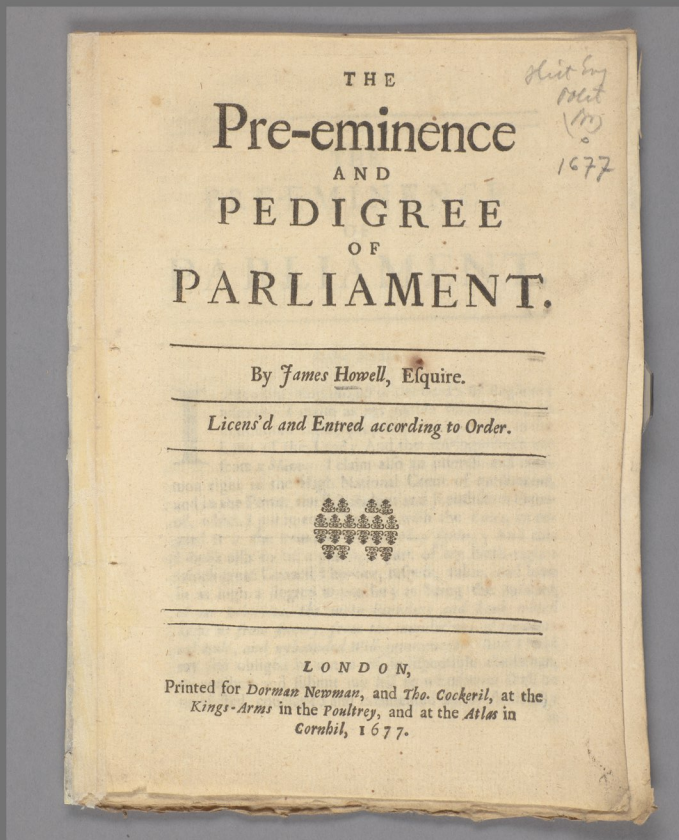


Howell, James

# The pre-eminence and pedigree of Parliament.



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THE  
Pre-eminence  
AND  
PEDIGREE  
OF  
PARLIAMENT.

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By James Howell, Esquire.

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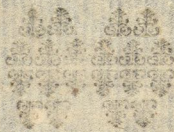
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Printed for Dorman Newman, and Tho. Cockeril, at the  
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L O N D O N

Printed for Robert Newman, and the Company, at the  
Right Hand in the Strand, and at the Bell in  
Court, 1677.

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THE  
PRE-EMINENCE  
OF  
PARLIAMENT.

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*Sectio Prima.*

**I** Am a free-born *Subject* of the Realm of *England*; whereby I claim as my native Inheritance, an undoubted right, propriety, and portion in the Laws of the Land; And this distinguisheth me from a *Slave*. I claim also an interest and common right in the High National Court of *Parliament*, and in the Power, the Priviledges and Jurisdiction thereof, which I put in equal balance with the *Laws*, in regard it is the *Fountain whence they spring*; And this I hold also to be a principal part of my Birth-right: which great Council I honour, respect, value, and love in as high a degree as can be; as being the *Bulwark of our Liberties, the main boundary and bank which keeps us from slavery, from the inundations of tyrannical Rule, and unbounded Will-government*. And I hold my self obliged in a tye of indispenfable obedience, to conform and submit my self to whatsoever shall be transacted, concluded and constituted by its Authority

in

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in Church or State; whether it be by making, enlarging, altering, diminishing, disannulling, repealing, or reviving of any Law, Statute, Act, or Ordinance whatsoever, either touching matters Ecclesiastical, Civil, Common, Capital, Criminal, Martial, Maritime, Municipal, or any other; of all which, the transcendent and uncontrollable Jurisdiction of that Court is capable to take cognizance.

