

# THE ANARCHY

## *or, The Blessed Reformation Since 1640*

11 January 1646/7 [OS]

Being a new carol wherein the people express their thanks and pray for the reformers. To be said or sung of all the well-affected of the Kingdom of England and Dominion of Wales before they eat any Plumbroth at Christmas.

Now that, thanks to the Powers below, we have e'ne done our due,  
The miter is down, and so is the Crown, and with them the coronet, too.  
Come clowns and come boys, come hober-de-hoyes, come females of each degree;  
Stretch your throats, bring in your votes, and make good the anarchy.

And "Thus it shall go," says Alice. "Nay, thus it shall go," says Amy.  
"Nay, thus it shall go," says Taffy, "I trow." "Nay, thus it shall go," says Jamie.

Ah, but the *Truth* good people all, the *Truth* is such a thing,  
For it would undo both Church and state, too, and cut the throat of our King.  
Yet not the Spirit, nor the new light, can make this point so clear,  
But you must bring out, you Deified rout, what thing this truth is and where.  
Speak Abraham, speak Kester, speak Judith, speak Hester; speak tag and rag, short coat and long,  
Truth's the spell made us rebel, and murder and plunder ding dong.  
"Sure I have the truth," says Nump; "Nay, I ha' the truth," says Clem;  
"Nay, I ha' the truth," says reverend Ruth; "Nay, I ha' the truth," says Nem.

Well let the truth be where it will; we're sure all else is our's.  
Yet these divisions in our religions may chance abate our powers;  
Then let's agree on some one way, it skills not much how true.  
Take Pryn and his clubs, or Say and his tubs, or any sect old or new;  
The D...l's ith' pack, if choice you can lack; we're four-score religions strong.  
Take your choice, the major voice shall carry it right or wrong.  
"Then we'll be of this," says Meg; "Nay, we'll be of that," says Tibb.  
"Nay, we'll be of all," says pitiful Paul, "Nay, we'll be of none," says Gibb.

Neighbours and friends, pray one word more, there's something yet behind.  
And wise though you be, you do not well see in which door sits the wind;  
As to religion to speak right and in the House's sense,  
The matter's all one to have any or none, if 'twere not for the pretence.  
But herein does lurk the key of the work, even to dispose of the Crown,  
Dexterously and as may be for your behoove in our own.  
"Then lets ha' King Charles," says George; "Nay, lets have his son," says Hugh.  
"Nay, then lets ha' none," says jabbering Joan; "Nay, let's be all kings," says Prue.

Oh we shall have (if we go on in plunder, excise, and blood).  
But few folk and poor to domineer over, and that will not be so good.  
Then let's resolve on some new way, Ssome new and happy course,  
The country's grown sad, the city horn mad, and both Houses are worse.  
The committee-men sit, the synod has writ, and both to like purpose too,  
Religion, laws, the truth, the cause are talk'd of, but nothing we do.  
"Come, come shal's have peace," says Nell; "No, No, but we won't," says Madge.  
"But I say we will," says fiery faced Phil; "We will and we won't," says Hodge.

Thus from the rout who can expect ought but division,  
Since unity does with monarchy begin and end in one.  
If then when all is thought their own, and lies at their behest,  
These popular pates reap naught but debates from that many round-headed beast.  
Come Royalists, then, do you play the men and cavaliers give the word,  
Now let's see at what you would be, and whether you can accord  
"A health to King Charles," says Tom; "Up with it," says Ralph, like a man.  
"God bless him," says Doll; "and raise him," says Moll.  
"And send him his own," says Nan.

Now for these prudent things that sit without end and to none,  
And their committees that towns and cities fill with confusion—  
For the bold troops of sectaries, the Scots and their partakers,  
The new British states, Colonel Burges and his mates,  
The Covenant and its makers.  
For all these we'll pray, and in such a way as if it might granted be  
Jack and Gill, Matt and Will, and all the world would agree.  
"A plague take them all," says Bess; "And a pestilence, too," says Margery.  
"The Devil," says Dick; "And his dame, too," says Nick.  
"Amen and amen," say I.

It is desired that the Knights and Burgesses would take special care to send down full numbers hereof to their respective counties and boroughs for which they have served apprenticeship, that all the people may rejoice as one man for their freedom.

T. Wright, ed. *Political Ballads Published in England During the Commonwealth* (London: The Percy Society, 1841):112–116.