

**A HISTORY
OF THE PROTESTANT
REFORMATION**

LETTER FOURTEEN



By William Cobbett

1825

**A HISTORY
OF THE
PROTESTANT "REFORMATION"
IN
ENGLAND AND IRELAND**

**Showing how that event has impoverished and degraded
the main
body of the People in those Countries**

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS

Addressed to all sensible and just Englishmen

BY WILLIAM COBBETT.

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**A HISTORY
OF THE
PROTESTANT REFORMATION
LETTER XIV**

**William's Triumph over James and the Catholics.
"No-Popery" War requires Money to carry it on.
Burnet's Scheme of Borrowing and Funding.
Origin of Banks and Bank Notes.
Heavy Taxes, Excise, Septennial Bill,
Attempt to Tax the Americans,
Americans revolt in the face of the Doctrines of Black-Stone**

By William Cobbett

Kensington, 31st December 1825

Dear Friends,

392. We have seen, in the foregoing Letter, that **Reformation the Third**, commonly called the "**Glorious Revolution**" grew directly out of **Reformation the Second**; and we are now to see **Reformation the Fourth**, commonly called "**the American Revolution**" grow directly out of **Reformation the Third**; and we are, before we get to the end of this present Letter, to see how severely the English people have been scourged, and how much more severely they are likely still to be scourged a consequence of these several "**Reformations**," which have all proceeded from **Reformation the First**, as naturally the stem and the branches of the tree proceed from the root.

393. We have seen, that King James and his family were set aside, because they were Catholics; and we are to bear that in mind, not forgetting, at the same time, that **ALFRED THE GREAT** was a Catholic, and that those kings of England, who really conquered France, and won that title of **King of France**, which **GEORGE III.** gave up, were also Catholics. But we are now particularly to bear in mind, that **James, an Englishman**, was set aside, that **William, a Dutchman**, was made king in his stead, and that James's heirs were set aside too, because he and they were Catholics. Bearing these things constantly in mind, we shall now see what took place, and how the "**Protestant Reformation**" worked, till it produced the **DEBT**, the **Banks**, the **Stock-Jobbers**, and the **American Revolution**.

394. James found faithful adherents in his Irish subjects, who fought and bled in his cause with all that bravery and disregard of life of which so many Irishmen have given proof. But, with the aid of Dutch and German armies, paid by England, the "**Deliverer**" finally triumphed over **James** and the Irish, and the whole kingdom submitted to the sway of the former. It is hardly necessary to say, that the Catholics were now doomed to suffer punishments heretofore unknown; and that,

if their faith still existed in the kingdom, it could scarcely be owing to any thing short of the immediate superintendence of Providence. The oppressions which they had had to endure under former sovereigns were terrible enough; but now began a series of acts against them, such as the world never heard of before. I shall, further on, have to give a sketch, at least, of these acts, which we shall find going on in increasing number and in severity, and, at least, presenting a mass of punishment which, to think of makes one's blood ran cold, when, all of a sudden, in the 18th year of **GEORGE III.**, came the **American Revolution**, which grew out of the **English Revolution** and (mark the justice of God!) which produced the first relaxation in this most dreadfully penal code.

395. But **HOW** did the **American Revolution** grow out of the Dutch Deliverer's or "**Glorious**" Revolution? A very pertinent and important question, my friends, and one that it is my duty to answer in the fullest and most satisfactory manner, for this points to the very heart of my subject. We shall by-and-by see the **American Revolution** producing wonderful events, and therefore we must with the greatest possible care trace it to its true source, especially as in all human probability this nation has yet to receive from that quarter blows far heavier than it has ever yet had to sustain.

396. The "**Protestant Deliverer**" had in the first place brought over a Dutch army for the English nation to support. Next there were the expenses and bloodshed of a civil war to endure for the sake of the "**deliverance from Popery.**" But these, though they produced suffering enough, were a mere nothing compared to what was to follow, for this was destined to scourge the nation for ages and ages yet to come, and to produce in the end effects that the human mind can hardly contemplate with steadiness.

