

*The Repeal of the Act Against
Occasional Conformity Consider'd
In a Letter to a Member of the
Honourable House of Commons*

by

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THE
REPEAL
OF THE
ACT
AGAINST
Occasional Conformity
CONSIDER'D.

In a LETTER to a Member of the
Honourable *House of Commons*.

LONDON:

Printed for JOHN CLARK, *at the Bible and
Crown in the Poultry, near Cheapside: And
may also be had of* J. ROBERTS *in Warwick-
lane, A. DODD without Temple-bar, and
J.FOX in Westminster-Hall, 1717.*

HONOUR'D SIR,

SINCE you have inform'd me, there will be a Motion in your House, for the Repealing the *Occasional Conformity* and *Schism* Acts, and desir'd my Thoughts on that Subject; I here send 'em you with my wonted Freedom; hoping, that if I should not be so happy, as in all things to fall in with your Sentiments, you will yet be so good as to forgive, one whom you know to be an hearty Lover of his King and Country.

I AM such a friend to this Design, that I hope the Motion will be made, by some Gentleman that has distinguish'd himself by his Zeal for King GEORGE, and his Family, and supported by Persons of approved Merit and Integrity; and that the Event will shew, that they that are embarked in it, instead of *managing at sixes and sevens*, have a good Majority at their back: And then, I am of opi-

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nion, it will be the greatest Stroke the Pretender's Interest has met with, since the passing the *Septennial Bill*.

I know you too well, to imagine, that in abetting this Design, you aim at any thing but serving the Government. You are not likely to be charg'd with Partiality to the Dissenters. Nor can I see, if they are consider'd as a Party, they are likely to be any great Gainers, if you carry your Point; because the Church will still have the great Places of Honour, Trust, and Profit, dispos'd among her Members: And yet, I must confess, I cannot see any solid Reason, why they, who are well known to be hearty Friends of the Government, should be kept any longer under Marks of Infamy and Contempt.

TIME was indeed, when they were generally run down as Enemies to Monarchy, and of Rebellious Principles; and there was a turn to be serv'd by the thus representing them, that was not much to the Advantage of the Nation, either in its Civil or Religious Interest: But it would not be so decent for that Cry to be now reviv'd, after their having discover'd so constant and steady a Regard to the present Establishment, and after His Majesty, in his Answer to their late Address, has done them the Honour to declare himself *fully convinc'd of the Loyalty and Zeal of the Protestant Dissenters*.

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WHAT I have therefore to offer is only this. That the Repeal of these Acts is highly reasonable in it self, and will be much for the Service of King *George* and his Government.

I take this Repeal to be highly reasonable upon many Accounts. The Occasional did not pass, without being often rejected. It met with great opposition, not only from many worthy Members of your House, but also from many noble Protestant Peers, and many of the Bench of Bishops too. This, to me, looks as if it was against the true Genius and Interest of the Nation. And its passing at last, was owing to a violent Torrent, that threw down all before it that stood in the way of the Designs then on foot, for introducing a Popish Pretender to the Crown. And tho' some who had before zealously oppos'd it, did then seemingly comply with what it was not in their power to hinder, yet 'tis well known they had not done that, had it not been with a prospect of gaining an Interest by it, to oppose those Designs; which Interest prov'd not so valuable as they expected.

NOR should it be forgotten what vigorous Efforts were made without doors (while this matter was depending) by *Lesley*, and other such furious Nonjurors, purely to serve the Church; meaning, all the while, the
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Church of the Suffragan of *Thetford*; which, if it has any real Strength, owes it very much to this Act.

I could wish Gentlemen would also consider, who they were in your House that brought in this Bill, and argu'd for it, and were so vastly fond on't, as, in a critical Juncture, to run the hazard of the common Safety, by a *Tack*, rather than they would lose it. Were they not a part of the last Ministry, whose Proceedings (to which this Act much help'd to pave the way) have been since so justly censur'd? And shall they have room to boast, that the Shackles they fram'd for their fellow Subjects continue still? Have not several of them, who liv'd to the present Reign, been forc'd to fly their Country; and others to be confin'd, that they might not kindle a Civil War, and let in Foreigners into our Bowels? And have not all of 'em, from *West* to *North*, either been actual Conspirators against King *George*, or Favourers or Abettors of those that were? And why should not this Argument plead as strongly for favour to Protestant Dissenters in 1717, as one, much like it, was allow'd to do, among the Commons, in 1680?

