

'To his Eminency Cardinal Mazarin.'

'Whitehall,' 26th December, 1656.

The obligations, and many instances of affection, which I have received from your Eminency, do engage 'me' to make returns suitable to your merits. But although I have this set home upon my spirit I may not (shall I tell you, I cannot?) at this juncture of time, and as the face of my affairs now stands, answer to your call for Toleration.

I say, I cannot, as to a public Declaration of my sense in that point; although I believe that under my Government your Eminency, in the behalf of Catholics, has less reason for complaint as to rigour upon men's consciences than under the Parliament. For I have of some, and those very many, had compassion; making a difference. Truly I have (and I may speak it with cheerfulness in the presence of God, who is a witness within me to the truth of what I affirm) made a difference; and, as Jude speaks, "plucked many out of the fire,"-the raging fire of persecution, which did tyrannise over their consciences, and encroached by an arbitrariness of power upon their estates. And herein it is my purpose, as soon as I can remove impediments, and some weights that press me down, to make a farther progress, and discharge my promise to your Eminency in relation to that.

And now I shall come to return your Eminency thanks for your judicious choice of that Person to whom you have entrusted our weightiest Affair: an Affair wherein your Eminency is concerned, though not in an equal degree and measure with myself. I must confess that I had some doubts of its success, till Providence cleared them to me by the effects. I was, truly, and to speak ingenuously, not without doubtings; and shall not be ashamed to give your Eminency the grounds I had for much doubting. I did fear that Berkley would not have been able to go through and carry on that work; and that either the Duke would have cooled in his suit, or condescended to his Brother. I doubted also that those Instructions which I sent over with 290 were not clear enough as to expressions; some affairs here denying me leisure at that time to be so particular as, 'in regard' to some circumstances, I would.-If I am not mistaken in his 'the Duke's' character, as I received it from your Eminency, that fire which is kindled between them will not ask bellows to blow it and keep it burning. But what I think farther necessary in this matter I will send 'to' your Eminency by Lockhart.

And now I shall boast to your Eminency my security upon a well-builted confidence in the Lord: for I distrust not but if this breach 'be' widened a little more, and this difference fomented, with a little caution in respect of the persons to be added to it,-I distrust not but that Party, which is already forsaken of God as to an outward dispensation of mercies, and noisome to their countrymen, will grow lower in the opinion of all the world.

If I have troubled your Eminency too long in this, you may impute it to the resentment of joy which I have for the issue of this Affair; and 'I' will conclude

with giving you assurance that I will never be backward in demonstrating, as becomes your brother and confederate, that I am,

Your servant,  
OLIVER P.

To our Right Trusty and Right Well-beloved Sir Thomas Widdrington, Speaker of the Parliament: To be communicated to the Parliament.

O.P.

Right Trusty and Well-beloved, we greet you well. Having taken notice of a Judgment lately given by Yourselves against one James Naylor: Although we detest and abhor the giving or occasioning the least countenance to persons of such opinions and practices, or who are under the guilt of the crimes commonly imputed to the said Person: Yet We, being entrusted in the Present Government, on behalf of the People of these Nations; and not knowing how far such Proceeding, entered into wholly without Us, may extend in the consequence of it,-Do desire that the House will let us know the grounds and reasons whereupon they have proceeded.

Given at Whitehall the 25th of December 1656.