397. King James had, as we have seen, been received in France. **LOUIS XIV.** treated him as King of England, Scotland, and Ireland. William hated Louis for this, and England had to pay for that hatred. All those who had assisted in a conspicuous manner to bring in the "**Deliverer**" were now embarked in the same boat with him. They were compelled to humour and to yield to him. They, historians say, wished to give the crown solely to his wife, because, she being **James's daughter**, there would have been less of revolution in this than in giving the crown to an utter alien. But he flatly told them that he "**would not hold his power by the apron strings,**" and, the dispute having continued for some time, he cut the matter short with them by declaring that if they did not give him the crown he would go back to Holland and leave them to their old sovereign! This was enough; they gave him the crown without more hesitation, and they found that they had got not only a "**deliverer**" but a master at the same time.

398. The same reasons that induced a submission to this conduct in the "**Deliverer,**" induced the same parties to go cordially along with him in his war against France. There was **JAMES** in France; a great part of his people were still for him; if France were at peace with England the communication could not be cut off. Therefore war with France was absolutely necessary to the maintenance of **William on the throne**; and if he were driven from the throne, what was to become of those who had obtained from him, as the price of their services in bringing him in, **immense grants of crown lands** and various other enormous emoluments, none of which they could expect to retain for a day if **JAMES** were restored? Besides this, there was the danger, and very great danger, too, to their own estates and their lives; for though that which they did was and is called a "**glorious revolution,**" it would, if **James** had been restored, have been called by a very different name; and that name would not have been an empty sound, it would have been applied to very practical purposes, and the chances are that very few of the principal actors would have wholly escaped. And there were, moreover, the possessors of the immense property of the Church founded and endowed by our fathers. The confiscation of this was not yet of so ancient a date as to have been forgotten. Tradition is very long-lived. Many and many then alive knew all the story well. They had heard their grandfathers say that the Catholic Church kept all

the poor, that the people were then better off; and they felt, the whole of the people felt, that England had lost by the change. Therefore, in case of the restoration of **JAMES**, the possessors of Church property, whether they were lay or clerical, might reasonably have their fears.

399. Thus, all these deeply interested parties, who were also the most powerful parties in the kingdom, were for a war with France, which they rightly regarded as absolutely necessary to the keeping of William on the throne, and to the quiet enjoyment of their great possessions, if not actually to the safety of their lives. This ought therefore to have been called a war to preserve Church property, crown lands and other great emoluments, to their present possessors. But those who make wars, like those who make confiscations of property belonging to the Church and poor, generally know how to give them a good name, and accordingly this was called and proclaimed as a war to preserve the Protestant religion, and to keep out Popery and slavery. It was a real "no-popery" war, and though attended with the most dreadful consequences to the nation, it answered all the purposes of its inventors. The history of this war as an affair of righting is of little consequence to us. It was, indeed, attended in this respect with disgrace enough, but it answered the great object of its inventors. It did not hurt France, it did not get rid of **JAMES** and his son, but it made the English people identify their old king and his son with the foreign enemies of England! That was what the inventors of the war wanted, and that they completely got. It was in vain that King James protested that he meant no harm to England; it was in vain that he reminded the people that he had been compelled to flee to France ; in vain his declarations that the French only wanted to assist in restoring him to his rights. They saw him in France, they saw the French fighting for him and against England, that was quite sufficient. Men do not reason in such a case, and this the inventors of this war knew very well.

400. But though passion muddles the head, though even honest feeling may silence the reasoning faculties, the purse is seldom to be quieted so easily; and this war, though for the preservation of the Protestant religion and for keeping out Popery and slavery, soon began to make some most dreadful tugs at this most sensitive part of those accoutrements that almost make part and parcel of the human frame. The expenses of this famous "**no popery**" war—Good God! what has this kingdom not suffered for that horrid and hypocritical cry!— The expenses of this famous "**no-popery**" war were enormous. The taxes were, of course, in proportion to those expenses, and the people, who already paid more than four times as much as they had paid in the time of **JAMES**, began not only to murmur but to give no very insignificant signs of sorrow for having been "**delivered!**" France was powerful, the French king liberal and zealous, and the state of things was ticklish. Force, as far as law and the suspension of law could go, was pretty fairly put in motion; but a scheme was at last hit upon to get the money, and yet not to tug so very hard at that tender part, the purse.