AND after all, what are the Fruits of this Glorious Act? What Good has it done? what Effetts has it produc'd, that are fit to be boasted of? It is well known to have displac'd
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a number that were firm in the Interest of the Protestant Succession; and it had done so by some others that might be nam'd (in the Magistracy of the City of *London* in particular) if the *Hanover* Resident interposing, had not prevail'd with them to deny themselves, for the sake of the Protestant Successor. It has kept others of the same Stamp out of Places, who might have been as likely to have had them as their Neighbours. It not a little animated the Tumultuous Rioters, and encourag'd the late Unnatural Rebellion, and still keeps up the hopes of a restless Faction, that some way or other they shall at last compass their Deugn, in opposition to the present Government. And is the Gain, of a particular Nobleman, with his Interest, especially when he's known to be one that can't be easy, where he does not give Measures, a sufficient Compensation for all this? For my party I can no more believe it, than I can, that it is for the Interest of *Britons* to suffer themselves to be hector'd by the *Swedes* with Impunity.

AND as for the *Schism* Acts, that visibly aim'd at weakening the Protestant Succession, and was own'd by its Promoters to be design'd to pave the Way to deprive *Englishmen* of their Birthright, and to incapacitate them to Vote for their Representatives in Parliament. It was struggled for by them, that
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have since openly appear'd in the Pretender's Interest, and oppos'd by all that valu'd the common Safety; and therefore 'tis hard to suppose, any can be now against the Repealing it, but such as with in their Hearts the protestant Succession had never taken place.

Let not Gentlemen say, what reason have the Dissenters to expect such a step as this in their Favour? For, besides that it is not in their Favour, that the Motion is made for the Repeal of these Acts, it will certainly be very hard, if when they can gain nothing that is peculiar to themselves, by the Accession of King *George*, they mayn't be allow'd to hope they shall lose nothing by him; which would be their Case, if they were not freed of those Hardships, which they were brought under for their Fidelity to his Interest.

WITHAL, such has been their Carriage, that I should think Men of any Honour could not refuse to allow them some Regard. They have born much, and made little complaint. They have never threaten'd (as 'tis well known some others did) that *Nature would be provok'd to rebel against Principle*: They were not to be cajol'd by the Wheedles, nor terrify'd by the Threats of the last Ministry, and so help'd to save us from the Ruin that then threaten'd. They have been insulted, abus'd, and plunder'd, in the present Reign; and yet have not follow'd the Government, or the
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Ministry with their Clamours. They have readily taken the Oaths, spoken well and honourably of the Government upon all Occasions, and contributed as chearfully as any in the Kingdom to its Support; they have pray'd for King *George*, and his Family, most heartily and universally, and done their utmost to prevent and suppress the late Unnatural Rebellion, and waited with great patience for some fruits of that publick Good-will they thought they might expect in return: And is it such a mighty thing after all, for them to hope to be freed from the disheartning marks of distinction they were brought under by those, whose Schemes taking place, would have effectually prevented King *George* from ever sitting on the *British* Throne, or such an House of Commons as yours, from ever appearing in *St. Stephen's* Chappel!

For my part, I must confess, I can't help thinking that the Dissenters have more reason to expect the Repeal of these Acts in the Reign of King *George*, than ever the Tories had to expect to carry them in the Reign of Queen *Anne*. Tho' if their Expectation herein was not answer'd, 'twould with me be comparatively but a small matter, provided the Publick were but safe: But I have no prospect of that, if they are neglected, and therefore I heartily concur with you, in laying the chief stress upon that. Let them be

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ever so meanly thought of, it may very well be expected by them and all hearty Lovers of his Majesty, that the Government will be just to it self, and not be left destitute of any necessary Support, as it would plainly be, should these Acts remain unrepeal'd.

FOR nothing can be more evident, than, that the present Government has many Enemies, not only abroad, but at home; tho' without the latter, there would be no great occasion for dreading the former. Besides open and avow'd Enemies that refuse to take the Oaths, there are many upon reserve, and in disguise, who are not upon that account, ever the less dangerous. Over and above profess'd Papists, it is well known, there are many that pass for Protestants and zealous Churchmen too, that would leave no Stone unturn'd, by which the Overthrow of our present Settlement might be promoted.

