

The Last Testimony, & Declaration of the Reverend Samuel Crossman,  
D. D. and Dean of Bristol: Setting forth his Dutiful, and True  
Affection to the Church of England as by Law Established.

Preface.

**T**His Following Paper was Deliver'd to my hand by the Reverend Author of it, with a Charge to Communicate it to the Mayor, and Other Worthy Members of the City of Bristol: But being Prevented by some Earnest Bus'ness in London, so that I could not Acquit my self of my Trust so soon as I intended, I found the Memory of This Reverend Good Man, so Courstly, and so Injuriously Treated by Divers Ill Tongues; that instead of Doing him Right by some Few Written Copies to his Particular Acquaintances and Friends, I rather made Choice of Committing the Original to the Press, as a more Publique Way of Justice and Vindication.

It was This Gentlemans Lot, among some Others of his very Loyal, and Orthodox Neighbours, to fall under the Lash and Scandal of Several Reproches: Wherein He was so Sollicitous to Clear Himself, that next to the Great Work of making his Peace with God, The Thing in the World, that lay nearest his Heart, was the Leaving of a Good Name behind him: Which he thought could not better be Secur'd then by the Solemnity of This Following Declaration. It was his Own Proper Act; Sign'd by his Own Hand; And in Delivering it over to the World in the very Syllables that I received it, I reckon that I have done my Duty.

John Knight.

To the Right Worshipfull Sir William Clutterbuck, Mayor, with  
the Worshipfull, and others my very Good Friends, and  
Neighbours, the Citizens of Bristol.

**H**AVING had my Lot cast by Divine Providence for Sixteen years amongst you; and having now through great indisposition of body received the Sentence of death, I am desirous (though with brokenness of words, through extremity of pain) yet to take my last leave of you and the World; with that sincere nakedness of heart, and truth, wherewith I expect to appear before my Judge and Saviour.

I rejoyce and am humbly thankfull to God, that I (though a wretched Sinfull man) may now dy in the Communion of the Reformed Church of England as established by Law. And as a peaceable Subject under my most gracious Prince, to whom I and all his Leige-people do owe a most chearfull and ready obedience: not only for Conscience sake, he being Gods Vicegerent over us; But even as the fruit of just gratitude for his most admired conduct of the Government for our Common good, while we have been so formidably involved in Successive and almost inextricable dangers.

I do rejoyce with you in those signall expresses, you and your City have shewn, both of Loyalty toward your Prince, and of Love to the Church of God: And do bescech Almighty God that you may yet encrease therein more and more. But forasmuch as the seeds of severall great Evills, and very Pernicious both to Church, and State, have grown up here (as the envious mans Tares, where better Seed had been sown) I do pray you, that I may, by these few lines, leave this as my last sense, to them who have been thus drawn aside into the snare of the evill one: It is now no time either to flatter with Softness, or to chide with Passion (Moses himself might not speak unadvisedly with his lips, how froward soever the People were at the waters of Strife) I do pity them with all my heart, and do wish as well to their Persons and Souls as I do to my self and my own everlasting concerns. But poor men, I fear they have scarce throughly considered the sad rise, and History of their present dissents from this Church. With what indecent virulencies these Feudes began at Frankfort; to

to the open offence of the Magistracy there, as a sad *Omen* of what would, and did afterwards so fatally ensue. With what bitter contempt of their Sovereign, and Christian authority they proceeded secretly to undermine, and openly to threaten the Government in *Q. Elizabeth* and *K. James* his Reign. With what male contentedness (as the Leprosy that cleaved of old to the walls of the house) they had leavened the body of the People in the Reign of *K. Charles the First* of blessed memory: till they had enforced their high pretences of Religion to bring forth that bloody Monster of Rebellion. I do pray them for the love of God, and as ever they tender the true welfare of this Church and State: that they would no longer continue fighters against God, but return to the Bishop and Shepherd of their Souls.

I Intreat them to consider, there is no key of knowledge unkindly taken from them. No mutilated Sacraments obtruded upon them. No Divine Administrations in an unknown tongue; but all pious methods for Gods Glory, and their edification, laid (by the great care & Wisdom of their Successive Princes) before them. If there be any shadow of good things to come in the Old Testament: If any thing of greater Glory revealed in the New, themselves cannot but acknowledge the principall things of both to be illustriously set forth in a most religious Order, commemorated and preserved in this Church, to the Joy of all good Christians. If there be any thing of Primitive Devotion (which we all seem so affectionately to pant and long after) 'tis here tenderly cherished, and truly defecate from the innovations which corrupt and later times had unhappily introduced: that we might drink of these holy waters as they run clear and crystall at the Spring-head. And if the fruit of righteousness be sown in peace, of them that make peace; I hope they will then forever abandon these fierce and joyless contentions. Welcome! Welcome! that serene Government in the State, Welcome! those mild Administrations in the Church, which breed such peaceable Subjects to the Throne of *David*; such peaceable Sons and Daughters to the House of God. Oh *Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love thee.* There the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.

Faintness denies me to proceed any further. God Almighty bless our most Gracious King, his lawfull Heirs, and Successors, and whatever bold insolencies have been lately animated by some, to the Affronting the true line of the Succession, I hope shall henceforth quietly end in that Propheticall Prediction, *They shall afterward return, and serve God, and David their King for ever: and no more meddle with them that are given to Change.* And now Brethren I commend you to God, and the word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and give you an inheritance among all them that are Sanctified. God grant the dearest harmony between this Church and City, and allow this poor Land (how unworthy soever we are of it through our manifold murmurings) that we and our Posterity may see good days, and peace upon Gods *Israel*. Farewell! Farewell! till we either meet in Heaven; or else being refined in the furnace of affliction; May become vessels more serviceable to God and his Church than hitherto we have been here on Earth.

Jan. 26.  
1683.

Samuel Crossman,  
Dean of Bristol.

The End.