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HISTORY
OF
THE ENGLISH PEOPLE

BY

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VOLUME VI

PURITAN ENGLAND, 1642-1660.
THE REVOLUTION, 1660-1683

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CHAPTER IX
THE CIVIL WAR
1642-1646

Edgehill.

The breaking off of negotiations was followed on both sides by preparations for immediate war. Hampden, Pym, and Holles became the guiding spirits of a Committee of Public Safety which was created by Parliament as its administrative organ. On the twelfth of July 1642 the Houses ordered that an army should be raised "for the defence of the king and the Parliament," and appointed the Earl of Essex as its captain-general and the Earl of Bedford as its general of horse. The force soon rose to twenty thousand foot and four thousand horse; and English and Scotch officers were drawn from the Low Countries. The confidence on the Parliamentary side was great. "We all thought one battle would decide," Baxter
6-002] confessed after the first encounter; for the king was almost destitute of money and arms, and in spite of his strenuous efforts to raise recruits he was embarrassed by the reluctance of his own adherents to begin the struggle. Resolved however to force on a contest, he raised the Royal Standard at Nottingham "on the evening of a very stormy and tempestuous day," the twenty-second of August, but the country made no answer to his appeal. Meanwhile Lord Essex, who had quitted London amidst the shouts of a great multitude with orders from the Parliament to follow the king, "and by battle or other way rescue him from his perfidious councillors and restore him to Parliament," was mustering his army at Northampton. Charles had but a handful of men, and the dash of a few regiments of horse would have ended the war; but Essex shrank from a decisive stroke, and trusted to reduce the king peacefully to submission by a show of force. But while Essex lingered Charles fell back at the close of September on Shrewsbury, and the whole face of affairs suddenly changed. Catholics and Royalists rallied fast to his standard, and the royal force became strong enough to take the field. With his usual boldness Charles resolved to march at once on the capital and force the Parliament to submit by dint of arms. But the news of his march roused Essex from his inactivity. He had advanced to Worcester to watch the king's proceedings; and he now hastened to
6-003] protect London. On the twenty-third of October 1642 the two armies fell in with one another on the field of Edgehill, near Banbury. The encounter was a surprise, and the battle which followed was little more than a confused combat of horse. At its outset the desertion of Sir Faithful Fortescue with a whole regiment threw the Parliamentary forces into disorder, while the Royalist horse on either wing drove their opponents from the field; but the reserve of Lord Essex broke the foot, which formed the centre of the king's line, and though his nephew, Prince Rupert, brought back his squadrons in time to save Charles from capture or flight, the night fell on a drawn battle.

Charles at Oxford.

The moral advantage however rested with the king. Essex had learned that his troopers were no match for the Cavaliers, and his withdrawal to Warwick left open the road to the capital. Rupert pressed for an instant march on London, where the approach of the king's forces had roused utter panic. But the proposal found stubborn opponents among the moderate Royalists, who dreaded the complete triumph of Charles as much as his defeat; and their pressure forced the king to pause for a time at Oxford, where he was received with uproarious welcome. When the cowardice of its garrison delivered Reading to Rupert's horse, and his daring capture of Brentford in November drew the royal army in his support almost to the
6-004] walls of the capital, the panic of the Londoners was already over, and the junction of their train-bands with the army of Essex forced Charles to fall back again on his old quarters. But though the Parliament rallied quickly from the blow of Edgehill, the war, as its area widened through the winter, went steadily for the king. The fortification of Oxford gave him a firm hold on the midland counties; while the balance of the two parties in the North was overthrown by the march of the Earl of Newcastle, with a force he had raised in Northumberland, upon York. Lord Fairfax, the Parliamentary leader in that county, was thrown back by Newcastle's attack on the manufacturing towns of the West Riding, where Puritanism found its stronghold; and the arrival of the queen in February 1643 with arms from Holland encouraged the royal army to push its scouts across the Trent, and threaten the eastern counties, which held firmly for the Parliament. The stress of the war was shown by the vigorous efforts of the Houses. Some negotiations which had gone on into the spring were broken off by the old demand that the king should return to his Parliament; London was fortified; and a tax of two millions a year was laid on the districts which adhered to the Parliamentary cause.

The Cornish rising.

In the spring of 1643 Lord Essex, whose army had been freshly equipped, was ordered to advance upon Oxford. But though the king held himself ready to fall back on the West, the Earl shrank from again
6-005] risking his raw army in an encounter. He confined himself to the recapture of Reading, and to a month of idle encampment round Brill. But while disease thinned his ranks and the Royalists beat up his quarters the war went more and more for the king. The inaction of Essex enabled Charles to send a part of his small force at Oxford to strengthen a Royalist rising in the West. Nowhere was the royal cause to take so brave or noble a form as among the Cornishmen. Cornwall stood apart from the general life of England: cut off from it not only by differences of blood and speech, but by the feudal tendencies of its people, who clung with a Celtic loyalty to their local chieftains, and suffered their fidelity to the Crown to determine their own. They had as yet done little more than keep the war out of their own county; but the march of a small Parliamentary force under Lord Stamford upon Launceston forced them into action. In May 1643 a little band of Cornishmen gathered round the chivalrous Sir Bevil Greenvil, "so destitute of provisions that the best officers had but a biscuit a day," and with only a handful of powder for the whole force; but, starving and outnumbered as they were, they scaled the steep rise of Stratton Hill, sword in hand, and drove Stamford back on Exeter with a loss of two thousand men, his ordnance and baggage-train. Sir Ralph Hopton, the best of the Royalist generals, took the command of their army as it advanced into
6-006] Somerset, and drew the stress of the war into the West. Essex despatched a picked force under Sir William Waller to check their advance; but Somerset was already lost ere he reached Bath, and the Cornishmen stormed his strong position on Lansdowne Hill in the teeth of his guns. The stubborn fight robbed the victors of their leaders; Hopton was wounded, Greenvil slain, and with them fell the two heroes of the little army, Sir Nicholas Slanning and Sir John Trevanion, "both young, neither of them above eight-and-twenty, of entire friendship to one another, and to Sir Bevil Greenvil." Waller too, beaten as he was, hung on their weakened force as it moved for aid upon Oxford, and succeeded in cooping up the foot in Devizes. But in July the horse broke through his lines; and joining a force which Charles had sent to their relief, turned back, and dashed Waller's army to pieces in a fresh victory on Roundway Down.

Hampden and the

The Cornish rising seemed to decide the fortune of the war; and the succours which his queen was bringing him from the army of the North determined Charles to make a fresh advance upon London. He

was preparing for this advance, when Rupert sallied from Oxford to beat up the quarters of the army under Essex, which still remained encamped about Thame. Foremost among this Parliamentary force were the "Greencoats" of John Hampden. From the first outbreak of warfare Hampden had shown the same energy in the field that he had shown in the Parliament. He had contributed two thousand pounds to the loan raised by the Houses for the equipment of an army. He had raised a regiment from among his own tenantry, with the parson of Great Hampden for their chaplain. The men wore his livery of green, as those of Holles or Brooke or Mandeville wore their leaders' liveries of red, and purple, and blue; the only sign of their common soldiership being the orange scarf, the colour of Lord Essex, which all wore over their uniform. From the first the "Greencoats" had been foremost in the fray. While Essex lay idly watching the gathering of an army round the king, Hampden was already engaged with the royal outposts. It was the coming up of his men that turned the day at Edgehill; and that again saved Lord Brooke from destruction in the repulse of the royal forces at Brentford. It was Hampden's activity that saved Reading from a second capture. During the gloomy winter, when the fortunes of the Houses seemed at their worst, his energy redoubled. His presence was as necessary in the Parliament as in the field; and he was continually on the road between London and Westminster. It was during these busy months that he brought into practical shape a league which was destined to be the mainstay of the Parliamentary force. Nowhere was the Puritan feeling so strong as in the counties about London, in his own Buckinghamshire, in Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, and the more easterly counties of Huntingdon, Cambridge, and Northampton. Hampden's influence as well as that of his cousin, Oliver Cromwell, who was already active in the war, was bent to bind these shires together in an association for the aid of the Parliament, with a common force, a common fund for its support, and Lord Manchester for its head. The association was at last brought about; and Hampden turned his energies to reinforcing the army of Essex.

War.

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Rupert's raid.

The army was strengthened; but no efforts could spur its leader into activity. Essex had learned his trade in the Thirty Years War; and like most professional soldiers he undervalued the worth of untrained levies. As a great noble, too, he shrank from active hostilities against the king. He believed that in the long run the want of money and of men would force Charles to lay down his arms, and to come to a peaceful understanding with the Parliament. To such a fair adjustment of the claims of both a victory of the Parliament would, he thought, be as fatal as a victory of the king. Against this policy of inaction Hampden struggled in vain. It was to no purpose that he urged Essex to follow Charles after Edgehill, or to attack him after his repulse before Brentford. It was equally to no purpose that he urged at the opening of 1643 an attack upon Oxford. Essex drew nearer to the town indeed; but at the news of the queen's junction with her husband, and of the successes of the Cornishmen, he fell back to his old cantonment about Thame. Hampden's knowledge of the country warned him of danger from the loose disposition of the army, and he urged Essex to call in the distant outposts and strengthen his line; but his warnings were unheeded. So carelessly were the troops scattered about that Rupert resolved to beat up their quarters; and leaving Oxford in the afternoon of Saturday, the 17th of June, he seized the bridge over the Thame at Chiselhampton, and leaving a force of foot to secure his retreat, threw himself boldly with his horsemen into the midst of the Parliamentary army. Essex with the bulk of his men lay quietly sleeping a few miles to the northward at Thame as Rupert struck in the darkness through the leafy lanes that led to the Chilterns, and swooped on the villages that lay beneath their slopes. At three in the morning he fell on the troops quartered at Postcombe, then on those at Chinnor. Here some fifty were slain, and more taken prisoners, as they sprang half-naked from their beds. The village was fired, and Rupert again called his men together to pursue their foray. But the early summer sun had now risen; it was too late to attack Wycombe as he had purposed; and the horsemen fell back again through Tetsworth to secure their retreat across the Thame.

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Death of Hampden.

6-010] It was time to think of retreat, for Hampden was already in pursuit. He had slept at Watlington; but the tidings of the foray in the village hard by roused him from slumber, and he at once despatched a trooper to Essex to bid the Earl send foot and horse and cut off the Prince from Chiselhampton bridge. Essex objected and delayed till Hampden's patience broke down. The thought of his own village blazing in that Sunday dawn, his own friends and tenants stretched dead in the village streets, carried him beyond all thought of prudence. A troop of horse volunteered to follow him; and few as they were, he pushed at once with them for the bridge. The morning was now far gone; and Rupert had reached Chalgrove Field, a broad space without enclosures, where he had left his foot drawn up amidst the standing corn to secure his retreat. To Hampden the spot was a memorable one; it was there, if we trust a Royalist legend, that "he first mustered and drew up men in arms to rebel against the king." But he had little time for memories such as these. His resolve was to hold Rupert by charge after charge till Essex could come up; and the arrival of these troops of horse with some dragoons enabled him to attack. The attack was roughly beaten off, and the assailants thrown into confusion, but Hampden rallied the broken troops and again led them on. Again they were routed, and Rupert drew off across the river without further contest. It was indeed only the courage of Hampden that had fired his little troop to face the Cavaliers; and he could fire them no more. In the last charge a shot struck him in the shoulder and disabled his sword-arm. His head bending down, his hands resting on his horse's neck, he rode off the field before the action was done, "a thing he never used to do." The story of the country-side told how the wounded man rode first towards Pyrton. It was the village where he had wedded the wife he loved so well, and beyond it among the beech-trees of the Chilterns lay his own house of Hampden. But it was not there that he was to die. A party of Royalists drove him back from Pyrton, and turning northwards he paused for a moment at a little brook that crossed his path, then gathering strength leaped it, and rode almost fainting to Thame. At first the surgeons gave hopes of his recovery, but hope was soon over. For six days he lay in growing agony, sending counsel after counsel to the Parliament, till on the twenty-fourth of June the end drew near. "O Lord, save my country," so ended Hampden's prayers; "O Lord, be merciful to——!" here his speech failed him, and he fell back lifeless on his bed. With arms reversed and muffled flags, his own men bore him through the lanes and woods he knew so well to the little church that still stands unchanged beside his home. On the floor of its chancel the brasses of his father and his grandfather mark their graves. A step nearer to the altar, unmarked by brass or epitaph, lies the grave in which, with bitter tears and cries, his greencoats laid the body of the leader whom they loved. "Never were heard such piteous cries at the death of one man as at

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Master Hampden's." With him indeed all seemed lost. But bitter as were their tears, a noble faith lifted these Puritans out of despair. As they bore him to his grave they sang, in the words of the ninetieth psalm, how fleeting in the sight of the Divine Eternity is the life of man. But as they turned away the yet nobler words of the forty-third psalm broke from their lips, as they prayed that the God who had smitten them would send out anew His light and His truth, that they might lead them and bring them to His holy hill. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou so disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall yet praise him, which is the help of my countenance, and my God!"

Relief of Gloucester.

To Royalists as to Parliamentarians the death of Hampden seemed an omen of ruin to the cause he loved. Disaster followed disaster: Essex, more and more anxious for a peace, fell back on Uxbridge; while a cowardly surrender of Bristol to Prince Rupert gave Charles the second city of the kingdom, and the mastery of the West. The news of the loss of Bristol fell on the Parliament "like a sentence of death." The
6-013] Lords debated nothing but proposals of peace. London itself was divided. "A great multitude of the wives of substantial citizens" clamoured at the door of the Commons for peace; and a flight of six of the few peers who remained at Westminster to the camp at Oxford proved the general despair of the Parliament's success. From this moment however the firmness of the Parliamentary leaders began slowly to reverse the fortunes of the war. If Hampden was gone, Pym remained; and while weaker men despaired Pym was toiling night and day to organize a future victory. The spirit of the Commons was worthy of their great leader: and Waller was received on his return from Roundway Hill "as if he had brought the king prisoner with him." The Committee of Public Safety were lavish of men and money. Essex was again reinforced. The new army of the associated counties, which had been placed under the command of Lord Manchester, was ordered to check the progress of Newcastle in the North. But it was in the West that the danger was greatest. Prince Maurice continued his brother Rupert's career of success, and his conquest of Barnstaple and Exeter secured Devon for the king. Gloucester alone interrupted the communications between the royal forces in Bristol and those in the North; and at the opening of August Charles moved against the city with hope of a speedy surrender. But the gallant resistance of the town called Essex to its relief. It was
6-014] reduced to a single barrel of powder when the Earl's approach forced Charles to raise the siege on the sixth of September; and the Puritan army fell steadily back again on London after an indecisive engagement near Newbury, in which Lord Falkland fell, "ingeminating 'Peace, peace!'" and the London train-bands flung Rupert's horsemen roughly off their front of pikes.

League with Scotland.

The relief of Gloucester proved to be the turning-point of the war. It was not merely that Charles had met with a repulse; it was that he had missed a victory, and that in the actual posture of affairs nothing but a great victory could have saved the king. For the day which witnessed the triumphant return of Essex witnessed the solemn taking of the Covenant. Pym had resolved at last to fling the Scotch sword into the wavering balance; and in the darkest hour of the Parliament's cause Sir Harry Vane had been despatched to Edinburgh to arrange the terms on which the aid of Scotland would be given. First amongst these terms stood the demand of a "unity in Religion"; an adoption, in other words, of the Presbyterian system by the Church of England. To such a change Pym had been steadily opposed. He had even withstood Hampden when, after the passing of the bill for the expulsion of bishops from the House of Peers, Hampden had pressed for the abolition of episcopacy. But events had moved so rapidly since the earlier debates on
6-015] Church government that some arrangement of this kind had become a necessity. The bishops to a man, and the bulk of the clergy whose bent was purely episcopal, had joined the royal cause, and were being expelled from their livings as "delinquents." Some new system of Church government was imperatively called for by the religious necessities of the country; and though Pym and the leading statesmen were still in opinion moderate Episcopalians, the growing force of Presbyterianism, and still more the absolute need of Scottish aid and the needs of the war, forced them to seek such a system in the adoption of the Scotch discipline.

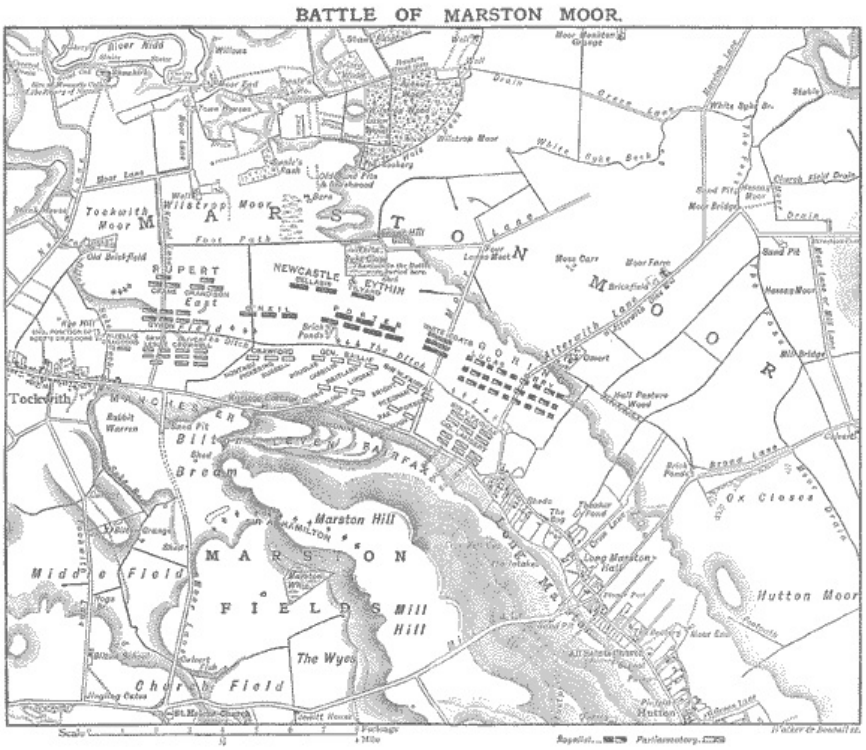
England swears to the Covenant.

Scotland, for its part, saw that the triumph of the Parliament was necessary for its own security. Whatever difficulties stood in the way of Vane's wary and rapid negotiations were removed in fact by the policy of the king. While the Parliament looked for aid to the North, Charles had been seeking assistance from the Irish rebels. Wild tales of the supposed massacre had left them the objects of a vengeful hate unknown before in England, but with the king they were simply counters in his game of kingcraft. Their rising had now grown into an organized rebellion. In October 1642 an Assembly of the Confederate Catholics gathered at Kilkenny. Eleven Catholic bishops, fourteen peers, and two hundred and twenty-six
6-016] commoners, of English and Irish blood alike, formed this body, which assumed every prerogative of sovereignty, communicated with foreign powers, and raised an army to vindicate Irish independence. In spite of this Charles had throughout the year been intriguing with the confederates through Lord Glamorgan; and though his efforts to secure their direct aid were for some time fruitless he succeeded in September in bringing about an armistice between their forces and the army under the Earl of Ormond which had as yet held them in check. The truce left this army at the king's disposal for service in England; while it secured him as the price of this armistice a pledge from the Catholics that they would support his cause. With their aid Charles thought himself strong enough to strike a blow at the Government in Edinburgh; and the Irish Catholics promised to support by their landing in Argyleshire a rising of the Highlanders under Montrose. None of the king's schemes proved so fatal to his cause as these. On their discovery officer after officer in his own army flung down their commissions, the peers who had fled to Oxford fled back again to London, and the Royalist reaction in the Parliament itself came utterly to an end. Scotland, anxious for its own safety, hastened to sign the Covenant; and on the twenty-fifth of September 1643 the Commons, "with uplifted hands," swore in St. Margaret's church to observe it. They pledged
6-017] themselves to "bring the Churches of God in the three Kingdoms to the nearest conjunction and uniformity in religion, confession of faith, form of Church government, direction for worship, and catechizing; that we, and our posterity after us, may as brethren live in faith and love, and the Lord may delight to live in the midst of us"; to extirpate Popery, prelacy, superstition, schism, and profaneness; to "preserve the rights and privileges of the Parliament, and the liberties of the Kingdom"; to punish malignants and opponents of reformation in Church and State; to "unite the two Kingdoms in a firm peace and union to all posterity." The Covenant ended with a solemn acknowledgement of national sin, and a vow of reformation. "Our true, unfeigned purpose, desire, and endeavour for ourselves and all others under our power and

charge, both in public and private, in all duties we owe to God and man, is to amend our lives, and each to go before another in the example of a real reformation."

Pym's plan for 1644.

The conclusion of the Covenant had been the last work of Pym. He died on December 6, 1643, and a "Committee of the Two Kingdoms" which was entrusted after his death with the conduct of the war and of foreign affairs did their best to carry out the plans he had formed for the coming year. The vast scope of these plans bears witness to his amazing ability. Three strong armies, comprising a force of fifty thousand
6-018] men, appeared in the field in the spring of 1644, ready to co-operate with the Scots in the coming campaign. The presence of the Scottish army indeed changed the whole face of the war. With Lord Leven at its head, it crossed the Border in January "in a great frost and snow"; and Newcastle, who was hoping to be reinforced by detachments from Ormond's army, was forced to hurry northward single-handed to arrest its march. He succeeded in checking Leven at Sunderland, but his departure freed the hands of Fairfax, who in spite of defeat still clung to the West-Riding. With the activity of a true soldier, Fairfax threw himself on the forces from Ormond's army who had landed at Chester, and after cutting them to pieces at Nantwich on the twenty-fifth of January, marched as rapidly back upon York. Here he was joined by the army of the Associated Counties, a force of fourteen thousand men under the command of Lord Manchester, but in which Cromwell's name was becoming famous as a leader. The two armies at once drove the force left behind by Newcastle to take shelter within the walls of York, and formed the siege of that city. The danger of York called Newcastle back to its relief; but he was too weak to effect it, and the only issue of his return was the junction of the Scots with its besiegers. The plans of Pym were now rapidly developed. While Manchester and Fairfax united with Lord Leven under the walls of York, Waller, who
6-019] with the army of the West had held Prince Maurice in check in Dorsetshire, marched quickly to a junction with Essex, whose army had been watching Charles; and the two forces formed a blockade of Oxford.



Map of Marston Moor

Marston Moor.

Charles was thrown suddenly on the defensive. The Irish troops, on which he counted as a balance to the Scots, had been cut to pieces by Fairfax or by Waller, and both in the North and in the South he seemed utterly overmatched. But he was far from despairing. Before the advance of Essex he had answered Newcastle's cry for aid by despatching Prince Rupert from Oxford to gather forces on the Welsh border; and the brilliant partizan, after breaking the sieges of Newark and Lathom House, burst over the Lancashire hills into Yorkshire, slipped by the Parliamentary army, and made his way untouched into York. But the success of this feat of arms tempted him to a fresh act of daring. He resolved on a decisive battle; and on the second of July 1644 a discharge of musketry from the two armies as they faced each other on Marston Moor brought on, as evening gathered, a disorderly engagement. On the one flank a charge of the king's horse broke that of the Scotch; on the other, Cromwell's brigade won as complete a success over Rupert's troopers. "God made them as stubble to our swords," wrote the general at the close of the
6-020] day; but in the heat of victory he called back his men from the chase to back Manchester in his attack on
6-021] the Royalist foot, and to rout their other wing of horse as it returned breathless from pursuing the Scots.
6-022] Nowhere had the fighting been so fierce. A young Puritan who lay dying on the field told Cromwell as he bent over him that one thing lay on his spirit. "I asked him what it was," Cromwell wrote afterwards. "He told me it was that God had not suffered him to be any more the executioner of His enemies."

Newbury.

At nightfall all was over; and the Royalist cause in the North had perished at a blow. Newcastle fled over sea: York surrendered, and Rupert, with hardly a man at his back, rode southward to Oxford. The blow was the more terrible that it fell on Charles at a moment when his danger in the South was being changed into triumph by a series of brilliant and unexpected successes. After a month's siege the king had escaped from Oxford; had waited till Essex, vexed at having missed his prey, had marched to attack what he looked on as the main Royalist force, that under Maurice in the West; and then, turning fiercely on Waller at Cropredy Bridge, had driven him back broken to London, two days before the battle of Marston Moor. Charles followed up his success by hurrying in the track of Essex, whom he hoped to crush between his

own force and that under Maurice; and when, by a fatal error, Essex plunged into Cornwall, where the
6-023] country was hostile, the king hemmed him in among the hills, and drew his lines tightly round his army. On the second of September the whole body of the foot were forced to surrender at his mercy, while the horse cut their way through the besiegers, and Essex himself fled by sea to London. Nor was this the only reverse of fortune which brought hope to the royal cause. The day on which the army of Essex surrendered to the king was marked by a Royalist triumph in Scotland which promised to undo what Marston Moor had done. The Irish Catholics fulfilled their covenant with Charles by the landing of Irish soldiers in Argyle; and as had long since been arranged, Montrose, throwing himself into the Highlands, called the clans to arms. Flinging his new force on that of the Covenanters at Tippermuir, he gained a victory which enabled him to occupy Perth, to sack Aberdeen, and to spread terror to Edinburgh. The news at once told. The Scottish army in England refused to march further from its own country; and used the siege of Newcastle as a pretext to remain near the Border. With the army of Essex annihilated and the Scots at a safe distance, no obstacle seemed to lie between the king and London; and as he came up from the West Charles again marched on the capital. But if the Scots were detained at Newcastle the rest of the victors at Marston Moor lay in his path at Newbury; and their force was strengthened by the soldiers who
6-024] had surrendered in Cornwall, but whom the energy of the Parliament had again brought into the field. On the twenty-seventh of October Charles fell on this army under Lord Manchester's command; but the charges of the Royalists failed to break the Parliamentary squadrons, and the soldiers of Essex wiped away the shame of their defeat by flinging themselves on the cannon they had lost, and bringing them back in triumph to their lines. Cromwell seized the moment of victory, and begged hard to be suffered to charge with his single brigade. But Manchester shrank like Essex from a crowning victory over the king. Charles was allowed to withdraw his army to Oxford, and even to reappear unchecked in the field of his defeat.

Cromwell.

The quarrel of Cromwell with Lord Manchester at Newbury was destined to give a new colour to the war. Pym, in fact, had hardly been borne to his grave in Westminster Abbey before England instinctively recognized a successor of yet greater genius in the victor of Marston Moor. Born in the closing years of Elizabeth's reign, the child of a cadet of the great house of the Cromwells of Hinchinbrook, and of kin, through their marriages, with Hampden and St. John, Oliver had been recalled by his father's death from a short stay at Cambridge to the little family estate at Huntingdon, which he quitted for a farm at St. Ives.
6-025] We have seen his mood during the years of personal rule, as he dwelt in "prolonging" and "blackness" amidst fancies of coming death, the melancholy which formed the ground of his nature feeding itself on the inaction of the time. But his energy made itself felt the moment the tyranny was over. His father had sat, with three of his uncles, in the later Parliaments of Elizabeth. Oliver had himself been returned to that of 1628, and the town of Cambridge sent him as its representative to the Short Parliament as to the Long. It is in the latter that a courtier, Sir Philip Warwick, gives us our first glimpse of his actual appearance. "I came into the House one morning, well clad, and perceived a gentleman speaking whom I knew not, very ordinarily apparelled, for it was a plain cloth suit, which seemed to have been made by an ill country tailor. His linen was plain, and not very clean; and I remember a speck or two of blood upon his little band, which was not much larger than his collar. His hat was without a hat-band. His stature was of a good size; his sword stuck close to his side; his countenance swoln and reddish; his voice sharp and untuneable, and his eloquence full of fervour."

The Ironsides.

He was already "much hearkened unto," but his power was to assert itself in deeds rather than in words. He appeared at the head of a troop of his own raising at Edgehill; but with the eye of a born soldier he at
6-026] once saw the blot in the army of Essex. "A set of poor tapsters and town apprentices," he warned Hampden, "would never fight against men of honour"; and he pointed to religious enthusiasm as the one weapon which could meet and turn the chivalry of the Cavalier. Even to Hampden the plan seemed impracticable; but the regiment of a thousand men which Cromwell raised for the Association of the Eastern Counties, and which in later times were known as his Ironsides, was formed strictly of "men of religion." He spent his fortune freely on the task he set himself. "The business . . . hath had of me in money between eleven and twelve hundred pounds, therefore my private estate can do little to help the public. . . . I have little money of my own (left) to help my soldiers." But they were "a lovely company," he tells his friends with soldierly pride. No blasphemy, drinking, disorder, or impiety were suffered in their ranks. "Not a man swears but he pays his twelve pence." Nor was his choice of "men of religion" the only innovation Cromwell introduced into his new regiment. The social traditions which restricted command to men of birth were disregarded. "It may be," he wrote, in answer to complaints from the Committee of the Association, "it provokes your spirit to see such plain men made captains of horse. It had been well that men of honour and birth had entered into their employments; but why do they not appear? But seeing it is
6-027] necessary the work must go on, better plain men than none: but best to have men patient of wants, faithful and conscientious in their employment, and such, I hope, these will approve themselves." The words paint Cromwell's temper accurately enough; he is far more of the practical soldier than of the reformer; though his genius already breaks in upon his aristocratic and conservative sympathies, and catches glimpses of the social revolution to which the war was drifting. "I had rather," he once burst out impatiently, "have a plain russet-coated captain, that knows what he fights for and loves what he knows, than what you call a gentleman, and is nothing else. I honour a gentleman that is so indeed!" he ends, with a return to his more common mood of feeling, but the outburst was none the less a characteristic one.

The Independent

The same practical temper broke out in a more startling innovation. Against dissidents from the legal worship of the Church the Presbyterians were as bitter as Laud himself. But Nonconformity was rising into proportions which made its claim of toleration, of the freedom of religious worship, one of the problems of the time. Its rise had been a sudden one. The sects who rejected in Elizabeth's day the conception of a National Church, and insisted on the right of each congregation to freedom of worship, had all but disappeared at the close of the queen's reign. Some of the dissidents, as in the notable instance
6-028] of the congregation that produced the Pilgrim Fathers, had found a refuge in Holland; but the bulk had been driven by persecution to a fresh conformity with the Established Church. As soon however as Abbot's primacy promised a milder rule, the Separatist refugees began to venture timidly back again to England. During their exile in Holland the main body had contented themselves with the free developement of their

system of independent congregations, each forming in itself a complete Church, and to these the name of Independents attached itself at a later time. A small part however had drifted into a more marked severance in doctrine from the Established Church, especially in their belief of the necessity of adult baptism, a belief from which their obscure congregation at Leyden became known as that of the Baptists. Both of these sects gathered a Church in London in the middle of James's reign, but the persecuting zeal of Laud prevented any spread of their opinions under that of his successor; and it was not till their numbers were suddenly increased by the return of a host of emigrants from New England, with Hugh Peters at their head, on the opening of the Long Parliament, that the Congregational or Independent body began to attract attention.

The Parliament and Uniformity.

6-029] Lilburne and Burton declared themselves adherents of what was called "the New England way"; and a year later saw in London alone the rise of "fourscore congregations of several sectaries," as Bishop Hall scornfully tells us, "instructed by guides fit for them, cobblers, tailors, felt-makers, and such-like trash." But little religious weight however could be attributed as yet to the Congregational movement. Baxter at this time had not heard of the existence of any Independents. Milton in his earlier pamphlets shows no sign of their influence. Of the hundred and five ministers present in the Westminster Assembly only five were Congregational in sympathy, and these were all returned refugees from Holland. Among the one hundred and twenty London ministers in 1643, but three were suspected of leaning towards the Sectaries. The struggle with Charles in fact at its outset only threw new difficulties in the way of religious freedom. The great majority of the Parliament were averse from any alterations in the constitution or doctrine of the Church itself; and it was only the refusal of the bishops to accept any diminution of their power and revenues, the growth of a party hostile to Episcopalian government, the necessity for purchasing the aid of the Scots by a union in religion as in politics, and above all the urgent need of constructing some new ecclesiastical organization in the place of the older organization which had become impossible from the political attitude of the bishops, that forced on the two Houses the adoption of the Covenant. But the
6-030] change to a Presbyterian system of Church government seemed at that time of little import to the bulk of Englishmen. The dogma of the necessity of bishops was held by few; and the change was generally regarded with approval as one which brought the Church of England nearer to that of Scotland, and to the reformed Churches of the Continent. But whatever might be the change in its administration, no one imagined that it had ceased to be the Church of England, or that it had parted with its right to exact conformity to its worship from the nation at large. The Tudor theory of its relation to the State, of its right to embrace all Englishmen within its pale, and to dictate what should be their faith and form of worship, remained utterly unquestioned by any man of note. The sentiments on which such a theory rested indeed for its main support, the power of historical tradition, the association of "dissidence" with danger to the State, the strong English instinct of order, the as strong English dislike of "innovations," with the abhorrence of "indifferency" as a sign of lukewarmness in matters of religion, had only been intensified by the earlier incidents of the struggle with the king.

Growth of dissidence.

The Parliament therefore was steadily pressing on the new system of ecclesiastical government in the midst of the troubles of the war. An Assembly of Divines, which was called together in 1643 at
6-031] Westminster, and which sat in the Jerusalem Chamber during the five years which followed, was directed to revise the Articles, to draw up a Confession of Faith, and a Directory of Public Worship; and these with a scheme of Church government, a scheme only distinguished from that of Scotland by the significant addition of a lay court of superior appeal set by Parliament over the whole system of Church courts and assemblies, were accepted by the Houses and embodied in a series of Ordinances. But while the Divines were drawing up their platform of uniform belief and worship, dissidence was growing fast into a religious power. In the terrible agony of the struggle against Charles individual conviction became a stronger force than religious tradition. Theological speculation took an unprecedented boldness from the temper of the times. The shock of war had broken the bonds of custom, and given a violent impulse to the freest thought. "Behold now this vast city!" cried Milton from London, "a city of refuge, the mansionhouse of liberty, encompassed with God's protection! The shop of war hath not there more anvils and hammers working to fashion out the plates and instruments of armed justice in defence of beleaguered truth than there be pens and heads there, sitting by their studious lamps, musing, searching, revolving new notions and ideas wherewith to present us, as with their homage and fealty, the approaching reformation; others as fast
6-032] reading, trying all things, according to the force of reason and convincement." The poet himself had drifted from his Presbyterian standpoint and saw that "new Presbyter is but old Priest writ large." The same change was going on widely about him. Four years after the war had begun a horror-stricken pamphleteer numbered sixteen religious sects as existing in defiance of the law; and, widely as these bodies differed among themselves, all were at one in repudiating any right of control in faith or in worship on the part of the Church or its clergy. Above all, the class which became specially infected with the spirit of religious freedom was the class to whose zeal and vigour the Parliament was forced to look for success in the struggle. Cromwell had wisely sought for good fighting men among the "godly" farmers of the Associated Counties. But where he found such men he found dissidents, men who were resolved to seek God after their own fashion, and who were as hostile to the despotism of the National Church as to the despotism of the king.

Cromwell and the dissidents.

The problem was a new and a difficult one; but Cromwell met it in the same practical temper which showed itself in his dealings with the social difficulties that stood in the way of military organization. The sentiments of these farmers were not his own. Bitter as had been his hatred of the bishops, and
6-033] strenuously as he had worked to bring about a change in Church government, Cromwell, like most of the Parliamentary leaders, seems to have been content with the new Presbyterianism, and the Presbyterians were more than content with him. Lord Manchester "suffered him to guide the army at his pleasure." "The man, Cromwell," writes the Scotchman Baillie, "is a very wise and active head, universally well beloved as religious and stout." But they were startled and alarmed by his dealings with these dissident recruits. He met the problem in his unspeculative fashion. He wanted good soldiers and good men; and, if they were these, the Independent, the Baptist, the Leveller found entry among his troops. "You would respect them, did you see them," he answered the panic-stricken Presbyterians who charged them with "Anabaptistry" and revolutionary aims: "they are no Anabaptists: they are honest, sober Christians; they expect to be

used as men." But he was busier with his new regiment than with theories of Church and State; and his horsemen were no sooner in action than they proved themselves such soldiers as the war had never seen yet. "Truly they were never beaten at all," their leader said proudly at its close. At Winceby fight they charged "singing psalms," cleared Lincolnshire of the Cavaliers, and freed the eastern counties from all danger from Newcastle's partizans. At Marston Moor they faced and routed Rupert's chivalry. At Newbury
6-034] it was only Manchester's reluctance that hindered them from completing the ruin of Charles.

Self-denying Ordinance.

Cromwell had shown his capacity for organization in the creation of the Ironsides; his military genius had displayed itself at Marston Moor. Newbury raised him into a political leader. "Without a more speedy, vigorous, and effective prosecution of the war," he said to the Commons after his quarrel with Manchester, "casting off all lingering proceedings, like those of soldiers of fortune beyond sea to spin out a war, we shall make the kingdom weary of us, and hate the name of a Parliament." But under the leaders who at present conducted it a vigorous conduct of the war was hopeless. They were, in Cromwell's plain words, "afraid to conquer." They desired not to crush Charles, but to force him back, with as much of his old strength remaining as might be, to the position of a constitutional king. The old loyalty, too, clogged their enterprise; they shrank from the taint of treason. "If the king be beaten," Manchester urged at Newbury, "he will still be king; if he beat us he will hang us all for traitors." To a mood like this Cromwell's reply seemed horrible: "If I met the king in battle I would fire my pistol at the king as at another." The army, too, as he long ago urged at Edgehill, was not an army to conquer with. Now, as then, he urged that
6-035] till the whole force was new modelled, and placed under a stricter discipline, "they must not expect any notable success in anything they went about." But the first step in such a reorganization must be a change of officers. The army was led and officered by members of the two Houses, and the Self-denying Ordinance, which was introduced by Cromwell and Vane, declared the tenure of military or civil offices incompatible with a seat in either.

The New Model.

The long and bitter resistance which this measure met in either House was justified at a later time by the political results that followed the rupture of the tie which had hitherto bound the Army to the Parliament. But the drift of public opinion was too strong to be withstood. The country was weary of the mismanagement of the war, and demanded that military necessities should be no longer set aside on political grounds. The Ordinance passed the Houses on the third of April 1645, and its passage brought about the retirement of Essex, Manchester, and Waller. The new organization of the army went rapidly on through the spring under a new commander-in-chief, Sir Thomas Fairfax, the hero of the long contest in Yorkshire, and who had been raised into fame by his victory at Nantwich and his bravery at Marston Moor. But behind Fairfax stood Cromwell; and the principles on which Cromwell had formed his brigade were
6-036] carried out on a larger scale in the "New Model." The one aim was to get together twenty thousand "honest" men. "Be careful," Cromwell wrote, "what captains of horse you choose, what men be mounted. A few honest men are better than numbers. If you choose godly honest men to be captains of horse, honest men will follow them." The result was a curious medley of men of different ranks among the officers of the New Model. The bulk of those in high command remained men of noble or gentle blood, Montagues, Pickerings, Fortescues, Sheffields, Sidneys, and the like. But side by side with these, though in far smaller proportion, were seen officers like Ewer, who had been a serving-man, like Okey, who had been a drayman, or Rainsborough, who had been a "skipper at sea." A result hardly less notable was the youth of the officers. Amongst those in high command there were few who, like Cromwell, had passed middle age. Fairfax was but thirty-three years old, and most of his colonels were even younger.

The Army and the dissidents.