Amongst the three things which the *Athenian* Captain thank'd the gods for, one was, That he was born a *Grecian*, and not a *Barbarian*. For such was the vanity of the *Greeks*, and after them, of the *Romans*, in the flourish of their Monarchy, to arrogate all civility to themselves, and to term all the world besides *Barbarians*: So I may say, to have cause to rejoyce, that I was born a vassal to the Crown of *England*; that I was born under so well moulded and tempered a Government, which endows the Subject with such Liberties and Infranchisements that bear up his natural courage, and keep him still in heart; such Liberties that fence and secure him eternally from the gripes and talions of *Tyranny*: And all this may be imputed to the Authority and Wisdom of this High Court of *Parliament*, wherein there is such a rare co-ordination of power (though the Sovereignty remain still entire, and untransferable in the person of the Prince) there is, I say, such a wholsom mixture 'twixt *Monarchy*, *Optimacy*, and *Democracy*; 'twixt Prince, Peers, and Commonalty, during the time of consultation, that of so many distinct parts, by a rare co-operation and unanimity, they make but one *Body Politick*, (like that Sheaf of Arrows in the Emblem) one entire concentrical piece; and the Results of their deliberations, but as so many harmonious diapasons arising from different strings. And what

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what greater immunity and happiness can there be to a People, than to be liable to no Laws but what they make themselves? To be subject to no Contribution, Assessment, or any pecuniar levy whatsoever, but what they Vote, and voluntarily yield unto themselves: For in this compacted *Politic Body*, there be all degrees of people represented; both the Mechanick, Tradesman, Merchant, and Yeoman, have their inclusive Vote, as well as the Gentry, in the persons of their Trustees, their Knights and Burgesses, in passing of all things. Nor is this Sovereign Surintendent Council an Epitome of this Kingdom only, but it may be said to have a representation of the whole Universe; as I heard a fluent well-worded *Knight* deliver the last *Parliament*, who compared the beautiful composure of that High Court, to the great Work of God, the World it self: The King is as the Sun, the Nobles the fixed Stars, the Itinerant Judges and other Officers (that go upon Messages 'twixt both Houses) to the Planets; the Clergy to the Element of fire; the Commons, to the solid *Body* of Earth, and the rest of the Elements. And to pursue this comparison a little farther; as the heavenly Bodies, when three of them meet in *Conjunction*, do use to produce some admirable effects in the Elementary World: So when these *three States* convene and assemble in one solemn great *Junta*, some notable and extraordinary things are brought forth, tending to the welfare of the whole Kingdom, our *Microcosm*.

**H**E that is never so little versed in the Annals of this Isle, will find that it hath been her fate to be four times *conquered*. I exclude the *Scot*; for the situation of his Countrey, and the quality of the Clime

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Climate, hath been such an advantage and security to him, that neither the *Roman Eagles* would flye thither for fear of Freezing their Wings; nor any other nation attempt the Work.

These so many Conquests must needs bring with them many tumblings and tossings, many disturbances and changes in Government; yet I have observed, that notwithstanding these tumblings, it retained still the form of a *Monarchy*, and something there was always that had Analogy with the great Assembly the *Parliament*.

The first Conquest I find was made by *Claudius Caesar*; at which time (as some well observe) the *Roman Ensigns*, and the *Standard of Christ* came in together. It is well known what Laws the *Roman* had; He had his *Comitia*, which bore a resemblance with our Convention in *Parliament*; the place of their meeting was called *Prætorium*, and the Laws which they enacted, *Plebescita*.

The *Saxon* Conquest succeeded next, which were the *English*, there being no name in *Welsh* or *Irish* for an *Englishman*, but *Saxon*, to this day. They governed by *Parliament*, though it were under other names; as *Michel Sinoth*, *Michel Gemote*, and *Witenage Mote*.

There are Records above a thousand years old, of these *Parliaments*, in the Reigns of King *Ina*, *Offa*, *Ethelbert*, and the rest of the seven Kings during the *Heptarchy*. the *British* Kings also, who retain'd a great while some part of the Isle unconquered, governed and made Laws by a kind of *Parliamentary* way; witness the famous Laws of Prince *Howel*, called *Howel Dha*, (the good Prince *Howel*) whereof there are yet extant some *Welsh* Records. *Parliaments* were also used

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used after the *Heptarchy* by King *Kenulphus*, *Alfred*, and others; witness that renowned *Parliament* held at *Grately* by King *Athelstan*.

