A DEFENCE
OF THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
Lord GEORGE GORDON,
AND THE
PROTESTANT ASSOCIATION, &c.

ALSO INCLUDING
TWO LETTERS,

To the Right Honourable Lord L——CH——H,
occasioned by his SPEECH to the Jury of
S——Y, appointed for the Trial of the Rioters.

[PRICE TWO PENCE]
A DEFENCE
OF THE
PROTESTANT ASSOCIATION.

OR,

An Attempt to show that the fifty thousand Petitioners to Parliament, assembled under the direction of their President Lord George Gordon, were not Chargeable with the outrages committed in the City of London, June 1780.

INCLUDING TWO LETTERS

To the Right Honourable Lord L——G——H, occasioned by his Speech to the Jury of S——y, appointed for the Trial of the Rioters.

GLASGOW:
Printed for, and Sold by the Booksellers in Town and Country.

M, DCC, LXXX.
[Price Two Pence.]
An Account of the rise and Progress of the late tumults in London.

A Dread of Popery's being encouraged, has given rise to associations for the security of the Protestant religion. Of some of these, Lord George Gordon, brother of the Duke of Gordon, and a member of parliament, was chosen president. A repeal of the act passed in 1778, for relieving Papists from certain penalties and disabilities [40. 399.], was the object of these associations.——The following notice appeared in the papers.

"Protestant Association.

This is to give notice, that, in compliance with a petition addressed to the President, the committee have resolved, that there shall be another general meeting of the Protestants, before the London petition is presented to the House of Commons.

The petition will not be presented this week, but will be kept till towards the close of this session of parliament, to give time for similar petitions from other parts of England, Wales, and Scotland, to be presented before it.

All the true friends of Great Britain, and of civil and religious liberty, are exhorted to unite in support of the Protestant Interest before it is too late; for unanimity and firmness in that glorious cause can alone protect us from the dangerous confederacy
federacy of Popish powers. If we unite, like one man, for the honour of God, and the liberties of the people, we may yet experience the blessing of the divine providence on this kingdom, and love and confidence may again be restored among brethren. But if we continue obstinate in errors, and spread idolatry and corruption through the land, we have nothing to expect but division among the people, distraction in the senate, and discontent in our camps, with all the other calamities attendant on those nations whom God has delivered over to arbitrary power and despotism.

George Gordon, President.

Welbeck Street, London May 8.

Those of London and its environs who wish the repeal of the late Popish bill, are desired to sign the Protestant petition, which they may have access to at the President's house in Welbeck Street, every day before four o'clock."

In pursuance of an advertisement, dated May 5, a meeting was held and its proceedings appeared in the papers, viz.

**Protestant Association.**

Monday evening (May 29.) the meeting of the Protestant Association was held at Coachmaker's hall, pursuant to public advertisement. At half past six o'clock the hall was quite full, and exceedingly crowded. Lord George Gordon took the chair exactly at seven, and addressed the meeting for near half an hour. His Lordship observed, that the Popish bill was carried through both Houses of Parliament with such amazing rapidity, that the people had not time to form an opposition, or to make themselves acquainted with the pernicious consequences that must attend its passing into a law; that the indulgence given to Popery by the repeal of the act of William III. was inconsistent with the...
principles of the Revolution, had a tendency to endanger the succession in the House of Hanover, and threatened destruction to the civil and religious liberty of this country. His Lordship read an extract from a Popish catechism, just published by a Popish printer in Grosvenor Square, and dispersed among the ignorant and unthinking part of the community; likewise an indulgence granted by the Pope, this present year, to his Holy Catholic subjects and saints in this heretic country; and from these publications his Lordship bid the people form an idea of the rapid and alarming progress that Popery was making in this kingdom; and the only way to stop it was, by going, in a firm, manly, and resolute manner, to the House, and shewing their representatives, that they were determined to preserve their religious freedom with their lives: that, for his part, he would run all hazards with the people; and if the people were too lukewarm to run all hazards with him, when their conscience and their country call them forth, they might get another President; for he would tell them candidly, that he was not a lukewarm man himself, and that if they mean to spend their time in mock debate and idle opposition, they might get another leader. This speech was received with the loudest acclamations of applause; and his Lordship then moved the following resolution: "That the whole body of the Protestant Association do attend in St. George's Fields, on Friday next, at ten o'clock in the morning, to accompany his Lordship to the House of Commons on the delivery of the Protestant petition;" which was carried unanimously, with repeated bursts of applause. His Lordship then informed them, that if less than 20,000 of his fellow-citizens attended him on that day, he would not present their petition; and for the better observance of order, he moved, that they should arrange themselves in four divisions; the Protestants of the city of London on the right, those of
Protestant Association.

the city of Westminster on the left, the borough of Southwark third, and the people of Scotland resident in London and its environs to form the last division; and that they might know their friends from their enemies, he added, that every real Protestant, and friend of the petition, should come with blue cockades in their hats. This also passed unanimously; and the meeting adjourned to Monday the 12th day of June."

Another advertisement was forthwith issued, viz

"Protestant Association.

Whereas no hall in London, can contain Forty Thousand Men.

Resolved, That this Association do meet on Friday next in St. George's fields, at ten o'clock in the morning, to consider of the most prudent and respectful manner of attending their petition, which will be presented the same day to the House of Commons.

Resolved, for the sake of good order and regularity, That this Association, on coming to the ground, do separate themselves into four distinct divisions, viz the London division, the Westminster division, the Southwark division, and the Scotch division.

Resolved, That the London division do take place upon the right of the ground towards Southwark, the Westminster division second, and the Southwark division third, and the Scotch division upon the left, all wearing Blue Cockades in their hats, to distinguish themselves from the Papists, and those who approve of the late act in favour of Piosity.

Resolved, That the Magistrates of London, Westminster, and Southwark, are requested to attend, that their presence may overawe and control any riotous or evil minded persons, who may wish to disturb
A Defence of the

disturb the legal and peaceable deportment of his
Majesty's Protestant subjects.

