

trust, by which many men were induced to adopt or profess the creed which led to preferment.

“Hume [in remarking this religious bias of King James II.] says, ‘the whole power of Ireland was committed to Catholics.’ The king entrusted the government of Scotland chiefly to converts from the Protestant to the Roman Catholic religion. He dismissed from their employments even his brothers-in-law, Rochester and Clarendon, because they adhered to Protestantism. The doors of the church and universities were attempted to be thrown open to papists. The king assumed the power at will of dispensing with the tests, which had been established to exclude men from office who professed the faith of Rome, and among other promotions of persons of that creed, he brought four lords—Powis, Arundel, Bellasis, and Dover—into his privy council. * * * *

“Although the university of Oxford was bound by oath not to elect any officer of the faith of Rome, yet James expelled the fellows of Magdalen College for refusing to elect a popish president of his appointing. And we know that Sir E. Hayes and Lord Sunderland, with the Scotch earls of Murray, Perth, and Melfort changed their religion (or profession of it) to accommodate themselves to the views of the king, and that many inferiors followed their example.”¹

The command of King James that the royal proclamation suspending the penal laws enacted for the suppression of religious dissent should be read in the churches of the realm having been disregarded by the prelates of the Church of England, on the ground that the abrogation of those laws was unconstitutional and obnoxious, the enraged monarch ordered their imprisonment in the Tower of London. The acquittal of the prelates on the charges brought against them was received by the churchmen with many manifestations of delight, and on the Sunday following the trial, the churches of London were crowded with worshippers “eager to pour forth their gratitude to God” for the verdict of the jury. “O what a sight was that,” says Nichols, “to behold the people crowding into the churches to return thanks to God for so great a blessing, with the greatest earnestness and ecstasy of joy, lifting up their hands to heaven; to see illuminations in every window and bonfires at every door, and to hear the bells throughout all the city ringing out peals of joy for the wonderful deliverance.”

As said by another historian: “The Tories had long taught the doctrines of the divine right of kings and passive obedience to the will of the sovereign, denouncing all resistance as sinful, but when the monarch began to exercise his prerogatives as head of the church in a spirit of distinct hostility to the prin-

¹ History of the New Netherlands. Dunlap. Vol. i., pp. 150, 151.