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246 His Majesties Complaint to his Subjects.

Are wee your King? A King of griefe 'tis true,
A Title strange, yet all wee have from you:
Our other honours you usurp as due.
 Never was King so griev'd.

5 Our Scepter's broke, our Lawes lie trodden downe,
The Revenues belonging to our Crowne
Are all but purchasers of your renowne.
 Never was griefe like Ours.

Our Wif 's debar'd us, Our deare Children too,
10 Our *Conscience* must be subject unto *you*:
Why don't you vote to *part our garments too*?
 Was ever griefe, &c.

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With Clubs and Staves you to our Court did rune
Alas! What haste you made to be undone:
15 Although but Glow-wormes, you'd out-shine the Sun.
 Never was griefe, &c.

Must you accuse us with dispitefulnesse,
Vying your malice with Our gentilenesse,
Pick Quarrells with your only happinesse?
20 Never was griefe, &c.

You in High Counsell sit, Whilst wee by-stand,
Voting us with a censorious hand:
Wee must obey, that should all you command.
 Was ever griefe, &c.

25 Yet you your selves; that now at us doe brave,
Are become worse than an Egyptian slave;
Using that power against us which we gave.
Was ever grieffe, &c.

You cannot thinke we had an ill intent
30 In granting a Trienniall Parliament,
Though you by it usurp our government.
Never was grieffe, &c.

Plots, feares and jealousies indeed you had
To blind the vulgar, and to make them sad,
35 A thiefe at his owne shadow may run mad.
Was ever case like mine.

When he has mist his aime in doing ill,
And so despairing to effect his will
For feare or shame himselfe himselfe may kill.
40 Never was grieffe like mine.

Arme, arme ye people: quickly make a head
Against the King: for we may wish him dead
Whose evill counsell hath him thus mislead.
Was ever grieffe, &c.

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45 Thus by your witchcraft, rebellion
You charm'd our subjects, gull'd the whole Nation,
Blessed effects of such a Reformation.
Never was King so, &c.

Your holy League with th'Scots must next advance
50 Your treachery: Then mount your Ordinance,
'Tis but the breach of your Allegiance.
Never was grieffe, &c.

Your Nationall Covenant must next agree
Between your deare brethren the Scots and yee,
55 To rob my subjects of their liberty.
Never was grieffe, &c.

I have been truckt for, bought and sold, yet I

Am King (though prisoner) pray tell my why
I am removed now from Holdenby?

60 Never was griefe, &c.

To Newmarket now I am by your Army led,
They'l sell me better then your brethren did,
Else seek to make me shorter by the head.

 Never was griefe, &c.

65 Religion, our life, our Crowne, our glory,
By you exchanged for a Directory,
Never was read the like in any story,

 Nor griefe like ours.

You have abandoned both Law and liberty,
70 And studied to root out Monarchie
To create an arbitrary Tyranny.

 Never was griefe, &c.

Your cholérique Synod stood you in great stead
To make you new Commandements and Creed,
75 They'l make you a new God too, if you have need.

 Never was griefe, &c.

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Both God and King, both Church and Nation,
Are all comprised in your Declaration,
You sure are both Saviour and salvation,

80 Never was griefe, &c.

With watry Rivelets both mine eyes oreflow
To thinke my people should be ruined so
By them that did pretend their weale, not woe,

 Never was griefe, &c.

85 For my wrong'd Kingdomes sake: my very griefe
Doth breake my heart, untill I finde reliefe,
Ile sue to heav'n, Mercy from God my chiefe.

 Never was griefe, &c.

Causelesse they like a bird have chased me,
90 Behold, O Lord, looke downe from heaven and see,

Thou that hearest prisoners prayers, heare me.
Never was grieffe, &c.

They have rebelled, and faine away from thee,
O pardon them, even for thy clemencie,
95 Looke downe from heaven and our afflictions see.
Never was grieffe, &c.

Compassion as thy mercy is infinite,
Else we had been ere this consumed quite,
But we thee pray, that thou our cause wilt right.
100 Never was grieffe, &c.

Thou know'st my wrongs; their vengeance they have wrought,
Their reproaches thou hast heard, and what they thought,
And now hast all their counsells brought to nought.
Never was grieffe like, &c.

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105 I was their song whether they rise or sit,
Give them rewards, Lord, for their working fit,
Sorrow of heart, thy curse; and with thy might
Follow, and from under heaven destroy them quite.

NOTES

246 See Notes on the Text for the relation of this poem to George Herbert's 'The Sacrifice'

246 Text: Pamphlet, *His Majesties Complaint. Occasioned by his late sufferings, and a not right understanding between him and his parliament*, 1647. British Library, Thomason E 393, no. 38, pp. 1-4 (sig. A2r-A3v). This poem is an appropriation of George Herbert's 'The Sacrifice', a poem spoken in the persona of Christ in His Passion. This poem explicitly, and no. 247 implicitly, puts the suffering Charles in parallel with the suffering Christ. This parallel becomes unmistakable, if this poem is read together with Herbert's original (ed. F. E. Hutchinson, *The Works of George Herbert*, Oxford, 1941 [reprint 1978], pp. 26-34).

26 *Egyptian slave* the sufferings of the Israelites in Egypt are narrated in Exodus 5-8

30 *Triennial Parliament* Charles's concession for parliaments every three years, rather than called as infrequently as the King wished

41 *make a head* like a boil rising to a head, the people have thrown up leaders against the King

50 *Ordinance* the 'Ordinance' of February 1644 established the Committee of Both Kingdoms to direct the war against the King

57 *truckt* traded for

66 *Directory* the 'Directory of Public Worship' of 1644 set forth rules on a Presbyterian model for all public church services

73 *cholérique* hot-tempered *Synod* the Westminster Assembly of divines, whose deliberations resulted in the 1644 'Directory'