

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF PROTESTANT ASSOCIATIONS.

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At the present time, when Protestant Associations are, we trust with the blessing of God, being multiplied in our land, a short sketch of those which have been formed at several periods of our history, and of the circumstances which occasioned their formation, may be useful and interesting. It will be found that they have varied in their features according to the emergencies which called them into existence, and that the success with which their efforts were attended has been various; and from a view of them we may learn a varied lesson of warning, instruction, and encouragement.

The first association having a Protestant character was formed in 1584, the 27th year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth. It was called into existence by the various plots against the Queen, which were commenced, and carried on through the instigation and agency of the seminary priests,¹ and under the authority of the bull of Pope Pius V, 1569, affecting to depose her from the throne of England, and absolve her subjects from their allegiance. Robertson² writes: "In order to discourage the adherents of Mary Queen of Scots, it was thought necessary to convince them by some public deed, of the attachment of the English to their own Sovereign, and that any attempt against her life would prove fatal to her rival;" and he adds on the authority of Camden,³ that "persons of all ranks subscribed this combination with the greatest eagerness and unanimity." It was also confirmed by Act of Parliament, 27 Eliz. c. 1. The instrument or writing of Association, which the Protestants of England entered into "in obedience and defence of the Queen and against those who attempt anything that shall tend to the harm of Her Majesty's royal person, and against all pretenders to the throne," is to be found in Lord Somers' Tracts, vol. i. p. 151;⁴ and is in the following terms:

"Forasmuch as Almighty God hath ordained Kings, Queens, and Princes, to have dominion and rule over all their subjects, and to preserve them in the possession and observation of the true Christian religion, according to his holy word and commandment; and in like sort, that all subjects should love, fear, and obey their Sovereign Princes, being Kings or Queens, to the utmost of their power; at all times to withstand, pursue, and suppress all manner of persons that shall by any means intend and attempt any thing dangerous or hurtful to the honour, states, or persons of their Sovereigns:

"Therefore, we whose names are or shall be subscribed to this writing, being natural born subjects of this Realm of England, and having so gracious a Lady, our Sovereign Elizabeth, by the ordinance of God, our most rightful Queen, reigning over us these many years with great felicity to our inestimable comfort: and finding lately by divers depositions, confessions, and sundry advertisements out of foreign parts from credible persons, well known to her Majesty's council and to divers others; that for the furtherance and advancement of some pretended title to the crown, it hath been manifested that the life of our gracious Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth, hath been most dangerously exposed to the peril of her person, if Almighty God, her perpetual Defender, of his mercy had not revealed and withstood the same; by whose life, we and all other her Majesty's true and loyal subjects do enjoy an inestimable benefit of peace in this land; do for the

reasons and causes above alleged, not only acknowledge ourselves most justly bound with our lives and goods for her defence, in her safety, to prosecute, suppress, and withstand all such intenders and all other her enemies, of what nation, condition, and degree whatsoever they shall be, or by what council or title they shall pretend to be her enemies, or to attempt any harm upon her person; but do further think it our bounden duties, for the great benefit of peace and wealth and godly government, we have more plentifully received these many years, under her Majesty's government, than any of our forefathers have done in any longer time of any other her progenitors, kings of this realm, to declare, and by this writing make manifest, our bounden duties to our said Sovereign Lady for her safety. And to that end we and every of us, first calling to witness the name of Almighty God, do voluntarily and most willingly bind ourselves, and every one of us to the other, jointly and severally in the bond of one firm and loyal society: and do hereby vow and promise, by the majesty of Almighty God, that with our whole powers, bodies, lives and goods, and with our children and servants, we and every of us will faithfully serve and humbly obey our said Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth against all States, Dignities, and earthly powers whatsoever : " &c.

A few years later (1588— the year of the Spanish Armada,) was formed the *Covenant* in the Sister Kingdom of Scotland, for the maintenance of true Religion and the defence of the King's person and Government in opposition to all enemies foreign and domestic. It was signed by the king (James VI. afterwards James I. of England), the council, and divers other estates, (that is the nobles, clergy and commons,) and was expressed in these terms:

"We under-subscribing, considering the strait linke and conjunction betwixt the true and Christian religion, presently professed within this our Realme, and [our] Sovereigne Lord's Estate and Standing, having both the self same friends, and common enemies, and subject to the like event of standing and decay; and weighing therewith all the imminent danger threatned to the said Religion, as well by forreigne preparations for prosecution of that detestable conspiracie against Christ and his Evangel, called the Holy League;⁵ by outward and inward practices of the favourers and supporters thereof among ourselves, who now, animated by the report of forreign powers repairing to this Realme, begin more plainly to utter and professe their long- conceived evil meaning to the truth, and consequently to the standing of his Majestie our Sovereigne Lord; whom they have found and tried to be a constant and inflexible Professour of the same.

"The preservation whereof being dearer to us than whatsoever we have dearest in this life; and finding in his Majestie a most honourable and Christian resolution to manifest himself to the world to be that zealous and religious Prince which he hath hitherto professed, and to employ the means and power which God hath put into his hands, as well to the withstanding of whatsoever that forreign force shall meane within this island for alteration of the said Religion, or endangering of the present Estate; as to the repressing of the inward enemies thereto among ourselves, linked with them in the said Anti-christian League and Confederate: Have therefore, in the presence of the Almighty God, and with his Majestie's authorizing and allowance, faithfully promised, and solemnly sworn; like as hereby we faithfully and solemnly swear and promise to take a

true, eaffold and plaine part with his Majestie among ourselves, for diverting of the apparent dangers threatned to the said Religion, and his Majestie's estate and standing, depending thereupon, by whatsoever forreigne or intestine plots or preparations : And to that effect," &c.⁶

Robertson⁷ observes that this national covenant of the Scots was in imitation of the precedent established by the people of Israel, who when roused by an extraordinary event, or alarmed by any public danger, were accustomed to bind themselves, by a solemn covenant, to adhere to that religion which the Almighty had established among them.

The solemn league and covenant introduced in Scotland in 1638, and adopted in England in 1643, from which flowed such disastrous consequences, was not only for " the preservation of the Reformed religion in the Church of Scotland," and for "the extirpation of popery," but aimed at the reformation of religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland, and "the extirpation of prelacy."⁸

In the latter part of the reign of Charles II. the attempt to exclude his brother, the Duke of York, from the succession to the throne on account of his zeal for popery, was the great political effort: and in 1680 (Dec. 15), the Commons passed a vote⁹ that a bill should be brought in for an Association of all His Majesty's Protestant subjects for the safety of His Majesty's person, the defence of the Protestant religion, and the preservation of His Majesty's Protestant subjects, against all invasions and oppositions whatsoever; and for preventing the Duke of York, or any papist from succeeding to the throne. And in the same session (Dec. 20,) they presented an address to the King, desiring therein "that His Majesty would be graciously pleased to assent to an act whereby His Majesty's Protestant subjects might be enabled to associate themselves for the defence of His Majesty's person, the Protestant religion, and the security of his kingdoms." This request was not complied with: the bill of exclusion was rejected in the House of Lords; and the Parliament was dissolved.

After the revolution of 1688, we find the following notice of a Protestant association in Ireland, in Sir James Ware's *Antiquities and History of Ireland, Gesta Hibernorum*, 1695. "About this time his Excellency the Lord Capel, and the Council, on the account of the late conspiracy to assassinate His Majesty, (having issued a proclamation for discovering and taking the conspirators,) signed an association in the council books, there to remain on record, as a testimony of their zealous affection to King William."

In England a similar association was in the following year ratified and confirmed by 7 & 8 W. III. c. 27, s. 3, A.D. 1696; and the reason for it and its form are thus stated: "Whereas there has been a horrid and detestable conspiracy, formed and carried on by papists, and other wicked and traitorous persons, for assassinating His Majesty's royal person, in order to encourage an invasion from France, to subvert our religion, laws, and liberty: we whose names are hereunto subscribed, do heartily, sincerely, and solemnly profess, testify and declare, that his present Majesty King William is rightful and lawful king of these realms. And we do mutually promise and engage to stand by and assist each

other to the utmost of our power, in the support and defence of His Majesty's most sacred person and government against the late King James and all his adherents."

The following answer was made by the King to the Commons presenting to him their association: "Gentlemen, — I take this as a most convincing, and most acceptable evidence of your affection; and, as you have freely associated yourselves for our common safety, I do heartily enter into the same association, and will be always ready with you, and the rest of my good subjects to venture my life against all who shall endeavour to subvert the religion, laws, and liberties of England."¹⁰

In this reign the Protestant character of our constitution was matured by statutes disabling a Papist from possessing the Crown; and it continued unimpaired for nearly 100 years. In 1778, however, notwithstanding the rebellions of 1715 and 1745, in which the papists were deeply engaged: "An act for relieving His Majesty's subjects professing the Popish religion from certain penalties and disabilities imposed upon them by an act made in the 11th and 12th years of the reign of King William the third, intituled an act for the further preventing the growth of Popery," was passed.

