

T H E
L I F E

*M. Roger North was
living 16. Jan. 1730. as ap-
pears by letters being sent
to a dead in an abstract
before me. P. H.*

Francis North
O F T H E

R I G H T H O N O U R A B L E

FRANCIS NORTH, 1

Baron of GUILFORD,

Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, under King
CHARLES II. and King JAMES II.

Wherein are inserted

The CHARACTERS of

Sir MATTHEW HALE, Sir GEORGE JEFFRIES,
Sir LEOLINE JENKINS, SIDNEY GODOLPHIN,
and others the most eminent Lawyers and Statesmen
of that Time.

By the Honourable ROGER NORTH, Esq; 1653-1734

Unus oculus testis præstat auritis decem.

L O N D O N,

Printed for JOHN WHISTON, at Mr. Boyle's Head in *Fleet-street.*
MDCCLXII.

King was careful, by not yielding to these Men, to save himself. The Speech of this noble Lord at the Council, in his drawling Way, is related in the *Examen*, and will serve to illustrate the Politicks of that Peer. The King could not, at that Time, bear with him long, but turned him out; and so the Council was purged; for the rest of the Party were disbanded, or left out, or deserted about the same Time. All this was less strange than his coming in again. We thought that the Duke of *York* had not Interest enough to have done it without the Adjunct of the French Ladies, whose Favour, with Money and Courtship, he failed not to purchase. It is certain that he was a most fastidious Aversion to the Lord Keeper *North*. They say that Animals, out of a Contrariety of their Natures, have a mutual Antipathy, and can scarce bear the Sight of each other. I know well that his Lordship scarce ever saw, or spoke of him, without a Chagrin; and, after he was restored to the Secretary's Office, and Place in the Cabinet, his Lordship declared he had no Hopes of any Good at Court. Nor was this noble Lord behind-hand with his Lordship, in his kind Thoughts towards him; which, sprouting out in Speeches and Actions, were as venomous as the deadly Nightshade; but, for want of apt Concurrents, as to all Harm to his Lordship, or his Reputation, vain and enervous. He laid a Plot to fasten a Whore upon his Lordship, that he might lose the Reputation he had of Moral Virtue untainted. That he rode upon a Rhinoceros, that he might be despised; and other Stratagems as silly, of which a particular Account will be given elsewhere: And all this without the least Offence, by Word, or Action, on his Lordship's Part to disgust him. But the Canker was his Lordship's unmoved Constancy and Fidelity to the Church and Monarchy settled by Law, both which his Lordship (the Earl) wrought to overturn: And he could not bear such an Obstacle in his Way, without attempting to remove it. However, such Enmities, at Court, have the Effect of Friendships elsewhere: For a Man is known by his avoiding, as well as by his herding, with particular People. I must not forget to add here, that his Lordship, by his external Behaviour, with Respect to this State Secretary, made no Resentments for his Clandestine Injury, but kept that even Temper with him as the King's Affairs required he should do. His Lordship had a Brother in Law, who, being a Courtier, and of a lofty Genius, habituated in the gaming Society of that Lord, and was so far imposed on as to mediate a nearer Conversation with him; and it went so far, that his Lordship yielded to a Project of an Invitation by dining with the Secretary; and I had the Honour to be there: But I must say, that I never saw so silent a Feast as that was. There was little to be amended, for little was said on either Side. We came away; and his Lordship chose to be so far rude as not to cross invite, rather than

and not one of their stale Trumpery. But his Lordship had deeper Reflections that, besides the sullying his Character, if he had such a Snake in his Bed, they would find a Way to come, by her, into his most retired Intentions. For the Courtiers knew the Use that, in Politics, might be made of the fair Ladies, whom they could charm better than his Lordship; and no Spy like a Female.

When these pointed Darts would not lay hold, they were contented to throw Dirt; as appears from what they inserted in a News Paper, of his Lordship's Behaviour in the *Western Circuit*; a full Account of which may be found in the *Examen*. And whoever looks into that Time, will find a strange Tendency to split the Laws against those who do not go to Church; that is to say *Recusants*. And some Votes of the House of Commons look'd that Way; as if it were a Grievance that those Laws were made to extend to Sectaries, who are softly styled *Protestant Dissenters*; such as *Presbyterians, Quakers, Anabaptists, &c.* But the Judges, as his Lordship in particular, and Justice Jones (who, though absent at *Taunton*, desired to be comprised in the Advertisement) had not such a Notion of Law as, for any Body's Humour, to treat plain Words and Expressions, as a Nose of Wax, to bend one Way or other to gratify Parties. But the Charge given by the Earl, as Secretary, to the Judges to that Effect, was an *Ignis fatuus*, or Will in the Wisp, of the Faction, concerted to mislead, at least, with shewing a Feint of Indemnity, to seduce them.

