some prosperous beginning to make them determine'.⁽⁴⁾

The memory of the Bloody Assizes undoubtedly deterred West Country

(1) Ibid, 189. Carswell uses NS dating.

(2) Morrice Q, 343, 347, 358; CR, 73; Henry Hyde Earl of Clarendon, *Diary and Correspondence*, ed. S. W. Singer (1828) II, 219. See A. Pye to Abigail Harley, 13 December 1688, HMC 14th Report, app. pt. II: Portland MSS III (1894), 420. By mid December it was known that Sir Edward Harley and Paul Foley had contributed £50 to a loan for William. Ibid, 421.

(3) Morrice Q, 333, 344, 391.

(4) Portland Misc. 19, PWA 2173b (18 June).

Dissenters from joining William.⁽¹⁾ Those of South Devon were 'very well affected' toward William; but Morrice felt that 'he cannot expect they will so generally assist him, though it is very likely they will not generally oppose him'.⁽²⁾ Nonconformists who lived neither on William's route nor in London, whence news of his doings quickly sped, were bemused by the whole thing. There were those like James Owen of Shrewsbury (under the influence of the Harleys) who believed that William had saved England from 'an army of Papists and the debauched Protestants, within our gates' and had prevented 'the enactment here' of 'the second part of the French tragedy',⁽³⁾ and cranks like the Congregationalist pastors Joseph Jacob, who rode out of London to meet William as soon as he heard of his landing, and Richard Beverley, who heralded the landing as the first act in the final destruction of the Papacy, a concomitant of the Second Coming;⁽⁴⁾ but these were probably exceptional. To Ralph Thoresby the landing was strange; 'we underlings knew not what to make of these affairs, nor is it my design to intermix public with my private memoirs'. Though he may not have actively disapproved, he may have felt the invasion to have been unnecessary.⁽⁵⁾ Philip Henry received the news of William's landing with 'some fear and

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- (1) J. Murch, *A History of the Presbyterian and Baptist Churches in the West of England* (1835), 384. See VCH Somerset II, 231. However, on 2 October several 'Monmouthians' were reported to be preparing to join William. Ellis II, 233, cxviii.
- (2) Morrice Q, 316.
- (3) James Owen, *Autobiography*, 42-44, cited T. Rees, *Nonconformity in Wales* (1883), 243-4.
- (4) Wilson I, 139; II, 63-5. See Beverley, *The Command of God to Come out of Babylon* (1687); *The Great Revolution in the Nation According to Revelation XVII; 16, 17, Wherein is Fully Proved that the Papacy can survive but Nine or Ten Years* (1688).
- (5) J. Hunter (ed), *The Diary of Ralph Thoresby* (1830) I, 188.

trembling'. He was 'somewhat in the dark' regarding 'the clearness of his [William's] call and dreaded what might be the consequence of it'. In public he prayed: 'Give peace in our time, O Lord'. Again, there was an element of surprise that the invasion should have had to happen at all; and perhaps a fear that the installation of William would result in a damaging war with the French.⁽¹⁾ Thomas Jolly noted:

the Prince of Orange's expedition into England' was strange to us, who were altogether unacquainted with the thing and with the grounds of it, yet we hope that such men had good grounds for what they did'.

Jolly had never thought as badly of James' intention as many other Congregationalist pastors had. He had been involved in the electoral campaign and, knowing that as far as Lancashire and Cheshire were concerned it had been a failure, he anticipated no danger from it.⁽²⁾ Henry Newcome was 'afraid' of the consequences of William's arrival, 'was affected *with* a great passion of tears' to see his respected friend Lord Delamere ride out to join the invading forces and, on 16 November celebrated a special day of prayer 'on the sad occasion of the confusion in the nation'.⁽³⁾ Whilst Oliver Heywood's initial reaction is less clear, in that he did not commit himself to paper until the year's end, it is evident that he did not understand even then why William's invasion had taken place and had no more than the haziest of notions of what had actually been happening in the last four months

(1) Henry, Diaries and Letters, 328-9.

(2) Jolly, 91. See 88-91.

(3) Henry Newcome, Autobiography, Chetham Soc. (1852) II, 268 ; R. Halley, Lancashire, its Puritanism and Nonconformity (1872) II, 284.

of 1688.⁽¹⁾ By 8 December comparatively few Nonconformist, even Presbyterian, pastors had openly declared for William, and it was believed that no Baptist or Quaker had as yet done so.⁽²⁾ Clearly the Jacobite pamphleteer who asserted that the Dissenters were the real villains behind 'the present, monstrous Revolution',⁽³⁾ was considerably wide of the mark.

William Penn, naturally, deplored the necessity for an invasion, representing as it did the ultimate demise of his hopes for a reconciliation between James and William. Alone among the King's Nonconformist allies, he remained in London throughout the Revolution. In the course of the ensuing two years he was arrested three times, spent a period in the Tower, and for part of 1689 corresponded with the exiled King at St. Germain. Penn was, perhaps, the only close confidant of James II - Jeffreys, Sunderland, Petre, Churchill - who emerged from the Glorious Revolution with his loyalty and self-respect intact.⁽⁴⁾ The importance attached to the role he had played in the Court of James II is indicated by the fact that he was arrested on 10 December by a special order of the Lords in Council and only released on 27 February 1689 on bail of £6000. He was finally cleared of a conspiracy charge at the end of the Easter Term of 1689: the letters he had written to James inviting him to return were merely intended to imply that he need not have fled in the first place, and, in any event, had been written during the period

(1) Heywood III, 234; IV, 61, 133.

(2) Morrice Q, 333; Lacey, 222.

(3) A True and Impartial Narrative of the Dissenters' New Plot, cited G. M. Straka, Anglican Reaction to the Revolution of 1688 (1962), 6.

(4) Buranelli, 170-1; Janney, 353-4; Braithwaite, 151-2; Luttrell I, 486, 553.

before the succession had been settled on William and Mary.⁽¹⁾

James II would have been surprised at the other Nonconformist source whence his cause received support in the frantic weeks immediately prior to his flight. Robert Ferguson, who had come over with William, insulted because of the subordinate capacity in which he was employed, took control of the main Presbyterian Meeting House at Exeter, sword in hand, when William's army arrived there, and preached a Jacobite sermon.⁽²⁾

In their reactions to the Revolution Penn and Ferguson were, of course, out on a limb, though for different reasons. The doubts of Thoresby, Henry, Jolly, Newcome and Heywood, and the silent testimonies of those conspicuously absent from William's camp, or uncommitted to his cause until after the King's first flight on 11 December, because they were more representative, have to be taken more seriously. Although some doubts could be accounted for by remoteness and slow communications, and, whilst all but two of the doubters - Jolly and Newcome - had adopted a favourable view toward William and the events of the Revolution by February 1689,⁽³⁾ there is clearly room for the suggestion that, the paranoid Popish Peril forebodings notwithstanding, there was doubt among those who did not know about the Revolution in advance whether it was necessary. In other words they probably shared the views of Halifax, Nottingham, Wake and the rest,

(1) Ellis II, 356; Buranelli, 172-7; Whiting, 185. See Penn, ix.

(2) Ferguson ultimately became an avowed Jacobite. DNB VI, 1216; Brockett, 53; J. Murch, A History of the Presbyterian and Baptist Churches in the West of England (1835), 385.

(3) Henry, Diaries and Letters, 329; Heywood III, 234-5; IV, 61, 133; Jolly, 92; Newcome, Autobiography, Chetham Soc. (1852) II, 269; R. Halley, op cit, 284-5; J. Hunter (ed), The Diary of Ralph Thoresby (1830) I, 191. See also 188-9, 190, 191.

who had assumed that James II's plans would collapse of their own volition, and certainly had lingering misgivings as to the trustworthiness of William - misgivings which had existed since 1679 - which Fagel's Letter had not quite eradicated.⁽¹⁾

The first ten days of December, which Morrice had predicted would decide the issue of whether 'the Dissenters and the Nation as a whole would go over to the Prince', produced few significant conversions to William's cause among the Nonconformists. Morrice was disturbed to hear that certain Dissenters who had served under Monmouth, with 'some sectaries under them', were serving as officers in the King's army.⁽²⁾ After 11 December (the date of James II's first flight) more began to declare for William. In Cornwall, Hugh Boscawen was found encouraging subscriptions for an address to William. Philip Lord Wharton was among the Lords who met at the Guildhall after James had fled and offered to obtain a Parliament. Sir John Maynard joined William at Court as a legal adviser. Sir William Ashurst led the Nonconformist group remaining in the City Corporation in a formal acknowledgement of thanks for William's venture.⁽³⁾

Responding to Anglican taunts and 'great imputations... that the Dissenters... did not more openly and publicly rise for, and serve the Prince of Orange',⁽⁴⁾ Nonconformists sought for media through which they might demonstrate their gratitude for what some

(1) See Morrice Q, 131, 149; above pp. 398, 523-526.

(2) Morrice Q, 322, 333, 335, 341.

(3) Burnet I, 803; Morrice Q, 344, 347, 350, 366; Lacey, 223.

(4) Morrice Q, 391.

now decided had been 'a deliverance from Popery' and an Irish army.⁽¹⁾ The opportunity for the London ministers came through an invitation extended to them by the Anglican Latitudinarians to attend a meeting to draw up a joint address. This meeting was chaired by the Bishop of London. The address was drawn up and four Nonconformist pastors were nominated to accompany a hundred Anglican clergymen, led by Compton, when they presented it to William on 21 December.⁽²⁾ Whether the Presbyterians were disappointed at the small representation allowed them is not clear but, under the leadership of John Howe, they drew up an address of their own. With Howe as spokesman and with a group of Dissenting pastors - variously estimated at fifty and ninety - in attendance, this address was presented to William in the presence of the Earl of Devonshire and Philip Lord Wharton on 2 January 1689.⁽³⁾ In the plethora of Nonconformist enthusiasm for the Protestant succession following the Coronation of William and Mary, it would appear that two further addresses were presented; one, by William Kiffin, purporting to represent the Baptists (though in view of the nature of that complexity of sects, probably representing no more than Kiffin's Devonshire Square congregation),⁽⁴⁾ another by Dr. William Bates on behalf of an unspecified group and number of Dissenters.⁽⁵⁾

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- (1) Heywood III, 234; IV, 133; T. Rees, Protestant Nonconformity in Wales (1883), 244; Neal V, 73; Henry, Diaries and Letters, 329. See text of address, Calamy, Abridgement, 388-9.
- (2) Morrice Q, 364, 383-4; Neal V, 74; Calamy, Abridgement, 387.
- (3) Calamy, Howe, 142-4; Calamy, Abridgement, 387-9; Neal V, 74; Luttrell I, 493; Morrice Q, 411-412; R. F. Horton, John Howe (1895), 170-171.
- (4) Morrice Q, 412.
- (5) Birch, Tillotson, 167; Neal V, 78. See Luttrell I, 505; Carpenter, Tenison, 96.

But by this time William had more substantial evidence than the swelling phrases of these addresses that Nonconformist support could be counted on. In the House of Lords meetings between 21-24 December Wharton and Paget were in the van of those eager to assume the 'abdication' of the King and the supposition of James Edward's birth. (1) John Hampden was the sponsor of the address brought to William praising him for his venture and asking him to assume the government and issue writs for an election. (2) Sir John Maynard, from his first appearance on the scene, canvassed among the ex-MPs, who had convened in London, in favour of William and Mary's succession. (3) Roger Morrice, ^{probably} having examined the Posting Books, believed that ^{all but} £37,000 of the total of £190,000, raised by the London Court of Aldermen in January 1689 as a loan to William, was from Dissenters. (4).

2

Despite earlier suspicions and their tardiness in making commitments, a mood of optimism began to overspread Dissenters by the end of 1688. This optimism, and the aspirations it germinated, had a common nexus in the relief felt at the removal of the half-believed-in Popish Menace; (5) in the assumption on the part of some

(1) Morrice Q, 350, 384-5; Lacey, 223.

(2) Morrice Q, 409; CJ X, 6.

(3) Morrice Q, 397-8.

(4)

Lacey, 224.

(5) Morrice Q, 308.

that William, as 'a Calvinistical Prince', would favour Dissenters;⁽¹⁾ and in the store placed in the Anglican promises made since May 1688.⁽²⁾ In early January 1689 Baxter, Bates and Howe were talking of demands that went even further than the Worcester House Agreement of 1660; 'that the bishops should exercise no Act of Jurisdiction or Ordination without the consent and counsel of the Presbyters'. The petition presented at Court by Bates called upon Their Majesties 'to establish a firm union of Protestant subjects in ^{the} matters of religion by making the rule of Christianity to be the rule of conformity'. To moderate churchmen it sounded as if Bates was suggesting a comprehension that amounted to a toleration.⁽³⁾ Heywood and Philip Henry looked for radical changes in Church and State to the benefit of Dissenters.⁽⁴⁾ The Nonconformist politicians, with the Catholic danger removed, moved away from a strictly 'Fagel's Letter' position on the Tests, and aimed to end the political exclusion of Dissenters. The address from John Howe and the London Presbyterians spoke of the repeal of the Tests as far as Protestants were concerned,⁽⁵⁾ and in the early days of the Convention Philip, Lord Wharton, drew up proposals that included the elimination of the Oaths and the requirement regarding the Sacrament from the 1673 Test Act, leaving only the declaration against transubstantiation.⁽⁶⁾ In March he hoped, probably in conjunction with Richard Hampden, to introduce legislation to this effect and, in addition, to repeal the

(1) Morrice Q, 424; Every, 28-29.

(2) Morrice Q, 335. See above, pp. 424, 425, 426, 427-434.

(3) Nuttall and Chadwick, 244; Carpenter, Tenison, 96.

(4) Heywood III, 235; Henry, Diaries and Letters, 329.

(5) Calamy, Howe, 142-4; Every, 35-36.

(6) Lacey, 226. See Morrice Q, 507.

Conventicle and Five Mile Acts and the sacramental test in the Corporation Act.⁽¹⁾

The optimism behind these aspirations was, in fact, unsoundly based. The removal of the Popish Menace, which helped to raise Nonconformist hopes, also removed the pressure on Anglicans to make concessions, and the more pragmatically-minded Churchmen, having already in the space of a few months exchanged 'Non-Resistance' for the 'Divine Right of Providence',⁽²⁾ felt disinclined to make further adaptations. Between 5 November 1688 and 13 April 1689, when it was decided to refer the matter of comprehension to Convocation, a reaction took place in Anglican opinion which made the soaring hopes of the Dissenters impossible of achievement. This reaction was made all the more telling by the fact that only thirty-three Nonconformists were elected to the Convention Parliament.⁽³⁾ Hence nothing could be achieved in the Commons without the support of the moderate Anglicans. But Anglicans may well have been alienated by the excessive demands of Howe and Bates. The fear developed among them that the re-opening of the comprehension debate would lead to concessions on liturgy, doctrine and discipline which would destroy the Church as it had evolved and come to be accepted by a majority of its clergy. Sancroft would appear to have believed in January 1689 that it would

(1) Lacey, 232-3.