The third Conquest was by the *Danes*, and they govern'd also by such general Assemblies, (as they do to this day) witness that great and so much celebrated *Parliament* held by that mighty Monarch *Canutus*, who was King of *England*, *Denmark*, *Norway*, and other Regions, 150 years before the compiling of *Magna Charta*; and this the learned in the Laws do hold to be one of the special't, and most authentick pieces of Antiquity we have extant. *Edward* the Confessor made all his Laws thus, (and he was a great *Legislator*), which the *Norman* Conqueror (who liking none of his Sons, made God Almighty his heir, bequeathing unto him this Island for a Legacy) did ratifie and establish, and digested them into one entire methodical System, which being violated by *Rufus*, (who came to such a disastrous end, as to be shot to death in lieu of a *Buck* for his sacriledges) were restor'd by *Henry* the first, and so they continued in force till King *John*, whose Reign is renowned for first confirming *Magna Charta*, the foundation of our Liberties ever since: Which may be compar'd to divers *Outlandish* *Graffs* set upon our *English* *stock*; or to a *Poste* of sundry *fragrant* *flowers*; for the choicest of the *British*, the *Roman*, *Saxon*, *Danish*, and *Norman* Laws, being cull'd and pick'd out, and gathered as it were into one bundle, out of them the foresaid *Grand Charter* was extracted: And the establishment of this great Charter was the work of a *Parliament*.

Nor are the Laws of *this* *Island* only, and the freedom of the Subject, conferved by *Parliament*; but all the best policed *Countreys* of *Europe* have the like.

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The *Germans* have their *Diets*, the *Danes* and *Swedes* their *Riicks Dachs*; the *Spaniard* calls his *Parliament*, *Las Cortes*, and the *French* have (or should have at least) their *Assembly of three States*, though it be grown now in a manner obsolete, because the Authority thereof was (by accident) devolv'd to the *King*. And very remarkable it is, how this happened; for when the *English* had taken such large footing in most parts of *France*, having advanced as far as *Orleans*, and driven their then King *Charles* the seventh to *Bourges* in *Berry*; the *Assembly of the three States* in these pressures, being not able to meet after the usual manner in full *Parliament*, because the *Countrey* was unpassable, the enemy having made such firm invasions up and down through the very bowels of the *Kingdom*; that power which formerly was inherent in the *Parliamentary Assembly*, of making *Laws*, of assessing the *Subject* with *Taxes*, subsidiary levies, and other impositions, was transmitted to the *King* during the *War*; which continuing many years, that intrusted power by length of time grew as it were habitual in him, and could never after be re-assumed and taken from him; so that ever since, his *Edicts* countervail *Acts* of *Parliament*: And that which made the business more feasible for the *King*, was, that the burthen fell most upon the *Commualty*, (the *Clergy* and *Nobility* not feeling the weight of it) who were willing to see the *Peasant* pull'd down a little, because not many years before in that notable Rebellion, call'd *La Jaquerie, de Beauvoisin*, which was suppressed by *Charles* the *Wise*; the common people put themselves boldly in *Arms* against the *Nobility* and *Gentry*, to lessen their power. Add hereunto as an advantage to the work, that the next succeeding King *Lewis the Eleventh*,  
was

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was a close cunning Prince, and could well tell how to play his game, and draw water to his own Mill; For amongst all the rest, he was said to be the first that put the Kings of *France*, *hors de page*, out of their minority, or from being *Pages* any more, though thereby he brought the poor *Peasants* to be worse than *Lacques*.