Equally strange was the mixture of religions in its ranks. The remonstrances of the Presbyterians had only forced Cromwell's mind forward on the road of toleration. "The State, in choosing men to serve it," he wrote before Marston Moor, "takes no notice of these opinions. If they be willing faithfully to serve it, that satisfies." Marston Moor spurred him to press on the Parliament the need of at least "tolerating"
6-037] dissidents; and he succeeded in procuring the appointment of a Committee of the Commons to find some means of effecting this. But the conservative temper of the bulk of the Puritans was at last roused by his efforts. "We detest and abhor," wrote the London clergy in 1645, "the much endeavoured Toleration"; and the Corporation of London petitioned Parliament to suppress all sects "without toleration." The Parliament itself too remained steady on the conservative side. But the fortunes of the war told for religious freedom. Essex and his Presbyterians only marched from defeat to defeat. Though a large proportion of the infantry was composed of pressed recruits, the cavalry was for the most part strongly Puritan, and in that part of the army especially, as in Cromwell's horsemen drawn from among the farmers from the eastern counties, dissidence of every type had gained a firm foothold.

Negotiations at Uxbridge.

Of the political and religious aspect of the New Model we shall have to speak at a later time; as yet its energy was directed solely to "the speedy and vigorous prosecution of the war." At the very moment when Fairfax was ready for action the policy of Cromwell was aided by the policy of the king. From the hour when Newbury marked the breach between the peace and war parties in the Parliament, and when the
6-038] last became identified with the partizans of religious liberty, the Scotch Commissioners and the bulk of the Commons had seen that their one chance of hindering what they looked on as revolution in Church and State lay in pressing for fresh negotiations with Charles. These were opened at Uxbridge, and prolonged through the winter; but the hopes of concession which the king held out were suddenly withdrawn in the spring of 1645. He saw, as he thought, the Parliamentary army dissolved and ruined by its new modelling at an instant when news came from Scotland of fresh successes on the part of Montrose, and of his overthrow of the troops under Argyle's command in a victory at Inverlochy. "Before the end of the summer," wrote the conqueror, "I shall be in a position to come to your Majesty's aid with a brave army." He pressed Charles to advance to the Scottish border, where a junction of their armies might still suffice to crush any force the Parliament could bring against them. The party of war at once gained the ascendant in the royal councils. The negotiations at Uxbridge were broken off, and in May Charles opened his campaign by a march to the north.

Naseby.

At first all went well for the king. Leicester was stormed, the blockade of Chester raised, and the eastern counties threatened, until Fairfax, who had hoped to draw Charles back again by a blockade of Oxford, was forced to hurry on his track. Cromwell, who had been

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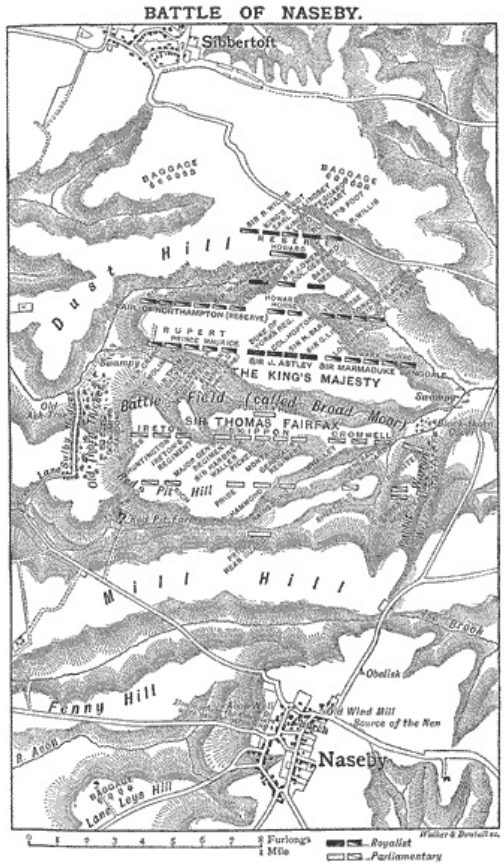

Map of Naseby Fight

suffered by the House to retain his command for a few days in spite of the Ordinance, joined Fairfax as he drew near the king, and his arrival was greeted by loud shouts of welcome from the troops. On the fourteenth of June 1645 the two armies met near Naseby, to the north-west of Northampton. The king was eager to fight; "Never have my affairs been in as good a state," he cried; and Prince Rupert was as impatient as his uncle. On the other side, even Cromwell doubted as a soldier the success of his newly-drilled troops, though his religious enthusiasm swept away doubt in the assurance of victory. "I can say this of Naseby," he wrote soon after, "that when I saw the enemy draw up and march in gallant order towards us, and we a company of poor ignorant men, to seek to order our battle, the general having commanded me to order all the horse, I could not, riding alone about my business, but smile out to God in praises, in assurance of victory, because God would by things that are not bring to nought things that are. Of which I had great assurance, and God did it." The battle began with a furious charge of Rupert uphill, which routed the wing opposed to him under Ireton; while the Royalist foot, after a single discharge, clubbed their muskets and fell on the centre under Fairfax so hotly that it slowly and stubbornly gave way. But the Ironsides were conquerors on the left. A single charge broke the northern horse under Langdale, who had already fled before them at Marston Moor; and holding his troops firmly in hand, Cromwell fell with them on the flank of the Royalist foot in the very crisis of its success. A panic of the king's reserve, and its flight from the field, aided his efforts. It was in vain that Rupert returned with forces exhausted by pursuit, that Charles in a passion of despair called on his troopers for "one charge more." The battle was over: artillery, baggage, even the royal papers, fell into the conqueror's hands; five thousand men surrendered; and only two thousand followed the king in his headlong flight from the field.

6-041]

Close of the War.

The war was ended at a blow. While Charles wandered helplessly along the Welsh border in search of fresh forces, Fairfax marched rapidly on the south-west, where an organized royal force alone existed; routed Goring's force at Langport, in Somersetshire; broke up the Royalist army; and in three weeks was master to the Land's End. A victory at Kilsyth, which gave Scotland for the moment to Montrose, threw a transient gleam over the darkening fortunes of his master's cause; but the surrender of Bristol to the Parliamentary army, and the dispersion of the last force Charles could gather from Wales in an attempt to relieve Chester, were followed in September by news of the crushing and irretrievable defeat of the "Great Marquis" at Philiphaugh. In the wreck of the royal cause we may pause for a moment over an incident
6-042] which brings out in relief the best temper of both sides. Cromwell, who was sweeping over the southern counties to trample out the last trace of resistance, "spent much time with God in prayer before the storm" of Basing House, where the Marquis of Winchester had held stoutly out through the war for the king. The storm ended its resistance, and the brave old Royalist was brought in a prisoner with his house flaming around him. He "broke out," reports a Puritan bystander, "and said, 'that if the king had no more ground in England but Basing House, he would adventure it as he did, and so maintain it to the uttermost,' comforting himself in this matter 'that Basing House was called Loyalty.'" Of loyalty such as this Charles was utterly unworthy. The seizure of his papers at Naseby had hardly disclosed his earlier intrigues with the Irish Catholics when the Parliament was able to reveal to England a fresh treaty with them, which purchased no longer their neutrality, but their aid, by the simple concession of every demand they had made. The shame was without profit, for whatever aid Ireland might have given came too late to be of service. The spring of 1646 saw the few troops who still clung to Charles surrounded and routed at Stow. "You have done your work now," their leader, Sir Jacob Astley, said bitterly to his conquerors, "and may go to play, unless you fall out among yourselves."

6-043]

CHAPTER X
THE ARMY AND THE PARLIAMENT
1646-1649

The new struggle.

With the close of the Civil War we enter on a time of confused struggles, a time tedious and uninteresting in its outer details, but of higher interest than even the war itself in its bearing on our after history. Modern England, the England among whose thoughts and sentiments we actually live, began, however dimly and darkly, with the triumph of Naseby. Old things passed silently away. When Astley gave up his sword the "work" of the generations which had struggled for Protestantism against Catholicism, for public liberty against absolute rule, in his own emphatic phrase, was "done." So far as these contests were concerned, however the later Stuarts might strive to revive them, England could safely "go to play." English religion was never to be more in danger. English liberty was never to be really in peril from the
6-044] efforts of kings after a personal rule. Whatever reaction might come about, it would never bring into question the great constitutional results that the Long Parliament had wrought. But with the end of this older work a new work began. The constitutional and ecclesiastical problems which still in one shape or

another beset us started to the front as subjects of national debate in the years between the close of the Civil War and the death of the king. The great parties which have ever since divided the social, the political, and the religious life of England, whether as Independents and Presbyterians, as Whigs and Tories, as Conservatives and Liberals, sprang into organized existence in the contest between the Army and the Parliament. Then for the first time began a struggle which is far from having ended yet, the struggle between political tradition and political progress, between the principle of religious conformity and the principle of religious freedom.

Religious liberty.

It was the religious struggle which drew the political in its train. The victory of Naseby raised a wider question than that of mere toleration. "Honest men served you faithfully in this action," Cromwell wrote to the Speaker of the House of Commons from the field. "Sir, they are trusty: I beseech you in the name of God not to discourage them. He that ventures his life for the liberty of his country, I wish he trust God for
6-045] the liberty of his conscience." The storm of Bristol encouraged him to proclaim the new principle yet more distinctly. "Presbyterians, Independents, all here have the same spirit of faith and prayer, the same presence and answer. They agree here, have no names of difference; pity it is it should be otherwise anywhere. All that believe have the real unity, which is the most glorious, being the inward and spiritual, in the body and in the head. For being united in forms (commonly called uniformity), every Christian will for peace' sake study and do as far as conscience will permit. And from brethren in things of the mind we look for no compulsion but that of light and reason." The increasing firmness of Cromwell's language was due to the growing irritation of his opponents. The two parties became every day more clearly defined. The Presbyterian ministers complained bitterly of the increase of the Sectaries, and denounced the toleration which had come into practical existence without sanction from the law. Scotland, whose army was still before Newark, pressed for the execution of the Covenant and the universal enforcement of a religious uniformity. Sir Harry Vane, on the other hand, who now headed the party which advocated religious freedom in the Commons, strove to bring the Parliament round to less rigid courses by the introduction of two hundred and thirty new members, who filled the seats left vacant by the withdrawal of
6-046] Royalist members, and the more eminent of whom, such as Ireton and Algernon Sidney, were inclined to support the Independents. But the majority in both Houses still clung to the Tudor tradition of religious uniformity; and it was only the pressure of the New Model, and the remonstrances of Cromwell as its mouthpiece, that hindered any effective movement towards persecution.

Charles in the Scotch camp.

Amidst the wreck of his fortunes Charles seized on the growing discord among his opponents as a means of retrieving all. He trusted that the dread of revolution would at last rally the whole body of conservative Englishmen round the royal standard; and it is likely enough that had he frankly flung himself on the side of the Parliament at this juncture he might have regained much of his older power. But, beaten and hunted as he was from place to place, he was determined to regain not much but all. The terms which the Houses offered were still severe; and Charles believed that a little kingcraft would free him from the need of accepting any terms whatever. He intrigued therefore busily with both parties, and promised liberty of worship to Vane and the Independents at the moment when he was negotiating with the Parliament and with the Scots. His negotiations were quickened by the march of Fairfax upon Oxford. Driven from his last refuge at the close of April 1646, the king had to choose between a flight from the realm or a surrender to
6-047] one of the armies about him. Charles had no mind to forsake England when all seemed working for his success; and after some aimless wanderings he made his appearance in May in the camp of the Scots. The choice was dexterous enough. The Parliament and the Army were still left face to face. On the other hand the Scots were indignant at what they regarded as a breach of faith in the toleration which existed in England, and Charles believed that his presence would at once rekindle their loyalty to a king of Scottish blood. But the results of his surrender were other than he had hoped. To the world at large his action seemed simply the prelude to an accommodation with his opponents on the ground of religious uniformity. This new aspect of affairs threatened the party of religious freedom with ruin. Hated as they were by the Scots, by the Lords, by the City of London, the apparent junction of Charles with their enemies destroyed their growing hopes in the Commons, where the prospects of a speedy peace on Presbyterian terms at once swelled the majority of their opponents. The two Houses laid their conditions of peace before the king without a dream of resistance from one who seemed to have placed himself at their mercy. They required for the Parliament the command of the army and fleet for twenty years; the exclusion of all "Malignants," or Royalists who had taken part in the war, from civil and military office; the abolition of
6-048] Episcopacy; and the establishment of a Presbyterian Church. Of toleration or liberty of conscience they said not a word.

The Scots, whose army had fallen back with its royal prize to Newcastle, pressed these terms on the king "with tears." His friends, and even the queen, urged their acceptance. But the aim of Charles was simply delay. His surrender had not brought about the results he had hoped for; but he believed that time and the dissensions of his enemies were fighting for him. "I am not without hope," he wrote coolly, "that I shall be able to draw either the Presbyterians or the Independents to side with me for extirpating one another, so that I shall be really king again." With this end he refused the terms offered by the Houses. His refusal was a crushing defeat for the Presbyterians. "What will become of us," asked one of them, "now that the king has rejected our proposals?" "What would have become of us," retorted an Independent, "had he accepted them?" The vigour of Holles and the Conservative leaders in the Parliament rallied however to a bolder effort. It was plain that the king's game lay in balancing the Army against the Parliament, and that the Houses could hope for no submission to these terms so long as the New Model was on foot. Nor could they venture in its presence to enforce religious uniformity, or to deal as they would have wished to deal with the theories of religious freedom which were every day becoming
6-049] more popular. But while the Scotch army lay at Newcastle, and while it held the king in its hands, they could not insist on dismissing their own soldiers. It was only a withdrawal of the Scots from England and their transfer of the king's person into the hands of the Houses that would enable them to free themselves from the pressure of their own soldiers by disbanding the New Model.

Surrender of the king.

In his endeavour to bring these two measures about Holles met with an unexpected success. Hopeless of success in the projects of accommodation which they laid before the king, and unable to bring him into

Scotland in face of the refusal of the General Assembly to receive a sovereign who would not swear to the Covenant, the Scottish army in January 1647 accepted £400,000 in discharge of its claims, handed Charles over to a Committee of the Houses, and marched back over the Border. The success of their diplomacy restored the confidence of the Houses. The Presbyterian leaders looked on themselves as masters of the king, and they resolved to assert their mastery over the New Model and the Sectaries. They voted that the army should be disbanded, and that a new army should be raised for the suppression of the Irish rebellion with Presbyterian officers at its head. It was in vain that the men protested against being severed from
6-050] "officers that we love," and that the Council of Officers strove to gain time by pressing on the Parliament the danger of mutiny. Holles and his fellow-leaders were resolute, and their ecclesiastical legislation showed the end at which their resolution aimed. Direct enforcement of conformity was impossible till the New Model was disbanded; but the Parliament pressed on in the work of providing the machinery for enforcing it as soon as the army was gone. Vote after vote ordered the setting up of Presbyteries throughout the country, and the first-fruits of these efforts were seen in the Presbyterian organization of London, and in the first meeting of its Synod at St. Paul's. Even the officers on Fairfax's staff were ordered to take the Covenant.

Temper of the New Model.

All hung however on the disbanding of the New Model, and the New Model showed no will to disband itself. Its attitude can only fairly be judged by remembering what the conquerors of Naseby really were. They were soldiers of a different class and of a different temper from the soldiers of any other army that the world has seen. Their ranks were filled for the most part with young farmers and tradesmen of the lower sort, maintaining themselves, for their pay was twelve months in arrear, mainly at their own cost. They had been specially picked as "honest," or religious men, and, whatever enthusiasm or fanaticism they
6-051] may have shown, their very enemies acknowledged the order and piety of their camp. They looked on themselves not as swordsmen, to be caught up and flung away at the will of a paymaster, but as men who had left farm and merchandise at a direct call from God. A great work had been given them to do, and the call bound them till it was done. Kingcraft, as Charles was hoping, might yet restore tyranny to the throne. A more immediate danger threatened that liberty of conscience which was to them "the ground of the quarrel, and for which so many of their friends' lives had been lost, and so much of their own blood had been spilt." They would wait before disbanding till these liberties were secured, and if need came they would again act to secure them. But their resolve sprang from no pride in the brute force of the sword they wielded. On the contrary, as they pleaded passionately at the bar of the Commons, "on becoming soldiers we have not ceased to be citizens." Their aims and proposals throughout were purely those of citizens, and of citizens who were ready the moment their aim was won to return peacefully to their homes. Thought and discussion had turned the army into a vast Parliament, a Parliament which regarded itself as a representative of "godly" men in as high a degree as the Parliament at Westminster, and which must have become every day more conscious of its superiority in political capacity to its rival. Ireton, the
6-052] moving spirit of the New Model, had no equal as a statesman in St. Stephen's: nor is it possible to compare the large and far-sighted proposals of the Army with the blind and narrow policy of the two Houses. Whatever we may think of the means by which the New Model sought its aims, we must in justice remember that, so far as those aims went, the New Model was in the right. For the last two hundred years England has been doing little more than carrying out in a slow and tentative way the scheme of political and religious reform which the army propounded at the close of the Civil War.

Its seizure of the king.

It was not till the rejection of the officers' proposals had left little hope of conciliation that the army acted, but its action was quick and decisive. It set aside for all political purposes the Council of Officers, by which its action had hitherto been directed, and elected a new Council of Agitators or Agents, two members being named by each regiment, which summoned a general meeting of the army at Triploe Heath, where the proposals of pay and disbanding made by the Parliament were rejected with cries of "Justice." While the army was gathering, in fact, the Agitators had taken a step which put submission out of the question. A rumour that the king was to be removed to London, a new army raised by the Parliament in his name, and a new civil war begun, roused the soldiers to madness. Five hundred troopers
6-053] appeared on the fourth of June before Holmby House, where the king was residing in charge of Parliamentary Commissioners, and displaced its guards. "Where is your commission for this act?" Charles asked the cornet who commanded them. "It is behind me," said Joyce, pointing to his soldiers. "It is written in very fine and legible characters," laughed the king. The seizure had in fact been previously concerted between Charles and the Agitators. "I will part willingly," he told Joyce, "if the soldiers confirm all that you have promised me. You will exact from me nothing that offends my conscience or my honour." "It is not our maxim," replied the cornet, "to constrain the conscience of any one, still less that of our king." After a first burst of terror at the news, the Parliament fell furiously on Cromwell, who had relinquished his command and quitted the army before the close of the war, and had ever since been employed as a mediator between the two parties. The charge of having incited the mutiny fell before his vehement protest, but he was driven to seek refuge with the army, and on the twenty-fifth of June it was in full march upon London. Its demands were expressed with perfect clearness in an "Humble Representation" which it addressed to the Houses. "We desire a settlement of the Peace of the kingdom and of the liberties of the subject according to the votes and declarations of Parliament. We desire no
6-054] alteration in the civil government: as little do we desire to interrupt or in the least to intermeddle with the settling of the Presbyterial government." What they demanded in religious matters was toleration; but "not to open a way to licentious living under pretence of obtaining ease for tender consciences, we profess, as ever, in these things when the State has made a settlement we have nothing to say, but to submit or suffer." It was with a view to such a settlement that they demanded the expulsion of eleven members from the Commons, with Holles at their head, whom the soldiers charged with stirring up strife between the Army and the Parliament, and with a design of renewing the civil war. After fruitless negotiations the New Model drew close upon London; the terror of the Londoners forced the eleven to withdraw; and the Houses named Commissioners to treat on the questions at issue.

The Army negotiates with the

Though Fairfax and Cromwell had been forced from their position as mediators into a hearty co-operation with the army, its political direction rested at this moment with Cromwell's son-in-law, Henry Ireton, and Ireton looked for a real settlement, not to the Parliament, but to the king. "There must be some

difference," he urged bluntly, "between conquerors and conquered"; but the terms which he laid before Charles were terms of studied moderation. The vindictive spirit which the Parliament had shown against
6-055] the Royalists and the Church disappeared in the terms exacted by the New Model; and the Army contented itself with the banishment of seven leading "delinquents," a general Act of Oblivion for the rest, the withdrawal of all coercive power from the clergy, the control of Parliament over the military and naval forces for ten years, and its nomination of the great officers of State. Behind these demands however came a masterly and comprehensive plan of political reform which had already been sketched by the army in the "Humble Representation," with which it had begun its march on London. Belief and worship were to be free to all. Acts enforcing the use of the Prayer-Book, or attendance at Church, or the enforcement of the Covenant were to be repealed. Even Catholics, whatever other restraints might be imposed, were to be freed from the bondage of compulsory worship. Parliaments were to be triennial, and the House of Commons to be reformed by a fairer distribution of seats and of electoral rights; taxation was to be readjusted; legal procedure simplified; a crowd of political, commercial, and judicial privileges abolished. Ireton believed that Charles could be "so managed" (says Mrs. Hutchinson) "as to comply with the public good of his people after he could no longer uphold his violent will." But Charles was equally dead to the moderation and to the wisdom of this great Act of Settlement. He saw in the crisis nothing but an
6-056] opportunity of balancing one party against another; and believed that the Army had more need of his aid than he of the Army's. "You cannot do without me—you are lost if I do not support you," he said to Ireton as he pressed his proposals. "You have an intention to be the arbitrator between us and the Parliament," Ireton quietly replied, "and we mean to be so between the Parliament and your Majesty."

King.

Flight of the king.

But the king's tone was soon explained. If London had been panic-stricken at the approach of the army, its panic soon disappeared. The great city was goaded to action by the humiliation of the Parliament, and still more by the triumph of religious liberty which seemed to be approaching through the negotiations of the Army with the king. A mob of Londoners broke into the House of Commons and forced its members to recall the eleven. The bulk of Vane's party, some fourteen peers and a hundred commoners, fled to the army; while those who remained at Westminster prepared for an open struggle with it and invited Charles to return to London. But the news no sooner reached the camp than the army was again on the march. "In two days," Cromwell said coolly, "the city will be in our hands." On the sixth of August the soldiers entered London in triumph and restored the fugitive members; the eleven were once more expelled; and the army leaders resumed their negotiations with the king. The indignation of the soldiers at his delays and
6-057] intrigues made their task hourly more difficult: but Cromwell, who now threw his whole weight on Ireton's side, clung to the hope of accommodation with a passionate tenacity. His mind, conservative by tradition, and above all practical in temper, saw the political difficulties which would follow on the abolition of Monarchy, and in spite of the king's evasions he persisted in negotiating with him. But Cromwell stood almost alone. The Parliament refused to accept Ireton's proposals as a basis of peace; Charles still evaded; and the army grew restless and suspicious. There were cries for a wide reform, for the abolition of the House of Peers, for a new House of Commons; and the Agitators called on the Council of Officers to discuss the question of abolishing Royalty itself. Cromwell was never braver than when he faced the gathering storm, forbade the discussion, adjourned the Council, and sent the officers to their regiments. But the strain was too great to last long, and Charles was still resolute to "play his game." He was in fact so far from being in earnest in his negotiation with Cromwell and Ireton that at the moment they were risking their lives for him he was conducting another and equally delusive negotiation with the Parliament, fomenting the discontent in London, and preparing for a fresh Royalist rising. What he still more counted
6-058] on was aid from the North. The intervention of the Scots had ruined his cause, but their intervention might again restore it. The practical suspension of the Covenant and the triumph of the party of religious liberty in England had produced a violent reaction across the Tweed. Argyle and the zealous Presbyterians still clung to the alliance between the two countries, though it disappointed their hopes; but Hamilton, who had now become a Duke, put himself at the head of the more moderate religionists, and carried the elections for a new Parliament. Charles at once saw the results of the Duke's success. "The two nations," he wrote joyously, "will soon be at war." All that was needed for the success of these schemes was his own liberty: and in November 1647, in the midst of their hopes of an accommodation, the army leaders learned that they had been duped throughout, and that the king had fled.

The second Civil War.

The flight fanned the excitement of the New Model into frenzy, and only the courage of Cromwell averted an open mutiny in its gathering at Ware. But even Cromwell was powerless to break the spirit which now pervaded the soldiers, and the king's perfidy left him without resources. "The king is a man of great parts and great understanding," he said, "but so great a dissembler and so false a man that he is not
6-059] to be trusted." The danger from his escape indeed soon passed away. By a strange error Charles had ridden from Hampton Court to the Isle of Wight, perhaps with some hope from the sympathy of Colonel Hammond, the Governor of Carisbrook Castle, and again found himself a prisoner. But the wider perils remained. Foiled in his effort to put himself at the head of the new civil war, the king set himself to organize it from his prison; and while again opening delusive negotiations with the two Houses he signed a secret treaty with the Scots for the invasion of the realm. All that Hamilton needed to bring the new Scotch Parliament to an active support of the king was his assent to a stipulation for the re-establishment of Presbytery in England. This Charles at last brought himself to give in the spring of 1648, and the Scots at once ordered an army to be levied for his support. In England the whole of the conservative party, with many of the most conspicuous members of the Long Parliament at its head, was drifting in its horror of the religious and political changes which seemed impending towards the king; and at the close of May the news from Scotland gave the signal for fitful insurrections in almost every quarter. London was only held down by main force, old officers of the Parliament unfurled the royal flag in South Wales, and surprised Pembroke. The seizure of Berwick and Carlisle opened a way for the Scotch invasion. Kent, Essex, and
6-060] Hertford broke out in revolt. The fleet in the Downs sent their captains on shore, hoisted the king's pennon, and blockaded the Thames.

The Houses and the Army.

"The hour is come," cried Cromwell, "for the Parliament to save the kingdom and to govern alone." But the Parliament showed no will to "govern alone." It looked on the rising and the intervention of the Scots as means of freeing it from the control under which it had been writhing since the expulsion of the eleven.

It took advantage of the crisis to profess its adherence to Monarchy, to reopen the negotiations it had broken off with the king, and to deal the fiercest blow at religious freedom which it had ever received. The Presbyterians flocked back to their seats; and an "Ordinance for the Suppression of Blasphemies and Heresies," which Vane and Cromwell had long held at bay, was passed by triumphant majorities. Any man —ran this terrible statute—denying the doctrine of the Trinity or of the Divinity of Christ, or that the books of Scripture are "the Word of God," or the resurrection of the body, or a future day of judgement, and refusing on trial to abjure his heresy, "shall suffer the pain of death." Any man declaring (amidst a long list of other errors) "that man by nature hath free will to turn to God," that there is a Purgatory, that images are lawful, that infant baptism is unlawful; any one denying the obligation of observing the Lord's day, or
6-061] asserting "that the Church government by Presbytery is antichristian or unlawful," shall, on a refusal to renounce his errors, "be commanded to prison." It was plain that the Presbyterians counted on the king's success to resume their policy of conformity, and had Charles been free, or the New Model disbanded, their hopes would probably have been realized.

The Scotch Invasion.

But Charles was still safe at Carisbrook; and the New Model was facing fiercely the danger which surrounded it. The wanton renewal of the war at a moment when all tended to peace swept from the mind of Fairfax and Cromwell, as from that of the army at large, every thought of reconciliation with the king. Soldiers and generals were at last bound together again in a stern resolve. On the eve of their march against the revolt all gathered in a solemn prayer-meeting, and came "to a very clear and joint resolution, 'That it was our duty, if ever the Lord brought us back again in peace, to call Charles Stuart, that man of blood, to account for the blood he has shed and mischief he has done to his utmost against the Lord's cause and people in this poor nation.'" The stern resolve was followed by vigorous action. In a few days Fairfax had trampled down the Kentish insurgents, and had prisoned those of the eastern counties within the walls of Colchester, while Cromwell drove the Welsh insurgents within those of Pembroke. Both towns
6-062] however held stubbornly out; and though a rising under Lord Holland in the neighbourhood of London was easily put down, there was no force left to stem the inroad of the Scots, who poured over the Border at the opening of July some twenty thousand strong. Luckily the surrender of Pembroke at this critical moment set Cromwell free. Pushing rapidly northward with five thousand men, he called in a force under Lambert which had been gallantly hanging on the Scottish flank, and pushed over the Yorkshire hills into the valley of the Ribble, where the Duke of Hamilton, reinforced by three thousand Royalists of the North, had advanced as far as Preston. With an army which now numbered ten thousand men, Cromwell poured down on the flank of the Duke's straggling line of march, attacked the Scots on the seventeenth of August as they retired behind the Ribble, passed the river with them, cut their rearguard to pieces at Wigan, forced the defile at Warrington, where the flying enemy made a last and desperate stand, and drove their foot to surrender, while Lambert hunted down Hamilton and the horse. Fresh from its victory, the New Model pushed over the Border, while the peasants of Ayrshire and the West rose in a "Whiggamore raid" (notable as the first event in which we find the name "Whig," which is possibly the same as our "Whey," and conveys a taunt against the "sour-milk" faces of the fanatical Ayrshiremen), and, marching upon
6-063] Edinburgh, in September, dispersed the Royalist party and again installed Argyle in power.

Demand of justice on the king.

Argyle welcomed Cromwell as a deliverer, but the victorious general had hardly entered Edinburgh when he was recalled by pressing news from the South. The temper with which the Parliament had met the Royalist revolt was, as we have seen, widely different from that of the Army. It had recalled the eleven members, and had passed the Ordinance against heresy. At the moment of the victory at Preston the Lords were discussing charges of treason against Cromwell, while in September commissioners were again sent to the Isle of Wight, in spite of the resistance of the Independents, to conclude peace with the king. Royalists and Presbyterians alike pressed Charles to grasp the easy terms which were now offered him. But if his hopes from Scotland had utterly broken down, they had given place to hopes of a new war with the aid of an army from Ireland; and the negotiators of the Houses saw forty days wasted in useless chicanery. "Nothing," Charles wrote to his friends, "is changed in my designs." With Ireland and Scotland on his side, with Royalists still in arms in the eastern counties, with the Houses at issue with the Army, and as it seemed on the point of yielding unconditionally to the king in their dread of organic changes, he
6-064] believed that the hour of his triumph was at last at hand. But the surrender of Colchester to Fairfax in August and Cromwell's convention with Argyle had now set free the Army, and it at once struck fiercely at its foes. Petitions from its regiments demanded "justice on the king." A fresh "Remonstrance" from the Council of Officers called for the election of a new Parliament; for electoral reform; for the recognition of the supremacy of the Houses "in all things"; for the change of kingship, should it be retained, into a magistracy elected by the Parliament, and without veto on its proceedings. Above all they demanded "that the capital and grand author of our troubles, by whose commissions, commands, and procurements, and in whose behalf and for whose interest only, of will and power, all our wars and troubles have been, with all the miseries attending them, may be specially brought to justice for the treason, blood, and mischief he is therein guilty of."

Pride's Purge.

The demand drove the Houses to despair. That the king should be forced back into legal courses, and if need be forced by stress of arms, seemed to the bulk of the English gentry who were ranged on the Parliament side a necessity, though a hard necessity. But the tradition of loyalty, of reverence for the Crown, was strong even in the men who had fought hardest against Charles. They shrank with horror from
6-065] the sight of a king at the bar of a court of justice, or yet more on the scaffold. The demand for a new Parliament was hardly less horrible. A new Parliament meant the rule of the Sectaries, a revolution in the whole political and religious system of the realm. To give way to Charles altogether, to surrender all that the war had gained, seemed better than this. Their reply to the Remonstrance was to accept the king's concessions, unimportant as they were, as a basis of peace. The calculations of Charles were verified by the surrender of his old opponents; but the surrender came too late to save either Parliament or king. The step was accepted by the soldiers as a defiance. On the thirtieth of November Charles was again seized by a troop of horse, and carried off to Hurst Castle, while a letter from Fairfax announced the march of his army upon London. "We shall know now," said Vane, as the troops took their post round the Houses of Parliament, "who is on the side of the king, and who on the side of the people." But the terror of the army proved weaker among the members than the agonized loyalty which strove to save the monarchy and the

Church; and a large majority in both Houses still voted for the acceptance of the terms which Charles had offered. The next morning, that of the sixth of December, saw Colonel Pride at the door of the House of Commons with a list of forty members of the majority in his hands. The Council of Officers had resolved to
6-066] exclude them, and as each member made his appearance he was arrested, and put in confinement. "By what right do you act?" a member asked. "By the right of the sword," Hugh Peters is said to have replied. The House was still resolute, but on the following morning forty more members were excluded, and the rest gave way.

Ruin of the Parliament.

The sword had fallen; and the old system of English government sank helplessly beneath the blow. The two great powers which had waged this bitter conflict, the Parliament and the Monarchy, suddenly disappeared. The expulsion of one hundred and forty members, in a word of the majority of the existing House, reduced the Commons to a name. The remnant who remained to co-operate with the army were, in the coarse imagery of popular speech, but the "rump" of a Parliament. Their will was no longer representative of the will of the country; their acts were no longer national acts. They were simply the acts of a body of partizans who had the luck to find themselves on the side of the sword. While the House of Commons dwindled to a sham, the House of Lords passed away altogether. The effect of Pride's Purge was seen in a resolution of the Rump for the trial of Charles, and the nomination on the first of January 1649 of a Court of one hundred and fifty Commissioners to conduct it, with John Bradshaw, a lawyer of eminence,
6-067] at their head. The rejection of this Ordinance by the few peers who remained brought about a fresh resolution from the members who remained in the Lower House, "that the People are, under God, the original of all just power; that the Commons of England in Parliament assembled—being chosen by, and representing, the People—have the supreme power in this nation; and that whatsoever is enacted and declared for law by the Commons in Parliament assembled hath the force of a law, and all the people of this nation are concluded thereby, although the consent and concurrence of the king or House of Peers be not had hereunto."

Death of the king.

And with the ruin of the Parliament went the ruin of the Monarchy. On the twentieth of January Charles appeared before Bradshaw's Court only to deny its competence and to refuse to plead; but thirty-two witnesses were examined to satisfy the consciences of his judges, and it was not till the fifth day of the trial that he was condemned to death as a tyrant, traitor, murderer, and enemy of his country. The popular excitement vented itself in cries of "Justice," or "God save your Majesty," as the trial went on, but all save the loud outcries of the soldiers was hushed as, on the 30th of January 1649, Charles passed to his doom. The dignity which he had failed to preserve in his long jangling with Bradshaw and the judges returned at
6-068] the call of death. Whatever had been the faults and follies of his life, "he nothing common did, nor mean, upon that memorable scene." Two masked executioners awaited the king as he mounted the scaffold, which had been erected outside one of the windows of the Banqueting House at Whitehall; the streets and roofs were thronged with spectators; and a strong body of soldiers stood drawn up beneath. His head fell at the first blow, and as the executioner lifted it to the sight of all a groan of pity and horror burst from the silent crowd.

Abolition of Monarchy.

The delays and hesitation which marked the action of the Commons on the king's death showed how stunned they were by the revolution which they were driven to bring about. To replace Charles by a new king was impossible. His son alone would be owned as sovereign by the bulk of the nation; and no friendship was possible between the men who now held England in their grasp and the son of the man they had sent to the block. But it was only slowly that they bowed to necessity. It was not till the seventeenth of March that Monarchy was formally abolished; and two months more elapsed before the passing of that memorable Act of the nineteenth of May which declared "that the People of England and of all the dominions and territories thereunto belonging are, and shall be, and are hereby constituted, made,
6-069] established, and confirmed, to be a Commonwealth and Free State, and shall henceforth be governed as a Commonwealth and Free State by the supreme authority of this nation, the representatives of the People in Parliament, and by such as they shall appoint and constitute officers and ministers for the good of the People, and that without any king or House of Lords."

6-070]

CHAPTER XI
THE COMMONWEALTH
1649-1653

Dangers of the Commonwea

The news of the king's death was received throughout Europe with a thrill of horror. The Czar of Russia chased the English envoy from his court. The ambassador of France was withdrawn on the proclamation of the Republic. The Protestant powers of the Continent seemed more anxious than any to disavow all connexion with a Protestant people who had brought their king to the block. Holland took the lead in acts of open hostility to the new power as soon as the news of the execution reached the Hague. The States-General waited solemnly on the Prince of Wales, who took the title of Charles the Second, and recognized him as "Majesty," while they refused an audience to the English envoys. Their Stadtholder, his brother-in-law, the Prince of Orange, was supported by popular sympathy in the aid and encouragement he afforded
6-071] to Charles; and eleven ships of the English fleet, which had found a refuge at the Hague ever since their revolt from the Parliament, were suffered to sail under Rupert's command, and to render the seas unsafe for English traders. The danger however was far greater nearer home. In Scotland even the zealous Presbyterians whom Cromwell had restored to power refused to follow England on its rejection of monarchy. Argyle and his fellow-leaders proclaimed Charles the Second as king on the news of his father's death; and at once despatched an embassy to the Hague to invite him to ascend the throne. In Ireland the factions who ever since the rebellion had turned the country into a chaos, the old Irish Catholics or native party under Owen Roe O'Neill, the Catholics of the English Pale, the Episcopalian Royalists, the Presbyterian Royalists of the North, had at last been brought to some sort of union by the diplomacy of Ormond; and Ormond called on Charles to land at once in a country where he would find three-fourths of

its people devoted to his cause.

England and the Commonwea

Of the dangers which threatened the new Commonwealth some were more apparent than real. The rivalry of France and Spain, both anxious for its friendship, secured it from the hostility of the greater powers of the Continent; and the ill-will of Holland could be delayed, if not averted, by negotiations. The
6-072] acceptance of the Covenant was insisted on by Scotland before it would formally receive Charles as its ruler, and nothing but necessity would induce him to comply with such a demand. On the side of Ireland the danger was more pressing, and an army of twelve thousand men was set apart for a vigorous prosecution of the Irish war. But the real difficulties were the difficulties at home. The death of Charles gave fresh vigour to the Royalist cause; and the loyalty which it revived was stirred to enthusiasm by the publication of the "Eikon Basilike," a work really due to the ingenuity of Dr. Gauden, a Presbyterian minister, but which was believed to have been composed by the king himself in his later hours of captivity, and which reflected with admirable skill the hopes, the suffering, and the piety of the royal "martyr." For a moment there were dreams of a rising, which had to be roughly checked by the execution of the Duke of Hamilton and Lords Holland and Capell, who had till now been confined in the Tower. But the popular disaffection was a far more serious matter than these Royalist intrigues. It was soon plain that the revolution which had struck down Parliament and monarchy alike was without sanction from the nation at large. The government of the country had been provided for by the creation of a Council of State, consisting of forty-one members selected from what was left of the Commons, and who were entrusted
6-073] with full executive power at home and abroad. But if the Rump consented to profit by the work of the soldiers, it showed no will to signify its approval of it. A majority of the members of the Council declined the oath offered to them at their earliest meeting, pledging them to an approval of the king's death and the establishment of the Commonwealth. In the nation at large the repudiation of the army's work was universal. Half the judges retired from the bench. Thousands of refusals met the demand of an engagement to be faithful to the Republic which was made from all beneficed clergymen and public functionaries. It was not till May, and even then in spite of the ill-will of the citizens, that the Council ventured to proclaim the Commonwealth in London.

Designs of the Rump.

