

## **James II and the Seven Bishops (Part II)**

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### **John Charles Ryle**

I come now to the closing scene in King James' disgraceful reign, the prosecution and trial of the Seven Bishops. The importance of that event is so great, and the consequences which resulted from it were so immense, that I must enter somewhat fully into its details. I do so the more willingly because attempts are sometimes made now-a-days to misrepresent this trial, to place the motives of the bishops in a wrong light, and to obscure the real issues which were at stake. Some men will do anything in these times to mystify the public mind, to pervert history, and to whitewash the Church of Rome. But I have made it my business to search up every authority I can find about this era. I have no doubt whatever where the truth lies. And I shall try to set before my readers the "thing as it is."

The origin of the trial of the Seven Bishops was a proclamation put forth by James II, on the 27th of April, 1688, called the "Declaration of Indulgence." It was a Declaration which differed little from one put forth on the April of 1687. But it was followed by an "Order of Council" that it was to be read on two successive Sundays, in divine service, by all the officiating ministers in all the churches and chapels of the kingdom. In London the reading was to take place on the 20th and 27th of May, and in other parts of England on the 3rd and 10th of June. The bishops were directed to distribute copies of the Declaration throughout their respective dioceses. The substance of the Declaration was short and simple. It suspended all penal laws against Nonconformists. It authorized both Roman Catholics and Protestant Dissenters to perform their worship publicly. It forbade the King's subjects, on pain of his displeasure, to molest any assembly. It abrogated all those Acts of Parliament which imposed any religious test as a qualification for any civil or military office. To us who live in the nineteenth century the Declaration may seem very reasonable and harmless. To the England of the seventeenth century it wore a very different aspect! Men knew the hand from which it came, and saw the latent intention. Under the specious plea of toleration and liberty, the object of the Declaration was to advance Popery and give license and free scope to the Church of Rome, and all its schemes for reconquering England.

This famous Declaration, we see at a glance, placed the bishops and clergy in a most awkward position. What were they to do? What was the path of duty? They were pinned on the horns of a dilemma. If they refused compliance to the King's wishes they would seem intolerant, illiberal, and unkind to the Nonconformists, as well as disloyal, disrespectful, and disobedient to their sovereign. If they yielded to the King's wishes, and read the Declaration, they would be assisting the propagation of Popery. The liberty James wanted them to proclaim was neither more nor less than indulgence to the Jesuits and the whole Church of Rome. In short, they found themselves between Scylla and Charybdis, and could not possibly avoid giving offence. Refusing to sanction the Declaration, they would certainly displease the King and perhaps irritate the Dissenters. Consenting to it, they would infallibly help the Pope. Never perhaps were English bishops and clergy placed in such a difficult and perplexing position!

God's ways, however, are not as man's ways, and light often arises out of darkness in quarters where it was not expected. At this critical juncture the Nonconformists, to their

eternal honour, came forward and cut the knot, and helped the bishops to a right decision. The shrewd sons of the good old Puritans saw clearly what James meant. They saw that under a specious pretence of liberty, he wanted a fulcrum for a lever which would turn England upside down, and destroy the work of the Reformation. Like the noble-minded Roman ambassador before Pyrrhus, they refused to be bribed just as they had formerly refused to be intimidated. They would have none of the Royal indulgence, if it could only be purchased at the expense of the nation's Protestantism. Baxter, and Bates, and Howe, and the great bulk of the London Nonconformists, entreated the clergy to stand firm, and not to yield one inch to the king. Young Defoe said to his Nonconformist brethren, "I had rather the Church of England should pull our clothes off by fines and forfeitures, than the Papists should fall both upon the Church and the Dissenters, and pull our skins off by fire and faggott." (C. Knight. History, iv. 419).

Oliver Heywood, a famous Nonconformist of the day, says distinctly in his account of the times, "though the Dissenters had liberty, we know it was not out of love to us, but for another purpose. We heard the king had said he was forced to grant liberty at present to those whom his soul abhorred." (Heywood's Works, i. 287).

