
It was the Heat of their Discontent, under the present Administration, which made their Zeal boil into these violent Ebulitions for those which were past and to come; but their Concern for the Advantages they had lately lost, was too great to suffer them to wait with Patience for a Re-instatement in another Reign, some Measures must be taken to regain a present Possession, and as there were no visible Hopes that her Majesty would, out of Choice, trust them, until they had given greater Signs of Amendment, they fell again upon their old undermining Methods of traducing and opposing the Government, and sowing Jealousies and Discontents to make the People uneasy with their Governors and them consequently uneasy in their Stations, that at length they might be tired or forced out, and the Queen necessitated to surrender the Power into their Hands.

To this End Weekly Scriblers were hired to retail Scandal, who erected themselves into a new Kind of Censorship under the Titles of *Observators* and *Reviews*, and by inventing Lies or travestyng, disguising and distorting the Truth, took all Opportunities of finding or making Faults in the publick Management.

These have always been their first Preliminaries to Mischief; the nest Step is to give out a Watch Word, to raise an Alarm and work up Discontents into Fears of present Danger, to excite the People under the Notion of their own Safety to oppose those who are set over them. It was necessary at this Time to rouse the Activity of all who were Friends to their Party, to exert their Endeavours in the Elections of Members for the ensuing Parliament, for without a Strength there, all their Engines will always recoil upon themselves; on a sudden therefore being disappointed of their old Thread-bare Topics, they open their Throats with a Cry of Persecution, by which, like that of Fire in the Stilness of the Night, these Thieves hop’d to put the honest Neighbourhood in Confusion, and then take the Advantage of it to work their own Ends.

But as there was not the least Smoak to be perceived to occasion this false Alarm, those who were acquainted with their Practices smelt a hot Smel of Knavery, which put them upon their Guard and made them think it their Duty to awake those who slept, and to point out the Quarter from whence they were really in Danger: This occasion’d the Publication of some Treatises, wherein the past and present Proceedings of the Dissenters, and those who join’d with them under the Notion of Moderate Churchmen, were freely censur’d and [he dangerous Tendency of them plainly laid open.

It is no Wonder that those on the other Side should endeavour to hush the People into an indolent Security, and tell them that all this was nothing but Priest-Craft, and how dangerous a Thing that was to Religion and Government: But the furious Manner in which they treated those Watchmen, who were so vigilant for the Safety of the Church, shew’d more Inclination to be active, than Fear of being passive in the Matter of Persecution; among whom a young Gentleman of Oxford, who then made his first Appearance in Print, had a large Earnest of those Favours which have since, by the Divine Providence, been turn’d to Ends so happy for the Nation and so contrary to the Intention of the Doners.
It was no small Disappointment to the Faction, that altho’ there had been no Want of Provocation, yet in all the Tracts publish’d against them, there was not one which touch’d upon the Toleration, or offered any Argument or Word against Ease and Indulgence to tender Consciences, upon which they could lay any Foundation for their pretended Fears, and perhaps the Temper of these moderate Men was warm’d to this immoderate Heat, as much for what was not said as for what was; they would much rather have seen every Page shine with the Blaze of Fire and Faggot, to have had every Line enrich’d with Fines and Forfeitures or furnish’d with Goals and Gibbets, which they would have esteemed at this Time as a great Happiness; but they had not languished long for those Comforts, before Care was taken to furnish them to their Hearts Content, in a Pamphlet, intituled, The Shortest Way with the Dissenters, wherein there was so much Truth charged upon that Party, that it pass’d currently as the Work of one of those they call’d High Church Men, (which villainous Distinction was raised about that Time to separate and destroy those, whom united they could not hurt;) and tho’ the pretended Heat and Earnestness of the Author to have the Dissenters treated according to their Deserts, was universally condemned by all Churchmen in general, yet it served the Purpose well enough to brand that whole Body with Blood-Thirstiness and a persecuting Spirit, till by the Diligence of the Government it appear’d that no Churchman had been so little a Christian, but that it was done by one of the Chief Scribes of the other Party, with a worse Design to halloo the Mob to make the World believe that the Dissenters Throats were to be cut the shortest Way, and to provoke those to begin first for their own Preservation, for which wicked Attempt the Author had his just Reward; but the Party were so little ashamed of it, that whenever it was objected against them it was only grinn’d off as a Piece of Wit and Management.

But tho’ at this Time their Plots prov’d addle in the South Parts of the Island, they had better Success in Scotland, on which they had built their greatest Hopes.