It was plain that England had no mind to see her old parliamentary liberties set aside for a military rule. But in truth the army itself never dreamed of establishing such a rule. Still less did it dream of leaving the conduct of affairs in the hands of the small body of members who still called themselves the House of Commons, a body which numbered hardly a hundred, and whose average attendance was little more than fifty. In reducing it by "Pride's Purge" to the mere shadow of a House the army had never contemplated its continuance as a permanent assembly: it had, in fact, insisted as a condition of even its temporary
6-074] continuance that it should prepare a bill for the summoning of a fresh Parliament. The plan, put forward by the Council of Officers is still interesting as the basis of many later efforts towards parliamentary reform. It advised a dissolution in the spring, the assembling every two years of a new Parliament consisting of four hundred members, elected by all householders rateable to the poor, and a redistribution of seats which would have given the privilege of representation to every place of importance. Paid military officers and civil officials were excluded from election. The plan was apparently accepted by the Commons, and a bill based on it was again and again discussed. But it was soon whispered about that the House had no mind to dissolve itself. Whatever might be the hopes of the soldiers or their leaders, the shrewder statesmen who sate at Westminster knew that the country was eager to undo the work that had been done; and that the first effort of a fairly-chosen Parliament would be to put an end to the Commonwealth and to religious liberty. Their aim therefore was to gain time; to continue their rule till what they looked on as a passing phase of national feeling had disappeared, and till the great results which they looked for from their policy both at home and abroad had reconciled the nation to the new system of government. In a witty paraphrase of the story of Moses, Henry Marten was soon to picture the
6-075] Commonwealth as a new-born and delicate babe, and hint that "no one is so proper to bring it up as the mother who has brought it into the world." Secret as this purpose was kept, suspicions of it no sooner stole abroad than the popular discontent found a mouthpiece in John Lilburne, a brave, hot-headed soldier, and the excitement of the army appeared in a formidable mutiny in May. But the leaders of the army set all suspicion aside. "You must cut these people in pieces," Cromwell broke out in the Council of State, "or they will cut you in pieces"; and a forced march of fifty miles to Burford enabled him to burst with Fairfax on the mutinous regiments at midnight, and to stamp out the revolt.

Cromwell in Ireland.

But resolute as he was against disorder, Cromwell went honestly with the army in its demand of a new Parliament; he believed, and in his harangue to the mutineers he pledged himself to the assertion, that the House purposed to dissolve itself. In spite of the delays thrown in the way of the bill for a new Representative body Cromwell entertained no serious suspicion of the Parliament's design when he was summoned to Ireland by a series of Royalist successes which left only Dublin in the hands of the Parliamentary forces. With Scotland threatening war, and a naval struggle impending with Holland, it was necessary that the work of the army in Ireland should be done quickly. The temper too of Cromwell and
6-076] his soldiers was one of vengeance, for the horror of the alleged massacre remained living in every English breast, and the revolt was looked upon as a continuance of the massacre. "We are come," he said on his landing, "to ask an account of the innocent blood that hath been shed, and to endeavour to bring to an account all who by appearing in arms shall justify the same." A sortie from Dublin had already broken up Ormond's siege of the capital; and feeling himself powerless to keep the field before the new army, the Marquis had thrown his best troops, three thousand Englishmen under Sir Arthur Aston, as a garrison into Drogheda. Cromwell landed in Ireland on the fifteenth of August 1649; and his storm of Drogheda in September was the first of a series of awful massacres. The garrison fought bravely, and repulsed the first attack; but a second drove Aston and his force back to the Mill-Mount. "Our men getting up to them," ran Cromwell's terrible despatch, "were ordered by me to put them all to the sword. And indeed, being in the heat of action, I forbade them to spare any that were in arms in the town, and I think that night they put to death about two thousand men." A few fled to St. Peter's church, "whereupon I ordered the steeple to be fired, where one of them was heard to say in the midst of the flames: 'God damn me, I burn, I burn.'" "In the church itself nearly one thousand were put to the sword. I believe all their friars were knocked on the
6-077] head promiscuously but two," but these were the sole exceptions to the rule of killing the soldiers only. At

a later time Cromwell challenged his enemies to give "an instance of one man since my coming into Ireland, not in arms, massacred, destroyed, or banished." But for soldiers there was no mercy. Of the remnant who surrendered through hunger, "when they submitted, their officers were knocked on the head, every tenth man of the soldiers killed, and the rest shipped for the Barbadoes." "I am persuaded," the despatch ends, "that this is a righteous judgement of God upon these barbarous wretches who have imbrued their hands in so much innocent blood, and that it will tend to prevent the effusion of blood for the future."

Charles and the Scots.

A detachment sufficed to relieve Derry and to quiet Ulster; and Cromwell turned to the south, where as stout a defence was followed by as terrible a massacre at Wexford. A fresh success at Ross brought him to Waterford; but the city held stubbornly out, disease thinned his army, where there was scarce an officer who had not been sick, and the general himself was arrested by illness. At last the tempestuous weather drove him into winter quarters at Cork with his work half done. The winter of 1649 was one of terrible anxiety. The Parliament was showing less and less inclination to dissolve itself, and was meeting the
6-078] growing discontent by a stricter censorship of the press and a fruitless prosecution of John Lilburne. English commerce was being ruined by the piracies of Rupert's fleet, which now anchored at Kinsale to support the Royalist cause in Ireland. The energy of Vane indeed had already re-created a navy, squadrons of which were being despatched into the British seas, the Mediterranean, and the Levant; and Colonel Blake, who had distinguished himself by his heroic defence of Taunton during the war, was placed at the head of a fleet which drove Rupert from the Irish coast, and finally blockaded him in the Tagus. But even the energy of Vane quailed before the danger which now broke on England from the Scots. "One must go and die there," the young king cried at the news of Ormond's defeat before Dublin, "for it is shameful for me to live elsewhere." But his ardour for an Irish campaign cooled as Cromwell marched from victory to victory; and from the isle of Jersey, which alone remained faithful to him of all his southern dominions, Charles renewed the negotiations with Scotland which his hopes from Ireland had broken. They were again delayed by a proposal on the part of Montrose to attack the very Government with whom his master was negotiating; but the failure and death of the Marquis in the spring of 1650 forced Charles to accept the Presbyterian conditions; and while an army was raised in the North, the young king prepared to cross to his Scottish dominions.

Cromwell in Scotland.

6-079] Dismayed as they were, the English leaders resolved to anticipate the danger by attacking the new enemy in his own home; but the Lord-General Fairfax, while willing to defend England against a Scotch invasion, scrupled to take the lead in an invasion of Scotland. The Council recalled Cromwell from Ireland, but his cooler head saw that there was yet time to finish his work in the west. During the winter he had been busily preparing for a new campaign, and it was only after the storm of Clonmell and the overthrow of the Irish army under Hugh O'Neill in the hottest fight the army had yet fought, that he embarked for England. The new Lord-General entered London amidst the shouts of a great multitude; and in July 1650, but a month after Charles had landed on the shores of Scotland, the English army crossed the Tweed fifteen thousand men strong. But the terror of his massacres in Ireland hung round its leader, the country was deserted as he advanced, and he was forced to cling for provisions to a fleet which sailed along the coast. The Scotch general, Leslie, with a larger force, refused battle, and lay obstinately in his lines between Edinburgh and Leith. A march of the English army round his position to the slopes of the Pentlands only brought about a change of the Scottish front; and as Cromwell fell back baffled upon
6-080] Dunbar, Leslie encamped upon the heights above the town, and cut off the English retreat along the coast by the seizure of Cockburnspath. His post was almost unassailable, while the soldiers of Cromwell were sick and starving; and their general had resolved on an embarkation of his forces when he saw in the dusk of evening signs of movement in the Scottish camp. Leslie's caution had at last been overpowered by the zeal of the preachers, and on the morning of the third of September the Scotch army moved down to the lower ground between the hillside on which it was encamped and a little brook which covered the English front. Leslie's horse was far in advance of the main body, and it had hardly reached the level ground when Cromwell in the dim dawn flung his whole force upon it. "They run, I profess they run!" he cried as the Scotch horse broke after a desperate resistance, and threw into confusion the foot who were hurrying to its aid. Then, as the sun rose over the mist of the morning, he added in nobler words: "Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered! Like as the mist vanisheth, so shalt Thou drive them away!" In less than an hour the victory was complete. The defeat at once became a rout; ten thousand prisoners were taken, with all the baggage and guns; three thousand were slain, with scarce any loss on the part of the conquerors. Leslie reached Edinburgh, a general without an army.

Break with Holland.

6-081] The effect of Dunbar was at once seen in the attitude of the Continental powers. Spain hastened to recognize the Republic, and Holland offered its alliance. But Cromwell was watching with anxiety the growing discontent at home. He was anxious for a "settlement." He knew that for such a settlement a new Parliament was necessary, and that England would never consent to be ruled against her will by the mere rump of members gathered at Westminster. Yet every day made it plainer that it was their purpose to continue to rule her. The general amnesty claimed by Ireton and the bill for the Parliament's dissolution still hung on hand; the reform of the courts of justice, which had been pressed by the army, failed before the obstacles thrown in its way by the lawyers in the Commons. "Relieve the oppressed," Cromwell wrote from Dunbar, "hear the groans of poor prisoners. Be pleased to reform the abuses of all professions. If there be any one that makes many poor to make a few rich, that suits not a Commonwealth." But the House was seeking to turn the current of public opinion in favour of its own continuance by a great diplomatic triumph. It resolved secretly on the wild project of bringing about a union between England and Holland, and it took advantage of Cromwell's victory to despatch Oliver St. John with a stately embassy to the Hague. His rejection of an alliance and Treaty of Commerce which the Dutch offered was
6-082] followed by the disclosure of the English proposal of union. The proposal was at once refused by the States; and the envoys, who returned angrily to the Parliament, attributed their failure to the posture of affairs in Scotland. Charles was preparing there for a new campaign. Humiliation after humiliation had been heaped on the young king since he landed in his northern realm. He had subscribed to the Covenant; he had listened to sermons and scoldings from the ministers; he was called on at last to sign a declaration that acknowledged the tyranny of his father and the idolatry of his mother. Hardened and shameless as he

was, the young king for a moment recoiled. "I could never look my mother in the face again," he cried, "after signing such a paper"; but he signed. He was still however a king only in name, shut out from the Council and the army, with his friends excluded from all part in government or the war. But he was freed by the victory of Dunbar. "I believe that the king will set up on his own score now," Cromwell wrote after his victory, as he advanced to occupy Edinburgh while the royal forces fell back upon Stirling and Perth. With the overthrow of Leslie in fact the power of Argyle and the narrow Presbyterians whom he led came to an end. Hamilton, the brother and successor of the Duke who had been captured at Preston, brought back the Royalists to the camp, and Charles insisted on taking part in the Council and on being crowned at Scone.

Worcester.

6-083] Master of Edinburgh, but foiled in an attack on Stirling, Cromwell waited through the winter and the long spring of 1651, while intestine feuds broke up the nation opposed to him, and while the stricter Covenanters retired sulkily from the king's army on the return of the "Malignants," the Royalists of the earlier war, to its ranks. With summer the campaign recommenced, but Leslie again fell back on his system of positions, and Cromwell, finding his camp at Stirling unassailable, crossed into Fife and left the road open to the South. The bait was taken. In spite of Leslie's counsels Charles resolved to invade England, and call the Royalist party again to revolt. He was soon in full march through Lancashire upon the Severn, with the English horse under Lambert hanging on his rear, and the English foot hastening by York and Coventry to close the road to London. "We have done to the best of our judgement," Cromwell replied to the angry alarm of the Parliament, "knowing that if some issue were not put to this business it would occasion another winter's war." At Coventry he learned Charles's position, and swept round by Evesham upon Worcester, where the Scotch king was encamped. Throwing half his force across the river, Cromwell attacked the town on both sides on the third of September, the anniversary of his victory at
6-084] Dunbar. He led the van in person, and was "the first to set foot on the enemy's ground." When Charles descended from the cathedral tower to fling himself on the division which remained eastward of the Severn, Cromwell hurried back across the river, and was soon "riding in the midst of the fire." For four or five hours, he told the Parliament, "it was as stiff a contest as ever I have seen"; for though the Scots were outnumbered and beaten into the city, they gave no answer but shot to offers of quarter, and it was not till nightfall that all was over. The loss of the victors was as usual inconsiderable. The conquered lost six thousand men, and all their baggage and artillery. Leslie was among the prisoners: Hamilton among the dead. Charles himself fled from the field; and after months of strange wanderings and adventures made his escape to France.

Activity of the Parliament.

"Now that the king is dead and his son defeated," Cromwell said gravely to the Parliament, "I think it necessary to come to a settlement." But the settlement which had been promised after Naseby was still as distant as ever after Worcester. The bill for dissolving the present Parliament, though Cromwell pressed it in person, was only passed, after bitter opposition, by a majority of two: and even this success had to be purchased by a compromise which permitted the House to sit for three years more. Internal affairs were
6-085] almost at a deadlock. The Parliament appointed committees to prepare plans for legal reforms or for ecclesiastical reforms, but it did nothing to carry them into effect. It was overpowered by the crowd of affairs which the confusion of the war had thrown into its hands, by confiscations, sequestrations, appointments to civil and military offices, in fact the whole administration of the State; and there were times when it was driven to a resolve not to take any private affairs for weeks together in order that it might make some progress with public business. To add to this confusion and muddle there were the inevitable scandals which arose from it; charges of malversation and corruption were hurled at the members of the House; and some, like Haselrig, were accused with justice of using their power to further their own interests. The one remedy for all this was, as the army saw, the assembly of a new and complete Parliament in place of the mere "rump" of the old, but this was the one measure which the House was resolute to avert. Vane spurred it to a new activity. In February 1652 the Amnesty Bill was forced through after fifteen divisions. A Grand Committee, with Sir Matthew Hale at its head, was appointed to consider the reform of the law. A union with Scotland was pushed resolutely forward; eight English Commissioners convoked a Convention of delegates from its counties and boroughs at Edinburgh, and, in spite of dogged
6-086] opposition, procured a vote in favour of the proposal. A bill was introduced which gave legal form to the union, and admitted representatives from Scotland into the next Parliament. A similar plan was proposed for a union with Ireland.

War with Holland.

But it was necessary for Vane's purposes not only to show the energy of the Parliament, but to free it from the control of the army. His aim was to raise in the navy a force devoted to the House, and to eclipse the glories of Dunbar and Worcester by yet greater triumphs at sea. With this view the quarrel with Holland had been carefully nursed; a "Navigation Act," prohibiting the importation in foreign vessels of any but the products of the countries to which they belonged, struck a fatal blow at the carrying trade from which the Dutch drew their wealth; and fresh debates arose from the English claim to salutes from all vessels in the Channel. In May 1652 the two fleets met before Dover, and a summons from Blake to lower the Dutch flag was met by the Dutch admiral, Tromp, with a broadside. The States-General attributed the collision to accident, and offered to recall Tromp; but the English demands rose at each step in the negotiations till war became inevitable. The army hardly needed the warning conveyed by the introduction of a bill for its disbanding to understand the new policy of the Parliament. It was significant
6-087] that while accepting the bill for its own dissolution the House had as yet prepared no plan for the assembly which was to follow it; and the Dutch war had hardly been declared when, abandoning the attitude of inaction which it had observed since the beginning of the Commonwealth, the army petitioned, not only for reform in Church and State, but for an explicit declaration that the House would bring its proceedings to a close. The Petition forced the House to discuss a bill for "a New Representative," but the discussion soon brought out the resolve of the sitting members to continue as a part of the coming Parliament without re-election. The officers, irritated by such a claim, demanded in conference after conference an immediate dissolution, and the House as resolutely refused. In ominous words Cromwell supported the demand of the army. "As for the members of this Parliament, the army begins to take them in disgust. I would it did so with less reason." There was just ground, he urged, for discontent in their selfish greed of houses and lands, the scandalous lives of many, their partiality as judges, their

interference with the ordinary course of law in matters of private interest, their delay of law reform, above all in their manifest design of perpetuating their own power. "There is little to hope for from such men," he ended with a return to his predominant thought, "for a settlement of the nation."

6-088] For the moment the crisis was averted by the events of the war. A terrible storm had separated the two fleets when on the point of engaging in the Orkneys, but Ruyter and Blake met again in the Channel, and after a fierce struggle the Dutch were forced to retire under cover of night. Since the downfall of Spain Holland had been the first naval power in the world, and the spirit of the nation rose gallantly with its earliest defeat. Immense efforts were made to strengthen the fleet; and the veteran, Tromp, who was replaced at its head, appeared in the Channel with seventy-three ships of war. Blake had but half the number, but he at once accepted the challenge, and throughout the twenty-eighth of November the unequal fight went on doggedly till nightfall, when the English fleet withdrew shattered into the Thames. Tromp swept the Channel in triumph, with a broom at his masthead; and the tone of the Commons lowered with the defeat of their favourite force. A compromise seems to have been arranged between the two parties, for the bill providing a new Representative was again pushed on; and the Parliament agreed to retire in the coming November, while Cromwell offered no opposition to a reduction of the army. But the courage of the House rose afresh with a turn of fortune. The strenuous efforts of Blake enabled him again to put to sea in a few months after his defeat; and in February 1653 a running fight through four
6-089] days ended at last in an English victory, though Tromp's fine seamanship enabled him to save the convoy he was guarding. The House at once insisted on the retention of its power. Not only were the existing members to continue as members of the new Parliament, thus depriving the places they represented of their right of choosing representatives, but they were to constitute a Committee of Revision, and in this capacity to determine the validity of each election and the fitness of the members returned.

Blake.

A conference took place between the leaders of the Commons and the officers of the Army, who resolutely demanded not only the omission of these clauses, but that the Parliament should at once dissolve itself, and commit the new elections to a Council of State. "Our charge," retorted Haselrig, "cannot be transferred to any one." The conference was adjourned till the next morning, on an understanding that no decisive step should be taken; but it had no sooner reassembled on the twentieth of April than the absence of the leading members confirmed the news that Vane was fast pressing the bill for a new Representative through the House. "It is contrary to common honesty," Cromwell angrily broke out; and, quitting Whitehall, he summoned a company of musketeers to follow him as far as the door of the Commons. He sate down quietly in his place, "clad in plain grey clothes and grey worsted stockings," and
6-090] listened to Vane's passionate arguments. "I am come to do what grieves me to the heart," he said to his neighbour, St. John; but he still remained quiet, till Vane pressed the House to waive its usual forms and pass the bill at once. "The time has come," he said to Harrison. "Think well," replied Harrison, "it is a dangerous work!" and Cromwell listened for another quarter of an hour. At the question "that this bill do pass," he at length rose, and his tone grew higher as he repeated his former charges of injustice, self-interest, and delay. "Your hour is come," he ended, "the Lord hath done with you!" A crowd of members started to their feet in angry protest. "Come, come," replied Cromwell, "we have had enough of this"; and striding into the midst of the chamber, he clapt his hat on his head, and exclaimed, "I will put an end to your prating!" In the din that followed his voice was heard in broken sentences—"It is not fit that you should sit here any longer! You should give place to better men! You are no Parliament." Thirty musketeers entered at a sign from their General, and the fifty members present crowded to the door. "Drunkard!" Cromwell broke out as Wentworth passed him; and Marten was taunted with a yet coarser name. Vane, fearless to the last, told him his act was "against all right and all honour." "Ah, Sir Harry Vane, Sir Harry Vane," Cromwell retorted in bitter indignation at the trick he had been played, "you might
6-091] have prevented all this, but you are a juggler, and have no common honesty! The Lord deliver me from Sir Harry Vane!" The Speaker refused to quit his seat, till Harrison offered to "lend him a hand to come down." Cromwell lifted the mace from the table. "What shall we do with this bauble?" he said. "Take it away!" The door of the House was locked at last, and the dispersion of the Commons was followed a few hours after by that of their executive committee, the Council of State. Cromwell himself summoned them to withdraw. "We have heard," replied the President, John Bradshaw, "what you have done this morning at the House, and in some hours all England will hear it. But you mistake, sir, if you think the Parliament dissolved. No power on earth can dissolve the Parliament but itself, be sure of that!"

The Parliament driven out.

6-092]

CHAPTER XII
THE PROTECTORATE
1653-1660

The thin screen which the continuance of a little knot of representatives had thrown over the rule of the sword was at last torn away. So long as an assembly which called itself a House of Commons met at Westminster, men might still cling to a belief in the existence of a legal government. But now that even this was gone such a belief was no longer possible. The army itself had to recognize its own position. The dispersion of the Parliament and of the Council of State left England without a government, for the authority of every official ended with that of the body from which his power was derived; and Cromwell, as Captain-General, was forced to recognize his responsibility for the maintenance of public order. The one power left in England was the power of the sword. But, as in the revolution of 1648, so in the revolution of
6-093] 1653, no thought of military despotism can be fairly traced in the acts of the general or the army. They were in fact far from regarding their position as a revolutionary one. Though incapable of justification on any formal ground, their proceedings since the establishment of the Commonwealth had as yet been substantially in vindication of the rights of the country to representation and self-government; and public opinion had gone fairly with the army in its demand for a full and efficient body of representatives, as well as in its resistance to the project by which the Rump would have deprived half England of its right of election. It was only when no other means existed of preventing such a wrong that the soldiers had driven

The Sword unveiled.

out the wrongdoers. "It is you that have forced me to this," Cromwell exclaimed, as he drove the members from the House; "I have sought the Lord night and day that He would rather slay me than put me upon the doing of this work." If the act was one of violence to the little group who claimed to be a House of Commons, the act which it aimed at preventing was one of violence on their part to the constitutional rights of the whole nation. The people had in fact been "dissatisfied in every corner of the realm" at the state of public affairs: and the expulsion of the members was ratified by a general assent. "We did not hear a dog bark at their going," the Protector said years afterwards. Whatever anxiety may have been felt at
6-094] the use which was like to be made of "the power of the sword," was in great part dispelled by a proclamation of the officers. They professed that their one anxiety was "not to grasp the power ourselves nor to keep it in military hands, no not for a day," and their promise to "call to the government men of approved fidelity and honesty" was to some extent redeemed by the nomination of a provisional Council of State, consisting of eight officers of high rank and four civilians, with Cromwell as their head, and a seat in which was offered, though fruitlessly, to Vane.

The Convention.

The first business of such a body was clearly to summon a new Parliament and to resign its trust into its hands. But the bill for Parliamentary reform had dropped with the expulsion of the Rump; and reluctant as the Council was to summon a new Parliament on the old basis of election, it shrank from the responsibility of effecting so fundamental a change as the creation of a new basis by its own authority. It was this difficulty which led to the expedient of a Constituent Convention. Cromwell told the story of this unlucky assembly some years after with an amusing frankness. "I will come and tell you a story of my own weakness and folly. And yet it was done in my simplicity—I dare avow it was. . . . It was thought then that men of our own judgement, who had fought in the wars, and were all of a piece on that account—why,
6-095] surely, these men will hit it, and these men will do it to the purpose, whatever can be desired! And surely we did think, and I did think so—the more blame to me!" Of the hundred and fifty-six men, "faithful, fearing God, and hating covetousness," whose names were selected for this purpose by the Council of State from lists furnished by the Congregational churches, the bulk were men, like Ashley Cooper, of good blood and "free estates"; and the proportion of burgesses, such as the leather-merchant, Praise-God Barebones, whose name was eagerly seized on as a nickname for the body to which he belonged, seems to have been much the same as in earlier Parliaments. But the circumstances of their choice told fatally on the temper of its members. Cromwell himself, in the burst of rugged eloquence with which he welcomed their assembling on the fourth of July, was carried away by a strange enthusiasm. "Convince the nation," he said, "that as men fearing God have fought them out of their bondage under the regal power, so men fearing God do now rule them in the fear of God. . . . Own your call, for it is of God: indeed it is marvellous, and it hath been unprojected. . . . Never was a supreme power under such a way of owning God and being owned by Him." A spirit yet more enthusiastic appeared in the proceedings of the Convention itself.

Its work.

6-096] The resignation of their powers by Cromwell and the Council into its hands left it the one supreme authority; but by the instrument which convoked it provision had been made that this authority should be transferred in fifteen months to another assembly elected according to its directions. Its work was, in fact, to be that of a constituent assembly, paving the way for a Parliament on a really national basis. But the Convention put the largest construction on its commission, and boldly undertook the whole task of constitutional reform. Committees were appointed to consider the needs of the Church and the nation. The spirit of economy and honesty which pervaded the assembly appeared in its redress of the extravagance which prevailed in the civil service, and of the inequality of taxation. With a remarkable energy it undertook a host of reforms, for whose execution England has had to wait to our own day. The Long Parliament had shrunk from any reform of the Court of Chancery, where twenty-three thousand cases were waiting unheard. The Convention proposed its abolition. The work of compiling a single code of laws, begun under the Long Parliament by a committee with Sir Matthew Hale at its head, was again pushed forward. The frenzied alarm which these bold measures aroused among the lawyer class was soon backed by that of the clergy, who saw their wealth menaced by the establishment of civil marriage and by
6-097] proposals to substitute the free contributions of congregations for the payment of tithes. The landed proprietors too rose against a scheme for the abolition of lay-patronage, which was favoured by the Convention, and predicted an age of confiscation. The "Barebones Parliament," as the assembly was styled in derision, was charged with a design to ruin property, the Church, and the law, with enmity to knowledge, and a blind and ignorant fanaticism.

Close of the Convention.

Cromwell himself shared the general uneasiness at its proceedings. His mind was that of an administrator rather than that of a statesman, unspeculative, deficient in foresight, conservative, and eminently practical. He saw the need of administrative reform in Church and State; but he had no sympathy whatever with the revolutionary theories which were filling the air around him. His desire was for "a settlement" which should be accompanied with as little disturbance of the old state of things as possible. If Monarchy had vanished in the turmoil of war, his experience of the Long Parliament only confirmed him in his belief of the need of establishing an executive power of a similar kind, apart from the power of the legislature, as a condition of civil liberty. His sword had won "liberty of conscience"; but, passionately as he clung to it, he was still for an established Church, for a parochial system, and a ministry
6-098] maintained by tithes. His social tendencies were simply those of the class to which he belonged. "I was by birth a gentleman," he told a later Parliament, and in the old social arrangement of "a nobleman, a gentleman, a yeoman," he saw "a good interest of the nation and a great one." He hated "that levelling principle" which tended to the reducing of all to one equality. "What was the purport of it," he asks with an amusing simplicity, "but to make the tenant as liberal a fortune as the landlord? Which, I think, if obtained, would not have lasted long. The men of that principle, after they had served their own turns, would then have cried up property and interest fast enough." To a practical temper such as this the speculative reforms of the Convention were as distasteful as to the lawyers and clergy whom they attacked. "Nothing," said Cromwell, "was in the hearts of these men but 'overturn, overturn.'" In December however he was delivered from his embarrassment by the internal dissensions of the Assembly itself. The day after the decision against tithes the more conservative members snatched a vote by surprise "that the sitting of this Parliament any longer, as now constituted, will not be for the good of the Commonwealth, and that it is requisite to deliver up unto the Lord-General the powers we received from

him." The Speaker placed their abdication in Cromwell's hands, and the act was confirmed by the subsequent adhesion of a majority of the members.

The Instrument of Government.

6-099] The dissolution of the Convention replaced matters in the state in which its assembly had found them; but there was still the same general anxiety to substitute some sort of legal rule for the power of the sword. The Convention had named during its session a fresh Council of State, and this body at once drew up, under the name of the Instrument of Government, a remarkable Constitution which was adopted by the Council of Officers. They were now driven by necessity to the step from which they had shrunk, that of convening a Parliament on the reformed basis of representation, though such a basis had no legal sanction. The House was to consist of four hundred members from England, thirty from Scotland, and thirty from Ireland. The seats hitherto assigned to small and rotten boroughs were transferred to larger constituencies, and for the most part to counties. All special rights of voting in the election of members were abolished, and replaced by a general right of suffrage, based on the possession of real or personal property to the value of two hundred pounds. Catholics and "Malignants," as those who had fought for the king were called, were excluded for the while from the franchise. Constitutionally all further organization of the form of government should have been left to this Assembly; but the dread of disorder during the
6-100] interval of its election, as well as a longing for "settlement," drove the Council to complete their work by pressing the office of "Protector" upon Cromwell. "They told me," he pleaded afterwards, "that except I would undertake the government they thought things would hardly come to a composure or settlement, but blood and confusion would break in as before." If we follow however his own statement, it was when they urged that the acceptance of such a Protectorate actually limited his power as Lord-General, and "bound his hands to act nothing without the consent of a Council until the Parliament," that the post was accepted. The powers of the new Protector indeed were strictly limited. Though the members of the Council were originally named by him, each member was irremovable save by consent of the rest: their advice was necessary in all foreign affairs, their consent in matters of peace and war, their approval in nominations to the great offices of State, or the disposal of the military or civil power. With this body too lay the choice of all future Protectors. To the administrative check of the Council was added the political check of the Parliament. Three years at the most were to elapse between the assembling of one Parliament and another, and, once met, it could not be prorogued or dissolved for five months. Laws could not be made nor taxes imposed but by its authority, and after the lapse of twenty days the statutes it
6-101] passed became laws, even though the Protector's assent was refused to them. The new Constitution was undoubtedly popular; and the promise of a real Parliament in a few months covered the want of any legal character in the new rule. The Government was generally accepted as a provisional one, which could only acquire legal authority from the ratification of its acts in the coming session; and the desire to settle it on such a Parliamentary basis was universal among the members of the new Assembly which met in September 1654 at Westminster.

The Parliament of 1654.

Few Parliaments have ever been more memorable, or more truly representative of the English people, than the Parliament of 1654. It was the first Parliament in our history where members from Scotland and Ireland sate side by side with those from England, as they sit in the Parliament of to-day. The members for rotten boroughs and pocket-boroughs had disappeared. In spite of the exclusion of Royalists and Catholics from the polling-booths, and the arbitrary erasure of the names of a few ultra-republican members by the Council, the House had a better title to the name of a "free Parliament" than any which had sat before. The freedom with which the electors had exercised their right of voting was seen indeed in the large number of Presbyterian members who were returned, and in the reappearance of Haselrig and Bradshaw,
6-102] with many members of the Long Parliament, side by side with Lord Herbert and the older Sir Harry Vane. The first business of the House was clearly to consider the question of government; and Haselrig, with the fiercer republicans, at once denied the legal existence of either Council or Protector, on the ground that the Long Parliament had never been dissolved. Such an argument however told as much against the Parliament in which they sate as against the administration itself, and the bulk of the Assembly contented themselves with declining to recognize the Constitution or Protectorate as of more than provisional validity. They proceeded at once to settle the government on a Parliamentary basis. The "Instrument" was taken as the groundwork of the new Constitution, and carried clause by clause. That Cromwell should retain his rule as Protector was unanimously agreed; that he should possess the right of veto or a co-ordinate legislative power with the Parliament was hotly debated, though the violent language of Haselrig did little to disturb the general tone of moderation. Suddenly however Cromwell interposed. If he had undertaken the duties of Protector with reluctance, he looked on all legal defects in his title as more than supplied by the general acceptance of the nation. "I called not myself to this place," he urged, "God and the people of these kingdoms have borne testimony to it." His rule had been accepted by London, by the
6-103] army, by the solemn decision of the judges, by addresses from every shire, by the very appearance of the members of the Parliament in answer to his writ. "Why may I not balance this Providence," he asked, "with any hereditary interest?" In this national approval he saw a call from God, a Divine Right of a higher order than that of the kings who had gone before.

Cromwell's administrati

But there was another ground for the anxiety with which Cromwell watched the proceedings of the Commons. His passion for administration had far overstepped the bounds of a merely provisional rule in the interval before the assembling of the Parliament. His desire for "settlement" had been strengthened not only by the drift of public opinion, but by the urgent need of every day; and the power reserved by the "Instrument" to issue temporary Ordinances "until further order in such matters, to be taken by the Parliament," gave a scope to his marvellous activity of which he at once took advantage. Sixty-four Ordinances had been issued in the nine months before the meeting of the Parliament. Peace had been concluded with Holland. The Church had been set in order. The law itself had been minutely regulated. The union with Scotland had been brought to completion. So far was Cromwell from dreaming that these measures, or the authority which enacted them, would be questioned, that he looked to Parliament simply
6-104] to complete his work. "The great end of your meeting," he said at the first assembly of its members, "is healing and settling." Though he had himself done much, he added, "there was still much to be done." Peace had to be made with Portugal, and alliance with Spain. Bills were laid before the House for the codification of the law. The plantation and settlement of Ireland had still to be completed. He resented the

setting these projects aside for constitutional questions which, as he held, a Divine call had decided, and he resented yet more the renewed claim advanced by Parliament to the sole power of legislation. As we have seen, his experience of the evils which had arisen from the concentration of legislative and executive power in the Long Parliament had convinced Cromwell of the danger to public liberty which lay in such a union. He saw in the joint government of "a single person and a Parliament" the only assurance "that Parliaments should not make themselves perpetual," or that their power should not be perverted to public wrong.

Dissolution of the Parliament.

But whatever strength there may have been in the Protector's arguments, the act by which he proceeded to enforce them was fatal to liberty, and in the end to Puritanism. "If my calling be from God," he ended, "and my testimony from the People, God and the People shall take it from me, else I will not part from it." And he announced that no member would be suffered to enter the House without signing an
6-105] engagement "not to alter the Government as it is settled in a single person and a Parliament." No act of the Stuarts had been a bolder defiance of constitutional law; and the act was as needless as it was illegal. One hundred members alone refused to take the engagement, and the signatures of three-fourths of the House proved that the security Cromwell desired might have been easily procured by a vote of Parliament. But those who remained resumed their constitutional task with unbroken firmness. They quietly asserted their sole title to government by referring the Protector's Ordinances to Committees for revision, and for conversion into laws. The "Instrument of Government" was turned into a bill, debated, and after some serious modifications read a third time. Money votes, as in previous Parliaments, were deferred till "grievances" had been settled. But Cromwell once more intervened. The Royalists were astir again; and he attributed their renewed hopes to the hostile attitude which he ascribed to the Parliament. The army, which remained unpaid while the supplies were delayed, was seething with discontent. "It looks," said the Protector, "as if the laying grounds for a quarrel had rather been designed than to give the people settlement. Judge yourselves whether the contesting of things that were provided for by this government
6-106] hath been profitable expense of time for the good of this nation." In January 1655, with words of angry reproach he declared the Parliament dissolved.

The Major-Generals.

The dissolution of the Parliament of 1654 was a turning-point in the relations of England and the army. As yet neither the people nor the soldiers had fairly recognized the actual state of affairs. From the revolution of 1648 the sword had been supreme, but its supremacy had been disguised by the continuance of the Rump. When the Rump was expelled, the military rule which followed still seemed only provisional. The bulk of Englishmen and the bulk of the army itself looked on its attitude as simply imposed on it by necessity, and believed that with the assembly of a Parliament all would return to a legal course. But the Parliament had come and gone; and the army still refused to lay down the sword. On the contrary, it seemed at last to resolve to grasp frankly the power which it had so long shrunk from openly wielding. All show of constitutional rule was now at an end. The Protectorate, deprived by its own act of all chance of legal sanction, became a simple tyranny. Cromwell professed indeed to be restrained by the "Instrument": but the one great restraint on his power which the Instrument provided, the inability to levy taxes save by consent of Parliament, was set aside on the plea of necessity. "The People," said the Protector in words
6-107] which Strafford might have uttered, "will prefer their real security to forms." That a danger of Royalist revolt existed was undeniable, but the danger was at once doubled by the general discontent. From this moment, Whitelock tells us, "many sober and noble patriots," in despair of public liberty, "did begin to incline to the king's restoration." In the mass of the population the reaction was far more rapid. "Charles Stuart," writes a Cheshire correspondent to the Secretary of State, "hath five hundred friends in these adjacent counties for every one friend to you among them." But before the overpowering strength of the army even this general discontent was powerless. Yorkshire, where the Royalist insurrection was expected to be most formidable, never ventured to rise at all. There were risings in Devon, Dorset, and the Welsh Marches, but they were quickly put down, and their leaders brought to the scaffold. Easily however as the revolt was suppressed, the terror of the Government was seen in the energetic measures to which Cromwell resorted in the hope of securing order. The country was divided into ten military governments, each with a major-general at its head, who was empowered to disarm all Papists and Royalists, and to arrest suspected persons. Funds for the support of this military despotism were provided by an Ordinance of the Council of State, which enacted that all who had at any time borne arms for the king should pay
6-108] every year a tenth part of their income, in spite of the Act of Oblivion, as a fine for their royalist tendencies. The despotism of the major-generals was seconded by the older expedients of tyranny. The ejected clergy had been zealous in promoting the insurrection, and they were forbidden in revenge to act as chaplains or as tutors. The press was placed under a strict censorship. The payment of taxes levied by the sole authority of the Protector was enforced by distraint; and when a collector was sued in the courts for redress, the counsel for the prosecution were sent to the Tower.

Settlement of Scotland.

If pardon indeed could ever be won for a tyranny, the wisdom and grandeur with which he used the power he had usurped would win pardon for the Protector. The greatest among the many great enterprises undertaken by the Long Parliament had been the union of the three Kingdoms: and that of Scotland with England had been brought about, at the very end of its career, by the tact and vigour of Sir Harry Vane. But its practical realization was left to Cromwell. In four months of hard fighting General Monk brought the Highlands to a new tranquillity; and the presence of an army of eight thousand men, backed by a line of forts, kept the most restless of the clans in good order. The settlement of the country was brought about by the temperance and sagacity of Monk's successor, General Deane. No further
6-109] interference with the Presbyterian system was attempted beyond the suppression of the General Assembly. But religious liberty was resolutely protected, and Deane ventured even to interfere on behalf of the miserable victims whom Scotch bigotry was torturing and burning on the charge of witchcraft. Even steady Royalists acknowledged the justice of the Government and the wonderful discipline of its troops. "We always reckon those eight years of the usurpation," said Burnet afterwards, "a time of great peace and prosperity."

Settlement of Ireland.

Sterner work had to be done before Ireland could be brought into real union with its sister kingdoms. The work of conquest had been continued by Ireton, and completed after his death by General Ludlow, as

mercilessly as it had begun. Thousands perished by famine or the sword. Shipload after shipload of those who surrendered were sent over sea for sale into forced labour in Jamaica and the West Indies. More than forty thousand of the beaten Catholics were permitted to enlist for foreign service, and found a refuge in exile under the banners of France and Spain. The work of settlement, which was undertaken by Henry Cromwell, the younger and abler of the Protector's sons, turned out to be even more terrible than the work of the sword. It took as its model the Colonization of Ulster, the fatal measure which had destroyed all hope of a united Ireland, and had brought inevitably in its train the revolt and the war. The people were
6-110] divided into classes in the order of their assumed guilt. All who after trial were proved to have personally taken part in the "massacre" were sentenced to banishment or death. The general amnesty which freed "those of the meaner sort" from all question on other scores was far from extending to the landowners. Catholic proprietors who had shown no goodwill to the Parliament, even though they had taken no part in the war, were punished by the forfeiture of a third of their estates. All who had borne arms were held to have forfeited the whole, and driven into Connaught, where fresh estates were carved out for them from the lands of the native clans. No such doom had ever fallen on a nation in modern times as fell upon Ireland in its new settlement. Among the bitter memories which part Ireland from England the memory of the bloodshed and confiscation which the Puritans wrought remains the bitterest; and the worst curse an Irish peasant can hurl at his enemy is "the curse of Cromwell." But pitiless as the Protector's policy was, it was successful in the ends at which it aimed. The whole native population lay helpless and crushed. Peace and order were restored, and a large incoming of Protestant settlers from England and Scotland brought a new prosperity to the wasted country. Above all, the legislative union which had been brought about with
6-111] Scotland was now carried out with Ireland, and thirty seats were allotted to its representatives in the general Parliament.

Settlement of England.