The immediate result was that a meeting of the London clergy was held, and after much debate, in which Tillotson, Sherlock, Patrick, and Stillingfleet took part, it was decided that the "Order in Council" should not be obeyed. No one contributed to this result more than Dr Fowler, Vicar of St Giles, Cripplegate, a well-known Broad Churchman. While the matter yet hung in the balance and the final vote seemed doubtful, he rose and said:—

"I must be plain. The question to my mind is so simple, that argument can throw no new light on it, and can only beget heat. Let every man say Yes or No. But I cannot consent to be bound by the majority. I shall be sorry to cause a breach of unity. But this Declaration I cannot read."

This bold speech turned the scale. A resolution by which all present pledged themselves not to read the Declaration was drawn up, and was ultimately signed by eighty-five incumbents in London.

In the meantime the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Sancroft, showed himself not unequal to the emergency. He was naturally a cautious, quiet, and somewhat timid man, and the last person to be combative, and to quarrel with kings. Nevertheless he came out nobly and well, and rose to the occasion. As soon as the Order in Council appeared he summoned to Lambeth Palace those few bishops, divines, and laymen who happened to be in London and took counsel with them. It was resolved to resist the King, and to refuse to read the Declaration. The Primate then wrote to all the bishops on the English bench, on whom he could depend, and urged them to come up to London at once, and join him in a formal protest and petition. But time was short. There were no railways in those days. Journeying was slow work. Eighteen bishops, says Burnet ("Own Times," iii.266), agreed with Sancroft. But with the utmost exertion only six bishops could get to London in time to help the Primate. These six, with the Archbishop at their head, assembled at Lambeth on the 18th of May, only two days before the fatal Sunday, when the King's Declaration was to be read in London, and before night agreed on a petition or protest to which all affixed their names.

The names of the six bishops who signed this remarkable document, besides Sancroft, deserve to be known and remembered. They were as follows: Lloyd of St. Asaph, Turner of Ely, Lake of Chichester, Ken of Bath and Wells, White of Peterborough, and Sir Jonathan

Trelawney of Bristol. It is a curious fact that, with the single exception of Ken, the author of "Morning and Evening Hymns," not one of the seven men who signed the petition could be called a remarkable man in any way. Not one, besides Ken, has made any mark in the theological world, or lives as a writer or preacher. Not one of the whole seven could be named in the same breath with Parker, or Whitgift, or Grindal, or Jewel, or Andrews, or Hall. They were probably respectable worthy quiet old-fashioned High Churchmen; and that was all. But God loves to be glorified by using weak instruments. Whatever they were in other respects, they were of one mind in seeing the danger which threatened Protestantism, and in determination to stand by it to the death. It was not jealousy of Dissenters but dislike to Popery, be it remembered, which actuated their conduct and knit them together. (Ranke, iv. 346.) All honour be to them. They have supplied an unanswerable proof, that the real loyal honest old-fashioned High Churchmen disliked Popery as much as any school in the Church.

The famous petition which the seven bishops drew up and signed on this occasion is a curious document. It is short, and tame, and cautious, and somewhat clumsily composed. But the worthy composers, no doubt, were pressed for time, and had no leisure to polish their sentences. Moreover we know that they acted under the best advice and were careful not to say too much and give needless offence.

In substance (says Macaulay) nothing could be more skilfully framed. All disloyalty, all intolerance, were reverently disclaimed. The King was assured that the Church was still, as ever, faithful to the throne. He was also assured that the bishops, in proper time and place, would, as Lords of Parliament and Members of the Upper House of Convocation, show they were by no means wanting in tenderness for the conscientious scruples of Dissenters. The Parliament, both in the late and present reign, had pronounced that the sovereigns were not constitutionally competent to dispense with statutes in matters ecclesiastical. The Declaration was therefore illegal, and the Petitioners could not in prudence, honour, or conscience, be parties to the solemn publication of an illegal Declaration in the House of God, and during the time of Divine Service.