(2) G. M. Straka, *Anglican Reaction to the Revolution of 1688* (1962), viii, *et seq.*

(3) Lacey, 224, 358 n. 57, App. III. See J. H. Plumb, 'The Elections to the Convention Parliament of 1689', *Cambridge Historical Journal* V (1937), 235-254; G. M. Straka, *op cit*, 15. If, as Carswell suggests, James II's encouragement of Nonconformist interests in the constituencies survived his reign and rendered Dissenters more electorally important in the elections for the Convention, they were clearly not using their advantage to support their own men. J. Carswell, *The Descent on England* (1969), 219. See also H. Horwitz, 'Parliament and the Glorious Revolution', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* XLVII No. 115 (May 1974), 40-41, 41-42.

be difficult to put forward enough concessions to please ^{all} the Dissenters in their present mood. During March and April there was a 'Church-in-danger' scare on the scale of the one twelve months before, this time with a new predator. (1)

However, the reaction against comprehension was not only caused by fear of what the Presbyterians proposals would do to the liturgy and discipline of the Church, but fear of what the Presbyterian political potential would do to the standing and influence of the Church. In the early months of 1689 Anglicans were well aware that the relative political positions of Church and Dissent were totally different then, by comparison with July 1688 when the comprehension scheme had been envisaged. (2) William Sherlock wrote that

at the start of the Revolution' it had been noted that the *Dissenters* were 'glad to be rid of Popery...; but now they expect Glorious Days for themselves and what they expect God Almighty knows'. (3)

Reresby wrote that it was common talk that 'the Prince upon his arrival, seemed more inclined to the Presbyterians than to members of the Church; which startled the clergy'. (4) From his observation of the behaviour of the various groupings in the early days of the

- (1) Henry Hyde Earl of Clarendon, Correspondence and Diaries, ed. S. W. Singer (1828) II, 240; Morrice Q, 511, 533-4; Carpenter, Tenison, 90-91; Every, 25, 28-29; G. M. Straka, op cit, 19; HMC Downshire MSS I, i, 304. Neither side were aware that, before the invasion, William had given an undertaking to the Pope, the Emperor and the King of Spain that there would be no 'rigorous Calvinism' were he to gain power in England. J. Carswell, op cit, 109-110.
- (2) G. Holmes, Religion and Party in late Stuart England, Historical Association. G.86. (1975), 12; Every, 28-29; K. Feiling, A History of the Tory Party 1640-1714 (1924), 269-70; A. Browning, Thomas Osborne Earl of Danby and Duke of Leeds (1951) I, 443, 444. See Morrice Q, 337, 380, 384, 388, 392.
- (3) Cited G. M. Straka, op cit, 19.
- (4) Cited Nuttall and Chadwick, 245.

Convention Parliament, Morrice remarked that, despite his earlier optimism about comprehension, he believed that the jealousy of the High Churchmen for the Presbyterians, and the Anglicans' fear of their being 'a dominant party' under the 'Calvinistical prince', would either inhibit or 'prevent it'.⁽¹⁾ The Popish Menace was not the only phobia bequeathed by the first to the second half of the seventeenth century in England; another 'was the fear of Puritan fanaticism, of a Second Coming of the Saints'. This fear had lost none of its potency by the early eighteenth century.⁽²⁾

In the debates on the ecclesiastical settlement the Nonconformist MPs seemed to go out of their way to give credence to the fear. Richard Hampden, Boscawen, and the rest dealt savagely with Nottingham's Comprehension Bill, which Anglicans could remind themselves was the same, not only in principle, but in detail as that drafted by Nottingham in 1680,⁽³⁾ and gave spirited support to Lord Wharton's proposals for the repeal of the sacramental test and the Conventicle and Five Mile Acts.⁽⁴⁾ It must have appeared to some Anglicans that Wharton and the elder Hampden were deliberately playing against the King's Anglican advisers, Danby, Halifax and Nottingham, and playing to win. On 16 March an uproar was raised in

- (1) Morrice Q, 424. The prominent part in debates in the Convention Parliament played by Maynard, Boscawen, the Hampdens, the Foleys and Sir William Waller, the political predominance of Richard Hampden and the elevation to the Privy Council of Richard Hampden, Philip Lord Wharton, the Earl of Bedford and Hugh Boscawen, must have helped to confirm the worst fears of the Anglicans between February and April 1689. Luttrell I, 502, 503, 506, 519; Lacey, 227-8, 230-1.
- (2) G. Holmes, *op cit*, 8-9, 11, 12, 13.
- (3) J. R. Western, *Monarchy and Revolution* (1972), 183. See G. V. Bennett, 'Church in Conflict', *Britain After the Glorious Revolution, 1689-1714*, ed. G. Holmes (1968), 158, 161, 162.
- (4) Morrice Q, 494, 503, 507, 508; Lacey, 232-6.

Parliament after Hampden and Wharton, in a private interview, had induced William to include their proposal for the abrogation of the sacramental test in a speech from the throne. Sir Thomas Clarges, an ally of the Nonconformist MPs through many political battles of the *with other Anglicans,* past, expressed the view that, whilst 'no man, from the bishops downward, *is* against any comprehension or relief to tender consciences',

Churchmen believed 'that something *lies* hid, that the Presbyterian party, the lean deer, *will* take away from *us*'.⁽¹⁾ That the Tory reaction was not merely the Bishops going back on their word is illustrated by the fact that the accommodation by which the Tories agreed to support the Toleration Bill on condition that the Comprehension Bill was dropped and the whole matter referred to Convocation was reached between politicians, not clergymen; and the petition that Convocation be summoned to deal with comprehension, was received from the Commons, not the bishops in the Lords.⁽²⁾

It has been argued convincingly that comprehension did not flourish once proposals for it were presented to Convocation when it met on 21 November 1689 because of the absence from their stations of responsibility of certain key High Churchmen who had made the initial commitments to Dissenters: the Non-Jurors. In 1688 comprehension had been 'a High Church policy'; the support of the High Churchmen had made it feasible for the first time since the Savoy Conference.⁽³⁾

(1) Lacey, 233, 234; Morrice Q, 505, 514-516; Every, 35. See A. Browning, Thomas Osborne Earl of Danby and Duke of Leeds 1632-1712 (1951) I, 447.

(2) Morrice Q, 558; Lacey, 235-6; Every, 35; Grey (Debates) IX, 197-8; K. Feiling, A History of the Tory Party 1640-1714 (1924), 265.

(3) N. Sykes, From Sheldon to Secker: aspects of English Church History 1660-1768 (1959), 85-89. See Carpenter, Tenison, 115-116.

Inconclusive as this argument must, by its nature, remain, there is evidence that the Non-Jurers gave the Comprehension Bill their support during its truncated parliamentary passage.⁽¹⁾

A further ingredient in the Anglican reaction was the shadow of events in Scotland. During the first few months of 1689, in which the Anglican position in England seemed to have been challenged by the Presbyterians, the Anglican predominance in Scotland had been overwhelmed by them. In July it became known that William had consented to an Act of the Scottish Parliament which abolished prelacy and established a Presbyterian church-order. This, the Churchmen were sure, would stiffen Presbyterian resistance to compromise, and put them in the mood to dictate, rather than accept, terms of comprehension. And news that arrived just before the meeting of Convocation in November of the persecution of episcopal clergy by the Presbyterians in Scotland, made its members ill-disposed to give a hearing to the report of its own Commission.⁽²⁾

There can be no doubt that the final element in the Anglican reaction against comprehension was fear of Dutch infiltration into the Church. The delayed reaction of English insularity to the Dutch invasion had led to the fear that, given generous terms of Comprehension and the complete emancipation of Nonconformists, Dutch

(1) Every, 33; K. Feiling, *op cit*, 264.

(2) G. Holmes, *Religion and Party in late Stuart England*, Historical Association. G.86. (1975), 12; G. V. Bennett, *op cit*, 160; Carpenter, Tenison, 115; Every, 28-29, 39-40. No evidence has been found in Presbyterian sources, such as Morrice, that the English Presbyterians did in fact draw analogies between their own position vis à vis the Anglicans in England, and the situation in Scotland. See Morrice's references to developments in Scotland, Morrice Q, 509, 513, 517, 523-4, 525, 531, 537, 539, 548, 550, 554, 555, 560, 561, 588, 600-1, 604-606.

Calvinists would be in a position to infiltrate the English Church and State. Some Anglicans, prepared to concede minor points in the liturgy and ceremonies of the Church to facilitate the comprehension of a few English Presbyterians, would not do so if the same concessions would allow the Dutch Calvinists into their communion and thus qualify them for political and military positions.⁽¹⁾

3

William's support for the Bill for exempting Their Majestys' Protestant subjects Dissenting from the Church of England from the Penalties of Certain Laws (the Toleration Bill), the Bill for Uniting Their Majestys' Protestant Subjects (the Comprehension Bill), and for the political emancipation of Nonconformists⁽²⁾ proved the inanity of the fears that some Nonconformists had entertained at the time of the landing. However, the hopes entertained by the optimists were shipwrecked by their own extravagance and by the complex reaction which had taken place in the ecclesiastical and political wings of the Church. Since the Anglican reaction had principally been a reaction against the idea of comprehension, the comprehension project was the long-term casualty from it. That the toleration scheme was the short-term beneficiary from the reaction was the result of a political accommodation.

Probably taking their cue from a speech made by the Archbishop of York in the Lords the previous day,⁽³⁾ spokesmen of the Whig and

(1) Morrice Q, 451; Every, 35, ~~36~~. See G. V. Bennett, op cit, 160.

(2) Carpenter, Tenison, 96-97, 98; Powicke, 173.

(3) Every, 35; Morrice Q, 534.

Tory factions met at Devil Tavern, Fleet Street on 9 April 1689. The upshot of their meeting was a bargain by which the Whigs agreed to drop the Comprehension Bill and support a motion to refer the matter to Convocation, and the Tories agreed to give their full support to the Toleration Bill.⁽¹⁾ Between 9 and 18 April the Toleration Bill passed speedily through the remaining stages in the Lords, then proceeded to the Commons, where unsuccessful attempts were made to restrict its application to a period of years, and it received the Royal Assent on 24 May.⁽²⁾

The Act did not repeal outright the laws against Dissenters; it exempted them from the penalties of the penal laws provided they met certain conditions. The Test Acts and the Corporation Act were expressly excluded. However, all persons convicted of recusancy were to be discharged on taking the oath of allegiance to William and Mary; those taking the oaths were also to be free of prosecutions for meeting, unless they met behind locked doors. JPs were empowered to tender the oaths to any person who attended a religious meeting, and to commit to prison, without bail, anyone who refused to take them. As a result of pressure from Gilbert Lathey and others a clause was inserted to allow Quakers to make a Solemn Declaration of Allegiance and Profession of Faith instead of the oaths. Roman Catholics and persons who denied the Trinity (Unitarians) were excluded from the advantages of the Act. For the protection of religious meetings, other than those held behind locked doors - a perpetuation of the

(1) Morrice Q, 558; K. Feiling, *A History of the Tory Party 1640-1714* (1924), 265; Lacey, 235.

(2) Luttrell I, 538; G. Holmes, *Religion and Party in late Stuart England*, Historical Association. G.86. (1975), 13n; Lacey, 236-7; Morrice Q, 557.

old equation between conventicles and sedition - it was made a criminal offence to disturb them. No building was to be used for public worship without a certificate from the Bishop, the Arch-deacon or a JP. Preachers must prove themselves 'orthodox' by signing the Thirty-Nine Articles, in addition to taking the oaths; though to accommodate perhaps chiefly the Baptists the 34th, 35th, 36th and part of the 20th and 27th Articles were made non-compulsory.⁽¹⁾

The pattern of Nonconformist reaction to the Toleration Act bore an inverse relationship to the reaction provoked by William's landing. Provincial Dissenters had been suspicious in November and December 1688; and hence in May 1689, with toleration on the statute book, they could not but be jubilant. Jolly, Heywood and Henry, who had taken little interest in comprehension and, ^{except Henry,} were oblivious to the continued political exclusion of Dissenters, had nothing but good to say.⁽²⁾ The Dons, who had welcomed the landing and looked for great things from the Convention Parliament, were deeply resentful of the political accommodation, pessimistic as to the chances of comprehension from Convocation, and dissatisfied that the Toleration Act left Nonconformists politically excluded. A few realists, however, who were aware of the Tory reaction within the Church, believed that Nonconformists were fortunate in the circumstances to get toleration at all from the Convention Parliament. Morrice and Burnet were amazed that a toleration 'so entirely

(1) G. Holmes, op cit, 12-13; Carpenter, Tenison, 97; R. Hawkins (ed), Friends Library: Consisting Principally of Journals and Extracts from Other Writings of Members of the Society of Friends, IX (1834), 85-86.

(2) Jolly, 94; Henry, Diaries and Letters, 362; Heywood IV, 133-4.
See R. Halley. Lancashire its Puritanism and Nonconformity (1872) II, 290-292.

satisfactory' to the sects should have been conceded given the mood of the Churchmen, and were disposed to put it down to the accommodation by which, they believed, the Comprehension Bill had been destroyed, to make the Toleration Act possible. John Howe was of the same opinion, but was bitter against the Churchmen for ditching the Comprehension Bill and appealed to Parliament 'for a larger measure' demanding 'that Dissenters should not be excluded from their share in the management of civil affairs'.⁽¹⁾ Bates and Baxter took the accommodation and the continuation of political exclusion very badly. The political bargain had 'dealt a death blow' to their 'inveterate hope in one English Church, broad based on simple Christianity'. The clergy, who had made undertakings in 1688, had let them down, and the Bishops had only yielded 'grudging assent' to the Toleration Act, unsatisfactory as it was. No mention had been made of permission for Nonconformist education. Baxter even objected to the clause requiring approval of the Thirty-Nine Articles; he had always had his doubts about some of them and, typically, was prepared to sign 'but with explanatory notes stating in what sense he did so'. An 'avowal of assent to the authority of the Holy Scriptures' was a sufficient test of orthodoxy, (and was in fact substituted for the Thirty-Nine Articles in 1779).⁽²⁾ In general the Quakers, who had kept an embarrassed silence since the Revolution, were deeply grateful for Article 10 of the Toleration Act, which had accommodated

(1) A. R. Henderson, *History of the Castle Gate Congregational Church Nottingham, 1655-1905* (1905), 76; Morrice Q, 558, 568, 574-5; Lacey, 236, 237-8. See Cragg II, 250.