401. An Act of Parliament was passed in the year 1694, being the 5th year of **William and Mary, chapter 20**, the title of which act is in the following words,—words that every man should bear in mind, words fatal to the peace and the happiness of England, words which were the precursor of a scourge greater than ever before afflicted any part of God's creation :—An Act for granting to their Majesties several rates and duties upon tonnage of ships and vessels, and upon beer, ale, and other liquors, for securing certain recompenses and advantages in the said Act mentioned, to such persons as shall voluntarily advance the sum of **fifteen hundred thousand pounds** towards carrying on the war against France. **This act lays certain duties, sufficient to pay the interest of this sum of £1,500,000.** Then it points out the manner of subscribing, the mode of paying the interest, or annuities, and then it provides that, if so much of the whole sum be subscribed by such a time, the subscribers shall have a charter under the title of "**The Governor and Company of the Bank of England**"!

402. Thus arose loans, funds, banks, bankers, banknotes, and a **national debt; things that England had never heard or dreamed of before this war "for preserving the Protestant religion as by law established;"** things without which she had had a long and glorious career of many centuries, and had been the greatest and happiest country in the world; things which

she never would and never could have heard of, had it not been for what is audaciously called the "**Reformation**," seeing that to lend money at interest, that is to say, for gain, that is to say to receive money for the use of money, seeing that to do this was contrary and still is contrary to the principles of the Catholic Church, and amongst Christians or professors of Christianity such a thing was never heard of before that which is impudently called "**the Reformation.**" **THE REV. MR. O'CALLAGHAN**, in his excellent little work (J. O'Callaghan, *Usury, or Lending at Interest*, 1825. The book was first published in New York in the summer of 1824), which I had the honour to republish last winter, and which ought to be read by every man, and especially every young man, in the kingdom, has shown that the ancient philosophers, the Fathers of the Church, both Testaments, the Canons of the Church, and the decisions of Pope and Councils, all agree, all declare that to take money for the use of money is sinful. Indeed, no such thing was ever attempted to be justified until the savage **HENRY VIII.** had cast off the supremacy of the Pope. Jews did it; but, then, **Jews had no civil rights.** They existed only by mere sufferance. They could be shut up, or banished, or even sold at the king's pleasure. They were regarded as a sort of monsters, who professed to be the lineal descendants and to hold the opinions of those who had murdered the Son of God and the Saviour of men. They were not permitted to practise their blasphemies openly. If they had synagogues they were unseen by the people. **The horrid wretches themselves were compelled to keep out of public view on Sundays** and on saints' days. They were not allowed to pollute with their presence the streets or the roads of a Christian country on days set apart for public devotion. In degraded wretches like these usury, that is, receiving money for the use of money, was tolerated just for the same cause that incest is tolerated amongst dogs.

403. How far the base spirit of usury may now have crept in even amongst Catholics themselves I know not, nor is it of importance as to the matter immediately before me. It is certain that before the "**Reformation**" there was no such thing known amongst Christians as receiving money or profit in any shape, merely for the use of money. It would be easy to show that mischief enormous is inseparable from such a practice, but we shall see enough of the mischief in the end. Suffice it for the present that this national usury, which was now invented for the first time, arose out of the "**Reformation.**"

404. This monstrous thing, the usury or funding system, was not only a Protestant invention, not only arose out of the "**Reformation**," not only was established for the express purpose of carrying on a war for the preservation of this **Church of England** against the efforts of Popery, but the inventor, **BURNET**, was the most indefatigable advocate for the "**Reformation**" that had ever existed. So that the thing was not only invented by Protestants to do injury to Catholics, it was not only intended by them for this purpose, it was not only destined by the wisdom and justice of God to be a scourge, to be the most terrible of all scourges to the Protestants themselves, it was not only destined to make, at last, the "**Church by law established**" look at the usurers with no very quiet feelings, the thing was not only thus done and thus destined to operate, but the instrument was the fittest, the very fittest, that could have been found in the whole world.