By order of the Association,
London May 29. GEORGE GORDON, President.

Lord George Gordon gave notice in the House
of Commons, May 30th, That, on the Friday fol-
lowing, June 2d, he should have the honour of
presenting to the House the petition of the Pro-
testant Associations of London, Westminster, and
Southwark, praying for a repeal of the late act in
favour of Popery in England. He acquainted the
House, that the whole Association proposed to as-
ssemble in St. George's Fields, and to accompany
their petition to the House, in the most humble, de-
cent, and respectful manner.

In the morning of Friday, June 2d, a great num-
ber of persons, with Blue Cockades in their hats, met
in St. George's Fields. A tailor was employed to
tack together the different skins which had been sign-
ed by the petitioners, composing a very large roll.
They separated into four divisions; the London, the
Westminster, the Southwark, and the Scotch. With
the last there was a Highlander, in his country-dress,
his sword drawn, and followed by a pair of bag-
pipes. Lord George Gordon joined them about e-
 leven. His Lordship addressed the several divisions;
told them he would go, and wait for them at the
House; requested they would go round London
bridge, and proceed through the cities of London
and Westminster to Palace-yard; and then went in-
to his carriage — Peaceable conduct was recommen-
ded by the following hand-bill.

"As there is great reason to believe, that a num-
ber of Papists will assemble, with an intent to breed
a riot among the Protestants, at their intended peace-
able and lawful meeting this day, in St George's
Fields, in the most humble manner to attend their
worthy
worthy President Lord George Gordon, with the Protestant petition, up to the Honourable the House of Commons, it is requested, that Protestants who may receive insults from any of those attending for the above purpose, will not of themselves resent it, but cause them to be given up to the civil power, with as little confusion as possible, (a number of magistrates and constables attending for that purpose), in order to their being prosecuted with the utmost severity of the law.

You are again, Gentlemen, exhorted as Protestants, and the most loyal subjects of his present Majesty, King George the Third, whatever riots or confusion may happen amongst the spectators, to keep your ground in the proper divisions; for on peace and good order a great deal depends."

Between eleven and twelve they let off, marching, the great body, six a breast, over London bridge, through Cornhill and the city, another body over Black-friars bridge, and a third over Westminster bridge, to the amount of about 50,000, some say 100,000 persons, with banner, flags, pennants, &c. and the Protestant petition, of an enormous size, carried on a man's head in front of the procession, in their way to Palace yard. The procession was so extensive, that when the first part reached Westminster hall, the last row was advanced no farther than the corner of the Old Change. It was remarked, that the part of the procession which was preceded by the Highlander and bag-pipers was orderly; but that the people who went before the associators, to clear the way, had the aspect of abandoned vagabonds, and it appeared afterwards that this crew, and not the associators were the authors of all the tumults and dreadful events which afterwards happened.

On Monday June 5th, the following hand bill which was distributed by the Association, shows their
their abhorrence of the crimes which the rabble had committed.

"PROTESTANT ASSOCIATION.

Whereas many riotous persons, on Friday last, after the petition of this Association was presented to the Honourable the House of Commons, did tumultuously impede the passage to both Houses of Parliament; and grossly insult the persons of many of the members, and afterwards proceeded with violence to destroy the chapels belonging to foreign ambassadors, so sacred in all countries, to the great breach of the peace, the disturbance of private persons and families, and to the disgrace of the best of causes; Resolved unanimously, That all true Protestants be requested to shew their attachment to their best interest, by a legal and peaceable deportment, as all unconstitutional proceedings in so good a cause, can only tend to prevent the members of the legislature from paying due attention to the united prayers of the Protestant petition.

By order of the Committee,

London, June 5.  GEORGE GORDON, President."

On Friday June 9th, Lord George Gordon was committed a close prisoner to the Tower.

On Saturday, June 10th, about five o'clock in the morning, Mr. Fisher, the secretary to the Protestant Association, was apprehended at his house, and carried to the Tower. In the evening he was examined before the privy council; and nothing appearing against him, the committee, or the association, he was honourably dismissed. —— Mr. Hopkins, one of the managers of the association, was likewise taken up, examined, and dismissed.

This evening a deputation of the committee of the association waited on Lord North, offering if they had
had done any thing contrary to law, to stand a trial. His Lordship received them politely, and told them, that no charge whatever was designed to be brought against the secretary, the committee, or the association.—They shewed his Lordship a copy of a letter designed to be printed, which his Lordship approved of.—Of this letter many thousands were distributed. It was dated next day, which was Sunday; and we insert a copy of it, viz.


A S Citizens, as peaceable members of civil society, and as loyal subjects, we think it our bounden duty to acquaint you, and to beg that you will to the utmost of your power acquaint every one, that the petitions of his Majesty's Protestant subjects would have been considered before now, but for the unhappy distractions occasioned by an unruly and tumultuous mob, who, under pretence of opposing Popery, have been guilty of many most heinous offences. The Protestant Association has no connection, directly, or indirectly, with these lawless rioters.

The military power which has been called in, was not to resist the Protestants of London, &c. but to quell the riots, and prevent a continuance of that havoc and devastation which these unhappy cities have experienced for many days past.

We have the happiness to acquaint you, that the dreadful contusion is, by the vigilance of government, in a great measure subsided; and we most earnestly with and pray peace may be completely restored.

By order of the Committee,

J. Fisher, Secretary.

Goulston-square, Whitechapel."
From the release of Mr. Fisher and Mr. Hopkins it is evident that he did not consider the Association as being any way chargeable with the guilt of the late riots; and from the numerous trials of the late rioters, it further appeared that not one individual of that body had been more or less concerned in them, notwithstanding that the following Speech of Lord L——, to the jury on July 10th, would make the reader imagine that the associators were the only persons concerned in these tumults.