(2) Calamy, *Abridgement*, 444-5, 467-476; Morrice Q, 558, 560; Powicke, 173-4. See G. V. Bennett, 'Conflict in the Church', *Britain after the Glorious Revolution 1689-1714*, ed. G. Holmes (1968), 162.

their oath-taking scruples, and which they had not expected. However, Penn, who wanted to see political disabilities removed, was disappointed.⁽¹⁾ Despite the concession on the issue of infant baptism, Baptists gave the Act a rather surly reception;⁽²⁾ what it did was to impose limits on a freedom which, since the summer of 1686, had been almost complete. However, it was indicative of a long-term achievement of James II that, though some Anglicans avoided the use of the word,⁽³⁾ very few spoke out against the toleration of Protestant Dissenters in principle.

4

While the Dons were writing off the prospect of comprehension because it was being referred to Convocation, the Deans believed that only thus, given careful management, could it hope to succeed in a satisfactory form. This considerable divergence of opinion was just one yardstick of the distance between the comprehension parties in Church and Dissent by the spring of 1689.

The negotiations of July 1688 had taken place between Churchmen and Dissenters, but the committee established in August included only Churchmen and made no attempt to negotiate with Dissenters or elicit

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- (1) A. Cole, 'The Quakers and the English Revolution', *Crisis in Europe 1560-1660*, ed. T. Aston (1965), 357; Whitehead, 631-5. See R. Hawkins (ed), *op cit*, 85-86.
- (2) Morrice Q, 558; Lacey, 364 n. 105.
- (3) G. Holmes, *Religion and Party in late Stuart England*, Historical Association. G.86. (1975), 12.

their suggestions.⁽¹⁾ Perhaps because of the Tory reaction or a determination to avoid the tedious wrangling of previous comprehension negotiations, the Deans may well have decided after the Revolution that the comprehension of moderate Presbyterians could only be achieved if a detailed schedule of concessions could be worked out in advance and presented to the Dons as a fait accompli. On 3 January 1689 Tenison told Sancroft that

'the way to do good was, not to discourse with them, but for the bishops to endeavour to get such concessions settled in Parliament, the granting whereof, (whether accepted or not by the Dissenters) should be good for the Church.'

(2)

To this end a meeting of the Deans took place at St. Paul's on 14 January and drew up a list of concessions 'in ten or eleven heads' and agreed 'that a bill should be prepared to be offered by the Bishops' to the Convention.⁽³⁾ The informal conferences which interested churchmen had with the Earl of Nottingham between 14 January and the introduction of the Comprehension Bill on 11 March again did not involve Dissenters and hence it is not surprising that the Nonconformist politicians gave the Bill a poor reception in Parliament.⁽⁴⁾ In the absence of communication between the Anglican ecclesiastics working for comprehension and the group they were seeking to comprehend the Deans had to bear the brunt of Nonconformist

(1) See Carpenter, Tenison, 96; N. Sykes, *From Sheldon to Secker: aspects of English Church History, 1660-1768* (1959), 34; above, pp. 427-434.

(2) Henry Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, *Correspondence and Diaries*, ed. S. W. Singer (1828) II, 240.

(3) Simon Patrick, *Works* IX, 516-517.

(4) Morrice Q, 488, 493, 501, 507; Lacey, 232, 235; N. Sykes, *op cit*, 86.

recrimination when comprehension was referred to Convocation.⁽¹⁾

Having already decided to avoid the too drastic effect that Nonconformist demands might have had on the liturgy and constitution of the Church, Tillotson now began to put pressure on William to avoid the inhibitive effect that Convocation might have on negotiations by referring the matter to a special commission of 'the most eminent clergy'.⁽²⁾ It seems clear that the power that Tillotson wanted for his Commission was virtually to decide on behalf of Convocation; Convocation and Parliament could merely accept or reject the whole. In other words, not only the Dissenters, but Convocation also was to be presented with a fait accompli. Even if the Deans who backed comprehension could have achieved a majority on the proposed Commission, the chances for the success of their scheme were not good. They had deliberately cut themselves off from the possibility of Nonconformist co-operation, after thirty years of friendship and aspiration after a common goal, and everything they could propose would get, at best, a cool reception from the Dons, who had had no part in drawing it up. And, whilst they thought they were taking the Tory reaction into account by aiming to present Convocation with a fait accompli, that reaction was increasingly making them appear as a small minority fighting a battle whose cause found few sympathisers beyond their own immediate circle; and, since Convocation and Parliament, denied an opportunity to decide on the details, could still decide on the whole, the prospect was less than healthy.

Those nominated by William to his Royal Commission invited

(1) Morrice Q, 466.

(2) Carpenter, Tenison, 98. See Luttrell I, 581.

'to prepare matters to be considered in Convocation' included ten Bishops and twenty prominent Anglican intellectuals. The Bishops were Lamplugh (Archbishop of York), Compton (London), Mews (Winchester), Lloyd (St. Asaph), Sprat (Rochester), Smith (Carlisle), Trelawney (Exeter), Burnet (Salisbury), Humphrey (Bangor) and Stratford (Chester). Of these Compton, Lloyd, Burnet and Stratford were committed to comprehension. The 'inferior' clergy were Stillingfleet (Dean of St. Paul's), Patrick (Bishop elect Chichester), Tillotson (Dean of Canterbury), Meggott (Dean of Winchester), Sharp (Dean of Norwich), Montague (Master of Trinity College), Kidder (Dean elect of Peterborough), Aldrich (Dean of Christ Church), Jane (Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford), Hall (Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at Oxford), Beaumont (Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge), Goodman (Archdeacon of Middlesex), Beveridge (Archdeacon of Colchester), Batteley (Archdeacon of Canterbury),

Alston (Archdeacon of Essex), Tenison (Archdeacon of St. Paul's), *Scott (Prebend of St. Paul's), Fowler (Prebend of Gloucester), Grove (Prebend of St. Paul's)* and Williams (Prebend of St. Paul's).⁽¹⁾ Of these, Stillingfleet,

Patrick, Tillotson, Sharp, Kidder, and Tenison were committed to comprehension. Those actually committed to comprehension or who had previously achieved a rapport with Nonconformists numbered only ten out of thirty.

The terms under which the Commission was summoned were all that Tillotson could desire. Certain 'forms... rites and Ceremonies' used in Divine Worship, were generally acknowledged to be 'indifferent'

(1) Carpenter, Tenison, 100 footnote 1; R. Kidder, Autobiography, 141 in S. H. Cassan, Lives of the Bishops of Bath and Wells (1829); Luttrell I, 581. Regarding the meetings of the Commission, Morrice noted, 'They do not intend to take any of the Nonconformists into the debate nor to have any respect to them therein'. Morrice Q, 601. (See also 611).

and hence, where offence was given to any group, change should be considered. The Book of Canons was 'fit to be reviewed'. The 'defects and abuses in the ecclesiastical courts and jurisdictions', and the absence of machinery 'for the removing of scandalous ministers', made this an apt area for examination and reformation. Hence, to facilitate the unity of His Majesty's Protestant subjects, the King empowered the thirty Commissioners, or any nine of them (three being Bishops)

'to meet from time to time... to prepare such alterations and amendments to the liturgy and canons, and such proposals for the reformation of ecclesiastical courts and to consider^{of} such other matters'

as, in their judgement, might most conduce to the unity of Their Majestys' Protestant subjects, and to present a report to Convocation for its approval. This report would, 'when approved', be presented to Their Majesties and to Parliament and, if it were judged fit, it would be 'established in due form of law'. Beyond doubt, the comprehensive nature of the terms of reference and the quasi-legislative power given to the Commissioners, represented Tillotson's scheme in practice:⁽¹⁾ here was the opportunity he had sought to provide the terms of a comprehension to both the over-demanding Presbyterians and to the prejudice-ridden Convocation already cut, and half dried. This, in any event, was the theory.

The eighteen sessions of the special Commission took place between 10 October and 18 November. From the beginning it was deprived 'of its natural and authoritative leadership' by the

(1) Carpenter, Tenison, 98-100; Luttrell I, 581.

absence of the Non-Jurers who did not have places on it.⁽¹⁾ In addition the Archbishop of York, the Bishops of Carlisle and Exeter and Drs. Beaumont, Montague and Batteley, who did have places on it, indicated their antipathy to its work by not attending any of its sessions, while Sprat, Jane, Aldrich and Meggott boycotted the Commission after the third session.⁽²⁾ From this time the Latitudinarians - who did much of the work of the Commission on unofficial sub-committees - proceeded towards their fait accompli with speed and satisfaction.⁽³⁾ But it was not surprising that, in a pamphlet attributed to William Sherlock, the Commission should be described as the 'tool' of 'the Latitudemen', 'assuming men' who, having brought about a political revolution, were trying to accommodate the Church to a new order.⁽⁴⁾

The Report, which produced 'violent scenes' in Convocation on 21 November, was as detailed and wide-ranging as the terms of reference of the Commission had suggested it should be. Some of the ground covered was neutral but alterations in the liturgy contained in Articles 8-16 contained concessions to Dissenters. Article 1 abolished chanting in divine service, Article 3 conceded to the Dissenters their objection to the use of 'apocryphal lessons', Article 6 established Lent fasts as merely 'extra-ordinary acts of devotion' and asserted that the distinction regarding meat-eating was unimportant, and Article 5 made kneeling at the Sacrament

(1) N. Sykes, *From Sheldon to Secker: Aspects of English Church History, 1660-1768* (1959), 87.

(2) Carpenter, *Tenison*, 101-103. ~~See~~ Birch, *Tillotson*, 193-194.

(3) Morrice Q, 611; R. Kidder, *Autobiography*, 142 in S. H. Cassan, *Lives of the Bishops of Bath and Wells* (1829); Carpenter, *Tenison*, 102-105.

(4) *A Letter to A Friend containing some Queries about the New Commission* (1689) cited Carpenter, *Tenison*, 110.

optional. Article 8 altered the title of 'priest' to 'minister' and Article 18 established that, if any minister refused the surplice the bishop, if the parishioners desired it, might substitute another who would accept it. Article 19 made god-fathers and god-mothers optional at baptisms and Article 21 - on an issue which raised 'the fiercest passions' on both Commission and in Convocation - settled the vexed question of re-ordination in the following terms; those ordained during the period in which there had been no bishops and those ordained by presbyters since the Restoration must seek re-ordination from a bishop but, in re-ordaining them, the bishop would use the formula, 'if thou art not already ordained, I ordain thee'. Tenison and Tillotson had argued that re-ordination should not be insisted on; hence this was a concession by the Commissioners to the prejudices of Convocation and Parliament.⁽¹⁾

But the success of the Tory reaction in the Church was such, that when Convocation met even a concession on this major point could not save the Report. The first act of the Lower House was to elect Dr. Jane as Prolocutor, as opposed to Tillotson, by a majority of two to one. This set the tone for the succeeding debates, in which the most persistent champions of the Report were Tenison, Kidder and Fowler. William realised that the Report could not survive and adjourned Convocation from 13 December to 14 January, and then dissolved it with the Convention Parliament. Hence the majority against comprehension was never counted.⁽²⁾

(1) Luttrell I, 607; H. Prideaux, *The Life of the Reverend Humphrey Prideaux, Dean of Norwich (1748)*, 52; Carpenter, *Tenison*, 106-107, 108, 109, 115. See Morrice Q, 611, 622, 635-6, 639-41, 646-7.

(2) Morrice Q, 647-8; Morrice R, 29-31; Luttrell I, 607, 608; H. Prideaux, *op cit*, 52-56, 59, 60; Carpenter, *Tenison*, 115-116.

In championing the cause of comprehension between 1681 and 1686 the Latitudinarians had had to contend with a violent Anglican reaction against Dissenters.⁽¹⁾ They contended with the same phenomenon in 1689, though now it was directed especially against the Presbyterians. But if this was the Devil they were used to, on the other side was the Deep Blue Sea; a Presbyterian party which, for the time being, appeared insatiable for concessions. They had sought to accommodate themselves to both hazards by (almost) ignoring both, hoping that a detailed, 'cut-and-dried' answer would be accepted merely because it was given. Perhaps the Deans could not see that being 'cut-and-dried' might also be used as an argument for rejection by both sides. William Wake may have foreseen this but found consolation in the fact that at least a last attempt was being made. He also expected that an anti-Church reaction among Dissenters would follow the death of comprehension at the hands of Convocation;⁽²⁾ in this he was wrong. There was little Nonconformist reaction to the anti-climax of November and December 1689. They had expected nothing better from Convocation, and had written off comprehension eight months before. The Latitudinarians had never been more than a small minority among Churchmen and the commitments undertaken between May and July 1688 had been made at the instigation of an Archbishop of Canterbury who was no longer a part of the scene. Hence the majority that would decide the ultimate fate of comprehension would be the silent consensus among Anglican clergymen, under whose aegis persecution had continued up to the eve of the 1687

(1) See above pp. 354-355, 357, 360-361, 370.

(2) N. Sykes, *William Wake Archbishop of Canterbury 1657-1737* (1957) I, 49.

Indulgence, and under whose influence the rapprochement, so necessary to a Church faced with the policy of James II, had been delayed until January 1688.

5

Whilst the Churchmen had been quarrelling over comprehension, the sects had been taking advantage of the Toleration Act. Pessimists among the Presbyterians had predicted that the Act would result in a rapid expansion of sectarian activity and a situation in which 'any illiterate, conceited person with a ready tongue' would be able to enrol as a preacher.⁽¹⁾ The reality hardly fell short of the prediction. Between 1689 and 1690, 927 temporary places of Nonconformist worship, and 251 permanent ones, were registered under the terms of the Act, and between 1691 and 1710 a further 2,126 were licenced.⁽²⁾ Outbreaks of 'enthusiasm', of epidemic proportions, took place in some parts and there were reports of Independent Congregations, who chose their own ministers and determined their fitness for ordination, accepting men who had no ministerial training or any qualification for the ministry beyond a willingness to swear allegiance and sign their acceptance of the Thirty-Nine Articles.⁽³⁾ This obvious means of

(1) Bolam, 113-114.

(2) E. D. Bebb, *Nonconformity and Social and Economic Life 1660-1800* (1935), 174.