Pointless and tame as the Petition may seem to us, we must not allow ourselves to make any mistake as to the latent meaning of the document and the real object of the bishops in refusing to obey the King. We must do them justice. They were thoroughly convinced that the Declaration was intended to help Popery, and they were determined to make a stand and resist it. They had no ill-feeling towards Dissenters, and no desire to continue their disabilities. But they saw clearly that the whole cause of Protestantism was in jeopardy, and that, now or never, they must risk everything to defend it. Every historian of any worth acknowledges this, and it is vain to try to take any other view unless we are prepared to write history anew. A cloud of witnesses agree here. There is an overwhelming mass of evidence to prove that the real reason why the seven bishops resolved to oppose the King, was their determination to maintain the principles of the Reformation and to oppose any further movement towards Rome. In one word, the cause for which they boldly nailed their colours to the mast was the good old cause of Protestantism *versus* Popery. Every one, Churchman or Dissenter, knew *that* in 1688, and it is a grievous shame that anyone now should try to deny it. The denial can only be regarded as a symptom of ignorance or dishonesty.

It was quite late on Friday evening, May 18, when this Petition was finished and signed, and on Sunday morning, the 20<sup>th</sup> of May, the Royal Declaration had to be read in all the churches in London. There was therefore no time to be lost. Armed with their paper, six of the seven bishops (Sancroft being forbidden to come to Court) proceeded to Whitehall Palace, and had an interview with James II, at 10 o'clock at night. The King took the Petition, and read it with

mingled anger and amazement. He was both deeply displeased and astonished, and showed it. He never thought that English bishops would oppose his will. "I did not expect this," he said; "this is a standard of rebellion." In vain Trelawney fell on his knees, saying, "No Trelawney can be a rebel. Remember that my family has fought for the Crown." In vain Turner said, "We rebel! We are ready to die at your Majesty's feet." In vain Ken said, "I hope you will grant us that liberty of conscience which you grant to all mankind." It was all to no purpose. The King was thoroughly angry. "You are trumpeters of sedition," he exclaimed, "go to your dioceses and see that I am obeyed." "We have two duties to perform," said noble Ken, "our duty to God and our duty to your Majesty. We honour you: but we fear God." The interview ended, and the bishops retired from the royal presence, Ken's last words being "God's will be done."

Before the sun rose on Saturday morning, May 19, the Bishops' Petition was printed, as a broadsheet, and hawked through all the streets of London. By whom this was done is not known to this day: but the printer is said to have made a thousand pounds by it in a few hours. The excitement was immense throughout the metropolis, and when Sunday came, next day, the churches were thronged with expecting crowds, wondering what the clergy would do, and whether they would read the King's Declaration. They were not left long in doubt. Out of one hundred parish churches in the city and liberties of London, there were only four in which the Order in Council was obeyed, and in each case, as soon as the first words of the Declaration were uttered, the congregation rose as one man and left the Church. At Westminster Abbey the scene was long remembered by the boys of Westminster school. As soon as Bishop Spratt, who was then dean, a mean servile prelate, began to read the Declaration, the murmurs and noise of the people crowding out completely drowned his voice. He trembled so that men saw the paper shake in his hand; and long before he had done the Abbey was deserted by all but the choristers and the school. Timothy Hall, an infamous clergyman, who read the Declaration at St Matthew's, Friday Street, was rewarded by the King with the vacant Bishopric of Oxford. But he bought his mitre very dear. Not one Canon of Christ Church attended his installation, and not one graduate would come to him for ordination.

A fortnight passed away, and on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June the example of the London clergy was nobly followed in all parts of England. The Bishops of Norwich, Gloucester, Salisbury, Winchester, and Exeter, who were unable to reach London in time for the Lambeth Conference, had signed copies of the Petition, and, of course, refused to order obedience to the Declaration. The Bishop of Worcester declined to distribute it. In the great diocese of Chester, including all Lancashire, only three clergymen read it. In the huge diocese of Norwich, the stronghold of Protestantism, it was read in only four parishes out of twelve hundred. In short, it became evident that a spirit was awakened throughout the land which the Court had never expected, and that though the bishops and clergy might be broken, they would not bend. Whether the King could break them remained yet to be proved. On the evening of the 8<sup>th</sup> of June, all the seven bishops, in obedience to a summons from the King, appeared before him in Council at Whitehall. They went provided with the best legal advice and acted carefully upon it. They calmly refused to admit anything to criminate themselves, unless forced to do it by the King's express command. They were questioned and interrogated about the meaning of words in their Petition, but their answers were so guarded and judicious that the King gained nothing by the examination. They steadily held their ground, and would neither withdraw their Petition, nor confess they had done wrong, nor recede from their decision about the Declaration. At last they were informed that they would be prosecuted for libel in the Court of King's Bench, and refusing, by their lawyers' advice, to enter into recognizances for their

appearance, they were formally committed to the Tower. A warrant was made out, and a boat was ordered to take them down the river.