405. **BURNET**, whose first name, as the Scotch call it, was Gilbert, was in the first place a political church parson, next he was a monstrously lying historian, next he was a Scotchman, and lastly he received the thanks of Parliament for his History of the Reformation, that is to say, a mass of the most base falsehoods and misrepresentations that ever were put upon paper; so that the instrument was the very fittest that could have been found on earth. This man had, at the accession of **JAMES II**, gone to Holland, where he became secretary to William (afterwards the "**Deliverer**"), and where he corresponded with and aided the "**Glorious Revolutionizers**" in England, and in 1689, the year after the "**deliverance**", the "**Deliverer**" made him Bishop of Salisbury as a reward for his "**glorious revolution**" services.

407. This was the fittest man in the world to invent that which was destined to be a scourge to England. Though become a bishop he was still a most active politician; and when the difficulty of carrying on the "**no popery**" war arose, and when those fears mentioned in paragraph 401

began to be powerful, this bishop of the "**law-established Church**" it was who invented, who he adopted the schemes of borrowing, of mortgaging the taxes, and of pawning the property and labour of future generations. Pretty "**deliverance**"! Besides sparing the purses of the people and quieting their discontents on account of taxes, this scheme had a further and still more important object in view, namely, to make all those who had money to lend wish to see the new king and new dynasty and all the grants and emoluments of the "**glorious revolution**" folks upheld. That was the permanent object of this "**no popery**" project.

407. The case was this, and we ought clearly to understand it, seeing that here is the true origin of all our present alarms, dangers and miseries. **JAMES II.** and his son had been set aside because they were Catholics, a "**glorious revolution**" had been made, the great makers of Church possessions. If **JAMES** were restored all these would be taken from them, together with all the titles of nobility, all the bishoprics, and in short everything granted by the "**Deliverer.**" And as the "**Deliverer**" was liable to die, it was necessary to these great possessors and "**glorious**" actors to take care, if possible, that **James** or his son should not be the successors of the "**Deliverer.**" Acts of Parliament were passed to provide against this danger; but still, experience had shown that acts of Parliament were in some cases of but little avail when the great body of the people, feeling acutely, were opposed to them. Therefore something was wanted to bind great numbers of the people fast to the new dynasty. The cry of "**no popery**" had some power, but it had not power sufficient to weigh down that which, in later times, **CASTLEREAGH** had the insolence to call the "**ignorant impatience of taxation,**" and for which impatience the English were in former times always remarkable.

408. The "**Deliverer**" and all those who had brought him in, together with all those who had been fattened or elevated by him, were, as I said before, embarked in the same boat: but the great body of the people were not yet thus embarked. Indeed, very few of them, comparatively, were thus embarked. But if all, or a great part of those who had money to lend, could by the temptation of great gain be induced to lend their money on interest to the government, if they could be induced to do this, it was easy to see that all this description of persons would then be embarked in the same boat too; and that they who must necessarily be a class having great influence in the community would be amongst the most zealous supporters of the "**Deliverer,**" and the "**glorious**" aiders, abettors, and makers of the "**revolution**" which had just taken place.

409. For these purposes this funding system was invented. It had the two-fold object of raising money to carry on the "**no-popery**" war and of binding to the "**no popery**" government all those persons who wished to lend money at high interest, and these were, as is always the case, the most greedy, most selfish, least public-spirited, and most base and slavish and unjust part of the people. The scheme, which was quite worthy of the mind of the **Protestant Bishop Burnet,** answered its purposes: it enabled the "**Deliverer**" to carry on the "**no-popery**" war, it bound fast to the "**Deliverer**" and his bringers-in et al) the base and selfish and greedy and unfeeling part of those who had money. The scheme succeeded in effecting its immediate objects, but, good God! what a scourge did it provide for future generations! What troubles, what shocks, what sufferings it had in store for a people whose rulers, in an evil hour, resorted to such means for the purpose of causing to be trampled under foot those whose only crime was that of adhering to the faith of their fathers!