I have elsewhere noted that, during the Reign of King *Charles II.* Calumny, against his Lordship, at Court, was kept under; for he would not suffer his Mimics to fool with the Persons of his Ministers that he had a Value for. But, in the next Reign, when the *Roman Catholic* Designs began to work, and his Lordship was found utterly unfit for their Purposes, and the Court Instruments, of which the Earl of *Sunderland* was the chief, were employ'd to shake him off, that the Lord *Jeffries* might come on, then the Reins were let loose to Calumny; and when no Misdemeanour could be found to harp upon, they fell, like foolish Clowns, to call Names, as they say; and no Scruple was made to vilify him, as the unfittest Man that ever sat in his Place: Partial, passionate, unreasonable, impotent, corrupt, arbitrary, Popish, and ignorant. Any Thing to make him avoid the Room. But his Lordship cared not to humour these Barkers, or to quit his Place, till he might do it with *Salvo* to his Dignity.

To shew that his Lordship's Court Enemies, the Earl of *Sunderland* in particular, were hard put to it to find, or invent, something to report, tending to the Diminution of his Character, I shall give an Account of the most impudent buffoon Lye raised upon him, and with brazen Affirmations of Truth to it, dispersed from the Court one Morning,

A treacherous Handle held forth and repulsed.

Calumny kept under till the Reign of *J^a. II.* when it began to rage.

The foolish Lye of the Rhinoceros. His Lordship much roiled at it.

Morning, that ever came into Fools Heads; and Satan himself would not have own'd it for his legitimate Issue. It fell out thus: A Merchant, of Sir *Dudley North's* Acquaintance, had brought overan enormous Rhinoceros, to be sold to Shew-men for Profit. It is a noble Beast, wonderfully arm'd by Nature for Offence; but more for Defence, being cover'd with impenetrable Shields, which no Weapon would make any Impression upon; and a Rarity so great, that few Men, in our Country, have, in their whole Lives, Opportunity to see so singular an Animal. This Merchant told Sir *Dudley North*, that if he, with a Friend or two, had a Mind to see it, they might take the Opportunity at his House, before it was sold. Hereupon Sir *Dudley North* propos'd to his Brother, the Lord Keeper, to go with him upon this Expedition; which he did, and came away exceedingly satisfi'd with the Curiosity he had seen. But whether he was dogged, to find out where he and his Brother hous'd in the City, or flying Fame carried an Account of the Voyage to Court, I know not; but it is certain that, the very next Morning, a Bruit went from thence all over the Town, and (as factious Reports use to run) in a very short Time, *viz.* that his Lordship rode upon the Rhinoceros; than which a more infantine Exploit could not have been fasten'd upon him. And most People were struck with Amasement at it; and diverse run here and there to find out whether it was true or no. And, soon after Dinner, some Lords and others came to his Lordship to know the Truth from himself; for the Setters of the Lye affirm'd it positively, as of their own Knowledge. That did not give his Lordship much Disturbance; for he expected no better from his Adversaries. But that his Friends, intelligent Persons, who must know him to be far from guilty of any childish Levity, should believe it, was what roiled him extremely; and much more, when they had the Face to come to him to know if it were true. I never saw him in such a Rage, and to lay about him with Affronts (which he keenly bestow'd upon the minor Courtiers that came on that Errand) as then; for he sent them away with Fleas in their Ear. And he was seriously angry with his own Brother Sir *Dudley North*, because he did not contradict the Lye in sudden and direct Terms; but laugh'd, as taking the Question put to him for a Banter, till, by Iterations, he was brought to it. For some Lords came, and because they seem'd to attribute somewhat to the avow'd Positiveness of the Reporters, he rather chose to send for his Brother to attest, than to impose his bare Denial. And so it pass'd; and the noble Earl, with *Jeffries*, and others of that Crew, made merry, and never blush'd at the Lye of their own making; but valued themselves upon it, as a very good Jest.