"The act was introduced without previous notice in the most private manner, at the end of the Session, and to a thin house: many of the members having retired to their country-seats on the understanding and in the belief that no new matter of an interesting nature would be taken up at that advanced season of the year. The situation of those at the helm was difficult; it might have been thought dangerous at such a crisis to provoke the resentment of a numerous body of Papists by opposing the bill; they were ignorant of the sentiments of the people; and being surprized, unhappily thought it politic to acquiesce. The bishops had not time sufficiently to deliberate on it; and were tender of appearing enemies to toleration. Thus the mischief was done before the design was made known, and consequently before it could be prevented."¹¹

In consequence of the passing of the statute, 18 Geo. 3, c. 60, a Protestant Association was formed; and it published "An Appeal to the People of Great Britain, concerning the probable tendency of the late Act of Parliament in favour of the Papists," dated 5th November, 1779, with the following introduction: —

"Alarmed at the indulgence granted to Papists by an Act lately passed in their favour, and well persuaded that the principles of Popery deserve no such encouragement from any Protestant State, we feel for ourselves, we tremble for posterity; and having maturely deliberated on the consequences that most probably will result from this indulgence, we think it a duty we owe to religion and our country, to associate; and, by every lawful method, to procure a remedy for the evils apprehended from its operation, and to preserve the inestimable privileges, which, as christians and as members of society, we enjoy.

"This Association is not formed to promote the views of party, or to embarrass the measures of government at this important crisis:¹² it consists of Protestants, who will yield to none of their fellow subjects in loyalty to his Majesty's person, or in zealous attachment to our happy constitution.

"If the doctrines held by Papists were confined to matters of opinion in religion, and did not include political tenets of the most dangerous tendency, they might expect the same connivance which has generally been extended to other erroneous sects; they might bow down to their images, swallow the absurd doctrine of transubstantiation, and amuse themselves with dreams of purgatory, without interruption; their ignorance and superstition would rather excite compassion than expose them to the consequences of any penal statutes.

"But when Papists thunder excommunication against all who differ from them in opinion, and their religious profession itself breathes the very spirit of persecution and cruelty against those whom they anathematize as heretics,¹³ — who, if princes, are to be deposed and murdered; if subjects, to be massacred: when they avow such principles as these, what security can be given to any state for their peaceable behaviour? — and what claim can they have to toleration under any Protestant government?

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"Impressed with these considerations, we would now call the attention of our fellow subjects to the following observations on the late Act of Parliament: and if the matter contained in them be true; if our wisest and best laws against Popery be virtually repealed, and our constitution actually endangered; with what spirit and unanimity should we act, to preserve our civil and religious liberties from the encroachments of Popery, and from its inseperable concomitant — Arbitrary Power."

The object of the Association is thus stated, p. 63: —

"Having pointed out the fatal consequences of the late Act of Parliament; to remedy the evils, let the Protestants throughout the kin[g]dom associate as one man, and apply to government for redress ; and thus shew that the sense of the people at large is not to favour Popery.

"Something is necessary to be done, to assure the nation in general, and Papists in particular, that it is not the intention of the legislature to encourage the growth of Popery. Papists are insolent and presuming; and nothing but a law to repeal or qualify the late Act, can Keep them within the bounds of allegiance or decency.

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"Our constitution hath marked out the mode of obtaining redress; and declares that it is the right of the subject to petition. Let petitions be circulated throughout the kingdom; let the clergy of the establishment, and Protestant ministers of every denomination, and all who are zealous for the welfare and safety of the Protestant religion, cordially unite and strenuously exert themselves on this important occasion."

Of this appeal, the Rev. John Wesley in a letter "concerning the civil principles of Roman Catholics," addressed to the Public Advertiser, Jan. 21, 1780, writes — " Some time ago a pamphlet was sent me, entitled, 'An Appeal from the Protestant Association to the People of Great Britain.' A day or two since a kind of answer¹⁴ to this was put into my hand; which pronounces its style contemptible, its reasoning futile, its object malicious. On the contrary, I think the style of it is clear, easy, and natural; the reasoning, in general, strong and conclusive; the object, or design, kind and benevolent. And in pursuance of the same kind and benevolent design, namely, to preserve our happy constitution, I shall endeavour to confirm the substance of that tract by a few plain arguments."¹⁵

Several petitions for the repeal of that Act were presented to the House of Commons in the ensuing session;¹⁶ and on June 2, 1780, Lord George Gordon, who had been elected President of the Association, Nov. 12th, 1779, presented one from the inhabitants of London, Westminster, and Southwark, and their environs, signed, it is supposed, by more than twenty thousand persons. Lord George Gordon had suggested, that on the occasion of the presentation of this petition by him to the House, he should be accompanied by a large body of the petitioners; and accordingly a mixed multitude assembled together, and the occasion was taken by lawless and desperate and designing persons to proceed to acts of felony and insurrection. Lord George Gordon was tried for high treason in 1781, before the Earl of Mansfield and the other judges of the King's Bench, and was acquitted.¹⁷ The Attorney-general, Mr. Wallace, who conducted the prosecution, admitted, and the evidence of the Rev. Erasmus Middleton, one of the witnesses for the defence, and an influential member of the Committee of the Association, proved, that the Committee of the Association was not chargeable with the excesses of those riots.¹⁸ Mr. Fisher, the Secretary to the Association, after an examination by the Privy Council, was honourably dismissed; and Mr. Erskine, counsel for the prisoner, fearlessly asserted, that "in neither country (England or Scotland) was there found any man, high or low, of the associated Protestants here or there, who was either convicted, tried, or taken on suspicion."

"From the various tracts published on the occasion, it appears that there was much speculation as to the real authors and cause of the disturbances. The government does not seem to have been at all prepared for them; and the letter from the Secretary of State to the Lord Mayor, which states that the government had received information which rendered it necessary for them to call on the Lord Major to have all in readiness to prevent a breach of the peace, was only dated the afternoon of the day subsequent to that on which the Protestant Association accompanied Lord George Gordon from St. George's Fields to Westminster."—See Mr. Cubitt's *Strictures*, &c. pp. 63— 66.

That many of those who thought that the concessions contained in the Act of 1779 might safely be made to Papists, both held and expressed the most decided opinions as to the principles of Popery, and the absolute necessity of maintaining a barrier against the encroachments of Papists,¹⁹ appears from some of the resolutions passed by the House of Commons on the 20th June, 1780. It was resolved in a Committee of the whole House for considering the above-mentioned petitions:—

"That the effect and operation of the Act passed in the 18th year of the reign of his present Majesty, intituled, 'An Act for relieving his Majesty's subjects professing the Popish religion, from certain penalties and disabilities imposed upon them by an Act made in the 11th and 12th years of the reign of King Wm. III., intituled, 'An Act for the further preventing the growth of Popery' '— have been misrepresented and misunderstood.

"That the said Act does not repeal or in any manner invalidate or render ineffectual, the several statutes made to prohibit the exercise of the Popish religion, previous to the statute, 11 and 12, W. 3.

"That no ecclesiastical or spiritual jurisdiction or authority is given by the said Act of 18 Geo. 3, to the Pope or to the See of Rome.

"That this House does and ever will watch over the interests of the Protestant religion with the most unremitted attention; and that all attempts to seduce the youth of this kingdom from the Established Church to Popery, are highly criminal according to the laws in force, and are a proper subject of further regulation.²⁰

"That all endeavours to disquiet the minds of the people by misrepresenting the said Act of 18 Geo. 3., as inconsistent with the safety or irreconcilable to the principles of the Protestant religion, have a manifest tendency to disturb the public peace, — to break the union necessary at this time, — to bring dishonour on the national character, — to discredit the Protestant religion in the eyes of other nations, — and to furnish occasion for the renewal of the persecution of our Protestant brethren in other Countries."

It had been intended to bring in a Bill for a similar relaxation of the penal laws against Papists, in Scotland; but a unanimous and firm opposition by the great body of the people of Scotland,²¹ caused the intention to be abandoned. "I will tell you myself, gentlemen," said Mr. Erskine, in his speech on the trial of Lord George Gordon, "as one of the people of Scotland, that there exist eighty-five societies of Protestants, who have been, and still are, uniformly firm in opposing every change in that system of laws established to secure the revolution ; and parliament gave way to their united voice, and not to the firebrands of the rabble."²²

After losing sight of the Protestant Association of 1779, we do not meet with another until the year 1813, when a Protestant Union was formed under the presidency of Mr. Granville Sharp. But before we notice its operations, it will be useful to observe what advances Popery made in the State during the interval, after the favor shown towards it in 1778, and what further advances it aimed at in 1813.

