

Title: A declaration of the causes, for the which,
wee Frederick, by the grace of God King Bohemia,
Count Palatine of the Rhine, Elector of the Sacred
Empire, & c. have accepted of the crowne of

A
DECLARATION
OF THE CAUSES, FOR
THE WHICH, WEE FREDERICK,
BY THE GRACE OF GOD KING
OF BOHEMIA, COVNT PALATINE
OF THE RHINE, ELECTOR
OF THE SACRED EM-
PIRE, & C.

haue

ACCEPTED OF THE CROWNE OF
BOHEMIA, AND OF THE COVN-
TRYES THEREVNTO
annexed.

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FREDERICKE, By the Grace of GOD,
King of BOHEMIA, Count Palatine of the RHINE,
Elector of the Sacred EMPIRE, Duke of BAVARIA,
Marquise of MORAVIA, Duke of SILESIA and
Lvxembvrg, Marquise of the Higher and Lower
Lvsasia, & c. To ALL Potentate, Electors, Prin-
ces, and States of Christendome, happy Greeting.

WEE make no doubt, but all in ge-
nerall, residing either within or

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most evidently appeareth and is as clear as day, both by experience, and the ample Relations that haue bene diuers times made thereof; that they who by their depraued Councils, and suggestions, haue bene the means to precipitate the mightier sort, into present danger and losse, are now themselues conuinced, euen wihin their owne consciences. And notwithstanding the successe of these latter times, wherein sundry opinions haue been hatched, about the subject of Religion, may make one clearly discern with his eye, and (as it were) touch with his finger, that according to the veritie of holy Scripture, and a Maxime heretofore, held and maintayn'd, by the ancient Doctors of the Church, that mens Consciences, ought in no sort to be violated, vrged, or constrained; and whensoever men haue attempted any thing by this violent course, whether openly, or by secret meanes, the issue hath bene pernicious, and the cause of great and wonderfull innouations, in the principallest and mightiest Kingdomes, and Countries of all Christendome: Yet so it is, that a certaine extrauagant, and strange kinde of people, hauing dispersed themselues ouer Christendome, but especially within the Empire, and other Kingdomes and Countries, bordering and depending thereupon,

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and hauing there brought in, and planted a new Doctrine, absolutely sunestall and obnoxious, to all Potentates, and Magistrates: nay and further, hauing not onely obtained fauour and accesse to great men, but also drawne to their own bent, both their Councillours, and Officers, and generally the most Honourable, and opulent of euery place, through the false charme, of a counterfeit and masked Sanctitie, an implacable desire and thirst, did meruailously grow and increase, of persecuting all those, who were sepe- rated from the Romaine Church, yea and totally to extirpate them, if they did not yeeld, and come vnder that Jurisdiction. Whereupon, it came to passe, that notwithstanding all the good endeauours, that precedent Princes, and Gouver- nours haue bestowed both in the Empire, and more especially in the Kingdome of BOHEMIA, for preseruatiō of common Peace, and carrying an euen hand between the adherents of the one, and th'other Church, conformable to the Con- cessions, and Edicts of

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people and their complices, who entring here-
vpon into a full and mayne Careir, they pre-
fumed fometimes to innouate one thing, then ano-
ther, and not onely by publike writing to draw
into doubt and controuersie, but also really to
annihilate and make frustrate the said Concessi-
ons, liberties of Religion, [Pacts], Obligations and
Oathes, solemnly assumed for their confirmation.

But wee will not heere set downe in particu-
lers, what hath beene [practiced] for many yeares
since, and attempted in all parts of the Empire,
vpon the purchase of this Licence and Liberty;
neither in how weake and instable manner, af-
fares still continue and stand: referring our
selues herein, to that, which Time shall further
manifest by sufficient tryals and proofes, in
whatsoever shall be requisite and conuenient.

But as for the Crowne of BOHEMIA, and the
Countryses thereunto annexed, wee must no
wayes dissemble it, and it is very well knowne,
that according as the light of the holy Gospell
spred his beames more and more from time to
time, the lustre and repute of the Roman Ca-
tholike Religion, hath there beene wonderfully
eclipsed, not without procuring much trouble
and strife: so that finally, it most necessarily be-
houed to prouide for the maintainance of com-

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losse of body, Life, and goods, besides sundry other in-justices, perpetrated against men of eue-ry seuerall condition. And on the other side, when naturall and just resistance, opposed these insolences, or any other meanes which necessity vrged vnto, as those Manifests published by the said Estates can testifie, they of the contrary party, instead of referring their cause to reason and equall hearing, proceeded further, by open hostilitie, and force of Armes to such a point, that a good part of the said Kingdom of BOHEMIA, and the Prouinces Incorporate, remayneth now dismembred by Fyer, and Sword, being (as it were) turned into Blood and Ashes. Whereunto, we might also add, that whereas many yeares since, and especially the last part, the said Kingdome, and Countryes, haue exposed their liues, and substance, for the Defence and maintenance of the Crowne of HVNGARIE, but aboue all other, of the Frontier Fortifications, against the Forces of the Turke, a puissant, and dreadfull enemy to Christendome; quite contrary, and as it were, for an accumulation of all euils, the said places were vnfurnished both of Men, Atillery, and warlike munition, that the fame might bee employed against the Bohemian Nation, which was appointed, and ordayned against the Turke.