(3) Bolam, 113-115. See T. G. Crippen, 'Congregationalism in the Fen Country', CHST VI (1913-1915), 415; G. F. Nuttall, 'The Early Congregational Conception of the Church', CHST XIV (1940-44), 200.

making up the numerical deficiencies evident after the 1687 Indulgence in the ranks of the ministers of the two larger sects (1) was one of the causes of the eventual break-up of the Presbyterian-Congregationalist Union. The religious enthusiasm that followed the parliamentary toleration was also to throw up the man whose case was to occasion the split; Richard Davies. A full scale religious revival had taken place in Northamptonshire under the leadership of Davies, and was soon spreading. By the decision of an Independent congregation at Rothwell (or Rowell) he was ordained, and by his own decision missionaries were, without examination, ordained and sent out to the mushrooming congregations in Northamptonshire, Huntingdonshire, North Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire. (2)

Revival was also apparent in Baptist circles. Doctrinal heterodoxy resultant from the devolution of congregations had led to a serious crisis among the General Baptists 1660 - 1688 which had threatened their existence as a separate sect, but there were some signs of recuperation in 1689. The revival among the Particular Baptists was on a larger scale, beginning in London and ultimately penetrating the North. (3) But with the removal of all restraints upon the religious activity of the sects, there reappeared concomitant phenomena which had accompanied the absence of such restraints under the Commonwealth: first, the 'enthusiasms' and 'crude

(1) See above pp. 76-78, 81-83.

(2) Lyon Turner MS.89.26, 20, 21; T. Coleman, *Memorials of the Independent Churches in Northamptonshire* (1853), 53-56; Bolam, 115-117.

(3) R. G. Torbet, *A History of Baptists* (1966), 53-54; Whiting, 132; W. T. Whitley, *History of British Baptists* (1923), 167-168; W. T. Whitley (ed), *Minutes of the General Baptist Churches of England* (1908) I, xix. See B. R. White, 'The Baptists of Reading, 1652-1715', *BQXII* (1967-8), 249.

incoherences', which Baxter had frequently condemned;⁽¹⁾ second, the propensity for sectarian bickering on points of casuistry, of which Baxter was frequently guilty and never more so than now.

With the exception of Baxter and one or two associates,⁽²⁾ the Presbyterians involved in the plan for a Presbyterian-Congregationalist Union had initially been from the 'Duckling' faction. Such a union came near to being achieved in 1688.⁽³⁾ Whilst the 'Ducklings' shared a common Calvinism with the Congregationalists which they did not share with the 'Dons', there were still points of difference between Presbyterians like Dr. Samuel Annesley and Oliver Heywood, and Congregationalists like George Griffiths, Thomas Jolly and Matthew Mead, who were all champions of the project for a 'Happy Union'.⁽⁴⁾ The most important of these differences was that the Presbyterians continued to pay lip-service to the idea of a state establishment on a parochial basis, with some form of 'synodical control', whilst any form of central organisation was anathema to the Congregationalists. On Communion the Presbyterians held that everyone should be eligible unless specifically excluded as 'unfit', while Congregationalists held that no one was 'fit' for Communion unless they could 'bring evidence of the work of the Holy Spirit in their souls'. On ordination the Congregationalists placed the responsibility in the hands of the individual congregation, not deeming an 'examination' necessary, while Presbyterians believed in ordination by senior ministry after

(1) See above pp. 10-11.

(2) See Powicke, 177; above, p. 38.

(3) See above, p. 42.

(4) CR, 13-14, 237, 260, 301, 348; Gordon, 160, 361.

a rigorous 'examination' (spiritual and academic).⁽¹⁾

To these differences were added the even more divergent views of the Dons as, by a gradual mutation during 1689, they changed from 'reconcilers' to separatists. Bates, Howe, Morrice and Williams all became supporters of the union project.⁽²⁾ To Congregationalists like Isaac Chauncy, Thomas Cole and Nathaniel Mather, the Arminian Dons, with their talk of 'organisation' and indifference to 'discipline', were indistinguishable from Churchmen, and a conflict was set in motion before the Union was formed.⁽³⁾ To these frictions were also added, during 1689 and 1690, the enthusiastic support and controversial presence of Vincent Alsop and Stephen Lobb, on the one side, and Roger Flamank and Richard Stretton, on the other, who had represented opposite causes in the dispute over collaboration in 1687 and 1688.⁽⁴⁾

The first practical step to union was the Common Fund Agreement of July 1690. This set up a Fund Board whose function was twofold: first, to relieve any poverty that remained among the ministries of the two sects; second, to encourage recruitment for the ministry and to provide congregations with pastors who, since the removal of restrictions in 1687, had been unable to secure them.⁽⁵⁾

- (1) Bolam, 93-115; G. F. Nuttall, 'The Early Congregational Conception of the Church', CHST XIV (1940-44), 197-200, 202-204.
- (2) Gordon, 155, 160; A. G. Matthews, Congregational Churches in Staffordshire (1924), 95, 96; CR, 36, 280.
- (3) Bolam, 102-103, 105-108, 113, 114, 117-119; N. Mather to T. Jolly, 3 April 1691, DWL Thomas Jolly's Papers, f. 43. See R. Thomas, Daniel Williams Presbyterian Bishop (1964), 5-6.
- (4) Wilson III, 444; IV, 65; CR, 8-9. 200, 467.
- (5) Bolam, 101; CR, xv, xvi. See A. G. Matthews, Congregational Churches in Staffordshire (1924), 95-96.

Discussion continued on doctrinal and organisational questions during the remainder of 1690, on the basis of an agreement which had been worked out between representatives of the two sects at Bristol in 1680 and which had actually produced an organic union of the sects in Bristol since the Toleration Act. Between October 1690 and March 1691, however, the terms of this agreement were seriously modified.⁽¹⁾ In April 1691 'The Heads of Agreement Assented to by the United Ministers in and about London: formerly called Presbyterians and Congregationalists'⁽²⁾ was signed as the first phase of national union between the two sects. At this stage the 'Happy Union' consisted of between eighty and ninety Presbyterian and Congregationalist ministers in London and adjoining districts.⁽³⁾

From London and Bristol the idea of union upon the principles enunciated in 'The Heads of Agreement' was taken up elsewhere. Thanks to the groundwork of many years done by Thomas Jolly, a union was formed in Lancashire during the same month as the one in London. It was later extended to include Cheshire.⁽⁴⁾ On 2 September 1691 Heywood and Stretton patched up another 'union' in West Yorkshire.⁽⁵⁾ The old Exeter Assembly of 1655 was reconvened as The General Meeting of the United Brethren of the City and County of Exeter and County of Devon.⁽⁶⁾ In Norfolk *and Suffolk* there had never

(1) Lyon Turner MS.89.13, XI 6; Bolam, 101-102.

(2) For text see CHST VIII (1920-1923), 38-48.

(3) CR, lxxi; J. Waddington, Surrey Congregational History (1866), 94. See Cragg II, 252-5.

(4) Mather Papers, CMHS, 4th Series, VIII (1868), 317-320.

(5) CR, lxxi, 260, 467.

(6) H. P. R. Finberg and W. G. Hoskins, Devonshire Studies (1952), 374; E. Windeatt, 'Early Nonconformity in Ashburton', Transactions of the Devonshire Association XXVIII (1896), 9.

been a very clear distinction between Congregationalists and Presbyterians.⁽¹⁾

The divisions that would destroy the union had already begun to do so before The Heads of Agreement were signed. Thomas Cole and Nathaniel Mather refused to serve as Fund Managers in 1690 and in 1691, with Richard Taylor, condemned The Heads of Agreement because, among other reasons, the Congregational principles on ordination had been compromised by the Presbyterian insistence on ministerial control of admissions to the ministry.⁽²⁾ In addition Cole was already in the thick of an Arminian-Antinomian controversy with Baxter.⁽³⁾ What had drawn Baxter into the controversy was the republication in December 1689 by Samuel Crisp of the works of his father Tobias Crisp, who had been dead since 1643 but was still remembered for his extreme Antinomian views, with an attack on Baxter in the Introduction.⁽⁴⁾ Despite attempts by his friends to dissuade him from doing so Baxter published two pamphlets condemning the Antinomian position and, as if to make doubly sure of the failure of the union, followed them up with another re-asserting his belief in 'national churches', thus calling forth, on both counts, the heavy artillery fire of the Independents.⁽⁵⁾

Although tempers were raised among the London pastors by the

- (1) See Harmer MS.76.9, 7, 12, 26, 31, 35, 50, 52, 64, 66, 71, 76, 85, 89, 108, 139, 149, 161; MS.76.10, 18, 65.
- (2) R. Thomas, Daniel Williams Presbyterian Bishop (1964), 8-9; CR, 125, 344; Bolam, 101, 107-8/13; Gordon, 156, 160, 240.
- (3) Baxter MSS (Treatises) V, f. 143; Bolam, 107. See J.H. Colligan, 'The Antinomian Controversy', CHST VI (1913-1915), 389-396.
- (4) J. Hunt, Religious Thought in England (1870) I, 253; J. H. Colligan, op cit.
- (5) Bolam, 107-112; Powicke, 175, 177-8. See B. Dale, A History of English Congregationalism (1907), 481-2.

summer of 1691, the controversy was essentially centred round Baxter; and Baxter died on 8 December 1691. It would have taken a major crisis involving all the strands of disagreement to have led to a hardening of attitudes among the remaining (cautious) Dons against the Independents and to have provoked Annesley and the Ducklings to have supported their fellow-Presbyterians against the Independents. But such was the Richard Davies Affair. By ordaining without examination or consultation, Davies highlighted the disagreement over the status of the ministry. By preaching, and instructing his ordinands to preach, an extreme form of Antinomianism, he brought the doctrinal dispute to a crisis. By eluding all attempts at what he termed 'synodical control' by the Union of Ministers he left everyone clinging to their sectarian labels.⁽¹⁾

Twelve months after the formation of the 'Happy Union' Daniel Williams brought a charge of 'Antinomianism' against Davies at a meeting in London of the United Ministers,⁽²⁾ and precipitated the schism. A month later, May 1692, he published a manifesto against Antinomianism. On 18 May, sixteen other Presbyterian pastors signed it; when it went into its second edition on 27 September, forty-eight signed it. On 17 October Isaac Chauncy and five other Congregationalists used this as their excuse for withdrawing from the Union.⁽³⁾ During the winter of 1692-3, every Congregationalist left the Board of the United Ministers, and the remaining Presbyterians roundly

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- (1) R. Thomas, *op cit*, 10-11; Lyon Turner MS.89.26, ff. 20, 21; T. Coleman, *Memorials of the Independent Churches in Northamptonshire* (1853), 53-56; Bolam, 115-121; Cragg II, 253-4.
- (2) R. Thomas, *op cit*; Bolam, 117-119.
- (3) *Ibid*; CR, 112; R. Thomas, *op cit*.

condemned Davies.⁽¹⁾ By the second anniversary of the signature of 'The Heads of Agreement' the Union was dead as far as the London pastors were concerned.⁽²⁾ Although the Fund Board continued in existence for a few years, all the Congregationalists had dropped out by 1695.⁽³⁾

After the break-up of the London union, bickering over the Arminian-Antinomian dispute and the other issues raised by the Davies Affair spread to the provinces and destroyed the Yorkshire and Bristol unions.⁽⁴⁾ The Exeter Union persisted for a few years and those in Lancashire and Cheshire and East Anglia, probably due to the absence of clear sectarian divisions in these areas, lasted into the next century.⁽⁵⁾

It is nevertheless probably true to say that, despite the rapprochement between the Presbyterian and Congregationalist sects between 1662 and 1692, the Union of 1691-2 was in the long-term more deleterious than otherwise to the relations of the two sects, and that, at the beginning of the 18th Century, the distinction between them had never been sharper.⁽⁶⁾ This is illustrated by the fate of the Pinners' Hall Lecture. Since 1662 this weekly lecture, at which members of both sects comprised the audience and provided the lecturer, had been the means by which the union between the two groups of London pastors had been negotiated and through which,

(1) Bolam, 118-119.

(2) CR, lxxi.

(3) Gordon, 157, 183; Bolam, 121.

(4) DWL MS.38.34, Quick MSS I, i, 4, 7; Lyon Turner MS.89.13, XI 6 b; CR, lxxi; Wilson III, 444. See B. Dale, A History of English Congregationalism (1907), 479-84.

(5) Gordon, 155-8; Bolam, 102, 121; H. P. R. Finberg and W. G. Hoskins, Devonshire Studies (1952), 374.

(6) DWL MS.38.48, ff. 16, 24-28, 39.

during the reign of James II, the Presbyterians had been enabled to exert restraint over the political behaviour of the Independents. Under vigorous attack on a charge of Arminianism from Nathaniel Mather, John Howe, William Bates and Vincent Alsop withdrew from the joint lecture in December 1692 and established one of their own (in Salters Hall) at the same hour as the old lecture. The expulsion of Daniel Williams by the Congregationalists who remained then occasioned the resignation of Annesley and Richard Mayo (two 'Ducklings') from the Pinners' Hall Lecture. To symbolise the unity of the Presbyterians under Congregationalist attack - the reconciliation of Dons and Ducklings - Annesley and Mayo were then appointed Salters' Hall lecturers.⁽¹⁾ In fact both the mood and opportunities created by the Toleration Act had been inimical to the chances of success for any scheme for sectarian union. Congregationalist and Presbyterian congregations, in areas not involved in any of the unions, which had worshipped together under pressure of persecution (replaced after 1687 by fear of the Popish Menace), were separating in 1689 and building their own meeting-houses. Between the Toleration Act and the formation of the 'Happy Union' in the spring of 1691, joint sectarian congregations in Newbury, Andover, Ashwick, Cambridge, Gloucester, Newport Pagnell, Shepton Mallett and Whitehaven which had held together over many years, split up and went their separate ways.⁽²⁾

Despite the probable importance of the rapprochement between the two larger sects for the reign of James II, the union project

(1) Williams I, xii-xiii; Wilson II, 249-252.

(2) DWL MS.38.66, 11-14; Walter Wilson MS.I, i, 89; ii, 203, 305; iii, 368; iv, 254; MS.553D, 42.

had, in the event, proved to be a blind alley. With the restraints of persecution and the threat implicit in a Roman Catholic regime removed, the advantages which most sectarians had seen in the union disappeared; just as the advantages of comprehension disappeared, for many Anglicans, with James himself. Hence Presbyterians and Congregationalists, like Quakers and Baptists, could concentrate on enjoying the full benefits of the free, pluralistic ecclesiastical society that the enactment of toleration had created. Clearly, these benefits included proselytising without restriction, among other Nonconformist folds as well as that of the Church⁽¹⁾ and a cultivation of doctrinal and organisational idiosyncrasies, rather than any 'latitudinarian' or 'ecumenical' desire to compromise. The desire to compromise had been brought about by certain unpleasant necessities, the last of which had been removed by the Toleration Act. The Toleration Act had not only initiated the trends that would overthrow the 'Happy Union' but had made it unnecessary; a restraint on the enjoyment of the full benefits of toleration.⁽²⁾

The discord which characterised inter-sectarian relations after toleration was also evident in the relationships between the Dons and the Church but, because of the Tory reaction within the

(1) See H. M. Spufford, 'Dissenting Churches in Cambridgeshire from 1660-1700', Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society, LXI (1968), 83.