The stat. 14 G. 3, c. 83, passed before the beginning of the period now under review (A.D. 1774), "for making more effectual provision for the government of the province of Quebec in North America," had introduced the Church of Rome into the ecclesiastical establishment of that important territory, which was ceded by France at the peace of 1763.

In 1791 was passed the stat. 31 G. 3, c. 32, to relieve persons professing the Popish religion from certain penalties and disabilities imposed upon them by several acts of parliament in the reigns of Elizabeth, James I., Charles I. and Charles II., upon their making a declaration that they professed the Roman Catholic religion, and taking and subscribing the oath of allegiance and abjuration therein prescribed;²³ and in 1793 its provisions were extended to Scotland by stat. 33 G. 3, c. 44. In the same year (1793), by an act of the Irish parliament, adopting a recommendation from the Crown, the elective franchise was conceded without any qualification, to the Irish Papists, and they were enabled to hold commissions in the army;²⁴ and in 1795 the College of Maynooth was founded "for educating at home the Roman Catholic Clergy."

During the French Revolution a large number of emigrant French clergy and exiled monks and nuns took refuge in England, and they enjoyed such an exemption from all restraints, that in 1800, a bill passed the House of Commons "to prevent any addition to the number of persons belonging to certain foreign religious orders or communities lately settled in this kingdom, and to regulate the education of youth by such persons:" but in the House of Lords Bishop Horsley opposed the second reading, and it was lost.

In 1801, the year following the union of Great Britain and Ireland, Mr. Pitt made the admission of Roman Catholics to political power under certain restrictions a condition of his continuing to hold office. But George the Third's conscientious regard for his coronation oath²⁵ constrained him to deprive himself of the political services of Mr. Pitt, who had been at the head of the cabinet for more than seventeen years, rather than forego what he looked upon as his duty. In 1804 however, a season of great danger to the country, from the increasing ambition and power of Buonaparte, Mt. Pitt returned to office without insisting en any condition.

In the session of 1806 was first brought forward the general question, which began to be miscalled the *Emancipation* of the Roman Catholics, upon the presentation to the two houses of parliament of the first petition from the Roman Catholics of Ireland. The prayer of that petition, which in fact amounted to this, that they might be made capable of being any thing in the state but king, was resisted in the House of Lords by Bishop Horsley,²⁶ who had been a strenuous supporter of the preceding measures for their relief from the penal laws ; and in the House of Commons Mr. Pitt²⁷ opposed the motion "that the petition should be referred to a committee of the whole house."

In 1807, Lord Howick (afterwards Lord Grey) introduced a bill for enabling persons of every religious persuasion to receive commissions in the army and navy in Great Britain as well as in Ireland: this proposition led to the dismissal of Lord Grenville's administration, and the accession of Mr. Perceval to office. Numerous addresses from various parts of the kingdom, including the two Universities, and the corporation of London, were presented to the king, strongly expressing thanks for his conduct: and the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge discharged upon this occasion an important function of a Protestant association by holding a special general meeting, at which was

passed a resolution expressing their thanks to the King for his resistance to the proposed dangerous change in the constitution, and their readiness to co-operate with him.²⁸

In 1808 the general question was again brought before parliament, and a concession respecting the appointment of their bishops was submitted to the House of Lords by Lord Grenville, and to the House of Commons by Mr. Grattan, but in September of the same year the Popish bishops of Ireland came to the resolution of refusing to allow a veto to the Crown in the nomination to their bishoprics, which their agent in England, Dr Milner, had authorized their advocates in parliament to propose.²⁹

In 1809 in consequence of this obstacle the question slept, but was discussed again in 1810 and 1811, on petitions from the Irish Roman Catholics.

In 1812, (the Regency having commenced in the preceding year,) there was "a petition of his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects in Ireland to his royal highness the Prince Regent," praying for "an equal participation of the civil rights of the constitution." And motions were made in both houses "to take into consideration the claims of the Catholic body, for the removal of the disabilities they laid under," but were negatived. Mr. Canning then moved that the House of Commons "would early in the next session of parliament take into its serious consideration, the state of the laws affecting his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects in Great Britain and Ireland, with a view to such a final and conciliatory adjustment as might be conducive to the peace and strength of the United Kingdom and the stability of the Protestant establishment, and to the general satisfaction and concord of all classes of his Majesty's subjects." While this motion was under discussion, "the Catholic Board" in Dublin passed resolutions demanding the unqualified concession of their claims as a matter of right: and it was carried by a considerable majority, though the house had rejected the motion for the immediate consideration of the question; and a similar motion was carried in the House of Lords by a majority of One.

The feelings of the Protestants in England were strongly roused by the result of Mr. Canning's motion, and by the conduct of "the Catholic Board" and the Irish demagogues: and though the ministers in the following session of 1813³⁰ were divided in opinion upon the question, the feeling in the country exhibited, itself by petitions against the Roman Catholic claims from all quarters. A bill, conceding those claims, with certain conditions and restrictions, was however introduced into the House of Commons; but in committee the clause for admitting Papists to sit and vote in parliament was rejected upon the motion of the Speaker, Mr. Abbot,³¹ and in consequence thereof the bill was given up by its promoters.

Charles butler, in his "Memoir of the Catholic Relief Bill passed in 1829," justifies this course of the advocates of the Roman Catholic claims by the following observations:

"Napoleon was at this time in the zenith of his power, and made every nation on earth feel that she wanted for her preservation the active and cordial exertions of all her subjects. This feeling argued powerfully in favor of the Catholic claims. Thus at this time good policy made it wise to insist on the whole of the Catholic claims, while at a

subsequent time the same policy might dictate the prudence of withholding a part of them."

In the mean while the Popish demagogues in Ireland continued their efforts to inflame the people, and the alarming spirit manifested by them made a deep impression upon the minds of men.

In this crisis was formed the Protestant Union, with the avowed intention of opposing further concessions.

The following account of the Protestant Union formed in 1813, drawn up by a member of it, is given in the Memoirs of Granville Sharp, by Mr. Prince Hoare.

"Mr. Granville Sharp had uniformly opposed the system of Popery, most conscientiously believing that it was utterly subversive of the principles of genuine liberty, as well as of our Protestant Establishment. When, therefore, the *Roman Catholic question* was agitated, from the lively interest which he took in it, and from his frequent conversations with several friends on its great importance to the united kingdom, it was at length agreed to convene a meeting of respectable persons firmly attached to the principles of the Constitution as established at the Revolution, (but unconnected with party, and having no political purposes whatever to serve:) and calmly and dispassionately to consider the subject.

"A meeting was accordingly held at the Crown and Anchor Tavern in the Strand on the 22nd January 1813, when Mr. Sharp was called to the chair. After some discussion, the Address and (twenty) Resolutions, published by the Protestant Union in their first paper, were unanimously adopted.

"These Resolutions were reprinted and circulated in Ireland, and had a great effect in rousing the dormant spirit of Protestantism in that country. The Protestant Union was encouraged by the warm approbation of many eminent characters throughout the United Kingdom, and Mr. Sharp received many high eulogiums on the principles developed in their papers.

"The principal aim of the arguments used by this Society, was to separate distinctly the *two objects*, *Religious Freedom* and *Political Freedom*. They asserted the former to be already fully possessed by the whole body of Roman Catholics; and that the *latter*, of course, was the true object of the Bill presented by them to the Parliament, and was coveted, not for the sake of the *whole body of Papists*, (the lower classes necessarily not being within the reach of its consequences), but by that class alone, which from its rank in life would be enabled to possess what would accrue from its attainment. To this reasoning they added as an incontrovertible argument, that the religious freedom enjoyed by the Roman Catholics in the United Kingdom, would not in return be allowed to the Protestants (and other religious descriptions of men,) if the Papists should return to political power, because the *positive* and *unalterable* tenets of the Papal religion were intolerant of religious establishments of all other descriptions, and, therefore, that the

establishment of a Protestant Church was the only real source of universal religious freedom.³²

"In their second paper," continues the same account, (agreed to at a second meeting of the Union), "they issued a series of *questions* (proposed to the Roman Catholics) *respecting the demands of the Roman Catholics*, which have never been answered to this day.