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Moreouer, they haue in the Empire, not onely exacted that which remain'd yet vn timer of the olde Contributions against the Turke: but also vnder a speciall pretext of the preservation and defence of the said places, in certaine Precincts and Prouinces of the Empire, they haue imposed new Subsidies, which being obtayned and Collected in a great part, it was no wayes imployed to the pretended vse, and end, but rather to the ruyne and desolation of the members of the Empire, and their dependances. By meanes whereot, one may sae the Vauntmure, and Bulwarke of Christendome full of holes, and breaches, ready to tumble and fall downe. And this gaue the HVNGARIAN Nation, sufficient warning, to looke to their own securitie & Defence.

We also suppose it is no lesse generally known, with what care, affection, and loue, how we and other Electors and Princes (yea and some forraine Potentates likewise) by our exhortations and intercessions, haue procured all the best Offices possible, to quench and extinguish that fire, which daily spread it selfe more and more in the said Kingdome, and to devise some meanes how to preuent a greater disaster. And in truth, nothing would haue been more pleasing to vs then to see those differences and oppositions accruing

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between Princes and Subjects, soone appeased and ended by an Admission of the Estates of the same Countries, to heare and determine therein, as heretofore the laudable and commendable Custome was, and by vs out of sincere and viscerall affection in due time Vrged and moued: by reason that the Intermission of remote Princes and Potentates procured great losse of time, and very often augmented suspicion & distrust.

But all present circumstances clearely manifest, what fruit or effect the said aduertisements brought forth, seeing vnder colour of a suspension of Armes, there hath not onely many Monthes passed ouerhead, during which time, the enemy hath not ceased to forage and spoyle; But moreouer vnder shadow of deferring it, to such an interposition, there hath also a long space of time slipt away: whereas in such dangerous and imminent cases, and when hostile Actions are dayly re-enforced, we ought effectually to make vse of other more expedite meanes to worke a cessation, for it had bin impossible profitably to haue treated of any Accommodation, by way of Interposition, without first stopping the course of the fore-mentioned Hostilities, and setting downe a preualent, and validius security.

Besides all this (no doubt rather by the sug-

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gestions of some persons, who hauing lost all hope of attaining their ends and scopes by lenitie and mildenes, aspired thereunto by way of Armes) they were negligent and careles, to lay hold of the iust & opportune occasion of the re-establishing the Peace, which after the death of the Emperour MATHIAS deceased, of laudable memory, presented it selfe ; in that they would by no meanes lend their eares , to the wholesome counsell of good Patriots, nay of persons constituted in high place and Dignity , to recouer (as was most fit and requisite) alienated hearts , and affections : but rather they made choise, to follow the directions of some vnaturall and disloyall Bohemians, and of others , either wholly strangers or relying and hanging meerly vpon them. From hence it succeeded, that instead of reall satisfaction and security, for that, where now they were so strictly bound and oblied,

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which haue a prerogatiue of free Election, to the yooke of governments Hereditary , and to conclude (at what rate soeuer) to compass effects, conformable to their designes, and vnder colour of punishing some few nocents, to extirpate and destroy many thousands of Innocents. Wherein also, they imployed the assistance of strange Nations, very ill affected to all Euangelicall professors ; of whom, a great number, and many thousands both Foote and Horse , yea whole Regiments at a time , haue marched through the Countries of the Empire, (although, without consent of the Electors, the Emperor himselfe, hath no Authority nor power) to conduct them against the Estates of BOHEMIA, & the Prouinces annexed, for the wreaking of their euill affection, & to enrich themselues, with their spoyle.

But contrariwise, if too manifest a true intention to Peace, they had deposed Armes from the beginning, remou'd the Authors of these troubles, prouided for the government of the Estate, by the aduise and cooperation of the Prouinces, remedied so many aggriouances, restored the violated priuiledges, and taken order for their obseruance , by meanes of a sufficient securitie, (without which all other courses had bene but vaine) they might easily haue wrought a Peace,

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and diuerted greater alterations and changes. So farre they were,from choosing so expedient and requisite a way,that on the contrary,by extreme violence they enforced the Countries to haue recourse,to such a lawfull and speedy defence, as G O D and Nature alloweth them, to be their own deliuerers out of these extremities ; And to this effect,they erected a generall Confederacie amongst them, (but not without Royall permission for what passed) making hereupon a new Election,for reducing the Estate,to a better order and Gouernment. Of all which things,the Estates of our Crowne of BOHEMIA, and the Countries incorporate , hauing presented the fundamentall causes and reasons,to the eye and view of the whole world , by Deductions so ample and cleare, any one not transported with passion, but impartially waighing all the reasons,and Circumstances,hee may herein, easily and equally be able to yeeld a true iudgement and censure.

