

Miii The Aftermath: reflections and assessments

Miii1 One worthy Chancellour rendred up his place

Notes. In November 1620, John Chamberlain noted that, “It seemes we live of late under some rolling planet for it is observed that in lesse than five yeares most of our principall officers have ben displaced or disgraced, as a Lord Chauncellor, a Lord Treasurer, a Lord Chamberlain, a Lord Admirall, a master of the horse, a secretarie, a master of the wards, a Lord Cheife Justice and an Atturney generall” (2.325). This verse, probably written a year after Chamberlain’s report, in the aftermath of Bacon’s fall and another spate of dismissals and new appointments, offers a similar perspective on the “rowlinge tumblinge Age” for officers of state.

One worthy Chancellour¹ rendred up his place

another was removed with disgrace²

Two treasurers³ a Maister of the Horse⁴

An Admirall⁵ all changed for the worse

Two Chequer Chancellors⁶ two Cheife Justices⁷

two secretaryes⁸ sped as ill as these

Maister of the wards⁹ domesticke officers

And favourites¹⁰ herein have had their shares

Of privy Councillours noe lesse then ten

Forbeare the Councell untill god knowes when

Even true Religion that these threescore yeares¹¹

hath settled beene, an alteration feares¹²

And you great lords that yet are on the stage

Stand fast this is a rowlinge tumblinge Age.

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Source. Bodleian MS Eng. Poet. c.50, fol. 13r

Miii1

¹ *One worthy Chancellour:* Lord Chancellor Thomas Egerton, Lord Ellesmere, died in March 1617, days after surrendering the Great Seal.

- ² *another...disgrace*: Ellesmere's successor, Sir Francis Bacon, impeached by Parliament in 1621.
- ³ *Two treasurers*: Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk, charged with gross corruption, was dismissed as Lord Treasurer in July 1618. Sir Henry Montagu, Viscount Mandeville, was Suffolk's eventual successor (in 1620), but surrendered the office late in 1621 to Sir Lionel Cranfield, Earl of Middlesex.
- ⁴ *Maister of the Horse*: James I appointed his favourite George Villiers (later Duke of Buckingham) as Master of the Horse in January 1616, replacing Edward Somerset, 4th Earl of Worcester, who was appointed, in compensation, Lord Privy Seal.
- ⁵ *Admirall*: George Villiers, Marquis of Buckingham, replaced Charles Howard, Earl of Nottingham, as Lord Admiral in January 1619.
- ⁶ *Two Chequer Chancellors*: turnover in the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer was significantly less pronounced than in other positions. Sir Julius Caesar held the office from 1606 to 1614, and Sir Fulke Greville from 1614 to 1621. In November 1621, Sir Richard Weston replaced Greville.
- ⁷ *two Cheife Justices*: Sir Edward Coke was dismissed as Lord Chief Justice in 1616; his successor, Sir Henry Montagu, Viscount Mandeville, was replaced in 1620 by Sir James Ley.
- ⁸ *two secretaryes*: one of the two Secretaries is Sir Thomas Lake, who lost office as a result of the scandal that engulfed his family in 1618-19 (see Section J). The other is either Sir Ralph Winwood, who died in office in October 1617, or Sir Robert Naunton, who was threatened with dismissal in 1621 though in fact survived in office until 1623.
- ⁹ *Maister of the wards*: William Knollys, Viscount Wallingford, son-in-law of Thomas Howard, Earl of Suffolk, was dismissed as Master of the Wards in December 1618.
- ¹⁰ *favourites*: alluding to the fall of the favourite Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset in 1615-16 (see Section H).
- ¹¹ *true Religion...threescore yeares*: dating the establishment of the "true Religion"—Protestantism—in England to the accession of Elizabeth I in 1558 and to the Elizabethan Church settlement that ensued.
- ¹² *an alteration feares*: alluding to the growing fears of a resurgence of Catholicism, possibly to be authorized in the terms for a marriage alliance with Spain.
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