Gentlemen,

The first remarkable circumstance that calls for your observation, is, a large concourse of people assembled in St. George's fields on the 2d of June. They were called together by an advertisement published in the name of a person stated to be the president of an association. The advertisement invited the attendance of thousands of people, appointing signals by which they were to be distinguished, and prescribing the order and course of their march in several columns to the place of their destination. Charity will oblige us to suppose, that of the persons thus assembled, there were many that came there unwarily, unconscious of any evil intended; but it would be credulity in the extreme, to suppose that there were not some among them, who knew, who foresaw, who intended, and who practised to accomplish the purposes intended to be effectuated by that meeting.

Gentlemen, a short time has disclosed to you, that the purpose of that assembly was, to overawe the legislature, and obtain an alteration of the established laws by force and numbers. There was a petition presented to repeal an act in which they had no special interest. To petition for the repeal of any act, is undoubtedly the inherent right of every subject; but, under the name and colour of a petition, to assume
assume the command over the legislature, is the dis- 
molition of all government; and it is fit to remind 
you, that fatal experience has shewn you the dan- 
ger of tumultuous petitioning, in the outter of that 
unhappy contest, which ended in a total dissolution 
of this government: and among the first acts, af- 
ter the restoration of legal authority, was a law pas-
ved in the 13th year of the reign of Charles II. which 
directs, that no petition for the alteration of matters 
establihed by law in church or state, not having 
previously obtained the approbation of the magi-
trates, or of the grand jury, shall be signed by more 
than twenty names, or delivered by more than ten 
perfons.*—In opposition to this law, a peti-
tion was signed and delivered by many thousands; 
and, in defiance of a principle more important and 
more ancient than any positive law, and the defire 
of this petition was to be carried by the terror of 
the multitude that attended it through the streets, 
classed, marked, and arranged as the advertisement 
directed.

Gentlemen, this was the transaction that passed in 
this county. That concourfe of people proceeded 
to Palace-yard, and to the avenues adjoining the 
two houses of parliament. How the leaders de-
meaned themselves there, what was the conduct of 
the multitude to the members of both houses, it is 
not my intention to state; not that it may not be 
proper matter for consideration in other parts of this 
business; my reason for avoiding it is, that it is the 
only purpose of my addressing you, to inform you 
of facts so public, that there can be no doubt upon 
them, and to convey that information to you in such 
a manner, as to avoid every circumstance that may 

* If such a law were considered as now in force, why was 
there no attempt made to try the Associates upon it? If 
this was not done, is it not evident that this law was re-
garded as one of the oppressive statutes of that tyrannical 
age, which was annulled at the Revolution?
inflame, where the application goes too directly to particular persons: for this reason, I pass over in silence all that part of the transaction, which cannot be related but in much stronger language, and in more indignant terms, than I choose at present to employ. In the close of that day the assembly dispersed from Palace yard. Many of them undoubtedly retired to their several dwellings: some, however, there were that remained, in order to shew, that the threats of the force of that multitude, which had invaded the ears of all that walked the streets, were not fruitless, but meant to be put into execution. When night came on, the houses of two foreign ministers residing at this court, from powers in amity with his Majesty, were attacked, their chapels strip'd, plundered, and set on fire. It is not possible upon that occasion, Gentlemen, to avoid this obvious reflection: Had such an outrage been committed upon a public minister from this state, residing in those countries, upon whom the imputation of bigotry may with the utmost justice be fixed; what horror, indignation, and abhorrence, would it have excited, not only in the minds of all our countrymen, that would have felt the honour of the nation hurt by it! but all other parts of Europe would have thought themselves concerned in the insult. That disgrace was committed in this country, by one of the first acts done when they proceeded in the manner I have stated to you. Upon the next day the 3d of June, there was a seeming quiet: A very memorable circumstance; for sudden tumults, when they are once over, are commonly at an end; but when they can cease and be revived again, it is impossible not to conceive that it argues something of settled influence and previous direction. The day that followed was Sunday. Gentlemen, that day, by the laws of God and man, is set apart and kept inviolated by the works of honest industry; that day, however, there was a renewal of the lawless
force and violence in broad day-light. Before night had drawn a veil upon their transactions, many buildings and private houses in Moorfields were attacked, stript of their goods, the furniture consumed in a bonefire in the public space of Moorfields, and all this done in the view of patient magistrates.

Gentlemen, some magistrates there were who had thought it their duty, upon the first breaking out of these tumults, to exert themselves in vindication of the laws: persons had been apprehended, and committed by the exertion of individuals and diligent magistrates, for the outrages committed on Friday evening. On the next day, Monday June 5th, those that had hitherto felt themselves under too little restraint, too little check and in no degree resisted, thought it was a necessary part to accomplish, in the project they had made, to shew, that the law could not be exercised against any that had been in the like delinquency with them, with impunity. It was the business of Monday to destroy, to pull down, and set fire to the houses of the magistrates, and all those officers of the peace, by whose means persons had been apprehended.

Thus far matters had proceeded to no common degree of excess;—but what I have hitherto related to you is far short of what afterwards followed, upon those two days, the 6th and 7th of June, which will ever remain a stain upon the annals of these times. Fresh insults were again offered to the members of the legislature; and towards the latter part of the first day (Tuesday) all who were then in London will recollect, that the town had the appearance of a city taken by a storm: every quarter of it was threatened and alarmed; neither sex, nor age, nor sanctity of character, nor eminence of situation, nor even honesty but humble obscurity, was sufficient to protect men from the rage, fury, and malevolence, of those who were spreading fire and terror in every quarter of the town. But,

Gentlemen,
Gentlemen, the attempts were not confined to the destruction of individuals; for, in a very short space of time, one of the first general objects appeared to be that which experience and history has shown to be among the last efforts of the most desperate and abandoned conspirators, to break the gaols and set loose the felons, and to engage the guilty hands of desperate men, whose lives were forfeited to the law, in the accession of the crimes that they were about to perpetrate;—this, Gentlemen, was committed with success. After that, the town was set on fire, and the flames were applied to those buildings, in different quarters, that were most likely to spread the conflagration to distant places; namely, the houses of distillers, and those that from their trade contained the greatest quantity of combustible matter. That was not all, but, in the midst of horror and confusion, there was an attempt to prevent the extinction of the flames, by cutting off the water of the New River, and an attempt to strike at the foundation of all the credit of the country, the Bank of England. That was, it is true, defeated, providentially defeated; but under circumstances which left no doubt of their intention to carry it into effect, if it had not pleased God that the execution had been postponed to that period of the business.