THE foolish and ridiculous, as well as abominably scandalous Aspersion, which in common Convention are very often cast upon the Royal Family; the manner in which they that meet with deserv'd Punishment upon this account are applauded, caress'd and supported; the Joy that is discover'd at any thing that tends to dishearten such as are in the Interest of the Government; and the Concern that may be seen in many, when any thing happens to encourage them: These things.

things, together with the numbers that either engag'd in, or favour'd the late Unnatural Rebellion, and the Compassion that was shewn to those few that suffer'd for it, without any consideration of the calamitous Condition we must all have been in, had it succeeded; and the readiness of many, when that Design fail'd, to embark in new Intrigues, in concert with Foreigners, to involve us in Blood and Confusion, are a notorious and flagrant Proof of this. In such a Case, 'twould be plain Injustice to the Government, to deny it the help of any that bear it an hearty Goodwill; and to be for contracting the number of Hands that should defend it, would be an effectual betraying it.

'Tis most certainly for the Interest of this, as well as any other Government, to strengthen its Friends, and weaken its Enemies: And this Repeal would do both.

ALL Gentlemen know that, the power and influence of Justices of the Peace is very great, all over the Kingdom; and that it is of the last Confluence to have those in that Commission true and faithful. Now there are several Counties in which, at the present, 'tis very hard to find such as are qualify d (according as the Law stands) to be in Commission, that can be depended on: And it would have prov'd yet harder, had not some been prevail'd with to deny themselves for a

while, purely to serve the Government. But let this step be taken, and there will be no room left to complain of a want of fit Persons to serve as Justices, wherever there is occasion.

MAGISTRATES in Corporations, and Officers in the Lieutenancy, are also of great Consequence to the Government. 'Tis well known that a number are now employ'd in both Capacities, that are no hearty Friends of King *George*, and his Family. The Government is sufficiently appriz'd of this, and many complaints have been made of it. But let these Acts once be repeal'd, and in the Course of a few years, we shall have as good Magistrates in Corporations, as the true Lovers of their Country need desire. The Common Council of *London* would then soon put on a better Face, and the Lieutenancy, through the Kingdom, be in safer Hands. Mobs and Insurrections will be this way prevented, and Conspiracies soon discover'd and defeated.

LET us suppose a foreign Enemy landing Upon us, according to the warning given by his Majesty in his Speech to the two Houses; what a Case are we in, if such as are in the Interest of the Invader or the Pretender have Power in their Hands? Shall we not then lie at their Mercy? Can we wonder if our Horses, our Stores, our Forces, and our Forts
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are betray'd into their Hands? But let all such without distinction be employ'd, that will be vigorously active against the common Enemy, and none else, and we need fear no Danger. The Repeal mov'd for might this way save us the Expence of a great deal of Blood and Treasure, and prevent a great deal of Terror and Confusion, that would otherwise be unavoidable.

THIS Repeal will help to secure the Interest of the Government in all Parts of its Dominions.

IT will be for the Advantage of the whole Isle of *Britain*, by promoting Unity, and Trade; and also by helping to secure us of a good Parliament, when the Time of this is expir'd. I am well assur'd it occasions not a little Concern to some very sensible and worthy Gentlemen, to think how many things (besides an Heat struck between the two Houses) might fall out, to make a Dissolution of this Parliament necessary; and how faint a Prospect we have of another of the same Complexion, if our Corporations are not first better settled. The next Election, in all probability, would be in the Field, with Sword in Hand; and who can tell how much Blood might be spilt, before we should, come to be settled? And how Corporations can be brought into the Interest of the present Government without this Repeal, is hard to say. IT

IT would particularly turn to a good account to *South Britain*. For so many Soldiers as now are so necessary to keep the Peace (the maintaining whom is what many complain of, as being expensive, and having a tendency to enslave us) would be no longer needful, when once the Fear of foreign Invaders is over, were but the Commission of the Peace, and our Corporations, in better hands,

North Britain also would be this way eas'd of some of its present Fears, and be brought to a better relish of Union with us.

Ireland would considerably find its Account in it. For whereas the Hands of a great body of that People, whose *Loyalty and Zeal* King *George* has lately declar'd himself *fully convinc'd of*, are in that Kingdom at present so tied up, that they are not able, upon supposition of a new Rebellion amongst them, to defend themselves, or assist their Protestant brethren (which they have never hitherto been backward to do) they, upon this Repeal, would not only be able to secure themselves, but also to keep the *Irish* under, and prevent their giving their Brethren any Disturbance or Uneasiness.