410. The sum at first borrowed was a mere trifle. It deceived by its seeming insignificance. But it was very far from being intended to stop with that trifle. The inventors knew well what they were about. Their design was to mortgage, by degrees, the whole of the country, all the lands, all the houses, and all other property, and even all labour, to those who would lend their money to the state. The thing soon began to swell at a great rate, and before the end of the "**glorious**" no-popery war, the interest alone of the debt, the annual interest, amounted to £1,310,492 a year, which, observe, was a greater sum than the whole of the taxes had yearly amounted to in the reign of the Catholic **JAMES II.** I So that here were taxes laid on for ever, mind that; here were, on account of this grand no-popery affair—merely on account of this "**glorious revolution,**"

which was expressly made for the purpose of getting rid of a Catholic king here were additional taxes laid on for ever to a greater amount than the whole of the taxes raised by that Catholic king! Thus does the justice of God work! The treatment of the Catholics at this time was truly horrible; the main body of the English people either approved of this treatment, or winked at it; this debt scheme was invented by a Protestant bishop for the purpose of utterly extirpating the Catholic religion, and that religion still lives in the kingdom, nay, there are in the kingdom a greater number of Catholics than there are persons of any one other religion; while the scheme, **the crafty, the cunning, the deep scheme**, has from its ominous birth been **breeding swarms of Jews, Quakers**, usurers of every description, feeding and fattening on the vitals of the country, till at last it has produced what the world never saw before, —starvation in the midst of abundance! Yea, verily, this is the picture we now exhibit to the world: the Law-Church parsons putting up in all the churches thanksgiving for a plenteous harvest, and the main mass of the labouring people fed and clad worse than the felons in the gaols!

411. However, we must not anticipate. We shall further on see something of the probable ultimate effects of this dreadful scheme. At present we have to see how it, together with the "**glorious revolution**" out of which it arose, led to and produced the **American revolution**, or "**Reformation**" the fourth, by which two things were accomplished; first, the lopping off of a large and valuable part of the dominions of England; secondly, the creating of a new mercantile and naval power, capable of disputing with her that dominion of the sea which has for so many ages been her chief glory, and without possessing which she must become a second-rate power in Europe. These were the things which were accomplished by the **American Revolution**, and therefore let us now see what it was that produced that revolution, or rather, let us see how it grew directly out of the "**glorious revolution**" and its "**no-popery**" wars and debts.

412. **BURNET'S** contrivance did very well for present use: it made the nation deaf to the voice of all those who foreboded mischief from it, it made all those who were interested in the funds advocates for taxation; the deep scheme set the rich to live upon the poor, and made the former have no feeling for those who bore the burden of the taxes; in short, it divided the nation into two classes, the tax-payers and the tax-eaters, and these latter had the government at their back. The great protection of the people of England always had been, that they could not be taxed without their own consent. This was always in Catholic times the great principle of the English government, and it is expressly and most explicitly asserted in **MAGNA CHARTA**, which was the work of a Catholic archbishop of Canterbury more than of anybody else. But how was it to be expected that this grand principle would be maintained, when a large part of the rich people themselves lived upon the taxes; when a man's next-door neighbour received the taxes paid by that man; when, in short, the community was completely divided, one part having a powerful interest in upholding that which was oppressive and ruinous to the other part?

