

BISHOPS' EXCLUSION BILL

13 February 1642

Whereas bishops and other persons in Holy Orders ought not to be entangled with secular jurisdiction, the office of the ministry being of such great importance that it will take up the whole man, and for that it is found by long experience that their inter-meddling with secular jurisdictions has occasioned great mischiefs and scandals both to Church and state, His Majesty, out of his religious care of the Church and souls of his people, is graciously pleased that it be enacted that no archbishop or bishop or other person that now is or hereafter shall be in Holy Orders, shall at any time after the fifteenth day of February, in the year of our Lord 1641, have any seat or place, suffrage, or voice, or use, or execute any power or authority in the Parliaments of this realm, nor shall be of the Privy Council of His Majesty, his heirs, or successors, or justice of the peace of *oyer* and *terminer* or gaol delivery, or execute any temporal authority by virtue of any commission, but shall be wholly disabled and be incapable to have, receive, use, or execute any of the said offices, places, powers, authorities, and things aforesaid.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that all acts from and after the said fifteenth day of February, which shall be done or executed by any archbishop or bishop, or other person whatsoever in Holy Orders, and all and every suffrage or voice given or delivered by them or any of them, or other thing done by them or any of them contrary to the purport and true meaning of this present Act, shall be utterly void to all intents, constructions, and purposes.

Henry Gee and William John Hardy, eds., *Documents Illustrative of English Church History* (London: MacMillan and Company, 1914):564.