

The Papacy and the British Crown

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WHEN Queen Anne came to the throne the Protestant succession had already been secured. However, a High Church Party had become influential in the Church of England and were ready to persecute the Protestant dissenters. The consort of the Queen was Prince George of Denmark. None of their seventeen children survived them. During this reign our armies were successful under John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, in the Wars of the Spanish succession. It was Queen Anne who restored to the Church of England the patrimony that Henry VIII had taken from it, it became known as Queen Anne's bounty. A certain clergyman named Dr Sacheverell preached in St Paul's Cathedral a sermon upholding the doctrine of non-resistance (to the monarch) and attacking Protestant Dissenters. It caused riots which led to the burning down of some dissenting meeting houses in London.

In 1701 an Act of Settlement was passed enabling the crown to be held by the descendants of Sophia, Electress of Hanover and granddaughter of James I. She died just before Queen Anne and the crown then became that of the Hanoverian Kings, George I, II, III, IV and William IV. This was entirely on the grounds of the Bill of Rights 1689 and the Act of Settlement of 1701. It was Parliament who decided the matter of the succession, not just the hereditary right. The fact that under the legislation of 1689 the crown could be held only by a Protestant, and that one not married to a Roman Catholic, secured the crown for these monarchs, bypassing the Roman Catholic Stuarts with a better hereditary claim to the throne.

The Protestant Reformation has given us the constitutional monarchy that has stabilized our government, protected us from revolution and

been blessed of God nationally ever since. Political freedom has grown out of religious freedom — freedom from Romanism and the dominion of the Alien Power of the Papacy.

The Acts that secure this Settlement are still in force, but have been attacked again and again by Romanists in Parliament or Government and from the Anglo-Catholic party in the Church of England. Originally the incoming monarchs at their accession had to declare themselves as being opposed to the teaching of the Roman Church and had to state their position with regard to the doctrine of the Mass — the theological theory of transubstantiation. This was changed when King George V came to the throne, through Anglo-Catholic influence. Romanists regard the Bill of Rights and Acts of Settlement as very obnoxious. They often speak of them as being outworn and obsolete in this day and age. They still protect our heritage and prevent us from having a monarch who is subservient to the Pope of Rome.

In order to make these matters clear we reprint the following important extracts:

The Bill of Rights and Act of Settlement lays it down that:

“Whereas it hath been found by experience that it is inconsistent with the safety and welfare of this Protestant kingdom to be Governed by a Popish Prince or by any King or Queen marrying a Papist ... Every person who is or shall be reconciled to or shall have communion with, the See or Church of Rome, or shall marry a Papist, shall be excluded and be forever incapable to inherit, possess, or enjoy the Crown or Government of this Realm and Ireland, and in every case the people of these Realms shall

be and are hereby released of their allegiance.” (Act I, William and Mary, cap 2 sec ii 1689)

The Accession Declaration: The Accession declaration has to be taken by the Monarch when meeting the first Parliament of the reign or at the Coronation, whichever may be first. “I do solemnly declare, in the presence of God, profess, testify, and declare that I am a faithful Protestant, and that I will, according to the true intent of the enactments which secure the Protestant Succession to the Throne of my Realm, uphold and maintain the said enactments to the best of my power, according to the law.”

The Coronation Oath. “Will you to the utmost of your power maintain the Laws of God and the true profession of the Gospel? Will you to the utmost of your power maintain in the United Kingdom the Protestant Reformed Religion established by law? And will you maintain and preserve inviolably the settlement of the Church of England and the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, as by law established in England? And will you preserve unto the Bishops and Clergy of England, and to the Churches there committed to their charge, all such rights and privileges as by law do or shall appertain to them, or any of them?”

Presentation of the Bible to the Monarch.

This is one of the most important features of the Coronation. It is distinctly Protestant.

At this presentation the Archbishop of Canterbury said these words: “Our most gracious Queen, to keep your Majesty ever mindful of the Law and of the Gospel of God as the rule for the whole life and government of Christian Princes, we present you with this Book, the most valuable thing this world affords.” The Moderator of the Church of Scotland continued by saying: “Here is wisdom — This is the Royal Law. These are the lively oracles of God.”

In recent years there have been various attempts to get these important enactments changed. Already a Bill has been passed to enable the Lord Chancellor to be a Roman Catholic. However, it has not yet been implemented. Before the Prince of Wales married there were efforts made to enable him to marry a Roman Catholic Princess if he so wished, without losing his right to the crown. The recent reception of the Pope by the Queen, when he visited this country, was regarded by many as a violation of these enactments.

May God preserve to us our Protestant Constitutional Monarchy