

Thirteen unpublished Letters

FROM

SIR ISAAC NEWTON TO JOHN COVEL, D.D.

COMMUNICATED BY

DAWSON TURNER, ESQ.,

VICE-PRESIDENT.

IN the division of the Macro Manuscripts,* purchased conjointly by Mr. Hudson Gurney and myself in 1820, not the least interesting part of what fell to my share was two folio volumes, containing about five hundred letters, the literary correspondence of Dr. John Covel, the learned author of the *History of the Greek Church*. Dr. Covel was a native of Horningheath, in Suffolk, a village adjoining Bury Saint Edmund's; and in the school of that village he received his early education: this he completed at Christ's College, Cambridge, where he graduated A.M. in 1661, at the age of 23. He shortly afterwards obtained a fellowship, but quitted the University and England in 1670, to accompany Sir Daniel Harvey in his embassy to Constantinople. Dr. Covel's residence in the East, as chaplain to Sir Daniel and his successor, Sir John Finch, embraced a term of seven years; in the course of which he visited various districts of Greece and Asia Minor. The note-books he kept on these journeys are in my library, and are, I regret to say, unpublished. Copious,

* Respecting the Rev. Dr. Cox Macro, see Nichols' *Literary Anecdotes*, IX pp. 359—365. His own correspondence and his Album are also in my hands.

and apparently accurate, and full of details and learning, they could scarcely fail to throw valuable light upon Archaeology; as they would bear indisputable testimony to the zeal of their author, in tracing and investigating and drawing and describing what was then left in those regions. Upon his return to England he repaired to his college, of which he was elected master in 1688. The office he held till his death in 1722, almost wholly devoting himself to the discharge of the consequent duties. The rectories of Littlebury and Kegsworth, together with the Chancellorship of York, and the office of Lady Margaret's Preacher in Cambridge, had been previously conferred upon him; and hence, he himself tells us, in the Dedication to his History, he has been compelled to lead a kind of itinerant life, in York, and Holland, and elsewhere. But how often, and on what occasions, he visited the Continent, his Correspondence affords no means of ascertaining; and I regret this the more, as it is clear, from some hints in the course of it, that during his abode in the Low Countries he unfortunately fell under the displeasure of the Sovereign. Thus much may safely be said of him, that, wherever stationed, he cultivated the society of men of literature, and subsequently maintained a correspondence with them, and carefully preserved their letters to him, together with transcripts of his own in reply.

With such stores in my possession,† the publication of

† The following may be enumerated among Dr. Covel's most distinguished correspondents:—

Archbishops Sancroft, Tenison, and Hutton, of Canterbury; and Sharp, of York; The Duke of Somerset; the Duchess of Grafton; Harley, Earl of Oxford; Viscount Bulkeley; and Lords Arlington and Hervey; Dr. Sherlock, Bishop of London; Dr. Moore, of Norwich; and Dr. Nicholson, of Carlisle.

Sir Isaac Newton; Sir Eliab and Lady Harvey; Sir John Finch; the Rev. Sir George Wheler; Sir Paul Ricaut; Sir Andrew Fountaine; Sir Thomas Barnes; and Sir James Porter.

Drs. Ralph Cudworth, George Hickes, Daniel Waterland, John Wood-

rather a copious selection from them was naturally at one time among my favourite day-dreams. The eminence of the writers, and in many cases the interest of the subject, made me anticipate a favourable reception; and, now that age has proved the real unsubstantiality of the visionary castle, I flatter myself that the mention of my design may cause it to be hereafter realized. In one single instance, however, I have determined to take the task upon myself, by publishing the following thirteen letters from Sir Isaac Newton. Carefully and zealously as “every hole and corner” has been ransacked, to detect whatever came from the pen of our great philosopher, or might illustrate his history or his studies, these letters, I have every reason to believe, have hitherto escaped the search. I am equally mistaken and misinformed, if they are not the only records left us of his senatorial life, and if they do not derive from that circumstance a considerable additional interest.* Their date ranges from Dec. 15, 1688, to the same day of the following May. It was in the January of 1688-9, that Sir Isaac, then Mr. Newton, first entered Parliament, having been returned as representative of the University of Cambridge, in conjunction with Sir

ward, Humphrey Gower, John Luke, John Spencer, Henry James, and John Mill.

Men of Learning.—John Locke, Humfrey Wanley, Jacob Spon, Paul Herman, Drelincourt, Justel, Philip Stosch, Martin Eagle, Thomas Petiver, Charles Daubuz, Thomas Ford, Jerome Salter, Samuel Dale, Peter Allix, Isaac Abendana, Thomas Baker, and W. T. Grelot.

Distinguished Foreigners.—Archbishop of Philippopolis, Marquis de Nointel, Count Zolyma, Baron Lempster, Ezekiel Spanheim, E. Benzelius, and T. B. Menkenius.

* I may also be allowed to state, what would give them a still greater interest in the eyes of a considerable body of collectors, that I believe they are the only letters known that are franked by him. Some of them also preserve his seal,—the shin-bones in saltire, of his heraldic shield.—Of a letter with such a seal, and also with a frank, I have annexed a facsimile, which will be found at the end of this Paper.