NOR would the American plantations be this way without Benefit. For this Repeal would help to lay that Spirit, which has been rais'd and fomented amongst those distant *British* Subjects, by the *Occasional Act*
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to the producing so much Mischief in some Parts, and particularly, in *Carolina*, as has been more than once complain'd of in Parliament.

BUT, on the other hand, let these Acts remain unrepeal'd, and I cannot see that any thing else can with Prudence and Safety be depended on, long to keep the Government on the present Foot.

Foreign Alliances are undoubtedly highly advantageous. They add to the Glory of our Sovereign, strike a Terror into our Enemies, and help to strengthen our Security; and yet they can't supply the place of repealing these Acts: For they can neither help us to a *Whig* Parliament, nor save us from a *Tory* Ministry; nor give that Accession of Strength to the Friends of King *George*, upon a sudden Emergency, that may be this way expedied.

THE Interest of *Low-Church*, consider'd as separate from the *Dissenters*, I take to be insufficient to secure the Government, *High-Church* and *Papists* joining together, with a foreign Force to back them, will bid fair for being too strong for them. And we have reason to be thankful, they did not prove so, in the late Struggle. Had the Rebellion broken out in the *West* at the same time as in the *North*, as was design'd; or had the Pretender come sooner into *Scotland*, or the Rebels at all stood their ground at *Dunblain*; or had they

they had the Courage, instead of surrendering, to have fought their way through at *Preston*; or had they but kept together, till those that stood on tip-toe to be with them had declar'd in their favour. I'm very inclinable to believe *Low-Church*, separately consider'd, had been aground, and must have call'd in Help from the *Dissenters*: nay they actually had it in some Parts without asking for it; and the Rebellion had been sooner quash'd, had they accepted more of it. But now 'tis plain to all that make any Observation, that a Spirit of implacable Rancour and Malignity hath appear'd among the Faction, since the Rebellion was suppress'd, rather more than before. So that upon the Arrival of any foreign Force, and a new Insurrection among our selves, 'tis highly probable, more will declare against the Government than hitherto; and so it may be overset, if the *Dissenters* are not allow'd to help to turn the Scale.

'Tis well known to Gentlemen to be the common talk of some, that as in the Time of King *James*, the Dissenters, with a few hair-brain'd Churchmen, made the first Essay under *Monmouth* to little purpose; but when the Body of the Church fell in, it did it with such a weight, that an *Abdication* and a *Revolution* soon follow'd: So also, that tho' the first Essay of the *Papists*, with a few hot-headed Church-

Churchmen, fail'd of success against the present Government, yet that at the next Attempt, when the Body of the Church falls in, (I suppose they mean Parson *Howel's* Church) we shall not fail of a new Revolution. And can it be Wisdom to run the Venture of this? Say that *Low-Church* might, exerting it self to the utmost, be able to secure the Government alone; yet why should they be unwilling to have an Additional Strength, with which they may do it better, and run less hazard? Let us suppose, that more, who are at present shrowded under the Name of the Church, should fail at a pinch, than was expected or imagin'd, will they not be asham'd to have ruin'd the Nation for a Fancy? Not that I apprehend the *Dissenters* would, in an Extremity, be backward to help to save their King and Country, tho' they did not do it exadly in Mood and Figure, and some usual Forms were wanting: I have a better Opinion of them, than to imagine it: And yet think it not very ingenuous in their Brethren, to abuse them for this their Generous Disposition, that they'll be ready to help at last. Their Help may come too late for the Publick Benefit. The *Dissenters* may do the Government ten times the Service now, that they could be capable of doing, if they are neglected till Things come to extremity. And must they after all be kept out

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upon a Pique of Honour? Will it be a sufficient Compensation to the Nation for its Ruin, for it to be said, that this was to prevent any Party but meer *Low-Church*, from having a Share in the Honour of saving it?