Their committal to the Tower was the means of calling out an enthusiastic expression of feeling in London, such as, perhaps, has never been equalled in the history of the metropolis. It was known from an early hour that the bishops were before the Council, and an anxious crowd had long waited round Whitehall to see what the result would be. But when the Londoners saw the seven aged prelates walking out of the palace under a guard of soldiers, and learned that they were going to prison (practically) in defence of English Protestantism, a scene of excitement ensued which almost baffles description. Hundreds crowded round them as they proceeded to Whitehall stairs, cheering them and expressing their sympathy. Many rushed into the mud and water up to their waists, blessing and asking their blessing. Scores of boats on the river full of people accompanied them down to the Tower with loud demonstrations of feeling. Even the very soldiers on guard in the Tower caught the infection and became zealous admirers of their prisoners. And when Sir E. Hales, the Popish governor, tried to check them, he was told by his subordinates that it was of no use, for his men “were all drinking the health of the bishops.”

The seven prelates were kept in the Tower for a week. Throughout that time the enthusiastic feeling of admiration for them flared higher and higher, and increased more and more every day. They were almost idolized as martyrs who had refused to truckle to a Popish tyrant, like Latimer and Ridley in Mary’s days. The Church of England at one bound rose cent. per cent. in public estimation. Episcopacy was never so popular as it was that week. Crowds of people, including many of the nobility, went to the Tower every day to pay their respects to the venerable prisoners. Among them a deputation of ten leading Nonconformist ministers went to express their sympathy, and when the King sent for four of them and upbraided them, they boldly replied that they “thought it a solemn duty to forget past quarrels and stand by the men who stood by the Protestant cause.” Even the Scotch Presbyterians were warmed and stirred in favour of the bishops, and sent messages of sympathy and encouragement. From every part of England came daily words of kindness and approbation. As for the men of Cornwall, they were so moved at the idea of their countryman, Trelawney, being in any danger, that a ballad was composed to suit the occasion, and sung over the county, of which the burden is still preserved.<sup>1</sup>

And shall Trelawney die? and shall Trelawney die?  
Then twenty thousand Cornish boys shall know the reason why.

Even the miners took up the song and sung it with a variation—

Then thirty thousand underground shall know the reason why.

A king of more common sense than James might well have been staggered by the astounding popularity of the seven episcopal prisoners, and would gladly have found some pretext for dropping further proceedings. But, unhappily for himself, he had not the wisdom to recede, and drove on furiously, like Jehu, and drove to his own destruction. He decided to go on with the prosecution. On the 15<sup>th</sup> of June the seven bishops were brought from the Tower to the Court of King’s Bench, and ordered to plead to the information laid against them. Of course, they pleaded “not guilty.” That day fortnight, the 29<sup>th</sup> of June, was fixed for their trial, and in the meantime they were allowed to be at liberty on their own recognizances. It was well for the Crown that they did not require bail. Twenty-one peers of the highest rank were ready to

give security, three for each defendant, and one of the richest Dissenters in the City had begged, as a special favour, that he might have the honour of being bail for Bishop Ken.

On leaving the Court, in order to go to their own lodgings, the bishops received almost as great an ovation as when they were sent to the Tower. The bells of many churches were set ringing, and many of the lower orders who knew nothing of the forms of law imagined that all was over, and the good cause had triumphed. But whether ignorantly or intelligently, such a crowd assembled round the prelates in Palace Yard, that they found it difficult to force their way through their friends and admirers. Nor could it be said for a moment that the people knew not wherefore they were come together. One common feeling actuated the whole mass, and that feeling was abhorrence of Popery and zeal for Protestantism. How deep that feeling was is evidenced by a simple anecdote supplied by Macaulay.