With the fall, or at least the discountenance of that usual *Parliamentary Assembly* of the *three States*, the liberty of the *French Nation* utterly fell; the poor *Roturier* and *Vineyard-man*, with the rest of the *Yeomanry*, being reduced ever since to such an abject *asinin* condition, that they serve but as *sponges* for the *King* to squeeze when he list. Nevertheless, as that *King* hath an advantage hereby one way, to *Monarchize* more absolutely, and never to want money, but to ballast his *Purse* when he will: so there is another mighty inconvenience ariseth to him and his whole *Kingdom* another way; for this illegal peeling of the poor *Peasant* hath so dejected him, and cowed his native courage so much by the sense of poverty (*which brings along with it a narrowness of soul*) that he is little useful for the *War*: which puts the *French King* to make other *Nations* mercenary to him, to fill up his *Infantry*; Insomuch, that the *Kingdom of France* may be not unfitly compared to a body that hath all its blood drawn up into the *Arms*, *Breast* and *Back*, and scarce any left from the *Girdle* downwards, to cherish and bear up the lower parts, and keep them from starving.

All this seriously considered, there cannot be a more proper and pregnant example than this of our *next Neighbours*, to prove how infinitely necessary the *Parliament* is, to assert, to prop up, and preserve the *Publick Liberty*,

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berty, and National Rights of a people, with the incolumity and welfare of a Countrey.

Nor doth the *subject* only reap benefit thus by *Parliament*, but the *Prince* (if it be well consider'd) hath equal advantage thereby; It rendreth him a King of *free* and *able* men, which is far more glorious than to be a King of *Slaves*, *Beggars*, and *Bankrupts*; Men that by their freedom, and competency of wealth, are kept still in heart to do him service against any forrain force. And it is a true maxime in all States, that 'tis less danger and dishonour for the Prince to be poor, than his people: Rich Subjects can make their King rich when they please; if he gain their hearts, he will quickly get their purses. *Parliament* increaseth love and good intelligence 'twixt him and his people; it acquaints him with the reality of things, and with the true state and diseases of his Kidgdom; it brings him to the knowledg of his better sort of Subjects, and of their abilities, which he may employ accordingly upon all occasions; it provides for his Royal Issue, pays his debts, finds means to fill his Coffers: and it is no ill observation, The *Parliamentary-moneys* (the *great Aid*) have prospered best with the Kings of *England*; it exceedingly raiseth his repute abroad, and enableth him to keep his *foes in fear*, his *Subjects in awe*, his *Neighbours and Confederates in security*, the three main things which go to aggrandize a Prince, and render him glorious. In sum, it is the *Parliament* that supports, and bears up the honour of his Crown, and settles his Throne in safety, which is the chief end of all their consultations: For whosoever is entrusted to be a Member of this High Court, carrieth with him a double capacity; he sits there as a *Patriot*, and as a *Subject*: As he is the one, the Countrey is his object, his duty being

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to vindicate the Publick Liberty, to make wholesome Laws, to put his hand to the pump, and stop the leaks of the great Vessel of the State; to pry into, and punish corruption and oppression; to improve and advance Trade; to have the grievances of the place he serves for redressed, and cast about how to find something that may tend to the advantage of it.

But he must not forget that he sits there also as a *Subject*, and according to that capacity, he must apply himself to do his *Sovereigns* business, to provide not only for his *publick*, but his *personal* wants; to bear up the luster and glory of his *Court*; to consider what occasions of extraordinary expences he may have, by encrease of Royal Issue, or maintenance of any of them abroad; to enable him to vindicate any affront or indignity that might be offered to his Person, Crown, or Dignity, by any *Foreign State* or Kingdom; to consult what may enlarge his *honour*, *contentment*, and *pleasure*. And as the *French Tacitus* (*Comines*) hath it, The *English Nation* was used to be more forward and zealous in this particular than any other; according to that ancient eloquent speech of a great *Lawyer*, *Domus Regis vigilia defendit omnium, otium illius labor omnium, deliciae illius industria omnium, vacatio illius occupatio omnium, salus illius periculum omnium, honor illius objectum omnium*. Every one should stand Centinel to defend the Kings Houses; his *safety* should be the danger of all, his *pleasures* the industry of all, his *ease* should be the labour of all, his *honour* the object of all.