"The Protestant Union also published some extracts of their correspondence with Ireland, exemplifying By facts the principles held by the Roman Catholics.

"The publications of the Society were sent to all the Members of Parliament in both Houses. But as *the Union* had no desire to raise any popular clamour against the Roman Catholics, but simply to bring the subject before the public *upon principle*, they did not call public meetings or use any methods to create prejudice.

"The last meeting of the Protestant Union during the life-time of Mr. Sharp, was held on the 1st of March, on which day the question, having undergone a previous debate of four days in the House of Commons, was carried in favour of the Roman Catholics by a majority of forty. *The Union*, therefore, finding its efforts ineffectual as to this great point, ceased from its exertions; the cause appearing to all the members to be lost, and it being deemed the remaining *duty of all* to submit peaceably to the determination of the Government. But their hopes were not destined so soon to perish. On the 24th of May, in one of the largest assemblies of the House of Commons ever known, when the last stage of the Bill in favour of the Roman Catholics was in a Committee of the whole House, the Speaker, (Mr. Abbot), after a most powerful and impressive speech, proposed, as an amendment to the Bill, 'that the first clause, which was, to admit Roman Catholics into Parliament, be struck out; 'which motion, after a long and warm debate, being carried by a majority of 251 votes to 247; the other clauses of the Bill were given up, and the power of the Protestant Establishment remained unshaken.

"In all the meetings of the Union," continues the author of his Memoirs, "Mr. Sharp exerted himself with unabated vigour of mind, and gave the most useful support to the cause. He spoke frequently and with great firmness; and he corresponded with several eminent persons on the subject of the Bill. Notwithstanding his great age, his faculties were still strong and clear; and his thorough acquaintance with the distinctions of religious tenets enabled him to enforce his feelings by the most animated and convincing arguments. Never in the long course of his public efforts, had he shown more conspicuously the superior treasures of his powerful mind, or excited in his associates, sensations of higher respect. All the reports and other numerous³³ papers of the Society were submitted to his inspection, and sanctioned by him previous to their publication, and several of them received his corrections. His knowledge of what Popery was and ever will be," adds the writer of the same account, "and his sense of the fatal indifference of good natured Protestants, which will sooner or later be their destruction, rendered his services of great use. In this Society he spoke more and attended more frequently I believe than in any other. The strenuous exertions of his faculties indeed on this important occasion, probably accelerated the final period of his labours; and if he

expressed no conscious triumph at closing them in a cause which he deemed transcendently meritorious, it was because he regarded the dispensations of his Creator with equal awe, and with equal submission at all moments of his worldly course."

It will be recollected that in 1813, when the Roman Catholic claims were pressed so peremptorily, Napoleon was at the height of his power, and Great Britain was at war with France. A general peace was concluded in 1814, and their claims were not brought forward again until 1817. In that year an Act was passed authorizing the delivery of commissions to Officers in the Army and Navy, without requiring them, before their commissions, to take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, or to subscribe the declaration against transubstantiation. The operation of this, combined with the annual act of indemnity, was to admit Papists into offices of command in the army and navy.

On the renewal of the Roman Catholic claims, and the petition from the Roman Catholics of Ireland, the meetings of the Protestant Union were resumed, Stephen Cattley, Esq., being called to the chair; and at the last meeting in the year 1819, (April 17), previous to the intended, debate in the House of Commons, which took place on the 3rd of May, a series of Resolutions was drawn up and sent to every Member of both Houses of Parliament.

The following address,³⁴ (the only one of the papers of that Society which the writer of this sketch has seen), though not dated, appears to have been issued at the time it resumed its meetings:

"A Society of Gentlemen, called "The Protestant Union," who in 1813 assembled at different times, and issued various papers under the signature of Granville Sharp, Esq., their chairman, have now, in conjunction with others, resumed the task of attempting to develop the proceedings, and oppose the political encroachments of the Papal Hierarchy; and it is believed that existing circumstances will justify their present renewed effort to awaken the dormant zeal of their Protestant Countrymen.

"The past efforts of that Association, and the avowed principles by which their conduct is governed, afford a pledge of their desire to cultivate enlarged and liberal sentiments towards men of a different religious persuasion; for while their own rights and privileges are guarded against the inroads of an arbitrary Church, they would not in the smallest degree abridge the religious liberties and immunities of Roman Catholics themselves.

"Civil and Religious Liberty has ever been dear to Britons; multitudes have perished in its defence; and our countrymen still view with a jealous eye whatever tends to injure it. They well know that our admirable Constitution secures equal liberty and protection to the persons and property of the poor as well as the rich, and that our laws protect every man in the peaceable worship of God according to the dictates of his own conscience. To this source we trace that strength and happiness, that energy and wisdom which have extended the power, the influence, and the renown of this realm; and enabled it to withstand all its enemies, however numerous, subtle, and persevering. And it is to this excellent system, under Divine Providence, that the domestic improvements of our

country, its benevolent and religious institutions, flourish and afford a satisfactory proof of great advancement in the moral condition of the people.

"Certainly this state of things has been produced under a Protestant Ascendancy. The Government of the Country during the progress of this national happiness has been purely Protestant, and it has carefully excluded Roman Catholics from its legislative and executive functions. It has been its Policy to confine the crown to a Protestant Monarch, and to take care that a Protestant Monarch should be advised only by a Protestant Council and Ministry; that our Legislators, Magistrates, and the higher officers of State should be Protestants. This is what it has invariably been since the Revolution; for as- Mr. Burke observed, 'Our Church is Protestant, our State is Protestant, our Government is Protestant in all its parts.'

"This policy, recognized and supported by the law, which has given beauty and strength to the magnificent fabric of the British Constitution, was the result of many a struggle endured by our forefathers with painful and inflexible constancy against Popery and arbitrary power; these they found inseparable, and therefore they sent them together into exile. Indeed it was in those arduous conflicts that the qualities we so much venerate in the honest Patriots and holy Martyrs, and which shed a lustre upon our annals, were so conspicuous; and their examples are chiefly valuable to us as indicating the course of conduct we ought to pursue for preserving those Civil and Religious rights, which are essential to our happiness and the welfare of the Community.

"The Protestant Union Society, satisfied of the wisdom of this policy, and considering that its continuance is indispensable to the security and tranquillity of the Country, cannot but view with painful solicitude the pretensions of the Roman Catholics; whose claims to further political power they deem perfectly incompatible with the principles of the Constitution. They are demanded to an extent which has no limit; and are urged with a vehemence and in a language which afford no proof that the power, when acquired, would be exercised with moderation towards the feelings and interest of others. They demand without exception the removal of all civil disabilities, which attach on account of their religious tenets; and they peremptorily place that demand on the ground of right which renders it superfluous to ask security for the proper exercise of political power."

The means employed by the Protestant Union failed to rouse that active sympathy and influential co-operation which they deserved; and the Society probably ceased to exist after the year 1819. But the pretensions of the Roman Catholics were continued to be urged in Parliament with untiring perseverance, and in various forms on different occasions—sometimes to their full extent, and at other times only in part. Moreover, the strongest promises, declarations, abjurations, and protestations were volunteered by leading members of the Roman Catholic hierarchy and laity, disavowing and disclaiming every principle and practice hostile to our Protestant institutions.³⁵

In the mean while some of the advocates of Protestant ascendancy perhaps became wearied with the continually repeated discussions in Parliament; and from the issues of those discussions, not only individuals, but constituencies were satisfied that whatever

might be the result of the divisions upon the question in the House of Commons, the Protestantism of the British Constitution was safely entrusted to the wisdom and decision of the House of Lords.

In 1821 a bill conceding the Roman Catholic claims was, for the first time, passed in the House of Commons; but it was rejected in the House of Lords. In 1822 a bill for admitting Roman Catholic Peers to sit and vote in the House of Lords was passed in the House of Commons; it also was rejected in the House of Lords. In 1823 two bills for placing English Roman Catholics on the same footing with Irish, one by conferring upon them the elective franchise, the other by opening to them the same offices to which the latter were admissible, were passed in the House of Commons; they also were rejected in the House of Lords. In 1824 similar bills were originated in the House of Lords, and rejected: but an act was passed, without a division, enabling persons to hold offices in the management, collection, and receipt of the revenue without taking any oath, except that of allegiance; also an act authorizing the Earl Marshal and his deputy to exercise that important office without taking the oath of supremacy, and making the declaration against transubstantiation—the Duke of Newcastle and Lord Abingdon only entering their protest against it. In 1825 a bill conceding the Roman Catholic claims was again passed in the House of Commons: on this occasion the Duke of York, in the House of Lords, declared his sentiments in opposition to the measure, and it was rejected.