Robert Sawyer.* For so high a distinction he appears to have been greatly indebted to the part he had taken shortly before in opposition to the wishes of the Court, then intent upon bringing the Church of England once more under subjection to that of Rome. The King had sent his mandamus to the University, commanding them to confer the degree of Master of Arts upon Father Francis, a Benedictine monk, and to annex the accompanying privileges, without requiring him to take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy. Obedience was refused, and the monarch was enraged: he repeated his commands, and accompanied them with threats, which were met with undaunted firmness; and “high words to words succeeding still,” the Vice-Chancellor was summoned before

* Sir Robert was at this time probably a popular character; having been dismissed in December, 1687, from the office of Attorney-General, a post he had held nearly eight years, for refusing to “support the dispensing power.” I quote the words of Burnet, who, in stating the fact, adds, “he had for many years served the ends of the Court in a most abject and obsequious manner;” and who, in speaking of him on a previous occasion, had called him “a dull, hot man, and forward to serve all the designs of Court.” Granger, on the other hand, gives him a widely different character; and this it seems only fair to quote, that the reader may thus have the bane and antidote at once before him. “Sir Robert Sawyer, one of the ablest of his contemporaries in his profession, formed himself after the Lord Chief Baron Hale, under whom he practised, and of whom he was a just admirer. He, like that excellent person, was a man of general learning, and of an integrity that nothing could corrupt. His reputation in the Court of Exchequer, the business of which he perfectly understood, was superior to that of any other counsel. He was Attorney-General, from the year 1681 to 1687; during which period he approved himself, in some very delicate points, and upon many important occasions, a most judicious and expert lawyer, and a no less useful man. He was continued in his office by James, but was soon set aside by that prince, who presently perceived that he could not be prevailed with to mould the laws to such purposes as were never intended by the legislature. He has been justly censured for his harsh treatment of Lord Russell on his trial. Pemberton, on the contrary, treated him with a gentleness and candour that did him much honour. He died at Highcleer, in Hampshire, 1692. His only daughter married the Earl of Pembroke. She died the 17th November, 1706.”

the Ecclesiastical Commission, to answer for this act of contempt. He accordingly appeared, attended by nine delegates, of whom Newton was one : the question was argued in the High Court ; and the King abandoned his pretensions.

Notwithstanding, however, the popularity thus acquired, and that derived from his wide-spread fame, it was only by a majority of five votes that the philosopher carried his election.* Most short, too, was his legislative career ; for on the dissolution of the Convention Parliament, in the March of the succeeding year, both he and his colleague were ejected.†

* The other candidates were Sir Robert Sawyer and Mr. Finch ; and the votes stood thus :—

Sir Robert Sawyer	125
Mr. Newton	122
Mr. Finch	117

I am quoting here from Sir David Brewster's interesting *Life of Sir Isaac Newton*, to which I have been greatly indebted for particulars touching the struggle between the King and the University.

† Who were the candidates, and what the votes upon the occasion, I am ignorant : I only see by the *Lists of the Members of the House of Commons*, that Edward Finch and Henry Boyle were then returned ; that in the King's third Parliament, it was George Oxenden and Henry Boyle ; in his fourth and fifth, Henry Boyle and Anthony Hammond ; but that, in his sixth and last, in December 1701, Newton was re-instated ; the candidates and their respective votes being, as I also learn from Sir David Brewster,

Mr. Henry Boyle (afterwards Lord Carleton) .	180
Mr. Newton	161
Mr. Hammond	64

On the same authority I state, that on the close of Queen Anne's first Parliament, which had assembled in 1702, and was dissolved in 1705, Newton, then knighted, and made Master of the Mint and President of the Royal Society, once more ventured upon a contest, though he had not been returned in 1702, and was defeated by a great majority ; the numbers being, for

The Hon. Arthur Annesley	182
The Hon. Dixie Windsor	170
Mr. Godolphin	162
Sir Isaac Newton	117

It may be objected to me, and perhaps with some justice, that in speaking of Newton's Parliamentary career, I have not noticed the ten months of his last seat. I do not defend myself, by saying that of these I know nothing,

During the fourteen months that he held his seat, we find no mention of him in the *Parliamentary History*, as taking a share in the debates or in the business of the House. Here, too, his very able biographer is wholly silent. The more fortunate may be regarded the existence of these letters, as testimonies to his political character, and to his attention to the discharge of his duties. They are all written in his character of Member of Parliament, and are all consequently addressed to Dr. Covel, who, as Vice-Chancellor, was the organ of similar communications. Their object was not a little delicate; it being to persuade the members of the University, who had so lately sworn allegiance to King James, to silence all scruples of conscience, while they vowed the same fidelity to his hostile successor. It may perhaps be regarded as extraordinary, that Newton's colleague should have taken no part in the correspondence; indeed that his name should appear only in a single instance, and then merely as a signature to an official document. But this may be accounted for from the fact, that he entered warmly into the debates; and, possibly, the cloud, which burst in January, 1689-90, and caused his expulsion, may then have been gathering over his head, and "concentered him all in self." *

and that here also history is silent regarding his name: it is enough for me to observe that my object is confined to elucidating these letters. The task of being his biographer happily rests in far abler hands; and "tractent fabilia fabri."

* The expulsion of Sir Robert Sawyer from the House of Commons, upon which such of his biographers as I am acquainted with are silent, is recorded at length in the *Parliamentary History*. It was carried, January 20, 1689-90, by a majority of 131 over 71. His crime was the part he had taken, as Attorney-General, in the trial and subsequent execution and attaignment of Sir Thomas Armstrong; in which he appears to have lent himself sadly to Lord Chief Justice Jeffreys. In the course of the debate, which was long, Mrs. Matthews, Sir Thomas' daughter, was called in, and asked what she knew of the prosecution against her father, and who were the prosecutors. She replied, "The judges were Jeffreys, Wythens, Holloway, and Walcott; Sawyer, Burton, and Graham, prosecutors. I was with Sawyer for a writ of

