

RECEPTION OF THE DUKE OF MONMOUTH AT
CHICHESTER IN 1679.

DESCRIBED IN A LETTER FROM THE BISHOP OF CHICHESTER.

FROM MS. TANNER, 38 BIBL. BODL.

READ AT EYE, JULY 13, 1854.

THE writer of the following letter, Guy Carlton, Bishop of Chichester, had been recently translated from the See of Bristol, January 8, 1679, when, owing to the disturbed state of public feeling, he found himself immediately involved in the political tumults of the time, so as to become liable to reproach and suspicion in his own cathedral city during the following month, when he wrote, on February 17, 1679, an account of the Duke of Monmouth having visited Chichester as the popular representative of the strong Protestant distrust of King Charles the Second's policy. Archbishop Sancroft was the prelate addressed.

The events of the previous months explain the highly excited feelings then prevalent at Chichester as elsewhere. On November 20, 1678, the Lords had passed an Act to disable Papists from sitting in Parliament, in spite of the protest of the Duke of York and seven other Peers. On December 2, the Commons had voted an Address to the King upon the growth of Popery, and the King had in consequence, on December 30, prorogued, and on January 24, 1679, dissolved the Parliament, summoning a new one to meet on March 6. It was in this interval of political struggle that the Duke of Monmouth put himself forward to influence the elections and direct public suspicion against the court of the King his father. As the King had in fact pledged himself to the King of France many years previously by the treaty of Dover, May 1670, to declare himself

a Roman Catholic, and as James, the heir to the throne, had already done so, Monmouth had little difficulty in becoming the hero of Protestant excitement.

Some passages of Macaulay's History referring to this crisis well depict what may have been the feelings of the parties at Chichester:—

I. p. 239. "Of the old Cavaliers many participated in the prevailing fear of Popery, and many bitterly resenting the ingratitude of the Prince, for whom they had sacrificed so much, looked on his distress as carelessly as he had on theirs. Even the Anglican clergy, mortified and alarmed at the apostacy of the Duke of York, so far countenanced the opposition as to join cordially in the outcry against the Roman Catholics."

p. 251. "When he (the Duke of Monmouth) travelled, he was everywhere received with not less pomp and with far more enthusiasm than had been displayed when the king had made progresses through the realm. He was escorted from mansion to mansion by long cavalcades of armed gentlemen and yeomen. Cities poured forth their whole population to receive him."

"Most reverend Father and my most honored Lord,
 "By the several relations even in this towne and the country adjacent, and both very fals and various, I beg leave to give your Grace a true accompt of the Duke of Monmouth's arrival and reception into the city of Chichester upon Saterdag, Feb. 7th inst. The Elector-general Grey (for so is his title in this country) being here in Chichester went out to bring him into the city attended with broken shopkeepers, butchers, carpenters, smiths, and such like people, all dissenters and petitioners, to the number of fifty or threescore.—The Duke was in a scarlet sute and cloak which the great men for petitioning for a Parliament call'd the Red flagg to lett see beforehand what oure doome would be ere long; And had the reception rested there, no other could be expected from such a rabble of Brutes. But the great men of our Cathedral welcomed him with belles and bonfires made by wood had from their houses to flare before his lodgings, personal visits made to him, complemented at the lighting from his horse with all that was in their houses proffered to his service, and to be at his disposal. Dr. Edes¹ that night officiated as his chaplane, supped with him, and herded himself there with such companie as no man that

¹ Dr. Edes was the Precentor of the Cathedral.