Gentlemen, during the very short space of these two days, the incredible activity of that band of furies that walked through the town with flaming torches had destroyed above seventy private houses, and four public jails; one of which seemed at least to have been built to withstand the efforts of an armed force. Such is the detail of the acts which were done—I am not to omit, that while these outrages were committed, the name of religion, and the purest and most peaceable description of religion, the Protestant religion, was made the profane pretext for some of these violences which were committed.
mitted;—the pretext only—for I am sure there is not in Europe a man so weak, neither will there be found a person so uncandid, or so unjust to the character of the Reformed church, as to suppose, that any possible motive, even of false zeal, by any possible perversion of human reason, could induce men to lay in ashes the capital of the Protestant faith, or that any pretence of any religion could at all have influenced the minds of those whose object was to destroy all private security, by letting loose all those who had been guilty of crimes against the peace of the country; and all public credit, by the destruction of the Bank of England.

TWO LETTERS.

To the Right Honourable Lord L—G—H,
occasioned by his SPEECH to the Jury of S—y, appointed for the Trial of the Rioters.

LETTER I.

My Lord,

It is neither from any desire of your L—p's favour, nor from hatred to your person, that I presume to make this public address to you, but solely with a view to exculpate a numerous and innocent body of men, the Protestant Associators, and their President, whom your L—p in my apprehension has grossly injured in your speech to the Grand Jury of S—y.

That
That speech, my L—d, however much honour it does you in the opinion of your friends, and perhaps in your own, gives no favourable impressions of your L—d’s character as a judge and a statesman, to many of your countrymen in the present age, and may be still less satisfactory to posterity. Your L—p knew well how to use all the advantages of your dignity and high office, to give weight to your own sentiments and those of the Court on that occasion, as you were sure that none durst contradict you on the bench; but the judgment of the public, my L—d, is paramount to all instituted courts of judicature; by this even kings must be tried, sometimes in their lifetime, but always, and most certainly at their death; and this judgment, my L—d, is not wholly in your favour, though you may justly boast of numerous and powerful friends. Your L—p sets out with a pertinent enough reference to the late riots, and the business of the Court of which you were president, after which you pretend to give a short account of those dangers from which this kingdom had been lately delivered; a good office indeed, if it had been faithfully performed by your L—p. The first remarkable circumstance to which you call the attention of your auditors, is a concourse of people assembled in St. George’s Fields, on the 2d of June, called together by a public advertisement (signed in the name of a person calling himself the president of an association) inviting many thousands to attend, and appointing their ensigns of distinction, &c. This indeed was a most remarkable circumstance, my L—d, though no way connected with the business, which was to come before the Court. The concourse of great numbers of people, it is owned, must be disagreeable to the enemies of the people, but no harm will be expected from them by those who are conscious of being their friends. In the present case your L—p knows that the appearance was by no means voluntary, but that this was forced
forced upon them by the obstinate and contemptuous behaviour of the L—re to former petitioners. Thirteen petitions, in behalf of the ancient laws of this kingdom, wantonly innovated of late by both Houses, had been already presented to Parliament, not with tumults, nor attended by great numbers, but by a Right Honourable Member, according to the laws of the House, and conceived in the most decent and respectful terms. But these were never taken into consideration by the House, and the numerous subscriptions with which they were accompanied, were wantonly, and without cause, contradicted, and treated as forgeries. Insults provoke resentment, and often lead men to such courses as they would never have thought of otherwise. The Protestant petitioners of London and the neighbourhood, dreading to have their petition rejected, and their very existence denied, as those of others had been, by the Commons, resolved to run all hazards that might arise from showing themselves in a peaceable manner, and published such regulations for their proceeding to Parliament, as must do them honour in the judgement of all lovers of peace and order. That others, from different motives, counterfeited their ensigns of distinction, and did acts of violence and rebellion in their name, is a matter in which they have no concern. And it can be proved, my L—d, that a riotous mob were convocated by some person or other, in the passages leading to the House of Commons, and committed some acts of violence on sundry members, a full hour before the foremost flag of the Protestant Association appeared in sight of that House. These could not be the same people, my L—d, and their behaviour sufficiently declared what they were, and whom they served. Would your L—p condemn any person, because another had assumed his name, or forged his subscription? Surely not. But in the progress of your speech, your L—p talks as if you had
every member of the Protestant Association in custody as well as their Noble President, who was taken, not in acts of violence, which his soul abhorred, but in the innocent and solitary retirement of his own house, after using every mean in his power to stop the fury of the mob, who cruelly pretended to be his friends. Surely you must blush, my L—d, if lawyers ever blushed, to find that not one of the subscribers to the Protestant petition was among the rioters.