In 1827, in a new parliament, a general election having taken place in 1826, the House of Commons rejected a resolution; "That the House is deeply impressed with the necessity of taking into immediate consideration the laws inflicting penalties on his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects with a view of removing them:"
the numbers were—

Against the resolution	276
For it	272
	<hr/>
	548

being a larger attendance of members than had ever before voted or did ever afterwards vote upon the question. In 1828, however, the same House agreed to a resolution, "That the House, should take into its consideration the laws affecting his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects in England and Ireland, with a view to such a final and conciliatory adjustment as might be conducive to the peace and strength of the Protestant Establishment, and to the general satisfaction and concord of all classes of his Majesty's subjects:" the numbers were—

Against the resolution	272
For it	266
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	538

The House of Lords refused to agree to a similar resolution; But in the same year an Act of Parliament was passed (stat. 9, Geo. IV. c. 17), which repealed the sacramental test as a qualification for office: this was brought forward and pressed as a relief to Protestant Dissenters. The effect, however, of passing it, seems to have operated powerfully and fatally upon the admission of Papists to political power.

Upon the growth of a suspicion that a settlement, as it was called, of the Roman Catholic question was to be recommended in the speech from the throne on the opening of the session of 1829, many spirited efforts were made by individuals to oppose the traitorous and disastrous proposition; and many a cry of "No surrender," was raised.³⁶ The constituencies of the University of Oxford and of Newark, the former by the election of Sir Robt. H. Inglis, and the latter by the election of Mr. Sadler,³⁷ testified their sense of the policy then adopted by Protestant Statesmen, merely upon reasons of State and motives of political expediency. And though the people of Great Britain had no opportunity given to them of effectively expressing their opinion by their representatives elected for that purpose, very many petitions against further concessions were presented to the two Houses from counties, corporations, towns, parishes, archdeaconries, deaneries, chapters, presbyteries, incorporations, and congregations of Protestant Dissenters. And yet no general associated opposition was organized out of Parliament in that momentous crisis.

We will not dwell upon the issue. The speech from the throne, after referring to the continued existence in Ireland of an association, the "Catholic Association," dangerous to the public peace and inconsistent with the spirit of the constitution, recommended the two Houses to take into their deliberate consideration the whole condition of Ireland, and to revise the laws which imposed civil disabilities on his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects, and proceeds thus: "You will consider whether the removal of those disabilities can be effected consistently with the full and permanent security of our establishments in Church and State, and with the maintenance of the Reformed Religion established by law, and of the rights and privileges of the Bishops and of the Clergy of this realm, and of the Churches committed to their charge. These are institutions which must ever be held sacred in this Protestant Kingdom, and which it is the duty and the determination of his Majesty to preserve inviolate." It was in pursuance of such a recommendation that the Protestantism of our constitution was essentially impaired, even destroyed in two branches of the Legislature, by an act which received the Royal assent on the 13th of April;³⁸ and so was recognized a political union with an idolatrous church, hostile to the true profession of the gospel and the Protestant religion, which, under the guidance and protection of God, had been so long maintained and established by law in this Kingdom.

Before we pass on to the date of the formation of the Protestant Association now in existence, our attention must be detained for the purpose of recording two circumstances properly belonging to the notice of the fatal event of the year 1829. The first is the pious and earnest effort of a faithful minister of our church, to avert the approaching evil by his pulpit prayers before the face of his congregation;³⁹ and the second is an anecdote evidencing the reluctance with which King George IV gave his consent to its accomplishment.⁴⁰

It was not until the growth of an unconstitutional and unscriptural theory, namely, that the State has no concern with the religious opinions of its members, nor until the increasing influence of Popery in the councils of the nation was perceived, nor until manifest and cogent proof of its ambitious aspirations, in Ireland especially, was supplied, that recourse was had to the important and we trust, with the Divine blessing upon its exertions, powerful agency of a Protestant Association, for maintaining Protestant principles in the policy of our government and in the hearts of our fellow-countrymen.

Before its formation, several important though desultory attempts were made to oppose the progress of evil. In 1832, on Wednesday the 8th, and Wednesday the 15th of February, there were glorious exhibitions of Protestant feeling and principle in opposition to the Irish scheme of education, at two meetings in Exeter Hall; and the following petition to both houses of parliament was adopted:

"The humble petition of the undersigned,

"Sheweth,—That your petitioners earnestly desire to promote the glory of God and a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, through the early reading and constant study of the Holy Scriptures; and are deeply impressed with the belief that the instruction of youth in the letter and principles of the entire Word of God is a duty of a divine obligation, and has been proved by experience to be essential to the moral well-being and social happiness of mankind. That the efforts made by Christians in this, and the sister countries, to impart to the ignorant poor of Ireland the benefits of a system of education, founded upon the whole Word of God, have, under the Divine blessing, been attended with astonishing success, and that the result of the experiment has satisfactorily proved the practicability as well as the moral influence of the instruction dispensed: That as Christian Protestants, we are opposed to any plan of Education in Ireland, which does not recognize the integrity of Scripture as its foundation: That we contemplate with alarm, the dangerous tendency of that system of national instruction which is now in progress under the direction of the Board of Commissioners sitting in Dublin,—a system which imposes restrictions upon the free and general use of the Word of God, inconsistent with Protestant principles: That we view with equal regret, surprise and alarm, that regulation in the new system which provides for the inculcation of the peculiar doctrines of the Church of Rome at the expense of Parliamentary grants, and under the direct sanction of a Protestant Government.

"Your Petitioners, therefore humbly pray, that your Lordships will be pleased to take the premises into consideration, and to provide that all grants of public money for national Education in Ireland be employed only in the support of systems of instruction which are founded upon the entire Word of God, and which encourage the free and general use of the Holy Scriptures, amongst all descriptions of persons; and, further, to provide that, in the application of such money, no unholy compromise be made with the Church of Rome, and no support or countenance whatever given to those who would substitute a part for the whole of God's Word, or who would 'teach for doctrines the commandments of men.' "41

Again in 1835, two very important meetings were held in Exeter Hall, in consequence of the following notice, signed by nineteen clergymen of Ireland:

"To the Protestants of Great Britain and Ireland.

"The undersigned having recently discovered by authentic and unquestionable documents which they have reason to believe have never met the public eye, that the standards adopted and the principles inculcated by the Roman Catholic hierarchy of Ireland, are of the same intolerant and persecuting nature at this day that are well known to have characterized their Church in former times, do feel it their painful but imperative duty to stand forward and produce before Protestants of all denominations answerable testimony on this subject.

"They make this public address to Protestants for the purpose of giving to them an opportunity of judging on a question of vital importance to every one who values the rights of conscience and the security of property, of liberty, and of life."

The large assemblies gathered together on these occasions were addressed by the Rev. R. J. McGhee, the Rev. Dr. Cooke, the Rev. Mortimer O'Sullivan, and the Rev. Robert Daly; and the following resolutions were agreed to:

"That it appears to the satisfaction of this meeting, that *Dens's Complete Body of Theology* has been adopted by the Roman Catholic bishops of Ireland, as containing those principles which they approve for the guidance of the Roman Catholic priesthood, since the year 1808, and set up for the conferences of the priests in the province of Leinster, since the year 1831.

"That the concurrent testimonies of approved standards of faith in the Church of Rome, and of the conduct and character of Roman Catholics, confirm our conviction that *Dens's Complete Body of Theology* was adopted as a conference-book by bishops in Ireland, because it was in conformity with their opinions."

At the close of the first day's proceedings, J. E. Gordon, Esq. "gave notice of a meeting to be held on an early day, for the establishment of a Protestant Constitutional Association, and read a series of resolutions intended to form the basis of the society; which had been adopted by a number of noblemen and gentlemen."⁴²

That meeting was held on Saturday, July 11,—and at it was formed the Protestant Association, upon the basis of the following resolutions:

"I. That the influence of true religion over a people forms the best security for their individual rights, and the surest basis of national prosperity.

"II. That the British Constitution acknowledges in its principle and laws the Sovereignty of Almighty God, and the supreme Authority of his Holy Word, and has provided for the Scriptural Instruction of the people by its religious Establishments.

"III. That in opposition to this principle of the Constitution, doctrines have of late been propagated, that religion is unconnected with the duties of Legislation,—that in the eye of the State all religions are alike—and that support should be equally given or denied to all.

"IV. That under cover of these doctrines, the Members of the Church of Rome are zealously exerting themselves to destroy the Protestant character of the Constitution, and that the first object to which they direct their efforts, is the overthrow of the Established Churches, as forming the main obstacles to their ulterior designs.

