

# The Declaration of the Nobility, Gentry, and Commonalty at the Rendezvous at *Nottingham*, Nov. 22. 1688.

**W**E the Nobility, Gentry, and Commonalty of these Northern Counties assembled together at *Nottingham*, for the defence of the Laws, Religion, and Properties, according to those free-born Liberties and Priviledges, descended to us from our Ancestors, as the undoubted Birth-right of the Subjects of this Kingdom of *England*, (not doubting but the Infringers and Invaders of our Rights will represent us to the rest of the Nation in the most malicious dress they can put upon us) do here unanimously think it our Duty to declare to the rest of our Protestant Fellow-Subjects the Grounds of our present Undertaking.

We are by innumerable Grievances made sensible, that the very Fundamentals of our Religion, Liberties, and Properties are about to be rooted out by our late Jesuitical Privy-Council, as hath been of late too apparent, 1. By the King's dispensing with all the Establish'd Laws at his pleasure. 2. By displacing all Officers out of all Offices of Trust and Advantage, and placing others in their room that are known Papists, deservedly made incapable by the Establish'd Laws of our Land. 3. By destroying the Charters of most Corporations in the Land. 4. By discouraging all persons that are not Papists, preferring such as turn to Popery. 5. By displacing all honest and conscientious Judges, unless they would, contrary to their Consciences, declare that to be Law which was meerly arbitrary. 6. By branding all men with the name of Rebels that but offered to justify the Laws in a legal Course against the arbitrary proceedings of the King, or any of his corrupt Ministers. 7. By burthening the Nation with an Army, to maintain the violation of the Rights of the Subjects. 8. By discountenancing the Establish'd Reform'd Religion. 9. By forbidding the Subjects the benefit of petitioning, and construing them Libellers; so rendering the Laws a Nose of Wax, to serve their arbitrary Ends. And many more such like, too long here to enumerate.

We being thus made sadly sensible of the Arbitrary, and Tyrannical Government that is by the Influence of Jesuitical Councils coming upon us, do unanimously declare, That not being willing to deliver our posterity over to such a condition of Popery and Slavery, as the aforesaid Oppressions inevitably threaten; we will to the utmost of our power oppose the same, by joining with the Prince of *Orange* (whom we hope God Almighty hath sent to rescue us from the Oppressions aforesaid) will use our utmost Endeavours for the recovery of our almost ruin'd Laws, Liberties, and Religion; and herein we hope all good Protestant Subjects will with their Lives and Fortunes be assistant to us, and not be bugbear'd with the opprobrious terms of Rebels, by which they would fright us, to become perfect Slaves to their tyrannical Insolencies and Usurpations; for we assure our selves, that no rational and unbiassed person will judge it Rebellion to defend our Laws and Religion, which all our Princes have Sworn at their Coronations; which Oath, how well it hath been observed of late, we desire a Free Parliament may have the Consideration of.

We own it Rebellion to resist a King that governs by Law; but he was always accounted a Tyrant that made his Will the Law; and to resist such an one, we justly esteem no Rebellion, but a necessary Defence; and in this Consideration we doubt not of all honest mens assistance, and humbly hope for, and implore the great God's protection, that turneth the hearts of his people as pleaseth him best; it having been observed, That people can never be of one mind without his inspiration, which hath in all Ages confirmed that observation, *Vox Populi est Vox Dei*.

The present restoring of Charters, and reversing the oppressing and unjust Judgment given on *Magdalen* Colledge Fellows, is plain, are but to still the people, like Plums to Children, by deceiving them for a while; but if they shall by this Stratagem be fooled, till this present storm that threatens the Papists, be past, as soon as they shall be settled, the former Oppression will be put on with greater vigour; but we hope in vain is the Net spread in the sight of the Birds: For (1.) The Papists old Rule is, *That Faith is not to be kept with Hereticks*, as they term Protestants, tho' the Popish Religion is the greatest Heresie. And (2.) Queen *Mary's* so ill observing her promises to the *Suffolk*-men that helpt her to her Throne. And above all, (3.) the Popes dispensing with the breach of Oaths, Treaties, or Promises, at his pleasure, when it makes for the service of Holy Church, as they term it. These, we say, are such convincing Reasons to hinder us from giving Credit to the aforesaid *Mock-Shews* of Redress, that we think our selves bound in Conscience to rest on no Security that shall not be approved by a freely Elected Parliament, to whom, under God, we refer our Cause.

## 'Declaration of the Nobility, Gentry and Commonalty at Nottingham.'

Grievances against James's "oppressive rule" published on 22 November 1688. Courtesy Somerset Record Office; Simon Heneage deposit of the Walker Heneage bequest reference DD/WHb 3070.