(2) That external forces - the threat of persecution or the visceral fear of a Catholic menace - provided the main force behind the desire for compromise which led to the Happy Union may be illustrated by the fact that, in the absence of analagous pressures, the movement to amalgamate the Presbyterians and the Congregationalists did not re-emerge until the 20th Century.

Church and the failure of Comprehension, it was even more pronounced. If the Happy Union had done long-term damage to relations between the sects, the comprehension project of 1688-9 had severed the connections between Church and Dissent. The rapprochement between the Latitudinarians and the Dons which had been achieved in January 1688 and which had been sundered as the Deans had sought to achieve comprehension on their own, was never re-established. Despite the elevation of the Latitudinarians to the high places of the Church under William Comprehension was never resurrected and the element in the Church which was prepared to sacrifice some of its formalism in the interests of an extended communion on fundamentalist principles was ultimately to find new forms of expression which would tend, rather, to further fragmentation.

After 1689 comprehension ceased to be 'practical politics'.⁽¹⁾ Hence the only connection between Church and Dissent thereafter was a politic one; the partial conformers after 1689 did not have the motives of the Dons.⁽²⁾ During the autumn session of the Convention Parliament a last attempt had been made by the Nonconformist politicians to secure some approximation toward political emancipation through a revision of the Corporation Act, involving the abolition of the sacramental test.⁽³⁾ This failed, and the Act for Restoring Corporations did little more than restore the status quo of 1675, which returned power in local government to the Tories.⁽⁴⁾ Hence the obvious via media for those Nonconformists wishing to avoid the

(1) Carpenter, Tenison, 116.

(2) G. Holmes, Religion and Party in Late Stuart England, Historical Association. G.86. (1975), 15.

(3) Morrice Q, 578-80, 607.

(4) Morrice Q, 592; Lacey, 240-242, 365-6 & 116.

disabilities imposed by the Test and Corporation Acts and to enjoy the same legal privileges as Anglicans was to take the Sacrament once during the prescribed period.⁽¹⁾ The fear of the Nonconformist political potential that had been a major reason for the Anglican persecution up to 1687,⁽²⁾ and which had provoked the Tory reaction that had dished comprehension in 1689, was also to lead Tory politicians to make four attempts during Anne's reign - in 1702, 1703, 1704 and 1711 - to make occasional conformity illegal. Thanks to the efforts of Whig politicians and bishops the first three of these were unsuccessful and the last only temporarily successful.⁽³⁾

The demise by the end of 1689 of comprehension, and the last hopes of Nonconformist political emancipation, meant that by and large those groups who had veered toward the Church, and favoured the retention of what the Church argued were her statutory bulwarks against Catholicism during the reign of James II, and alone among the Nonconformists had welcomed the Revolution, had failed to achieve their objectives in the Revolution Settlement. Those groups who had on the other hand favoured a parliamentary toleration, and had hence resisted enticement, and those who had collaborated with James II, being little concerned with emancipation, found the

(1) Carpenter, Tenison, 116-117; G. Holmes, op cit.

(2) See Cragg I, 166.

(3) For ten years. Carpenter, Tenison, 116-119; G. Holmes, op cit, 17-19; G. V. Bennett, 'Conflict in the Church', Britain after the Glorious Revolution 1689-1714, ed. G. Holmes (1968), 167, 168, 172; J. E. Manning, History of Upper Chapel Sheffield (1900), 9. Together with the fear of Nonconformist political potential, Anglicans during the period between 1689 and 1714 also exaggerated the significance for the Church itself of the growth of Nonconformist congregations and academies and, since Nonconformist academies still had no legal status, continued to harass them. T. G. Crippen, 'Richard Frankland and his Academy', CHST II (1905-1906), 425-6; G. V. Bennett, op cit, 162; G. Holmes, op cit, 8-9, 10-22.

consummation of their aims in the Toleration Act. The probable failure of James II's electoral campaign,⁽¹⁾ the national mood as catalogued by Bonrepos in the autumn of 1688 before the landing,⁽²⁾ the possible onset of the Tory reaction before the landing,⁽³⁾ and the abatement of Anglican fears during the summer of 1688 regarding the probable upshot of the projected Parliament,⁽⁴⁾ leave it open to doubt whether the Parliamentary Settlement of 1689, as far as Nonconformists were concerned, would have been appreciably different had the Revolution not taken place. It is less open to doubt that any difference there would have been - through the continued dependence of the Churchmen on Nonconformist support - would have tended to benefit those groups who, thirteen months after the Revolution, were forced to contemplate the failure of their hopes and what they regarded as the treachery of their friends.

(1) See above, pp. 520-526.

(2) Bonrepos au Roi, Archives Nationales K, 1351, No. 4, ff. 51, 53, 54, 59.

(3) See Every, 25.

(4) See above, pp. 524-526.

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APPENDIX ONEITEM AA PROCLAMATION OF THE KING'S MAJESTIES MOSTGRACIOUS AND GENERAL PARDON

Given at our Court at Whitehall the tenth day of March

1685/6. In the Second Year of Our Reign

JAMES R.

Whereas soon after our coronation, we had given order for preparing of a Bill, containing our most gracious general, and free Pardon to our loving subjects, with intention to have passed the same into an Act in the first session of our Parliament, but were unhappily prevented therein by the late most unnatural Rebellion which, since it hath pleased Almighty God by His blessing upon our arms to suppress, we have thought fit to renew our princely intentions of grace and mercy to our subjects, especially considering the steadfast loyalty of the far greater number of our subjects, who continued firm in their obedience to us notwithstanding that Rebellion: And being persuaded that many of those who joined themselves in that Rebellion being poor labourers and handicraftsmen, were drawn and seduced thereinto by the subtle and crafty insinuations of some ill-disposed persons of greater Note and Quality than themselves and not from their own evil rancour of mind and traitorous aversion to Us or Our Government, whose condition we in our princely clemency commiserating; And to the end their fears and despair of our mercy may not betray them to evil and lewd courses of life, but that they may with safety return to their obedience to us, and to their former habitations, labours, and employments. And that the minds of other our subjects may be quieted, and that all fears and

jealousies which may concern their security for any matter since our reign, or in the reign of our late Dearly beloved Brother, be removed and wholly taken away, as much as in us lies, we of our especial grace and tenderness to our people, do hereby publish and declare this Our most Royal and Gracious Pardon; And we do hereby for us, our heirs and successors, pardon, acquit, release and discharge all and every our subjects (except bodies politick and incorporate and such other persons who shall be herein or hereby excepted) of this Our Realm of England, Dominion of Wales, and the Town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, their heirs, executors, and administrators, them and every of them against us, our heirs and successors, of and from all manner of treasons, felonies, misprisions of treason or felony, treasonable or seditious words or libels, seditious and unlawful meetings and conventicles, all offences whereby any person may be charged with the Penalty and Danger of Praemunire; all riots, routs, offences, contempts, trespasses, and misdemeanours and all judgments and convictions for not coming to Church, and off and from the forfeitures and penalties for the same, or any of them heretofore had, committed or done, except as herein or hereby after is excepted. And Our Will and Pleasure is, that neither our said subjects nor any of them, nor the heirs, executors, or administrators of any of them be, or shall be sued, vexed or disquieted in their bodies, goods or chattels, lands or tenements, for any manner of matter, cause, contempt, misdemeanour, forfeiture, offence, or any other thing heretofore suffered, done, or committed or omitted against us or Our late Brother, His or Our Crown, Dignity, Prerogative, Laws or Statutes, and not herein or hereby after excepted. And this Our Grant of General Pardon, by the general words, clauses and sentences before rehearsed, shall be reputed, deemed, adjudged, expounded, allowed and taken in all manner of Our Courts and elsewhere,

most beneficially and liberally for our said subjects, thereby pardoned in all things not hereafter excepted, as if their particular persons and crimes had herein been at large and fully expressed.

[A list of the crimes excepted from the General Pardon, including 'treasons committed or done in the parts beyond the seas, or in any other place out of this realm', and all forms of theft, murder, and sexual crime, and fraud]

Excepted also all persons who after conviction or attainder of, or for any manner of treason, or misprisions of treason have been transported, and such attainted of other notorious crimes or felonies have been ordered or directed to be transported into ^{any of} Our Foreign Plantations.

Except also all and every person and persons who in a traitorous and hostile manner invaded this Our Realm with James Scott late Duke of Monmouth, and all and every other person or persons who in the time of the late Rebellion under the said late Duke of Monmouth were officers or had the name or repute of being officers in his army.

[The names of the rebels and their families are included; in addition a number of 'fugitives and persons fled from our justice into parts beyond the seas ... who shall not return and render themselves to Our Chief Justice or some Justice of the Peace before the nine and twentieth day of September next ensuing' and a few common criminals. This list of exceptions from the Pardon included Stephen Lobb, William Gaunt, John Manley, Richard Goodenough, Nathaniel Wade, John Trenchard, John Wildman, Titus Oates, Robert Ferguson and about one hundred and forty others, the vast majority of whom came from places in the West Country.]

Provided that no process of utlary at the suit of any person plaintiff, shall be by virtue of this Our Pardon stayed or avoided, unless the defendant appear and put in bail, where by law bail is necessary, and take forth a writ of Scire facias against the party at

whose suit he was outlawed. And that this Our Pardon be not allowed to discharge any outlawry after judgment, till satisfaction or agreement be made to or with the party at whose suit the utlary was obtained. And Our Will and Pleasure that this present Pardon shall be of as good force and effect to pardon and discharge all and singular the premises above mentioned, and intended to be pardoned and discharged, as if we should by letters patents under the Great Seal have granted particular pardons to every one of our subjects. And for the better manifestation of Our Gracious Intentions and Desire herein we do give leave that any of our subjects not herein excepted, may take and sue out our particular pardon, pursuant to the tenor hereof. And for that purpose we shall direct our Secretaries of State to present warrants to us for Our Signature, and give order to Our Attorney General or Solicitor, to prepare Bills for passing pardons to such as shall desire the same. Provided always, that this Our General Pardon shall not extend to any person that were in actual arms against us in the late Rebellion in the West, who being now within this Realm, shall not within three months after the publication hereof lay hold of this Our Pardon, and testify the same by their peaceable returning to their former habitations, labours and employments.

GOD SAVE THE KING

[The London Gazette No. 2120, from 11 March to 15 March 1685/6]

ITEM B

THE KING'S WARRANT TO THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL

15 MARCH 1685/6

[This warrant, styled by Quaker sources as 'The Mandate', enabled

the Quakers as a sect to take advantage of the provisions of the
General Pardon.]

Whereas we are given to understand that several of our subjects, commonly called Quakers, in the schedules hereunto annexed, are either convicted or upon process in order to their conviction of praemunire for not swearing or indicted, or presented for not coming to Church, or convicted for the same, and several of them have been returned into our Exchequer, and in charge for £20 per mensem, according to the Statutes in the case provided; and some of them lie in prison upon Writs de Excommunicato Capiendo, and other processes for the causes aforesaid, and we being willing that our said subjects, and other of our subjects commonly called Quakers, who are or have been prosecuted, indicted, convicted, or imprisoned for any the causes aforesaid should receive the full benefit of our General Pardon, which we have been pleased to grant to our loving subjects by our Royal Proclamation, with all possible ease to them: our will and pleasure is, and we do hereby authorise, will, and require you to cause such of our subjects commonly called Quakers, who are in prison for any the causes aforesaid, to be forthwith discharged out of prison, and forthwith to stop and discharge, or cause to be discharged, by giving our consent on our behalf, all fines, forfeitures, or sums of money charged upon any of our subjects commonly called Quakers, for not coming to Church, or set upon them upon any process for the same, as also all processes, indictments, presentments and convictions, for any of the said causes, by ent'ring Noli prosequi, or otherwise as you shall judge necessary, for rendering that our Pardon most effectual and beneficial for our said subjects. And for your so doing this shall be your warrant.

Given at our Court at Whitehall the 15th day of March 1685-6, in the second year of our reign. By His Majesty's Command. Sunderland, P.

APPENDIX TWOA TABULAR ANALYSIS OF THE ADDRESSES SENT TO JAMES II IN
THANKS FOR THE DECLARATION OF INDULGENCE OF APRIL 1687

A preliminary division may be made between addresses from 'substantial interests', groups capable of influencing the choice of MPs and assisting the King's programme; and addresses from 'light-weight interests', groups which were not necessarily capable of lending effective assistance to the King's programme.

A. ADDRESSES FROM SUBSTANTIAL INTERESTS

Mayors, Corporations, Grand Juries, High Stewards,
Burgesses and Capital Citizens

(x in any column indicates affirmative)

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
Date Sent	London Gazette Number	Addressers (abbreviated)	Alluded to the necessity of Parliament's approval	Thanks given for HM's undertaking to protect Church	Excessively fulsome in language	Contained an offer to co-operate i.e. by electing compliant MPs.