"V. That to counteract these efforts, all who venerate the Word of God, and value the British Institutions, should be called on to co-operate in pointing out to the people the peculiar dangers of the present time, and in taking measures to inspire them with a just sense of the benefits and blessings of the Protestant Constitution."

The proceedings of our Association may be seen detailed in the annual reports, the first of which was delivered in May 1837, and illustrated in the publications which have been issued.

A few observations must conclude this sketch. It will have been observed that the appeal of the Protestant Association in 1779, did not rest its opposition to the favour then extended to Papists, on their apostacy from the true Catholic Church of Christ, but on the antisocial and persecuting principle of their system. The step then taken by the legislature being a concession of relief from penal statutes, that might be a proper position for a Protestant Association to occupy. But assuredly when that concession had led to a claim of admission into offices and a participation in political power and privileges, the defenders of our Protestant constitution would have acted wisely and consistently in appealing to the declaration, which was wont to be made by our members of parliament, and which is still made by our sovereign, and which had in effect pronounced those who believed in the doctrine of transubstantiation, and practised the superstitious and idolatrous invocation and adoration of the Virgin Mary and other saints, and the sacrifice of the mass, to be disqualified from exercising official and legislative functions faithfully and beneficially in a Protestant commonwealth; and in declaring their belief that further concessions would be inconsistent with our Christian Protestant state,—inconsistent with the advancement of the glory of God, the good of his church, and the safety, honour, and welfare of our sovereign and our country. But it is remarkable that during the long struggle which ended in opening a wide breach in our Protestant constitution in 1829, those statesmen and politicians who spoke and wrote with most earnestness and ability against concession to the claims of the Roman Catholics, with few exceptions, among whom Mr. J. E. Gordon and Mr. Sadler⁴³ were pre-eminent, built no argument upon the danger of exposing their country to that wrath which God has denounced against the Church of Rome, and against such rulers as give unto it their power. (See Rev. xvii. 10—14.) Either they were too little accustomed to search the Scriptures for guidance over the

stormy sea of political strife, or they needed the *moral courage* (unto which the Rev. Hugh Stowell at our recent annual meeting, so eloquently exhorted our friends in parliament,) requisite for making such a decided confession of implicit faith in the word of God, before such an assembly as a House of Parliament.⁴⁴

May our Protestant Association be enabled, by the blessing of God vouchsafed on its efforts and its prayers, to hold up a union standard of sound political and religious principles,—even the religious principles of the Reformation, and the political principles of the Revolution of 1688; around which a faithful and undaunted band of religious men and christian patriots may gather, and contend successfully for the restoration of the Christian Protestant character of our Constitution.

1. See the trials of Parry, and of Ballard and others, for high treason, in the 1st vol. of the State Trials: the former is given, with remarks thereon, in the first vol. of Criminal Trials, by Jardine, 12mo. 1832. For a history of the seminary priests, see *Camden, Annals of Queen Elizabeth*, under the year 1680.

2. History of Scotland, ii. 101. 4to. London, 1771.

3. Annals of Queen Elizabeth, under the year 1584.

4. Or vol. viii. p. 311, of edition by Sir Walter Scott.

5. The prospect of the King of Navarre, a zealous Protestant, ascending the throne of France, alarmed all the Papists in Europe, and the Duke of Guise, countenanced by the Pope, and aided by the King of Spain, appeared as defender of the Romish faith, and the asserter of the Cardinal of Bourbon's right to the Crown. In order to unite the party, a bond of confederacy was formed, distinguished by the name of the Holy League. The destruction of the Reformation, not only in France, but all over Europe, seemed to be the object and wish of the whole party. — See Robertson's Hist. of Scotland, ii. 112.

6. Calderwood's Hist. of the Church of Scotland, p. 223, 1678.

7. Hist. of Scotland, ii., 164-5, 4to, Lond. 1771.

8. It is to be seen at full length, as well as the remonstrance of the University of Oxford against it, in the "Reasons of the present Judgment of the University of Oxford, concerning the Solemn League and Covenant, the negative Oath, the Ordinances concerning Discipline and Worship; approved by general consent, in a full Convocation, June 1st, 1647, and presented to consideration," Lord Somers' Tracts, vol. iv, p. 606-626, ed. by Sir Walter Scott.

9. Commons' Journals, 32 Charles II.

10. Commons' Journals, 4 April, 8 Will. 3.

11. Appeal from the Protestant Association, &c. New edition, 1780. Leave was given to Sir George Saville, and others, to bring in the bill on the 14th May, and it passed the Commons on the 21st; it was brought up to the House of Lords on the following day, and passed that House on the 1st June; it received the Royal Assent on the 3rd June, the day on which Parliament was prorogued. — See Erskine's Speech on the Trial of Lord George Gordon, 21 Howell's State Trials, 595 to 598: "I shall not enter into the motives or merits of the act that produced the Protestant Petition to Parliament. It was certainly introduced by persons who cannot be named by any citizen without affection and respect: but *this* I will say without fear of contradiction, that it was sudden and unexpected; that it passed with uncommon precipitation, considering the magnitude of the object; that it underwent no discussion; and that the heads of the church, the constitutional guardians of the national religion, were never consulted upon it. Under such circumstances it

is no wonder that many sincere Protestants were alarmed; and they had a right to spread their apprehensions. It is the privilege and *the duty* of all the subjects of England to watch over their religious and civil liberties, and to approach either their representatives or the throne with their fears and their complaints — a privilege which has been bought with the dearest blood of our ancestors, and which is confirmed to us by law as our ancient birthright and inheritance.

12. Great Britain was then engaged in the American War, and France and Spain were supporting the Americans.

13. "That this is incontestably true, is evident from the Roman Clergy," viz.— the bishops and abbots, "obliging themselves by oath, on their admission to their sacred functions," — (their consecration) — "to persecute and impugn to the utmost of their power, all heretics, schismatics, and rebels to the Pope. Haereticos, schismaticos, et rebelles etdem Domino nostro vel successoribus praedictis pro posse persequar et impugabo."—*Pontificale Romanum*, pp. 77, 125, *Antwerp*, 1626; pp. 59, 86, *Brux.* 1735. Dr. Hales, in his *Survey of the Modern State of the Church of Rome*, proved that the clause is an obligation to persecute heretics, and oppose them with temporal weapons; and that this appeared to be the sense of the Church of Rome, both from her decrees and practice.

It is true that in 1778, the Roman Catholic peers and commoners of Great Britain presented an address to the king, signed by 10 peers and 163 commoners,) containing- general assurances of loyalty, submission to the laws, and attachment to the constitution in State. In 1788, six foreign Universities, in answer to certain questions sent to them at the desire of Mr. Pitt, gave their opinion against the obligation of the decrees of the 4th Lateran Council, respecting heretics, heretical princes, and their subjects; and in 1789, a declaration and protestation, disclaiming in particular five doctrines, signed by between 1700 and 1800 persons, calling themselves the English Catholic dissenters, was deposited in the British Museum, to remain there a constant and irrefragable evidence of the purity and integrity of the moral and political principles of English Catholics; a petition also containing the substance of the declaration and protestation was presented to the House of Commons: the more rigid papists, however, became dissatisfied with that document, and vehemently opposed its being deposited in the Museum. — See *Letters of Catholic Committee, and Supplement to Reflections on Popery*, 1798.

But without making any observations upon the occasion and character of those disclaimers, and of the parties from whom they proceeded, it may be asserted that the books used in the College of Maynooth in Ireland, and the conduct of the great majority of the Popish Members of Parliament towards the Established Church in England and Ireland, notwithstanding their oath, present a strong contradiction to those disclaimers, and show that some of those doctrines are still entertained, and still practically operate — See Nos. 6 and 23 of the *Publications of the Protestant Association*, and "*The Nullity of the Government of Queen Victoria in Ireland, or the Pope the virtual Ruler of the Land*" by the Rev. Robert J. McGhee, 12mo. 1839.

14. "A Defence of the Act of Parliament lately passed for the relief of Roman Catholics," by a Protestant. Lond. 1780.

15. About the same time was published. "A Defence of the Protestant Association," by "J. W.;" and it was remarked upon by Father O'Leary, a Capuchin friar in Dublin, as Mr. Wesley's — (*Miscellaneous Tracts* by the Rev. Arthur O'Leary, Dublin, 1781, 2nd edition, p. 207); but it was explicitly and publicly disowned by him: the author of the forgery is not known.— See the Rev. George Cubitt's "*Strictures on Mr. O'Connell's Letters to the Wesleyan Methodists*," pp. 54—58, 62, just published in the form of a pamphlet. The appendix contains Mr. Wesley's Letter addressed to the Public Advertiser, and a Defence of it, in Two Letters to the Editors of the *Freeman's Journal*, Dublin; also "A Defence of the Protestant Association," by "J. W." Mr. Wesley asserts, that the latter was never heard of but in Mr. O'L[eary]'s "*Remarks*." — See appendix p. 76.