413. Taxes, of course, went on increasing, and the debt went on in the same way. The Protestant interest demanded more wars, and brought on a couple of civil wars. Taxation marched on with dreadful strides. The "**glorious revolution**" it had been settled and enacted that there should be a new Parliament called every three years at least, and this had been held forth as one of the great gains of the "**glorious revolution**." Another "**great gain**" was that no pensioner and no placeman were to sit in the House of Commons. These things were enacted, they were laws of the land, they were held forth to the people as great things gained by "**Glorious**." This last act was soon repealed, and placemen and pensioners have sat in the House of Commons people a fresh choice every three years at least, that was a vital law. That law was in the new state of things, a state of taxes and debts, a state of things which demanded new taxes almost every year; in such a state of things frequent and new Parliaments, new choosing at short intervals, were absolutely necessary to give the people a chance, even so much as a chance of avoiding oppressive taxation, and oppression, indeed, of every sort. It was, in short, the only means of protection that was left to the people.

414 Yet to uphold the new system it was necessary to demolish even this barrier of liberty and property; and in the year 1715, being the first year of the reign of **GEORGE I., CHAP, XXXVIII.**, this law, this vital law, this solemn compact between the Protestant dynasty and the people, was repealed and for ever abolished, and the three years were changed for seven, and that too, observe, by the very men whom the people had chosen to sit only for three years! Yes, men chosen by the people to sit for three years enacted that they would sit for seven; that they themselves would sit for seven; and that those who had chosen them, together with their descendants for ever, should have no choice at all unless they voted for men who might at the king's pleasure sit for seven years!

415. It is useless for us to feel indignation and rage. They can do us no good. We shall do well to keep ourselves cool. But we ought to bear in mind that this thing, which has scourged us so famously, was not done by Catholics, that they had no hand in it ; nay, that it was not only done under the new Protestant dynasty, but that this thing also, this thing the like of which the world never had and never has heard of, that this thing also was done from hostility to the religion of our fathers! Good God! What has this nation not suffered, and what has it not yet to suffer for this hostility? There is hardly one great calamity or disgrace that has befallen England during the last three hundred years which we do not clearly trace to this fatal source.

416. But this **SEPTENNIAL BILL**, this measure which is perfectly matchless in its nature, and which has led to such dreadful effects;—this is a thing which we must have in its original black and white, and we must have every word of it too, for here we have a complete "**no-popery**" law, and of this law we are tasting the effects to the present hour, and we shall taste them for a long while yet to come. The following are the words, all the words, of this memorable Act:-

417. **WHEREAS** in and by an Act of Parliament made in the **sixth year of the reign of their late Majesties King William and Queen Mary** (of ever blessed memory) intitulated *an Act for the frequent meeting and calling of Parliaments*: It was among other things enacted that from thenceforth no Parliament whatsoever that should at any time thereafter be called, assembled or held, should have any continuance longer than for three years only at the farthest, to be accounted from the day on which by the writ of summons the said Parliament should be appointed to meet: And whereas it has been found by experience that the said clause hath proved very grievous and burdensomely, by occasioning much greater and more continued expenses in order to elections of members to serve in Parliament, and more violent and lasting heats and animosities among the subjects of this realm than were ever known before the said clause was enacted, and the said provision, if it should continue, may probably at this juncture, when a restless and popish faction are designing and endeavouring to renew the rebellion within this kingdom and an invasion from abroad, be destructive to the peace and security of the government. "Be it enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, that this present Parliament, and all Parliaments that shall at any time hereafter be called, assembled or held, shall and may respectively have continuance for seven years and no longer, to be accounted from the day on which by the writ of summons this present Parliament hath been or any future Parliament shall be appointed to meet, unless this present or any such Parliament hereafter to be summoned, shall be sooner dissolved by his Majesty, his heirs or successors.

418. So here it is again! The "**restless popish faction**" was at work! So that the rights, the most precious rights of the whole of the people, were to be taken away merely on account of the designs and wishes of a "**popish faction**!" What harm could a mere "**faction**" do at an election? The truth is these pretences were false: the people, the great body of the people, smarting under the lash of enormous taxation, became disaffected towards the new order of things; they were strongly disposed to revert to their former state; it was suspected, and indeed pretty well known, that they would at the next election have chosen almost everywhere members having the same sentiments, and therefore it was resolved that they should not have the power of doing it.