1687

April	2238	Corporation, Totnes	-	-	-	-
May	2242	JPs, Grand Jury, Middlesex	-	x	-	-
June	2250	Barristers, Middle Temple	(1)	-	-	-
	2250	Corporation, Richmond	-	x	-	-
	2250	Corporation, Chester	-	x	-	-

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
June	2251	Corporation, Penzance	-	x	-	-
	2252	Corporation, York	-	x	-	-
	2252	Grand Jury, Middlesex	-	-	-	-
	2252	Corporation, Newcastle-u-Lyne	-	x	-	-
	2254	Corporation, Gloucester	-	-	x	x
	2254	Corporation, Berwick	-	x	-	-
July	2257	Grand Jury, Westminster	-	x	-	-
	2257	Grand Jury, Southwark	-	x	-	-
	2260	Grand Jury, Wallingford	-	x	-	-
	2263	Grand Jury, Oakham	-	x	-	-
	2269	Grand Jury, Durham	-	-	-	-
Aug.	2266	Burgesses, Eye, Suffolk	-	x	-	-
	2268	Grand Jury, Hereford	-	-	-	x
	2269	Corporation, New Windsor	-	x	-	-
	2270	Corporation, Tavistock	-	x	-	-
	2271	Corporation, Bath	-	-	-	-
	2273	Corporation, Ludlow	-	x	-	-
	2273	Corporation of Clothiers (2)	-	-	-	-
	2273	Corporation of Masterbuilders	-	-	-	-
	2273	Bailiffs and Recorders, Bewdly	-	x	-	-

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
Sept.	2275	Corporation, Lancaster	-	x	-	-
	2275	Grand Jury, Lancaster	-	-	-	-
	2276	Corporation, Woodstock	-	x	-	-
	2276	Corporation, Wallingford	-	-	-	-
	2276	Grand Jury, Merioneth	-	-	-	-
	2276	Corporation of Stroud-Water Clothiers	-	-	-	-
	2276	Freemen of Banbury	-	-	-	x
	2276	Grand Jury, Northumberland	-	-	x	x
	2282	Corporation, Thetford	-	x	-	-
	2282	Corporation, Garstang, Lancs.	-	x	-	-
	2282	Freeholders of Ludgehall, Wilts.	-	-	-	-
Oct.	2285	Lord Mayor, Alder- men, City of London	-	-	-	-
	2286	Grand Jury, Lincoln	x	x	-	-
	2287	Corporation of London Stationers	-	-	-	-
	2287	Corporation, King's Lynn	-	-	-	-
	2287	Corporation, Colchester	-	x	-	-
	2287	Corporation, Yarmouth	-	-	-	-
	2287	Trinity College, Dublin	-	-	x	-
	2288	Corporation of Barbers and Surgeons	-	-	-	-

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
Oct.	2288	Goldsmiths and Burgesses, Hull	-	-	x	x
	2289	Royal Society of Apothecaries	-	-	-	-
	2290	Company of Clockworkers	-	-	-	-
	2290	Company of Mercers	-	-	-	-
	2290	Seamen of Trinity House, Hull	-	-	-	-
Nov.	2291	Grand Inquest, Weymouth	-	-	-	-
	2292	Company of Glovers	-	-	-	-
	2292	Corporation, Chard, Somerset*	-	-	-	x
	2293	Corporation, Hull	-	x	x	x
	2294	Company of Cooks	-	-	-	-
	2296	Company of Distillers	-	-	-	-
	2297	Mystery of Cutlers	-	-	-	-
	2297	Company of Goldsmiths	-	-	-	-
	2297	Company of Haberdashers	-	-	-	-
	2297	Company of Joiners	-	-	-	-
	2297	Company of Weavers	-	-	-	-
	2297	Burgesses, Doncaster	-	x	-	-
	2297	Corporation, Hertford	-	x	-	-
Dec.	2300	Company of Bakers	-	-	-	-

* Actually from 'The Portreeve, Burgesses, Principal Freeholders and others.'

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
Dec.	2303	St. Thomas's Hospital	-	-	-	-
	2307	Company of Merchant Tailors	-	-	-	-
<u>1688</u>						
Jan.	2311	Society of the Inner Temple	-	-	-	-
	2313	Grand Jury, Common Council, Gloucester	-	-	x	x
	2313	Corporation, Newcastle-u-Lyne (3)	-	-	x	x
	2314	Company of Plumbers	-	-	-	-
	2315	Grand Jury, Exeter	-	-	-	-
	2315	Company of Skinners	-	-	-	-
Feb.	2317	Company of Free Fishermen	-	-	-	-
	2318	Corporation, Portsmouth	-	-	-	-
	2320	Magistrates and Clergy, Guernsey	-	x	-	-
	2322	Common Council, Abingdon	-	-	-	x
	2323	Company of Painters	-	-	-	-
	2325	Corporation, Tewkesbury	-	-	x	x
	2327	Corporation, Reading	x	-	-	x
Mar.	2328	Corporation, Nottingham	x	-	x	x
	2329	Grand Jury, Essex	x	x	-	x
	2330	Grand Jury, Buckingham	-	-	-	x
	2332	<i>Burgesses</i> Bridport	-	-	x	x

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
Mar.	2333	Company of Cordwainers	-	-	-	-
	2334	Grand Jury, York	-	-	-	x
Apr.	2335	Corporation, Banbury	-	-	-	-
	2336	Grand Jury, Gloucester	-	-	x	x
	2339	Grand Inquest, Stafford	-	-	x	x
	2341	Grand Jury, Monmouth	-	-	-	x

NOTES:

- (1) This was the only address which extolled the Royal Prerogative.
- (2) None of the addresses sent by the Chartered Livery Companies, of which this was the first, contained any kind of political commitment or allusion.
- (3) Immediately after remodelling, the new corporation often sent an address. The address of the new corporation was usually more compliant than that of the old.

B. ADDRESSES FROM LIGHT-WEIGHT INTERESTS

Small isolated groups of believers from the various sects, whose electoral effectiveness had been reduced by the years of sporadic persecution.

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
Date Sent	London Gazette Number	Addressers	contained reference to past persecution (1)	alluded to the necessity of Parliament's approval	excessively fulsome in language	contained an offer of co-operation

1687Presbyterians

April	2238	City of London	x	x	-	? (a)
May	2246	Bristol	x	-	x	? (b)
	2248	Norwich	-	-	-	-
June	2253	Dublin	x	-	-	-

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
Aug.	2265	Colchester	x	-	x	-
	2267	Scotland	-	-	-	-
Sept.	2274	Macclesfield (with Independents)	-	-	-	-
	2278	Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire	x	-	-	-
	2280	Edinburgh	x	-	-	-
	2282	Nottingham	x	-	-	-
Oct.	2287	East Somerset	-	-	x	-
	2287	Hull	x	-	x	-
	2289	King's Lynn	-	-	-	-
Nov.	2295	Maidstone, Kent	-	-	-	-
<u>1687</u>		<u>Congregationalists</u>				
Apr.	2238	City of London	x	x	-	? (c)
May	2242	Norwich	-	-	-	? (d)
June	2250	Ipswich and Bury St. Edmunds	-	-	x	-
	2250	Yarmouth	-	x	x	x (e)
July	2256	Devon	x	-	-	-
Aug.	2265	Norfolk	-	x	-	x (f)
	2272	Monmouthshire	x	-	-	-
Sept.	2282	North Wales and Shrewsbury	-	-	-	-
Nov.	2295	Hitchin	-	x	-	x (g)
<u>1687</u>		<u>Baptists/Congregationalists</u> <u>(Joint)</u>				
May	2243	Gloucestershire	-	x	-	-
	2246	Bristol	-	x	-	-
Oct.	2287	Pembroke, Caer- marthen, Cardigan and Glamorgan	-	x	-	-

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>1687</u>	<u>Baptists</u>					
April	2234	City of London	x	-	-	? (h)
May	2241	Leicestershire	x	-	-	? (i)
	2244	Staffordshire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire	x	-	-	? (j)
	2244	Cheshire and Shropshire	x	-	-	? (k)
June	2752	Kent	x	-	-	-
	2255	Middlesex, Hertfordshire, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Warwickshire, Northamptonshire, Lincolnshire, Huntingdonshire, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Kent, Sussex, Surrey, Hampshire, and Dorset	x	x	-	-
Nov.	2294	Oxfordshire and Berkshire	x	-	-	-
<u>1687</u>	<u>Quakers</u>					
April	2238	London	x	-	-	-
May	2245	Yearly Meeting	x	x	-	-
June	2252	Scotland	x	-	-	-
Aug.	2270	West Scotland	x	-	-	-
	2273	Ireland	x	-	-	-
Sept.	2282	Wales and North West England	x	-	-	-
Oct.	2287	Bristol	x	-	-	-
<u>1687</u>	<u>Nonconformists</u> (sect not specified; probably collective)					
April	2235	Those who had fought in the Monmouth Rebellion and received the King's Pardon	-	-	-	-

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
May	2244	Newcastle	-	-	-	-
	2245	Taunton	x	x	-	-
June	2252	Berwick	-	-	-	-
	2252	Marlborough, Wilts.	x	-	-	-
	2254	West Somerset	x	-	-	? (1)
	2254	Leeds	x	-	-	-
July	2258	York	x	-	-	-
	2258	Malden, Great Cogshall, Witham, Chelmsford and Halsted, Essex	x	-	-	-
	2260	Southmolton, Devon	x	x	-	-
	2260	Northampton	-	-	-	-
	2262	Essex	-	x	-	-
	2263	Lancashire (County Palatine)	-	-	-	-
	2264	Lancashire (Furnace District)	x	-	-	-
Aug.	2268	Plymouth	-	-	x	-
	2268	Sheffield	-	-	-	-
	2270	Cumberland	-	x	-	-
	2270	'Dissenting Traders in and about London'	-	-	x	-
	2270	Leathward, Cumberland	-	x	-	-
	2272	Hampshire	x	-	-	-
	2273	Shropshire	x	-	-	-
	2273	Nantwich, Cheshire	x	-	x	-
	2273	Oswestry	-	-	-	-
	2274	Chester	x	-	x	-
Sept.	2277	Oxfordshire	-	x	-	x (m)

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
Sept.	2282	New Sarum, Chippenham, Warminster, Westbury and Trowbridge	-	x	-	-
	2282	Ciceter, Gloucestershire	x	-	x	-
	2282	Reading, Abingdon and Newbury	-	-	-	-
Oct.	2287	Kingston-on- Thames	x	-	-	-
	2287	Cambridge	-	x	-	-
	2289	Dorset	-	-	-	-
Nov.	2297	Lewes	x	-	-	-
	2297	Canterbury	-	-	-	-
	2297	Tenterden, Cranbrook and Staplehurst, Kent	-	x	-	-
	2300	New England	-	-	x	-
	2304	Leicestershire	-	-	-	-
<u>1687</u>		<u>'Your Majesty's Loyal Subjects Dwelling in...'</u>				
April	2238	City of Westminster	-	-	-	-
May	2242	Devon	-	-	-	-
June	2249	Tiverton	-	-	-	-
	2251	Plymouth	x	-	-	-
	2252	Coventry	-	-	x	-
	2252	Traders of Exeter	x	-	x	? (n)
July	2256	Kingsbridge, Devon	-	-	-	-
	2259	Northamptonshire	x	-	x	-
	2260	Ashburton, Devon	-	-	-	-
	2262	Munster, Ireland	-	-	x	-

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
July	2264	Droitwich, Worcestershire	-	-	-	-
Aug.	2270	Chichester	x	-	x	x (o)
	2271	Bath	-	-	-	-
Sept.	2276	Dorchester, Andover and Whitchurch	-	-	-	-
	2282	Chatford	-	-	-	-
Oct.	2284	Taunton	x	-	-	-
	2287	Honiton, Devon	-	x	-	-
	2287	<i>Portsmouth</i>	-	-	-	-
Nov.	2300	Hertford	x	-	-	x (p)

NOTE:

- (1) Where addressers did not identify themselves by a sectarian label, this was important in indicating that they were Nonconformists.

NOTES ON TABLE B

Nonconformist addresses included many ambiguous phrases, the meaning of which it is difficult to determine. The instances in which there is any possibility that these phrases might have been implied offers of support for the King's programme, are reproduced below; the lettering relates to the letters used in column seven of the table.

When corporations or grand juries offered support (See Table A) they stated specifically that they were prepared to help facilitate the election of MPs who were committed to the repeal of the Test and penal laws. Only in three cases did Nonconformist addressers (in Table B) make such a specific commitment. It is likely that many of the phrases reproduced below meant nothing at all in terms of support.

(a) Presbyterians: City of London

This address thanked His Majesty 'for declaring his inclination to engage his two Houses of Parliament in concurrence.. in so excellent a work', and then committed the addressers 'to be most forward and faithful in their allegiance'.

Coming immediately after the reference to parliamentary approval, this could be taken as a promise of co-operation.

(b) Presbyterians: Bristol

The addressers were 'sensible that they were under the highest obligation to His Majesty' and intended 'to manifest by their conscientious and dutiful deportment their gratitude toward so indulgent a prince'.

(c) Congregationalists: City of London

'In duty bound' they would 'make it their constant endeavour to answer His Majesty's just expectations of them'. (this followed a reference to the necessity of Parliament's approval of the King's Declaration).

(d) Congregationalists: Norwich

The addressers undertook 'to adhere to His Majesty with all loyalty, fidelity and hearty service'.

(e) Congregationalists: Yarmouth

The addressers were pleased that it was the King's 'intention to make [His Declaration] perpetual by obtaining the concurrence of the two Houses of Parliament' and promised to 'endeavour to contribute the utmost assistance thereto'.

(f) Congregationalists: Norfolk

This congregation promised to 'engage themselves to serve His Majesty with all fidelity.. in their respective capacities'.

(g) Congregationalists: Hitchin

'We assure His Majesty that we are resolved to do our utmost

in our places, that such worthy persons may be chosen to sit in Parliament as will concur with your Majesty, that liberty may be established in an unalterable law'. (This is one of the three specific offers of assistance contained in the Nonconformist addresses).

(h) Baptists: City of London

'The only emulation among them would be who might approve himself best worthy of His Majesty's favour, and contribute most toward the glory and happiness of his reign'.

(i) Baptists: Leicestershire

They would give evidence of their thanks and loyalty 'in those ways whereby they might most demonstrate the same'.

(j) Baptists: Staffordshire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire

The addressers said they were prepared to assist 'the success of the King's government' 'as far as it in us lies'.

(k) Baptists: Cheshire and Shropshire

They would serve His Majesty as well as they could in 'their present station'.

(l) Nonconformists: West Somerset

The addressers offered to 'answer the obligations His Majesty had laid upon them'.

(m) Nonconformists: Oxfordshire

'When Your Majesty in your great wisdom shall think fit to summon another Parliament [we undertake] to use our utmost endeavours to elect such persons as may abrogate and abolish such laws as have impeded the free exercise of religion'.

(This is the second of the three specific commitments received in Nonconformist addresses).

(n) Nonconformist Traders of Exeter

In contrast to the Exeter Corporation, who had 'made no return

of thanks' to His Majesty for his gracious Indulgence, the addressers put 'every last drop of blood' as his disposal.

(o) Nonconformists: Chichester

The addressers intended 'to improve every opportunity to serve His Majesty'.

(p) Nonconformists: Hertford

This address (the last Nonconformist address involving a specific commitment) contained the undertaking that the signatories would do their best to 'send such representatives as should be acceptable' to His Majesty, in the event of an Election.

C. OTHER ADDRESSES

The fact that the King received only one Roman Catholic address (presented by Lords Powis, Arundell and Belasyse in May 1687 on behalf of 'His Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects', Gazette 2246) may be indicative of both the tact and the numerical inferiority of this group. That he received only eleven addresses from Anglican ecclesiastics (as opposed to some of those in Table A, from Tory corporations), serves to illustrate the silent opposition with which the majority of churchmen received the King's Declaration. It was also significant that no less than seven of the eleven addresses from Anglican sources were sponsored by the Bishops of Durham, Chester and St. Davids:

May 1687 Gazette 2243: The Bishop of Durham on behalf of the Dean and Chapter of Durham.

May 1687 Gazette 2246: The Bishop of Durham on behalf of the City of Durham.

May 1687 Gazette 2246: The Bishop of Chester on behalf of his diocese.

May 1687 Gazette 2246: The Bishop of Chester with a group of clergy from Cheshire.