Out of these premisses this Conclusion may be easily deduced, that, *The principal Fountain whence the King derives his happiness and safety, is his Parliament*; It is that great Conduit-Pipe which conveighs unto him  
his

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his peoples bounty and gratitude ; the truest Looking-Glass wherein he discerns their loves ; now *the Subjects love hath been always accounted the prime Cittadel of a Prince.* In his *Parliament* he appears as the Sun in the Meridian, in the altitude of his glory, *in his highest State Royal,* as the Law tells us.

Therefore whosoever is averse or disaffected to this Sovereign Law-making Court, cannot have his heart well planted within him : He can be neither good *Subject,* nor good *Patriot* ; and therefore unworthy to breathe *English* air, or have any benefit, advantage, or protection from the Laws.

*Sectio Secundo.*

**B**Y that which hath been spoken, *which is the language of my heart,* I hope no indifferent Judicious Reader will doubt of the cordial affection, of the high respects and due reverence I bear to *Parliament,* as being the wholsomest constitution, (and done by the highest and happiest reach of policy) that ever was established in this *Island,* to perpetuate the happiness thereof : Therefore I must tell that *Gentleman,* who was Author of a Book entituled, *The Popish Royal Favourite,* (lately Printed and exposed to the world) that he offers me very hard measure ; nay, he doth me apparant wrong, to term me therein, *No friend to Parliament, and a Malignant ;* A character, which as I *deserve* it not, so I *disclaim* it.

For the first part of his charge, I would have him know, that I am as much a *friend,* and as real an *affectionate humble servant and votary* to the *Parliament,* as possibly he can be ; and will live and die with these affections about me : And I could wish, that he were Secretary of my thoughts a while ; or if I may take the boldness  
to

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to apply that comparison His late Majesty used in a famous speech to one of his *Parliaments*, I could wish there were a Crystal Window in my Brest, through which the World might espy the inward motions and palpitations of my heart; then would he be certified of the sincerity of this Protestation.

For the second part of his charge, to be a *Malignant*, I must confess to have some *Malignity* that lurks within me, much against my will; but it is no *malignity* of *mind*, it is amongst the *humours*, not in my *intellectuals*. And I believe, there is no natural man, let him have his *humours* never so well balanced, but hath some of this *malignity* reigning within him; For as long as we are composed of the four *Elements*, whence these *humors* are derived, and with whom they symbolize in qualities; which *Elements* the Philosophers hold to be in a restless contention amongst themselves (and the Stoick thought that the world subsisted by this innated mutual strife); as long, I say, as the four *humors*, in imitation of their principles (the *Elements*) are in perpetual reluctance, and combat for prædominancy, there must be some *malignity* lodg'd within us, as adusted choler, and the like; whereof I had late experience, in a dangerous fit of sickness it pleased God to lay upon me, which the Physicians told me proceeded from the *malignant* hypochondriacal effects of *Melancholy*; having been so long in this *Saturnine* black condition of close imprisonment, and buried alive between the Walls of this fatal *Fleet*. These kinds of *malignities*, I confess are very rife in me, and they are not only incident, but connatural to every man according to his complexion: And were it not for this incessant struggling and enmity amongst the *humors* for mastery, which produceth such *malignant* effects in us, our souls would be loth ever to depart from our bodies, or to abandon this mansion of clay. Now

