

THE NINETEEN PROPOSITIONS

Parliament

1 June 1642

Your Majesty's most humble and faithful subjects, the Lords and Commons in Parliament, having nothing in their thoughts and desires more precious and of higher esteem (next to the honor and immediate service of God) than the just and faithful performance of their duty to Your Majesty and this kingdom: and being very sensible of the great distractions and distempers, and of the imminent dangers and calamities which those distractions and distempers are like to bring upon Your Majesty and your subjects; all which have proceeded from the subtle insinuations, mischievous practices, and evil counsels of men disaffected to God's true religion, Your Majesty's honor and safety, and the public peace and prosperity of your people, after a serious observation of the causes of those mischiefs, do in all humility and sincerity present to Your Majesty their most dutiful petition and advice, that out of your princely wisdom for the establishing your own honor and safety, and gracious tenderness of the welfare and security of your subjects and dominions, you will be pleased to grant and accept these their humble desires and propositions, as the most necessary effectual means, through God's blessing, of removing those jealousies and differences which have unhappily fallen betwixt you and your people, and procuring both Your Majesty and them a constant course of honor, peace, and happiness

1. That the Lords and others of Your Majesty's Privy Council, and such great officers and Ministers of State, either at home or beyond the seas, may be put from your Privy Council, and from those offices and employments, excepting such as shall be approved of by both Houses of Parliaments, and that the persons put into the places and employments of those that are removed may be approved of by both Houses of Parliament; and that the Privy Councilors shall take an oath for the due execution of their places, in such form as shall be agreed upon by both Houses of Parliament.
2. That the great affairs of the kingdom may not be concluded or transacted by the advice of private men, or by any unknown or unsworn councilors, but that such matters as concern the public, and are proper for the High Court of Parliament, which is Your Majesty's great and supreme council, may be debated, resolved and transacted only in Parliament, and not elsewhere: and such as shall presume to do anything to the contrary shall be reserved to the censure and judgment of Parliament: and such other matters of state as are proper for Your Majesty's Privy Council shall be debated and concluded by such of the nobility and others as shall from time to time be chosen for that place, by approbation of both Houses of Parliament: and that no public act concerning the affairs of the kingdom, which are proper for your Privy Council, may be esteemed of any validity, as proceeding from the royal authority, unless it be done by the advice and consent of the major part of your Council, attested under their hands: and that your Council may be limited to a certain number, not exceeding five and twenty, nor under fifteen: and if any councilor's place happen to be void in the interval of Parliament, it shall not be supplied without the assent of the major part of the Council, which choice shall be confirmed at the next sitting of Parliament, or else to be void.
3. That the Lord High Steward of England, Lord High Constable, Lord Chancellor, or Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, Lord Treasurer, Lord Privy Seal, Earl Marshall, Lord Admiral, Warden of the Cinque Ports, Chief Governor of Ireland, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Master of the Wards, Secretaries of State, two Chief Justices and Chief Baron, may always be chosen with the approbation of both Houses of Parliament; and in the intervals of Parliament, by assent of the major part of the Council, in such manner as is before expressed in the choice of councilors.
4. That he, or they unto whom the government and education of the King's children shall be committed, shall be approved of by both Houses of Parliament; and in the intervals of Parliament, by the assent of the major part of the council, in such manner as is before expressed in the choice of councilors; and that all such

servants as are now about them, against whom both Houses shall have any just exceptions, shall be removed.