Jun 1687 Gazette 2250: The Bishop of Chester on behalf of the people of Richmond.

Jun 1687 Gazette 2252: The Bishop of Chester on behalf of the Corporation of Wigan.

Oct. 1687 Gazette 2283: The Bishop and Clergy of the diocese of St. Davids.

Even these addresses, however, only thanked the King for his assurances regarding the Church; none mentioned liberty of conscience for Nonconformists. The other four Anglican addresses were in the same vein:

July 1687 Gazette 2256: The Bishop and Clergy of the diocese of Lincoln.

July 1687 Gazette 2257: The Clergy of Ripon.

July 1687 Gazette 2258: The Bishop and Clergy of Coventry and Lichfield.

Aug. 1687 Gazette 2270: Some of the Clergy of London.

APPENDIX THREE

This handwritten pamphlet is in DWL Baxter MSS (Treatises) VII., ff. 230-235. The pamphlet was dated 1 October 1691. Baxter died in December 1691. The pamphlet was never published. It has been necessary to omit an occasional sentence where the handwriting, never good, was indecipherable.

KING JAMES HIS ABDICATION OF THE CROWN

PLAINLY PROVED

October 1 1691

In compassion to a divided Kingdom and of the conscientious part of those who for want of true information take him yet for their King.

BY ONE THAT NEVER SWORE ALLEGIANCE

TO KING JAMES II OR KING WILLIAM III

RICHARD BAXTER

Chapter 1

I. One would think that a nation of so great esteem for nobility, wealth, learning, wit, and interest, should not need at this time of day, to be informed of a matter of such notorious public evidence, and so nearly and greatly concerning them. But the debauchery of the laity, and factious malignity of too many of the clergy, is a forfeiture of divine illumination, and provoking God to give them up to the Great Deceiver, who love deceit, and to be ruled by Satan, who will not obey the God of truth; and Quos perdere vult Jupiter hos dementat.

II. But what's this to the sober sort of gentlemen, and a conscionable part of the clergy, and universities? I would their

ignorance in politics, and in this case, could be truly denied, and that it tended not to the dreadful danger of the Kingdom and Religion, nor to their own. Two causes are notorious. Our youth ... do so few study political doctrine to any digestion, that it is no wonder if they are liable to the snares of a Hobbes, or Spinoza on our side, or any Papal or usurping deceivers on the other. Their politics are their worldly interest, or the talk of any coffee house or factious railer, or the aspect of Court advantages, or of any power, civil or ecclesiastic, that can prefer them. Even our students of law (though lawyers are the pillars of the Kingdom's rights) do many of them study what the laws of England are, and never well study what the nature, original, measure and ends of government in genere et specie are, nor what a law is: much more are our theological students strangers to the same prerequisite politics, and think they know what God's government and laws are, that cannot give you a true definition of government or a law, of the constitution or administration of a body politic. Would they but digest Suarez, de Legibus, Guilielmus Grotius, de Jure Naturae, Hugo Grotius, de Imper. Summa Protestat. et de Jure Belli, Bodin, de Republica, Arnisaeus, Althusius, or the summaries of Willius, Besoldus, Angelius, etc... they would be more captable of debating our English state cases. Do but bar their claim of the Papal Usurpation, and Suarez and Gregory Sayrus, alone might teach them more than most understand.

III. And the late factions and wars and changes in England, have divided us into prejudiced, wrathful, malicious sects: and enmity with Court Countenance maketh men's politics. And men of wrath and power have got much possession of the education of youth. And that which is bred up in them becometh a second nature. Through most of the world, men called Great and Learned and Religious, are too like our house animals that will bark at all strangers, but fawn

on their own masters.

IV. But a further cause of men's ignorance of King James's abdication is that it hath not (that I know of) been truly opened and proved to them, so that the conscientious that have not well studied politics themselves, are to be pitied as excusable in their errors. And I am far from thinking that the Bishops that have been hereupon ejected, are worse men than many that have taken the Oaths. But I desire God by their own case to make them sensible, how their poor fellow servants have been used these thirty years, by the imposition of oaths, covenants, and false subscriptions or professions.....

V. Perhaps they might think that had they opened how much of the abdication consisted in delivering up the Kingdom so far to a Foreign Jurisdiction as Popery doth, and professing the extermination of the nation on account of Religion, the Emperor, and the Kings of Spain, Portugal, Poland, the Duke of Bavaria, Savoy, etc., might have thought that it was a war for Religion and so would be consequence be as against them. But there was no ground for such a suspicion:

1. Because so much of their government as is now in the possession of the Pope, was long ago given him by their own and their subjects' express consent: and it is no injury to such consenters.
2. Because their subjects and they being of one party in religion, their Councils, Religion and Laws do not bind them to exterminate or burn the whole nation, as in a Protestant nation they do. Of which more anon. Therefore in France, Spain, and other countries of the Papal Church, no doubt but the people are bound to loyal fidelity, though a nation which their King professeth to destroy be never so much disobliged.

VI. And it is a mistake to call their self-defense a war for

Religion. It is but a war for their Lives and Liberties and Properties, and Posterity, that one man drunk with ignorance and error, seduced by a lying priest, may not have power to use a whole kingdom like dogs or rats unless they will damn their souls. It is not to force their religion on others; no not on the Pope's professed subjects among us, but to save our lives and property which the enemies of our religion on that pretense would take away. Men cannot take our religion from us, but only hinder us from outward exercise of it, and murder us for it.

VII. For ought I can understand, the people (even the learned clergy and too many Lords and Gentlemen) are made to believe that King James's self-disposition lay but in his flying out of the Land: no doubt but he did it for his own safety; he had no reason to trust his life, liberty and crown in the hands of one that had drawn his sword to force him (unless it had been for his Kingdom whose welfare is the end of his government). When King Richard I was gone toward Jerusalem, or was in prison abroad, it was no abdication of his crown, though his brother usurped it: King William, King Henry V, etc. when they were beyond sea, were Kings of England still. When King James's own army and nearest kindred, and friends and the clergy forsook him, who could blame him to save himself by flight? Wherein then did his Abdication consist, and at which time was it?

CHAPTER II

Presupposed certainties to be understood

I. If we agree in no principles we are incapable of dispute: I shall first lay down such undeniable certainties of Fact and Rights as may be an unquestionable foundation for our following argumentation.

1. As there is no creature but from God the Creator, so there is no Governing Authority (or Power) but from God the universal sovereign...

II. This power is of God, partly immediately without our choice, and partly immediately by the will of man.

1. It is of divine determination:

1. That in general there be governing order, Rulers and Subjects in the world, and not men left to live as beasts.
2. That all Kings and Rulers be God's ministers, under him as subject officers.
3. That they take his Laws for their Supreme Laws and Rule, which none may abrogate, suspend, or contradict.
4. That they make the common good or welfare an essential end of their government. And
5. That they make the glorifying of God's government, and Holiness, and the pleasing of his will, the ultimate end of all.

2. But it is left to man's will (under the conduct of Providence and the General Laws of God):

1. How large a Prince's dominion shall be.
2. Whether the supremacy shall be in One, or Many, Monarchy or Aristocracy.
3. Whether during life, or till forfeiture.
4. Whether hereditary or elective: and who the persons or family by inheritance shall be.
5. What measure of power he shall have over men's properties.
6. Who shall be magistrates under the supreme.

III. Though men may chose the Receiver it is God by his law that giveth all the first-mentioned power (authority and obligation) to him that is so duly chosen: as a woman chooseth the husband, and may secure some properties; but God giveth the man the governing power.

IV. Power and Conquest usually render some one man fittest for the government, as ablest to protect and execute; but it giveth not the Right of Governing, or proper authority, till it force or procure consent. Else as Hobbes and Spinoza say, right would be nothing but strength and possession and, e.g. if the King of France conquer us, he would be our rightful King.

VI. Forced consent is self-obliging.

VII. As contract formed the government (in the said points not determined by God) so neither party (Sovereign or people) may change it in the species without mutual consent.

VIII. The *salus populi* or *bonum publicum* is the essential terminus or end of government, and so called the Supreme Law.

IX. *Regere* and *perdere* in profession or practice are inconsistent. He abdicateth his government, that professeth his resolution to destroy the Kingdom.

X. So doth he that delivereth it up to another (without the Kingdom's consent), or an essential part of it.

XI. But as every breach of law is not treason, nor every fault of a husband or wife dissolveth marriage (but incapacity, adultery or a murdering design truly judged), so it is not every wrong to the Commonwealth that is Abdication.

XII. Nor yet is the persecution or destruction of a party or faction an abdication, but of the Kingdom, or main body.

XIII. Every true Papist professeth himself bound by General Councils approved by the Popes, as the rule of his religion.

XIV. The Council at the Lateran sub Innocent III and others, oblige all Temporal Lords to exterminate all Protestants on pain of excommunication, and deposition, as soon as they are able....

XV. When their Doctors commonly maintain this exposition, and defend this Papal power, and Princes' obligation, and when no one

Pope would ever be brought to renounce it, people have just cause to judge that professed Papists own it:

XVI. If a Papist King of a Protestant Kingdom should say that he doth not take himself obliged to exterminate the nation as Protestant, and would swear it, 1. Men may well think that he will not be so true to any obligation, as to that of his religion on which he takes his salvation to lie; 2. But if he also openly practice the setting up Papists under him in the subordinate power, Parliament, Council, Judicature, Corporations, Navies, Armies, Sheriffs, Justices, Embassies, he maketh the case evident against his contrary pretense. For he cannot save the nation from all these that are to exercise the power; nor can any in reason believe that all these will be false to their religion, Popes, Councils, etc., and to forsake their Doctors and clergy, though the King should do it.

XVII. A Kingdom thus palpably designed to ruin, or endangered, may not on pretenses of uncertainty delay their self-preservation till they are past remedy (as in Ireland 1641 it fell out very near).

XVIII. The Right and Duty of a Kingdom to self-defense, is greater than of a single person's defense against a highway robber.

XIX. If the danger were doubtful to single persons, the Representative body of the nation, are the most satisfactory discerning judges.

XX. For the sovereign to subject himself to the Pope, is to subject an essential part of the Kingdom to him. And so great is the Papal Supremacy that to receive it is to give up an essential part of the regal power to him, and is to abdicate it by giving to another both the person and species of government.

XXI. 1. That the sovereign or head is an essential part of the Kingdom as a Political Body, no knowing man doubteth: If the species of Monarchy be put down, the species of that Republic is put

down. If but the Person be changed, the Republic would nominally be extinct: but that, 1) it virtually liveth in specie constitua; 2) and actually liveth in a succeeding heir, that from the moment of his father's death is King: whence we say *Respublica non moritur*. All the subordinate Magistrates and Bishops (even the Admirals, Generals, Chancellor, Judges, Archbishops, and confederate clergy), are but integral and not essential parts of the Kingdom. And the change of any of these doth but change the administration, and not the species. But the sovereign power is the specifying head.

2. And that the Papal power claimed and constantly defended, is such as containeth much (if not far most) of the Essence of the Monarchy, is past doubt to all that know it. I would here cite a volume of their Councils, Popes, and chief Doctors that defend such power, but for diverting the Reading by seeming tedious:

i. A great part of their Doctors make the Pope God's universal viceregent for the government of all the world by word and sword, as the vice God. Philip King of France was not strong enough and bold enough to oppose this, when Cardinal Bertrand in a set speech to him asserted it. They that dare not speak so high as this Cardinal (that said, "God had not been wise, if he had not made one such universal Representative or Ruler") yet do the same while they say that in ordine ad spiritualia the Pope hath the sword power. They maintain that the Papal and clergy power is as the soul, and the King's power but as the body, that must obey the soul; that the magistrates' power is but for the body and civil peace, and the Papal and clergy power for the soul and our salvation; and so every priest is far better than the King as the soul is than the body; that the magistrate is bound to burn or exterminate all that the Pope and clergy judge heretics and excommunicate, and to execute their bloody sentence when they deliver men up to the secular power. They debase

the office of Kings (which is by God's institution as holy as priests, and to govern them) as if they were but base terrene animals, made for temporal things, and to serve the clergy. They usurp the disposing of all the clergy, who they say must be governed by the Pope, and obey him before the King. They claim and use the power of interdicting all God's public worship, as they have done for a long time in England (by Innocent IV and others); so that all the church doors shall be shut up, if the King will not obey the Pope, and the land shall live like Infidels or Atheists. They claim tribute from the subjects. Yea the Pope claimeth England as his own since King John's day, and hath not yet quit the claim. He that knoweth what power a clergy, subject to the Pope, will have in England, and hath formerly had, and what power it hath in all Popish Kingdoms, will know that it is the greatest half of the regal power that is given up to the Pope by a King that would subject himself and us to him.

Objection: But the case is altered now from what it was heretofore: Popes have not now such power, nor are Kings such fools to be enslaved by them.

Answer: 1. The Papists' princes should thank the Protestants, if their fetters be any whit relaxed: the Popes would not forbear them, but for fear lest they should do as Saxony, Hussia, England and other protestants did.

2. I need not bid the objectors yet look to the Inquisition in Spain, and Portugal, and the state of other such Papal Kingdoms; go only to France and you will see, that though that King have by barbarous cruelty extirpated Protestants, and drawn many hundred thousands into the danger of damnation by revolting from the truth, and though he having opened his design to root out the Reformation (called the Northern Heresy) from the world, yet cannot he get acceptance and peace with the Pope and Papal clergy, unless the Church of France will renounce her ancient liberties.

XXI. To be a traitor against the Commonwealth is a far worse sort of treason than that which is only against the Person of the King. For though the Summa Potestatis (King and Parliament) be both singulis et universis major (falsely denied by some), yet not universis melior: we may easier have another King than another Kingdom.

XXII. Christians that know how much of the interest of Christ, and his Kingdom, and the souls of men and our posterity are involved in the state interest and safety of such a protestant Kingdom as this, intolerably aggravate their perfidiousness, if they betray it.

XXIII. They that know how much the giving up of Britain and Ireland to Popery, would tend to the extirpation of the Protestant Reformation out of the world, and yet would betray us, are yet more inexcusable.

XXIV. As sin lieth first and chiefly in omissions, so may omission of necessary defense and duty, be treason against the Kingdom, and against Christ himself, as much as actually treachery by commission.

XXV. They that would put this Kingdom into the Power of the King of France, who hath done what he hath done in France, and through the Christian world, and this upon trust that he will not destroy us nor the Protestant Religion, are notorious traitors to the Kingdom. And if King James would give him such power, he delivereth up to him his Crown.

XXVI. If King James do not only deliver up himself a subject to the Pope, and a dependent... of the King of France, but also take his son from his subjects, and put him into the hands of such a King, he doth quantum in se make the same profession for his son as for himself, and make the same forfeiture of his title to the crown.