But what does your L—p mean, by indiscriminately accusing the Protestant Association as rioters, when not one of them have been apprehended, nor any one person has sworn that they were concerned! If that is true, my L—d, every one of these wretches whom your L—p so hastily condemned, must be innocent, as none of them belonged to the Protestant Association, who are the only persons accused by your L—p, and accused in a manner that does little credit to your L—p's judgment, as it was previous to any trial or examination of witnesses. Your L—p must have an extraordinary opinion of your own acuteness if you think that you could distinguish the faces and persons of 50,000 men, for having once seen them on their way to the House of Commons. No one, surely, will believe this, unless your L—p can prove that the Pope had sent you a portion of his infallibility. But what a legion of absurdities must not one believe, before they can give the least credit to your L—p's accusation of the Protestant Association? I shall mention a few of them. We must believe that the whole multitude who assembled in St. George's Fields, immediately formed a design of ruining their own petition, as nothing could more effectually disappoint its effect, than any riotous behaviour in the petitioners. We must also believe that the soldiers who apprehended the rioters, had orders not to apprehend any person belonging to the
Protestant Association, and that they were able to distinguish them from all others; for unless this were the case, some one or other of them must certainly have been apprehended. We are next required to believe that the associators, who had hitherto paid great respect to their noble President, immediately formed a design against his life, by exposing him as the head of an army of rioters, and refusing to pay the least regard to him when he addressed them from the gallery of the House of Commons. But as we are not become Papists, your Lordship need not be surprised that many of the public do not believe one word of what your Lordship advances in order to blacken the Protestant Association. What new kind of logic is it your Lordship makes use of!—The Protestant Association were all, or most of them concerned in the riots; because not one of them has been apprehended or convicted! Go on my Lord, to insult the common sense of mankind, and to make your Court to them, but be assured, that disgrace and the execration of the public will pursue you. The Protestant Association have been already publicly exculpated by a letter published with the consent of the premier:* and if your Lordship had paid him that uniform obedience, which you always did in the House of Commons, after your abandoning the bill of rights, you would have been afraid of accusing those whom he had allowed to be declared innocent. This first difference of opinion renders the premier's sincerity, or your Lordship's veracity, or both of them extremely suspected in the judgment of the public. Your Lordship allows, that to petition for the passing and repeal of any acts is the undisputed inherent birth-right of every British subject. But you say that no more than twenty must sign a petition at a time: and that no more than ten can legally present one, and if

* For this Letter see page 9th.
every Briton contends that he has a right to present his own petition, or to bring it to the House, which your L—p has not denied, let us see how beneficial that right is, which your L—p has left them. If suppose your L—p means that only one petition could be received in one day, otherwise two companies of ten persons each, might casually meet, which would be contrary to your L—p's favourite law. Suppose that the people of Great Britain are six millions, (the wars are daily lessening their numbers) and that there are 120 days, nearly the third part of a year, in which the Parliament can receive petitions. Suppose again, that a time shall occur, when all our great men shall be upon the point of declaring themselves Papists, or when any other remarkable grievances shall take place; by your L—p's rule, only 1200 persons could be allowed to petition against these grievances in the space of one year; how long then must it be before the grievances are redressed? Let us discount from the six millions above mentioned, two millions for Papists and place-men, there will remain four millions of petitioners, and these according to your L—p's rule, would require 3,333 years and four months to present their petitions.

What a glorious birth-right has your L—p enforced on British subjects? Surely the British constitution, as explained by L—h, must have been revealed from heaven, on account of the quick and easy method it suggests for the redress of grievances! Your L—p prudently declines mentioning what was the conduct of the crowd to the members of both Houses of Parliament; prudently indeed, my L—d, because that might unfortunately reveal what Court influence requires should be concealed from the public, a tale that would harrow up your soul, if you have any remaining degree of sensibility, but a tale that must not perhaps be told in the present age, though undoubtedly it will be told to
to posterity. Your L—p is safe in the midst of your camp, and may talk as you please, while the Praetorian cohorts are encamped in St. James's or Hyde Park, and possess the principal parts of the city. But it is not the first time that falsehoods have been supported by great men, to the ruin and disgrace of the innocent. When Rome was burnt in the reign of Nero, it was not the Christians, the Protestant association of that age, and a sedition everywhere spoken against, but that prince himself, and his minions, that kindled the devouring flames. Suetonius tells us that most of the gentlemen of consular dignity, who were employed to protect the city, perhaps the patient magistrates of those times, discovered the Emperors's bed chamber-men with torches and tow, in several parts of the city, carrying on the conflagration, but that they durst not meddle with them. They had friends at Court, like the Russian gentleman, who was released not long ago, by order from above. They were the Catholics of those times, and his Imperial Majesty's best subjects, in the judgment of all the friends of the Court. Your L—p knows well, that it would not have been safe for any one in the reign of Nero, to have published a defence of the Christians, or a true account of the dangers from which Rome had been delivered. None were committed, or tried, except those whom the Court thought proper; no enquiry was made but with a view to criminate the Christians, and if the proclamations and addresses of those times had been preserved, no doubt we would have found that association dignified with the titles of intolerant, ignorant, and enthusiastic, or actuated by motives less excusable than those. Mr. Walpole, in his catalogue of royal and noble authors, observes, that "there is not the least suspicion that the folio, under the respectable name of James the First, is not of his own composition;" and afterwards adds

† This was A. D. 64.
Two Letters to the

adds, "The King's speech is always supposed by Parliament to be the speech of the minister: how cruel would it have been on King James's ministers, if that interpretation had prevailed in his reign!"

May we not add, my L—d, how cruel and unjust would it be to our present amiable Sovereign, if that interpretation did not prevail at present! The Christians, my L—d, more unfortunate in this respect than the members of the Protestant association, were the only persons that suffered death for the burning of Rome, though entirely innocent of the fact, and we need not doubt that they were regularly convicted according to all the forms of the Roman law. Judges are generally complaisant to their superiors, and none of our monarchs, who transgressed the constitution, ever wanted judges to justify all his measures. Tacitus tells us that the Christians were either crucified, or burned for the illumination of the city in the night time, with a dagger fixed under their chin, and wrapped up in coats daubed with combustible matters, in allusion to their pretended crimes of burning the city. If your L—p had been L—d Chief Justice to Nero, there is little reason to doubt that you would have complied with the desires of the Court, and condemned the Christians rather than resign your place; and your late speech would have been much more proper to have been delivered to the jury for trying the Christians, had there been any Juries at those times, than it was on a late occasion. Your L—p might have descended on the mournful appearance of this city, in a great measure burnt to the ground; and when it is considered that the apostle Paul, the president of the Christian association, arrived in Rome a short time before, you will likewise find a fit parallel to

