

ment is offered to its plans; and we regret to add, that the Nonconformists—those whose ancestors were boldest in their hostility to the then rampant heresy—are too generally either passive spectators of its progress, or active auxiliaries of its political designs. Public opinion, which formerly always evinced more or less of a Protestant spirit, now indicates no symptoms of that healthful and necessary characteristic. Bulwark after bulwark of our Constitution and our religion, has been lost through perfidy, apathy, or defeat; and now, at the present time, this nation, once renowned for the integrity of her counsellors, and the Christian principles of her Parliament, is at the mercy of a profligate demagogue, intent on the introduction of a grovelling superstition, and a humiliating foreign despotism. We can no longer look for that providential care which for ages was the guide and guardian of us as a Protestant people; we are no longer, as even in Cromwell's days, the acknowledged safeguard of the Protestants of Europe. All is changed; our power is weakened, our prosperity has decayed, and the prospects presented to our contemplation are such as in the days of old would have aroused the population as one man, to manful exertions for the preservation of their freedom and their faith. Too long, alas! have we been deluded by the vain idea that the enlightenment of this generation was proof against the assaults of Popery. Bitter experience now calls on every preacher to warn his people with the solemn mandate—"Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." To that warning we add our feeble counsel, and bid every man who pretends to patriotic feelings, to look around on the portentous signs of the times, and fearlessly to do his duty to his country and himself. We all have now a common enemy thundering at the gates, and he is a traitor who refuses to repel the danger; doubly, then, is that man a foe to the land in which he now enjoys ancestral blessings that his children may claim to have handed down unimpaired, who gives up a single post he was bound to guard, or meanly sells his birthright for honours, or places, or from base sectarian ambition.

In concluding our glances at this question, we have only to proceed as we have proposed, to call for vigorous and united exertions in the Protestant cause. We do so from a most deep, and painful, and conscientious conviction of the important consequences to which resistance or assistance to Popery under present circumstances must surely lead. We do so from a knowledge of the necessity of immediate efforts, and with a hope that our appeal will not be entirely in vain. Little has yet been done by the friends, and much, very much, by the enemies of the Constitution. There never was a time before in this country, not even during the reign of the last infatuated monarch of the Stewart dynasty, when evils more terrible threatened the land. At that period, memorable in the history of this country, which was then marvellously saved—memorable in the history of Europe, which has often since owed its rescue from oppression or Popery to the contagious spirit of this emancipated island—at that period our Universities, our Legislature, our Executive Government in England and in Ireland, our corporations, and our Court were for a time in the grasp of the Popish tyrant, and were content to impose on the people the scornfully rejected thralldom of

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