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Now what *malignity* my *Accuser* means, I know not; if he means *malignity of spirit*, as some antipathy or ill impression upon the mind, arising from disaffection, hatred, or rancor, with a desire of some destructive revenge, he is mightily deceiv'd in me; I *malign* or hate no Creature that ever God made, but the *Devil*, who is the Author of all *malignity*; and therefore is most commonly called in French, *le Malin Asprit*, the *malignant spirit*. Every night before I go to bed, I have the grace, I thank God for it, to forgive all the world, and not to harbour, or let roost in my bosom the least *malignant* thought; yet none can deny, but the aspersions which this my *Accuser* casts upon me, were enough to make me a *malignant* towards him; yet it could never have the power to do it: For I have prevail'd with my self to forgive him this his wrong censure of me, issuing rather from his *not-knowledg* of me, than from *malice*; for we never mingled speech, or saw one another in our lives, to my remembrance: which makes me wonder the more, that a Professor of the *Law*, as he is, should pronounce such a positive sentence against me so slightly. But methinks I over-hear him say, That the precedent discourse of Parliament is involv'd in Generals; and the Tropick Axiome tells us, that *Dolus versatur in universalibus*, there is double dealing in Universals: His meaning is, that I am no friend to this present Parliament, (though he speaks in the Plural number Parliaments) and consequently, he concludes me a *Malignant*: Therein, I must tell him also, that I am traduc'd, and I am confident it will be never prov'd against me, from any *actions, words, or letters*, (though divers of mine have been intercepted) or any other misdemeanor, though some things are father'd upon me which never dropt from my quill. Alas, how unworthy and uncapable am I to censure the proceedings

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ceedings of that great *Senate*, that high *Synedrion*, wherein the wisdom of the whole State is epitomized? It were a presumption in me, of the highest nature that could be: It is enough for me to pray for the prosperous success of their consultations: And as I hold it my *duty*, so I have good *reason* so to do, in regard I am to have my share in the happiness; And could the utmost of my poor endeavours, by any ministerial humble office (and sometimes the meanest *Boat swain* may help to preserve the Ship from sinking) be so happy, as to contribute any thing to advance that great work (which I am in despair to do, while I am thus under *Hatches* in this *Fleet*), I would esteem it the greatest honour that possibly could befall me; as I hold it now to be my greatest disaster, to have fallen so heavily under an affliction of this nature, & to be made a sacrifice to *publick fame*, than which there is no other proof, nor *that* yet urg'd against me, or any thing else produc'd after so long, so long captivity, which hath brought me to such a low ebb, and put me so far behind in the course of my poor fortunes, and indeed more than half undone me. For although my whole life (since I was left to my self to *swim*, as they say, *without bladders*) has been nothing else but a continued succession of crosses, and that there are but few red letters found (God wot) in the Almanack of my Age (for which I account not my self a whit the less *happy*); yet This cross has carried with it a greater weight, it hath been of a larger extent, longer continuance, and lighted heavier upon me than any other; and as I have *present patience* to bear it, so I hope for *subsequent grace* to make use of it accordingly, that my old Motto may be still confirmed, *παθήματα μαθήματα*.

HE produceth my attestation for some passages in *Spain*, at His Majesties being there; and he quotes

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me right, which obligeth me to him: And I hope all his quotations, wherein he is so extraordinarily copious and elaborate in all his works, are so; yet I must tell him, that those interchangeable Letters which passed between His Majesty and the *Pope*, which were originally couch'd in *Latin*, the language wherein all Nations treat with *Rome*, and the *Empire* with all the Princes thereof; those Letters, I say, are adulterated in many places, which I impute not to him, but to the *French Chronicler*, from whom he took them in trust. The truth of that business is this; The world knows there was a tedious treaty of an Alliance 'twixt the Infanta *Dona Maria* (who now is *Empress*) and His Majesty, which in regard of the slow affected pace of the *Spaniard*, lasted about ten years, as that in *Henry* the seventh's time, 'twixt Prince *Arthur* and (afterwards) Queen *Katharine*, was spun out above *seven*: To quicken, or rather to consummate the work; His Majesty made that adventurous journey through the whole Continent of *France*, into *Spain*; which voyage, though there was a great deal of gallantry in it, (whereof all posterity will ring, until it turn at last to a *Romance*) yet it prov'd the bane of the business, which 'tis not the Errand of so poor a Pamphlet as this to unfold. His Majesty being there arriv'd, the ignorant common people cryed out, the *Prince* of *Wales* came thither to make himself a Christian. The *Pope* writ to the *Inquisitor General*, and others, to use all industry they could to reduce him to the *Roman* Religion; And one of *Olivares* first complements to him, was, *That he doubted not but that His Highness came thither to change his Religion*: whereunto he made a short answer, *That He came not thither for a Religion, but for a Wife*. There were extraordinary processions made, and other artifices us'd by protraction of things, to make him stay there of purpose  
till