Cartwright, Bishop of Chester, a timid sycophant of the Court, was silly and curious enough to mingle with the crowd as his noble-minded brethren came out of the Court. Some person who saw his episcopal dress supposed he was one of the accused, and asked and received his blessing. A bystander cried out, "Do you know who blessed you?" "Surely," said the man, "it was one of the seven." "No!" said the other, "it was the Popish Bishop of Chester." At once the enraged Londoner roared out, "Popish dog, take your blessing back again."

At last, on the 29th of June, the ever-memorable trial of the seven bishops actually came off, and they were arraigned before a jury of their countrymen in the Court of King's Bench at Westminster. Such a crowd was probably never before or since seen in a court of law. Sixty peers according to Evelyn's diary, thirty-five according to Macaulay, sat near the four judges and testified their interest in the cause. Westminster Hall, Palace Yard, and all the streets adjoining, were filled with a multitude of people wound up to the highest pitch of anxious expectation. Into all the details of that well-fought day I cannot enter. How from morning till sunset the legal battle went on—how the Crown witnesses were cross-examined and worried—how triumphantly Somers, the fourth counsel of the bishops, showed that the alleged libel was neither false, nor libellous, nor seditious—how even the four judges were divided in opinion, and two of them went so far in their charge to the jury as to admit there was no libel—how the jury retired when it was dark to consider their verdict, and were shut up all night with the servants of the defendants sitting on the stairs to watch the doors and prevent roguery—how at length all the twelve jurymen were for acquittal except Arnold the King's brewer, and even he gave way when the biggest of the twelve said, "Look at me, I will stay here till I am no bigger than a tobacco pipe before I find the bishops guilty"—how at six in the morning the jury agreed, and at ten appeared in court, and by the mouth of their foreman, Sir Roger Langley, pronounced the bishops *Not Guilty*—how at the words coming out of his lips Lord Halifax waved his hat, and at least ten thousand persons outside the court raised such a shout that the roof of old Westminster Hall seemed to crack—how the people in the streets caught up the cheer and passed it on all over London—how many seemed beside themselves with joy, and some laughed and some wept—how guns were fired and bells rung, and horsemen galloped off in all directions to tell the news of a victory over Popery—how the jury could scarcely get out of the Hall and were forced to shake hands with hundreds crying out "God bless you, you have saved us all to-day"—how when night came bonfires were lighted and all London was illuminated and huge figures of the Pope were burnt in effigy—all, all these things are words of Lord Macaulay's pictorial History that I shall not attempt to depict them. To go over the field so graphically occupied by that mighty "master of sentences" would be as foolish as to gild refined gold or paint the lily. Suffice it to say that the great battle of Protestantism against Popery was fought at this trial, that a great victory

was won, and that to the prosecution and acquittal of the seven bishops James II owed the loss of his Crown.

For we must never forget that the consequences of the trial were enormously great, and that results flowed from it of which myriads never dreamed when they shouted and cheered on the 29th of June. Within twenty-four hours of the trial a letter left England for Holland, signed by seven leading Englishmen, inviting the Prince of Orange to come over with an army and overthrow the Stuart dynasty. The hour had come at last, and the man was wanted. Within four weeks of the trial Archbishop Sancroft, warmed and softened by the events of May and June, drew up a circular letter to all the bishops of the Church of England, which is one of the most remarkable letters ever penned by an Archbishop of Canterbury, and has never received the attention it deserves. In this letter he solemnly enjoined the bishops and clergy “to have a tender regard to our brethren the Protestant Dissenters, to visit them at their homes, to receive them kindly at their own, and to treat them fairly whenever they meet them.” Above all he charged them “to take all opportunities of assuring the Dissenters that the English bishops are really and sincerely irreconcilable enemies to the errors, superstitious, idolatries, and tyrannies of the Church of Rome.” And lastly he urged them “to exhort Dissenters to join with us in fervent prayer to the God of peace for the universal blessed union of all reformed churches both at home and abroad.” A wonderful pastoral that! Well would it have been for the Church of England if Lambeth had always held similar language and not cooled down and forgotten the Tower. Last, but not least, within six months of the bishops’ acquittal the Great Revolution took place, the Popish monarch lost his Crown and left England, and William and Mary were placed on the English throne. But before they were formally placed on the throne the famous “Declaration of Rights” was solemnly drawn up and signed by both Houses of Parliament. And what was the very first sentence of that Declaration? It is an assertion that “the late King James did endeavour to subvert and extirpate the Protestant religion—by assuming a power of dispensing with laws and by committing and prosecuting divers worthy prelates.” And what was the last sentence of the Declaration? It was the famous Oath of Supremacy, containing these words:—

