

Charles actually declared war against the Dutch, but as he did not dare to appeal to Parliament for money to carry on the war, he seized from the national treasury what would be equal to nine or ten million dollars to-day, and spent it partly on the war and partly on his own pleasure. This money had been collected to repay wealthy citizens of London who had lent large sums to the government, and when they were not paid, many merchants and bankers were ruined. The alliance with France was very unpopular, and, moreover, it was generally believed that Charles was leaning towards Roman Catholicism. The country was indignant, and, much against his will, the king was compelled again to make peace with the Dutch.

186. **Trouble over religion.**—Charles had already attempted to carry out part of his agreement with Louis by proclaiming the Declaration of Indulgence, by which all laws interfering with any peaceable form of public worship were suspended. But Parliament began now to suspect the treacherous designs of the king, and declared that the Declaration was illegal, and that the laws could not be suspended except by Act of Parliament. When Charles saw that further resistance would be useless, he yielded. But Parliament went even further and passed, in 1673, the Test Act. This Act required every man appointed to an office in the army, navy, or the government, to be a member of the Church of England and to declare that he did not believe that the bread and wine of the sacrament became the actual body and blood of Christ when blessed by the priest. If he so declared, it was considered proof that he was not a Roman Catholic. The Duke of York, the brother of the king, immediately resigned his command in the navy, and his example was followed by hundreds of others who refused to sacrifice their religion.

The attempts of the king to lessen the severity of the laws against the Roman Catholics caused, in 1678, an outbreak of religious fanaticism. An infamous or half-insane wretch, called Titus Oates, declared that there had been a gigantic plot formed by the Roman Catholics to burn