To turn from men to things,—these letters, I cannot but feel, have a twofold interest. They have the primary one already mentioned, derived from their illustrious author; and they have another, not trifling, which they owe to the subject-matter and the times. The history of Britain scarcely embraces a more eventful epoch, than when the throne, just deserted by the lineal monarch, was occupied by his daughter, and by her husband, his nephew. Not only must the tide of party, in the common acceptation of the word, have then run unusually high, but other considerations and feelings must have conspired to give it a character of its own. The sympathy of the courtiers and their friends with the deposed sovereign cannot but have been inexpressibly augmented by pity for the general misfortunes of the family; and, above all, when united with the reflection that the exile was the son of him, who, in his decapitation, had undergone what they regarded as martyrdom in defence of their privileges. They had learned, too, from their parents what they themselves had witnessed at the commencement of the century; and they naturally dreaded a repetition of similar horrors at its close. On the other hand, their opponents were blind to every consideration but what they regarded as a systematic attack upon their liberty and their consciences. They had fearfully

error: He said, ‘Your father must die, he must die, he is an ill man.’ My mother was ready to pay him all his due fees; but he said ‘he must die, he must die.’ When my father was brought to the bar, the Chief Justice asked Sawyer, What he had to say? Sawyer prayed an award of execution, which was done. My father desired that the Statute of Outlawries might be read. He said, ‘He thought it was plain that he was come in within a year, &c.’ Said Sawyer, ‘Sir Thomas Armstrong will not find anything in the statute to his purpose: possibly he will say, he surrendered himself to your lordship; but, Sir Thomas, you should have surrendered yourself before you went out of England;’ and he alledged Holloway’s case. Said the Chief Justice, ‘We have enough against him.’ Said Sawyer, ‘The King did indulge in Holloway’s case; but Armstrong was active in the fire at Newmarket, and he has received dangerous letters;’ whereas, they were no more than a recommendation to the Duke of Brandenbourg.”

committed themselves; and they not only hated the tyrant and dreaded his return, but the question at issue involved in their eyes no less a stake than the very existence of the Freedom of England, the Constitution, and the Reformed Religion. No thought of half-measures could be entertained, while, in the expressive language of my late excellent friend, Mr. Roscoe,

“The welfare of millions now hung in the scale,
And the balance yet trembled with fate.”

Such, in few words, was the character of the times. To the nature of the contents of the letters allusion has already been made; but it must be added, that they tend likewise to throw light upon the feeling and conduct of the University at that momentous epoch. It may even be allowable to advance a step further, and to point out one of them as of peculiar intrinsic value. The bias of Newton's political opinions was not indeed to be questioned, after the part he had taken against the fugitive monarch while apparently firm upon his throne; but the decided expression of these opinions, and the mathematical precision with which he lays down his theorem, traces and ramifies his arguments, and draws his inference no less accurately in morals than in physics, must be regarded as a fresh and desirable evidence of the structure of his mind. Had, however, the whole series of the letters been destitute of these claims to attention, I am not prepared to say that I should therefore have abstained from printing them. Let it be admitted that whatever can be collected, even by tradition, touching him who was the glory of his country and his age, deserves to be recorded; and it cannot but follow that the same necessarily holds good, with increased force, when what it is proposed to preserve are actually sparks from his mind and lines from his pen. Impossible is it too to pronounce how far an incident, in itself apparently immaterial, may not, by “touching some wheel or verging to some goal,” disclose motives for actions, or bring to light actions themselves, previously unknown and unsuspected. Neither were it less

absurd than it would be false to deny that I feel a pride, that I hope is honest, in the opportunity thus afforded me of associating my name in any manner, however humble, with Newton's. Sir Joshua Reynolds wrote his upon the folds of the drapery in his glorious portrait of Mrs. Siddons; and when asked the cause for what was so unusual, replied that he should be content to go down to posterity upon the hem of her garment. In the present case, the pretensions and hopes are far more lowly; not better founded, it is feared, than those ascribed to his congregation by John Wesley, when, with his characteristic shrewdness, he told them, "You are, all of you, I know, expecting to go up with me to heaven, one by catching hold of my cassock and another of my coat; but, depend upon it, you will be left behind; for it is only in a jacket, and that a very tight-buttoned one, that I shall ascend on high."

DAWSON TURNER.

For the more complete understanding of the following letters, without the necessity of referring to other books, it has been thought desirable to prefix to them the few accompanying documents, as placed by Dr. Covel himself in his Correspondence.

*To all Maisters and Heads of Colleges, John Covel,
Vice-Chancellor of ye University of Cambridge,
sendeth greeting.*

GENTLEMEN,

Whereas, in this disorder many Schollers are now in armes, and the effects thereof are to be feared as very dangerous to the whole University, as well as destructive to all good manners, I do humbly conceive our best course

to reduce them would be to convene them in some publick place of your Coll. to-morrow morning, if they returne ; and grauely, but calmly, advise them to all civil behaviour, belieueing all severity at this juncture might rather tend to exasperate them more, and bring the unruly people's fury upon us all.

Your Servant,

JOH. COVEL, Procan.

December 15, 1688.

Letter from the Prince of Orange to the University of Cambridge, and accompanying Notice from the Vice-Chancellor.

Whereas the Lords Spūal and tēþral, ye Kḡhts, Citizens, and Burgesses, heretofore members of ye Comōns House of Parl^{mt} during y^e Reign of K. Charles y^o 2^d, residing in and about y^e City of London, together with y^e Aldermen and divers of the Coñon council of the said City, in this extraordinary conjuncture, at our request, severally assembled, to advise us the best manner how to attain the ends of our declaration, in calling a free Parliam^t for the preservation of the Protestant Religion, and restoring the Rights and Libertyes of the Kingdom, and settling the same that they may not be in danger of being again subverted, have advised and desired us to cause our letters to be written and directed for the Counties to the Coroners of the respective Counties, or any one of them ; and in default of the Coroners, to y^e Clerks of y^e Peace of the respective Counties ; and for the Universities, to the respective Vicechancellors ; and for the Cityes, Boroughs, and Cinque-ports, to the chief magistrates of each respective city, borough, and cinque-port, containing directions for the choosing in all such countyes, cities, universytes, boroughs, and cinque-ports, wthin ten days after the receipt of the said respective letters, such a number of persons to

represent them, as from every such place is or are of right to be sent to Parliament; of which Elections, and times and places thereof, the respective Officers shall give notice. The notice for the intended Election in the Counties to be published in the Market-towns w^t in the respective Counties, by the space of five dayes at the least before the said Election; and for the Universityes, Cities, Boroughs, and Cinque-ports, in every of them respectively by the space of three days at the least before the said Election; the said letters and y^e execution thereof to be returned by such officer and officers, who shall execute the same, to the Clerke of the Crowne in the Court of Chancery, so as the persons to be chosen may meet and set at Westminster, the two and twentieth day of January next.

