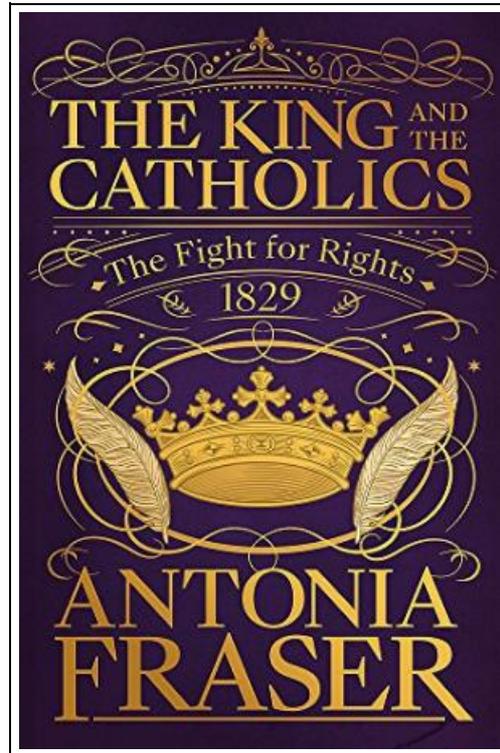


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Orion Publishing Co, United Kingdom, 2018. Hardback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book. The Gordon Riots of 1780 were the worst civil disturbance in British history, causing 285 deaths and widespread looting in central London. The riots had begun as an anti-Catholic protest against the Papist Act two years earlier, which intended to reduce official discrimination against British Catholics after over one hundred years of penalties against them. The Riots came at the height of the American War of Independence with Britain fighting American rebels, France and Spain. They created an atmosphere of fear that a deliberate attempt by (Catholic) France had been made to destabilize Britain before an imminent French invasion. It is against this backdrop that the 50-year battle for Catholic Emancipation developed, culminating in the Roman Catholic Relief Act of 1829. A hugely sensitive issue during the Napoleonic Wars, William Pitt s government had fallen in 1806 over it. Its successful passage followed a vigorous campaign on the issue by Irish lawyer Daniel O Connell, who had firm support from the Prime Minister - the Duke of Wellington, no less - as well as from the Whigs and liberal Tories. The Act permitted Catholics to sit in the parliament at Westminster, something denied O Connell when he won a by-election seat for Clare in 1828. Robert Peel, the Home Secretary, who had until then opposed emancipation (and had, in 1815, challenged O Connell to a duel) concluded that although emancipation was a great danger, civil strife was a greater danger . Fearing a revolution in Ireland, Peel drew up the Catholic Relief Bill and guided it through the House of Commons. To overcome the vehement opposition of the House of Lords and King George IV, the Duke of Wellington worked tirelessly to ensure its passage...



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