16. In the Commons' Journal, 20 Geo. III., are noticed the following :— May 31, from Soham, Cambridgeshire; June 2, from Newcastle-upon-Tyne; and June 19, from the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Commonalty of London.

17. He afterwards wrote "Innocence vindicated, and the Intrigues of Popery," &c., which was published by the Association.

18. See 21 Howell's State Trials, 663; also Mr. Cubitt's Strictures, &c pp. 28, 52-54. The Rev. E. Middleton deposed that the Association was formed after the model of the Protestant Association in 1696, which was signed by the King, both Houses of Parliament, and the bishops and clergy, and deposited in the records of the Tower; and he gave an account of the early proceedings of the Association.

19. Mr. Cubitt has suggested and illustrated this position by a reference to the opinions of the Monthly Reviewers on the sermons and pamphlets upon Popery, published in the years 1778, 1779, 1780.— See Strictures, &c. pp. 45-49.

20. In pursuance of this resolution, which was resolved *nemine contradicente*, a Bill was brought in "to secure the Protestant religion in Great Britain from any encroachments of Popery, by more effectually restraining Papists, or persons professing the Popish religion, from teaching or taking upon themselves the education or government of the children of Protestants." It was passed in the House of Commons on the 28th of June; and was read the third time in the House of Lords: but on the question, (July 5.) whether the Bill with certain amendments should pass, it was resolved in the negative; and the parliament was in the same year dissolved.

21. "Scotland's opposition to the Popish Bill, containing a collection of all the declarations and resolutions published by the General Assembly of Scotland, and the different provincial synods, presbyteries, associate presbyteries, kirk sessions, counties, cities, royal boroughs, boroughs, towns, parishes, incorporations, and societies throughout Scotland, against the repeal of the statutes enacted, and for ever ratified, by the Revolution and Union Parliament, for preventing the growth of Popery; with an introduction, giving a short history of the rise, progress, and effects of that national alarm; and an appendix, containing amongst other things, some remarks, showing the propriety and necessity of opposing such repeal, with a few hints on the constitutional and prudent mode of opposition;" was published in Edinburgh, 1781.

22. The Riots at Edinburgh were in the February preceding those in London.

23. The oath inserted in the bill as passed by the House of Commons contained the following clause. "I do also, in my conscience, declare and solemnly swear, — that no foreign church, prelate or priest, or assembly of priests, or ecclesiastical power whatsoever, hath or ought to have, any jurisdiction or authority whatsoever within this realm, *that can directly or indirectly affect or interfere with the independence, sovereignty, laws, constitution, or government thereof*, or the rights, liberties, persons, or properties of the people of the said realm or any of them." This, though in conformity with the protestation of the general body of Roman Catholics, adopted in 1778, (see the note in p. 42 of the Magazine for February,) and sanctioned by "the Catholic Committee," consisting of laymen, was condemned by three out of the four Vicars Apostolic, or titular bishops, to whom the court of Rome delegates its authority over the English Papists; and ultimately the oath required by the act of 1778, with some slight alterations, was substituted, in which the corresponding clause is; "I do declare that the Pope of Rome, or any other foreign prince, prelate, state, or potentate, hath or ought to have, *any temporal or civil jurisdiction, power, superiority, or preeminence, directly or indirectly, within this realm*" The difference between the terms of the two clauses is material and important. See Bp. Horsley's Speeches, p. 48, &c.

24. Notwithstanding these favors the vilest arts were used and succeeded in exciting a Popish rebellion in Ireland in 1793.

25. See the part of it, relevant to this subject, in No. XXVIII. of the publications of the Protestant Association.

26. Bp. Horsley's views appear from the following passages in his Speech:— "My mind is so unfashionably constructed, that it cannot quit hold of the distinction between toleration and admission to political power and authority in the state. The object of toleration is conscientious scruples, I conceive that the Roman

Catholics already enjoy a perfect toleration: the statutes which exclude them from offices of high trust and authority in the State are not penal; such exclusions are not penalties; and the relaxation of those statutes* would not be toleration; it would be an indulgence of a very different kind." Again. "My mind is not yet brought to that modern liberality of sentiment which holds it to be a matter of indifference to the State of what religion the person may be who fill its highest offices: I hold, that there is danger to the State, when persons are admitted to high offices who are not of the religion of the State, be it what it may." — pp. 490, 499.

27. The following passages in Mr. Pitt's speech explain his views and the position of the question at that time: "I observe with pleasure, that the application made by the petitioners has not been advanced as a claim of right, but of expediency. That is the ground upon which I feel the measure ought alone to be discussed: for I cannot allow that, at any time, under any circumstances, or under any possible situation of affairs, it ought to be discussed or entertained as a claim or question of right. I have never been one of those who have held that the term emancipation is, in the smallest degree, applicable to the repeal of the few remaining penal statutes to which the Catholics are still liable.

"As to the chance of carrying the question at present with general concurrence, of gratifying the Catholics without offending the Protestants, of confirming the affections of the one without raising the suspicions and exciting the fears of the other, not only in Ireland but in England, I confess there appears to me to be none." ... I ask any gentleman whether he does not believe, looking to the opinions of the members of the established church, of the nobility, of the men of property, of the middling and respectable classes of society — I ask him, whether he does not believe, looking at the sentiments of the mass of Protestants of this country and of Ireland, that there is the greatest repugnance to this measure, and that even if it could now be carried, so far from producing conciliation and union, it would tend, on the contrary, to disappoint all the prospects of advantage which under other circumstances would be derived from it? ... I am sure I shall not be contradicted when I say, that ever since the union this subject has in a very considerable degree attracted public attention, and that of late, notwithstanding the other events which have occupied the public mind, it has been the subject of much conversation both in public and private, particularly since the Catholic petition has been presented, and since the honorable gentleman" (Mr. Fox) "has given notice of his present motion; and I should disguise my real sentiments, if I did not say that. at present the prevailing sentiment is strongly against this measure." — *Pitt's Speeches*, vol. 3, p. 427 — 428.

28. The resolution was published during the general election which ensued on the change in the administration; and it called forth a letter of remonstrance to the Secretary from Lord Grenville. See *Ann. Reg.* 1807, vol. 49, p. 624 — 626. He remained, however, an attached member of that Society until his death in 1884.

29. See Lord Grenville's Letter to the Earl of Fingall, in the *Quarterly Review*. Feb. 1810, vol.3, p. 114. "When last I had the honour of addressing the house," said Mr. Grattan, "in behalf of the Catholic claims, I then stated that the Catholics were willing to concede to his Majesty the right of veto on the Catholic nomination of their bishops. I am sorry to say, that I cannot now affirm that such are the sentiments of the Roman Catholics of Ireland upon that subject. Whether I have misinformed the house, or the Catholics have been guilty of retraction, is a question which I shall never agitate, it being my fixed principle never to defend myself at the expense of my country."

30. In this year the order of Jesuits was reestablished by the bull of Pope Pius VII., dated August 7th. Mr. Whitbread, advocating the Roman Catholic claims in 1812, asked this (among other questions,) with the confidence of one who would have deemed it absurd to suppose that an affirmative answer could be given: "Was there any apprehension of the Jesuits being restored"?

31. Afterwards created Lord Colchester.

32. *Memoirs of Granville Sharp*, p. 443, 444, 4to. Lond. 1820.

33. This character is probably inaccurate. Amongst them, however, was an answer to "An Appeal to the Protestants of Great Britain and Ireland," published in 1813, by Charles Butler, an eminent Roman Catholic

Barrister, of which he thus writes in his *Reminiscences*, vol. i. p. 225, 1822: "The ablest answer was published by a Society of gentlemen who styled themselves *the Protestant Association*, the late worthy and learned Mr. Granville Sharp, was their president: it expressed some of the prejudices of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but was written with temper and moderation."

34. A copy of it was furnished to the writer by a friend of the Protestant Association.

35. See the extracts from Roman Catholic petitions in No. XXIII. of the Publications of the Protestant Association—tract called "The Repeal of the Popish Emancipation Act."