However, the deed was done; we have felt the effects of it from that day to this, and we have now to remember that even this terrible curtailment of English liberty we owe to the hostility to the religion of our fathers, that religion during the dominance of which there was always a new House of Commons every time the Parliament was assembled; that religion, along with which were bound up the people's civil and political rights; that religion, the followers of which, while it was predominant, never heard of Parliaments for seven years or for three years, or even for one year, but who, as often as they saw a Parliament called, saw a Commons' House chosen for that one session and for no more.

419. After the passing of the **SEPTENNIAL ACT** the people would, of course, lose nearly all the control that they had ever had with regard to the laying on of taxes and to the expending of the public money. Accordingly taxes went on increasing prodigiously. The excise system, which had had a little beginning in former Protestant reigns, and the very name of which had never been heard of in Catholic times, now assumed somewhat its present form, and the "castles" of Englishmen became thenceforth things to be visited by **excise-men**. Things went on in this way until the reign of **GEORGE III.**, when, by means of "**no-popery**" wars and other measures for preserving the Protestant religion as by law established, the debt from £1,500,000 had swelled up to £146,682,844. The yearly interest of it had swelled up to, £4,840,821, which was about four times as much as the whole annual amount of the taxes in the reign of the popish **JAMES II.**! And the whole of the yearly taxes had swelled up to £8,744,682. That is to say, about eight times as much as **JAMES** had raised yearly on this same "**no-popery**" people!

420. Now, though men will do much in the way of talk against "**popery**," or against many other things, they are less zealous and active when it comes to money. The nation most sensibly felt the weight of these burdens, and the burdens received no alleviation from the circumstance of their being most righteously merited. The people looked back with aching hearts to former happy days, and the nobility and gentry began to perceive with shame and fear that already their estates were beginning to pass quietly from them (as Swift had told them they would) into the hands of the **Jews, Quakers**, and other moneychangers created by the "**no-popery**" war, and by the scheme of the Scotchman, **BURNET**. But it was now too late to look back; and yet to look forward to this certain and not very slow ruin was dreadful, and especially to men of ancient family and by no means destitute of pride. Fain would they, even at that time, have applied a sponge to the score brought against them by **Burnet's tribes**. But this desire was effectually counteracted by the same motive which led to the creation of the debt,—the necessity of embarking, and of keeping embarked, great masses of the money owners in the same boat with the government.

421. In this dilemma, namely, the danger of touching the interest of the debt and the danger of continuing to pay that interest, a new scheme was resorted to, which it was hoped would obviate both these dangers. It was to tax the American colonies, and to throw a part first, and perhaps the whole in the end, of the "**no-popery**" debt upon their shoulders! Now, then, came "**Reformation**" the fourth, having for cause the measures necessary to effect the "**glorious revolution**," taking the principles and the manner of that revolution as its example in these respects, beginning with a "**convention**" assembled without authority of King, Parliament or people, proceeding with charges against the king, with making it high treason to adhere to him, and ending with setting aside his authority and extinguishing his rights and those of his family for ever! Aye, but besides all this, bringing the first dawn of relief to the long-suffering Catholics of England, Scotland and Ireland! What it was that these our countrymen had to suffer for the crime of adhering to the religion of their and our fathers I shall leave, to state further on; but I now proceed to show how this "**Reformation**" the fourth commenced and proceeded.

422. The Septennial gentlemen proceeded at first very slowly in their attempts to shift the pressure of the debt from their own shoulders to that of the Americans. They sent out tea to pay a tax; they imposed a stamp duty on certain things in the colonies; but they had a clever, a sharp-sighted and a most cool and resolute and brave people to deal with. The Americans had seen debts, and

funds and taxation, and abject submission creep by slow degrees over the people of England, and they resolved to resist at once the complicated curse. The money-people there were not, like those in England, the owners of stock and funds. They were not, as the money-people of England were, embarked in the same boat with the government; if they had there would have been more hesitation on the subject of resistance; if they had been entangled in **Burnet's artful web**, the Americans might at this day have been hardly known in the world, might have seen a parcel of bands of poor devils doomed to toil for Haughty and insolent masters. Happily for them, the Scotch bishop's deadly trammels had not reached them, And therefore they at once resolved not to submit to the Septennial commands.