“I do declare that no foreign prince, person, prelate, state, or potentate hath, or ought to have, jurisdiction, power, superiority, pre-eminence, or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm. So help me God.”

Such were the immediate consequences of the trial of the Seven Bishops. They are of unspeakable importance. They stand out to my eyes in the landscape of English history like Tabor in Palestine, and no Englishman ought ever to forget them. To the trial of the seven bishops we owe our second deliverance from Popery.

It remains for me to point out three practical lessons which appear to flow naturally out of the whole subject.

(a.) First and foremost, the reign of James II ought to teach a lesson *about English rulers and statesman*, whether Whig or Tory. That lesson is the duty of never allowing the Government of this great country to be placed again in the hands of a Papist.

If this lesson does not stand out plainly on the face of history, like the handwriting at Belshazzar’s feast, I am greatly mistaken. Unless we are men who having eyes see not, and having ears hear not, let us beware of Popish rulers. We know what they were in Queen Mary’s days. We tried them a second time under James II. If we love our country let us never

try them again. They cannot possibly be honest conscientious Papists if they do not labour incessantly to subvert English Protestantism, and turn everything upside down. I yield to no man in abhorrence of intolerance and religious persecution. I have not the slightest desire to put the clock back and revive such miserable disabilities as those of the Test and Corporation Acts. I am quite content with the Constitution as it is, and the laws which forbid the crown of England to be placed on the head of a Papist. But I hope we shall take care these laws are never repealed.

Some may think me an alarmist for saying such things. But I say plainly there is much in the outlook of the day to make a thinking man uncomfortable. I dislike the influence which men like Cardinal Manning are gradually getting among the upper classes. I dislike the growing disposition to make an idol of mere earnestness, to forget history, and to suppose that Rome has changed, and earnest Papists are as good as any Protestant. I dislike the modern principle, unknown to the good old Puritans, that States have nothing to do with religion, and that it matters not whether the sovereign is Protestant or Papist, Jew, Turk, Infidel, or Heretic. I see these things floating in the air. I confess they make me uncomfortable. I am sure we have need to stand on our guard, and to resolve that, God helping us, we will never allow the Pope to rule England again. If he does, we may depend upon it we shall have no more blessing from God. The offended God of the Bible will turn away His face from us, and we shall bid a long farewell to peace at home, influence abroad, comfort in our families, and national prosperity. Once more then, I say, let us move heaven and earth before we sanction a Popish prime minister or a Popish king. On the 28th of January, 1689, the House of Commons resolved unanimously "that it hath been found by experience inconsistent with the safety and welfare of this Protestant kingdom to be governed by a Popish prince." (Hallam, iii. 129.) I pray God that resolution may never be forgotten, and never be cancelled or expunged.

(b.) In the second place the reign of James II ought to teach us a lesson *about English Bishops and Clergy*. That lesson is the duty of never forgetting that the true strength of the Established Church lies in loyal faithfulness to Protestant principles and bold unflinching opposition to the Church of Rome.

Never was the Church of England so unpopular as in the days of Laud, and never so popular as in the days of the seven bishops. Never was the Church so hated by Nonconformists as she was when Laud tampered with Rome, never so much beloved by them as when the seven bishops went to prison rather than help the Pope. Why was it that when Laud was committed to the Tower few hands were held up in his favour and few said, "God bless him"? There is only one answer, men did not trust him, and thought him half a Papist. Why was it that, when Sancroft and his companions were taken to the Tower fifty years after, the heart of London was stirred and the whole metropolis rose up to do them honour? The answer again is simple. Men loved them and admired them because they stuck to Protestantism and opposed Rome.