We, heartily desiring ye performance of w^t we have in our s^d Declaration expressed, in pursuance of the said advice and desire, have caused this our letter to be written to you, to the intent that you, truely and uprightly, w^tout favour or affection to any person, or indirect practice or proceeding, do and execute what of your part ought to be done, according to the said advice for the due execution thereof. The Elections to be made by such persons only, as, according to the antient laws and customes, of right ought to choose Members for Parliament; and that you cause a returne to be made by certificate, under your seal, of the names of the persons elected, annexed to this our letter to the said Clerk of the Crowne, before the said two and twentyeth day of January.

Given at St James's the nine and twentieth day of December, in the year of Our Lord 1688.

G. PRINCE D'ORANGE.

To the Vice-Chancellor of the University
of Cambridge.

In pursuance of his Highnesse the Prince of Orange his letter hereunto annexed, the Chancellor, Masters, and Scholars, of the University of Cambridge, have wth one assent and consent chosen S^r Rob^t Sawyer, Knight, and M^r Isaac Newton, M. A., and Mathematick Professor, representatives for the aforesaid University, to meet and sit at Westminster the two and twentyeth day of this instant January. Giving and granting in this extraordinary juncture to the aforesaid representatives full and sufficient power for the Body of the said University to doe and consent to those things, which then and there shall be determined by the Lords Spirituall and Temporall, and the Commons assembled, for the preservacion of the Protestant Religion and settling the Rights and Libertys of this Kingdome. In witnesse whereof, I, the Vicechancellor of the said University, have hereunto put this seal of my Office, the seventeenth day of January, Anno Dni. 1688-9.

Sir Isaac Newton to Dr. Covel.

REV. SIR,

The King and Queen being proclaimed here yesterday, I presume you will soon receive an order for proclaiming them at Cambridge. I have enclosed the form of the Proclamation. I could wish heartily that the University would so compose themselves as to perform y^e solemnity with a seasonable decorum; because I take it to be their interest to set y^e best face upon things they can, after y^e example of y^e London divines. I am of opinion that Degrees be not given till you are authorized to administer the new Oaths. Whether that will be speedily done by authority of their Maties and y^e Convention, or after y^e Convention is turned to a Parliament, I cannot yet resolve you. The Oath of Supremacy, as you administer it imperfectly in Latin,

ought to be omitted, and both y^e new Oaths administered in English. You will see these Oaths in y^e end of the declaration I have enclosed this post in a letter to Dr. Beaumont.

S^r, I am
Yor^r most humble Servant,
Is. NEWTON.

London, Feb. 12, 1688-9.

The Manner of the Proclaiming of King William and Queen Mary, at White-hall, and in the City of London, Feb. 13, 1688-9.

About half an hour past Ten in the Morning, the Lords and Commons came from Westminster to White-hall in their coaches, and alighting at the Gate, went up into the Banqueting-house, when they presented the Prince and Princess of Orange with an Instrument in Writing, for declaring their Highnesses King and Queen of England, France, and Ireland, and the Dominions and Territories thereunto belonging; desiring them to accept the Crown pursuant to the said Declaration; which their Highnesses accepting accordingly, the said Lords and Commons came down again to White-hall-gate, preceded by the Speakers of their respective Houses, each attended with a Sergeant at Arms, where they found the Heralds of Arms, the Sergeants at Arms, the Trumpets, and other officers, all in readiness, being assembled by orders from the Duke of Norfolk, Earl Marshal of England. And Sir Thomas St. George, Knight, Garter Principal King of Arms, having received a Proclamation, and an Order from the Lords' House to the King's Heralds and Pursuivants of Arms, for Publishing or Proclaiming the same forthwith, the persons concern'd disposed themselves in order before the

Court-gate, for making the said Proclamation. And the Trumpets having sounded a call three several times, the last of which was answer'd by a great shout of the vast Multitudes of People there assembled, the noise ceasing, the said Garter King of Arms, read the said Proclamation by short sentences or periods, which was thereupon proclaimed aloud by Robert Devenish, Esq., York Herald, being the Senior Herald, in these words :

“ Whereas it hath pleased Almighty God, in his great mercy to this Kingdom,” &c.

Which being ended, and the trumpets sounding a flourish, was answered by several repeated shouts of the people. And directions being given to proclaim the same within Temple-bar, in Cheapside, and at the Royal Exchange, the Proceeding marched in this manner :

First, the several Beadles of the Liberties of Westminster; next, the Constables of the said Liberties, all on foot, with the High Constable on horseback; after them, the Head Bailiff of Westminster, and his men, all with white staves, to clear the way, on horseback; then the Knight-Marshall’s Men, also on horseback; next to these, a class of trumpets, nine in all, viz., 2, 2, 2, and 3, followed by the Serjeant-Trumpeter, carrying his Mace on his shoulder, all likewise on horseback; then a Pursuivant of Arms, single; then a Pursuivant and a Serjeant-at-Arms; another Pursuivant and a Serjeant-at-Arms; then four Heralds of Arms, one after another, each with a Serjeant-at-Arms on his left hand, the Heralds and Pursuivants being all in their rich coats of the Royal Arms, and the Serjeants-at-Arms, each carrying his mace on his shoulder, and all on horseback; then Garter King-of-Arms in his rich Coat of Arms, carrying the Proclamation, accompanied by Sir Tho. Dupper, Kt., Gentleman-Usher of the Black Rod, in his crimson mantle of the Order of the Garter, and his Black Rod of office, likewise on horseback.