BUT after all, where is this *Low-Church* that is so powerful, to be found? And where lies its strength? *Oxford* is boasted of by *High-Church*, and their Carriage sufficiently speaks for them; the *Low-Church* must not pretend to much Interest there. Nor can *Low-Church* make any great boast of *Cambridge* neither, (tho' perhaps the better of the two) if Mr. Serjeant *Millar* has given the World a true Account of it. And if the Fountains are corrupted, what can we expect from the Streams? What must be said to the Cathedrals? Are they conspicuous for Loyalty and Zeal? If they were, how came the E. of *A.* to be chosen High-Steward of *Westminster*, in the room of his Brother the D. of *O.* by half the Dignitaries of the Abbey, with the Dean at their Head? Was not this an open Affront to the Government, instead of a Proof of an Inclination to support it? And were it not easy to name several, other Collegiate Churches besides, where one half of the Dignitaries, or more, may justly be suspected to be in an opposite Interest to that of King *George*, and his Family? Or does the great Interest of *Low-Church*, that the Government

vernment is to have all its dependance on, lie in the Gentry and Clergy, dispers'd all over the Kingdom? I am not at all inclin'd to lessen the number of true Lovers of their Country; I heartily wish them a great Encrease: But I think if we may make any Judgment as to these, from the little influence they have had to prevent Riots and Tumults; it would tempt a Man to fear, that a great part of them would add but little weight, upon supposition of a new Rebellion, unless it were on the wrong Side: nor can it be wonder'd at by any one that does but consider that the Notions of *Hereditary Right*, and *Lineal Succession*, have been generally suck'd in by them, as first Principles, in the Course of their Education. And if these Things are taken together, there appears but little Room left to imagine or expect that *Low-Church* should be able to do great Feats alone, while the *Dissenters* are excluded: But if they are taken together, and act in concert, they need not fear *High-Church* and *Papists*. This way *Low-Church* will not only be farther strengthen'd by the Addition of other Hands; but the very number of *Low-Church* Men will it self increase: Because many that attend at their Parish Churches, and no where else, will then, venture to own themselves to be *Low-Church*, tho' they are at present afraid, or asham'd to

acknowledge it, least they should be stigmatiz'd or expos'd.

PROVIDING for the Payment of the public Debts, and satisfying Parliamentary Securities, about which we have had so much Discourse of late, is certainly necessary to our Safety, and yet not capable of answering that End, if these Acts remain unrepeal'd. For we may be inslav'd and romaniz'd with Money in our Pockets, as well as in the Funds; tho' it will make us but a very poor amends: And it will be much better, to let the Government still keep our Money, at ever so low an Interest, when all Hands are employ'd to defend it, than for us to have it in our own keeping, and be pillag'd, and plunder'd, either by Foreigners or Fellow Subjects, for want of Hands enough to defend us.

No Man has a greater Opinion than I, of the Valour and Courage of our Soldiers and their Commanders, and next to the Providence of Almighty God, and the Prudence of King *George*, I expect most from them, in case of Invaders from abroad, or new Insurrections at home: And yet I cannot see, how we can depend even on them for our Security, should these Acts remain unrepeal'd. For the Genius of the Nation has ever been averse, from any considerable standing Force, any longer than it's absolutely necessary. 'Tis

so at the present; and therefore tho' there are some that would be willing enough to complain and murmur, yet the Body of the Nation is easy. But it cannot be expected, that it should be always so, or continue so long. Time will come, when a *British* Parliament will not fail of being for laying it down. And should that be done, before Corporations are fix'd in the Interest of the Government (which was one of the first Cares after the *Reformation*, and can hardly be too soon dispatch'd now) we may well dread the thoughts of the Confusion that would ensue. But let these Acts be repeal'd, and the Design of an Invasion once over, and a number of our standing Forces may be disbanded with Safety, and no ill Consequences to the Government need be apprehended.

THE Regulating our Universities is a farther Step I find most Gentlemen reckon necessary to the publick Safety; and I think the World is much oblig'd to Mr. *Millar* for the Proof he has given of it: But I cannot perceive it would secure us, unless these Acts are repeal'd. For should the very Methods which he proposes be taken, they must have time in which to operate. And before the seven Years he mentions were run out, we might be ruin'd for want of having all Hands employ'd by the Government in its Defence, when it is attack'd from all Quarters: And
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perhaps it may be more damag'd by the Assaults of pretended Friends, than of open Enemies.

BUT you intimate, 'tis said by some, that the Repeal of these Acts would now be *unseasonable*; and therefore it were better deferr'd. But why *unseasonable*? Can it ever be *unseasonable* to strengthen such a Government as ours, for which we have so much cause to be thankful, and which we could not have obtain'd without a train of as wonderful Steps of Divine Providence, as can be produc'd out of any History? Can it ever be *unseasonable* to support an Establishment, that gives us the Prospect of the Continuance and Security of our Religion, Liberty, and Property, and every thing that is valuable, when it is well known many are at work in contriving Ways and Methods to overthrow it? How can it be *unseasonable*, at a time when the Hands of all that are faithful are highly needful, to throw in an additional Strength to a Government, which, if it be but continu'd, gives us ground to hope, that we and our Posterity shall be as happy a People, as any in the World? If this be really a good Work, I can't see why we should defer putting it in Execution, which might have no small hazard attending it.