423. It is curious enough that they should, as the "**glorious**" people had done, call themselves Whigs! But the **Septennial people** were Whigs too, so that there were now Whigs resisting Whigs. A Whig means, in England, one who approves of the setting of **JAMES** and his heirs aside. A Whig means, in America, one who approves of the setting of **GEORGE** and his heirs aside. The English Whigs called a convention, so did those of America. The English Whigs published a declaration, containing as we have seen in paragraph 380, charges against **JAMES**; so did those of America against George. The charges against James were twelve in number. This is a favourite number with Whigs, for the American Whigs had twelve charges against **George**. We have seen in paragraph 380 what Protestants accused a Popish king of, and it is but fair for us to see what Protestants, and Catholics too, accused a Protestant king of. Black-stone, in justifying the "**glorious**" affair, took good care to say that the like was never to take place again, and the **Septennial gentlemen** declared, and I think enacted, that the king in future (being, of course, a Protestant) could do no wrong. Now the Americans seemed to think it hard that they should thus be positively forbidden to do what was so "**glorious**" in Englishmen. Blackstone had told them that to justify another revolution all the same circumstances must exist; not a part of them, but the whole of them. The king must not only endeavour to subvert the laws, he must not only commit acts of tyranny, but he must be a Catholic, and must have a design to overthrow the Protestant religion, and he must, into the bargain, have abdicated his authority by going out of the kingdom. So that, according to this lawyer, there never could by any possibility be a "**glorious**" revolution again, seeing that two essential circumstances must in any future case be wanting, as no Catholic was ever to be king again, and as no king was ever to do wrong any more.

424. But, alas! these American Whigs did not listen to Blackstone, though he had talked so piously about the "**dark ages of monkish ignorance and superstition.**" They thought, nay they said, that a Protestant king might do wrong and had done wrong. They thought, or at least they said, that a king might abdicate his authority, not only without going out of the country, but also without ever having been in it! In short, they drew up, a la "**glorious,**" charges against their Protestant king, his late Majesty; and as the charges against **JAMES II.** are found in an Act of Parliament, so the charges against **GEORGE III.** are found in an **Act of Congress**, passed on the **memorable 4th of July, 1776.** These charges were as follows:—

425. The history of **the present King of Great Britain** is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these States. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

I. He has refused to pass laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature—a right inestimable to them, and formidable to tyrants only.

II. He has called the legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the repository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

III. He has dissolved representative houses repeatedly, for opposing with firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

IV. He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

V. He has made judges dependent on his will alone for the tenure of their offices and the amount and payment of their salaries.

VI. He has created a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people and eat their substance.

VII. He has kept among us, in times of peace, standing armies without the consent of our legislatures.

VIII. He has affected to render the military independent of, and superior to, civil power.

IX. He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation.

X. He has imposed taxes on us without our consent

XI. He has deprived us in many cases of the benefits of trial by jury.

XII. He has abdicated government here, by declaring us out of his protection and waging war against us. In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms: our repeated petitions have been answered by repeated injury. A prince whose character is thus marked by every act which defines a tyrant is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

426. Now, justice to the memory of the late king demands that we expressly assert that here are some most monstrous exaggerations, and especially at the close; but does not that same justice demand of us, then, to be cautious how we give full credit to the charges made against **JAMES II.?** However, the question with us at the present moment is, not whether the grounds of one of these revolutions were better than those of the other, but whether the last revolution grew directly out of the former; and of the affirmative of this question no man who has read this chapter can, I think, entertain a doubt.

427. I should now proceed to show that the French Revolution, or "Reformation" the fifth, grew immediately out of the American Revolution, and then to sum up the consequences; but I am at the end of my paper.

The End of Chapter 14





King George III

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