These immediately preceded the Marquess of Halifax, who executed the place of Speaker in the House of Lords, in his coach, attended by Sir Roger Harsnet, eldest Serjeant-at-Arms, with his mace. Then followed Henry Powle, Esq., Speaker of the House of Commons, in his coach, attended by John Topham, Esq., Serjeant-at-Arms to the said House, with his mace. After the two Speakers of the Houses, followed the Duke of Norfolk, Earl Marshal, and Primier Duke of England, in his coach, with his Marshal's Staff in his hand. And next to him, all the Peers in order in their coaches ; and, last of all, the Members of the House of Commons in their coaches. In this order they proceeded towards Temple-bar ; and, being come as far as the Maypole in the Strand, two of the Officers of Arms, with a Sergeant-at-Arms and two trumpets, went before to Temple-bar ; and the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Sheriffs, being by this time arrived there, and, having ordered the Gates to be shut, the Herald-at-Arms knocked thereat, whereupon the Sheriffs, being on horseback, came to the gate ; and the said Herald acquainting them, That he came by order of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal assembled at Westminster, to demand entrance into that famous City, for the Proclaiming of William and Mary, King and Queen of England, France, and Ireland, and the Dominions and Territories thereunto belonging ; and therefore required their speedy Answer. The said Sheriffs ordered the gates to be opened. Whereupon, leaving the Head-Bayliff, Constables, and Beadles of Westminster without the Barr, the rest of the proceeding entred, where they found the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, Recorder, and Sheriffs, all in their formalities, and on horseback, except the Lord Mayor, who was in his coach, attended by the Sword-bearer and other of his officers, who joyfully receiving them, they made a stand between the two Temple Gates, and Proclaimed ther Majesties a second time. From whence they marched towards Cheap-side ; a class of the City Trumpets, and the

Lord Mayor's Livery-men leading the way, and the said Aldermen and Lord Mayor falling into the proceeding ; and near Wood-street end (the place where Cheap-side Cross formerly stood) they made another stand, and Proclaimed their Majesties a third time. And arriving at the Royal Exchange about two of the clock, they Proclaimed them a fourth time ; and at each Proclamation the vast multitudes of spectators who thronged the streets, balconies, and windows, filled the air with loud and repeated shouts and expressions of joy. Within Temple-bar, and all along Fleet-street, the Orange Regiment of the City Militia lined both sides of the way ; as did the Green Regiment within Ludgate and St. Paul's Church-yard ; the Blew Regiment in Cheapside ; and the White in Cornhil.

Proclamation by the Vice-Chancellor and Heads of Houses.

Whereas, it hath pleased Almighty God, in his great mercy to this Kingdome, to vouchsafe us a miraculous deliverance from Popery and arbitrary power, and that our preservation is due, next under God, to the resolution and conduct of His Highnesse, the Prince of Orange, whome God hath chosen to be the glorious instrument of such an inestimable happinesse to us and our posterity ; and being highly sensible and fully persuaded of the great and eminent virtues of Her Highnesse, the Princess of Orange, whose zeal for the Protestant religion will no doubt bring a blessing along with her upon this nation, and whereas the L^{ds} and Co^mmons now assembled at Westminister have made a Declaration, and presented the same to the said Prince and Princesse of Orange, and therein desir'd them to accept the Crowne,—who have accepted the same accordingly,—We, therefore, the Vice-Chancellor, Heades of Colleges, Doctors, Maisters, and Schollars of this University

of Cambridge, do, wth a full consent, publish and proclaim according to the said Declaration, William and Mary, Prince and Princesse of Orange, to be King and Queen of England, France, and Ireland, wth all the Dominions and Territoryes thereunto belonging. And we do own, deem, accept, and take them accordingly, and shall henceforward acknowledge and pay unto them all Faith and true Allegiance, beseeching God, by whome kings reign, to blesse King William and Queen Mary wth long and happy yeares to reign over us.

God save King William and Queen Mary.

Sir Isaac Newton to Dr. Covel.

S^r,

I have had an account of the solemnity of the Proclamation; and I am glad to understand it was performed wth so much decence by the wiser and more considerable part of y^e university, and generosity on yo^r part. The next thing is a book of verses. If you do it at all, y^e sooner y^e better. Concerning y^e new Oaths w^{ch} you are to administer, I need not give instructions to you about their legality. But because many persons of less understanding (whom it may be difficult to persuade) will scruple at them, I will add my thoughts to yours, that you may have the fuller argument for convincing them, if I can add anything to what you have not thought of; ffor, seeing these Oaths are the main thing that y^e dissatisfied part of y^e University scruple, I think I cannot do the University better service at present than by removing the scruples of as many as have sense enough to be convinced wth reason. The argument I lay down in the following propositions:—

1. Fidelity and Allegiance sworn to y^e King is only such a ffidelity and obedience as is due to him by y^e law of y^e land; ffor were that ffaith and allegiance more than what the law

requires, we should swear ourselves slaves, and y^e King absolute; whereas, by the law, we are ffree men, notwithstanding those Oaths.

2. When, therefore, the obligation by the law to fffidelity and allegiance ceases, that by the Oath also ceases; ffor might allegiance be due by the oath to one person, whilst by the law it ceases to him and becomes due to another, the oath might oblige men to transgress the law and become rebels or traitors; whereas the oath is a part of the law, and therefore ought to be so interpreted as may consist wth it.

3. Fidelity and Allegiance are due by y^e law to King William, and not to King James. For the Statute of 25 Edw. 3, w^{ch} defined all treasons against y^e King, and is y^e only statute to that purpose, by the king understands not only a king *de jure* and *de facto*, but also a king *de facto*, though not *de jure*, against whom those treasons lye. Whence the L^d Chief Justice Hales, in his Pleas of the Crown, page 12, discoursing of that statute, tells us that a *king de facto and not de jure, is a king within that Act, and that treason against him is punishable, tho' the right heir get the crown.* And that this has been the constant sense of the law, Sr Rob^t. Sawyer also, upon my asking him about it, has assured me. And accordingly, by another statute in the first of Hen. 7, 'tis declared treason to be in arms against a king *de facto*, (such as was Richard the Third,) tho' it be in behalf of a king *de jure*. So then by y^e law of y^e land all things are treason against King William w^{ch} have been treason against former kings; and therefore the same fidelity, obedience, and allegiance w^{ch} was due to them is due to him, and by consequence may be sworn to him by y^e law of y^e land. Allegiance and protection are always mutuall; and, therefore, when K. James ceased to protect us, we ceased to owe him allegiance by y^e law of y^e land. And, when King W. began to protect us, we begun to owe allegiance to him.