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till the Spring following, to work upon him the better: And the *Infanta* her self desir'd him (which was esteem'd the greatest favour he received from her all the while) to visit the *Nun of Carion*; hoping that the said Nun, who was so much cryed up for miracles, might have wrought one upon him; but her Art failed her: nor was His Highness so weak a subject to work upon, according to His late Majesties speech to Doctor *Mawe* and *Wren*: who when they came to kiss his hands, before they went to *Spain* to attend the Prince their Master, He wished them to have a care of Buckingham; as touching his Son *Charles*, he apprehended no fear at all of him; for he knew him to be so well grounded a Protestant, that nothing could shake him in his Religion. The *Arabian Proverb* is, That the Sun never soils in his passage, though his beams reverberate never so strongly, and dwell never so long upon the Myry lake of *Maotis*, the black Turf'd Moors of *Holland*, the *Aguish Woose* of *Kent* and *Essex*, or any other place, be it never so dirty: Though *Spain* be a hot Countrey, yet one may pass and repass through the very Center of it, and never be Sun-burnt, if he carry with him a *Bongrace*, and such a one His Majesty had.

Well, after His Majesties arrival to *Madrid*, the treaty of Marriage went on still (though he told them at his first coming, that he came not thither like an *Ambassadour*, to treat of Marriage; but as a *Prince*, to fetch home a Wife); and in regard they were of different Religions, it could not be done without a dispensation from the *Pope*, and the *Pope* would grant none, unless some *Capitulations* were stipulated in favour of the *Romish Catholicks* in *England* (the same in substance were agreed on with *France*). Well, when the dispensation came, which was negotiated solely by the

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King of *Spains* Ministers ; because His Majesty would have as little to do as might be with *Rome*, Pope *Gregory* the fifteenth, who died a little after, sent His Majesty a Letter, which was delivered by the *Nuncio*, whereof an answer was sent a while after : Which Letters were imprinted and exposed to the view of the world, because His Majesty would not have people whisper, that the business was carried in a clandestine manner. And truly, besides this, I do not know of any Letter, or Message, or Complement, that ever pass'd 'twixt His Majesty and the *Pope*, afore or after ; some addressees peradventure might be made to the Cardinals, to whom the drawing of those Matrimonial dispatches was referred, to quicken the work ; but this was only by way of civil Negotiation.

Now touching that *responsory* Letter from His Majesty, it was no other than a Complement in the severest interpretation ; and such formalities pass 'twixt the Crown of *England* and the great *Turk*, and divers Heathen Princes. The *Pope* writ first, and no man can deny, but by all Moral rules, and in common humane civility, His Majesty was bound to answer it, specially considering how punctual they are in those Countries to correspond in this kind, how exact they are in repairing visits, and the performance of such Ceremonies : And had this compliance been omitted, it might have made very ill impressions, as the posture of things stood then ; for it had prejudiced the great work in hand, I mean the *Match*, which was then in the heat and height of agitation : His Majesties person was there engag'd, and so it was no time to give the least offence. They that are never so little vers'd in business abroad, do know that there must be addressees, compliances, and formalities of this nature (according to the *Italian* Proverb, *That one must*  
some-

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*sometimes light a candle to the Devil*) us'd in the carriage of matters of State, as this great business was, whereon the eyes of all Christendom were so greedily fixt; a business which was like to bring with it such an universal good, as the restitution of the *Palatinate*, the quenching of those hideous fires in *Germany*, and the establishing of a peace through all the Christian World.