5. That no marriage shall be concluded or treated for any of the King's children, with any foreign prince, or other person whatsoever, abroad or at home, without the consent of Parliament, under the penalty of a *praemunire*,¹ upon such as shall conclude or treat of any marriage as aforesaid; and that the said penalty shall not be pardoned or dispensed with but by the consent of both Houses of Parliament.
6. That the laws in force against Jesuits, priests, and Popish recusants, be strictly put in execution, without any toleration or dispensation to the contrary; and that some more effectual course may be enacted, by authority of Parliament, to disable them from making any disturbance in the State, or eluding the law by trusts or otherwise.
7. That the votes of Popish lords in the House of Peers may be taken away, so long as they continue Papists: and that Your Majesty will consent to such a Bill as shall be drawn for the education of the children of Papists by Protestants in the Protestant religion.
8. That Your Majesty will be pleased to consent that such a reformation be made of the Church government and liturgy, as both Houses of Parliament shall advise; wherein they intend to have consultations with divines, as is expressed in their declaration to that purpose; and that Your Majesty will contribute your best assistance to them, for the raising of a sufficient maintenance for preaching ministers throughout the kingdom; and that Your Majesty will be pleased to give your consent to laws for the taking away of innovations and superstition, and of pluralities, and against scandalous ministers.
9. That Your Majesty will be pleased to rest satisfied with that course that the Lords and Commons have appointed for ordering of the militia, until the same shall be further settled by a Bill; and that Your Majesty will recall your Declarations and Proclamations against the Ordinance made by the Lords and Commons concerning it.
10. That such members of either House of Parliament as have, during the present Parliament, been put out of any place and office, may either be restored to that place and office, or otherwise have satisfaction for the same, upon the petition of that House whereof he or they are members.
11. That all privy Councilors and Judges may take an oath, the form whereof to be agreed on and settled by Act of Parliament, for the maintaining of the Petition of Right and of certain statutes made by the Parliament, which shall be mentioned by both Houses of Parliament: and that an enquiry of all the breaches and violations of those laws may be given in charge by the Justices of the King's Bench every Term, and by the Judges of Assize in their circuits, and Justices of the Peace at the sessions, to be presented and punished according to law.
12. That all the judges and all the officers placed by approbation of both Houses of Parliament may hold their places *quam diu bene se gesserint*.²
13. That the justice of Parliament may pass upon all delinquents, whether they be within the kingdom or fled out of it; and that all persons cited by either House of Parliament may appear and abide the censure of Parliament.
14. That the general pardon offered by Your Majesty may be granted, with such exceptions as shall be advised by both Houses of Parliament.
15. That the forts and castles of this kingdom may be put under the command and custody of such persons as Your Majesty shall appoint, with the approbation of your Parliament: and in the intervals of Parliament,

¹ a writ charging with the offence of resorting to a foreign jurisdiction, which was illegal in England

² *during good behaviour*

with approbation of the major part of the Council, in such manner as is before expressed in the choice of councilors.

16. That the extraordinary guards and military forces now attending Your Majesty, may be removed and discharged; and that for the future you will raise no such guards or extraordinary forces, but according to the law, in case of actual rebellion or invasion.
17. That Your Majesty will be pleased to enter into a more strict alliance with the States of the United Provinces, and other neighboring princes and states of the Protestant religion, for the defense and maintenance thereof, against all designs and attempts of the Pope and his adherents to subvert and suppress it; whereby Your Majesty will obtain a great access of strength and reputation, and your subjects be much encouraged and enabled, in a Parliamentary way, for your aid and assistance, in restoring your royal sister and her princely issue to those dignities and dominions which belong unto them, and relieving the other Protestant princes who have suffered in the same cause.
18. That Your Majesty will be pleased, by Act of Parliament, to clear the Lord Kimbolton and the five members of the House of Commons, in such manner that future Parliaments may be secured from the consequence of that evil precedent.
19. That Your Majesty will be graciously pleased to pass a Bill for restraining peers made hereafter, from sitting or voting in Parliament, unless they be admitted thereunto with the consent of both House of Parliament.

And these our humble desires being granted by Your Majesty, we shall forthwith apply ourselves to regulate your present revenue in such sort as may be for your best advantage; and likewise to settle such an ordinary and constant increase of it, as shall be sufficient to support your royal dignity in honor and plenty, beyond the proportion of any former grants of the subjects of this kingdom to Your Majesty's royal predecessors. We shall likewise put the town of Hull into such hands as Your Majesty shall appoint, with the consent and approbation of Parliament, and deliver up a just account of all the magazine, and cheerfully employ the uttermost of our power and endeavors in the real expression and performance of our most dutiful and loyal affections, to the preserving and maintaining the royal honor, greatness and safety of Your Majesty and your posterity.

Thomas May, *The History of the Parliament of England which Began November 3, 1640* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1854):190–194.