† The Apostle Paul went to Rome, A. D 61, was in that city until the year 63, and after that continued some time longer in Italy, so that it is probable he was in or near Rome at the time it was burnt.
to L—d G——e G——n. The first remarkable circumstance to be attended to, would have been a vast concourse of persons assembled at Apia forum, as we have it in the Acts of the apostles, chap. xxviii. ver. 15. that the Brethren, no doubt, in great numbers, came thither from Rome, to testify their respect for their Apostle, and conduct him to the city; and as there were some Christians then in Cæsar’s household (I hope there are some still) we need not doubt but that great numbers of the common people were likewise Christians; for a religion that has friends at Court, Popery, for example, bids fair for success among the lower ranks of mankind. If any of the more indiscreet part of the Apostle’s attendants had cried “No Idolatry,” words entirely synonymous with “No Popery,” and this cry had spread among the multitude, in spite of the Apostle’s prohibition, your L——p would have laid hold of this as an evident presumption that they intended to burn the city, which was full of the monuments and professors of idolatry; and though the burning did not take place upon the Apostle’s entry, but all remained quiet, as on the 3d of June last, your L——p’s long winded observation would have come in with signal propriety. “Sudden tumults, when they subside, are over. To revive a tumult, every thing so like design, that it is impossible for the most candid mind not to conceive that there lies at the bottom a pre-concerted settled plan of operation.” According to this new philosophy, every tumult is only a revival of the preceding one; the tumult on the 2d of June was only a revival of that which was raised at Keppel’s acquittal, and that again of Mr. Wilkes’s mob at St. George’s fields, and so on backwards to the days of Watt Tyler and Jack Cade.* As hired evidences and pensioned informers

* The insurrection of Watt Tyler and Jack Straw happened June 1381 in the reign of Richard the II. It was occasioned
ers were in use in the time of Nero, your L----p would have readily admitted and encouraged them, as was done of late, so that want of witnesses was not to be dreaded. It is true your L----p's friend Mr. Gibbon, to whom the memory of Nero was justly dear, as a persecutor of Christians, has done his utmost to exculpate him from the charge of burning the city, but indeed, my L----d, he makes as bad a figure in this attempt, as your L----p does in blackening the Protestant Association. He thinks it sufficiently clear, that his Imperial Majesty should not be guilty, because he did not order the people to be slain after he had burnt their houses, but humanely received them into his gardens, and ordered something to be furnished for them, supporting them cationed by the imposition of a Poll tax of three groats a head; which was levied upon the people with much rigour by those who had farmed it. Tyler and Straw were the leaders of the Rioters, who amounted to one hundred thousand men. They insulted the king's mother; forced the king himself to take shelter in the Tower, burnt the duke of Lancaster's Palace, and murdered many persons of distinction. The king passing along Smithfield met with Watt Tyler at the head of a large body of Rioters; a conversation between the king and him immediately took place, during which Tyler behaved with great insolence to the king. Walworth the mayor of London, struck him down with his sword, upon which he was immediately killed by the king's attendants, after which the insurrection was soon quelled, by granting the insurgents their principal demands.

The insurrection of Jack Cade happened 1450 during the reign of Henry VI. He took the name of John Mortimer, intending as was supposed to pass for a son of Sir John Mortimer, who was very popular and had been executed in the beginning of this reign. 20,000 people of Kent immediately flocked to Cade's standard, complaining against numerous abuses of government and demanding redress of their grievances. He came to London with his Associates, and seemed at first very moderate in his demands, but his followers became afterwards more insolent, and were driven out of London with great slaughter, a price was set upon Cade's head, he was at last killed by one of the name of Iden, and many of the Rioters were capitally punished.
them in life. It is easy to see that your L—'s whole speech contains no better arguments than such as might with equal propriety have been used to prove the Christians guilty of the burning of Rome; but though it is common at present to have all the professed writers of history in the pay of G—, there may arise in the next age a Tacitus or a Suetonius, who may set those matters in a proper light to posterity. The Christians of Rome were treated as rioters while they were in disgrace at Court, and their president the apostle in confinement on a charge of high treason, which is exactly the circumstance of the Protestant Association at present, but as in process of time the reputation of the Christians was cleared, and St. Paul delivered out of the mouth of the Lion, so I doubt not but the native candor and coolness of Englishmen will return, the Protestant Association emerge from disgrace, and L—d G—e G—n be honourably dismissed from his present confinement. But I have so much to say to your L—'p that I must necessarily give you and myself the trouble of another letter; mean time I am with due respect,

My L—d,
Your L—'s
Most obedient humble servant,
A Consistent Protestant.

LETTER II.

To the Right Honourable Lord L—

My Lord,

Perhaps your L—'p may have been offended at the freedom of my first letter, and may think it unfair to compare the accusation of the Protestant
Two Letters to the Protestant Association, with regard to the late riots in London, to that which was brought against the Christians for burning Rome. But the more I consider the two cases, I discover the more circumstances of resemblance. While the Apostle languished under his two years confinement, no doubt great preparations were made for his trial, and his epistles would be carefully collected from all the churches and persons, with whom he had corresponded, in different parts of the Roman empire: and if this was the case, they would be read by the courtiers with more critical attention and application than ever they have been read by men of the same rank, since that time, in order to discover proofs of his guilt. No doubt when they met with such passages as these, Shall I come unto you with a rod? Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is, &c. they would immediately conclude that they afforded evident proof of a design formed for burning the city. And when they met with those passages that inculcate peace, order, goodwill to man, and obedience to lawful authority, they would complain in the words of your L——p, that religion, the sacred name of religion, and of that purest and most peaceable system, the system of Christianity, was made the profane pretext for assaulting the Government, trampling upon the laws of the country, and violating the first great precept of their duty to God, and to their neighbour. And as Suetonius informs us, that the burning of Rome lasted six days and seven nights, one of these must undoubtedly have been Sunday, so that your L——p's fine flourish on the observation of Sunday, would have been exceedingly proper. But it is much doubted whether your L——p ever paid so much reverence to Sunday, on any occasion, as you did in your late speech. The burning of Rome, my L——d, as well as that of seventy two houses and four
public goals in London, was done in the view of patient magistrates. The Emperor, the Chief Magistrate, was extremely patient, for Suetonius tells us, that he viewed the burning of the city from Mæcenas's Tower with the greatest tranquility; and was so delighted with the beauty of the flames, that he sung to his harp in his theatrical habit, the old ballad of the destruction of Troy, an occasion on which, as at the burning of London, fatal effects were produced by one party assuming the armour of the other. At the burning of Rome we do not hear of Pretorian bands being employed to quench the fire, as they did, though very late, in London; but if your L—p had been a member of the House of C—ns, you would have heard a magistrate affirm there, that he had repeatedly applied for troops, but without effect.