XXVII. If the next heir of the crown shall see the Kingdom about to be alienated to a Foreign Power, he hath cause in time to

use all just means to secure his titles to the succession.

XXVIII. If a nation, to prevent such alienation, call in necessary help, it is perfidious ingratitude to forsake the helper, and when the sword is once drawn against the alienator, all hope of mutual trust is gone.

XXIX. He that hath deposed himself or abdicated, is no King, and to resist him is not to resist the King.

XXX. He that sweareth that it is unlawful on any pretense whatsoever to take arms against a French or Irish army, if King James commission them to exterminate or enslave the land, doth swear for treason.

CHAPTER III

The Application: And the Proof of the Abdication

I. It is notorious that King James professed himself a Papist.

II. And that he did thereby become a Subject to a Foreign Ruler, and so quantum in se, subject to the Nation thereto. For if the Pope must rule the King, and the King must rule the Kingdom, then the Pope must rule by the King. E.G. if the King's General or Admiral should take a commission as his subject, from the King of France, and must obey him and the Army or Navy must obey that General or Admiral, it followeth that they must obey the King of France, and indeed are his subjects. And hereby he delivered more than half the Regal Government to the Pope, and thereby divested himself of it.

III. It is notorious that General Councils, approved by Popes, are objectively the Papists' Religion, and that such Councils decree the burning or extermination of Protestants as heretics, and particularly all that deny Transubstantiation, and that they oblige all Temporal Lords to this execution as soon as they are able on pain of excommunication, deposition and damnation. And we may believe that King James was not willing to be excommunicate, deposed or damned:

and therefore by professing popery, professed his obedience to such Councils.

IV and V. It is notorious that King James did strenuously endeavour to bring all the three Kingdoms under the foreign jurisdiction of the Pope, that he might be able to execute his professed religion. For, 1. Ireland he actually subjected to him by power. 2. He corresponded with the Pope by Embassies in order hereto. 3. He made a Jesuit and Papist his Privy Councillor. 4. He made Papists Judges, 5. and Justices of the Peace. 6. He made Papists the most trusted part of his Armies, 7. and of his Navies. 8. He promoted Mass and Monastries in the City. 9. He overthrew the charters that might be able to choose Parliament men. 10. He invaded the University colleges for Papists. 11. He, having the power of choosing Bishops, Deacons, and making the clergy of England, sought the extirpation and ruin, if not the death of the most eminent Bishops, that he might put his adopted instruments in their steads. 12. He oppressed the Nonconformists, that he might force some of them to be for an universal toleration, that Popery might have public allowance. 13. He made men believe that his brother King Charles II died a Papist... that we might know that he was but perfecting an old design; but had not his brother's patience to carry it on by degrees, but must push for it suddenly at once. So that there is no place for doubting whether King James endeavoured the subjecting of the Kingdom to the Pope, and the enabling of himself to execute his professed exterminating religion.

VI. It's notorious, that the whole Kingdom is sworn by the Oath of Supremacy against all Foreign Jurisdiction, Civil and Ecclesiastical; and consequently that he was engaged to exterminate them unless they were to be perjured. And that hereby our religion or freedom from Popery is twisted into the Constitution of the

Kingdom, which he endeavoured to change and overthrow.

VII. By these means he forced his own Armies and Navy and the chief of the clergy, to call for help to save them from him; and the Helpers once engaged, mutual trust became impossible.

VIII. The Princess and Prince of Orange, were so near to the right of succession, than when they saw the Kingdom near given up to a Foreign Jurisdiction, or to destruction, they were justly concerned to secure their right, and save the Kingdom.

IX. King James hath long been in confederacy with the King of France, and hath now put himself and his supposed son so much in his power as may satisfy all but fools, that we must be subjects to France if we are subjects to King James; or be wholly at the mercy of the French: and all Christendom knoweth what that is.

X. The Commons of England had in Parliament voted the said James, when Duke of York, incapable of the succession.

XI. As the children of the faithful baptised are justly accounted infant Christians, so the supposed son of King James put into the hands of Papists, is justly accounted an infant Papist. And by his parents put into the same incapacity with themselves.

XII. King James had no more power than what was given him by God or man: but neither God nor man gave him power to destroy the Kingdom, to change the Constitution, to give up the Kingdom to another, to abrogate or suspend the Laws of God, or to drive the people to sin and damnation.

XIII. The English Parliament have especially these thirty years been so zealous against disloyalty, than no man can justly suspect than anything but notorious danger of utter ruin of the Kingdom, would have caused them to declare King James's abdication and to change the personal government to preserve the species.

XIV. The Prince of Orange found the land without a King, he

having abdicated or deposed himself before.

A King that, being sworn to maintain the laws of a Kingdom which is sworn against all Foreign Jurisdiction, civil and ecclesiastical, shall deliver up himself and quantum in se his Kingdom to a Foreign Jurisdiction, and shall profess himself of a religion that bindeth him on pain of excommunication, deposition and damnation to destroy or exterminate all his Kingdom that will not damn their souls, as soon as he is able; and that visibly hasteth the execution, in Ireland, in Scotland and England, by Papist Councillors, Judges, militia by sea and land, overthrowing charters or Corporations, etc. doth hereby declare himself to be publicus hostis, and turn regere into perdere rem publicam, and doth notoriously depose himself, and abdicate the Royalty. But all this did King James II - ergo, King James did abdicate the government....

CHAPTER IV

OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

Objection 1. All Resistance is forbidden, Romans 13, on pain of Damnation. Prayers and tears and passive obedience are our last remedy.

Answer. I grant it. But whom do you talk of? May you not resist a highway robber, or a pirate, or the Pope? It is the King that is God's minister for the common good that you may not resist. But he that hath deposed himself by declaring himself to be publicus hostis ad rem publicam perdenam is no King. To resist him is not to resist the King, but an Enemy.

Objection II. He was not worse than Nero and such heathen princes whom Christians would not resist.

Answer 1. Christians were not the Roman Commonwealth but a small party of dissenters. Therefore to destroy them was not to

destroy the Commonwealth.

2. And their Emperors' Religion did not oblige them to destroy or exterminate all the subjects - with what scorn would the Romans have heard of such a profession.

3. The Romans ruled with a great profession of the Law of Nations, which would preserve justice and suppress all moral vice. So that among forty Emperors there were but ten that were called persecutors, and I think not past seven that were notably such indeed. So that the heathen Romans preserved the Christians from the blind rage of the Jewish zealots.

4. The Roman Senate claimed a power superior to the Emperors, who indeed were but generals of their armies, and had not power but what they gave them. They voted and put to death both Nero and many others. And neither Christ nor Paul decided the controversy whether the Emperor or the Senate was the higher power.

Objection III. The Kings of France, Spain, Portugal are not to be resisted though they may be Papists.

Answer. This is before answered:

1. Their religion bindeth them not to destroy or exterminate the Commonwealth, because the people are of their own religion.

2. And if part of their government be given up to the Pope, it is done by the people's free consent: and men that will be slaves or Papists, may. But the nation here is against it, and sworn against it.

Objection IV. Was not Queen Mary a lawful Queen, though a Papist, and changed King Edward's religion and laws?

Answer. King Edward ruled so short a time that it was but a small part of the Kingdom that were protestants at his death: almost all the Parish Priests were the same that had been Mass Priests. Either the body of the Kingdom was then protestant, or not? If not,

it's nothing to our case. If they were, could their resistance have prevailed, I am not he that could have proved it unlawful. But reputation followeth succession. If Queen Jane, or Sir Thomas Wyatt had prevailed, history would have honoured and justified their undertaking. But indeed the small number comparatively that submitted to be burnt for their religion tells us that then the Protestants were but a small part of the Nation.

Objection V. The Parliament took the Oath of Allegiance to King James after he had declared himself a Papist. Therefore they took that for no abdication.

Answer 1. The Commons of England had before voted him incapable of the government. Therefore what followed was the effect of fear.

2. The whole Kingdom was sworn before against all Foreign Jurisdiction, which oath no Parliament could dispense with.

3. King James swore also to them to preserve the Commonwealth and Laws; and their oath to him was but a confirmation of this covenant. They swore to him as King; and if he abdicated the Kingdom, he was no longer their King.

4. While he professed, though a Papist, to preserve the Commonwealth, contrary to his own religion, they were excusable for trusting his profession while it was not utterly incredible. But when he set himself openly to subject the Kingdom to the Pope and put the power of the land in Council, Army, Navy, Judicature, Corporations, church preferments, etc., into the hands of Papists, or their instruments, and actually delivered up Ireland to the Pope, and was near it in Scotland, his contrary profession was no longer credible, nor any security to these Kingdoms whose necks he was laying on the block, and confederating with the Pope and the King of France for the effectual execution.

Objection VI. The Church of England must not lose the honour

of her enmity to rebellion, and her being for passive obedience.

Answer. Did not the Church of England cast off the yoke of obedience to Rome, and is it her honour to reassume it? We are all of the Church of England, and all against rebellion, and resistance of the King. But what's that to a public enemy that is no King, because he will not. Who did so much to resist King James, by calling in or assisting the Prince that resisted him, as our imprisoned Bishops and their adherents? Will it be the honour of the Church of England to betray these, and this on a blind pretense of preserving their loyalty to one that hath made himself an enemy, and would bring England into the case of France, and enslave it to a Foreign Tyrant?

Objection VII. But by this we shall justify the Parliament rebellion against King Charles I which we have with so much zeal condemned.

Answer. Either the case was the like, or not. If not, it is no justification of it. If yea, then what can I say but as the Rulers to Judas, that cryed: 'I have sinned in betraying innocent blood'. 'See thou to it: what is that to us?' Will you also bind all ministers on pain of ejection, silencing and ruin, to profess assent and consent that King James is a martyr, as you have done that King Charles I was a martyr? Will you not rather disgrace your old cause by such equaling King Charles I and King James II? Yea, have not your party been public resisters already; and you have not yet declared repentance.

Objection VIII. But we must do our duty and trust God with his church and cause: it is distrusting God that causeth rebellion.

Answer. True. And it is sottish ignorance that maketh men call it trusting God when they rebel against him, and join in a confederacy to set up the Kingdom of Satan in the world. Methinks

in this objection I hear, 'If thou be the Son of God, command these stones to be made bread, and cast down thyself, for it is written, "He shall give his angels charge over thee", etc.' But it is written, 'Thou shall not tempt the Lord thy God.' This is the Devil's preaching of faith and righteousness. How many fornicators, drunkards, worldlings, infidels, seek the ruin of the Protestant Religion, and say, 'we must trust God'? What will you trust God for? Is it to set up Popery and slavery and extirpate truth and piety from the world? Is this his work? Hath he made you any promise to save you while you are his enemies? Is it your duty to betray religion, and your country, and to promote a confederacy for ruin and iniquity? Know the way of your duty, and trust God in it; but not in rebellion against him.

Objection IX. But we believe we may trust King James and the King of France, that they will seek for no more than a toleration of Popery, and will put the power of the nation into the churchmen's hands.

Answer 1. What! After what King James hath done? After all the exasperations of his desertion by his kindred, the clergy, his Army, in England in Ireland, etc.? And after all that the King of France hath done in France, in Savoy, in Flanders, in Germany, with the Turks, etc.? These wretches that cannot trust the God of infinite power, wisdom and goodness, with their souls or bodies, and would be loath to hold their estates on such a kind of trust, can yet trust the Kingdom, and all the protestant churches, and their own and their posterities' souls, upon the clemency of the King of France, that both by torment and terror, frightened some hundred thousand of his own subjects from their religion, and hath burnt so many cities, and depopulated so many countries, by ambition and cruelty as he hath done. Read the Emperor's description of him.

Objection X. But the possession of the Crown is yet uncertain: it is wisdom to see which side will prevail.

Answer 1. It seems then you would be for the extirpation of the Protestant Church if you knew that that side would prevail.

2. It is not prevailing that can make a self-deposed King to be a King indeed: nor that will authorise him to destroy us.

Objection XI. But if King James be no King, his son is next heir and therefore King William is but a usurper, and to such we must not swear.

Answer. Whether that son be spurious or not, is a question that I will not meddle with, but,

1. Is not that son an infant Papist, devoted to Popery, to be bred up in it? and so incapable as his father is? Is he not in the guardianship of the King of France, and so his title is but for our captivity to France and Popery?

2. I beseech you give me a sober answer. Is not government in genere of God? How long can the nation be without it? Shall it be till the supposed Prince of Wales be capable to govern, and will renounce Popery and all foreign jurisdiction? Are you content till then to have no government, but your lives and estates to be at the mercy of your enemies, and the rabble and of thieves? If you cannot have whom you would, must you not have whom you can? If anything in government be jure divino, it is that there shall be in genere government and subjection. And are you not the greatest rebel against God, that would live without Government? What a cause do you think England would have been in, in these three years, if it had had no government. Worse than the Barbarians in America. Do you understand Romans 12? Do you think that the Roman Emperors were no usurpers, when they ravished the Senate, as Cromwell did the Parliament? And when they set up and pulled down and killed their Emperors, and had a Nero, a

Galba, an Otho, a Vitellius, a Vespasianus, a Titus, a Domitian, in a few months or years? And when the soldiers set up the Empire to sale to him that would give most for it?

Objection XII. But we must rather submit than subject and swear allegiance to a usurper.

Answer 1. Should all do so, or some few only? Why you more than all others? If all, then there is no government, and God's Law is broken, and the Kingdom dissolved and undone.

2. Is he a usurper

1. that findeth the Kingdom abdicated and vacant,
2. and is the next capable heir,
3. and had so clear a call to secure his own right by saving the Kingdom from being alienated to a foreigner?
4. and that as a member of the mundane, and the Christian, and the Protestant communion, is bound to help the desolate and distressed?
5. and that was called over hither for their aid, and assisted by the people of the land, laity and clergy, in their necessity?
6. and was chosen and declared King (with his Queen) by the whole Representative body of the nation?
7. and if they had not had him, they could have none, but had been a prey to the public enemies?

3. If he were a usurper it is he and the Parliament that must answer for it and not you. You are not called to swear that he came in on a just title, but that he is now stated in the government, which you are bound to obey: and if you be not enemies to the Protestant cause and the nation, you should with zeal and thankfulness promote the means of our common safety and welfare. The Lord grant that our mad ingratitude, blindness, and malignity, cause not the outcast

devil to return with seven spirits worse than himself and our latter end be worse than our beginning. I confess that the Papists are far more excusable in their rebellion than our malignant pretended Protestants. For they think that the Papal sovereignty is God's institution, which lives and Kingdoms are not a price too dear to maintain. But they are not here to be disputed with, their errors being more copiously confuted than any other in the world.