

**THE SUBSTANCE OF A SECOND SPEECH
AFTER AN INTERVAL OF SIXTEEN YEARS,
INTENDED TO HAVE BEEN DELIVERED AT
A METTING CONVENEED IN QUEEN-
SQUARE, IN THE CITY OF BRISTOL**

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The Substance of a Second Speech After an Interval of Sixteen years, intended to have been delivered at a meeting convened in Queen-Square, in the city of Bristol by William Thorp

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WILLIAM THORP

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A MEETING CONVENED IN QUEEN-
SQUARE, IN THE CITY OF BRISTOL**

S. A. 1829
England's Liberties Defended.

THE SUBSTANCE
OF
A SECOND SPEECH



AFTER AN INTERVAL OF SIXTEEN YEARS,
INTENDED TO HAVE BEEN DELIVERED AT A MEETING
CONVENED
IN QUEEN - SQUARE,
IN THE CITY OF BRISTOL,

For the Purpose of taking into Consideration the Expediency of presenting

A PETITION TO PARLIAMENT

AGAINST

The Claims of the Roman Catholics.

BY

WILLIAM THORP,

DISSENTING MINISTER OF BRISTOL.

*" My Son fear thou the Lord and the King ; and join not with them
that are given to change."—SOLOMON.*

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PREFACE.

AT a time, when the very heart of the Constitution seems to indicate, from the inequality of its motions, the progress of a secret, yet deep-rooted disease,—now lazy in its action, and scarcely sustaining the vigour and vitality of the extremities, and now hurried and palpitating, as if under the influence of a mortal fear, it is no wonder to see the members of that Constitution displaying a morbid alternation of complexion and aspect, and failing to perform with their accustomed facility, the functions allotted them. Nor is it less wonderful to observe those members insensible to every, even the most powerful impressions, when either a temporary fit of delirium, or a more obstinate paralysis has seized on the head of the system, the source and spring of action. Such symptoms are, to say the least, extremely alarming, and we argue the unsoundness of some principal functionary, from such indisputable marks.

The people of this country have, in the course of late years, suffered under the influences of causes similar to what we have here represented, and have beheld a question of vital importance to the well-being of these Protestant realms,

tampered and trifled with, in the hands of unhallowed, or at least of unthinking men, till the sanctity with which it has been regarded, in every period not distinguished by infatuation, ignorance, or the pomp of a shallow self-sufficiency, has been tarnished, or altogether obscured by the clouds which settle on and round about the understandings of a simple and unsuspecting multitude. To what other cause are we to attribute that difference of opinion which exists in the present day, on a point so clearly defined by the judgment of our fathers, and about which all disputes have been long since so clearly settled, not by the force of prejudice armed with power, nor by the unmeaning deliberations of inexperienced Cabinets, nor by a wisdom less practical, though ripened in an earlier and less mature period of the world, than that of the 19th Century, but by the unanimous decisions of men who appealed only to a dear-bought experience for their justification, and who looked forward in anticipation to these later ages for its confirmation, in the permanent blessings which they foretold would be reaped by their children, as the reward of their toils. Such insanity in their descendants is deeply and keenly to be regretted. But it is of no use to attempt to produce sound conviction on minds thus disorganized, by an appeal to reason ;—nor will the soothing system produce a much greater effect. Something, however, must be done to stop the progress of the evil, and by accurate investigation to ascertain how far it has already spread.

When we daily witness so lamentable a prostration of the

understanding, and such oracular proofs of some evil influence, in the out-pourings of imbecility, and the æstus of Liberalism which comes over these deluded advocates of a destructive principle; when we find that the march of intellect has been increasing to a speed so far beyond what its actual strength will maintain, that an overwhelming lassitude must be the inevitable consequence; when we find that the understanding and knowledge of the present day, have grown so unnaturally fast, that there is some reason to fear they will drop off in a consumption, it is no longer either prudent or humane to decline an avowal of one's sentiments, since if it fail to convince the one party, it may be matter of consolation to the other. Were it not for the solemnity with which a subject of such immense importance is invested, it might be amusing to picture to oneself, a few of the manifold forms and varieties, in which this Proteus-like absurdity of the present day, is to be witnessed. We daily see the unhallowed coalition of the Atheist, and the Minister of the Gospel, each advocating upon principles, distinct as they would have us believe, and yet equivalent, if we may judge by the folly and presumption with which they are characterized in common, the same monstrous absurdity. The object of their officious benevolence, the more consistent Catholic, regards them both with hatred and contempt, and in spite of them refuses to admit the accuracy of any one principle on which their good natured stupidity is founded, though he gladly avails himself of the offer, which a principle totally inadmissible on his own scheme, has prompted. The two former obstinately main-

taining, in spite of the obstinate conviction of the latter, that he and his religion are changed, while he is forced by their increasing clamours to yield to a point in his own favour, though opposed to his creed, with a plea in his mouth, for the perpetuity of his own unchanged and unchanging system.

But I turn with pleasure to notice the glorious and triumphant manifestation of a better spirit, and of a more unequivocal soundness of head as well as of heart, made in this City, on occasion of the late Meeting in Queen-Square, held for the purpose of taking into consideration, the propriety of petitioning Parliament against further Concessions to the Roman Catholics; an occasion never to be remembered but with feelings of the most devout enthusiasm, by all who rejoice to know, that the vestiges of our national character are still preserved, among this favoured portion of the people of our beloved country.

It was a lamentable thing, certainly, that some Gentlemen actuated not least of all by a spirit of faction, should on that day have presented themselves on the hustings merely to be taught the weakness of a bad cause under circumstances of such painful publicity, yet their inauspicious reception may act as a wholesome warning to them in future, not to over-rate their own influence upon the public mind, especially when they reflect, that the weakness of their cause, is really not greater than their feebleness as agents in making the best of it. I shall not, however, attempt to add to their

sufferings by laying open their wounds afresh. A meeting attended by between 12,000 and 15,000, and the computation is moderate, if we only strike the balance between conflicting statements, in which at least 20 to 1 were favourable to the measure ultimately carried, though a respected dissenting brother, on the opposite side of the House, saw,—or thought he saw 5 to 1 in favour of his own views, when the suffrages of the multitude were called for, will solidly and substantially prove the preponderance of good sense, over speculative, scheming, and presuming folly, in this city. And long may the fact continue to receive additional confirmation, in the increasing soundness and consistency of the views which it advocates.

I would, however, caution the adverse party, not to be so simple as to endeavour to use intimidation and threats, where threats and intimidation will not avail. Every effort that vulgarity or scurrility could devise has been employed to prevent my taking any public part in the late transactions in this city.

To a more lengthy, verbose, and somewhat gentlemanly correspondent, who has behaved with tolerable temper through a very prolix, attenuated, and feeble address, I would recommend the employment of his talents on a subject better suited to them. He may spend his time with more advantage to himself, and with more prospect of advantage to the world in which he lives, than he at present does, by scribbling in the columns of an obscure and scurrilous provincial newspaper.

One word, however, before I close, to my Roman Catholic Brethren. God forbid that I should attempt to throw obloquy upon them, or to disregard the claims which they have upon my affection and esteem, as men. They will give me credit for candour when I say, that I oppose them upon principle, though I at the same time regard them as more consistent in their character, than the individuals by whom their party is upheld, and who nevertheless profess to differ so essentially from them in their views. If I cannot convince them of their error, I may at least convince them of the impossibility of maintaining other sentiments than I do, consistently with the safety of that system which, as a Protestant Englishman, I am conscientiously bound to uphold.

5, PRITCHARD STREET.