But before I have done with this parallel, my L—d, I would draw your L—p's attention to one circumstance. In the reign of Nero, Paul, though a prisoner of state, and accused of high treason, was guarded only by one soldier, and had the liberty of writing to his friends, and receiving their visits in his own hired house, during the whole time of his confinement, no man forbidding him. Let your L—p make the application to present times.

Perhaps a Lord of Trade may tell your L—p, that no credit is due to the New Testament, but after the fine things you have said of Christianity, I hope your L—p will not believe him. Pulling down houses is undoubtedly a crime, and punishable with death by our laws. But has not your L—p read of laws for pulling down the houses of heretics? If you have not, I have just now open before me the Bull of Pope Innocent IV. which contains thirty eight regulations, and is considered as the law of the Roman Inquisition. The 26th of these regulations expressly enacts, "That the house in which any heretic, whether male or female,
Two Letters to the

shall be found, shall be pulled down to the ground,
without any hope of its ever being rebuilt, unless
where the owner of the house becomes informer;
and that if the owner of that house have other
houses contiguous to that in which heretics shall
have been found, all these houses shall also be
pulled down, and the goods which shall be found
in that house, and in those adjacent houses, shall
be confiscated, and shall become the property of
those that carry them off." Father Paul tells us,
that Frederick II. was the first Christian prince who
took the inquisition under his protection, and au-
thorised them to condemn heretics to be burnt, tho'
he was afterwards deposed by the loyal church of
Rome, whose submission to Government is so much
cried up at present. Pope Alexander IV. and Pope
Clement IV. ratified the constitution of Innocent
IV. and the Emperor Frederick II. in which the
pulling down the houses of heretics is expressly en-
joined. These are the laws, my Lord, of the mild and
tolerant church of Rome, which is now in so great
repute at Court.

When the rioters destroyed the houses of Lord
and Sir George — — — they were only exe-
cuting a part of the laws of their own church. But
your Lordship thinks it much more probable, that
those who are forbidden by their laws to do any in-
jury to the persons and property of those whom they
call heretics, should have been guilty of acts of vio-
ence, than those who are not only allowed, but
commanded by their laws, to pull down and destroy
the houses of heretics. Your partiality to the Ca-
tholic church, my Lord, will be properly consid-
ered at Rome, and your Lordship's statue, erected in
your own native brass, may soon adorn the church
of St. Dominic, and in time you may be worshipped
as a saint, while Lord - - - - is traduced
in France as an incendiary, and a waxen image, said
to resemble him, is publicly shown in that country.
Be assured, my L—d, that the Catholic church entirely agrees with you in sentiment, and wishes to expose the very same persons, whom your L——p has so vilely traduced, without the least iota of evidence.

It will look strange to posterity, as it does to many at present, that in a speech at the opening of a court appointed to try criminals, your L——p should have launched out into a long and virulent invective against a society to which not one of these criminals belonged, and which had not the remotest connexion with them. It is known from the public papers, that many Papists were apprehended in acts of violence, but as we have heard nothing of their trials, there is reason to believe, that their great friends at court have ordered them to be liberated.

I do not pretend to say that Protestant offenders ought to expect such a favour, as they cannot boast of such friends. But whilst your L——p is singing *Te Deum*, or *Salve Regina*, upon the execution of the rioters, and the introduction of the army, many sincere Protestants are privately lamenting the disgrace into which the Protestant religion is fallen, among those who ought to be its chief defenders, by the arts of Jesuits, and Papishly affected courtiers. They look back with applause to these happy times, in which Popery was acknowledged to be a cruel and persecuting superstition, intolerant, and hurtful to the Constitution of Great Britain, and the Protestant religion was considered as the bulwark of our civil liberties. Real Protestants suspect that some secret Popish influence prevails at court, when they hear the highest eulogiums of that religion pronounced in the British senate, by men in the highest office in the nation. Even the mob, my L—d, have a certain persuasion, with regard to matters of religion, however little account they make of its precepts; and your L——p knows very well, that when many thousands of Protestants fled to England in the
the last century, to escape the mildness (for we must not call it persecution, because Papists never persecute) of Lewis XIV. who had politely desired them, holding the bayonet to their throats, to change their religion, it was discovered that some of them had no religion to change. They were not Christians, but they were men of spirit and honour, who would not profess a religion which they did not believe. The mob must express their sentiments in a mobbish manner, and while regular and decent Protestants petition and complain of the infringement of the ancient laws, those who are ignorant, sullen or passionatet will fall rudely on the persons who, they think, are the causes of their misfortunes. But if ignorant and drunken Protestants are driven to desperation and acts of violence, who is to blame for it? What is the primary cause of these irregularities? Not the Protestant Association, who had no existence till the late daring attack on the laws of their country, and whose sole object was to petition. But those persons, my L—d, were the real rioters, who were convicted by their own acts, of beginning to pull down the sacred fences of the revolution establishment, and may perhaps, if God does not prevent them, finish that work, which they began with so much alacrity, and without any petition or public application, even from the Papists. These, my L—d, are the real rioters, against whom your L—p's spleen would have been more properly directed, and not the Protestant Association, against which your L—p has had no opportunity of pronouncing any sentence.