I have thought of the matter pretty closely, and cannot imagine how any Time could possibly

sibly be more *seasonable*, for the Repeal of these Acts, than now that we have those in considerable Posts in the Government, who did their utmost to prevent their passing into Acts, who cannot therefore be against repealing them, without declaring they have alter'd their Principles; which few Gentlemen, I conceive, will be very willing to do. What can be more *seasonable*, than now we are got through one Rebellion that was very ill concerted, and seem upon the Borders of another, concerted much better, with a more considerable foreign Force to back it, to fix things on such a bottom, as may most effectually tend to curb and restrain those, whose Inclination will lead 'em either to side in with the Invaders, or favour them all they can? What can be more *seasonable*, than now that we have a Parliament, that is to continue seven Years from its first assembling, to take the proper Method for securing another Parliament as much in the Interest of the Government as this, before that Time expires? And I must confess, I'm wholly at a loss to find anything that will so effectually do this, as the Repealing these Acts. Let this be now deferr'd, and I'm very apprehensive one of these two things will follow: Either we must run the hazard of a Tory Parliament, or the present Parliament must by a new Act be continu'd for a yet longer time; which may perhaps

haps be found to have its Difficulties, when it comes to the Tryal; and will be very likely to have this Effect among others, that it will make the Opposers of such a Continuation, the most popular Men in the Kingdom.

I have had occasion to observe, that when any thing has been mov'd for in favour of *Dissenters*, or even that Justice might be done them, it has been the common Evasion of Statesmen and Politicians to signify to them, that tho' it was but fit what was mention'd should be done, yet this was not the proper Season for it. This was the common way in King *Charles's* time, reviv'd in the Reign of King *William*, and continu'd in the Reigns of Queen *Anne*, and King *George*. But this Excuse has been so often repeated, that it is perfectly worn out; and is grown so stale and threadbare, that there's scarce a Man to be met with, that can be thereby impos'd on. Should any one (especially that eats King *George's* Bread) offer at this time of day, to say that this is no proper Season for so good and necessary a Work as this, of securing such a Government as ours, by all the additional Strength that can be given it, for fear of their being thrown into the Hands of the *Dissenters*, and their being too much favour'd, it will, by all Men, be understood to be in effect a declaring that nothing is ever to be done for them, since a properer Season cannot be assign'd.

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And they must be weaker than many People reckon 'em, after all the Jest's that have been spent upon them, if this don't satisfy them what they have to trust to.

BUT it seems this is a Step will create Division: And are we then to run the hazard of having the Government overthrown, for fear of Division? I take it to be capable of Proof which to a reasonable Man maybe as satisfactory as a Demonstration, That King *George* will gain by it, much more than he can possibly lose. For he cannot depend on any that can be lost, by his taking a Step that is so necessary as this, to his own and the publick Safety: And as for those whose Service he this way gains, having their Hearts before, and being *fully convinc'd of their Loyalty and Zeal*, he may not only depend on the utmost they can do for him in any Exigence; but they, in conjunction with *Low-Church*, will be in a Capacity of easily obviating all that others can do against him. So that if there be a Division, it tends to strengthen the Government, and not to weaken it; and therefore it cannot be blam'd by such as are hearty in its Interest.

BUT say that some may be this way disobligh'd: Is that a sufficient Argument against what is plainly for the Interest of the Government? Whenever you put it to the Tryal, it can be oppos'd but by two sorts of People:

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Either by such, as tho' they live; under the Protection of this Government, yet are desirous of a new Revolution; or such, as tho' they truly love the Government, are yet afraid that this will not do it Service, but create new Heats. If the former of these are disoblig'd, I take it to be so much the better; because 'tis a Proof that they are convinc'd this Method tends to cross their Designs. Which is a good Argument in favour of it. And if the latter should be a little disoblig'd for the present, their Love to the Government will keep it from going far; and their seeing their mistake afterwards, cannot but help to set them right. But whoever are disoblig'd, let Gentlemen judge, whether 'tis fit that the Fear of that, should discourage them from taking a Method that tends to keep the Body of the loyal Subjects of King *George*, from lying at the Mercy of such, as are in the Interest either of the Pretender, or of the King of *Sweden*; whether he be his Deputy, or his Rival: And also, whether it be more reasonable to gratify real Enemies, that appear in the disguise of Friends, to the disobliging Subjects of known and approv'd Loyalty and Zeal, or to gratify a number of real Friends and loyal Subjects, by putting 'em into a Capacity of curbing known Enemies: And methinks it's no hard matter to judge in so plain a Case.