In England Cromwell dealt with the Royalists as irreconcileable enemies; but in every other respect he carried fairly out his pledge of "healing and settling." The series of administrative reforms planned by the Convention had been partially carried into effect before the meeting of Parliament in 1654; but the work was pushed on after the dissolution of the House with yet greater energy. Nearly a hundred ordinances showed the industry of the Government. Police, public amusements, roads, finances, the condition of prisons, the imprisonment of debtors, were a few among the subjects which claimed Cromwell's attention. An ordinance of more than fifty clauses reformed the Court of Chancery. The anarchy which had reigned in the Church since the breakdown of Episcopacy and the failure of the Presbyterian system to supply its place, was put an end to by a series of wise and temperate measures for its reorganization. Rights of patronage were left untouched; but a Board of Triers, a fourth of whom were laymen, was appointed to examine the fitness of ministers presented to livings; and a Church board of gentry and clergy was set up in every county to exercise a supervision over ecclesiastical affairs, and to detect and remove scandalous
6-112] and ineffectual ministers. Even by the confession of Cromwell's opponents the plan worked well. It furnished the country with "able, serious preachers," Baxter tells us, "who lived a godly life, of what tolerable opinion soever they were"; and, as both Presbyterian and Congregationalist ministers were presented to livings at the will of their patrons, it solved so far as practical working was concerned the problem of a religious union among Protestants on the base of a wide variety of Christian opinion. From the Church which was thus reorganized all power of interference with faiths differing from its own was resolutely withheld. Save in his dealings with the Episcopalians, whom he looked on as a political danger, Cromwell remained true throughout to the cause of religious liberty. Even the Quaker, rejected by all other Christian bodies as an anarchist and blasphemer, found sympathy and protection in the Protector. The Jews had been excluded from England since the reign of Edward the First; and a prayer which they now presented for leave to return was refused by a commission of merchants and divines to whom the Protector referred it for consideration. But the refusal was quietly passed over, and the connivance of Cromwell in the settlement of a few Hebrews in London and Oxford was so clearly understood that no one ventured to interfere with them.

Cromwell's foreign policy.

No part of his policy is more characteristic of Cromwell's mind, whether in its strength or in its
6-113] weakness, than his management of foreign affairs. While England had been absorbed in her long and obstinate struggle for freedom the whole face of the world around her had changed. The Thirty Years War was over. The victories of Gustavus, and of the Swedish generals who followed him, had been seconded by the policy of Richelieu and the intervention of France. Protestantism in Germany was no longer in peril from the bigotry or ambition of the House of Austria; and the Treaty of Westphalia had drawn a permanent line between the territories belonging to the adherents of the old religion and the new. There was little danger indeed now to Europe from the great Catholic House which had threatened its freedom ever since Charles the Fifth. Its Austrian branch was called away from dreams of aggression in the west to a desperate struggle with the Turk for the possession of Hungary and the security of Austria itself. Spain, from causes which it is no part of our present story to detail, was falling into a state of strange decrepitude. So far from aiming to be mistress of Europe, she was rapidly sinking into the almost helpless prey of France. It was France which had now become the dominant power in Christendom, though her position was far from being as commanding as it was to become under Lewis the Fourteenth. The peace and order which prevailed after the cessation of the religious troubles throughout her compact and fertile
6-114] territory gave scope at last to the quick and industrious temper of the French people; while her wealth and energy were placed by the centralizing administration of Henry the Fourth, of Richelieu, and of Mazarin, almost absolutely in the hands of the Crown. Under the three great rulers who have just been named her ambition was steadily directed to the same purpose of territorial aggrandizement, and though limited as yet to the annexation of the Spanish and Imperial territories which still parted her frontier from the Pyrenees, the Alps, and the Rhine, a statesman of wise political genius would have discerned the beginning of that great struggle for supremacy over Europe at large which was only foiled by the genius of Marlborough and the victories of the Grand Alliance.

Cromwell and Spain.

But in his view of European politics Cromwell was misled by the conservative and unspeculative temper of his mind as well as by the strength of his religious enthusiasm. Of the change in the world around him he seems to have discerned nothing. He brought to the Europe of Mazarin the hopes and ideas with which all England was thrilling in his youth at the outbreak of the Thirty Years War. Spain was still to him "the

head of the Papal Interest," whether at home or abroad. "The Papists in England," he said to the Parliament of 1656, "have been accounted, ever since I was born, Spaniolized; they never regarded
6-115] France, or any other Papist state, but Spain only." The old English hatred of Spain, the old English resentment at the shameful part which the nation had been forced to play in the great German struggle by the policy of James and of Charles, lived on in Cromwell, and was only strengthened by the religious enthusiasm which the success of Puritanism had kindled within him. "The Lord Himself," he wrote to his admirals as they sailed to the West Indies, "hath a controversy with your enemies; even with that Romish Babylon of which the Spaniard is the great underpropper. In that respect we fight the Lord's battles." What Sweden had been under Gustavus, England, Cromwell dreamed, might be now—the head of a great Protestant League in the struggle against Catholic aggression. "You have on your shoulders," he said to the Parliament of 1654, "the interest of all the Christian people of the world. I wish it may be written on our hearts to be zealous for that interest." The first step in such a struggle would necessarily be to league the Protestant powers together, and Cromwell's earliest efforts were directed to bring the ruinous and indecisive quarrel with Holland to an end. The fierceness of the strife had grown with each engagement; but the hopes of Holland fell with her admiral, Tromp, who received a mortal wound at a moment when he had succeeded in forcing the English line; and the skill and energy of his successor, De Ruyter, struggled
6-116] in vain to restore her waning fortunes. She was saved by the expulsion of the Long Parliament, which had persisted in its demand for a political union of the two countries; and the new policy of Cromwell was seen in the conclusion of peace. The peace indeed was dearly bought. Not only did the United Provinces recognize the supremacy of the English flag in the British seas, and submit to the Navigation Act, but Holland pledged itself to shut out the House of Orange from power, and thus relieved England from the risk of seeing a Stuart restoration supported by Dutch forces.

War with Spain.

The peace which was concluded with the Dutch in 1654 was followed by the conclusion of like treaties with Sweden and with Denmark; and on the arrival of a Swedish envoy with offers of a league of friendship Cromwell endeavoured to bring the Dutch, the Brandenburgers, and the Danes into a confederation of the Protestant powers. His efforts in this direction however, though they never wholly ceased, remained fruitless; but the Protector was resolute to carry out his plans single-handed. The defeat of the Dutch had left England the chief sea-power of the world; and in the first days of 1655, before the dissolution of the Parliament, two fleets put to sea with secret instructions. The first, under Blake, appeared in the Mediterranean, exacted reparation from Tuscany for wrongs done to English commerce,
6-117] bombarded Algiers, and destroyed the fleet with which its pirates had ventured through the reign of Charles to insult the English coast. The thunder of Blake's guns, every Puritan believed, would be heard in the castle of St. Angelo, and Rome itself would have to bow to the greatness of Cromwell. But though no declaration of war had been issued against Spain, the true aim of both expeditions was an attack on that power; and the attack proved singularly unsuccessful. Though Blake sailed to the Spanish coast, he failed to intercept the treasure fleet from America; and the second expedition, which made its way to the West Indies, was foiled in a descent on St. Domingo. It conquered Jamaica in May; but the conquest of this lesser island, important as it really was in breaking through the monopoly of the New World in the South which Spain had till now enjoyed, seemed at the time but a poor result for the vast expenditure of money and blood. The leaders of the expedition, Blake and Venables, were committed to the Tower on their return in September; but Cromwell found himself at war with Spain, and thrown whether he would or no into the hands of Mazarin.

Parliament of 1655.

In October 1655 he was forced to sign a treaty of alliance with France; while the cost of his abortive expeditions drove him again to face a Parliament. But Cromwell no longer trusted, as in his earlier
6-118] Parliament, to freedom of election. The sixty members who were returned under the Ordinances of union by Scotland and Ireland were simply nominees of the Government. Its whole influence was exerted to secure the return of the more conspicuous members of the Council of State. It was calculated that of the members returned one-half were bound to the Government by ties of profit or place. But Cromwell was still unsatisfied. A certificate of the Council was required from each member before admission to the House when it met in September 1656; and a fourth of the whole number returned—one hundred in all, with Haselrig at their head—were by this means excluded on grounds of disaffection or want of religion. To these arbitrary acts of violence the House replied only by a course of singular moderation and wisdom. From the first it disclaimed any purpose of opposing the Government. One of its earliest acts provided securities for Cromwell's person, which was threatened by constant plots of assassination. It supported him in his war policy, and voted supplies of unprecedented extent for the maintenance of the struggle. It was this attitude of loyalty which gave force to its steady refusal to sanction the system of tyranny which had practically placed England under martial law. In his opening address Cromwell boldly took his stand in support of the military despotism wielded by the major-generals. "It hath been more effectual towards
6-119] the discountenancing of vice and settling religion than anything done these fifty years. I will abide by it," he said, with singular vehemence, "notwithstanding the envy and slander of foolish men. I could as soon venture my life with it as with anything I ever undertook. If it were to be done again, I would do it." But no sooner had a bill been introduced into Parliament to confirm the proceedings of the major-generals than a long debate showed the temper of the Commons. They had resolved to acquiesce in the Protectorate, but they were equally resolved to bring it again to a legal mode of government. This indeed was the aim of even Cromwell's wiser adherents. "What makes me fear the passing of this Act," one of them wrote to his son Henry, "is that thereby his Highness' government will be more founded in force, and more removed from that natural foundation which the people in Parliament are desirous to give him, supposing that he will become more theirs than now he is." The bill was rejected, and Cromwell bowed to the feeling of the nation by withdrawing the powers of the major-generals.

Offer of the Crown to Cromwell.

But the defeat of the tyranny of the sword was only a step towards a far bolder effort for the restoration of the power of the law. It was no mere pedantry, still less was it vulgar flattery, which influenced the Parliament in their offer to Cromwell of the title of king. The experience of the last few years had taught
6-120] the nation the value of the traditional forms under which its liberties had grown up. A king was limited by constitutional precedents. "The king's prerogative," it was well urged, "is under the courts of justice, and is bounded as well as any acre of land, or anything a man hath." A Protector, on the other hand, was new

in our history, and there were no traditional means of limiting his power. "The one office being lawful in its nature," said Glynne, "known to the nation, certain in itself, and confined and regulated by the law, and the other not so—that was the great ground why the Parliament did so much insist on this office and title." Under the name of Monarchy, indeed, the question really at issue between the party headed by the officers and the party led by the lawyers in the Commons was that of the restoration of constitutional and legal rule. In March 1657 the proposal was carried by an overwhelming majority, but a month passed in endless consultations between the Parliament and the Protector. His good sense, his knowledge of the general feeling of the nation, his real desire to obtain a settlement which should secure the ends for which Puritanism fought, political and religious liberty, broke, in conference after conference, through a mist of words. But his real concern throughout was with the temper of the army. Under whatever spurious disguises he cloaked the true nature of his government from the world, Cromwell knew well that it was a
6-121] sheer government of the sword, that he was without hold upon the nation, and that the discontent of his soldiery would at once shake the fabric of his power. He vibrated to and fro between his sense of the political advantages of such a settlement, and his sense of its impossibility in face of the mood of the army. His soldiers, he said, were no common swordsmen. They were "godly men, men that will not be beaten down by a worldly and carnal spirit while they keep their integrity"; men in whose general voice he recognized the voice of God. "They are honest and faithful men," he urged, "true to the great things of the Government. And though it really is no part of their goodness to be unwilling to submit to what a Parliament shall settle over them, yet it is my duty and conscience to beg of you that there may be no hard things put upon them which they cannot swallow. I cannot think God would bless an undertaking of anything which would justly and with cause grieve them."

Inauguration of the Protector.

The temper of the army was soon shown. Its leaders, with Lambert, Fleetwood, and Desborough at their head, placed their commands in Cromwell's hands. A petition from the officers to Parliament demanded the withdrawal of the proposal to restore the Monarchy, "in the name of the old cause for which they had bled"; and on the eighth of May Cromwell anticipated the coming debate on this petition, a debate which
6-122] might have led to an open breach between the Army and the Commons, by a refusal of the crown. "I cannot undertake this Government," he said, "with that title of king; and that is my answer to this great and weighty business." Disappointed as it was, the Parliament with singular self-restraint turned to other modes of bringing about its purpose. The offer of the crown had been coupled with the condition of accepting a constitution, which was a modification of the Instrument of Government adopted by the Parliament of 1654, and this Constitution Cromwell emphatically approved. "The things provided by this Act of Government," he owned, "do secure the liberties of the people of God as they never before have had them." With a change of the title of king into that of Protector, the Act of Government now became law: and the solemn inauguration of the Protector by the Parliament on the twenty-sixth of June was a practical acknowledgement on the part of Cromwell of the illegality of his former rule. In the name of the Commons the Speaker invested him with a mantle of State, placed the sceptre in his hand, and girt the sword of justice by his side. By the new Act of Government Cromwell was allowed to name his own successor, but in all after cases the office was to be an elective one. In every other respect the forms of the older Constitution were carefully restored. Parliament was again to consist of two Houses, the seventy members
6-123] of "the other House" being named by the Protector. The Commons regained their old right of exclusively deciding on the qualification of their members. Parliamentary restrictions were imposed on the choice of members of the Council, and Officers of State or of the army. A fixed revenue was voted to the Protector, and it was provided that no moneys should be raised but by assent of Parliament. Liberty of worship was secured for all but Papists, Prelatists, Socinians, or those who denied the inspiration of the Scriptures; and liberty of conscience was secured for all.

Cromwell's triumphs.

The adjournment of the House after his inauguration in the summer of 1657 left Cromwell at the height of his power. He seemed at last to have placed his government on a legal and national basis. The ill-success of his earlier operations abroad was forgotten in a blaze of glory. On the eve of the Parliament's assembly one of Blake's captains had managed to intercept a part of the Spanish treasure fleet. At the close of 1656 the Protector seemed to have found the means of realizing his schemes for rekindling the religious war throughout Europe in a quarrel between the Duke of Savoy and his Protestant subjects in the valleys of Piedmont. A ruthless massacre of these Vaudois by the Duke's troops roused deep resentment throughout England, a resentment which still breathes in the noblest of Milton's sonnets. While the poet
6-124] called on God to avenge his "slaughtered saints, whose bones lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold," Cromwell was already busy with the work of earthly vengeance. An English envoy appeared at the Duke's court with haughty demands of redress. Their refusal would have been followed by instant war, for the Protestant Cantons of Switzerland were bribed into promising a force of ten thousand men for an attack on Savoy. The plan was foiled by the cool diplomacy of Mazarin, who forced the Duke to grant Cromwell's demands; but the apparent success of the Protector raised his reputation at home and abroad. The spring of 1657 saw the greatest as it was the last of the triumphs of Blake. He found the Spanish Plate fleet guarded by galleons in the strongly-armed harbour of Santa Cruz; and on the twentieth of April he forced an entrance into the harbour and burnt or sank every ship within it. Triumphs at sea were followed by a triumph on land. Cromwell's demand of Dunkirk, which had long stood in the way of any acceptance of his offers of aid, was at last conceded; and in May 1657 a detachment of the Puritan army joined the French troops who were attacking Flanders under the command of Turenne. Their valour and discipline were shown by the part they took in the capture of Mardyke in the summer of that year; and still more in the June of 1658 by the victory of the Dunes, a victory which forced the Flemish towns to open their gates to the French, and gave Dunkirk to Cromwell.

Cromwell's theory.

6-125] Never had the fame of an English, ruler stood higher; but in the midst of his glory the hand of death was falling on the Protector. He had long been weary of his task. "God knows," he had burst out to the Parliament a year before, "God knows I would have been glad to have lived under my woodside, and to have kept a flock of sheep, rather than to have undertaken this government." Amidst the glory of his aims, Cromwell's heart was heavy with this sense of failure. Whatever dreams of personal ambition had mingled with his aim, his aim had in the main been a high and unselfish one; in the course that seems to modern eyes so strange and complex he had seen the leading of a divine hand that drew him from the sheepfolds

to mould England into a people of God. What convinced him that the nation was called by a divine calling was the wonder which men felt at every step in its advance. The England which he saw around him was not an England which Pym or Hampden had foreseen, which Vane in his wildest dreams had imagined, or for which the boldest among the soldiers of the New Model had fought. Step by step the nation had been drawn to changes from which it shrank, to principles which it held in horror. When the struggle began the temper of the men who waged it was a strictly conservative temper; they held themselves to be
6-126] withstanding the revolutionary changes of the king, to be vindicating the existing constitution both of Church and State. But the strife had hardly opened when they were drawn by very need to a revolutionary platform. What men found themselves fighting for at Edgehill and Marston Moor was the substitution of government by the will of the nation for government by the will of the king, and a setting aside of the religious compromise embodied in the Church of the Tudors for a Church which was the mere embodiment of the Puritan section of the people at large. Defeat drove England to the New Model; and again it found itself drawn to a new advance. No sooner was the sword in the hand of the "Godly," than the conception of religious purity widened into that of religious liberty, and the thought of a nation self-governed into the dream of a kingdom of God. Dunbar and Worcester, the strife with the Houses, the final strife with the king, turned the dream into a practical policy. Every obstacle fell before it. Episcopal Church and Presbyterian Church alike passed away. The loyalty of the nation, the stubborn efforts of Cromwell and Ireton, failed to uphold the Monarchy. Lords and Commons fell in the very moment of their victory over the king. Desperately as men clung to the last shadow of a Parliament, the victories of Blake, the statesmanship of Vane, failed to preserve the life of the Rump. In the crash of every political and
6-127] religious institution the Army found itself the one power in the land, and the dream of its soldiers grew into a will to set up on earth a Commonwealth of the Saints.

The Puritan State.

In this resolve Cromwell was at one with the New Model. Like every soldier in his army, he held that by the victories God had given them He had "so called them to look after the government of the land, and so entrusted them with the welfare of all His people, that they were responsible for it, and might not in conscience stand still while anything was done which they thought was against the interest of the people of God." But he never doubted that the nation would own its calling as zealously as his soldiers did. He had no wish to change the outer form of its political or its social life; he would maintain social distinctions as he would maintain Parliaments. But the old institutions must be penetrated with a new spirit. Conscience and worship must be free. Holiness must be the law of England's life. Its rulers must be found among "godly men," and their rule must be widened beyond the common sphere of temporal government. The old distinctions of the secular and the spiritual world must be done away. In public and in private life the new government must enforce obedience to the will of God. Socially such a theory seemed realized at last in the administration of the major-generals. Never had Cromwell been so satisfied. The "malignants" who
6-128] had so long trodden pious men under foot lay helpless at the feet of the godly. The "Cavalier interest," which was but "the badge and character of countenancing profaneness, disorder, and wickedness in all places," was crushed and powerless. "Christian men" reigned supreme. Cromwell recalled how "it was a shame to be a Christian within these fifteen, sixteen, or seventeen years in this nation. It was a shame, it was a reproach to a man; and the badge of Puritan was put upon it!" But the shame and reproach were now rolled away. The Puritan was master in the land. All government was in the hands of godly men. Piety was as needful for an officer in the army, for a magistrate, for a petty constable, as for a minister of religion. The aim of the Protector was that England should be ruled and administered by "the best," by men ruling and administering in the fear of God. In Church as in State all that such men had longed to do could now be done. Superstitious usages were driven from the churches. No minister wore a surplice. No child was signed in baptism with a cross. The very pastimes of the world had to conform themselves to the law of God. The theatres were closed. Sunday sports were summarily abolished. There were no more races, no more bull-baitings, no more cock-fighting, no more dances under the Maypole. Christmas had to pass without its junketings, or mummers, or mince-pies.

Its failure.

6-129] To the eyes of mere zealots the work of Puritanism seemed done. But Cromwell was no mere zealot. Strangely mingled with the enthusiasm of his temper was a cool, passionless faculty of seeing things as they actually were about him; and he saw that in its very hour of triumph the cause he loved was losing ground. From this effort to turn England into a kingdom of God England itself stood aloof. Its traditional instincts were outraged by the wreck of its institutions, its good sense by the effort to enforce godliness by civil penalties, its self-respect by the rule of the sword. Never had England shown a truer nobleness than when it refused to be tempted from the path of freedom even by the genius of Cromwell, never a truer wisdom than when it refused to be lured from its tradition of practical politics by the dazzling seductions of the Puritan ideal. And not only did the nation stand aloof from Cromwell's work, but its opposition grew hourly stronger. The very forces which seemed to have been annihilated by the Civil War drew a fresh life from the national ill-will to their conquerors. Men forgot the despotism of the Monarchy when the Monarchy and the Parliament lay wrecked in a common ruin. They forgot the tyranny of Laud when the Church was trampled under foot by men who trampled under foot the constitution. By a strange turn of fortune the restoration of the Church and of the Crown became identified with the restoration of legal
6-130] government and with the overthrow of a rule of brute force. And for such a restoration the vast majority of the nation were longing more and more. The old enmities of party and sect were forgotten in the common enmity of every party and every sect to the tyranny of the sword. A new national unity was revealing itself, as one jarring element after another came in to swell the mass of the national opposition to the system of the Protectorate. The moderate Royalist joined hands with the Cavalier, the steady Presbyterian came to join the moderate Royalist, and their ranks were swelled at last by the very founders of the Commonwealth. Nothing marked more vividly the strength of the reaction against the Protector's system than the union in a common enmity of Vane and Haselrig with the partizans of the Stuart pretender.

The Scientific Movement.

It was the steady rise of this tide of opposition in which Cromwell saw the doom of his cause. That it could permanently be upheld by the sword he knew to be impossible. What he had hoped for was the gradual winning of England to a sense of its worth. But every day the current of opinion ran more strongly against it. The army stood alone in its purpose. Papist and sceptic, mystic and ceremonialist, latitudinarian and Presbyterian, all were hostile. The very pressure of Cromwell's system gave birth to new forms of

6-131] spiritual and intellectual revolt. Science, rationalism, secularism, sprang for the first time into vivid life in their protest against the forced concentration of human thought on the single topic of religion, the effort to prison religion itself in a system of dogma, and to narrow humanity with all its varied interests within the sphere of the merely spiritual. Nothing is more significant, though to Cromwell nothing would have been more unintelligible, than the simple story which tells us how from the vexed problems, political and religious, of the times, men turned to the peaceful study of the natural world about them. Bacon had already called men with a trumpet-voice to such studies; but in England at least Bacon stood before his age. The beginnings of physical science were more slow and timid there than in any country of Europe. Only two discoveries of any real value came from English research before the Restoration: the first, Gilbert's discovery of terrestrial magnetism in the close of Elizabeth's reign; the next, the great discovery of the circulation of the blood, which was taught by Harvey in the reign of James. Apart from these illustrious names England took little share in the scientific movement of the Continent; and her whole energies seemed to be whirled into the vortex of theology and politics by the Civil War.

But the war had not reached its end when, in 1645, a little group of students were to be seen in London,
6-132] men "inquisitive," says one of them, "into natural philosophy and other parts of human learning, and particularly of what had been called the New Philosophy . . . which from the times of Galileo at Florence, and Sir Francis Bacon (Lord Verulam) in England, hath been much cultivated in Italy, France, Germany, and other parts abroad, as well as with us in England." The strife of the time indeed aided in directing the minds of men to natural inquiries. "To have been always tossing about some theological question," says the first historian of the Royal Society, Bishop Sprat, "would have been to have made that their private diversion, the excess of which they disliked in the public. To have been eternally musing on civil business and the distresses of the country was too melancholy a reflection. It was nature alone which could pleasantly entertain them in that estate." Foremost in the group stood Doctors Wallis and Wilkins, whose removal to Oxford, which had just been reorganized by the Puritan Visitors, divided the little company in 1648 into two societies, one at the university, the other remaining at the capital. The Oxford society, which was the more important of the two, held its meetings at the lodgings of Dr. Wilkins, who had become Warden of Wadham College; and added to the names of its members that of the eminent mathematician Dr. Ward, and that of the first of English economists, Sir William Petty. "Our business,"
6-133] Wallis tells us, "was (precluding matters of theology and State affairs) to discourse and consider of philosophical enquiries and such as related thereunto, as Physick, Anatomy, Geometry, Astronomy, Navigation, Statics, Magnetics, Chymicks, Mechanicks, and Natural Experiments: with the state of these studies, as then cultivated at home and abroad. We then discoursed of the circulation of the blood, the valves in the *venæ lacteæ*, the lymphatic vessels, the Copernican hypothesis, the nature of comets and new stars, the satellites of Jupiter, the oval shape of Saturn, the spots in the sun and its turning on its own axis, the inequalities and selenography of the moon, the several phases of Venus and Mercury, the improvement of telescopes, the grinding of glasses for that purpose, the weight of air, the possibility or impossibility of vacuities, and Nature's abhorrence thereof, the Torricellian experiment in quicksilver, the descent of heavy bodies and the degree of acceleration therein, and divers other things of like nature."

The Latitudinaria

To what great results this protest against the Puritan concentration of all human thought on spiritual issues was to lead none could foresee. But results almost as great were to spring from the protest against the Puritan dogmatism which gave birth to the Latitudinarians. Whatever verdict history may pronounce on Falkland's political career, his name must remain memorable in the history of religious thought. A new
6-134] era in English theology began with the speculations of the men he gathered round him in his country house at Great Tew in the years that preceded the meeting of the Long Parliament. Their work was above all to deny the authority of tradition in matters of faith, as Bacon had denied it in matters of physical research; and to assert in the one field as in the other the supremacy of reason as a test of truth. Of the authority of the Church, its Fathers, and its Councils, John Hales, a Canon of Windsor, and a friend of Laud, said briefly, "It is none." He dismissed with contempt the accepted test of universality. "Universality is such a proof of truth as truth itself is ashamed of. The most singular and strongest part of human authority is properly in the wisest and the most virtuous, and these, I trow, are not the most universal." William Chillingworth, a man of larger if not keener mind, had been taught by an early conversion to Catholicism, and by a speedy return, the insecurity of any basis for belief but that of private judgement. In his "Religion of Protestants" he set aside ecclesiastical tradition or Church authority as grounds of faith in favour of the Bible, but only of the Bible as interpreted by the common reason of men. Jeremy Taylor, the most brilliant of English preachers, a sufferer like Chillingworth on the Royalist side during the troubles, and who was rewarded at the Restoration with the bishopric of Down, limited even the authority of the
6-135] Scriptures themselves. Reason was the one means which Taylor approved of in interpreting the Bible; but the certainty of the conclusions which reason drew from the Bible varied, as he held, with the conditions of reason itself. In all but the simplest truths of natural religion "we are not sure not to be deceived." The deduction of points of belief from the words of the Scriptures was attended with all the uncertainty and liability to error which sprang from the infinite variety of human understandings, the difficulties which hinder the discovery of truth, and the influences which divert the mind from accepting or rightly estimating it.

It was plain to a mind like Chillingworth's that this denial of authority, this perception of the imperfection of reason in the discovery of absolute truth, struck as directly at the root of Protestant dogmatism as at the root of Catholic infallibility. "If Protestants are faulty in this matter [of claiming authority] it is for doing it too much and not too little. This presumptuous imposing of the senses of man upon the words of God, of the special senses of man upon the general words of God, and laying them upon men's consciences together under the equal penalty of death and damnation, this vain conceit that we can speak of the things of God better than in the words of God, this deifying our own interpretations and tyrannous enforcing them upon others, this restraining of the word of God from that latitude and
6-136] generality, and the understandings of men from that liberty wherein Christ and His apostles left them, is and hath been the only foundation of all the schisms of the Church, and that which makes them immortal." In his "Liberty of Prophesying" Jeremy Taylor pleaded the cause of toleration with a weight of argument which hardly required the triumph of the Independents and the shock of Naseby to drive it home. But the

freedom of conscience which the Independent founded on the personal communion of each soul with God, the Latitudinarian founded on the weakness of authority and the imperfection of human reason. Taylor pleads even for the Anabaptist and the Romanist. He only gives place to the action of the civil magistrate in "those religions whose principles destroy government," and "those religions—if there be any such—which teach ill life." Hales openly professed that he would quit the Church to-morrow if it required him to believe that all that dissented from it must be damned. Chillingworth denounced persecution in words of fire. "Take away this persecution, burning, cursing, damning of men for not subscribing the words of men as the words of God; require of Christians only to believe Christ and to call no man master but Him; let them leave claiming infallibility that have no title to it, and let them that in their own words disclaim it, disclaim it also in their actions. . . . Protestants are inexcusable if they do offer violence to other men's consciences."

6-137] From the denunciation of intolerance the Latitudinarians passed easily to the dream of comprehension which had haunted every nobler soul since the "Utopia" of More. Hales based his loyalty to the Church of England on the fact that it was the largest and the most tolerant Church in Christendom. Chillingworth pointed out how many obstacles to comprehension were removed by such a simplification of belief as flowed from a rational theology, and asked, like More, for "such an ordering of the public service of God as that all who believe the Scripture and live according to it might without scruple or hypocrisy or protestation in any part join in it." Taylor, like Chillingworth, rested his hope of union on the simplification of belief. He saw a probability of error in all the creeds and confessions adopted by Christian Churches. "Such bodies of confessions and articles," he said, "must do much hurt." "He is rather the schismatic who makes unnecessary and inconvenient impositions, than he who disobeys them because he cannot do otherwise without violating his conscience." The Apostles' Creed in its literal meaning seemed to him the one term of Christian union which the Church had any right to impose.

Hobbes.

6-138] The impulse which such men were giving to religious speculation was being given to political and social inquiry by a mind of far greater keenness and power. Bacon's favourite secretary was Thomas Hobbes. "He was beloved by his Lordship," Aubrey tells us, "who was wont to have him walk in his delicate groves, where he did meditate; and when a notion darted into his mind, Mr. Hobbes was presently to write it down. And his Lordship was wont to say that he did it better than any one else about him; for that many times when he read their notes he scarce understood what they writ, because they understood it not clearly themselves." The long life of Hobbes covers a memorable space in our history. He was born in the year of the victory over the Armada; he died in 1679 at the age of ninety-two, only nine years before the Revolution. His ability soon made itself felt, and in his earlier days he was the secretary of Bacon, and the friend of Ben Jonson and Lord Herbert of Cherbury. But it was not till the age of fifty-four, when he withdrew to France on the eve of the great Rebellion in 1642, that his speculations were made known to the world in his treatise "De Cive." He joined the exiled Court at Paris, and became mathematical tutor to Charles the Second, whose love and regard for him seem to have been real to the end. But his post was soon forfeited by the appearance of his "Leviathan" in 1651; he was forbidden to approach the Court, and returned to England, where he appears to have acquiesced in the rule of Cromwell.

His political speculations

6-139] The Restoration brought Hobbes a pension; but both his works were condemned by Parliament, and "Hobbism" became, ere he died, a popular synonym for irreligion and immorality. Prejudice of this kind sounded oddly in the case of a writer who had laid down, as the two things necessary to salvation, faith in Christ and obedience to the law. But the prejudice sprang from a true sense of the effect which the Hobbist philosophy must necessarily have whether on the current religion or on the current notions of political and social morality. Hobbes was the first great English writer who dealt with the science of government from the ground, not of tradition, but of reason. It was in his treatment of man in the stage of human developement which he supposed to precede that of society that he came most roughly into conflict with the accepted beliefs. Men, in his theory, were by nature equal, and their only natural relation was a state of war. It was no innate virtue of man himself which created human society out of this chaos of warring strengths. Hobbes in fact denied the existence of the more spiritual sides of man's nature. His hard and narrow logic dissected every human custom and desire, and reduced even the most sacred to demonstrations of a prudent selfishness. Friendship was simply a sense of social utility to one another. The so-called laws of nature, such as gratitude or the love of our neighbour, were in fact contrary to the
6-140] natural passions of man, and powerless to restrain them. Nor had religion rescued man by the interposition of a Divine will. Nothing better illustrates the daring with which the new scepticism was to break through the theological traditions of the older world than the pitiless logic with which Hobbes assailed the very theory of revelation. "To say God hath spoken to man in a dream, is no more than to say man dreamed that God hath spoken to him." "To say one hath seen a vision, or heard a voice, is to say he hath dreamed between sleeping and waking." Religion, in fact, was nothing more than "the fear of invisible powers"; and here, as in all other branches of human science, knowledge dealt with words and not with things.

It was man himself who for his own profit created society, by laying down certain of his natural rights and retaining only those of self-preservation. A covenant between man and man originally created "that great Leviathan called the Commonwealth or State, which is but an artificial man, though of greater stature and strength than the natural, for whose protection and defence it was intended." The fiction of such an "original contract" has long been dismissed from political speculation, but its effect at the time of its first appearance was immense. Its almost universal acceptance put an end to the religious and patriarchal theories of society, on which kingship had till now founded its claim of a Divine right to
6-141] authority which no subject might question. But if Hobbes destroyed the old ground of royal despotism, he laid a new and a firmer one. To create a society at all, he held that the whole body of the governed must have resigned all rights save that of self-preservation into the hands of a single ruler, who was the representative of all. Such a ruler was absolute, for to make terms with him implied a man making terms with himself. The transfer of rights was inalienable, and after generations were as much bound by it as the generation which made the transfer. As the head of the whole body, the ruler judged every question, settled the laws of civil justice or injustice, or decided between religion and superstition. His was a Divine

Right, and the only Divine Right, because in him were absorbed all the rights of each of his subjects. It was not in any constitutional check that Hobbes looked for the prevention of tyranny, but in the common education and enlightenment as to their real end and the best mode of reaching it on the part of both subjects and Prince. And the real end of both was the weal of the Commonwealth at large. It was in laying boldly down this end of government, as well as in the basis of contract on which he made government repose, that Hobbes really influenced all later politics.

Cromwell's consciousnes of failure.

6-142] That Cromwell discerned the strength of such currents of opinion as those which we have described may fairly be doubted. But he saw that Puritanism had missed its aim. He saw that the attempt to secure spiritual results by material force had failed, as it always fails. It had broken down before the indifference and resentment of the great mass of the people, of men who were neither lawless nor enthusiasts, but who clung to the older traditions of social order, and whose humour and good sense revolted alike from the artificial conception of human life which Puritanism had formed, and from its effort to force such a conception on a people by law. It broke down too before the corruption of the Puritans themselves. It was impossible to distinguish between the saint and the hypocrite as soon as godliness became profitable. Ashley Cooper, a sceptic in religion and a profligate in morals, was among "the loudest bagpipes of the squeaking train." Even amongst the really earnest Puritans prosperity disclosed a pride, a worldliness, a selfish hardness which had been hidden in the hour of persecution. What was yet more significant was the irreligious and sceptical temper of the younger generation which had grown up amidst the storms of the Civil War. The children even of the leading Puritans stood aloof from Puritanism. The eldest of Cromwell's sons made small pretensions to religion. Milton's nephews, though reared in his house, were writing
6-143] satires against Puritan hypocrisy and contributing to collections of filthy songs. The two daughters of the great preacher, Stephen Marshall, were to figure as actresses on the infamous stage of the Restoration. The tone of the Protector's later speeches shows his consciousness that the ground was slipping from under his feet. He no longer dwells on the dream of a Puritan England, of a nation rising as a whole into a people of God. He falls back on the phrases of his youth, and the saints become again a "peculiar people," a remnant, a fragment among the nation at large.

Dissolution of the Parliament.

But with the consciousness of failure in realizing his ideal of government the charm of government was gone; and now to the weariness of power were added the weakness and feverish impatience of disease. Vigorous and energetic as Cromwell's life had seemed, his health was by no means as strong as his will; he had been struck down by intermittent fever in the midst of his triumphs both in Scotland and in Ireland, and during the past year he had suffered from repeated attacks of it. "I have some infirmities upon me," he owned twice over in his speech at the reopening of the Parliament in January 1658, after an adjournment of six months; and his feverish irritability was quickened by the public danger. No supplies had been voted, and the pay of the army was heavily in arrear, while its temper grew more and more sullen at the
6-144] appearance of the new Constitution and the reawakening of the Royalist intrigues. Cromwell had believed that his military successes would secure compliance with his demands; but the temper of the Commons was even more irritable than his own. Under the terms of the new Constitution the members excluded in the preceding year took their places again in the House; and it was soon clear that the Parliament reflected the general mood of the nation. The tone of the Commons became captious and quarrelsome. They still delayed the grant of supplies. Meanwhile a hasty act of the Protector in giving to his nominees in "the other House," as the new second chamber he had devised was called, the title of "Lords," kindled a strife between the two Houses which was busily fanned by Haselrig and other opponents of the Government. It was contended that the "other House" had under the new Constitution simply judicial and not legislative powers. Such a contention struck at once at Cromwell's work of restoring the old political forms of English life: and the reappearance of Parliamentary strife threw him at last, says an observer at his court, "into a rage and passion like unto madness." What gave weight to it was the growing strength of the Royalist party, and its hopes of a coming rising. Such a rising had in fact been carefully prepared; and Charles with a large body of Spanish troops drew to the coast of Flanders to take advantage of it. His
6-145] hopes were above all encouraged by the strife in the Commons, and their manifest dislike of the system of the Protectorate. It was this that drove Cromwell to action. Summoning his coach, by a sudden impulse, the Protector drove on the fourth of February with a few guards to Westminster; and, setting aside the remonstrances of Fleetwood, summoned the two Houses to his presence. "I do dissolve this Parliament," he ended a speech of angry rebuke, "and let God be judge between you and me."

Death of Cromwell.

Fatal as was the error, for the moment all went well. The army was reconciled by the blow levelled at its opponents, and a few murmurers who appeared in its ranks were weeded out by a careful remodelling. The triumphant officers vowed to stand or fall with his Highness. The danger of a Royalist rising vanished before a host of addresses from the counties. Great news too came from abroad, where victory in Flanders, and the cession of Dunkirk in June, set the seal on Cromwell's glory. But the fever crept steadily on, and his looks told the tale of death to the Quaker, Fox, who met him riding in Hampton Court Park. "Before I came to him," he says, "as he rode at the head of his Life Guards, I saw and felt a waft of death go forth against him, and when I came to him he looked like a dead man." In the midst of his triumph Cromwell's heart was heavy in fact with the sense of failure. He had no desire to play the tyrant; nor had
6-146] he any belief in the permanence of a mere tyranny. He clung desperately to the hope of bringing over the country to his side. He had hardly dissolved the Parliament before he was planning the summons of another, and angry at the opposition which his Council offered to the project. "I will take my own resolutions," he said gloomily to his household; "I can no longer satisfy myself to sit still, and make myself guilty of the loss of all the honest party and of the nation itself." But before his plans could be realized the overtaxed strength of the Protector suddenly gave way. Early in August 1658 his sickness took a more serious form. He saw too clearly the chaos into which his death would plunge England to be willing to die. "Do not think I shall die," he burst out with feverish energy to the physicians who gathered round him; "say not I have lost my reason! I tell you the truth. I know it from better authority than any you can have from Galen or Hippocrates. It is the answer of God Himself to our prayers!" Prayer indeed rose from every side for his recovery, but death drew steadily nearer, till even Cromwell felt that his hour was come. "I would be willing to live," the dying man murmured, "to be further serviceable to God and His people, but my work is done! Yet God will be with His people!" A storm which tore roofs from houses, and levelled

[6-147] huge trees in every forest, seemed a fitting prelude to the passing away of his mighty spirit. Three days later, on the third of September, the day which had witnessed his victories of Worcester and Dunbar, Cromwell quietly breathed his last.

Richard Cromwell, Protector.