These considerations are in my opinion sufficient to remove

y^e grand scruple about the oaths. If y^e dissatisfied party accuse the Convention for making y^e P. of Orange King, 'tis not my duty to judge those above me; and therefore I shall only say that, if they have done ill, "Quod fieri non debuit, factū valet." And those at Cambridge ought not to judge and censure their superiors, but to obey and honour them according to the law and the doctrine of passive obedience.

Yesterday a bill for declaring the Convention a Parliament was read y^e 2^d time and committed. The Committee have not yet finished their amendments of it. There is no doubt but it will pass. I am in haste,

Yor^r most humble Servant,

Is. NEWTON.

London, Feb. 21, 1688-9.

Sir Isaac Newton to Dr. Covel.

Westminster, Feb. 28, 1688-9.

Sr,

Because you cannot administer the new Oaths wthout being authorized by an Act of Parliam^t, I have spoke to the gentleman who is to bring in a Bill for imposing those Oaths, that he would hasten the bringing it in. I pray, send me word what is y^e latest day you may (by virtue of the University statutes) administer them to the Commencers; that if the Bill cannot be dispatcht and passed time enough, a clause may be inserted for empouring you to give the Inceptors their degrees afterwards, or some other care taken that they lose not their year. I have spoke to Mr. Bridgman for y^e Statute-Book, who refuses to deliver it wthout an order from y^e Secretaries' office. I have got my Lord of Shrewsbury spoke to for an order; and he has promised it shall be done. But I have not yet his order, as I hope to have wthin a few days. You may go on with your Courts as formerly. The

only question is about causes depending, whether they may proceed as if they had not been interrupted. A Bill is passing here for the continuing of such causes in y^e Courts of Westminster, wthout putting men to y^e charge of beginning anew. If there be any depending in your Court, they may (for preventing disputes) begin anew, unless y^e persons concerned had rather deferr till they be further advised. But, for such causes as are to begin anew, you need make no scruple. Some of or members w^{ch} ackt me about yo^r letter I acquainted wth y^e contents thereof, to y^e sense w^{ch} you set down in yo^r last.

Yesterday we voted to stand by y^e King wth or lives and fortunes in his . . . * against France, and for composing things at home and reducing Ireland; and to day we voted y^e King a land-tax of 68,820^{lb.} the month for six months.

6

412,920

I am

Yo^r most humble servant,

Is. NEWTON.

Sir Isaac Newton to Dr. Covel.

Westminster, March 2^d, 1688-9.

Sr,

The Bill for imposing the oaths is drawn, and I hope will pass time enough for the Inceptors. If proceedings in yo^r Court do not run in the King's name, (as I presume they do not) you may procede not only in new causes, (as I wrote you word in my last) but also in those w^{ch} began in the late King's reign, wthout putting men to the charge and trouble of beginning again; but if processes in yo^r Court run in y^e King's name, then all causes begun before y^e reign must begin again. And all Leases, Indentures, Bonds, and

* Torn.

Westminster March 2^d 1689

fr

The Bill for imposing the oaths is drawn & I hope will pass time enough for ~~the~~ the Inceptors. If proceedings in yo^e Court do not run in the Kings name, (as I presume they do not,) you may proceed not only in new causes (as I wrote you word in my last) but also in those whch began in yt late Kings reign, w/out putting men to yt charge & trouble of beginning again: but if process in yo^e Court run in ye Kings name then all causes begun before yt reign must begin again. And all Leases, Indentures, Bonds & such like writings must be dated the first year of K. William & Q. Mary, w/out expecting an Act of Parliament for yt purpose. Yesterday the King of his own accord sent to y^e House of Commons that he was willing the Hearth money Tax should be taken away. And a Bill was drawn up & read twice for taking away suspending y^e Habeas corpus Act for ^{about} two months or till the first day of y^e next Term. To day y^e Houses of L^{ds} & Com^s took y^e new oaths & Test, none in town scrupling them that I have heard of. I am

fr

Yo^e most humble Servant
J^s. Newton.

For the Rnd Dr John Covell
Vicechancellor of the
University of
Cambridge

frank
J^s. Newton



such like writings, must be dated the first year of K. William and Q. Mary, wthout expecting an Act of Parliament for that purpose. Yesterday the King of his own accord sent to the House of Commons, that he was willing the Hearth-money tax should be taken away. And a Bill was drawn up and read twice for suspending y^e Habeas Corpus Act for about two months, or till the first day of the next term. To day y^e Houses of L^{ds} and Com^s took y^e new Oaths and Test; none in town scrupling them, that I have heard of.

I am, S^r,
Yor^r most humble Servant,
Is. NEWTON.

Sir Isaac Newton to Dr. Covel.

S^r,

I find some unwilling here to clog y^e Act wth a clause for enabling you to give degrees after y^e time lapst by yo^r Statutes; because if you cannot do it by y^e Authority of yo^r Senate alone, the King may empower you by his Letters. But if you can do by yo^r Senate's Authority, (as Dr. Cook seems to believe), it will be much better. I find o^r Cambridge friends here are much inclined to my L^d of Dorset for a Chancellour;* and if you be not yet otherwise determined, I believe you will do a grateful act to those above in favoring y^e Election of that honourable person. I am in hast,

S^r,
Yor^r most humble Servant,
Is. NEWTON.

Westminster, March 5th, 1688-9.

* The Chancellor actually appointed was the Duke of Somerset. Dr. Covell's Correspondence contains much upon the subject.

Sir Isaac Newton to Dr. Covel.