(c.) In the last place, the reign of James II ought to teach a *lesson to all loyal Churchmen*. That lesson is the duty of using every reasonable and lawful means to resist the reintroduction of Romanism into the Church of England.

It is useless to deny that the times demand this, and that there is an organized conspiracy among us for Romanizing the Established Church of this country. Bishops see it and lament it in their charges. Statesmen see it and make no secret of it in public speeches. Dissenters see it and point the finger of scorn. Romanists see it and rejoice. Foreign nations see it and lift up their hands in amazement. Whether this disgraceful apostasy is to prosper and succeed or not

remains yet to be proved. But one thing, at any rate, is certain. This is no time to sit still, fold our arms, and go to sleep. The Church of England expects all her sons to do their duty, and much, under God, depends on the action of the laity.

It is false to say, as some of the advocates of Ritualism constantly say, that those who oppose them want to narrow the limits of the Church of England, and to make it the exclusive church of one party. I for one indignantly deny the charge. I have always allowed and do allow that our Church is largely comprehensive, and that there is room for honest High, honest Low, and honest Broad Churchmen within her pale. If any clergyman likes to preach in a surplice, or has the Lord's Supper weekly, or has Saints' day services, or daily matins and vespers, I have not the least wish to interfere with him, though I cannot see with his eyes. But I firmly maintain that the comprehensiveness of the Church has limits, and that those limits are the Thirty-Nine Articles and the Prayer-Book.

Controversy and religious strife no doubt are odious things; but these are times when they are a positive necessity. Unity and peace are very delightful, but they are bought too dear if they are bought at the expense of truth. There is a vast amount of maundering childish weak talk now-a-days in some quarters about unity and peace, which I cannot reconcile with the language of St. Paul. It is a pity, no doubt, that there should be so much controversy, but it is also a pity that human nature should be so bad as it is, and that the devil should be loose in the world. It was a pity that Arius taught error about Christ's person: but it would have been a greater pity if Athanasius had not opposed him. It was a pity Tetzal went about preaching up the Pope's indulgences: it would have been a far greater pity if Luther had not withstood him. Controversy, in fact, is one of the conditions under which truth in every age has to be defended and maintained, and it is nonsense to ignore it.

Of one thing I am very certain. Whether men will come forward or not to oppose the Romanizing movement of these days, if the Church of England cannot get rid of the revived Popish mass and the revived detestable confessional the people of this land will soon get rid of the Established Church of England. True to the mighty principles of the Reformation, our Church will stand and retain its hold on the affections of the country, and no weapon formed against us shall prosper. False to these principles, and readmitting Popery, she will certainly fall, and no amount of histrionic sensuous ceremonial will prevent her ruin. Like Ephesus which left her first love, like Thyatira which suffered Jezebel to teach, like Laodicea which became lukewarm, her candlestick will be taken away. The glory will depart from her. The pillar of cloud and fire will be removed. The best and most loyal of her children will forsake her in disgust, and, like an army whose soldiers have gone away, leaving nothing behind but officers and band, the Church will perish, miserably and unpitied but deservedly, for want of Churchmen.

## **J. C. LIVERPOOL.**

Endnotes:

- 1) The following is said to have been the ballad, but it is doubtful whether any part except the chorus is as old as 1688:—

A good sword and a trusty hand,

A merry heart and true;  
King James' men shall understand,  
What Cornish men can do!  
And have they fixed the where and when,  
And shall Trelawney die?  
Then twenty thousand Cornish men  
Will know the reason why.

Chorus.

And shall they scorn Tre, Pol, and Pen?  
And shall Trelawney die?  
Here's twenty thousand Cornish men  
Will know the reason why.

Outspake their Captain, brave and bold—  
A merry wight was he:  
“If London Tower were Michael's Hold,  
We'll set Trelawney free!  
We'll cross the Tamar land to land,  
The Severn is no stay,—  
All side by side and hand to hand,  
And who shall bid us nay?”

Chorus.

And shall they scorn, &c.