36. Amongst the appeals by individuals were an Address to the Freeholders of Kent, by Lord Bexley; Letters from Lord Colchester to Lord Redesdale; Four Letters on the Catholic Question, by the Rev. G. S. Faber; the Security of the Protestant Establishment, incompatible with the concession of power to Roman Catholics, by the Rev. Geo. Townsend; a Letter to the Record, by the Rev. John Scott; a Letter, by the Rev. A. Brandram; a Statement of some reasons for continuing to Protestants the whole Legislature of Great Britain and Ireland, by W. W. Hull, Esq.; "No Surrender," being an appeal to the Gentry and Inhabitants of Great Yarmouth, by J. P. Cory, Esq.; and a small monthly publication, called the "Protestant Warder," commenced on the 1st of January, 1829, at Stourport, in Worcestershire,

37. His Speech on the second reading of the Roman Catholic Relief Bill in the House of Commons, has been reprinted by the Protestant Association.—Publications, No. XX.

38. Amongst those Peers who entered protests against the bill in the House of Lords, were the Duke of Newcastle; Earls Bradford, Brownlow, Eldon, Mansfield, Mountcashell, Winchelsea; Viscounts Farnham, Lorton, Sidmouth; Barons Bexley, Kenyon, Redesdale, Romney, Tenterden; and the Bishops of Bath and Wells, and Salisbury.

39. "O thou infinitely great and blessed God, whose love and compassion are commensurate with thyself; this glorious truth is revealed to us in the most comprehensive manner in the gift of thy Son, to deliver and redeem us from this world, and to communicate the gift of thy Spirit, to invest us in a love which is to raise us from all the ruin and depths of the fall, and to preserve us in a state of purity and holiness, and consequently of peace, for ever and ever. May these sublime truths constitute the delight and glory of our lives. We have been too long feeding on the trifles of time and sense, enable us to ascend above them and to live in thy presence; forgive us the wickedness of our past lives, and do thou be pleased, in the spirit of true religion, to lead us into the recesses of our hearts, to weep over our own sins and the sins of our nation, and at the same time to repose implicit confidence in thy promises, in thy mercy, and in thy love. Enable us to make a holy and wise use of all thy providential dispensations. Bless us at the present moment; and, O thou God of Heaven, be pleased to have mercy upon Britain; make her depart from iniquity, and cause thy church in every part of her to fall down before thee in dust and ashes, throwing themselves upon thy covenant mercy, and raising a mighty bulwark of prayer for their land. O forgive us, we beseech thee, and let us not see the crown of England robbed of its brightest jewel, and thy enemies taking the lead in our councils. We dare not prescribe any means—at present we see none; but thou canst still disperse the dark cloud hanging over our heads. O preserve to us the constitution of our forefathers, O thou God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob—thou hast commanded thy church to call upon thee in the day of trouble. Be with us then and preserve us; lead us into our own bosoms, and make us remember that the sins of thy church are the most provoking and insulting to thee,—that judgment begins at the household of God,—that thou chastisest thine own family before thou hurlest thine enemies into destruction. If we are to smart for our sins, O lead us into the glories of true religion, pour upon us thy Holy Spirit, as a spirit of grace and of supplication; dispose thy church throughout Britain to wait upon thee, to be ceaselessly engaged in prayer. Hear us, O thou blessed and merciful God, whilst we ask everything in the name and for the sake of Jesus. Amen." —*Feb.* 8, 1829.

"O Lord God Almighty, thou hast commanded us to pray. It is thy delight to answer the prayers of thy family,—to answer them with everything good, temporal and spiritual, even with everything best for them. May we have such faith in this truth, as to lead us to trust in Thee, in the noon of night as well as of day, and to look up perpetually to that God who has been the rock and refuge of his church in all ages, and will

be so to the end of time. Do thou be pleased to be with us this morning, and to convince us of the awful and at the same time lovely realities of true religion, that we may be as conscious of death, judgment, and eternity, as of our own existence. O keep the truth alive in our hearts by thy Holy Spirit, that we may ascend in it perpetually to Thee. O hear us for our country, and whilst this dark cloud is hanging over it, which we fear is charged with thine indignation, O fill thy family here and elsewhere with the spirit of grace and of supplication, that the blessings we have hitherto enjoyed under an exclusively Protestant government, may be continued to us and our posterity. Lord, at the present moment, we know not what to think nor what to do; but we know that trifles in thine omnipotent hand can overthrow empires and establish kingdoms. We desire then to commit ourselves and our country into thy hands, and ask all in the name and for the sake of thy beloved Son, our gracious Redeemer. Amen."—*March 2, 1829.*

"O Lord God, thou hast commanded us to wait on thee and to call on thee in the day of trouble, and thou hast promised to hear and answer us. Do thou be with us at the present moment, and visit thy church in Britain more than ever. O Lord God Almighty, may we know, through the rich influence of thy Holy Spirit, what thy holy religion is, that we may unite in one spirit, and that all little differences may be passed over in an affectionate silence. Dark as our present prospects are, we have no reason to sink into despondency. Arm us with thy truth and with thy spirit, and then without any human aid, we shall know what it is to triumph over all our enemies. Be our sun and shield, that if Popery is destined to gain the ascendancy in our land, we may be armed to meet and triumph over all its attendant evils. May we remember that not only from seeming but from real evils thou canst and wilt deduce good,—that in leading thy church triumphantly over all our enemies, thou art glorifying thyself whilst thou art preparing her for thy presence above. Arm with the lamb-like influences of thy holy religion, that we may present ourselves to all in thy image; and then if man be against us, the Lord of Hosts will be with us, to cause us to triumph over all our enemies, now and for ever. Amen."—*April 5, 1829.*

Prayers of the late Rev. William Howels, as delivered before and after the Sermon, at Long Acre Chapel. 12mo. London 1835.

40. It has been related upon good authority, that when the Roman Catholic Relief Bill was brought to the king to receive the royal assent, the king, as soon as he had signed it, threw the pen angrily to the ground; and upon some one of the attendants proceeding to pick it up, he exclaimed, "Let it lye.—No man can tell what may be the consequences of that act." And the recollection of that which George III. would have deemed a breach of the coronation oath dwelt upon his mind to the last. In the words of one who was admitted to his friendship, "It broke his heart."

It should be mentioned, that the number of petitions against the Bill was 2953; whereas the number in favour of it was 918 (642 of which were from Papists); leaving a majority of 2035 against the Bill.

41. See the Protestant Journal for 1882, p. 66. In the same publication, p. 760, it is recorded, that a Protestant Association was formed in the spring of that year, at New York, in the United States, which had issued the following circular:

"Acknowledging the Pope as their supreme common head, and guided by his Vicar, in the midst of them, the Roman Catholics act as a body throughout the land with perfect unity, and with a concentrated and dangerous force against the purity and simplicity of the Gospel of Christ.

"Popery in our land, is precisely the same in its genius and spirit as it ever has been. It is unreformed, and unchanged. Its aspects and peculiarities may be concealed, disguised, and adapted to the circumstances growing out of free institutions. But its claims to infallibility its perfect and absolute submission to the Pope's will and canons; and its actually using among us to this day, the very same decretals, canons, and all the doctrines and rites of the Missal, which have ever been used in Rome, even in the dark ages,—do complete the demonstration that Popery is unchanged in its nature and spirit.

"Wherever it gains an ascendancy, it tends to subvert and destroy, by the very laws of its nature, all civil and religious liberty. This fact is written legibly in the history and present condition of every kingdom and nation, where it is the religion of the Court, and is established by law, as in Spain, Italy, Austria, &c. Hence

we may fairly infer, that it waits only the opportunity of gaining the ascendancy of power, to inflict on us in this country, all the evils produced by it in Europe, and our southern Continent. That this will not take place we readily admit. But, then, the calamity is to be prevented, under divine grace, only by the concentrated and active exertions of all Christian patriots.

"With these preliminary remarks, we beseech your attention to the following resolution:

"Resolved, — That it be recommended to our brethren of the Protestant Churches in all our principal cities, to form a PROTESTANT ASSOCIATION in each city, for the purpose of exposing the evils of Popery, and defending the principles of the Reformation, and that the president and secretaries be instructed to transmit a copy of this Resolution to one or more of the most respectable Clergymen and laymen in each city, to stir up the Christian community, and to defend the truths of God against all encroachments upon the purity and simplicity of the Gospel."

42. See "Authentic Reports of the two great Protestant Meetings, held at Exeter Hall, London, on Saturday, June 20, and Saturday, July 11, 1836, to prove to Protestants of all denominations, by authentic documents, the real tenets of the Church of Rome, as now held by the Roman Catholic Priests and Bishops of Ireland." London, 1835, price 6d.

43. See his Speech, No. XX. of the publications of the Protestant Association.

44. See the reflections upon the passing of the act of 1829, in the History of England by the Rev. H. Walter, vol. 7.