Speech 13 was to the Second Protectorate Parliament on 8th April 1657
Would state his doubts if there were opportunity given - if there were some conference, or the like appointed.

MR. SPEAKER,

No man can put a greater value than I hope I do, and shall do, upon the desires and advices of the Parliament. I could in my own heart aggravate, both concerning the Persons advising and concerning the Advice; readily acknowledging that it is the Advice of the Parliament of these Three Nations. And if a man could suppose it were not a Parliament to some; (Malignants there are who have such notions)-yet doubtless it should be to me, and to us all that are engaged in this common Cause wherein we have been engaged. I say surely it ought to be a Parliament to us! Because it arises as a result of those issues, and determinations of Settlement, that we have laboured to arrive at! And therefore I do most readily acknowledge the weight of authority 'you have' in advising these things.

I can aggravate also to myself the general notion of the Things Advised-to; as being things which tend to the settlement of the chiefest Interests that can fall into the hearts of men to devise or endeavour-after. And at such a time, 'too;' when truly, I may think the Nation is big with expectation of something that may add to their 'security of' Being.-I therefore must needs put a very high esteem 'upon' and have a very reverent opinion of anything that comes from you.

And so I have had of this Instrument:-and, I hope, so I have expressed. And what I have expressed, hath been,-if I flatter not myself,-from a very honest heart towards the Parliament and the Public. I say not these things to compliment you. For we are all past complimenting, and all considerations of that kind! (Serious enough his Highness is, and we all are; the Nations and the Ages, and indeed the MAKER of the Nations and the Ages, looking on us here!) We must all be very real now, if ever we will be so!-

Now, howbeit your title and name you give to this Paper (Looking on the Vellum) makes me think you intended "Advice;" and I should transgress against all reason, should I make any other construction than that you did intend Advice: 'yet'-!(Still hesitates, then?)-I would not lay a burden on my beast but I would consider his strength to bear it! And if you lay a burden upon a man that is conscious of his own informity and disabilities, and doth make some measure of counsels which may seem to come from Heaven, counsels from the Word of God (who leaves room for charity, and for men to consider their own strength),-I hope it will be no evil in me to measure your "Advice" with my own Infirmities. And truly these will have some influence upon conscience! Conscience in him that receives talents to know how he may answer the trust of them. And such a conscience have I had 'in this matter;' and still have; and therefore when I thought I had an opportunity to make an Answer, I made that Answer. (The unemphatic Negative; truest "Answer" your Highness then had:-can it not grow an Affirmative?)-and am a
person that have been, before and then and since, lifting up my heart to God,
To know what might be my duty at such a time as this, and upon such an
occasion and trial as this was to me! (Deep silence: Old Parliament casts
down its eyes.)

Truly, Mr. Speaker, it hath been heretofore, I think, a matter of philosophical
discourse, That great places, great authority, are a great burden. I know it so.
And I know a man that is convinced in his conscience, Nothing less will
enable him to the discharge of it than Assistance from above. And it may very
well require in such a one, so convinced and so persuaded, That he be right
with the Lord in such an undertaking!-And therefore, to speak very clearly and
plainly to you: I had, and I have my hesitations as to that individual thing. (Still
negative, your Highness?) If I undertake anything not in Faith, I shall serve
you in my own Unbelief;-and I shall then be the most unprofitable Servant that
People or Nation ever had!

Give me leave, therefore, to ask counsel. I am ready to render a reason of
my apprehensions; which haply may be overswayed by better
apprehensions. I think, so far I have deserved no blame; nor do I take it you
will lay any upon me. Only you mind me of the duty that is incumbent upon
me. And truly the same answer I have as to the point of duty one way, the
same consideration have I as to duty another way.-I would not urge to you the
point of "Liberty." Surely you have provided for Liberty,-I have borne my
witness to it,-Civil and Spiritual! The greatest provision that ever was made
have you made, 'for Liberty' to all,-and I know that you do not intend to
exclude me. The "Liberty" I ask is, To vent my own doubts, and my own
fears, and my scruples. And though haply, in such cases as these are, the
world hath judged that a man's conscience ought to know no scruples; yet
surely mine doth, and I dare not dissemble. And therefore-!

They that are knowing in the ground of their own Action will be best able to
measure advice to others. (Will have us reason, In Free Conference, with
him? There are many things in this 'Instrument of' Government besides that
one of the Name and Title, that deserve much to be elucidated as to my
judgment. It is you that can capacitate me to receive satisfaction in them! Otherwise, I say truly,-I must say, I am not persuaded to the performance of
'this' as my trust and duty, nor 'sufficiently' informed. 'Not persuaded or
informed;' and so not actuated 'by a call of duty,' as I know you intend I should
be,-and as every man in the Nation should be. You have provided for 'every
one of' them as a Free Man, as a man that is to act possible, rationally and
conscientiously!-And therefore I cannot tell what other return to make to you
than this:

I am ready to give a reason, if you will, I say, capacitate me to do it; and
'capacitate' yourselves to receive it;-and to do what other things may inform
me a little more particularly than this Vote which you have passed Yesterday,
and which has now been read by you to me.

Truly I hope when 'once' I understand the ground of these things,-the whole
being 'meant' neither for your good nor mine, but for the good of the Nation,-
there will be no doubt but we may, even in these particulars, find out what may answer our duty. Mine, and all our duties, to those whom we serve. And this is that that I do, with a great deal of affection and honour and respect, offer now to you.