

THE  
QUAKERS ADDRESS  
TO THE  
House of Commons.  
Declosing their Suffering Case, Relating  
To Oathes and Swearing.

As it was Presented by *George Whitehead*, Capt. *William Mead*, and other  
Eminent *Quakers*, on Friday Last, the 12th Instant.

**I**t is not unknown to this nation, that ever since we were a *People*, it has been *our Principle* not to swear, make, or take Oaths, which He who is the searcher of all Hearts knows, is no other than a Case of pure Conscience, in tender Obedience to the Mind of Our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as we are fully perswaded, according as many Eminent Martyrs, and Men of Wisdom and Renown were, who Testified against Oaths and Swearing in the Gospel-Day, and not any Obstinacy, Disaffection or Worldly Interest whatsoever on our parts: We being really Willing and Desirous to Answer the Just and Good Ends of Law and Government, as a peaceable People fearing God, and for this *Cause* of not *Swearing* we have been Exposed to great *Sufferings* and *Inconveniences* in our Persons and Estates, by tedious Imprisonments, and Disabled from Receiving *Our Due Debts*, or defending *Our Just Titles and Properties*: not suffered to give Evidence in Courts of *Judicature* at Common or Civil Law, nor to Answer in Chancery or Exchequer, prove Wills and Testaments, or take Administrations, or to proceed in our Trades at Custom-House, or be admitted to our Lands, or Trusted in our Duties, and Services in Courts Leer, and Courts Baron; but great Advantage is taken against us, because we so fear an Oath, as that we dare not Swear: For which cause also, our Children and Young Men are not allowed their Freedoms in *Cities or Corporations*, when they have Faithfully served out their Apprenteships. Nor admitted to give our Voices in Elections of Magistrates, and Parliament Members in divers Places, tho known to have Right thereunto as Free-holders, &c.

**Wherefore** *Our Request is, That in all Cases where OATHES are imposed, and Swearing Required, Our Word, that is, our Solemn Affirmation or Denial as in the fear and presence of God may be accepted instead of an OATH, for which we Humbly Offer, and Freely Submit, That if an under the same Profession among us, break their Word, or be found false in such their Affirmation or Denial, or guilty of Falsbood In any unsworn Testimony, Evidence, or Answers, That then such Penalty be inflicted on the Person so Offending, as law and Justice Require in Case of False Swearing or Perjury.*

*This may be Printed, James Fraser.*