I hope none will take offence, that in this particular which comes within the compass of my knowledg, being upon the Stage when this Scene was acted, I do this right to the *King* my Master, in displaying the *Truth*, and putting her forth in her own colours: a rare thing in these days.

**T**ouching the *Vocal Forest*, an Allegorical Discourse, that goes abroad under my name, a good while before the beginning of this *Parliament*, which this *Gentleman* cites (and that very faithfully) I understand there be some that mutter at certain passages therein, by putting ill glosses upon the Text, and taking with the left hand, what I offer with the right: (Nor is it a wonder for Trees which lie open, and stand exposed to all weathers, to be nipt) But I desire this favour, which in common justice I am sure in the Court of *Chancery* cannot be denied me, it being the priviledg of every Author, and a received maxim through the World, *Cujus est condere, ejus est interpretari*; I say, I crave this favour, to have leave to expound my own Text, and I doubt not then but to rectifie any one in his opinion of me, and that in lieu of the *Plumbs* which I give him from those Trees, he will not throw the stones at me.

Moreover, I desire those that are over-critical Censurers of that Piece, to know, that as in Divinity it is a rule, *Scriptura parabolica non est argumentativa*; so it is

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## The Pre-eminence of Parliament.

in all other kind (of knowledg. *Parables* (whereof that Discourse is composed) though pressed never so hard, prove nothing. There is another Rule also, That *Parables* must be gently used, like a Nurses Breast; which if you press too hard, you shall have blood instead of milk. visu

But as the Author of the *Vocal Forest* thinks he hath done neither his Country, nor the Commonwealth of Learning any prejudice thereby (That maiden fancy having received so good entertainment and respect abroad, as to be translated into divers Languages, and to gain the publick approbation of some famous Universities); So he makes this humble protest unto all the World, that though the design of that Discourse was partly *Satyrical* (which peradventure induc'd the Author to shrowd it of purpose under the shadows of *Trees*, and where should Satyrs be, but amongst Trees?) yet it never entered into his imagination to let fall from him the least thing that might give any offence to the High and Honourable Court of *Parliament*, whereof he had the honour to be once a Member, and hopes he may be thought worthy again: And were he guilty of such an offence, or *piacle* rather, he thinks he should never forgive himself, though he were appointed his own Judg. If there occur any passage therein, that may admit a hard construction, let the Reader observe, That the Author doth not positively assert, or pass a judgment on any thing in that Discourse which consists principally of concise, cursory narrations, of the choicest Occurrences and Criticisms of State, according as the pulse of time did beat then: And matters of State, as all other sublunary things, are subject to alterations, contingencies and change, which makes the opinions and minds of men vary accordingly; not one amongst twenty is the same man to day as he was four years ago, in point of judgment,

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ment, which turns and alters according to the circumstance and success of things : And it is a true saying, whereof we find common experience, *Posterior dies est prioris Magister*. The day following is the former days School-master. There's another Aphorism, *The wisdom of one day is foolishness to another*, and 'twill be so as long as there is a man left in the World.

I will conclude with this modest request to that *Gentleman of the long Robe*; That having unpassionately perus'd what I have written in this small *Discourse*, in penning whereof my *Conscience* guided my *quill* all along as well as my *hand*, he would please to be so charitable and just, as to reverse that harsh sentence upon me, *To be no Friend to Parliaments, and a Malignant*.

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The Remembrance of Parliament

ment, which turns and alters according to the circum-  
stances and success of things: And it is a true  
saying, wherof we find common experience, Posterior  
dies off prioris Anterior. The day following is the for-  
mer days school-maister. There's another Aphorism the  
wisdom of one day is foolishness to another, and will be  
so as long as there is a man left in the World.

I will conclude with this modest request to that Gen-  
tlemen of the long Robes; That having unpassionately per-  
us'd what I have written in this small Discourse, in pen-  
ning wherof my Conscience guided my pen all along as  
well as my hand, he would please to be so charitable  
and just, as to reverse that harsh sentence upon me, To  
be no Friend to Parliaments, and a Disloyal.

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