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YOU tell me, you find an Argument will be drawn, from the Number and Strength of the *Tories*, who will be against this Repeal: But that, I confess, I take to be an excellent Argument for it. For if they are so strong and numerous, after they have had so much to weaken them, 'tis certainly high time to guard our selves against them, that we may not lie any more at their mercy. I can safely turn their own Words upon them in their celebrated *Memorial*, with a very little change. *If the Strength of the Tories is still so considerable, as to make it dangerous to prevoke them, by easing their Fellow-Subjects, of whose Loyalty and Zeal the Government is fully convinc'd; this is so far from being an Argument against the Repeal desir'd that it is a good Argument for it. For if their Interest is so formidable, as to make it hazardous to offend them, it is full time to venture their Displeasure, when there is such reason to dread their Power. And if they are not so terrible, as they would make the World believe they are, it is prudent to prevent their being so.*

ANOTHER Argument you intimate, is this: That it is but a small and inconsiderable Party that would be this way gratify'd. I suppose you mean, 'tis insinuated that the *Dissenters* are so; and I am not surpriz'd at the Suggestion. For I perceive these *Dissenters* are a sort of People that happen to be either for-

midable or contemptible, according as either of those Views best serve the Purposes of those who have declar'd themselves their Enemies. I have sometimes heard them represented as a Body of People, that were much to be dreaded, because of their Numbers, their Union, their concerted Measures, their Secresy, their having the trading Part of the Nation so much in their Interest, and their Steadiness to a Man to the present Government. I have in other Company heard the very same People run down, as very despicable for their Number and Interest, and so insignificant, as not to deserve any Regard. For my own part, I know them to be a considerable Body, take them together, and to have no small Influence in Elections of Members of Parliament, when they are united among themselves, and with *Low-Church*; and the Publick had the Benefit of it in K. *Charles's* Reign; and also in K. *George's* Their Interest in Corporations, and among the trading and monied Part of the Nation, is not despicable. And I am well satisfy'd, that let them but have tolerable Usage, and their Zeal for King *George* is such, that they will exert themselves, beyond what can be expected, in the Service of the Government. And as the Fear of this is the reason why some are so unwilling they should be freed from their incapacitating Clogs, so is the Hope of
it

it the true reason why many of their Fellow-Subjects, who value them not as *Dissenters*, and would like them much better, did they fall in with the National Establishment, are yet desirous they should be freed from their Shackles, that the Government may have the Benefit of their hearty and zealous Service. So that it is not the *Dissenters* barely that would be this way gratify'd, but the most hearty Friends of King *George*, and his Government, who are as different in their Principles and Temper from the *Dissenters*, as the *Dissenters* are from the Establish'd Church. And take these both together, and I hope no Man will refuse to allow them to pass for a very considerable Body.

To crown the whole, you tell me, you are apprehensive upon the Motion, there will be a Revival of the Cry of *the Danger of the Church*. But there is no great matter in that, as long as there can be no Danger in it to real Religion, about which they that cry out about *the Danger of the Church*, are commonly least concern'd. I hope the Magick of that Cry is almost worn out and spent. I am sure many Gentlemen, as well as your self, are of opinion, that unless these Acts are repeal'd, whatever becomes of the Church, the State will be in danger; and I should think, that might be allow'd an equal Concern for Self-reservation with the Church.

BUT

BUT if things are come to that pass, that the Church can never be safe and out of danger, till King *George* is dethron'd, and we have a new *Revolution*, I'll venture to say (be the Consequence what it will) 'tis no Church of God's appointing; it is a Church, for which no true Protestant can have any affection: It can be none but Parson *Paul's* and Parson *Howell's* Church: It has not the least footing in the Word of God: It must come to nothing, or else we must at once be Papists, Slaves, and Fools. And from such a Church, *Good Lord deliver us.*

THUS, in compliance with your Desire, I have with some freedom consider'd this Affair, in which I heartily wish you good Success; and am,

Honour'd Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

March 19,
1716-17,

D. E.