

4. **The Declaration of Indulgence, 1672.** Charles had given his promise to Louis in the Secret Treaty of Dover that he would restore Romanism. His first step towards the attainment of this object was to issue the *Declaration of Indulgence*, suspending all penal laws against Nonconformists and Roman Catholics. But the wily king had overreached himself. The "Declaration" raised a storm of indignation throughout England, which he did not expect. It was thought to be but a stepping stone towards the restoration of Popery and arbitrary power. "*Forty statutes,*" it was said, "*had been violated by the Declaration.*" If, it was argued, the King could suspend one Act of Parliament by the exercise of the royal prerogative, that power might also be extended to the suspension of any Act of Parliament whatsoever. Even the Nonconformists, for whose benefit it was ostensibly passed, opposed it, and when the Parliament met, an Address was carried by a large majority begging the King to withdraw the Declaration. Charles had no moral courage, and instead of standing his ground, he feebly gave way and recalled the Declaration.
5. **The Test Act and End of the Cabal Ministry, 1673.** The triumph of the Opposition or "Country party," in compelling Charles to withdraw the Declaration, was followed by another and much more complete victory. Men saw that the Church of England was in danger, not from Dissenters, but from Roman Catholics, who held many high and important offices in the State. There were also grave suspicions afloat that Charles was a Roman Catholic at heart, while the conversion of the Duke of York was a well-known fact. Parliament therefore proceeded to pass the **Test Act**, which required, that all persons who held office in the State, should receive the Holy Communion in accordance with the rites of the Church of England, and renounce the doctrine of Transubstantiation. The passing of this Act broke up the Cabal. Clifford resigned his post as lord-treasurer, Arlington almost entirely disappeared from public life, Shaftesbury was dismissed from the Chancellorship, and having joined the Opposition, became the King's steady opponent. Buckingham also passed over to the Opposition, while Lauderdale alone continued in office, but was chiefly occupied in Scottish