So absolute even in death was his sway over the minds of men, that, to the wonder of the excited Royalists, even a doubtful nomination on his death-bed was enough to secure the peaceful succession of his son, Richard Cromwell. Many in fact who had rejected the authority of his father submitted peaceably to the new Protector. Their motives were explained by Baxter, the most eminent among the Presbyterian ministers, in an address to Richard which announced his adhesion. "I observe," he says, "that the nation generally rejoice in your peaceable entrance upon the government. Many are persuaded that you have been strangely kept from participating in any of our late bloody contentions, that God might make you the healer of our breaches, and employ you in that Temple work which David himself might not be honoured with, though it was in his mind, because he shed blood abundantly and made great wars." The new Protector was a weak and worthless man; but the bulk of the nation were content to be ruled by one who was at any rate no soldier, no Puritan, and no innovator. Richard was known to be lax and worldly in his conduct, and he was believed to be conservative and even royalist in heart. The tide of reaction was felt [6-148] even in his Council. Their first act was to throw aside one of the greatest of Cromwell's reforms, and to fall back in the summons which they issued for a new Parliament on the old system of election. It was felt far more keenly in the tone of the new House of Commons when it met in January 1659. The republicans under Vane, backed adroitly by the members who were secretly Royalist, fell hotly on Cromwell's system. The fiercest attack of all came from Sir Ashley Cooper, a Dorsetshire gentleman who had changed sides in the Civil War, had fought for the King and then for the Parliament, had been a member of Cromwell's Council, and had of late ceased to be a member of it. His virulent invective on "his Highness of deplorable memory, who with fraud and force deprived you of your liberty when living and entailed slavery on you at his death," was followed by an equally virulent invective against the army. "They have not only subdued their enemies," said Cooper, "but the masters who raised and maintained them! They have not only conquered Scotland and Ireland, but rebellious England too; and there suppressed a Malignant party of magistrates and laws."

Divisions in the army.

The army was quick with its reply. Already in the preceding November it had shown its suspicion of the new government by demanding the appointment of a soldier as General in the place of the new Protector, [6-149] who had assumed the command. The tone of the Council of Officers now became so menacing that the Commons ordered the dismissal of all officers who refused to engage "not to disturb or interrupt the free meetings of Parliament." Richard ordered the Council of Officers to dissolve. Their reply was a demand for the dissolution of the Parliament; and with this demand, on the twenty-second of April, Richard was forced to comply. The purpose of the army however was still to secure a settled government; and setting aside the new Protector, whose weakness was now evident, they resolved to come to a reconciliation with the republican party, and to recall the fragment of the Commons whom they had expelled from St. Stephen's in 1653. The arrangement was quickly brought about; and in May, of the one hundred and sixty members who had continued to sit after the king's death, about ninety returned to their seats and resumed the administration of affairs. The continued exclusion of the members who had been "purged" from the House in 1648 proved that no real intention existed of restoring a legal rule; and the soldiers trusted that the Rump whom they had restored to power would be bound to them by the growing danger both to republicanism and to religious liberty. But not even their passion for these "causes" could make men endure the rule of the sword. The House was soon at strife with the soldiers. In spite of Vane's counsels, it [6-150] proposed a reform of the officers, and though a Royalist rising in Cheshire during August threw the disputants for a moment together, the struggle revived as the danger passed away. A new hope indeed filled men's minds. Not only was the nation sick of military rule, but the army, unconquerable so long as it held together, at last showed signs of division. In Ireland and Scotland the troops protested against the attitude of their English comrades; and Monk, the commander of the Scottish army, threatened to march on London and free the Parliament from their pressure. The knowledge of these divisions encouraged Haselrig and his coadjutors in the Commons to demand the dismissal of Fleetwood and Lambert from their commands. They answered in October by driving the Parliament again from Westminster, and by marching under Lambert to the north to meet the army under Monk.

Return of Charles.

Lambert however suffered himself to be lured into inaction by negotiations, while Monk gathered a Convention at Edinburgh, and strengthened himself with money and recruits. His attitude was enough to rouse England to action. Portsmouth closed its gates against the delegates of the soldiers. The fleet declared against them. So rapidly did the tide of feeling rise throughout the country that the army at the [6-151] close of December was driven to undo their work by recalling the Rump. But the concession only aided the force of resistance by showing the weakness of the tyranny which England was resolute to throw off. Lambert's men fell from him, and finding his path clear, Monk, without revealing his purport, advanced rapidly to Coldstream, and crossed the Border in the first days of 1660. His action broke the spell of terror which had weighed upon the country. The cry of "A free Parliament" ran like fire through the country. Not only Fairfax, who appeared in arms in Yorkshire, but the ships on the Thames and the mob which thronged the streets of London caught up the cry. Still steadily advancing, but lavishing protestations of loyalty to the Rump while he accepted petitions for a "Free Parliament," Monk on the third of February entered unopposed. From the moment of his entry the restoration of the Stuarts became inevitable. The army, resolute as it still remained for the maintenance of "the cause," was deceived by Monk's declarations of loyalty to it, and rendered powerless by his adroit dispersion of the troops over the country. At the instigation of Ashley Cooper, those who remained of the members who had been excluded from the House of Commons in 1648 again forced their way into Parliament, and at once resolved on a dissolution and the election of a new House of Commons. The dissolution in March was followed by a last [6-152] struggle of the army for its old supremacy. Lambert escaped from the Tower and called his fellow-soldiers to arms; but he was hotly pursued, overtaken, and routed near Daventry; and on the twenty-fifth of April the new House, which bears the name of the Convention, assembled at Westminster. It had hardly taken the Solemn League and Covenant which showed its Presbyterian temper, and its leaders had only begun to draw up terms on which the king's restoration might be assented to, when they found that Monk was in

negotiation with the exiled Court. All exaction of terms was now impossible; a Declaration from Breda, in which Charles promised a general pardon, religious toleration, and satisfaction to the army, was received with a burst of national enthusiasm; and the old Constitution was restored by a solemn vote of the Convention, "that according to the ancient and fundamental laws of this Kingdom, the government is, and ought to be, by King, Lords, and Commons." The king was at once invited to hasten to his realm; and on the twenty-fifth of May Charles landed at Dover, and made his way amidst the shouts of a great multitude to Whitehall. "It is my own fault," laughed the new king with characteristic irony, "that I had not come back sooner; for I find nobody who does not tell me he has always longed for my return."

6-153] In his progress to the capital Charles passed in review the soldiers assembled on Blackheath. Betrayed by their general, abandoned by their leaders, surrounded as they were by a nation in arms, the gloomy silence of their ranks awed even the careless king with a sense of danger. But none of the victories of the New Model were so glorious as the victory which it won over itself. Quietly, and without a struggle, as men who bowed to the inscrutable will of God, the farmers and traders who had dashed Rupert's chivalry to pieces on Naseby field, who had scattered at Worcester the "army of the aliens," and driven into helpless flight the sovereign that now came "to enjoy his own again," who had renewed beyond sea the glories of Crécy and Agincourt, had mastered the Parliament, had brought a king to justice and the block, had given laws to England, and held even Cromwell in awe, became farmers and traders again, and were known among their fellow-men by no other sign than their greater soberness and industry. And, with them, Puritanism laid down the sword. It ceased from the long attempt to build up a kingdom of God by force and violence, and fell back on its truer work of building up a kingdom of righteousness in the hearts and consciences of men. It was from the moment of its seeming fall that its real victory began. As soon as the wild orgy of the Restoration was over, men began to see that nothing that was really worthy in the 6-154] work of Puritanism had been undone. The revels of Whitehall, the scepticism and debauchery of courtiers, the corruption of statesmen, left the mass of Englishmen what Puritanism had made them, serious, earnest, sober in life and conduct, firm in their love of Protestantism and of freedom. In the Revolution of 1688 Puritanism did the work of civil liberty which it had failed to do in that of 1642. It wrought out through Wesley and the revival of the eighteenth century the work of religious reform which its earlier efforts had only thrown back for a hundred years. Slowly but steadily it introduced its own seriousness and purity into English society, English literature, English politics. The history of English progress since the Restoration, on its moral and spiritual sides, has been the history of Puritanism.

Fall of Puritanism.

6-155]

BOOK VIII
THE REVOLUTION
1660-1760

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AUTHORITIES FOR BOOK VIII

The social change of the Restoration is illustrated by the picture of court life in Anthony Hamilton's "Memoirs of the Count de Grammont," by the memoirs of Reresby, Pepys, and Evelyn, and the dramatic works of Wycherly and Etherege. For the general character of its comedy see Lord Macaulay's "Essay on the Dramatists of the Restoration." The histories of the Royal Society by Thompson or Wade, with Sir D. Brewster's "Biography of Newton," preserve the earlier annals of English Science, which are condensed by Hallam in his "Literary History" (vol. iv.). Clarendon gives a detailed account of his own ministry in his "Life," which forms a continuation of his "History of the Rebellion." The relations of the Church and the Dissenters during this period may be seen in Neal's "History of the Puritans," Calamy's "Memoirs of the Ejected Ministers," Mr. Dixon's "Life of Penn," Baxter's "Autobiography," and Bunyan's account of his sufferings in his various works. For the political story of the period as a whole our best authorities are Bishop Kennet's "Register," and Burnet's lively "History of my own Times." The memoirs of Sir W. Temple, with his correspondence, are of great value up to their close in 1679. Mr. Christie's "Life of Shaftesbury" is a defence, and in some ways a successful defence, of that statesman's career and of the Whig policy at this time, which may be studied also in Earl Russell's life of his ancestor, William, Lord Russell. To these 6-158] we may add the fragments of James the Second's autobiography preserved in Macpherson's "Original Papers" (of very various degrees of value), the "Memoirs of Great Britain and Ireland" by Dalrymple, the first to discover the real secret of the negotiations with France, M. Mignet's "Négociations relatives à la Succession d'Espagne," a work indispensable for a knowledge of foreign affairs during this period, Welwood's "Memoirs," and Luttrell's "Diary."

Throughout the whole reign of Charles the Second Hallam's "Constitutional History" is singularly judicious and full in its information. Lingard becomes of importance during this period from the original materials to which he has had access, as well as from his clear and dispassionate statement of the Catholic side of the question. Ranke in his "History of the Seventeenth Century" has thrown great light on the diplomatic history of the later Stuart reigns: on internal and constitutional points he is cool and dispassionate but of less value. The great work of Lord Macaulay, which practically ends at the Peace of Ryswick, is continued by Lord Stanhope in his "History of England under Queen Anne," and his "History of England from the Peace of Utrecht." For Marlborough the main authority must be the Duke's biography by Archdeacon Coxe with his "Despatches." The character of the Tory opposition may be studied in Swift's

Journal to Stella and his political tracts, as well as in Bolingbroke's correspondence. The French side of the war and negotiations has been given by M. Henri Martin ("Histoire de France") in what is the most accurate and judicious portion of his work. For the earlier period of the Georges Coxe's "Life of Sir Robert Walpole," Horace Walpole's "Memoirs of the Reign of George the Second," and Lord Hervey's amusing "Memoirs from the Accession of George the Second to the Death of Queen Caroline," give the main materials on the one side; Bolingbroke's "Patriot King," his "Letter to Sir W. Wyndham," and his correspondence afford some insight into the other. Horace Walpole's "Letters to Sir Horace Mann" give a minute account of his father's fall.

For the elder Pitt we have the Chatham Correspondence, a life by Thackeray, and two brilliant Essays by
6-159] Lord Macaulay. Another of Lord Macaulay's Essays may be used with Sir John Malcolm's biography for the life of Lord Clive and the early history of British India, a fuller account of which may of course be found in general histories of India, such as that by James Mill. Carlyle's Frederick the Great contains a picturesque recital of the Seven Years War, and of England's share in it; while the earlier relations of England and Frederick may be studied more coolly and thoroughly in Ranke's "Nine Books of Prussian History," published in an English version under the name of his "History of Prussia." The earlier part of the "Annual Register," which begins in 1758, has been attributed to Burke. Southey's biography, or the more elaborate life by Tyerman, gives an account of Wesley and the movement he headed.

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CHAPTER I
THE RESTORATION
1660-1667

The New England.

The entry of Charles the Second into Whitehall marked a deep and lasting change in the temper of the English people. With it modern England began. The influences which had up to this time moulded our history, the theological influence of the Reformation, the monarchical influence of the new kingship, the feudal influence of the Middle Ages, the yet earlier influence of tradition and custom, suddenly lost power over the minds of men. From the moment of the Restoration we find ourselves all at once among the great currents of thought and activity which have gone on widening and deepening from that time to this. The England around us becomes our own England, an England whose chief forces are industry and science, the love of popular freedom and of law, an England which presses steadily forward to a larger social
6-161] justice and equality, and which tends more and more to bring every custom and tradition, religious, intellectual, and political, to the test of pure reason.

Between modern thought, on some at least of its more important sides, and the thought of men before the Restoration there is a great gulf fixed. A political thinker in the present day would find it equally hard to discuss any point of statesmanship with Lord Burleigh or with Oliver Cromwell. He would find no point of contact between their ideas of national life or national welfare, their conception of government or the ends of government, their mode of regarding economical and social questions, and his own. But no gulf of this sort parts us from the men who followed the Restoration. From that time to this, whatever differences there may have been as to the practical conclusions drawn from them, there has been a substantial agreement as to the grounds of our political, our social, our intellectual, and religious life. Paley would have found no difficulty in understanding Tillotson. Newton and Sir Humphry Davy could have talked together without a sense of severance. There would have been nothing to hinder a perfectly clear discussion on government or law between John Locke and Jeremy Bentham.

The Social Revolt.

The change from the old England to the new is so startling that we are apt to look on it as a more
6-162] sudden change than it really was; and the outer aspect of the Restoration does much to strengthen this impression of suddenness. The whole face of England was changed in an instant. All that was noblest and best in Puritanism was whirled away with its pettiness and its tyranny in the current of the nation's hate. Religion had been turned into a system of political and social oppression, and it fell with that system's fall. Godliness became a byword of scorn; sobriety in dress, in speech, in manners was flouted as a mark of the detested Puritanism. Butler in his "Hudibras" poured insult on the past with a pedantic buffoonery for which the general hatred, far more than its humour, secured a hearing. Archbishop Sheldon listened to the mock sermon of a Cavalier who held up the Puritan phrase and the Puritan twang to ridicule in his hall at Lambeth. Duelling and raking became the marks of a fine gentleman; and grave divines winked at the follies of "honest fellows" who fought, gambled, swore, drank, and ended a day of debauchery by a night in the gutter. Life among men of fashion vibrated between frivolity and excess. One of the comedies of the time tells the courtier that "he must dress well, dance well, fence well, have a talent for love-letters, an agreeable voice, be amorous and discreet—but not too constant." To graces such as these the rakes of the Restoration added a shamelessness and a brutality which passes belief. Lord Rochester was a fashionable
6-163] poet, and the titles of some of his poems are such as no pen of our day could copy. Sir Charles Sedley was a fashionable wit, and the foulness of his words made even the porters of Covent Garden pelt him from the balcony when he ventured to address them. The Duke of Buckingham is a fair type of the time, and the most characteristic event in the Duke's life was a duel in which he consummated his seduction of Lady Shrewsbury by killing her husband, while the Countess in disguise as a page held his horse for him and looked on at the murder.

The Comedy of the Restoration.

Vicious as the stage was when it opened its doors again on the fall of the Commonwealth it only reflected the general vice of the day. The Comedy of the Restoration borrowed everything from the contemporary Comedy of France save the poetry, the delicacy, and good taste which there veiled its grossness. Seduction, intrigue, brutality, cynicism, debauchery, found fitting expression on the English stage in dialogue of a studied and deliberate foulness, which even its wit fails to redeem from disgust. Wycherly, the popular playwright of the time, remains the most brutal among all dramatists; and nothing gives so damning an impression of his day as the fact that he found actors to repeat his words and audiences to applaud them. Men such as Wycherly gave Milton models for the Belial of his great poem,

6-164] "than whom a spirit more lewd fell not from heaven, or more gross to love vice for itself." The dramatist piques himself on the frankness and "plain dealing" which painted the world as he saw it, a world of brawls and assignations, of orgies at Vauxhall and fights with the watch, of lies and *doubles-ententes*, of knaves and dupes, of men who sold their daughters, and women who cheated their husbands. But the cynicism of Wycherly was no greater than that of the men about him; and in mere love of what was vile, in contempt of virtue and disbelief in purity or honesty, the king himself stood ahead of any of his subjects.

The New Rationalism.

It is easy however to exaggerate the extent of this reaction. So far as we can judge from the memoirs of the time its more violent forms were practically confined to the capital and the court. The mass of Englishmen were satisfied with getting back their Maypoles and mince-pies; and a large part of the people remained Puritan in life and belief though they threw aside many of the outer characteristics of Puritanism. Nor was the revolution in feeling as sudden as it seemed. Even if the political strength of Puritanism had remained unbroken its social influence must soon have ceased. The young Englishmen who grew up in the midst of civil war knew nothing of the bitter tyranny which gave its zeal and fire to the religion of their fathers. From the social and religious anarchy around them, from the endless
6-165] controversies and discussions of the time, they drank in the spirit of scepticism, of doubt, of free inquiry. If religious enthusiasm had broken the spell of ecclesiastical tradition its own extravagance broke the spell of religious enthusiasm; and the new generation turned in disgust to try forms of political government and spiritual belief by the cooler and less fallible test of reason.

It is this rationalizing tendency of the popular mind, this indifference to the traditions and ideals of the past, this practical and experimental temper, which found its highest expression in the sudden popularity of the pursuit of physical science. Of the two little companies of inquirers whom we have already noticed as gathering at the close of the Civil War, that which remained in the capital and had at last been broken up by the troubles of the Second Protectorate was revived at the Restoration by the return to London of the more eminent members of the group which had assembled at Oxford. But the little company of philosophers had hardly begun their meetings at Gresham College when they found themselves objects of a general interest. Science suddenly became the fashion of the day. Charles the Second was himself a fair chymist, and took a keen interest in the problems of navigation. The Duke of Buckingham varied his freaks of rhyming, drinking, and fiddling by fits of devotion to his laboratory. Poets like Dryden and Cowley,
6-166] courtiers like Sir Robert Murray and Sir Kenelm Digby, joined the scientific company to which in token of his sympathy with it the king gave the title of "The Royal Society." The curious glass toys called Prince Rupert's drops recall the scientific inquiries which amused the old age of the great cavalry-leader of the Civil War. Wits and fops crowded to the meetings of the new Society. Statesmen like Lord Somers felt honoured at being chosen its presidents.

English Science.

The definite establishment of the Royal Society in 1662 marks the opening of a great age of scientific discovery in England. Almost every year of the half-century which followed saw some step made to a wider and truer knowledge of physical fact. Our first national observatory rose at Greenwich, and modern astronomy began with the long series of observations which immortalized the name of Flamsteed. His successor, Halley, undertook the investigation of the tides, of comets, and of terrestrial magnetism. Hooke improved the microscope and gave a fresh impulse to microscopical research. Boyle made the air-pump a means of advancing the science of pneumatics, and became the founder of experimental chymistry. Wilkins pointed forward to the science of philology in his scheme of a universal language. Sydenham introduced a careful observation of nature and facts which changed the whole face of medicine. The
6-167] physiological researches of Willis first threw light upon the structure of the brain. Woodward was the founder of mineralogy. In his edition of Willoughby's "Ornithology," and in his own "History of Fishes," John Ray was the first to raise zoology to the rank of a science; and the first scientific classification of animals was attempted in his "Synopsis of Quadrupeds." Modern botany began with Ray's "History of Plants," and the researches of an Oxford professor, Robert Morrison; while Grew divided with Malpighi the credit of founding the study of vegetable physiology.

But great as some of these names undoubtedly are they are lost in the lustre of Isaac Newton. Newton was born at Woolsthorpe in Lincolnshire on Christmas Day, 1642, the memorable year which saw the outbreak of the Civil War. In the year of the Restoration he entered Cambridge, where the teaching of Isaac Barrow quickened his genius for mathematics, and where the method of Descartes had superseded the older modes of study. From the close of his Cambridge career his life became a series of great physical discoveries. At twenty-three he facilitated the calculation of planetary movements by his theory of Fluxions. The optical discoveries to which he was led by his experiments with the prism, and which he partly disclosed in the lectures which he delivered as Mathematical Professor at Cambridge, were embodied in the theory of light which he laid before the Royal Society on becoming a Fellow of it. His
6-168] discovery of the law of gravitation had been made as early as 1666; but the erroneous estimate which was then generally received of the earth's diameter prevented him from disclosing it for sixteen years; and it was not till 1687, on the eve of the Revolution, that the "Principia" revealed to the world his new theory of the Universe.

The Latitudinaria Theology.

It is impossible to do more than indicate in such a summary as we have given the wonderful activity of directly scientific thought which distinguished the age of the Restoration. But the sceptical and experimental temper of mind which this activity disclosed was telling at the same time upon every phase of the world around it. We see the attempt to bring religious speculation into harmony with the conclusions of reason and experience in the school of Latitudinarian theologians which sprang from the group of thinkers that gathered on the eve of the Civil War round Lord Falkland at Great Tew. With the Restoration the Latitudinarians came at once to the front. They were soon distinguished from both Puritans and High Churchmen by their opposition to dogma, by their preference of reason to tradition whether of the Bible or the Church, by their basing religion on a natural theology, by their aiming at rightness of life rather than at correctness of opinion, by their advocacy of toleration and comprehension
6-169] as the grounds of Christian unity. Chillingworth and Taylor found successors in the restless good sense of Burnet, the enlightened piety of Tillotson, and the calm philosophy of Bishop Butler. From this moment indeed the work of English theologians turned from the bold assertion of the supremacy of revealed truth

over natural reason to a more cautious assertion of the essential harmony of the one with the other. Boyle varied his philosophical experiments by demonstrations of the unity of dogmatic and natural religion. So moderate and philosophical was the temper displayed by Cudworth in his "Intellectual System of the Universe," that the bigots of his day charged him with the atheistic principles which he was endeavouring to refute. But the change of tone in the theologians of the Reformation was itself an indication of the new difficulties which theology had to meet. The bold scepticism of Hobbes was adopted by courtiers and politicians. Charles himself was divided between superstition and Hobbism. Shaftesbury was a Deist. The bulk of the leading statesmen of the time looked on religious questions in a purely political light.

Political Philosophy.

The impulse which was carrying religious speculation into regions hitherto strange to it told equally on political and social inquiry. The researches of Sir Josiah Child, and still more of Sir William Petty, not only threw light on the actual state of English trade but pointed forward to the future science of Political
6-170] Economy. For the moment however philosophical speculation on the nature of government eclipsed the interest of statistical research. Though the Restoration brought Hobbes a pension his two great works were condemned by Parliament, and Hobbism became ere he died a popular synonym for political as well as religious immorality. But in spite of the bitter resistance offered to it his assertion of a rational method of political inquiry superseded more and more the older doctrines of a religious and traditional polity. After Clarendon no English statesman really believed in any divine right of the sovereign he served; and Charles himself probably believed it still less than his ministers. The fiction of a contract between governor and governed, on which Hobbes built up his theory of a state, passed silently into general acceptance. John Locke, the foremost political thinker of the Restoration, derived political authority like Hobbes from the consent of the governed, and adopted the common weal as the end of government. But the practical temper of the time moulded the new theory into a form which contrasted strangely with that given to it by its first inventor. The political philosophy of Locke indeed was little more than a formal statement of the conclusions which the bulk of Englishmen had drawn from the great struggle of the Civil
6-171] War. In his theory the people remain passively in possession of the power which they have delegated to the Prince, and have the right to withdraw it if it be used for purposes inconsistent with the end which society was formed to promote. To the origin of all power in the people, and the end of all power for the people's good—the two great doctrines of Hobbes—Locke added the right of resistance, the responsibility of princes to their subjects for a due execution of their trust, and the supremacy of legislative assemblies as expressing the voice of the people itself.

It was in this modified and enlarged form that the new political philosophy found general acceptance after the Revolution of 1688. But powerful as was its influence in the thirty years which separated that event from the Restoration it remained during that period an influence which told but slowly on the people at large. It is indeed this severance for the time between the thinking classes and the general bulk of the nation which makes its history so difficult and perplexing. While sceptics and divines were drifting to questions which involved the very being of religion itself the mass of Englishmen were still without a doubt, and dead to every religious struggle save the old struggle of Protestantism with the Pope. While statesmen and philosophers were smiling at Sir Robert Firmer and his "Patriarchal Theory of Government," the people remained blind to any notion of an original contract, and every pulpit resounded
6-172] with the doctrine of a divine right of kings. It was only by slow steps, and above all by the practical stress of events, that England was driven forward to religious toleration or to the establishment of parliamentary government in the place of monarchy.

The Period of Transition.

Slowly and gradually however it was driven forward to both. Even at the outset of the Restoration the temper of England had in fact drifted far from the past to which it thought to return. The work of the Long Parliament indeed seemed to be undone when Charles entered Whitehall. Not only was the Monarchy restored but it was restored without restriction or condition; and of the two great influences which had hitherto served as checks on its power, the first, that of Puritanism, had become hateful to the nation at large, while the second, the tradition of constitutional liberty, was discredited by the issue of the Civil War. But, wild as was the tumult of demonstrative loyalty, not one of the great steps towards constitutional freedom which had been gained by the patriots of 1641 was really lost. The prerogatives for which Charles the First had struggled were quietly relinquished by his son. The very Cavaliers who had welcomed the king to "his own again" never dreamt of restoring the system of government which their
6-173] opponents had overthrown. Twenty years of parliamentary rule, however broken and mixed with political and religious tyranny, had made the return to ship-money or monopolies or the Star Chamber impossible. Men had become so accustomed to freedom that they forgot how recent a thing its unquestioned existence was. From the first therefore the great "revolution of the seventeenth century," as it has been called, went steadily on. The supreme power was gradually transferred from the Crown to the House of Commons. Step by step Parliament drew nearer to a solution of the political problem which had so long foiled its efforts, the problem how to make its will the law of administrative action without itself undertaking the task of administration. It is only by carefully fixing our eyes on this transfer of power, and by noting the successive steps towards its realization, that we can understand the complex history of the Restoration and the Revolution.

Charles the Second.

Changed to the very core, yet hardly conscious of the change, drifting indeed steadily towards a wider knowledge and a firmer freedom, but still a mere medley of Puritan morality and social revolt, of traditional loyalty and political scepticism, of bigotry and free inquiry, of science and Popish plots, the England of the Restoration was reflected in its king. What his subjects saw in Charles the Second was a pleasant, brown-faced gentleman playing with his spaniels, or drawing caricatures of his ministers, or
6-174] flinging cakes to the water-fowl in the park. To all outer seeming Charles was the most consummate of idlers. "He delighted," says one of his courtiers, "in a bewitching kind of pleasure called sauntering." The business-like Pepys discovered, as he brought his work to the Council-board, that "the king do mind nothing but pleasures, and hates the very sight or thoughts of business." That Charles had great natural parts no one doubted. In his earlier days of defeat and danger he showed a cool courage and presence of mind which never failed him in the many perilous moments of his reign. His temper was pleasant and social, his manners perfect, and there was a careless freedom and courtesy in his address which won over

everybody who came into his presence. His education indeed had been so grossly neglected that he could hardly read a plain Latin book; but his natural quickness and intelligence showed itself in his pursuit of chymistry and anatomy, and in the interest he showed in the scientific inquiries of the Royal Society. Like Peter the Great his favourite study was that of naval architecture, and he piqued himself on being a clever shipbuilder. He had some little love too for art and poetry, and a taste for music. But his shrewdness and vivacity showed themselves most in his endless talk. He was fond of telling stories, and he told them with a good deal of grace and humour. He held his own fairly with the wits of his Court, and bandied repartees
6-175] on equal terms with Sedley or Buckingham. Even Rochester in his merciless epigram was forced to own that Charles "never said a foolish thing." He had inherited in fact his grandfather's gift of pithy sayings, and his habitual irony often gave an amusing turn to them. When his brother, the most unpopular man in England, solemnly warned him of plots against his life, Charles laughingly bade him set all fear aside. "They will never kill me, James," he said, "to make you king."

But courage and wit and ability seemed to have been bestowed on Charles in vain. He only laughed when Tom Killigrew told him frankly that badly as things were going on there was one man whose industry could set them right, "and this is one Charles Stuart, who now spends his time in using his lips about the Court and hath no other employment." Charles made no secret in fact of his hatred of business. Nor did he give to outer observers any sign of ambition. The one thing he seemed in earnest about was sensual pleasure, and he took his pleasure with a cynical shamelessness which roused the disgust even of his shameless courtiers. Mistress followed mistress, and the guilt of a troop of profligate women was blazoned to the world by the gift of titles and estates. The royal bastards were set amongst English nobles. The ducal house of Grafton springs from the king's adultery with Barbara Palmer, whom he created
6-176] Duchess of Cleveland. The Dukes of St. Albans owe their origin to his intrigue with Nell Gwynn, a player and a courtezan. Louise de Quérouaille, a mistress sent by France to win him to its interests, became Duchess of Portsmouth and ancestress of the house of Richmond. An earlier mistress, Lucy Walters, declared him, it is believed falsely, father of the boy whom he raised to the dukedom of Monmouth, and to whom the Dukes of Buccleuch trace their line. But Charles was far from being content with these recognized mistresses or with a single form of self-indulgence. Gambling and drinking helped to fill up the vacant moments when he could no longer toy with his favourites or bet at Newmarket. No thought of remorse or of shame seems ever to have crossed his mind. "He could not think God would make a man miserable," he said once, "only for taking a little pleasure out of the way." From shame he was shielded by his cynical disbelief in human virtue. Virtue indeed he regarded simply as a trick by which clever hypocrites imposed upon fools. Honour among men seemed to him as mere a pretence as chastity among women. Gratitude he had none, for he looked upon self-interest as the only motive of men's actions, and though soldiers had died and women had risked their lives for him, "he loved others as little as he thought they loved him." But if he felt no gratitude for benefits he felt no resentment for wrongs. He was incapable
6-177] either of love or of hate. The only feeling he retained for his fellow-men was that of an amused contempt.

It was difficult for Englishmen to believe that any real danger to liberty could come from an idler and a voluptuary such as Charles the Second. But in the very difficulty of believing this lay half the king's strength. He had in fact no taste whatever for the despotism of the Stuarts who had gone before him. His shrewdness laughed his grandfather's theories of Divine Right down the wind, while his indolence made such a personal administration as that which his father delighted in burthensome to him. He was too humorous a man to care for the pomp and show of power, and too good-natured a man to play the tyrant. But he believed as firmly as his father or his grandfather had believed in his right to a full possession of the older prerogatives of the Crown. He looked on Parliaments as they had looked on them with suspicion and jealousy. He clung as they had clung to the dream of a dispensing power over the execution of the laws. He regarded ecclesiastical affairs as lying within his own personal control, and viewed the interference of the two Houses with church matters as a sheer usurpation. Above all he detested the notion of ministerial responsibility to any but the king, or of a Parliamentary right to interfere in any way
6-178] with the actual administration of public affairs. "He told Lord Essex," Burnet says, "that he did not wish to be like a Grand Signior, with some mutes about him, and bags of bowstrings to strangle men; but he did not think he was a king so long as a company of fellows were looking into his actions, and examining his ministers as well as his accounts." "A king," he thought, "who might be checked, and have his ministers called to an account, was but a king in name."

The king's Policy.

In other words Charles had no settled plan of tyranny, but he meant to rule as independently as he could, and from the beginning to the end of his reign there never was a moment when he was not doing something to carry out his aim. But he carried it out in a tentative, irregular fashion which it was as hard to detect as to meet. Whenever there was any strong opposition he gave way. If popular feeling demanded the dismissal of his ministers, he dismissed them. If it protested against his declaration of religious indulgence, he recalled it. If it cried for victims in the frenzy of the Popish Plot, he gave it victims till the frenzy was at an end. It was easy for Charles to yield and to wait, and just as easy for him to take up the thread of his purpose afresh the moment the pressure was over. There was one fixed resolve in fact which overrode every other thought in the king's mind, and this was a resolve "not to set out on his travels
6-179] again." His father had fallen through a quarrel with the two Houses, and Charles was determined to remain on good terms with the Parliament till he was strong enough to pick a quarrel to his profit. At no time has party strife raged more fiercely; in no reign has the temper of the Parliament been more threatening to the Crown. But the cynicism of Charles enabled him to ride out storms which would have wrecked a better and a nobler king. He treated the Lords with an easy familiarity which robbed opposition of its seriousness. "Their debates amused him," he said in his indolent way; and he stood chatting before the fire while peer after peer poured invectives on his ministers, and laughed louder than the rest when Shaftesbury directed his coarsest taunts at the barrenness of the queen. Courtiers were entrusted with the secret "management" of the Commons; obstinate country gentlemen were brought to the Royal closet to kiss the king's hand and listen to the king's pleasant stories of his escape after Worcester; and still more obstinate country gentlemen were bribed. Where bribes, flattery, and management failed Charles was content to yield and to wait till his time came again.

Dissolution of the Union.

But even while yielding and waiting he never lost sight of the aim he had set himself. If he had no mind to play the tyrant, he was resolved to be something more than "a king in name." If he could not get back
6-180] all that his father had had he could go on patiently gathering up what fragments of the old royal power still survived, and availing himself of whatever new resources offered themselves. One means of recovering somewhat of the older authority of the Crown lay in the simple refusal to recognize the union of the three kingdoms. If he could not undo what the Puritans had done in England Charles could undo their work in Scotland and in Ireland. Before the Civil War these kingdoms had served as useful checks on English liberty, and by simply regarding the Union which the Long Parliament and the Protector had brought about as a nullity in law it was possible they might become checks again. In his refusal to recognize the Union Charles was supported by public opinion among his English subjects, partly from sheer abhorrence of changes wrought during "the troubles," and partly from a dread that the Scotch and Irish members would form a party in the English Parliament which would always be at the service of the Crown. In both the lesser kingdoms too a measure which seemed to restore somewhat of their national independence was for the moment popular.

Scotland and Ireland.

But the results of this step were quick in developing themselves. In Scotland the Covenant was at once abolished. The Scotch Parliament which assembled at Edinburgh, the Drunken Parliament as it was called, outdid the wildest loyalty of the English Cavaliers by annulling in a single Act all the proceedings of its
6-181] predecessors during the last eight-and-twenty years. By this measure the whole existing Church system of Scotland was deprived of legal sanction. The General Assembly had already been prohibited from meeting by Cromwell; the kirk-sessions' and ministers' synods were now suspended. The Scotch bishops were again restored to their spiritual pre-eminence and to their seats in Parliament. An iniquitous trial sent the Marquis of Argyle, the only noble strong enough to oppose the Royal will, to the block; and the government was entrusted to a knot of profligate statesmen till it fell into the hands of Lauderdale, one of the ablest and most unscrupulous of the king's ministers. Their policy was steadily directed to two purposes, the first, that of humbling Presbyterianism—as the force which could alone restore Scotland to freedom and enable her to lend aid as before to English liberty in any struggle with the Crown—the second, that of raising a royal army which might be ready in case of need to march over the Border to the king's support. In Ireland the dissolution of the Union brought back the bishops to their sees; but whatever wish Charles may have had to restore the balance of Catholic and Protestant as a source of power to the Crown was baffled by the obstinate resistance of the Protestant settlers to any plans for redressing the confiscations of Cromwell. Five years of bitter struggle between the dispossessed loyalists
6-182] and the new occupants left the Protestant ascendency unimpaired; and in spite of a nominal surrender of one-third of the confiscated estates to their old possessors hardly a sixth of the profitable land in the island remained in Catholic holding. The claims of the Duke of Ormond too made it necessary to leave the government in his hands, and Ormond's loyalty was too moderate and constitutional to lend itself to any of the schemes of absolute rule which played so great a part in the next reign under Tyrconnell.

The Royal Army.

But the severance of the two kingdoms from England was in itself a gain to the Royal authority; and Charles turned quietly to the building up of a royal army at home. A standing army had become so hateful a thing to the body of the nation, and above all to the Royalists whom the New Model had trodden under foot, that it was impossible to propose its establishment. But in the mind of both Charles and his brother James, the Duke of York, their father's downfall had been owing to the want of a disciplined force which would have trampled out the first efforts of national resistance; and while disbanding the New Model Charles availed himself of the alarm created by a mad rising of some Fifth-Monarchy men in London under an old soldier called Venner to retain five thousand horse and foot in his service under the name of his guards. A body of "gentlemen of quality and veteran soldiers, excellently clad, mounted, and ordered," was
6-183] thus kept ready for service near the royal person; and in spite of the scandal which it aroused the king persisted, steadily but cautiously, in gradually increasing its numbers. Twenty years later it had grown to a force of seven thousand foot and one thousand seven hundred horse and dragoons at home, with a reserve of six fine regiments abroad in the service of the United Provinces.

Charles and English Politics.

But it was rather on policy than on open force that Charles counted for success. His position indeed was a strange and perplexing one. All the outer pomp of the monarchy had returned with the restoration. Charles, like his father, was served by the highest nobles on their knees. Nor had the theory of his position in appearance changed. The principle indeed of hereditary kingship had gained a new strength from the troubles of the last twenty years. The fall of the monarchy had been followed so closely by that of the other institutions, political and religious, of the realm, its restoration coincided so exactly with their revival, that the Crown had become the symbol of that national tradition, that historical continuity, without which the practical sense of Englishmen felt then, as Burke felt afterwards, that men were "but as flies in a summer." How profound a disgust the violent interruption of this continuous progress by the clean sweep
6-184] of the Civil War had left behind it was seen in the indifference with which measures such as the union of the three kingdoms or the reform of parliamentary representation were set aside as sharing in the general vice of the time from which they sprang. It was seen as vividly at even a later time in the instant ruin of Shaftesbury's popularity from the moment when he was believed to be plotting the renewal of civil war. But if the Monarchy was strengthened by its association with the tradition of constitutional freedom it was henceforth inseparably bound to the freedom which strengthened it. The Cavalier who had shouted for the king's return had shouted also for the return of a free Parliament. The very Chief-Justice who asserted at the trial of the Regicides the personal freedom of the king from any responsibility to the nation asserted just as strongly that doctrine of ministerial responsibility against which Charles the First had struggled. "The law in all cases preserves the person of the king to be authorized," said Sir Orlando Bridgeman, "but what is done by his ministers unlawfully, there is a remedy against his ministers for it." It was the desire of every Royalist to blot out the very memory of the troubles in which monarchy and freedom had alike disappeared, to take up again as if it had never been broken the thread of our political history. But the point at which even Royalists took it up was not at the moment of the Tyranny, but at the moment of the
6-185] Long Parliament's first triumph when that tyranny had been utterly undone. In his wish to revive those older claims of the Crown which the Long Parliament had for ever set aside the young king found himself alone. His closest adherents, his warmest friends, were constitutional Royalists of the temper of Falkland

or Colepepper; partizans of an absolute monarchy, of such a monarchy as his grandfather had dreamed of and his father for a few years carried into practice, there now were none.

Charles and English Religion.

In his political aims therefore Charles could look for no help within his realm. Nor did he stand less alone in his religious aims. In heart, whether the story of his renunciation of Protestantism during his exile be true or no, he had long ceased to be a Protestant. Whatever religious feeling he had was on the side of Catholicism; he encouraged conversions among his courtiers, and the last act of his life was to seek formal admission into the Roman Church. But his feelings were rather political than religious. The English Roman Catholics formed a far larger part of the population then than now, and their wealth and local influence gave them a political importance which they have long since lost. The Stuarts had taught them to look to the Crown for protection against the Protestant bigotry around them, and they repaid this shelter by aiding Charles the First in his war on the Parliament, and by liberally supplying his son with money during
6-186] his exile. He had promised in return to procure toleration for their worship, and every motive of gratitude as well as self-interest led him to redeem his pledge. But he was already looking, however vaguely, to something more than Catholic toleration. He saw that despotism in the State could hardly co-exist with free inquiry and free action in matters of the conscience; and that government, in his own words, "was a safer and easier thing where the authority was believed infallible, and the faith and submission of the people were implicit." The difficulties in the way of such a religious change probably seemed the less to him from his long residence in Roman Catholic countries and from his own religious scepticism. Two years indeed after his restoration he had already despatched an agent to Rome to arrange the terms of a reconciliation between the Anglican Church and the Papacy. But though he counted much for the success of his project of toleration on taking advantage of the dissensions between Protestant Churchmen and Protestant Dissenters, he soon discovered that in this or any wider religious project he stood utterly alone. Clarendon and the Cavaliers were as bitterly anti-Catholic as the wildest fanatic in his realm. For any real success in his religious as in his political aims he must look elsewhere than at home.

