

# THE S P E E C H

O F

## Sir George Pudsey,

Serjeant at Law, Recorder of the City of OXFORD,

Spoken in the GUILD-HALL of the said City,

At the Swearing the New Mayor.

SEPTEMBER 30. 1685.

GENTLEMEN,

**T**hat England is second to no Nation for all things that can delight the Sons of men for a happy Government, for a Valiant, Loyal, and Religious People; all Authors, both Antient and Modern, do allow: It's our Glory that the first Christian Emperour and King in the Universe, were Natives of this Island: The Gospel flourish'd here in the very dawning of it, and so continued until the Tenth Persecution under Dioclesian, for though it was the last, yet 'twas the first the Britains felt: afterwards it was restor'd by Constantine the Great, the aforesaid Emperour; and did shine again here, until the Saxon Cruelty and Paganism had almost utterly extinguish'd it: It was afterwards reviv'd by Augustine the great Apostle of the English Saxons, in the year 686.

That Providence has given us so choice an Inheritance, is no ordinary Mercy, though common to all its Inhabitants. Now if this Blessing is capable of any improvement, we Citizens of Oxford enjoy it. You know in the Land of Ham there was a Goshen for God's chosen People, in which they were safe, when all Egypt besides felt the heavy Hand of Divine Vengeance for its Wickedness. This City has been the peculiar care of God, and his Servants our Sovereigns, for more than eight hundred years. It was the Learned and Warlike King Alfred that first made it the Seat of our English Rabbies; no doubt but he consulted the Scituation, the Fertility of its Soil about it, the Pureness of its Air, and all things convenient for so glorious an undertaking: It's the Boast of our Country, and the Sight of it; the Brag of all Travellers. From Alfred's days to ours, it has been the Fountain of all Learning, Piety, Loyalty, and Virtue; so that it's hard to believe that our Citizens can be otherwise than Good men. Ten Righteous Persons had sav'd Sodom; Can a Soul then be lost here, that have so many eminent Divines to Instruct and Pray for us? That our Kings have always held this Place in great Esteem, I shall make you sensible of: 'Twas the Royal Seat of some of the Saxon Kings. Maud the Empress, the Daughter and Heir of Henry the First, found safety here against the Usurper Stephen. King John and Henry the Third held Parliaments in this place to curb their head-strong and unruly Barons. Many other Kings have call'd their Great Councils hither, to stem the Tyde of Faction and Rebellion. Charles the Martyr, and Charles the Merciful are full to our purpose. Charles the First, from this place had opportunity to retire from a Prevailing Trayterous English Army, though indeed he unfortunately met with as bad, or worse, of Scots. Charles the Second, here received Advice from Heaven to put an end to the worst Councils of the worst Parliaments that ever England had; I say again, the Worst, and will not yield the point, though that of Forty One be offered to me: the Reason's manifest, because that Parliament did not fall to the extremity of Mischiefe, till it was first modell'd and forced by

the Army their then Masters; so that it was but the Rump of that Parliament which acted that Horrid Villany upon the Sacred Person of the Royal Martyr, which was never out-done, but by the Jews. The Oxford Parliament, by inclination, were for breaking through all Bounds and Methods of Government and Succession: they aim'd at Impossibilities, by vainly attempting to divide the United Hearts of the two Royal Brothers; the one must not succeed the other in his Dominions, because the Enemies to both would succeed in their Treasons. Thus far I go, because Oxford was the Scene of this Mighty Change, when both Church and State lay under great Convulsions. We had a sudden and speedy Deliverance; our Fears are vanish'd; no Evil can come to us, if we act none. It has been observ'd, that in times of greatest Difficulty, brave Spirits (as great Princes have great Ministers) have been always rais'd to ease the Royal Head: Who they are, at present to name them, is to lessen them, their Actions being so conspicuous; for which they now enjoy the highest Places under the Wisest of Princes.

I am sure here dwells all Loyalty: Methinks I see into your Hearts, and there find that you wou'd more willingly have fought for JAMES the Just, against the Western Rebels, than they did for James the Traytor. If it shall be objected, That we have at any time made a stand in our Duty; I answer, The best Man sins, and that often too: Ours was but a little too eager a Zeal for our Priviledges: We saw our Error, and soon implor'd Mercy, and as soon had it: So that he's a Stranger to us, that doubts our Loyalty; this City has been always eminent for it: It was for that chiefly we can number so many Charters: There's hardly a Monarch since the Conquest, but we can produce his Seal to some new Grant or Confirmation. I could wish that we had no occasion to remember, that 'twas not long ago that we were like to have lost all: His late Majesties Quo Warranto wou'd have made Whole-sale-work, had it proceeded; it had left us a Town, without either City, or Corporation: But a Gracious Prince, a Powerful Advocate for us with him, the Earl of Abbingdon, (to whom you can never make sufficient Acknowledgment) and a Loyal prudent Magistrate, preserv'd us; otherwise we had met with the Fate of London, who has its Magistrates now, but at pleasure. It's a great Vill, and that's all, when Cæsar says the Word. What cou'd we hope for, when she fell, that was so supported by Parliaments and Charters? You must know her great Sin was Caballing against the Government; which is altogether Antipodes to the Institution of Corporations: Shops were made for Trade and Commerce, and not for stating the Question about Politicks, and the Arcana of Governement; they are matters above our Consideration. Our Post is Obedience, and Submission to the Sovereign Power. The Minister need not instruct the Farmer what Grain to sow for his Tythe-sake. Wou'd not one of you Ridicule me for pretending to direct you in the Cunning of your Trade? Every thing does best in's own Element: Had London considered that, she had not lost those Immunities which she has enjoyed many Ages. It's vain to think his Majesty will suffer so many Petty Commonwealths within his Kingdoms, as Corporations seem to be; when they, Uzza-like, profanely (though to a contrary end) hold forth the hand to touch the Ark. There is an implied Condition in all Corporations, That so long as they keep within their Obedience to Majesty, they are safe; but if once they Rival Kings in their Royal Concerns, Adieu to all Priviledges and Franchises. It cannot be denied, but that Corporations have been once fatal to the Kingdom. What Armies did London send out against her Sovereign, in the Never-to-be-forgotten Rebellion! Most Corporations did their parts. But Oxford indeed was all White, all Innocent; nay, let me do it more right, 'twas a Retreat for Injur'd Majesty; it stood not a Looker on, but heartily and loyally Espous'd the Royal Interest.

I know it's expected that I shou'd say something of the Government of this City for two years last past under the Loyal Sir William Walker, your Mayor. I am very glad, for his sake, that his Merits are so eminent; otherwise he wou'd suffer much by the Character I were able to give him. His being formerly in that Office, and your Choice of him again, is a sufficient demonstration of his great Integrity and Abilities in that Station. His late Majesty (who, like Solomon, knew from the Cedar to the Shrub) commended your Choice so well, that he made you happy in him a third time. And his present Majesty (the Joy of all good men, and Terrour of ill) for his unshaken Fidelity to the Crown, gave him a Mark of Honour.

At his first coming into the Office the second time, your Condition was very crazy, and wanted such a Magistrate: he has preserv'd your Priviledges, and sav'd your Treasure. Such another you have now wisely chosen: Therefore what can hinder, but this must be a flourishing year to us? He has your Hearts, and he, in few words, has told you his; which, is first to serve the Crown, and next the City. To make this Harmony compleat, your Concurrence with him in Loyalty and Duty to the Government, under our most August Sovereign; and your Obedience to him, as your Mayor, will render this a great City, and make us below'd both of God and the King.

LICENSED, Octob. 13. 1685.

Rog. L'Estrange.

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