If your L—p could but for a moment forget your own guilt, your dignity, and the nature of those services in Parliament, by which you obtained it, I am persuaded that you would be convinced of the justness of these sentiments. But as your L—p has been for a considerable time in the practice of the
the law, do you not remember that you have occasion-
ally, and for a good fee, defended some actions
almost as bad as burning houses? Was there not a
certain N—b, not long ago, who was accused of
a small crime, I mean the putting several millions of
innocent persons to death, by famine? The Bishop
of St. A—ph gave confirmation of this in a printed
speech, no part of which has ever yet been refuted.
Does your L—p remember who was the person
who ably defended the illustrious panel; and who
uttered the following sentiments, worthy to be writ
in letters of gold, in the prayer book of every Cour-
tier, that the actions of great men are not to be regu-
lated by closet mortality? The person who uttered
this sentence, my L—d, I take to be a greater ene-
my to justice, order, peace, and good government,
than all the rioters that have been executed, or ought
to have been executed, for the burning of seventy-
two houses, and four public goals in London; and
I hope that your L—p agrees with me in opinion,
though I do not insist on your publishing it; for
you know, my L—d, that when great men take a-
ny liberties, the vulgar will quickly claim the same,
especially if they are drunk, for then they always
think themselves great men and as much exempted
from the obligations of closet mortality, as the very
best of them. Your L—p knows that it was a
Monarch who said, that the man that is drunk is as
great as a king, and your L—p is too good a cour-
tier to deny that kings have a right to burn houses.
Nay I believe you read, with considerable satisfac-
tion, the burning of Boston, New York, Norfolk,
and the many villages in the Jerseys, besides Elipus
and Egg harbour, by which the valour of his
M—y's troops has been to remarkably shown.
And though you may regret the loss of L—d's library, I have the charity to believe that you,
consider the burning of the libraries of Princetown
and Trenton as a most noble action, and worthy of,
the Goths, Vandals, or Saracens, or any nation the most distinguished for liberal sentiments, and polite manners. But I am surprised, my L—d, at the diffusion between the military and civil powers, on occasion of the late riots. The military apprehended and confined a number of poor, drunken, thoughtless wretches, whom they found in acts of illegal violence. Your L—p again employs your whole speech in railing on a respectable society of sober people who were not apprehended, nor included in your commission. What does your L—p intend? Would you really wish that 50,000 men were apprehended and executed? What a joyous campaign would this have been to Judge Jeffries, one of your L—p's predecessors? It would have been more fitting, and worthy of a judge, to have proposed in Parliament a reformation of the criminal law of England, which to the scandal of humanity, condemns poor people to lose their lives for a threepence, half crown, or such other contemptible piece of property, while greater criminals escape with impunity. But your L—p is perhaps employed in drawing up the heads of a bill for erasing the monument of London, and erecting another upon a Roman model, adorned with an inscription ascribing the burning of that city to the Protestant Association. If this is the case, my L—d, I cannot expect your L—p should have leisure to think of so trifling a concern, as saving the lives of men.

It was observed, that the rioters, in their late proceedings, attempted to destroy a fine model of Rome, to the great detriment of the artist, who was to live by showing it. But your L—p is likely to do that person much more harm than the rioters did, as your L—p's speech and principles exhibit a more compleat model of Rome, than was ever executed by any artist in wood, or plaster of Paris. We had two small riots here in Scotland, not without burning, but this nation having long had the happiness...
pines of your L—p’s absence, a more rational system was pursued on that occasion. The fury of the mob was beheld by patient magistrates, and no man lost his life, as a compensation for statues of St. Dominic, altars, boards or brickbats. We had no tragical declamations about a settled influence, a preconcerted plan, an assault on government, and the like stuff, with which your L—p’s speech is so plentifully interlarded. And yet we might have dehaanted on the danger of our Banks, though we cannot boast of possessing such an huge bundle of waste paper as that commonly called the Bank of England. The m—y yielded to the desires of our Protestant Association, though not composed of people of higher rank than that of London, and gave us their security, so far as that can be relied on, that no relaxation of the Popery acts should be attempted in this country. I do not know if your L—p is a minister, but ministers are a strange sort of men, so fluctuating and various in their plans, that one does not know where to find them. They have such a number of receipts for quelling riots, that no body can possibly know which of them they intend to make use of. Sometimes they prescribe blocking up the harbour and removing the Custom House as the best method of suppressing riots; sometimes again they yield to the mob, as in the case of Scotch riots, which might mislead the London rioters; sometimes they are stern and bloody, but that is when they have taken a little town after two years of total inaction.

I conclude with intreating your L—p, for the repose of your conscience, to have as little to do as possible, with that sort of men, and do no more of their dirty work, which will make no addition to your reputation, though it may greatly add to your fortune. If you do, though you may increase your riches, you will be plagued with tormenting...
Two Letters, &c.

Reflections, which even the philosophy of Mr. Gibbon, or a plenary indulgence from Rome, will not remove. Conscience has great power, my Lord, even in great men sometimes, and your Lordship would not choose to forward your own salvation, or to have your journey to Bath unexpectedly stopped by a sudden suicide, a misfortune that once happened to one of your clients.

I am, without the least malice to your person, or envy of your riches and dignity,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's

Most obedient humble servant,

A Consistent Protestant.

AFTER Perusing these original papers of the Protestant Association, and considering the result of the trials of the Rioters, the attentive and unprejudiced Reader will readily admit, that the Associates stand exculpated, not only from being actually criminal in any part of their conduct, but also from having any evil intentions whatever. And when it is considered that circumstances frequently required the most speedy resolutions, it is not a little remarkable, that they were not suffered to fall into any snares which might have tended to criminate any of them. Their conduct has been found in all respects to be such as became their professions. If the late tumults shall stain the British Annals, it will be no less wonderful in the eyes of posterity, that fifty thousand men, were assembled together and conducted themselves with so much propriety, in the midst of such dreadful Riot and disorder, as that not an individual could be charged with the least unbecoming behaviour, after the most scrupulous inquiry into their conduct.

FINIS.