State of Europe.

Holland had been the first power to offer him its aid in the renewal of the old defensive alliance which
6-187] had united the two countries before the Civil War, and it had accompanied its offer by hints of a heavy subsidy. But offers and hints were alike withdrawn when it was found that the new government persisted in enforcing the Navigation Act which the Long Parliament had passed. Spain, to which Charles looked with greater hope, demanded terms of alliance which were impossible—the restoration of Jamaica and the cession of Dunkirk. One ally only remained. At this moment France was the dominant power in Christendom. The religious wars which began with the Reformation had broken the strength of the nations around her. Spain was no longer able to fight the battle of Catholicism. The Peace of Westphalia, by the independence it gave to the German princes and the jealousy it kept alive between the Protestant and Catholic powers of Germany, destroyed the strength of the Empire. The German branch of the House of Austria, spent with the long struggle of the Thirty Years War, had enough to do in battling hard against the advance of the Turks from Hungary on Vienna. The victories of Gustavus and of the generals whom he formed had been dearly purchased by the exhaustion of Sweden. The United Provinces were as yet hardly regarded as a great power, and were trammelled by their contest with England for the empire of the seas.

France.

6-188] France alone profited by the general wreck. The wisdom of Henry the Fourth in securing religious peace by a grant of toleration to the Protestants had undone the ill effects of its religious wars. The Huguenots were still numerous south of the Loire, but the loss of their fortresses had turned their energies into the peaceful channels of industry and trade. Feudal disorder was roughly put down by Richelieu; and the policy which gathered all local power into the hands of the Crown, though fatal in the end to the real welfare of France, gave it for the moment an air of good government and a command over its internal resources which no other country could boast. Its compact and fertile territory, the natural activity and enterprise of its people, and the rapid growth of its commerce and manufactures, were sources of natural wealth which even its heavy taxation failed to check. In the latter half of the seventeenth century France was looked upon as the wealthiest power in Europe. The yearly income of the French crown was double that of England, and even Lewis the Fourteenth trusted as much to the credit of his treasury as to the triumphs of his arms. "After all," he said, when the fortunes of war began to turn against him, "it is the last louis d'or which must win!"

It was in fact this superiority in wealth which enabled France to set on foot forces such as had never been seen in Europe since the downfall of Rome. At the opening of the reign of Lewis the Fourteenth its
6-189] army mustered a hundred thousand men. With the war against Holland it rose to nearly two hundred thousand. In the last struggle against the Grand Alliance there was a time when it counted nearly half-a-million of men in arms. Nor was France content with these enormous land forces. Since the ruin of Spain the fleets of Holland and of England had alone disputed the empire of the seas. Under Richelieu and Mazarin France could hardly be looked upon as a naval power. But the early years of Lewis saw the creation of a navy of a hundred men-of-war, and the fleets of France soon held their own against England or the Dutch.

Lewis the Fourteenth.

Such a power would have been formidable at any time; but it was doubly formidable when directed by statesmen who in knowledge and ability were without rivals in Europe. No diplomatist could compare with Lionne, no war minister with Louvois, no financier with Colbert. Their young master, Lewis the Fourteenth, bigoted, narrow-minded, commonplace as he was, without personal honour or personal courage, without gratitude and without pity, insane in his pride, insatiable in his vanity, brutal in his selfishness, had still many of the qualities of a great ruler, industry, patience, quickness of resolve, firmness of purpose, a capacity for discerning ability and using it, an immense self-belief and self-confidence, and a temper utterly destitute indeed of real greatness, but with a dramatic turn for seeming
6-190] to be great. As a politician Lewis had simply to reap the harvest which the two great Cardinals who went before him had sown. Both had used to the profit of France the exhaustion and dissension which the wars of religion had brought upon Europe. Richelieu turned the scale against the House of Austria by his alliance with Sweden, with the United Provinces, and with the Protestant princes of Germany; and the two great treaties by which Mazarin ended the Thirty Years War, the Treaty of Westphalia and the Treaty of the Pyrenees, left the Empire disorganized and Spain powerless. From that moment indeed Spain sank

into a strange decrepitude. Robbed of the chief source of her wealth by the independence of Holland, weakened at home by the revolt of Portugal, her infantry annihilated by Condé in his victory of Rocroi, her fleet ruined by the Dutch, her best blood drained away to the Indies, the energies of her people destroyed by the suppression of all liberty, civil or religious, her intellectual life crushed by the Inquisition, her industry crippled by the expulsion of the Moors, by financial oppression, and by the folly of her colonial system, the kingdom which under Philip the Second had aimed at the empire of the world lay helpless and exhausted under Philip the Fourth.

France and Spain.

6-191] The aim of Lewis was to carry on the policy of his predecessors, and above all to complete the ruin of Spain. The conquest of the Spanish provinces in the Netherlands would carry his border to the Scheldt. A more distant hope lay in the probable extinction of the Austrian line which now sat on the throne of Spain. By securing the succession to that throne for a French prince not only Castille and Aragon with the Spanish dependencies in Italy and the Netherlands but the Spanish empire in the New World would be added to the dominions of France. Nothing could save Spain but a union of the European powers, and to prevent this union was the work to which the French negotiators were now bending their energies with singular success. The intervention of the Emperor was guarded against by a renewal of the old alliances between France and the lesser German princes. A league with the Turks gave the court of Vienna enough to do on its eastern border. The old league with Sweden, the old friendship with Holland, were skilfully maintained. England alone remained as a possible foe, and at this moment the policy of Charles bound England to the side of Lewis.

England and France.

6-192] France was the wealthiest of European powers, and her subsidies could free Charles from his dependence on the Parliament. The French army was the finest in the world, and French soldiers could put down, it was thought, any resistance from English patriots. The aid of Lewis could alone realize the aims of Charles, and Charles was willing to pay the price, that of a silent concurrence in his Spanish projects, which Lewis demanded for his aid. It was to France therefore, in spite of the resentment he felt at his treatment by her in his time of exile, that Charles turned in the earliest days of his reign. There was no trace as yet of any formal alliance, but two marriages showed the close connexion which was to be established between the kings. Henrietta, the sister of Charles, was wedded to the Duke of Orleans, the brother of Lewis: and this match served as the prelude to that of Charles himself with Catharine of Braganza, a daughter of the king of Portugal. The English ministers were dazzled by the dowry which the new queen brought with her: half-a-million in money, the fortress of Tangier in the Mediterranean, the trading port of Bombay in the Indies, and a pledge of religious toleration for all English merchants throughout the Portuguese colonies. The world at large saw rather the political significance of the marriage. As the conquest of Portugal by Philip the Second had crowned the greatness of the Spanish monarchy, so with its revolt had begun the fall of Spain. To recover Portugal was the dream of every Spaniard, as to aid Portugal in the preservation of its independence was the steady policy of France. The Portuguese marriage, the Portuguese alliance which followed it, ranged England definitely amongst the friends of Lewis and the foes of Spain.

Charles and his first Ministry.

6-193] In England itself these indications of the king's foreign policy passed as yet almost without notice. The attention of the nation was naturally concentrated on the work of political and social restoration. What shape the new England would take, what was to be its political or religious form, was still uncertain. It was still doubtful which political or religious party had really the upper hand. The show of power lay as yet with the Presbyterians. It was by the Presbyterians that the chief part in the Restoration had in fact been played; and it was the Presbyterians who still almost exclusively possessed the magistracy and all local authority. The first ministry which Charles ventured to form bore on it the marks of a compromise between this powerful party and their old opponents. Its most influential member indeed was Sir Edward Hyde, the adviser of the king during his exile, who soon became Earl of Clarendon and Lord Chancellor. Lord Southampton, a steady Royalist, accepted the post of Lord Treasurer; and the devotion of Ormond was rewarded with a dukedom and the dignity of Lord Steward. But the Presbyterian interest was represented by Monk, who remained Lord-General of the army with the title of Duke of Albemarle; and though the king's brother, James, Duke of York, was made Lord Admiral, the administration of the fleet was virtually in the hands of one of Cromwell's followers, Montagu, the new Earl of Sandwich. An old
6-194] Puritan, Lord Say and Sele, was made Lord Privy Seal. Sir Ashley Cooper, a leading member of the same party, was rewarded for his activity in bringing about the Restoration by a barony and the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer. Of the two Secretaries of State, the one, Nicholas, was a devoted Royalist; the other, Morice, was a steady Presbyterian. Of the thirty members of the Privy Council, twelve had borne arms against the king.

The Convention.

It was clear that such a ministry was hardly likely to lend itself to a mere policy of reaction, and the temper of the new Government therefore fell fairly in with the temper of the Convention when that body, after declaring itself a Parliament, proceeded to consider the measures which were requisite for a settlement of the nation. The Convention had been chosen under ordinances which excluded Royalist "Malignants" from the right of voting; and the bulk of its members were men of Presbyterian sympathies, loyalist to the core, but as adverse to despotism as the Long Parliament itself. In its earlier days a member who asserted that those who had fought against the king were as guilty as those who cut off his head was sternly rebuked from the Chair. The first measure which was undertaken by the House, the Bill of Indemnity and Oblivion for all offences committed during the recent troubles, showed at once the
6-195] moderate character of the Commons. In the punishment of the regicides indeed a Presbyterian might well be as zealous as a Cavalier. In spite of a Proclamation issued in the first days of his return, which virtually promised mercy to all the judges of the late king who surrendered themselves to justice, Charles pressed for revenge on those whom he regarded as his father's murderers, and the Lords went hotly with the king. It is to the credit of the Commons that they steadily resisted the cry for blood. By the original provisions of the Bill of Oblivion and Indemnity only seven of the living regicides were excluded from pardon; and though the rise of Royalist fervour during the three months in which the bill was under discussion forced the House in the end to leave almost all to the course of justice, yet a clause which made a special Act of Parliament necessary for the execution of those who had surrendered under the Proclamation protected

the lives of most of them. Twenty-eight of the king's Judges were in the end arraigned at the bar of a Court specially convened for their trial, but only thirteen were executed, and only one of these, General Harrison, had played any conspicuous part in the rebellion. Twenty others, who had been prominent in what were now called "the troubles" of the past twenty years, were declared incapable of holding office under the State: and by an unjustifiable clause which was introduced into the Act before its final adoption
6-196] Sir Harry Vane and General Lambert, though they had taken no part in the king's death, were specially exempted from the general pardon.

Settlement of the Nation.

In dealing with the questions of property which arose from the confiscations and transfers of estates during the Civil Wars the Convention met with greater difficulties. No opposition was made to the resumption of all Crown-lands by the State, but the Convention desired to protect the rights of those who had purchased Church property and of those who were in actual possession of private estates which had been confiscated by the Long Parliament or by the government which succeeded it. The bills however which they prepared for this purpose were delayed by the artifices of Hyde; and at the close of the Session the bishops and the evicted Royalists quietly re-entered into the occupation of their old possessions. The Royalists indeed were far from being satisfied with this summary confiscation. Fines and sequestrations had impoverished all the steady adherents of the royal cause, and had driven many of them to forced sales of their estates; and a demand was made for compensation for their losses and the cancelling of these sales. Without such provisions, said the frenzied Cavaliers, the bill would be "a Bill of Indemnity for the king's enemies, and of Oblivion for his friends." But here the Convention stood firm. All transfers of property by sale were recognized as valid, and all claims of compensation for losses by sequestration were barred by the Act.

6-197] From the settlement of the nation the Convention passed to the settlement of the relations between the nation and the Crown. So far was the constitutional work of the Long Parliament from being undone that its more important measures were silently accepted as the base of future government. Not a voice demanded the restoration of the Star Chamber or of monopolies or of the Court of High Commission; no one disputed the justice of the condemnation of Ship-money or the assertion of the sole right of Parliament to grant supplies to the Crown. The Militia indeed was placed in the king's hands; but the army was disbanded, though Charles was permitted to keep a few regiments for his guard. The revenue was fixed at £1,200,000, and this sum was granted to the king for life, a grant which might have been perilous for freedom had not the taxes voted to supply the sum fallen constantly below this estimate, while the current expenses of the Crown, even in time of peace, greatly exceeded it. But even for this grant a heavy price was exacted. Though the rights of the Crown over lands held, as the bulk of English estates were held, in military tenure had ceased to be of any great pecuniary value, they were indirectly a source of considerable power. The rights of wardship and of marriage above all enabled the sovereign to exercise a
6-198] galling pressure on every landed proprietor in his social and domestic concerns. Under Elizabeth the right of wardship had been used to secure the education of all Catholic minors in the Protestant faith; and under James and his successor the charge of minors had been granted to Court favourites or sold in open market to the highest bidder. But the real value of these rights to the Crown lay in the political pressure which it was able to exert through them on the country gentry. A squire was naturally eager to buy the good will of a sovereign who might soon be the guardian of his daughter and the administrator of his estate. But the same motives which made the Crown cling to this prerogative made the Parliament anxious to do away with it. Its efforts to bring this about under James the First had been foiled by the king's stubborn resistance; but the long interruption of these rights during the troubles made their revival almost impossible at the Restoration. One of the first acts therefore of the Convention was to free the country gentry by abolishing the claims of the Crown to reliefs and wardship, purveyance, and pre-emption, and by the conversion of lands held till then in chivalry into lands held in common socage. In lieu of his rights Charles accepted a grant of £100,000 a year; a sum which it was originally purposed to raise by a tax on the lands thus exempted from feudal exactions; but which was provided for in the end with less justice by a general excise.

England and the Church.

6-199] Successful as the Convention had been in effecting a settlement of political matters it failed in bringing about a settlement of the Church. In his proclamation from Breda Charles had promised to respect liberty of conscience, and to assent to any Acts of Parliament which should be presented to him for its security. The Convention was in the main Presbyterian; but it soon became plain that the continuance of a purely Presbyterian system was impossible. "The generality of the people," wrote Sharpe, a shrewd Scotch observer, from London, "are doting after Prelacy and the Service-book." The Convention however still hoped for some modified form of Episcopalian government which would enable the bulk of the Puritan party to remain within the Church. A large part of the existing clergy indeed were Independents, and for these no compromise with Episcopacy was possible: but the greater number were moderate Presbyterians who were ready "for fear of worse" not only to submit to such a plan of Church government as Archbishop Usher had proposed, a plan in which the bishop was only the president of a diocesan board of presbyters, but to accept the Liturgy itself with a few amendments and the omission of "superstitious practices." It was to a compromise of this kind that the king himself leant at the beginning, and a Royal declaration
6-200] announced his approval of the Puritan demands, limited the authority of the bishops by the counsel of their presbyters, and promised a revision of the Book of Common Prayer. The royal declaration was read at a conference of the two parties, and with it a petition from the Independents praying for religious liberty. The king proposed to grant the prayer of the petition, not for the Independents only but for all Christians. Dexterous as the move was, it at once spread alarm. The silence of the bishops, the protest of Baxter, proved that on the point of tolerating the Catholics all were at one. In itself however the declaration satisfied the Puritan party, and one of their leaders, Dr. Reynolds, accepted a bishopric on the strength of it. But the king's disappointment at the check given to his plans showed itself in the new attitude of the government when a bill was introduced into the House of Commons by Sir Matthew Hale to turn the declaration into a law. The opposition of the Episcopalian party was secretly encouraged by the Royalist section of the ministry, and the bill thrown out by a small majority. A fresh conference was promised, but in the absence of any Parliamentary action the Episcopal party boldly availed themselves of their legal rights. The ejected clergy who still remained alive entered again into their parsonages, the

bishops returned to their sees, and the dissolution of the Convention-Parliament destroyed the last hope of an ecclesiastical compromise.

6-201] **The Constitution: Royalists.**

The tide of loyalty had in fact been rising fast during its session, and its influence was already seen in a shameful outrage wrought under the very orders of the Convention itself. The bodies of Cromwell, Bradshaw, and Ireton were torn from their graves and hung on gibbets at Tyburn, while those of Pym and Blake were cast out of Westminster Abbey into St. Margaret's churchyard. But it was only on the dissolution of the Convention-Parliament at the end of 1660 that the new political temper made itself vigorously felt. For the first time during twenty years half England found itself able to go to the poll. From the outset of the war all who had taken part on the Royalist side had been disfranchised as "malignants," and this disfranchisement had been rigorously enforced even in the elections to the Convention. But "malignity" had now ceased to be a crime, and the voters so long deprived of all share in the suffrage, vicars, country gentlemen, farmers, with the whole body of the Catholics, rushed again to the poll. Their temper, as might be expected, was one of vengeance on the men who had held them down so long. In counties and towns alike the zeal for Church and king, the two causes for which the voters had suffered, swept all hope of moderation or compromise before it. The ruling impulse was to get utterly rid of the old representatives. The Presbyterians, dominant in the Convention, sank in the Cavalier Parliament, as that of 1661 was called, to a handful of fifty members.

6-202] **The Parliament of 1661.**

The new House of Commons was made up for the most part of young men, of men, that is, who had but a faint memory of the Stuart tyranny under which their childhood had been spent, but who had a keen memory of living from manhood beneath the tyranny of the Commonwealth. They had seen their fathers driven from the justice-bench, driven from the polling-booth, half-beggared and imprisoned for no other cause but their loyalty to the king. They had seen the family oaks felled and the family plate sent to the melting-pot to redeem their estates from the pitiless hands of the committee at Goldsmiths' Hall. They had themselves been brought like poachers before the justices for a horse-race or a cock-fight. At every breath of a rising a squad of the New Model had quartered itself in the manor-house and a warrant from the Major-general of the district had cleared the stables. Nor was this all. The same tyranny which pressed on their social and political life had pressed on their religious life too. The solemn petitions of the Book of Common Prayer, the words which had rung like sweet chimes in their ears from their first childhood, had been banned from every village church as accursed things. It had been only by stealth and at home that the cross could be signed on the brow of the babe whom the squire brought to be christened. Hardly by
6-203] stealth had it been possible to bury their dead with the words of pathetic hope which have so often brought comfort to the ears of mourners.

The Parliament and the Church.

And now the young squires felt that their time had come. The Puritan, the Presbyterian, the Commonwealthman, all were at their feet. Their very bearing was that of wild revolt against the Puritan past. To a staid observer, Roger Pepys, they seemed a following of "the most profane, swearing fellows that ever I heard in my life." Their whole policy appeared to be dictated by a passionate spirit of reaction. They would drive the Presbyterians from the bench and the polling-booth as the Presbyterians had driven them. They would make belief in a Commonwealth as much a sign of "malignity" as their enemies had made belief in a king. They would have no military rule: they hated indeed the very name of a standing army. They were hot Royalists and they were hot churchmen. The old tyranny of the bishops was forgotten, the old jealousy of the clergy set aside in the memory of a common suffering. The oppressors of the parson had been the oppressors of the squire. The sequestrator who had driven the one from his parsonage had driven the other from his manor-house. Both had been branded with the same charge of malignity. Both had been robbed alike of the same privileges of citizenship. Both had suffered together,
6-204] and the new Parliament was resolved that both should triumph together. For the first time since the Reformation the English gentry were ardent not for king only but for Church and King.

The zeal of the Parliament at its outset therefore far outran that of Charles or his ministers. Though it confirmed the other acts of its predecessor, the Convention, it could with difficulty be brought to confirm the Act of Indemnity. The Commons pressed for the prosecution of Vane. Vane was protected alike by the spirit of the law and by the king's pledge to the Convention that, even if convicted of treason, he would not suffer him to be sent to the block. But he was now brought to trial on the charge of treason against a king, "kept out of his royal authority by traitors and rebels," and his spirited defence served as an excuse for his execution. "He is too dangerous a man to let live," Charles wrote with characteristic coolness, "if we can safely put him out of the way." But the new members were yet better churchmen than loyalists. At the opening of their session they ordered every member to receive the communion, and the League and Covenant to be solemnly burnt by the common hangman in Westminster Hall. The bill which excluded the bishops from their seats in the House of Lords was repealed. The conference at the Savoy between the Episcopalians and Presbyterians broke up in anger, and the few alterations made in the Liturgy were made with a view to disgust rather than to conciliate the Puritan party.

6-205] **Clarendon.**

In spite of these outbursts however it would be unjust to look on the temper of the new Parliament as a mere temper of revenge. Its wish was in the main to restore the constitutional system which the civil war had violently interrupted. The Royalist party, as we have seen, had no sort of sympathy with the policy of the early Stuarts. Their notions and their aims were not those of Laud and Strafford, but of the group of constitutional loyalists who had followed Falkland in his break with the Long Parliament in 1642. And of that group by a singular fortune the most active and conspicuous member now filled the chief place in the counsels of the king. Edward Hyde had joined Charles the First before the outbreak of the war, he had become his Chancellor of the Exchequer, and it was to his pen that the bulk of the royal manifestoes were attributed. He had passed with the young Prince of Wales into exile, and had remained the counsellor of Charles the Second during the long years which preceded his return. His faithfulness had been amply rewarded. He was now Earl of Clarendon and Lord Chancellor; and his influence in the royal council, which had been great from the first, became supreme when the temper of the new Parliament shattered the hopes of his Presbyterian opponents there. But his aim was simply to carry out the policy he had clung
6-206] to with Falkland. He was a lawyer by breeding, and his theory of the State was a lawyer's theory. He looked on the English constitution, not as the sum of political forces which were still in process of

developement, but as a mass of fixed and co-ordinated institutions whose form and mutual relations had been settled in some distant past. He had opposed the Stuart tyranny because—as he held—it had broken down this constitution to the profit of the Crown. He worked with the men of the Long Parliament in what he regarded as the work of restoring it; he left them the moment that he fancied they were themselves about to break it down to the profit of the People. Years of exile had only hardened his ideas. He came back with the fixed resolve to hold the State together at the exact point where the first reforms of the Long Parliament had left it. The power and prerogative of the Crown, the authority of the Church, were to be jealously preserved, but they were to be preserved by the free will and conviction of the Parliament. It was on this harmonious co-operation of these three great institutions that Clarendon's system hung. Its importance to future times lay in his regarding Parliament and the Church, not as mere accidents or checks in the system of English government, but as essential parts of it, parts which were as needful for its healthy working as the Crown itself, and through which the power of the Crown was to be exercised.
6-207] Wholly to realize such a conception it was necessary that the Parliament should be politically, the Church religiously, representatives of the whole nation.

Test and Corporation Act.

The first of Clarendon's assumptions was not only a fact but a far greater fact than he imagined. Hence it came about that his assembly of the Parliament year after year, and the steady way in which he used it to do the Crown's work by setting its stamp on every great political measure, became of the highest importance in our constitutional developement. The second was a fiction, for half England had passed from the grasp of the Church, but it was to make it a fact that Clarendon buckled himself to a desperate struggle with Nonconformity. It was under his guidance that the Parliament turned to the carrying out of that principle of uniformity in Church as well as in State on which the minister was resolved. The chief obstacle to such a policy lay in the Presbyterians, and the strongholds of the Presbyterians were the corporations of the boroughs. In many of the boroughs the corporation actually returned the borough members—in all they exercised a powerful influence on their election. To drive the Presbyterians therefore from municipal posts was to weaken if not to destroy the Presbyterian party in the House of Commons. It was with a view of bringing about this object that the Cavalier Parliament passed a severe Corporation
6-208] Act, which required as a condition of entering on any municipal office a reception of the communion according to the rites of the Anglican Church, a renunciation of the League and Covenant, and a declaration that it was unlawful on any grounds to take up arms against the king. The attempt was only partially successful, and test and oath were taken after a while by men who regarded both simply as insults to their religious and political convictions. But if Clarendon was foiled in his effort to secure political uniformity by excluding the Presbyterian party from any connexion with the government of the State, he seemed for the time more successful in his attempt to secure a religious uniformity by their exclusion from the Church.

Act of Uniformity.

An effectual blow was dealt at the Puritans in 1662 by the renewal of the Act of Uniformity. Not only was the use of the Prayer-Book, and the Prayer-Book only, enforced in all public worship, but an unfeigned consent and assent was demanded from every minister of the Church to all which was contained in it; while for the first time since the Reformation all orders save those conferred by the hands of bishops were legally disallowed. To give a political stamp to the new measure the declaration exacted from corporations, that it was unlawful in any case to take up arms against the Crown, was exacted from the clergy, and a pledge was required that they would seek to make no change in Church or State. It was in
6-209] vain that Ashley opposed the bill fiercely in the Lords, that the peers pleaded for pensions to the ejected ministers and for the exemption of schoolmasters from the necessity of subscription, and that even Clarendon, who felt that the king's word was at stake, pressed for the insertion of clauses enabling the Crown to grant dispensations from its provisions. Every suggestion of compromise was rejected by the Commons; and Charles whose aim was to procure a toleration for the Catholics by allowing the Presbyterians to feel the pressure of persecution at last assented to the bill.

St. Bartholomew Day.

The bill passed in May, but its execution was deferred till August; and in the interval the Presbyterian party in the royal Council struggled hard to obtain from the king a suspension of its provisions by the exercise of his prerogative. Charles had promised this, but the bishops were resolute to enforce the law; and on St. Bartholomew's Day, August the 24th, the last day allowed for compliance with its requirements, nearly two thousand rectors and vicars, or about a fifth of the English clergy, were driven from their parishes as Nonconformists. No such sweeping alteration in the religious aspect of the Church had ever been seen before. The ecclesiastical changes of the Reformation had been brought about with little change in the clergy itself. Even the severities of the High Commission under Elizabeth ended in the expulsion of
6-210] a few hundreds. If Laud had gone zealously to work in emptying Puritan pulpits his zeal had been to a great extent foiled by the restrictions of the law and by the growth of Puritan sentiment in the clergy as a whole. A far wider change had been brought about in the expulsion of Royalist clergy from their benefices during the Civil War; but the change had been gradual, and had been at least ostensibly wrought for the most part on political or moral rather than on religious grounds. The parsons expelled were expelled as "malignants," or as unfitted for their office by idleness or vice or inability to preach. But the change wrought by St. Bartholomew's Day was a distinctly religious change, and it was a change which in its suddenness and completeness stood utterly alone. The rectors and vicars who were driven out were the most learned and the most active of their order. The bulk of the great livings throughout the country were in their hands. They stood at the head of the London clergy, as the London clergy stood in general repute at the head of their class throughout England. They occupied the higher posts at the two Universities. No English divine save Jeremy Taylor rivalled Howe as a preacher. No parson was so renowned a controversialist or so indefatigable a parish priest as Baxter. And behind these men stood a fifth of the whole body of the clergy, men whose zeal and labour had diffused throughout the country a greater appearance of piety and religion than it had ever displayed before.

Its religious results.

6-211] But the expulsion of these men was far more to the Church of England than the loss of their individual services. It was the definite expulsion of a great party which from the time of the Reformation had played the most active and popular part in the life of the Church. It was the close of an effort which had been going on ever since Elizabeth's accession to bring the English Communion into closer relations with the

Reformed Communions of the Continent and into greater harmony with the religious instincts of the nation at large. The Church of England stood from that moment isolated and alone among all the Churches of the Christian world. The Reformation had severed it irretrievably from those which still clung to the obedience of the Papacy. By its rejection of all but episcopal orders the Act of Uniformity severed it as irretrievably from the general body of the Protestant Churches whether Lutheran or Reformed. And while thus cut off from all healthy religious communion with the world without it sank into immobility within. With the expulsion of the Puritan clergy all change, all efforts after reform, all national developement, suddenly stopped. From that time to this the Episcopal Church has been unable to meet the varying spiritual needs of its adherents by any modifications of its government or its worship. It stands alone
6-212] among all the religious bodies of Western Christendom in its failure through two hundred years to devise a single new service of prayer or of praise.

Its political results.

But if the issues of St. Bartholomew's Day have been harmful to the spiritual life of the English Church they have been in the highest degree advantageous to the cause of religious liberty. At the Restoration religious freedom seemed again to have been lost. Only the Independents and a few despised sects, such as the Quakers, upheld the right of every man to worship God according to the bidding of his own conscience. The bulk of the Puritan Party, with the Presbyterians at its head, was at one with its opponents in desiring a uniformity of worship, if not of belief, throughout the land. Had the two great parties within the Church held together their weight would have been almost irresistible. Fortunately the great severance of St. Bartholomew's Day drove out the Presbyterians from the Church to which they clung, and forced them into a general union with sects which they had hated till then almost as bitterly as the bishops themselves. A common persecution soon blended the Nonconformists into one. Persecution broke down before the numbers, the wealth, and the political weight of the new sectarians; and the Church for the first time in its history found itself confronted with an organized body of Dissenters without its pale. The impossibility of crushing such a body as this wrested from English statesmen the first legal
6-213] recognition of freedom of worship in the Toleration Act; their rapid growth in later times has by degrees stripped the Church of almost all the exclusive privileges which it enjoyed as a religious body, and now threatens what remains of its official connexion with the State. With these remoter consequences however we are not as yet concerned. It is enough to note here that with the Act of Uniformity and the expulsion of the Puritan clergy a new element in our religious and political history, the element of Dissent, the influence of the Nonconformist churches, comes first into play.

Charles and Clarendon.

The sudden outbreak and violence of the persecution, the breaking up of conventicles, the imprisonment of those who were found worshipping in them, turned the disappointment of the Presbyterians into despair. Many were for retiring to Holland, others proposed a general flight to New England and the American colonies. Among the Baptists and Independents there was vague talk of an appeal to arms. So threatening indeed did the attitude of the Sectaries become that Clarendon was anxious to provide himself with men and money and above all with foreign aid for such a struggle, should it come. Different indeed as were the aims of the king and his Chancellor the course of events drew them inevitably together. If Charles desired the friendship of France as a support in any possible struggle with the Parliament
6-214] Clarendon desired it as a support in the possible struggle with the Nonconformists. The first step in this French policy had been the marriage with Catharine of Braganza; the second was the surrender of Dunkirk. The maintenance of the garrison at Dunkirk was a heavy drag upon the royal treasury, and a proposal for its sale to Spain, which was made by Lord Sandwich in council, was seized by Charles and Clarendon as a means of opening a bargain with France. To France the profit was immense. Not only was a port gained in the Channel which served during the next hundred years as a haunt for privateers in every war between the two powers, but the withdrawal of the English garrison at the close of 1662 from a port which necessarily drew England into every contest between France and Spain freed the hands of Lewis for the stroke he was patiently planning against the Low Countries. Lewis however proved a shrewd bargainer, and not a half of the sum originally demanded as its price found its way into the royal treasury. But the money was accepted as a pledge of the close connexion which was to bind the two crowns together. Charles declared the cession to be "one of the greatest proofs he could give of his friendship for the French king," and the Duke of York pressed the bargain with assurances that his strongest desire, like that of his brother, was "to unite our interests with those of France." Clarendon was as desirous of such a
6-215] union as his master. In his eyes the friendship of France, the money, the force placed in his hands by the return of the garrison of Dunkirk to England, were so many safeguards against the outbreak of rebellion which his policy had provoked.

Ashley Cooper.

But he had reckoned without Charles, and the time was come when the king was to show how widely his temper and aim differed from those of his Chancellor. Charles had no taste for civil war, nor had he the slightest wish to risk his throne in securing the supremacy of the Church. His aim was to use the strife between the two great bodies of Protestant religionists so as to secure toleration for the Catholics and revive at the same time his prerogative of dispensing with the execution of laws. At the close of 1662 therefore he suddenly broke from the policy of Clarendon and laid his plans for toleration before the Presbyterian party who were struggling against the Chancellor in the royal council. Of that party Ashley Cooper, Lord Ashley, was now in influence, though not in rank, the chief. Every step in his career had brought out the boldness, the self-reliance, the versatility and readiness of resource which distinguished his character. In mere boyhood he had saved his estate from the greed of his guardians by boldly appealing in person for protection to Noy, who was then attorney-general. As an undergraduate at Oxford
6-216] he organized a rebellion of the freshmen against the oppressive customs which were enforced by the senior men of his college, and succeeded in abolishing them. At eighteen he was a member of the Short Parliament. On the outbreak of the Civil War he took part with the king; but in the midst of the royal successes he foresaw the ruin of the royal cause, passed to the Parliament, attached himself to the fortunes of Cromwell, and became member of the Council of State. A temporary disgrace during the last years of the Protectorate only quickened him to a restless hatred which did much to bring about its fall. His bitter invectives against the dead Protector, his intrigues with Monk, and the active part which he took in the king's recall, were rewarded at the Restoration with a peerage and with promotion to a foremost share in the royal councils.

Ashley was then a man of forty, and under the Commonwealth he had been famous in Dryden's contemptuous phrase as "the loudest bagpipe of the squeaking train"; but he was no sooner a minister of Charles than he flung himself into the debauchery of the Court with an ardour which surprised even his master. "You are the wickedest dog in England!" laughed the king at some unscrupulous jest of his counsellor's. "Of a subject, sir, I believe I am!" was the unabashed reply. But the debauchery of Ashley was simply a mask. He was in fact temperate by nature and habit, and his ill-health rendered any great excess
6-217] impossible. Men soon found that the courtier who lounged in Lady Castlemaine's boudoir, or drank and jested with Sedley and Buckingham, was a diligent and able man of business. "He is a man," says the puzzled Pepys, three years after the Restoration, "of great business and yet of pleasure and dissipation too." His rivals were as envious of the ease and mastery with which he dealt with questions of finance as of the "nimble wit" which won the favour of the king. Even in later years his industry earned the grudging praise of his enemies. Dryden owned that as Chancellor he was "swift to despatch and easy of access," and wondered at the fevered activity which "refused his age the needful hours of rest." His activity indeed was the more wonderful that his health was utterly broken. An accident in early days left behind it an abiding weakness whose traces were seen in the furrows which seamed his long pale face, in the feebleness of his health, and the nervous tremor which shook his puny frame. The "pigmy body" was "fretted to decay" by the "fiery soul" within it. But pain and weakness brought with them no sourness of spirit. Ashley was attacked more unscrupulously than any statesman save Walpole; but Burnet, who did not love him, owns that he was never bitter or angry in speaking of his assailants. Even the wit with which he crushed them was commonly good-humoured. "When will you have done preaching?" a bishop murmured testily, as he
6-218] was speaking in the House of Peers. "When I am a bishop, my Lord!" was the laughing reply.

Ashley's Policy.

As a statesman Ashley not only stood high among his contemporaries from his wonderful readiness and industry, but he stood far above them in his scorn of personal profit. Even Dryden, while raking together every fault in his character, owns that his hands were clean. As a political leader his position was to modern eyes odd enough. In religion he was at most a Deist, with some fanciful notions "that after death our souls lived in stars," and his life was that of a debauchee. But Deist and debauchee as he was he remained the representative of the Presbyterian and Nonconformist party in the Royal Council. He was the steady and vehement advocate of toleration, but his advocacy was based on purely political grounds. He saw that persecution would fail to bring back the Dissenters to the Church, and that the effort to recall them only left the country disunited. He saw too that such a disunion exposed English liberty to invasion from the Crown, while it robbed England herself of all influence in Europe at a time when her influence alone could effectually check the ambition of France. The one means of uniting Churchmen and Dissidents was by a policy of toleration, but in the temper of England after the Restoration he saw no hope of
6-219] obtaining toleration save from the king. Wit, debauchery, rapidity in the despatch of business, were all therefore used as a means to gain influence over the king, and to secure him as a friend in the struggle which Ashley carried on against the intolerance of Clarendon.

The first Declaration of Indulgence.

Charles, as we have seen, had his own game to play, and his own reasons for protecting Ashley during his vehement struggle against the Test and Corporation Act, the Act of Uniformity, and the persecution of the Dissidents. But the struggle had been fruitless, and the only chance—as it seemed to Ashley—of securing toleration was to receive it on the king's own terms. It was with the assent therefore of the Presbyterian party in the Council that Charles issued in December a royal proclamation which expressed the king's resolve to exempt from the penalties of the Acts which had been passed "those who living peaceably do not conform themselves thereunto through scruple and tenderness of misguided conscience, but modestly and without scandal perform their devotions in their own way." The desire for toleration had in fact not only overcome their dread of Catholicism, but even blinded them to the political dangers of a revival of the dispensing power. The indulgence applied equally to Catholics as to Protestants; it was in itself a bold assertion of the royal prerogative of suspending the execution of the law. The Presbyterian statesmen indeed aimed at giving the dispensing power a legal basis. A bill introduced by Lords Ashley
6-220] and Robartes in the opening of 1663, in redemption of a pledge contained in the declaration itself, gave Charles the power to dispense not only with the provisions of the Act of Uniformity but with the penalties provided by all laws which enforced religious conformity or which imposed religious tests. But the policy of Charles as of Ashley broke instantly down before the good sense as well as the religious passion of the people at large. If the Presbyterian leaders in the council had stooped to accept the aid of the declaration, the bulk of the Dissidents had no mind to have their grievances used as a means of procuring by a side wind toleration for Roman Catholics, or of building up again that dispensing power which the civil wars had thrown down. The Churchmen on the other hand with the bishops at their head were resolute in opposition. Ever since the issue of the Declaration of Indulgence the hatred felt by the Churchmen for the Dissidents had been embittered by suspicions of a secret league between the Dissidents and the Catholics in which the king was taking part. The Houses therefore struck simultaneously at both their opponents. They forced Charles by an address to withdraw his pledge of toleration. They then extorted from him a proclamation for the banishment of all Catholic priests, and followed this up by a Conventicle Act, which
6-221] punished with fine, imprisonment, and transportation on a third offence all persons who met in greater number than five for any religious worship save that of the Common Prayer.

Clarendon's triumph.

What added to the sting of this defeat was the open opposition which Clarendon had offered to his master's scheme in Parliament. From that moment Charles resolved on his minister's ruin. But Clarendon's position was too strong to be easily shaken. Hated by the Catholics and the Dissenters, opposed in the Council itself by Ashley and the Presbyterian leaders, opposed in the Court by the king's mistress, Lady Castlemaine, as well as by the supple and adroit Henry Bennet, a creature of the king's who began to play a foremost part in politics, Clarendon was still strong in his long and intimate connexion with the king's affairs, his alliance with the royal house through the marriage of his daughter, Anne Hyde, with the Duke of York, in his untiring industry, his wide capacity for business, above all in the support of the Church and the confidence of the royalist and orthodox House of Commons. To the Commons and the Church he was only bound the closer by the hatred of Catholics and Nonconformists or by the futile attempts at impeachment which were made by the Catholic Earl of Bristol in the summer of 1663. The "Declaration" indeed had strengthened Clarendon's position. It had identified his policy of

persecution with the maintenance of constitutional liberty, and had thrown on Ashley and his opponents
6-222] the odium of an attempt to set up again the dispensing power and of betraying, as it was thought, the interests of Protestantism into the hands of Rome. Never in fact had Clarendon's power seemed stronger than in 1664; and the only result of the attempt to shake his system of intolerance was an increase of persecution. Of the sufferings of the expelled clergy one of their number, Richard Baxter, has given us an account. "Many hundreds of them with their wives and children had neither house nor bread. . . . Their congregations had enough to do, besides a small maintenance, to help them out of prisons or to maintain them there. Though they were as frugal as possible they could hardly live; some lived on little more than brown bread and water, many had but eight or ten pounds a year to maintain a family, so that a piece of flesh has not come to one of their tables in six weeks' time; their allowance could scarce afford them bread and cheese. One went to plow six days and preached on the Lord's Day. Another was forced to cut tobacco for a livelihood." But poverty was the least of their sufferings. They were jeered at by the players. They were hooted through the streets by the mob. "Many of the ministers being afraid to lay down their ministry after they had been ordained to it, preached to such as would hear them in fields and private houses, till they were apprehended and cast into gaols, where many of them perished." They were
6-223] excommunicated in the Bishop's Court or fined for non-attendance at church; and a crowd of informers grew up who made a trade of detecting the meetings they held at midnight. Alleyn, the author of the well-known "Alarm to the Unconverted," died at thirty-six from the sufferings he endured in Taunton Gaol. Vavasour Powell, the apostle of Wales, spent the eleven years which followed the Restoration in prisons at Shrewsbury, Southsea, and Cardiff, till he perished in the Fleet.