Yet in this place, we meane not to charge our selfe with such Inferences, much lesse also in this respect,heere to insert the rightes and immunities of the Realme,aswell in the point of Free Election,as otherwise: but in this case, we referre all men, to the Information and Iustification

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which the Estates, haue diuulged and published.

True it is, that the Election of a King of Romanes made not long since at Franckfort, fell out at the same time. But so likewise, we very perfectly carry in minde, that we perswaded, what possibly we could, not to make too much haste therein, but before all things, to take counsel, for the cessation of Armes, and to appease the Warre, which now was kindled in so many partes : causing our Councillours to intimate,

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Not as being hereunto inuited by any hope of particular profit, feeling then we had not the least apprehension of such things as afterwards ensued : but onley in that we fore-saw such an alteration and change, as euent haue now made manifest and so greatly desiring, that it might haue bene auoyed and shunn'd.

Seeing therefore the Estates of BOHEMIA, and of the Countries annexed, in their generall Assembly, vnanimously, and with one consent, haue conferred their Suffrages and Election vpon our Person; We protest before GOD, and with a cleare Conscience, that we euer hauing liued content, with the Electorall Dignity, and such Principalities, and Countries hereditary, as God imparted to vs, we neuer of our selues aspired to this said Crowne : and much lesse attained we thereunto, by any seductions, or stratagem, euen as those Estates which Elected vs, may yeeld vndoubted witness and testimony.

As likewise wee had no reason, considering the tempestuous, and lamentable Estate, of present affaired, but surely it had bene farre more acceptable to vs, to have seene the Peace of that Kingdom established, and withal, the Imperiall tranquility, preserued, and aduaunc'd. For we duely waigh and fore-see the Change, Perill,

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and care which will redound vnto vs, by the

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who giues and takes away Crownes to, & from
whome he thinks best, with zealous Supplica-
tion & Prayer (in all this) to direct and gouerne

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him, but rather to maintaine and defend those, which defend the right of Liberty, of Priuiledges, of royall Grants & Letters Patents, for a free exercise of the religion of the Gospell, and other obseruances, against an vnjust & violent oppression: and to Protect these noble Countries, and so many thousands os innocent Persons from totall ruyne, so farre as God shall strengthen our arme, and enlarge upon us his Graces and benedictions: having undouted hope, that whereas or simple intentions ayme in all this, neither at Vulptuonsnes, nor pleasures, at Honours, or worldly riches ; but onely at the glory of God, the comfort of the afflicted, the release of the oppressed , and at the consolation of so many desolate harts, whose deep sighs, sobbes and teares, urged us to a feeling compassion, that God our high and soueraigne Conductor will never forsake, and abandon us, but that rejecting all vaine thoughts and cogitations of men, he will send down vnto us from aboue, his benigne assistance and ayde, with fit and requisite meanes herein, to execute the Arrest, and Decree, of his sacred will, prouidence, and inexhaustible wisdom : wherein, if we should com short of our duty, our conscience would not onely be inwardly wounded, but further we should drawe vpon our-

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selues Gods Diuine wrath, and punishment.

Moreover also considering, that if we had refused this diuine Vocation & Dignity, we could not possibly haue auoyded (especially, with all those that make profession of the Gospell) the imputation and blame, of so much blood consequently shed, and of all the spoyle and waste made in the same Countries : As also if they of the contrary party, had attayned to the end of their designes (which was to suppress the Bohemian Nation) it would further mightily haue

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they had bene in great danger to haue fallen into a Strangers hand, and finally to haue bene entirely cut off, from the body of the Germaine Empire, or at least reduced to such a Condition, that they must needs haue bin the Authors of great Inconueniences, directly prejudicial to the

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very important occasions, at the humble, and instant request of the Estates of the Kingdome of BOHEMIA and the Countries incorporate, divers times reiterated, both by writing and Embassies directed to vs, as also by serious remonstrances to vs intimated : that at last we appro-

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And that the sinceritie of our intentions, may more manifestly appeare, wee will euer haue a care, by all possible meanes, to embrace Amitie, correspondencie, and friendly Intelligence with all Potentates, Electors, Princes, and Estates of Christendome, but more especially with those that border and confine vpon vs: We presuming no lesse of them, that they will reciprocally testifie the like to vs, assisting vs with their Counsels, and performances, against all those who out of some contray Disseigne, would hostilely attempt against vs, our Kingdome and Countrey.

And therefore wee request them, out of the same affection and loue, which we are ready to acknowledge towards euery one of them, in all Offices possible within our power, and vpon all occasions, they may be presented: Wee finding it fit and necessary, in the times wherein we liue, to manifest and make knowne the fame to all men, by this our publicke
Declaration.

*Giuen in our Royall Castle at Prague
the 7 day of Nouember. 1619.*