S^r,

I have y^e Statutes of y^e University from M^r Bridgman. But not having yet y^e Act of 13 Eliz. made in confirmation of o^r former Charters, I know not what judgment to make of things. I hope to have that Act in a few days. S^r Tho. Clarges tells me he thinks it will be proper to confirm only y^e originall Charters granted for founding of Colleges, and to leave y^e Statutes to y^e King's pleasure as before. I must leave it to you and the Heads and fellows of y^e severall Colleges to consider what's fit and proper to be confirmed, and what not. When the heat of business is a little more over, the House will be moved for giving leave to bring in a bill for confirming the Charters of y^e two Universityes; and then what shall be convenient to be confirmed may come into y^e bill, or as much of it as can conveniently be brought in. Yesterday and to-day a grand Committee of o^r House has past some votes about imposing y^e new oaths, w^{ch} I had rather you should have from another hand. They out-voted us yesterday by about 50 votes. I acquainted S^r Rob^t Sawyer wth y^e case of y^e proctors you sent me; and he suspends his judgm^t till he can get sight of the late King's generall pardon, w^{ch} he tells me he cannot yet meet wth. I am,

Yo^r most humble Servant,

Is. NEWTON.

London, Mar. 6, 1688-9.

Sir Isaac Newton to Dr. Covel.

London, Mar. 16, 1688-9.

S^r,

The Bill for imposing the new oaths has been thrice read in o^r House, and is ordered to be ingross'd. I perused

it a week before it was brought into the House, (*that* is three weeks ago) and found nothing in it for imposing y^e new oaths on all persons in preferments, but only on those who take new preferments. Being acquainted wth y^e Gentleman who drew it up, I discoursed him about y^e designe of it before he drew it up, to understand how he would draw it; and after he had drawn it up he shewed me y^e draught, to satisfy me y^t it was not for imposing y^e new oaths on all in preferm^{ts}, but only on such as ought to have taken y^e old ones, according to y^e laws heretofore made. This I acquaint you with particularly, because I would have y^e Universitye satisfied that these new oaths are not designed to be imposed on them all; as I am told they still believe, tho' I wrote formerly to remove this their prejudice. So soon as y^e Act comes out, I will send you a copy of it. I have, by reason of some indisposition, kept my chamber for a few days, and so cannot give you a distinct account of what has lately been done in o^r House. That w^{ch} I can tell you is, that yesterday y^e House voted to repay y^e Dutch 600,000^{lbs}, and to-day y^e King made a speech in y^e House of Lords about y^e Test for excluding Papists from offices.

S^r, I am,
Y^r most humble servant,
Is. NEWTON.

Sir Isaac Newton to Dr. Covel.

S^r,

The Latine clause of the oath which you sent me in one of your letters I conceive ought to be omitted, and both the new oaths administered in English, so soon as y^e Bill for administering them shall come out. The case you sent me in yo^r last I take to be very plain for y^e proctors; but I will send you a further answer when I have advised about

it. There is a Bill designed for confirming the Statutes of both Universities, and those also of the severall Colleges. I desire you would procure me a copy of y^e Statute w^{ch} past in Q. Elizabeth's reign for that purpose. And if there be any other ancient Acts of Parlamt of that kind in your Statute-books, you would oblige me wth copies of them. I believe it would be convenient that y^e University should cause their Statute-books to be reviewed, and such chapters to be noted as they would have confirmed. And, if they would have any thing added or altered, *that* should also be noted, that it may be considered here. Such notes may be made in a distinct paper tackt to y^e end of y^e book. And I could wish that the same thing were done by every College for their College Statute-book, that their books may be ready against y^e drawing up of a Bill for their confirmation. Yor rights of y^e press and University Preachers ought also to be stated, how they are or should be; and if there be any thing els, as y^e wine-licenses or y^e foundations of professorships, w^{ch} needs confirmation. I have not yet seen y^e ancient Acts of Parl. made in confirmation of y^e University Statutes, and therefore know not what form will be observed in this new one, nor whether all that I speak of will be taken in; but it's good to have all in readiness, and for that end I give you as timely notice as I can. The Bill about the new oaths sent up from or House to y^e Lords was there laid aside, and a new one more severe sent down from them to us. This has been read twice in or House and is committed. In the Comittee I believe it will be mollified.

Sr, I am,

Yor most humble Servant,

Is. NEWTON.

London, March 29, 1689.

Sir Isaac Newton to Dr. Covel.

S^r,

This day, upon a motion made by S^r Tho. Clarges, for Oxford, and by me for Cambridge, the House of Commons gave leave to bring in a Bill to settle the Charters and Privileges of y^e Universities.

They have resolved at Oxford what to have done, and sent up the form of a Bill to S^r Tho. Clarges. If you at Cambridge neglect yo^r advantage, as you seem to do, I will take y^e best care I can of it. But I think it may deserve a little of yo^r care. And if, at that distance you are from hence, you cannot communicate your advice so easily as might be desired, you may perhaps do well to send up one or two intelligent persons (with such instructions as you shall think fit) for us to consult with here in drawing y^e Bill. But if you send up any body, pray let him be moderate as well as intelligent; and let 'em be sent as soon as may be. In hopes to heare from you about this matter, I rest

Yo^r most humble servant,

Is. NEWTON.

London, Ap. 30th, 1689.

Sir Isaac Newton to Dr. Covel.

S^r,

Since I can heare nothing from you about y^e University concern w^{ch} is now upon y^e board, we intend to do it as well as we can wthout you. That w^{ch} I would now desire of you is, to procure me a copy of y^e Letters Patents dated

y^e 13th of August, in y^e 31st year of Queen Elizabeth. In hast, I am,

Yor most humble servant,
Is. NEWTON.

May 5th, 1689.

Sir Isaac Newton to Dr. Covel.

London, May 7th, 1689.

