

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
IN 1610, EDITED, FROM THE  
NOTES OF A MEMBER OF  
THE HOUSE OF COMMONS**

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Parliamentary Debates in 1610, edited, from the notes of a member of the house of commons by Samuel Rawson Gardiner

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**SAMUEL RAWSON GARDINER**

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*Camden Society, v. 51.*

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IN 1610.

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A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

BY

SAMUEL RAWSON GARDINER,

LATE STUDENT OF CHRISTCHURCH.



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## PREFACE.

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THE debates during the session of 1610 can not compete in interest with those of such years as 1641 and 1689; but they have nevertheless, a peculiar importance of their own. From them may be dated the commencement of the great struggle between the King and the House of Commons. During the greater part of the first of the two sessions it seemed likely that the two great powers of our constitution might come at least to a temporary agreement. Before the second session was closed it was evident that all such hopes were at an end. The King demanded larger supplies than the Commons were willing to grant. The Commons asked that the exclusive power of taxation should remain in their hands, and that their grievances should be redressed; or, in other words, that whenever a difference arose between them and the Government on any important point, the Government and not the House of Commons should give way.

Our knowledge of the proceedings of these sessions has hitherto been very defective. Of the first session we have the reports in the Journals of the two Houses; but they are very brief, and even more than ordinarily unintelligible. There are also extant some few letters and other documents\* which throw further light upon the subject. Of the great debate on the Impositions all that was known was a portion of Bacon's speech, printed as the whole, a speech of

\* I regret that I was not aware till it was too late that there are several papers relating

Hakewill's, and another of Whitelocke's which passed under the name of Yelverton. No doubt these speakers were the ablest who spoke on that occasion; but their speeches are not sufficient to make up for the loss of those of men of less reputation, which have a great historical importance, as showing the tone of thought prevailing, not among statesmen and lawyers, but amongst ordinary men of the world.

Of the later session, again, scarcely anything whatever has been known. On account of the early prorogation the Commons' Journal was either not kept, or not copied out; and its place could not be filled by any materials known to be in existence.

The MS. from which this volume is printed (Add. MS. 4210)

to these sessions in Cott. MS. Tit. F. IV. A reference to the most important of them may not be out of place.

Fol. 255. The message delivered on the 11th of May, commanding the Commons not to debate the King's prerogative of levying Impositions.

Fol. 167. The petition against Recusants, presented May 28.

Fol. 244. A full report of Sir J. Doderidge's speech in the debate on Impositions.

Fol. 242. A speech of Dr. Thomas Crompton, member for the University of Oxford, apparently delivered in the same debate, but not mentioned in the notes now published.

Fol. 112. Notes of the proceedings of the fourth session.

Fol. 159. The message delivered by the Speaker on Nov. 24, adjourning the House.

Fol. 120. Notes of the proceedings of the fifth session. The first notice of any importance is as follows:—

“A Committee appointed to make report to the Howse, by a note to be collected by them, what Bills were dealt in, and did not passe the last Session, and upon their reporte another Committee to consider what Bills to proceed in, and which first and principally, 19 Oct. And upon their report, the Bills ordered to be newe written.”

“The Howse being called, and not above 100 appearing, it was moved it might no where be recorded that there was so great a neglect, and that fynes might be sett, extreated, and levied. Moved, that the names of the absent might be given to the Kinge, 22 Oct. 1610.”

There is nothing important in the remaining notices, excepting a rather fuller account than that in this volume, of the question as to the right of the King to summon members to attend him, without leave previously granted by the House.

A copy is also given of the order mentioned at p. 139.

will make up for many of these deficiencies. It is written in two or three different hands. The notes which it contains were evidently taken by a member of the House of Commons, and were perhaps copied out by himself and other members of his family after the dissolution.

I have made much use of the Harl. MS. 777. It purports to be a copy of so much of the Journal of the House of Commons for the first session as relates to the Great Contract. Whole speeches are, however, inserted from reports at full length, and, even when this is not done, the alteration of a word or two, or the insertion of a sentence, frequently makes good sense of what in the printed Journals is absolute nonsense.

In a note to p. 123, I have referred to the State Trials for the Petition of Grievances. It is there said to be reprinted from Petyt's *Jus Parliamentarium*. As, however, there is an omission of some paragraphs, the reference should have been to Petyt (1739), p. 318, where the petition will be found entire.

The Appendix is, I fear, somewhat bulky; but I trust that the value of the materials which I have collected may prove my excuse.

I cannot conclude without expressing my warmest thanks to John Bruce, Esq., the Director of the Camden Society, at whose instigation this work was originally undertaken, and whose constant readiness to give me every assistance in his power will never be forgotten by me.