had a loyal harte towards the king or bene really a cordiall sonn of the Church of England would have bene amongst. The next day Dr. Edes went to his lodging, caus'd the way to be swept, though the weather was drie enough, and conducted him to the church from the Cloyster into the Quier. He was ushered into the Deane's seat with a voluntarie upon the organ; before sermon a part of the first psalme was ordered to be sung, these wordes, 'He shal be like the tree that growes, Fast by the river side,' &c. The anthem made choice of at Evening prayer was the slaughter of king Saul and his people upon the mountains of Gilboa, but not a worde I warrant you of 'the kinges enimies to perish,' or that 'upon his head his crown might long flourish,' these were apocryphal anthems when the commonwealth saints appear'd amongst us. In these bell and bonfire solemnities I would not joyne nor goe to give him personal visites. I thought it did ill become clergiemmen of all others to open our armes so wide with acclamations of joy to imbrace a man that lay under the Duke of Monmouth's circumstances at this tyme, a person that was highly under the kinges displeasure for its obstinate perseverance in disobedience to his soveraigne, and that kept no companie here but known enimies to the king and his government. I was mightily blamed, cried out upon and condemned for not doing all homige imaginable to so excellent a person as the D. of M. was. I told them if he deserted that raskel companie that flockt to him, and would returne to that obedience and loyalty he owed his father and his soveraigne, then no man should honor him more than I should doe, but till this were done I would never think him worthy of honor from any good man or loyall subject. Whether in doinge this I cannot tell whether I faild in the pointe of manners, but I thinke I did not, and I am sure I did not in mine affection and loyalty to the kyng my master. But, my Lord, since I would not bow my knee to the people's Idol, when it was dark a clubb companie of these zealous brethren were sent to my house to demand wood to make bonfires for the Duke of Monmouth, as they said the other clergiemmen had already done of their own accord. Some of my servants answered them that their master had other uses to put his wood to, whereupon with a

shout they said the bishop was an old Popish rogue—and all the people in his familie were rogues and thieves and they should meet with him ere long; then they shott three tymes into my house and seconded that violence with a shower of stones so thick that our servants thought they would have broke in and cut our throats—Neither the Maior of this city nor any gentlemen (and there are diverse of them and persons of good quality that live in it) went out to meet the Duke, nor hath ever since come to visit him, or any gentleman in the country about us hath so much as met him in the field to hunt with him since he came, save Mr. Butlr of Amberly, a burgess with Mr. Garroway for Arrundell, and his brother-in-law Rooper.

“I must not forget to tell your Grace a passage between the D. and the honest Maior of Chichester Mr. Jennings. It is a custome in this city when great persons come to town to present them with something or other: so after the D. had been some time in towne, a day or two as I had the story, the Maior and Aldermen sent him some wine and gave him a visit. The D. told the Maior, he look'd like a young man. No Sir, said the Maior, I am no yong man, for I bore armes for the late king in his armie against his enemyes in the last Rebellion and I doe remember, said he, that they began that Rebellion much as they are now about to do, by petitioning the king for a Parliament. What, said the D., would you not have the people petition the king for a Parliament to sit? No, said the Maior, by no means when the king hath put forth his proclamation to the contrarie. Why then, said the D., you would not have a Parliament to sitt—Yes, said the Maior, by all means, but only when the King pleases, and not till then. Here the Lord Grey interposed and said, Well, Mr. Maior, I will come to your house to convince you of your error. Upon this the county party, as the fanatick party call themselves, report that the Maior and the Popish Bishop do both one quill, and have caused notes beforehand what to doe. I dare say your Grace thinks me tedious and yet I cannot forbear to tell you two other passages that follow.—

A tobacco-pipe maker here in Chichester came to visit the D., and was introduced by the Lord Grey under the

character of a very honest man—this noble tradesman was a Quaker, the D. graciously received him and talked to him with his hat off, the Quaker with his hat on. The D. asked him what their numbers were that frequented their meetings? the Quaker answered about 100, but we are all for thee, said the Quaker. Are you disturbed at your meetings? said the D. No, said the Quaker, we are not molested.

“At Midhurst lately there were some met together in an inn in that town and in the next Room to that company, a wenscot being only betwixt them, three other gentlemen were mett about businessse that concerned them. One in the first company, they being in discourse about the King’s last prorogation of the Parlt., said with a loud voice, that the three gentlemen in the other room heard the words distinctly, which were these, ‘Well, for all this the sword shall be drawn before May Day, and I care not if the King stood by and heard me.’

“Your Grace as a privie counsellor knows what use to make of these passages, whose pardon he heartily begs for trespassing so long upon your patience who must ever acknowledge himself your Grace’s most obliged Servant

G. CHICHESTER.”

“Chichester, Feb. 17, 1679.”