S^r,

I received yo^{rs} of May y^e 4th, wherein you mention two former letters w^{ch} I received not, w^{ch} I am troubled at, because you tell me that you therein gave me the result of all your thoughts about the business in hand. I thank you for what you add to them in this I have received. My copy of the Bill w^{ch} came from Oxford, is at p^rsent in S^r Robt. Sawyer's hands. But the Summ of it is this—ffirst, the body of the Statute of 13 Eliz. for incorporating the Universities, and confirming their Charters and privileges, is recited. Then the Letters Patents of Queen Eliz., dated August y^e 13th, in the 31st year of her reign, to or University, and other Letters Patents of Charles y^e Second granted to Oxford, and all other Letters Patents and Charters granted to either University, at any time either since or before y^e 13th of Q. Eliz., are confirmed; and so are all the privileges and properties of both Universities. Then y^e Letters Patents and Charters for founding y^e severall colleges, or for confirming their foundations, possessions, and privileges, are ratified. Then follows a clause, empowering the visitors, two divinity professors and master of every college, to revise y^e Statutes of that college, and strike out what ever favours Popery, and instead thereof, to insert other precepts agreeable to y^e reformed religion.

This is y^e summ of y^e Bill as it came from Oxford. Together wth a copy of this Bill, I gave S^r Rob^t. Sawyer a paper of some other heads, for inhibiting mandates, regulating visitations, entituling Professors to livings annexed to their professorships, granting one book of every printed copy to y^e publick library of either University for ever, and restoring the right of University preachers.

I should be glad of your further directions about any other matters of moment, not too particular to be inserted in a general Bill. I sent you y^e Bill concerning y^e oaths on Saturday was se'night; and, since it came not to yo^r hands, I have in this letter inclosed another copy of that Bill.

S^r, I am,
Yor most humble servant,
Is. NEWTON.

Sir Isaac Newton to Dr. Covel.

Honoured S^r,

Being confined to my chamber by a cold and bastard pleurisy, I shall have no opportunity of conferring wth S^r Rob^t Sawyer so soon as you desire, and therefore have sent you an answer apart, and sent your letter to him to answer it as soon as he can. The Declaration to be subscribed is not y^e latter part of y^e second new oath, but y^e Declaration mentioned pag. 195 in y^e New Act for imposing these Oaths, and conteined at large in y^e Act of y^e 30th of K. Charles y^e 2^d. This is to be understood of those who take Degrees, and come into new preferments of Mastership, ffellowship, and Scholarships; ffor those already preferred are only to

take y^e two new oaths wthout making and subcribing y^e Declaration. By repeating y^e Declaration is meant repeating it after y^e officer who readeth it. These words, "that I will conform to y^e Liturgy of y^e Church of England, as it is now by law established," are still in force, and must be subcribed as before. I would advise you to admit no more swearing by proxy. For it is not swearing in y^e sense of that law w^{ch} imposes y^e oaths, and by which you must be judged. Nor is the law to be broken for y^e convenience of commencers; especially since it may prove as much to your inconvenience, should you be called to account for breaking it, as to theirs for you to keep it.

I am, S^r,
Yor^r most humble servant,

Is. NEWTON.

May 10, 1689.

Sir Isaac Newton to Dr. Covel.

May 15th, 1689.

S^r,

I communicated yor letter of quæres to S^r Robt. Sawyer, and have enclosed or common answer to them. The law requires that y^e Declaration be subcribed only; but we are of opinion, that, for preventing questions about men's having sworn or not sworn, a record of that also be made and kept; w^{ch} may be done by an order of y^e Senate and of every College apart. I thank you heartily for yor care and pains in getting y^e catalogue of y^e 15 heads to be inserted into y^e Bill we are bringing in. The confirming of your statutes wth such a reserve as you propose, S^r Robt. and I had been considering before, and agreed it was not advisable, because it would not be to confirm to you a privilege, but to give you a new one, and to take away an undoubted and indisputable right of

y^e Crown. What concerns y^e College of Physitians I communicated to one of y^e College, and find it will not be admitted wthout engaging y^e House in a hazzardous debate. I have seen y^e form of a petition for an explication of true allegiance, and am told it goes up and down amongst you for hands. I can neither perswade nor diswade any man from subscribing it; but yet I think it my duty to acquaint you that I have endeavoured much to feel y^e puls of y^e House about such an explication of allegiance, and find such an averseness from it, that I am of opinion y^e petition can do no good, but may do much hurt if ill-resented by y^e Houses. When you write by y^e carrier, direct yo^r letter to me at Mr. More's house, in the broad *Century*, at y^e West end of Westminster Abby.

S^r, I am,
Yo^r most humble and faithfull servant,
Is. NEWTON.

Declaration by Sir Robert Sawyer and Sir Isaac Newton.

Honored S^r,

In answer to the Questions you desire satisfaction in, Wee are of opinion, and soe the course and practise is, that the Oaths are not to be subscribed, only the Declaration being faire writ in a parchment roll or booke, and after the persons have audibly repeated it, they subscribe their names. It is fit as a Memoriall of theire takeing the Oaths and of theire repeating the Declaration, that a memorandum bee entered upon the roll or booke of the subscribers takeing the Oaths and repeating the Declaration, with the time when. And this, for your self, and the Masters of Colledges and Halls, Proctors, and Beadles, is to be done publickly in Convocation, before the Senior Masters there present. All

Commencers are to take the Oaths and subscribe the Declaration before your selfe in the Congregation House; and persons already promoted to any degree within the University, w^{ch} are neither Fellows or Scholars of any Hall or Colledge, are to do it before the Vicechancellor in the Congregation-House. The Fellows and Scholars of any Hall or Colledge, under the degree of a Baron, before the Master or Provost of the Hall and Colledge; where likewise the subscription is onely to the Declaration, but fit to make the like memorandum upon the booke or roll to bee kept by the respective Colledges and Halls. The law to w^{ch} the late Act refers to is 7 Jac. cap. 6, not 3 Jac., as you are pleased to mention. We are of opinion that, where persons are allready under severall capacityes, once takeing of the Oaths in the place of their aboads and subscribing the Declaration before 1 Aug. is sufficient to exempt them out of the penaltyes of the Act. You are no wayes obliged to cite the Heads; for both you and they are to take the Oaths before the Senior Masters in Convocation, which word the Statute useth, but I suppose with you is called Congregation; and it will bee incumbent on the Heads to attend some Congregation before the first of August; but, to prevent all exception, it may not bee amiss to hold a Congregation a day or two before the first of August.

R. SAWYER.
Is. NEWTON.