England and the Dutch.

The success however of this experiment in the repression of religious opinion rested mainly on the absence of any disturbing influences from without; and in the midst of his triumph over his opponents at home Clarendon was watching anxiously the growth of a quarrel which threatened war with the Dutch. The old commercial jealousy between the two rival merchant nations, which had been lulled in 1662 by a formal treaty of peace, but which still lived on in petty squabbles at sea, was embittered by the cession of Bombay—a port which gave England an entry into the profitable trade with India—as well as by the establishment of a West Indian Company in London which opened a traffic with the Gold Coast of Africa, and brought back from Guinea the gold from which our first "guineas" were struck. In both countries there was a general irritation which vented itself in cries for war, and in the session of 1664 the English
6-224] Parliament presented an address to the Crown praying for the exaction of redress for wrongs done by the Dutch to English merchants. But the squabble was of long standing, and there was nothing to threaten any immediate strife. Charles himself indeed shrank from wars which he foresaw would leave him at the mercy of his Parliament; and Clarendon with Ormond, the bishops, and the whole Church party, were conscious that the maintenance of peace was needful for their system of religious repression. The quarrel therefore would have dragged on in endless recriminations had not the restless hatred of the Chancellor's opponents seen in it a means of bringing about the end in which they had as yet been foiled. Bennet and the Court, Ashley and the Presbyterian party in the Council, Bristol and the Catholics, foresaw that the pressure of such a war, the burdens it would bring with it, and the supplies for which he would be driven to ask, would soon ruin the Chancellor's popularity with the Commons. Stripped of their support, it was easy to bring about his fall and clear the stage for fresh efforts after a religious toleration. The popular temper made their task of forcing on a war an easy one. The king was won over, partly by playing on his old resentment at the insults he had suffered from Holland during his exile, partly by his hope that the suffering which war would bring on Holland would end in the overthrow of the aristocratic republicans
6-225] who had governed the United Provinces ever since the fall of the House of Orange, and in the restoration of his young nephew, William of Orange, to the old influence of his family over the State. Such a restoration would not only repay the debt of gratitude which the Royalist cause owed to the efforts of William's father in its support, but would remove the dread which the English government never ceased to feel of the encouragement which the Dissidents at home derived from the mere existence close by of a presbyterian and republican government in Holland. Against the combined pressure of the king, the people, and his enemies in the cabinet and the court, Clarendon was unable to contend. Attacks on the Dutch settlements, on the Gold Coast, and the American coast, made war inevitable; a fleet was manned; and at the close of 1664 the Parliament in a fit of unwonted enthusiasm voted two millions and a half for the coming struggle.

The Dutch War.

The war at sea which followed was a war of giants. No such mighty fleets have ever disputed the sovereignty of the seas, nor have any naval battles equalled the encounters of the two nations in dogged and obstinate fighting. In the spring of 1665 the two fleets, each a hundred ships strong, mustered in the Channel, the Dutch under Opdam, the English under the Duke of York. Their first battle off Lowestoft,
6-226] obstinate as all the engagements between the two nations, ended in a victory for the English, a victory due chiefly to the superiority of their guns and to a shot which blew up the flag-ship of the Dutch Admiral in the midst of the engagement. But the thought of triumph was soon forgotten in a terrible calamity which now fell on London. In six months a hundred thousand Londoners died of the Plague which broke out in May in the crowded streets of the capital, and which drove the Parliament from London to assemble in October at Oxford. To the dismay caused by the Plague was added the growing irritation at the increasing pressure of the war and a sense of the grave dangers into which the struggle with Holland was plunging the country both at home and abroad. The enormous grant which had been made at the outset for three years was already spent and a fresh supply had to be granted. But hard and costly as the Dutch war had proved, a far graver and costlier struggle seemed opening in its train. The war was a serious stumbling-block in the way of the French projects. Holland on the strength of old treaties, England on the strength of her new friendship, alike called on Lewis for aid; but to give aid to either was to run the risk of throwing the other on the aid of the House of Austria, and of building up the league which could alone check France in its designs upon Spain. Only peace could keep the European states disunited, and it was on their
6-227] disunion that Lewis counted for success in his design of seizing Flanders, a design which was now all but ripe for execution. At the outset of the war therefore he offered his mediation, and suggested the terms of a compromise. But his attempt was fruitless, and the defeat off Lowestoft forced him to more effective action. He declared himself forced to give aid to the Dutch though he cautiously restricted his help to the

promise of a naval reinforcement. But the chief work of his negotiators was to prevent any extension of the struggle. Sweden and Brandenburg, from both of which powers Charles counted on support, were held in check by the intervention of France; and the Bishop of Münster, whom an English subsidy had roused to an attack on his Dutch neighbours, was forced by the influence of Lewis to withdraw his troops. Sir William Temple, the English ambassador at Brussels, strove to enlist Spain on the side of England by promising to bring about a treaty between that country and Portugal which would free its hands for an attack on Lewis, and so anticipate his plans for an attack under more favourable circumstances on herself. But Lewis knew how to play on the Catholic bigotry of Spain, and the English offers were set aside.

England and France.

6-228] Lewis thus succeeded in isolating England and in narrowing the war within the limits of a struggle at sea, a struggle in which the two great sea-powers could only weaken one another to the profit of his own powerful navy. But his intervention was far from soaring England into peace. The old hatred of France had quickened the English people to an early perception of the dangers which were to spring from French ambition; and as early as 1661 the London mob backed the Spanish ambassador in a street squabble for precedence with the ambassador of France. "We do all naturally love the Spanish," Pepys comments on this at the time, "and hate the French." The marriage of Catharine, the sale of Dunkirk, were taken as signs of the growth of a French influence over English policy, and the jealousy and suspicion they had aroused were seen in the reception with which the Parliament met the announcement of Lewis's hostility. No sooner had the words fallen from Charles's lips than "there was a great noise in the Parliament," writes the French statesman Louvois, "to show the joy of the two Houses at the prospect of a fight with us." But even the warlike temper of the Parliament could not blind it to the new weight which was given to the struggle by this intervention of France. Above all it woke men to the dangers at home. The policy of Clarendon had broken England into two nations. Whatever might be the attitude of Monk or Ashley in the royal closet the sympathies of the Nonconformists as a whole could not fail to be opposed to a war with
6-229] the Dutch; and as Charles was striving with some show of success to rouse the Orange party in the States to active opposition against the dominant republicans, so the Dutch statesmen summoned the banished regicides to Holland, and dreamed of a landing in England which would bring about a general rising of the Dissidents against Charles. The less scrupulous diplomacy of Lewis availed itself of every element of opposition, called Algernon Sidney to Paris and supplied him with money as a possible means of rousing the English republicans, while it corresponded with the Presbyterians in Scotland and the hardly less bitter Catholics of Ireland.

The Religious Persecution.

The dread of internal revolt was quickened by the new attitude of resistance taken by the Nonconformists. When the clergy fled from London at the appearance of the Plague, their pulpits were boldly occupied in open defiance of the law by the ministers who had been ejected from them. The terror and hatred roused by this revival of a foe that seemed to have been crushed was seen in the Five Mile Act, which completed in 1665 the code of persecution. By its provisions every clergyman who had been driven out by the Act of Uniformity was called on to swear that he held it unlawful under any pretext to take up arms against the king, and that he would at no time "endeavour any alteration of government in Church or
6-230] State." In case of refusal he was forbidden to go within five miles of any borough or of any place where he had been wont to minister. As the main body of the Nonconformists belonged to the city and trading classes, the effect of this measure was to rob them of any religious teaching at all. But the tide of religious intolerance was now slowly ebbing and, bigoted as the House was, a motion to impose the oath of the Five Mile Act on every person in the nation was rejected in the same session by a majority of six. The sufferings of the Nonconformists indeed could hardly fail to tell on the sympathies of the people. The thirst for revenge which had been roused by the tyranny of the Presbyterians in their hour of triumph was satisfied by their humiliation in their hour of defeat. The sight of pious and learned clergymen driven from their homes and their flocks, of religious meetings broken up by the constables, of preachers set side by side with thieves and outcasts in the dock, of gaols crammed with honest enthusiasts whose piety was their only crime, pleaded more eloquently for toleration than all the reasoning in the world.

Milton.

We have a clue to the extent of the persecution from what we know to have been its effect on a single sect. The Quakers had excited alarm by their extravagances of manner as well as by their refusal to bear arms or to take oaths, and a special Act was passed for their repression. They were one of the smallest of
6-231] the Nonconformist bodies, but more than four thousand were soon in prison, and five hundred of these were imprisoned in London alone. The king's Declaration of Indulgence twelve years later set free twelve hundred Quakers who had found their way to the gaols. For not only had persecution failed to kill religious liberty, but the very Puritanism which the Cavalier Parliament believed itself to have trodden under foot was at this moment proving the noble life it had drawn from suffering and defeat. It was at this moment that Milton produced the "Paradise Lost." During the Civil War he had been engaged in strife with Presbyterians and with Royalists, pleading for civil and religious freedom, for freedom of social life and freedom of the press. At a later time he became Latin secretary to the Protector in spite of a blindness which had been brought on by the intensity of his study. The Restoration found him of all living men the most hateful to the Royalists, for it was his "Defence of the English People" which had justified throughout Europe the execution of the king. Parliament ordered his book to be burnt by the common hangman; he was for a time imprisoned; and even when released he had to live amidst threats of assassination from fanatical Cavaliers. To the ruin of his cause were added personal misfortunes in the bankruptcy of the scrivener who held the bulk of his property, and in the Fire of London which deprived him of much of what
6-232] was left. As age drew on he found himself reduced to comparative poverty and driven to sell his library for subsistence. Even among the Sectaries who shared his political opinions Milton stood in religious opinion alone, for he had gradually severed himself from every accepted form of faith, had embraced Arianism, and had ceased to attend at any place of worship.

His Life.

Nor was his home a happy one. The grace and geniality of his youth disappeared in the drudgery of a schoolmaster's life and amongst the invectives of controversy. In age his temper became stern and exacting. His daughters, who were forced to read to their blind father in languages which they could not understand, revolted against their bondage. But solitude and misfortune only brought into bolder relief Milton's inner greatness. There was a grand simplicity in the life of his later years. He listened every

morning to a chapter of the Hebrew Bible, and after musing in silence for a while pursued his studies till mid-day. Then he took exercise for an hour, played for another hour on the organ or viol, and renewed his studies. The evening was spent in converse with visitors and friends. For, lonely and unpopular as Milton was, there was one thing about him which made his house in Bunhill Fields a place of pilgrimage to the wits of the Restoration. He was the last of the Elizabethans. He had possibly seen Shakspere, as on his
6-233] visits to London after his retirement to Stratford the playwright passed along Bread Street to his wit combats at the Mermaid. He had been the contemporary of Webster and Massinger, of Herrick and Crashaw. His "Comus" and "Arcades" had rivalled the masques of Ben Jonson. It was with a reverence drawn from thoughts like these that men looked on the blind poet as he sate, clad in black, in his chamber hung with rusty green tapestry, his fair brown hair falling as of old over a calm serene face that still retained much of its youthful beauty, his cheeks delicately coloured, his clear grey eyes showing no trace of their blindness. But famous whether for good or ill as his prose writings had made him, during fifteen years only a few sonnets had broken his silence as a singer. It was now in his blindness and old age, with the cause he loved trodden under foot by men as vile as the rabble in "Comus," that the genius of Milton took refuge in the great poem on which through years of silence his imagination had been brooding.

The "Paradise Lost."

On his return from his travels in Italy Milton spoke of himself as musing on "a work not to be raised from the heat of youth or the vapours of wine, like that which flows at waste from the pen of some vulgar amourist or the trencher fury of a rhyming parasite, nor to be obtained by the invocation of Dame Memory and her Siren daughters, but by devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit who can enrich with all utterance and
6-234] knowledge, and sends out His Seraphim with the hallowed fire of His altar to touch and purify the lips of whom He pleases." His lips were touched at last. In the quiet retreat of his home in Bunhill Fields he mused during these years of persecution and loneliness on the "Paradise Lost." The poem was published in 1667, seven years after the Restoration, and four years later appeared the "Paradise Regained" and "Samson Agonistes," in the severe grandeur of whose verse we see the poet himself "fallen," like Samson, "on evil days and evil tongues, with darkness and with danger compassed round." But great as the two last works were their greatness was eclipsed by that of their predecessor. The whole genius of Milton expressed itself in the "Paradise Lost." The romance, the gorgeous fancy, the daring imagination which he shared with the Elizabethan poets, the large but ordered beauty which he had drunk in from the literature of Greece and Rome, the sublimity of conception, the loftiness of phrase which he owed to the Bible, blended in this story "of man's first disobedience, and the fruit of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste brought death into the world and all our woe." It is only when we review the strangely mingled elements which make up the poem that we realize the genius which fused them into such a perfect whole. The meagre outline of the Hebrew legend is lost in the splendour and music of Milton's verse. The stern
6-235] idealism of Geneva is clothed in the gorgeous robes of the Renascence. If we miss something of the free play of Spenser's fancy, and yet more of the imaginative delight in their own creations which gives so exquisite a life to the poetry of the early dramatists, we find in place of these the noblest example which our literature affords of the majesty of classic form.

The Epic of Puritanism.

But it is not with the literary value of the "Paradise Lost" that we are here concerned. Its historic importance lies in this, that it is the Epic of Puritanism. Its scheme is the problem with which the Puritan wrestled in hours of gloom and darkness—the problem of sin and redemption, of the world-wide struggle of evil against good. The intense moral concentration of the Puritan had given an almost bodily shape to spiritual abstractions before Milton gave life and being to the forms of Sin and Death. It was the Puritan tendency to mass into one vast "body of sin" the various forms of human evil, and by the very force of a passionate hatred to exaggerate their magnitude and their power, to which we owe the conception of Milton's Satan. The greatness of the Puritan aim in the long and wavering struggle for justice and law and a higher good, the grandeur of character which the contest developed, the colossal forms of good and evil which moved over its stage, the debates and conspiracies and battles which had been men's life for twenty
6-236] years, the mighty eloquence and the mightier ambition which the war had roused into being—all left their mark on the "Paradise Lost." Whatever was highest and best in the Puritan temper spoke in the nobleness and elevation of the poem, in its purity of tone, in its loftiness of conception, in its ordered and equable realization of a great purpose. Even in his boldest flights Milton is calm and master of himself. His touch is always sure. Whether he passes from Heaven to Hell or from the council hall of Satan to the sweet conference of Adam and Eve his tread is steady and unfaltering.

Its defects.

But if the poem expresses the higher qualities of the Puritan temper it expresses no less exactly its defects. Throughout it we feel almost painfully a want of the finer and subtler sympathies, of a large and genial humanity, of a sense of spiritual mystery. Dealing as Milton does with subjects the most awful and mysterious that poet ever chose, he is never troubled by the obstinate questionings of invisible things which haunted the imagination of Shakspere. We look in vain for any Æschylean background of the vast unknown. "Man's disobedience" and the scheme for man's redemption are laid down as clearly and with just as little mystery as in a Puritan discourse. On topics such as these, even God the Father (to borrow Pope's sneer) "turns a school divine." As in his earlier poems he had ordered and arranged nature, so in
6-237] the "Paradise Lost" Milton orders and arranges Heaven and Hell. His mightiest figures, Angel or Archangel, Satan or Belial, stand out colossal but distinct. There is just as little of the wide sympathy with all that is human which is so lovable in Chaucer and Shakspere. On the contrary the Puritan individuality is nowhere so overpowering as in Milton. He leaves the stamp of himself deeply graven on all he creates. We hear his voice in every line of his poem. The cold, severe conception of moral virtue which reigns throughout it, the intellectual way in which he paints and regards beauty (for the beauty of Eve is a beauty which no mortal man may love) are Milton's own. We feel his inmost temper in the stoical self-repression which gives its dignity to his figures. Adam utters no cry of agony when he is driven from Paradise. Satan suffers in a defiant silence. It is to this intense self-concentration that we must attribute the strange deficiency of humour which the poet shared with the Puritans generally, and which here and there breaks the sublimity of the poem with strange slips into the grotesque. But it is above all to this Puritan deficiency in human sympathy that we must attribute Milton's wonderful want of dramatic genius. Of the power which creates a thousand different characters, which endows each with its appropriate act and word, which loses itself in its own creations, no great poet ever had less.

The Naval War.

6-238] While Milton was busy with his verse events were moving fast in favour of the cause which he saw trodden under foot. Defeat had only spurred the Dutch to fresh efforts. Their best seaman, De Ruyter, had reorganized their fleet, and appeared off the North Foreland in May 1666, with eighty-eight vessels, stronger and better armed than those of Opdam. The English fleet was almost as strong; but a squadron had been detached under Prince Rupert to meet a French force reported to be at Belleisle, and it was with but sixty ships that the new admiral, Monk, Duke of Albemarle, fell in with De Ruyter's armament. There was no thought however of retreat, and a fight at once began, the longest and most stubborn that the seas have ever seen. The battle had raged for two whole days, and Monk, left with only sixteen ships uninjured, saw himself on the brink of ruin, when on the morning of the third he was saved by the arrival of Rupert. Though still greatly inferior in force, the dogged admiral renewed the fight on the fourth day as the Dutch drew off to their own coast, but the combat again ended in De Ruyter's favour and the English took refuge in the Thames. Their fleet was indeed ruined; twenty ships had been taken or sunk and a far larger number disabled; but the losses of the enemy had been hardly less. What the Dutch had discovered, owned De Witt, was, "that English sailors might be killed and English ships burned, but that there was no
6-239] conquering Englishmen." At the close of July in fact the two fleets, again refitted, met anew off the North Foreland; and a second fight, as hard fought as that which had gone before, ended in an English victory. Twenty Dutch sail had struck or sunk, seven thousand Dutch seamen had been slain, while the English loss was comparatively small. The victorious fleet sailed along the rich coast of Holland, burning merchantmen and plundering its undefended towns. But Holland was as unconquerable as England herself. In a short time the Dutch fleet was again refitted and at sea, and Lewis, whose aid had hitherto been only in words, thought it time to act. The French fleet joined the Dutch, and the English found themselves too inferior in force to venture on a fresh battle for the command of the Channel.

Parliament and the War.

It was at this moment of national disappointment, with the fruit of great efforts snatched away and the sea lost, that a fresh calamity at home was added to the sufferings of the war. In the night of the second of September a fire broke out in the heart of London which raged for four days and reduced the city to ashes from the Tower to the Temple. Thirteen hundred houses and ninety churches were destroyed. The loss of merchandise and property was beyond count. Again the Parliament with stubborn pride voted a subsidy of
6-240] nearly two millions to refit the fleet. But the money came in slowly. The treasury was so utterly drained that it was agreed to fit out no large ships for the coming year. The ministers indeed were already seeking to conclude a peace through the mediation of France. It was not the public distress alone which drove Clarendon to peace negotiations: his own fears and those of the king had been alike fulfilled as the war went on. The country squires were disgusted at the obstinacy and cost of the struggle, and they visited their disgust on Clarendon as its supposed author. He had lost the support of the Houses, and the admission of fresh opponents into the royal council spoke of the secret enmity of the king. But Charles too had his reasons for desiring peace. He had a sleepless distrust of Parliaments, and his distrust was already justified. The "Cavalier" Parliament had met in a passion of loyalty. It had pressed for the death of the regicides. It had hardly been hindered from throwing all England into confusion by refusing its assent to the Amnesty Bill. It had ordered the League and Covenant, as well as the act deposing Charles Stuart, to be burned by the common hangman. It had declared the taking up arms against the king on any pretext to be treason, and had turned its declaration into a test to be exacted from every parson and every alderman. And yet this loyal Parliament had faced and checked the Crown as boldly and pertinaciously as the Long
6-241] Parliament itself. It had carried out its own ecclesiastical policy in the teeth of the known wishes of the king. It had humiliated him by forcing him to cancel his public declaration in favour of the Nonconformists. It gave counsel in foreign affairs, and met the king's leanings towards Lewis by expressions of its will for a contest with France. It voted large subsidies indeed, but at this juncture it inserted into the Subsidy Bill a clause which appointed a Parliamentary commission with powers to examine into the royal expenditure, and to question royal officers upon oath.

The Dutch in the Medway.

To Clarendon such a demand seemed as great an usurpation on the rights of the Crown as any measure of the Long Parliament, and he advised a dissolution. But the advice was rejected, for there was no hope that fresh elections could bring together a more royalist House of Commons than that of 1661. The attitude of the Houses showed in fact that the hottest Royalists had learned, whether they would or no, the lesson of the Civil War. Whatever might in other ways be the temper of the Commons who assembled at Westminster, it was certain that the great constitutional revolution which was slowly removing the control of affairs from the hands of the Crown into those of the Parliament would go just as steadily on. But if Charles refused to dissolve the Parliament he longed to free himself from its power; and the mediation of
6-242] France enabled a peace congress to assemble at Breda in May 1667. To Holland, eager to free its hands so as to deal with the French invasion of the Netherlands, an invasion which was now felt to be impending, peace was yet more important than to England; and a stroke of singular vigour placed peace within her grasp. Aware of the exhaustion of the English treasury and of the miserable state of the English navy, the persevering De Witt suddenly ordered the Dutch fleet, sixty vessels strong, to sail in June to the Thames. England was taken utterly by surprise. Neither ships nor forts were manned when the Hollanders appeared at the Nore. Pushing their light vessels without show of opposition up the Thames to Gravesend they forced the boom which protected the Medway, burned three men-of-war which lay anchored in the river, and withdrew only to sail proudly along the coast, the masters of the Channel.

Fall of Clarendon.

The thunder of the Dutch guns in the Medway and the Thames woke England to a bitter sense of its degradation. The dream of loyalty was roughly broken. "Everybody nowadays," Pepys tells us, "reflect upon Oliver and commend him, what brave things he did, and made all the neighbour princes fear him." But Oliver's successor was coolly watching this shame and discontent of his people with the one aim of turning it to his own advantage. To Charles the Second the degradation of England was only a move in the
6-243] political game which he was playing, a game played with so consummate a secrecy and skill that it not only deceived close observers of his own day but still misleads historians in ours. The blow at once brought about the peace he desired. Each of the combatants retained what it had won, save that Holland gained the isle of Polaroon on the Bombay coast, and England the settlement of New Amsterdam on the Hudson, which was soon to be better known as her colony of New York. A result still more to the king's taste was the ruin of Clarendon. Clarendon had had no part in the reduction of the navy which had proved

so fatal to English renown, but the public resentment fell on him alone. The Parliament, enraged by his counsel for its dissolution, saw in his call for forces to defend the coast an attempt to re-establish the one thing they hated most, a standing army. Charles could at last free himself from the minister who had held him in check so long. In August 1667 the Chancellor was dismissed from office, and driven by the express command of the king to take refuge in France.

6-244]

CHAPTER II
THE POPISH PLOT
1667-1683

The Cabal Ministry.

The fall of Clarendon marks a new epoch in the history of the Restoration. By the exile of the Chancellor, the death of Lord Southampton, which had preceded, and the retirement of Ormond and Nicholas which followed it, the constitutional loyalists who had hitherto shaped the policy of the government disappeared from the royal council. The union between King, Church, and Parliament, on which their system had been based, was roughly dissolved. The House of Commons, which had been elected in a passion of loyalty only six years before, found itself thrown into a position of antagonism to the Crown. The Church saw the most formidable opponent of its supremacy in the king.

6-245] For the first time since his accession Charles came boldly forward to the front of public affairs. He had freed himself, as he believed, from the domination of the constitutional loyalists and of the ministers who represented them. The new ministry was mainly made up of that section of the original ministry of 1660 which then represented the Presbyterians, and which under Ashley's guidance had bent to purchase toleration even at the cost of increasing the prerogatives of the Crown. Ashley himself remained Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Duke of Buckingham, whose marriage with the daughter of Lord Fairfax allied him with the Presbyterians, and who carried on political relations even with the Independents, held a leading position in the new Cabinet, though at first without office. Sir William Coventry, a bitter opponent of Clarendon, took his seat at the Treasury board. The direction of Scotch affairs was left to Lord Lauderdale, a man of rough and insolent manner but of striking ability, and whose political views coincided as yet mainly with those of Ashley. Two great posts however were filled by men whose elevation showed the new part which Charles himself was resolved to take in the task of administration. Foreign affairs the king determined to take into his own hands: and this was adroitly managed by the nomination of Henry Bennet, now become Earl of Arlington, as Secretary of State. Bennet was a man of sense and experience, but he was flexible and unprincipled, he was in heart a Catholic, and ready to serve as a
6-246] creature of the royal will. Sir Thomas Clifford, the new head of the Treasury, was a Catholic by conviction, and ready to sacrifice English freedom if the sacrifice would bring back England to his faith.

The Cabal.

Such was the ministry which from the accidental coincidence of the initial letters of the names of five of its members with those which make up the word was known as the Cabal. But the word Cabala, or Cabal, had as yet none of the odious meaning which after events attached to it; it meant indeed simply what we mean by "cabinet." Nor was there anything in the temper or conduct of the new ministers which foreboded ill. To all but the king and themselves the Catholic sympathies of Clifford and Arlington were unknown. The ministry seemed to represent the Presbyterians, and the Presbyterians as a party were true to the cause of freedom for which they had fought. Nor did the earlier acts of the "Cabal" belie its origin. Few ministries in fact have shown at their outset greater vigour or wisdom. Its first work was the Triple Alliance. The warlike outburst of feeling in the Parliament at the prospect of a struggle with France had warned the French and English kings that a strife which both desired rather to limit than to widen must be brought to an end. The dexterous delays of Charles were seconded by the eagerness with which Lewis pressed on the Peace of Breda between England and the Dutch. To Lewis indeed it seemed as if the hour
6-247] he had so long waited for was come. He had secured the neutrality of the Emperor by a secret treaty which provided for a division of the Spanish dominions between the two monarchs in case the king of Spain died without an heir. England, as he believed, was held in check by Charles, and like Holland was too exhausted by the late war to meddle with a new one. On the very day therefore on which the Treaty of Breda was signed he sent in his formal claims on the Low Countries, and his army at once took the field. Flanders was occupied and six great fortresses secured in two months. Franche Comté was overrun in seventeen days.

English Diplomacy.

But the suddenness and completeness of the French success woke a general terror before which the king's skilful diplomacy gave way. Holland, roused to a sense of danger by the appearance of French arms on the Rhine, protested and appealed to England for aid; and though her appeals remained at first unanswered, even England was roused from her lethargy by the French seizure of the coast towns of Flanders. The earlier efforts of English diplomacy indeed were of a selfish and unscrupulous kind. Holland, Spain, and France were tempted in turn by secret offers of alliance. A treaty offensive and defensive against all powers for the defence of the Spanish Netherlands was proposed to the Dutch. Spain was
6-248] offered alliance and aid in return for the concession of free trade with her dominions in America and the Philippines. Before France was laid the project of an offensive and defensive alliance directed especially against Holland, and perhaps against Spain, in return for which England stipulated for admission to a share in the eventual partition of the Spanish dominions, and for an assignment to her in such a case of the Spanish Empire in the New World. Each of these offers was alike refused. Spain looked on them as insincere. France regarded the terms of alliance as extravagant, while she was anxious to hold the Dutch to their present friendship and inactivity rather than to stir them to war. Holland itself, while desirous to check French ambition, still clung to its French alliance.

The Triple Alliance.

Repulsed as they were on every side, the need of action became clearer every hour to the English ministers. The common refusal of France and the Dutch roused fears that these powers were secretly leagued for a partition of the Netherlands between them. Wider views too gradually set aside the narrow dreams of merely national aggrandizement. To Ashley and his followers an increase of the French power

seemed dangerous not only to the European balance of power but to English Protestantism. Even Arlington, Catholic as in heart he was, thought more of the political interests of England and of the invariable resolve of its statesmen since Elizabeth's day to keep the French out of Flanders than of the
6-249] interests of Catholicism. One course alone remained. To lull the general excitement Lewis had offered peace to Spain on terms either of the cession of Franche Comté or of the retention of his conquests in the Netherlands. The plan of John de Witt, the Pensionary of Holland, was to take France at its word and to force on Spain the acceptance of these terms by the joint pressure of England and the United Provinces. It was this plan which England suddenly adopted. In the opening of 1668 Sir William Temple was despatched to the Hague, and an alliance was concluded between England and Holland, in which Sweden, the third great Protestant power, was soon included.

Few measures have won a greater popularity than this Triple Alliance. "It is the only good public thing," says Pepys, "that hath been done since the king came to England." Even Dryden, writing at the time as a Tory, counted among the worst of Shaftesbury's crimes that "the Triple Bond he broke." In form indeed the alliance simply bound Lewis to adhere to terms of peace proposed by himself and those advantageous terms, the possession of the southern half of Flanders and of a string of fortresses which practically left him master of the Spanish Netherlands. But in fact it utterly ruined his plans. His offer of peace had been meant only as a blind. At the moment when Temple reached the Hague Lewis was writing to his general,
6-250] Turenne, "I am turning over in my head things that are far from impossible, and go to carry them into execution whatever they may cost." Three armies were ready to march at once on Spain, Germany, and the Netherlands, when the intervention of the three powers suddenly arrested these schemes of conquest and forced Lewis to conclude peace at Aix-la-Chapelle. But the immediate gain was the least result of the Triple Alliance. It brought about that union of the powers of Europe against which, as Lewis felt instinctively, his ambition would dash itself in vain. It was Arlington's aim to make the Alliance the nucleus of a greater confederation: and he tried not only to perpetuate it but to include within it the Swiss Cantons, the Empire, and the House of Austria. His efforts were foiled; but the "Triple Bond" bore within it the germs of the Grand Alliance which at last saved Europe. To England it at once brought back the reputation which she had lost since the death of Cromwell. It was a sign of her re-entry on the general stage of European politics, and of her formal adoption of the balance of power as a policy essential to the welfare not of one or another nation but of Europe at large.

Lewis and Holland.

Lewis was maddened by the check. But it was not so much the action of England which galled his pride as the action of Holland. That "a nation of shopkeepers," for Lewis applied the phrase to the United
6-251] Provinces long before Napoleon applied it to England, should have foiled his plans at the very moment of their realization "stung him," as he owned, "to the quick." He had always disliked the Dutch as Protestants and Republicans; he hated them now as an obstacle which must be taken out of his way ere he could resume his projects upon Spain. If he refrained from an instant attack on them it was to nurse a surer revenge. Four years were spent in preparations for a decisive blow. The French army was gradually raised to a hundred and eighty thousand men, while Colbert created a fleet which rivalled that of Holland in number and equipment. The steady aim of French diplomacy from the moment when Lewis was forced to sign the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was to isolate the United Provinces, to secure the neutrality of the Empire in any attack on them, to break the Triple Alliance by detaching Sweden from it and securing Charles, and to leave the Dutch without help save from the ineffectual good-will of Brandenburg and Spain.

Charles and the Cabal.

In England the French designs were favoured by the political difficulties which at once followed on the fall of Clarendon. The new Ministry, representing as it did the Presbyterian party and a policy of toleration, was in itself a declaration on the king's part that the executive power was no longer necessarily
6-252] to act in harmonious co-operation with the Parliament. Its first steps in releasing Nonconformists from prison, in suffering conventicles to reopen, and suspending the operation of the Act of Uniformity, were in open defiance of the known will of the two Houses. But when Charles again proposed to his counsellors a general toleration he no longer found himself supported by them as in 1663. Even Ashley's mood was changed. The policy of the Council in fact was determined by the look of public affairs abroad. The victories of Lewis, the sudden revelation of the strength of France, roused even in the most tolerant minds a dread of Catholicism. Men felt instinctively that the very existence of Protestantism and with it of civil freedom was again to be at stake. Instead of toleration therefore the ministers pressed for a union of Protestants which would have utterly foiled the king's projects; and a scheme of Protestant comprehension which had been approved by the moderate divines on both sides, by Tillotson and Stillingfleet on the part of the Church as well as by Manton and Baxter on the part of the Nonconformists, was laid before the House of Commons in the session of 1668. Even its rejection failed to bring back Ashley and his party to their old position. They were still for toleration. But they were for a toleration the benefit of which did not extend to Catholics, "in respect the laws have determined the principles of the Romish religion to be inconsistent with the safety of your Majesty's person and government."

Parliament and the Cabal.

6-253] Again Charles was baffled. He had overthrown Clarendon in the belief that the Nonconformists must necessarily support him in the general reversal of Clarendon's policy. He found not only that to obtain a toleration for Catholics from his new ministers was as impossible as to obtain it from Clarendon himself, but that they were resolute to bring about that union of Protestants which Charles regarded as fatal to his designs and which the Chancellor's policy had at any rate prevented. Luckily for the king neither their new attitude at home nor their success abroad could win them the confidence of the House of Commons. As soon as it met they became the object of bitter attack. Their Comprehension Bill was rejected. Their suspension of the penalties for Nonconformity was denounced. "We shall remain unhappy," said one of the leaders of the Commons, Sir Edward Seymour, "so long as his Majesty retains his present counsellors." It was in fact only by an early prorogation which was prolonged throughout the year that the ministers were saved from impeachment. Such a course however gave but a temporary respite; and Buckingham and Ashley pressed on Charles the advisability of a dissolution. The House of Commons, they held, chosen as it had been eight years before in a moment of reaction, no longer really represented public opinion, and a
6-254] new House would contain a larger proportion of members inclined to a policy of Protestant union. But

Charles refused to dissolve the House. A Protestant union in fact was precisely what he wished to avoid. The pressure of a Parliament with Presbyterian leanings would be yet more fatal to the administrative independence he wished to maintain than a Cavalier Parliament. Above all such a Parliament would at once force him to take up a distinctly Protestant attitude, and to place himself at the head of the Protestant States as the leader in a European resistance to the supremacy of Catholicism and of France as the representative of Catholicism. How little such an attitude was to the king's taste we have already seen. He had been stirred to a momentary pride by the success of the Triple Alliance, but he had never in heart abandoned his older policy. He still looked to France and to Catholicism as the most effective means of restoring his prerogative; and the sudden revelation of the power of Lewis, however it might startle his ministers into anxiety for freedom and Protestantism, only roused in the heart of their royal master a longing to turn it to the advantage of his crown.

Conversion of James.

Tempted however as he must have been to a new turn in his policy by the failure of his older plans at home and the display of French greatness, the sudden and decisive turn which he actually gave it was due
6-255] above all to an event which, unknown as it as yet remained to Englishmen, was destined to exercise a vast influence from this moment on English politics. This was the conversion of his brother and presumptive successor James, Duke of York, to the Catholic faith. Though finally completed in the spring of 1672, this had for some time been imminent. The dull, truthful temper of the Duke hindered him from listening to his brother's remonstrances against this step; but Charles was far too keen-witted to be blind to the difficulties in which it was certain to involve him. That either Churchman or Presbyterian should sit still and wait patiently the advent of a Catholic king, and above all a king whose temper would necessarily make him a Catholic bigot, was, as he foresaw, impossible. The step could not long be concealed; and when once it was known a demand would arise for the exclusion of James from the succession, or at the least for securities which would fetter the Crown. Even if such a demand were surmounted a struggle between James and the Parliament was in the end inevitable, and such a struggle, if it ever arose, could end only in the establishment of Catholicism and despotism or in the expulsion of James from the throne. To foresee these consequences required no great keenness of sight; they were as plainly foreseen by Ashley and the bulk of Englishmen, when once the truth was known, as by Charles. But Charles was far
6-256] from contenting himself with foreseeing them. He resolved to anticipate the danger by hurrying on the struggle which was certain to come. France alone could help him in forcing despotism and Catholicism on England, and from this moment Charles surrendered himself utterly to France. He declared to Lewis his purpose of entering into an alliance with him, offensive and defensive. He owned to being the only man in his kingdom who desired such a league, but he was determined, he said, to realize his desire, whatever might be the sentiments of his ministers.

Treaty of Dover.

His ministers indeed he meant either to bring over to his schemes or to outwit. Two of them, Arlington and Clifford, were Catholics in heart like the king; and in January 1669 they were summoned with the Duke of York and two Catholic nobles, Lords Bellasys and Arundell, to a conference in which Charles, after pledging them to secrecy, declared himself a Catholic and asked their counsel as to the means of establishing the Catholic religion in his realm. It was resolved to apply to Lewis for aid in this purpose; and Charles proceeded to seek from the king a "protection," to use the words of the French ambassador, "of which he always hoped to feel the powerful effects in the execution of his design of changing the present state of religion in England for a better, and of establishing his authority so as to be able to retain
6-257] his subjects in the obedience they owe him." He was fully aware of the price he must pay for such a protection. Lewis was bent on the ruin of Holland and the annexation of Flanders. With the ink of the Triple Alliance hardly dry Charles promised help in both these designs. The Netherlands indeed could not be saved if Holland fell, and the fall of Holland was as needful for the success of the plans of Charles as of Lewis. It was impossible for Holland to look with indifference on the conversion of England into a Catholic power, and in the struggle to make it one the aid of the Dutch would be secured for the king's opponents. Charles offered therefore to declare his religion and to join France in an attack on Holland if Lewis would grant him a subsidy equal to a million a year. In the event of the king of Spain's death without a son Charles pledged himself to support France in her claims upon Flanders, while Lewis, made wiser by the results of his previous refusal, promised in such a case to assent to the designs of England on the Spanish dominions in America. On this basis, after a year's negotiations, a secret treaty was concluded in May 1670 at Dover in an interview between Charles and his sister Henrietta, the Duchess of Orleans. It provided that Charles should announce his conversion, and that in case of any disturbance arising from such a step he should be supported by a French army and a French subsidy. War was to be declared by
6-258] both powers against Holland, England furnishing only a small land force, but bearing the chief burthen of the contest at sea on condition of an annual subsidy of three hundred thousand pounds.

The Cabal and the War.

Nothing marks better the political profligacy of the age than that Arlington, the author of the Triple Alliance, should have been chosen as the confidant of Charles in his Treaty of Dover. But to all save Arlington and Clifford the king's change of religion or his political aims remained utterly unknown. It would have been impossible to obtain the consent of the party in the royal council which represented the old Presbyterians, of Ashley or Lauderdale or the Duke of Buckingham, to the Treaty of Dover. But it was possible to trick them into approval of a war with Holland by playing on their desire for a toleration of the Nonconformists. The announcement of the king's Catholicism was therefore deferred; and a series of mock negotiations, carried on through Buckingham, ended in the conclusion of a sham treaty which was communicated to Lauderdale and to Ashley, a treaty which suppressed all mention of the religious changes, or of the promise of French aid in bringing them about, and simply stipulated for a joint war against the Dutch. In such a war there was no formal breach of the Triple Alliance, for the Triple Alliance only guarded against an attack on the dominions of Spain, and Ashley and his colleagues were lured into assent to it in 1671 by the promise of toleration.

