

THE SPEECH

Of ROBERT Earl of Lothian, Justice-General, His Majesties Commissioner to the General Assembly, after the Reading the KING'S Letter. Upon the 16th Day of January, 1691.

Right Reverend Ministers, and Elders of this General Assembly,

I Shall not take up your Time with any thing concerning my self, being sensible of so many Natural Unfitnesses for the Character I bear, that it were no little Disingenuity, to endeavour by an Apologie to extenuate them; But being very unexpectedly Comanded by the King, whose Orders I Dispute not, to meet you at this Assembly, I choos'd rather to expose my Reputation, which hitherto I have been tender enough of, with this Disadvantage to come after a Person so well Qualify'd and Fitted for this Affair; then to decline any thing wherein His Majesty may think I could in the least be Serviceable to Him, or have any Prospect of being any manner of way Instrumental in settling the Peace of the Church, which hath for so long a time been Rent, without any great appearance hitherto of an effectual way for its Healing.

And indeed the known Inclinations of His Majesty to go the greatest length can consist with Royalty, to effectuare so good a Work, are no less Encouragements to your Well-wishers, than they should be Incitements to make you go all the Lengths and Advances on your parts, that such a Pious and Protestant King deserves at your Hands, who is willing to do more voluntarily, than what could ever be extorted from His Royal Predecessors, even in their lowest Condition; And which can in Reason never be expected from any shall succeed in the Royal Throne. But as no less was to be look'd for from the Return of your Prayers, and your sincere Endeavours in the work of the Ministry in the midst of sharpest Tryals, than the Blessing of such a King, your Deliverer, who in following the Stepts of his Renowned and Noble Predecessors the Princes of Orange, the Bulwark and Deliverers of the Protestant Interest throughout the World, hath now in a manner put it in your own Hands, to settle the Peace, and Unity of our Church; so upon the other hand, if there should be any Shiftness or Remissness in coming up the length to give His Majesty a suitable Return, as it will be justly thought by your Friends, a Stroke from Heaven, from hidden Causes of GOD'S unsearchable Decrees, as the Destruction of the Primitive Churches were; So the Opportunity lost, will be an Advantage and Rejoycing to your Enemies, probably not to be regained. But I shall Wish and Hope for better things from this Reverend and Wise Assembly, who have in your own Hands, to make your selves a more general one, by Uniting the
Church