Ashley and the Dutch War.

6-259] Toleration was still Ashley's first thought. He had provided for it only a year before in the constitution which he had drawn up with the aid of Locke for the new Colony of Carolina, which drew its name from King Charles. He looked the more hopefully to the king that in Scotland toleration had already been brought about by the royal authority. Nowhere had the system of conformity been more rigidly carried out

than in the northern kingdom. Not only was the renunciation of the Covenant exacted from every parson and official, but it was proposed to extend it to every subject in the realm. The fall of Clarendon, however, at once brought about a change. Lauderdale, who now took the lead in Scotch affairs, published in 1669 a royal decree which enabled many of the Presbyterian ministers to return to their flocks. A parliament which was called under his influence not only recognized the royal supremacy, but owned the king's right to order the government of the Church and to dispense with ecclesiastical laws. The new system was just set on foot in Scotland when Charles came forward to tempt his English ministers with the same pledge of toleration. With characteristic audacity he removed the one stumbling-block in the way of his project by yielding the point to which he had hitherto clung, and promising, as Ashley demanded, that no Catholic
6-260] should be benefited by the Indulgence. Whether the pledge of toleration was the only motive which induced the ministers to consent to the war with Holland it is hard to tell. Ashley had shown in bringing about the previous strife that he was no friend of the Dutch. He regarded a close alliance with France as the one means by which Charles could find himself strong enough to maintain religious liberty against the pressure of the Parliament. It is possible that like most statesmen of the time he looked on the ruin of Holland as a thing inevitable, and was willing to gain for England whatever he could out of the wreck. If the United Provinces were to become a part of France it was better that a part of their territory, and that the most important part, the Brill, Flushing, and the mouths of the Scheldt, should fall as had been stipulated to England than that Lewis should have all.

The Declaration of Indulgence.

But whatever may have been the motives which influenced Ashley and his colleagues the bargain was at last struck; and now that his ministers were outwitted it only remained for Charles to outwit his Parliament. At the close of 1670 a large subsidy was demanded for the fleet under the pretext of upholding the Triple Alliance; and the subsidy was granted. In the spring of 1671 the two Houses were adjourned and vigorous preparations were made for the coming struggle. But as the rumours of war
6-261] gathered strength the country at once became restless and dissatisfied. The power of Lewis, the renewed persecutions of the Huguenots, had increased the national hatred of the French. Protestants' hearts too trembled, as Baxter tells us, at the menacing armaments of the "Catholic King." On the other hand the sense of a common interest and a common danger had changed the old jealousy of Holland into a growing inclination towards the Dutch. Charles and his ministers stood almost alone in their resolve. "Nearly all the court and all the members of Parliament that are in town," wrote the French ambassador, "make cabals to turn the king from his designs." Prince Rupert and the Duke of Ormond, the heads of the old Royalist and constitutional party, supported the Dutch embassy which was sent to meet the offers of mediation made by Spain. So great was the pressure that Charles was only able to escape from it by plunging hastily into hostilities. In March 1672 a captain in the king's service attacked a Dutch convoy in the Channel. The attack was at once followed by a declaration of war, and fresh supplies were obtained for the coming struggle by closing the Exchequer and suspending, under Clifford's advice, the payment of either principal or interest on loans advanced to the public Treasury. The suspension spread bankruptcy among half the goldsmiths of London; but with the opening of the war Ashley and his colleagues gained
6-262] the toleration they had bought so dear. By virtue of his ecclesiastical powers the king ordered "that all manner of penal laws on matters ecclesiastical against whatever sort of Nonconformists or recusants should be from that day suspended," and gave liberty of public worship to all dissidents save Catholics who were allowed to say mass only in private houses.

Bunyan.

The effect of the Declaration of Indulgence went far to justify Ashley and his colleagues (if anything could justify their course) in the bargain by which they purchased toleration. Ministers returned after years of banishment to their homes and flocks. Chapels were reopened. The gaols were emptied. Hundreds of Quakers who had been the special objects of persecution were set free to worship God after their own fashion. John Bunyan left the prison which had for twelve years been his home. We have seen the atmosphere of excited feeling in which the youth of Bunyan had been spent. From his childhood he heard heavenly voices and saw visions of heaven; from his childhood too he had been wrestling with an overpowering sense of sin which sickness and repeated escapes from death did much as he grew up to deepen. But in spite of his self-reproaches his life was a religious one; and the purity and sobriety of his youth were shown by his admission at seventeen into the ranks of the "New Model." Two years later the
6-263] war was over, and Bunyan, though hardly twenty, found himself married in 1645 to a "godly" wife as young and penniless as himself. So poor were the young couple that they could scarce muster a spoon and a plate between them; and the poverty of their home deepened perhaps the gloom of the young tinker's restlessness and religious depression. His wife did what she could to comfort him, teaching him again to read and write for he had forgotten his school-learning, and reading with him in two little "godly" books which formed his library. But darkness only gathered the thicker round his imaginative soul. "I walked," he tells us of this time, "to a neighbouring town; and sate down upon a settle in the street, and fell into a very deep pause about the most fearful state my sin had brought me to; and after long musing I lifted up my head; but methought I saw as if the sun that shineth in the heavens did grudge to give me light and as if the very stones in the street and tiles upon the houses did band themselves against me. Methought that they all combined together to banish me out of the world. I was abhorred of them, and wept to dwell among them, because I had sinned against the Saviour. Oh, how happy now was every creature over I; for they stood fast and kept their station. But I was gone and lost."

Bunyan in prison.

At last in 1653 after more than two years of this struggle the darkness broke. Bunyan felt himself
6-264] "converted" and freed from the burthen of his sin. He joined a Baptist church at Bedford, and a few years later he became famous as a preacher. As he held no formal post of minister in the congregation, his preaching even under the Protectorate was illegal and "gave great offence," he tells us, "to the doctors and priests of that county." He persisted, however, with little real molestation until the Restoration, but only six months had passed after the king's return when he was committed to Bedford Gaol on a charge of preaching in unlicensed conventicles. His refusal to promise to abstain from preaching kept him there eleven years. The gaol was crowded with prisoners like himself, and amongst them he continued his ministry, supporting himself by making tagged thread laces, and finding some comfort in the Bible, the "Book of Martyrs," and the writing materials which he was suffered to have with him in his prison. But he was in the prime of life; his age was thirty-two when he was imprisoned; and the inactivity and severance

from his wife and little children were hard to bear. "The parting with my wife and poor children," he says in words of simple pathos, "hath often been to me in this place as the pulling of the flesh from the bones, and that not only because I am somewhat too fond of those great mercies, but also because I should have often brought to my mind the many hardships, miseries, and wants that my poor family was like to meet
6-265] with should I be taken from them, especially my poor blind child who lay nearer to my heart than all besides. Oh, the thoughts of the hardships I thought my poor blind one might go under would break my heart to pieces. 'Poor child,' thought I, 'what sorrow art thou like to have for thy portion in this world! Thou must be beaten, must beg, suffer hunger, cold, nakedness, and a thousand calamities, though I cannot now endure the wind should blow upon thee.'" But suffering could not break his purpose, and Bunyan found compensation for the narrow bounds of his prison in the wonderful activity of his pen. Tracts, controversial treatises, poems, meditations, his "Grace Abounding," and his "Holy City," followed each other in quick succession. It was in his gaol that he wrote the first and greatest part of his "Pilgrim's Progress."

The "Pilgrim's Progress."

The book had only just been completed when the Indulgence set Bunyan free. Its publication was the earliest result indeed of his deliverance, and the popularity which it enjoyed from the first proves that the religious sympathies of the English people were still mainly Puritan. Before Bunyan's death in 1688 ten editions of the "Pilgrim's Progress" had already been sold; and though even Cowper hardly dared to quote it a century later for fear of moving a smile in the polite world about him, its favour among the middle
6-266] classes and the poor has grown steadily from its author's day to our own. It is now the most popular and the most widely known of all English books. In none do we see more clearly the new imaginative force which had been given to the common life of Englishmen by their study of the Bible. Its English is the simplest and homeliest English which has ever been used by any great English writer; but it is the English of the Bible. The images of the "Pilgrim's Progress" are the images of prophet and evangelist; it borrows for its tenderer outbursts the very verse of the Song of Songs and pictures the Heavenly City in the words of the Apocalypse. But so completely has the Bible become Bunyan's life that one feels its phrases as the natural expression of his thoughts. He has lived in the Bible till its words have become his own. He has lived among its visions and voices of heaven till all sense of possible unreality has died away. He tells his tale with such a perfect naturalness that allegories become living things, that the Slough of Despond and Doubting Castle are as real to us as places we see every day, that we know Mr. Legality and Mr. Worldly Wiseman as if we had met them in the street. It is in this amazing reality of impersonation that Bunyan's imaginative genius specially displays itself. But this is far from being his only excellence. In its range, in
6-267] its directness, in its simple grace, in the ease with which it changes from lively dialogue to dramatic action, from simple pathos to passionate earnestness, in the subtle and delicate fancy which often suffuses its childlike words, in its playful humour, its bold character-painting, in the even and balanced power which passes without effort from the Valley of the Shadow of Death to the land "where the Shining Ones commonly walked because it was on the borders of heaven," in its sunny kindliness unbroken by one bitter word, the "Pilgrim's Progress" is among the noblest of English poems. For if Puritanism had first discovered the poetry which contact with the spiritual world awakes in the meanest souls, Bunyan was the first of the Puritans who revealed this poetry to the outer world. The journey of Christian from the City of Destruction to the Heavenly City is simply a record of the life of such a Puritan as Bunyan himself, seen through an imaginative haze of spiritual idealism in which its commonest incidents are heightened and glorified. He is himself the pilgrim who flies from the City of Destruction, who climbs the hill Difficulty, who faces Apollyon, who sees his loved ones cross the river of Death towards the Heavenly City, and how, because "the Hill on which the City was framed was higher than the clouds, they therefore went up through the region of the air, sweetly talking as they went."

The attack on Holland.

6-268] Great, however, as was the relief of the Indulgence to men like Bunyan, it was difficult to wring from the bulk of the Nonconformists any expression of gratitude or satisfaction. Dear as toleration was to them, the general interests of religion were dearer, and not only these but national freedom was now at stake. Holland, the bulwark of Protestantism abroad, seemed to crumble into ruin at the first blow of France. Lewis passed the Rhine on the twelfth of June, and overran three of the States without opposition. It was only by skill and desperate courage that the Dutch ships under De Ruyter held the English fleet under the Duke of York at bay in an obstinate battle off the coast of Suffolk. Till almost the eve of the struggle, in fact, the Dutch had been wrapt in a false security. The French alliance had been their traditional policy since the days of Henry the Fourth, and it was especially dear to the great merchant class which had mounted to power on the fall of the House of Orange. John de Witt, the leader of this party, though he had been forced to conclude the Triple Alliance by the previous advance of Lewis to the Rhine, had expressly refused to join England in an attack on France, and still clung blindly to her friendship. His trust only broke down when the glare of the French watch-fires was seen from the walls of Amsterdam.

The Prince of Orange.

For the moment Holland lay crushed at the feet of Lewis, but the arrogant demands of the conqueror
6-269] roused again the stubborn courage which had wrested victory from Alva and worn out the pride of Philip the Second. De Witt was murdered in a popular tumult, and his fall called William, the Prince of Orange, to the head of the Republic. The new Stadtholder had hardly reached manhood; but he had no sooner taken the lead in public affairs than his great qualities made themselves felt. His earlier life had schooled him in a wonderful self-control. He had been left fatherless and all but friendless in childhood; he had been bred among men who regarded his very existence as a danger to the State; his words had been watched, his looks noted, his friends jealously withdrawn. In such an atmosphere the boy grew up silent, wary, self-contained, grave in temper, cold in demeanour, blunt and even repulsive in address. He was weak and sickly from his cradle, and manhood brought with it an asthma and consumption which shook his frame with a constant cough; his face was sullen and bloodless, and scored with deep lines which told of ceaseless pain. But beneath this cold and sickly presence lay a fiery and commanding temper, an immovable courage, and a political ability of the highest order. William was a born statesman. Neglected as his education had been in other ways, for he knew nothing of letters or of art, he had been carefully
6-270] trained in politics by John de Witt; and the wide knowledge with which in his first address to the States-General the young Stadtholder reviewed the general state of Europe, the sagacity with which he calculated the chances of the struggle, at once won him the trust of his countrymen.

William and the French Invasion.

Their trust was soon rewarded. The plot of the two courts hung for its success on the chances of a rapid surprise, and with the approach of winter, a season in which military operations were then suspended, all chance of a surprise was over. William rapidly turned the respite to good account. Young as he was, he displayed from the first the cool courage and dogged tenacity of his race. "Do you not see your country is lost?" asked the Duke of Buckingham when he was sent to negotiate at the Hague. "There is a sure way never to see it lost," replied William, "and that is to die in the last ditch." With the spring of 1673 the tide began to turn. Holland was saved, and province after province won back from the arms of France by William's dauntless resolve. Like his great ancestor, William the Silent, he was a luckless commander, and no general had to bear more frequent defeats. But he profited by defeat as other men profit by victory. His bravery indeed was of that nobler cast which rises to its height in moments of ruin and dismay. The coolness with which, boy-general as he was, he rallied his broken squadrons amidst the rout of Seneff and
6-271] wrested from Condé at the last the fruits of his victory moved his veteran opponent to a generous admiration. It was at such moments indeed that the real temper of the man broke through the veil of his usual reserve. A strange light flashed from his eyes as soon as he was under fire; and in the terror and confusion of defeat his cold and repulsive manner was thrown aside for an ease and gaiety which charmed every soldier around him.

Parliament and the War.

The gallant struggle of the prince was hardly needed to win the sympathies of Englishmen to the cause of the Dutch. In the exultation of the first moment of triumph Charles had lavished honours on the leaders of both the parties in his cabinet. Clifford became Lord Treasurer, Ashley was made Chancellor and raised to the earldom of Shaftesbury. But the dream of triumph soon passed away. The Duke of York had owned at the outset of the war that recourse could only be had to Parliament when success had put Charles in a position "to obtain by force what he could not get by pleasanter ways." But the delay of winter exhausted the supplies which had been procured so unscrupulously, while the closing of the Treasury had shaken credit and rendered it impossible to raise a loan. It was necessary therefore in 1673, though the success Charles had counted on was still delayed, to appeal to the Commons. But the Commons met in a mood of
6-272] angry distrust. The war, unpopular as it was, they left alone. What overpowered all other feelings was a vague sense, which we know now to have been justified by the facts, that liberty and religion were being unscrupulously betrayed. There was a suspicion that the whole armed force of the nation was in Catholic hands. The Duke of York was suspected of being in heart a Catholic, and he was in command of the fleet. Catholics had been placed as officers in the land force which was being raised for a descent upon Holland. Lady Castlemaine, the king's mistress, paraded her change of faith; and doubts were fast gathering over the Protestantism of the king. There was a general dread that a plot was on foot for the establishment of Catholicism and despotism, and that the war and the Indulgence were parts of the plot.

The Test Act.

The change of temper in the Commons was marked by the appearance of what was from that time called the Country party with Lord Russell, Lord Cavendish, and Sir William Coventry at its head, a party which sympathized with the desire of the Nonconformists for religious toleration, but looked on it as its first duty to guard against the political and religious designs of the Court. The House listened unmoved to the fiery address of the new Lord Chancellor in favour of the war, an address which ended with the phrase, "Delenda est Carthago," so often quoted against him afterwards, as they listened unmoved to the king's
6-273] declaration of his steady adherence to the Indulgence. "I shall take it very ill," said Charles, with unusual haughtiness, "to receive contradiction in what I have done; and, I will deal plainly with you, I am resolved to stick to my declaration." As to the Declaration of Indulgence, however, all parties in the House were at one. The Commons resolved "that penal statutes in matters ecclesiastical cannot be suspended but by consent of Parliament," and refused supplies till the Declaration was recalled. The king yielded after long hesitation, for the grant of supplies was still before the House and France counselled compliance. But the Declaration was no sooner recalled than the Parliament passed from considerations of the past to provisions for the future. A Test Act was passed through both Houses without opposition, which required that every one in the civil and military employment of the State should take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, subscribe a declaration against transubstantiation, and receive the sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England. It was known that the dissidents were prepared to waive all objection either to oath or sacrament, and the result of the Bill therefore was to bring Protestants, if not to union, yet a step nearer to one another. Catholics, on the other hand, were wholly excluded from all share in the government of the State. The Act was fatal to the king's schemes, and Clifford at once counselled
6-274] resistance while Buckingham talked flightily about bringing the army to London. But the grant of a subsidy was still held in suspense till the Test was accepted: and Arlington, who saw that all hope of carrying the "great plan" through was at an end and looked to the Test as a means of freeing himself from Clifford's rivalry in the cabinet, pressed Charles to yield. A dissolution in fact was the king's only resource, but in the temper of the nation a new Parliament would have been yet more violent than the present one. Charles therefore sullenly gave his assent to the Bill.

Shaftesbury.

Few measures have ever brought about more startling results than the Test Act. It was no sooner passed than the Duke of York owned himself a Catholic and resigned his office as Lord High Admiral. Throngs of excited people gathered round the Lord Treasurer's house at the news that Clifford too had owned to being a Catholic and had laid down his staff of office. Their resignation was followed by that of hundreds of others in the army and the civil service of the Crown. On public opinion the effect of these discoveries was wonderful. "I dare not write all the strange talk of the town," says Evelyn. The resignations were held to have proved the existence of the dangers which the Test had been framed to meet. From this moment all trust in Charles was at an end. "The king," Shaftesbury said bitterly, "who if he had been so happy as to
6-275] have been born a private gentleman had certainly passed for a man of good parts, excellent breeding, and well natured, hath now, being a Prince, brought his affairs to that pass that there is not a person in the world, man or woman, that dares rely upon him or put any confidence in his word or friendship." The one man in England indeed on whom the discovery of the king's perfidy fell with the most crushing effect was Shaftesbury himself. Ashley Cooper had piqued himself on a penetration which read the characters of men around him and on a political instinct which discerned every coming change. He had bought, as he believed, the Declaration of Indulgence, the release of the imprisoned Nonconformists, and freedom of worship for all dissidents, at the price of a consent to the second attack on Holland; and he was looked on

by the public at large as the minister most responsible both for the measures he advised and the measures he had nothing to do with. But while facing the gathering storm of unpopularity, Ashley learnt in a moment of drunken confidence the secret of the king's religion. He owned to a friend "his trouble at the black cloud which was gathering over England"; but troubled as he was he still believed himself strong enough to use Charles for his own purposes. His acceptance of the Chancellorship and of the earldom of Shaftesbury, as well as his violent defence of the war on opening the Parliament, identified him yet more
6-276] with the royal policy. It was after the opening of the Parliament, if we credit the statement of the French Ambassador, a statement which squares with the sudden change in his course, that he learnt from Arlington, who desired to secure his help in driving Clifford from the royal councils, the secret of the Treaty of Dover.

Shaftesbury's change of Policy.

Whether this was so, or whether suspicion as in the people at large deepened into certainty, Shaftesbury saw he had been duped. To the bitterness of such a discovery was added the bitterness of having aided in schemes which he abhorred. His change of policy was rapid and complete. He pressed in the royal council for the withdrawal of the Declaration of Indulgence. In Parliament he supported the Test Act with extraordinary vehemence. But he was far from any thought of resigning his post. He clung to it in fact more tenaciously than ever, for the displacement of James and Clifford by the test left him, as he thought, dominant in the royal council, and gave him hopes of revenging the deceit which had been practised on him by forcing his policy on the king. He was resolved to end the war. He had dreams of meeting the danger of a Catholic successor by a dissolution of the king's marriage with Catharine and by a fresh match with a Protestant princess. For the moment indeed Charles was helpless. He found himself, as he had told
6-277] Lewis long before, alone in his realm. The Test Act had been passed unanimously by both Houses. Even the Nonconformists deserted him and preferred persecution to the support of his plans. The dismissal of the Catholic officers made the employment of force, if he ever contemplated it, impossible, while the ill success of the Dutch war robbed him of all hope of aid from France. The firmness of the Prince of Orange had roused the stubborn energy of his countrymen; the French conquests on land were slowly won back; and at sea the fleet of the allies was still held in check by the fine seamanship of De Ruyter. Nor was William less successful in diplomacy than in war. The House of Austria was at last stirred to action by the danger which threatened Europe; and its union with the United Provinces laid the foundation of the Grand Alliance.

Shaftesbury's dismissal.

Charles indeed was still firm to continue the war. He had gathered an army on the coast for a descent upon Holland, and he again sent his fleet to sea under Prince Rupert to clear the way for its landing. But the gallantry and seamanship of Tromp forced Rupert to withdraw after an indecisive engagement, and the descent on the Dutch coast had become impossible when the Parliament again met in October. The House was resolved upon peace, and Shaftesbury was as determined to end the war as the House itself. It
6-278] was for this purpose that he threw himself into hearty alliance with the Country party in the Commons and welcomed the Duke of Ormond and Prince Rupert, who were looked upon as "great Parliament men," back to the royal council. It was to Shaftesbury's influence that Charles attributed the dislike which the Commons displayed to the war and their refusal of a grant of supplies for it until fresh religious securities were devised. It was at his instigation that an address was presented by both Houses at the end of 1673 against the plan of marrying James to a Catholic princess, Mary of Modena, a plan which as James was still without a male heir promised to secure the succession, should a son be the result of the marriage, in a Catholic line. But Charles was not yet inclined to play the part of a mere puppet in other men's hands, and the projects of Shaftesbury were suddenly interrupted by an unexpected act of vigour on the part of the king. The Houses were prorogued in November, and the Chancellor was ordered to deliver up the Seals.

The Public Panic.

"It is only laying down my gown and buckling on my sword," Shaftesbury is said to have replied to the royal bidding; and though the words were innocent enough, for the sword was part of the usual dress of a gentleman which he must necessarily resume when he laid aside the gown of the Chancellor, they were taken as conveying a covert threat. He was still determined to force on the king a peace with the States.
6-279] But he looked forward to the dangers of the future with even greater anxiety than to those of the present. The Duke of York, the successor to the throne, had owned himself a Catholic; and almost every one agreed that securities for the national religion would be necessary in the case of his accession. But Shaftesbury saw, and it is his especial merit that he did see, that with a king like James, convinced of his Divine Right and bigoted in his religious fervour, securities were valueless. From the first he determined to force on Charles his brother's exclusion from the throne, and his resolve was justified by the Revolution, which finally did the work he proposed to do. Unhappily he was equally determined to fight Charles with weapons as vile as his own. The result of Clifford's resignation, of James's acknowledgement of his conversion, had been to destroy all belief in the honesty of public men. A panic of distrust had begun. The fatal truth was whispered that Charles himself was a Catholic. In spite of the Test Act it was suspected that men Catholics in heart still held high office in the State, and we know that in Arlington's case the suspicion was just. Shaftesbury seized on this public alarm, stirred above all by a sense of inability to meet the secret dangers which day after day was disclosing, as the means of carrying out his plans. He began fanning the panic by tales of a Papist rising in London and of a coming Irish revolt with a French army to
6-280] back it. He retired to his house in the City to find security against a conspiracy which had been formed, he said, to cut his throat. Meanwhile he rapidly organized the Country party in the Parliament and placed himself openly at its head. An address for the removal of ministers "popishly affected or otherwise obnoxious or dangerous" was presented on the reassembling of the Houses in 1674. The Lower House called on the king to dismiss Lauderdale, Buckingham, and Arlington, and to disband the troops he had raised since 1664. A bill was brought in to prevent all Catholics from approaching the Court, in other words for removing James from the king's Councils. A far more important bill was that of the Protestant Securities which was pressed by Shaftesbury, Halifax, and Carlisle, the leaders of the new Opposition in the House of Lords, a bill which enacted that any prince of the blood should forfeit his right to the Crown on his marriage with a Catholic.

Peace with Holland.

The bill, which was the first sketch of the later Exclusion Bill, failed to pass, but its failure left the Houses excited and alarmed. Shaftesbury intrigued busily in the City, corresponded with William of

Orange, and pressed for a war with France which Charles could only avert by an appeal to Lewis, a subsidy from whom enabled him to prorogue the Parliament. But Charles saw that the time had come to give way. Spain was now joining Holland, and a war with Spain would have deprived English merchants of
6-281] their most lucrative branch of commerce. The refusal of supplies by the Commons hastened the king's resolve. "Things have turned out ill," he said to Temple with a burst of unusual petulance, "but had I been well served I might have made a good business of it." His concessions however were as usual complete. He dismissed Buckingham and Arlington from office. He made peace with the Dutch. But Charles was never more formidable than in the moment of defeat, and he had already determined on a new policy by which the efforts of Shaftesbury and the Country party might be held at bay. Ever since the opening of his reign he had clung to a system of balance, had pitted Churchman against Nonconformist and Ashley against Clarendon, partly to preserve his own independence and partly with a view of winning some advantage to the Catholics from the political strife. The temper of the Commons had enabled Clarendon to baffle the king's attempts; and on his fall Charles felt strong enough to abandon the attempt to preserve a political balance and had sought to carry out his designs with the single support of the Nonconformists. But the new policy had broken down like the old. The Nonconformists refused to betray the cause of Protestantism, and Shaftesbury, their leader, was pressing on measures which would rob Catholicism of
6-282] the hopes it had gained from the conversion of James. In straits like these Charles resolved to win back the Commons by boldly adopting the policy on which the House was set.

Danby.

The majority of its members were still a mass of Cavalier Churchmen, who regarded Sir Thomas Osborne, a dependant of Arlington's, as their representative in the royal councils. The king had already created Osborne Earl of Danby and raised him to the post of Lord Treasurer in Clifford's room. In 1674 he frankly adopted the policy of Danby and of his party in the Parliament. The policy of Danby was in the main that of Clarendon. He had all Clarendon's love of the Church, his equal hatred of Popery and Dissent, his high notions of the prerogative tempered by a faith in Parliament and the law. His policy rested like Clarendon's on a union between the king and the two Houses. He was a staunch Protestant, and his English pride revolted against any schemes which involved dependence on France. But he was a staunch Royalist. He wished for a French war, but he would not force the king to fight France against his will. His terror of Popery failed to win him over to any plans for a change in the succession. The first efforts indeed of the king and his minister were directed to strengthen James's position by measures which would allay the popular panic. Mary, the Duke's eldest child and after him the presumptive heir to the Crown, was
6-283] confirmed by the royal order as a Protestant. It was through Mary indeed that Charles aimed at securing the Prince of Orange. The popularity of William throughout the Protestant world was great; and in England, as the terror of a Popish king increased, men remembered that were James and his house excluded from the throne William as the king's nephew, the son of his sister Mary and the grandson of Charles the First, stood next in succession to the Crown. The Prince was drawn by his desire to detach England from the French alliance into close connexion with Shaftesbury and the leaders of the Country party, and already pledges from this quarter had reached him that he should be declared heir to the throne. It was to meet this danger that Charles resolved to offer William the hand of the Duke's daughter, Mary. Such a marriage secured James against the one formidable rival to his claims, while it opened to William a far safer chance of mounting the throne at his father-in-law's death in right of his wife. The prospect too of such a Protestant succession might well allay much of the panic which was spreading through the country as men looked forward to the accession of a Catholic king.

Danby and the Commons.

The secret negotiations for this marriage which began at the close of 1674 were accompanied by conferences between Danby and the bishops which restored the union between the Church and the Crown. The first fruits of this agreement were seen in the rigorous enforcement of the law against
6-284] conventicles and the exclusion of all Catholics from Court; while the Parliament which reassembled in 1675 was assured that the Test Act should be rigorously enforced. The change in the royal policy came not a moment too soon. As it was the aid of the Cavalier party which rallied round Danby hardly saved the king from the humiliation of being forced to recall the troops he still maintained in the French service. To gain a majority on this point Danby was forced to avail himself of a resource which from this time played for nearly a hundred years an important part in English politics. Every hour showed more clearly how fatal to its healthy working was the abandonment of the reforms which the Long Parliament and Cromwell had introduced into the composition of the House of Commons. The influence of that House was growing greater and greater on public affairs. In spite of the king's vigorous resistance it was reviewing expenditure, dictating its own policy in Church and State, checking the royal action even in foreign affairs, denouncing ministers and driving them from office, meddling now even with the succession to the Crown. It did this as representing the people, and yet the people could hardly be said to be represented. The counties alone really returned their own members, and in the counties the franchise was limited to freeholders. In all but the larger towns the nomination of members lay in the hands of close corporations.
6-285] A large number of so-called boroughs had ceased to have any real existence at all. Their representatives were simply nominees of the Crown or of neighbouring landowners.

Policy of corruption and persecution.

On great questions so imperfect a composition of the representative body mattered indeed little, for whatever were their origin the members shared in the general national feeling and expressed fairly the national sentiment. But in the common business of Parliament and in questions of detail it told fatally on the temper of the House. The members were conscious of their power, but they were checked by little sense of responsibility for its exercise. They were open therefore to the meanest and most selfish influences. Charles had done much by "closeting" them. Danby, bolder and less ingenious, trusted to coarser means. With him began the system of direct bribery which was to culminate in the Parliamentary corruption of the Pelhams. He was more successful in winning back the majority of the Commons from their alliance with the Country party by reviving the old spirit of religious persecution. With the view of breaking up the growing union between the Churchmen and the Nonconformists as well as of driving from Parliament the Presbyterian members who formed the strength of the Country party, and whose numbers increased as time brought fresh elections, he proposed that the test which had been imposed by
6-286] Clarendon on municipal officers should be extended to all functionaries of the State, that every member of either House, every magistrate and public officer, should swear never to take arms against the king or to

"endeavour any alteration of the Protestant religion now established by law in the Church of England, or any alteration in the Government in Church and State as it is by law established." The Bill was forced through the Lords by the bishops and the Cavalier party, and its passage through the Commons was only averted by a quarrel on privilege between the two Houses which Shaftesbury dexterously fanned into flame.

Charles turns to France.

On the other hand the Country party remained strong enough to hamper their grant of supplies with conditions which rendered it unacceptable to the king. Eager as they were for the war with France which Danby promised, the Commons could not trust the king; and Danby was soon to discover how wise their distrust had been. For the Houses were no sooner prorogued in November 1675 than Charles revealed to him the negotiations he had been all the while carrying on with Lewis. To France, hard pressed as she was by the allies, the entry of England into the war would have been ruinous; and Lewis was eager to avert this danger by promising Charles a subsidy should the Parliament strive to force on him a war policy by
6-287] refusing or limiting supplies. Charles, who still looked to France for aid in his plans and who believed war would deliver him helplessly into the power of the Parliament, was as ready to accept the money as Lewis to give it. At this juncture therefore he called on Danby to sign a treaty by which, on consideration of a yearly pension guaranteed on the part of France, the two sovereigns bound themselves to enter into no engagements with other powers, and to lend each other aid in case of rebellion in their dominions. Such a treaty not only bound England to dependence on France, but freed the king from all Parliamentary control. But his minister pleaded in vain for delay and for the advice of the Council. Charles answered his entreaties by signing the treaty with his own hand.

Danby's measures.

Danby found himself duped by the king as Shaftesbury had found himself duped; but his bold temper was only spurred to fresh plans for rescuing the king from his bondage to Lewis. To do this the first step was fully to reconcile the king and the Parliament, which met again in February 1677 after a prorogation of fifteen months. The Country party stood in the way of such a reconciliation, but Danby resolved to break its strength by measures of unscrupulous vigour for which a blunder of Shaftesbury's gave an opportunity. Shaftesbury despaired of bringing the House of Commons, elected as it had been fifteen years before in a
6-288] moment of religious and political reaction, to any steady opposition to the Crown. He had already moved an address for its dissolution; and he now urged that as a statute of Edward the Third ordained that Parliaments should be held "once a year or oftener if need be" the Parliament by the recent prorogation of a year and a half had ceased legally to exist. The Triennial Act deprived such an argument of any force, and its only effect was to place the Country party in an injudicious position of general hostility to the existing Parliament. But Danby represented it as a contempt of the House, and the Lords at his bidding committed its supporters, Shaftesbury, Buckingham, Salisbury, and Wharton, to the Tower. While the Opposition cowered under the blow Danby pushed on a measure which was designed to win back alarmed Churchmen to confidence in the Crown. The terror of a Catholic successor grew steadily throughout the country, and it was to meet this terror that Danby devised his Bill for the security of the Church. By this Bill it was provided that on the succession of any king who was not a member of the Established Church the appointment of bishops should be vested in the existing body of prelates, and that the king's children should be placed in the guardianship of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The cry for War.

The bill however failed in the Commons; and a grant of supply unchecked by the appropriation of the
6-289] money to special services, a limitation which Charles steadily opposed, was only obtained by Danby's profuse bribery. The progress of the war abroad indeed was rousing panic in England faster than Danby could allay it. New successes of the French arms in Flanders and a defeat of the Prince of Orange at Cassel stirred the whole country to a cry for war. The two Houses united in an address to the Crown which prayed that England might enter into the Great Alliance that William had built up, but Charles parried the blow by demanding a supply before the war was declared and by a new prorogation of the House on a new refusal. Fresh and larger subsidies from France enabled him to continue this prorogation for seven months. But the silence of the Parliament did little to silence the country; and Danby took advantage of the popular cry for war to press an energetic course of action on the king. In its will to check French aggression the Cavalier party was as earnest as the Puritan, and Danby aimed at redeeming his failure at home by uniting the Parliament through a vigorous policy abroad.

Marriage of William and Mary.

As usual Charles appeared to give way. He was himself for the moment uneasy at the appearance of the French on the Flemish coast, and he owned that "he could never live at ease with his subjects" if Flanders were abandoned. He allowed Danby therefore to press on both parties the necessity for mutual concessions, and to define the new attitude of England by reviving the project for a match between Mary
6-290] and William of Orange. William's distrust of Arlington, by whom the proposal of it had been made to him, had led the Prince at first to set aside the scheme. But he had never lost sight of it, and the counsels of Sir William Temple had brought him in 1677 to make overtures for its realization. Charles and Danby had still the same reasons for desiring it, and the marriage took place on William's visit to England in September. As the king was childless and James had no son Mary was presumptive heiress of the Crown. The marriage therefore promised a close political union in the future with Holland, and a corresponding opposition to the ambition of France. With the country it was popular as a Protestant match and as ensuring a Protestant successor to James. But Lewis was bitterly angered; he rejected the English propositions of peace and again sent his army into the field. Danby was ready to accept the challenge. The withdrawal of the English ambassador from Paris was followed in 1678 by an assembly of the Parliament; a warlike speech from the throne was answered by a warlike address from the House, large supplies were voted and an army raised.

Peace of Nimeguen.

But the actual declaration of war still failed to appear; indeed Charles was in heart as disinclined for war as ever. While Danby threatened France the king was busy turning the threat to his own profit, and
6-291] gaining time by prorogations for a series of base negotiations. At one stage he demanded from Lewis a fresh pension for the next three years as the price of his good offices with the allies. Danby stooped to write the demand, and Charles added "This letter is written by my order, C. R." A force of three thousand English soldiers was landed at Ostend; but the allies were already broken by their suspicions of the king's real policy, and Charles soon agreed for a fresh pension to recall the brigade. The bargain was hardly

struck when Lewis withdrew the terms of peace he had himself offered and on the faith of which England had ostensibly retired from the scene. Once more Danby offered aid to the allies. But all faith in England had now disappeared. One hostile power after another gave assent to the new conditions laid down by France, and though Holland, the original cause of the war, was saved, the Peace of Nimeguen in July 1678 made Lewis the arbiter of Europe.

Map of Europe, with France as it was under Lewis XIV.

The Catholic hopes.

Disgraceful as the peace was to England, it left Charles the master of a force of twenty thousand men levied for a war he had refused to declare. It left him too with nearly a million of French money in his pocket. His course had roused into fresh life the old suspicions of his perfidy and of a secret plot with Lewis for the ruin of English freedom and of English religion. That there was such a plot we know; and from the moment of the Treaty of Dover the hopes of the Catholic party had mounted even faster than the panic of the Protestants. But they had been bitterly disappointed by the king's sudden withdrawal from the prosecution of his schemes after his four years' ineffectual struggle, and roused to wild anger by his seeming return to the policy of Clarendon. Their anger and disappointment were revealed in the letters from English Jesuits which were afterwards to play so fatal a part in begetting a belief in the plot, and in the correspondence of Coleman. Coleman was secretary of the Duchess of York and a busy intriguer, who had gained sufficient knowledge of the real plans of the king and of his brother to warrant him in begging money from Lewis for the work of saving Catholic interests from Danby's hostility by intrigues in the Parliament. A passage from one of his letters gives us a glimpse of the wild dreams which were stirring among the hotter Catholics of the time. "They had a mighty work on their hands," he wrote, "no less than the conversion of three kingdoms, and by that perhaps the utter subduing of a pestilent heresy which had so long domineered over a great part of the northern world. Success would give the greatest blow to the Protestant religion that it had received since its birth." But while the despair of the Catholic party was unknown their previous attitude of confidence had stirred suspicions in the public mind which mounted into alarm when the Peace of Nimeguen suddenly left Charles master—as it seemed—of the position, and it was of this general panic that one of the vile impostors who are always thrown to the surface at times of great public agitation was ready to take advantage by the invention of a Popish plot.

Titus Oates.

Titus Oates, a Baptist minister before the Restoration, a curate and navy chaplain after it, but left penniless by his infamous repute, had sought bread in a conversion to Catholicism, and had been received into Jesuit houses at Valladolid and St. Omer. While he remained there he learnt the fact of a secret meeting of the Jesuits in London which was probably nothing but the usual congregation of the order, and on his expulsion for misconduct this single fact widened in his fertile brain into a plot for the subversion of Protestantism and the death of the king. His story was laid before Charles in the August of 1678 and received, as was natural enough, with the cool incredulity of one who knew what plot there really had been; but Oates made affidavit of its truth before a London magistrate, Sir Edmondsbury Godfrey, and at last managed to appear before the Council. He declared that he had been trusted with letters which disclosed the Jesuit plans. They were stirring rebellion in Ireland; in Scotland they disguised themselves as Cameronians; in England their aim was to assassinate the king and to leave the throne open to the Papist Duke of York. The extracts from Jesuit letters, however, which he produced, though they showed the bitter disappointment and anger of their writers at the king's withdrawal from his schemes, threw no light on the monstrous charges of a plot for his assassination. Oates would have been dismissed indeed with contempt but for the seizure of Coleman's correspondence. The letters of this intriguer, believed as he was to be in the confidence of the Duke of York, gave a new colour to the plot. Danby himself, conscious of the truth that there really were designs which Charles dared not avow, was shaken in his rejection of the disclosures and inclined to use them as weapons to check the king in his Catholic policy. But a more dexterous hand had already seized on the growing panic. Lord Shaftesbury, released after a long imprisonment from the Tower, ready since his discovery of the Treaty of Dover to believe in any conspiracy between the Catholics and the king, and hopeless of foiling the king's policy in any other way, threw himself into the plot. "Let the Treasurer cry as loud as he pleases against Popery," he laughed, "I will cry a note louder." But no cry was needed to heighten the popular frenzy from the moment when Sir Edmondsbury Godfrey, the magistrate before whom Oates had laid his information, was found in a field near London with his sword run through his heart. His death was assumed to be murder, and the murder to be an attempt of the Jesuits to "stifle the plot." A solemn funeral added to the public agitation; and the two Houses named committees to investigate the charges made by Oates.

Shaftesbury and the Plot.

In this investigation Shaftesbury took the lead. Whatever his personal ambition may have been, his public aims in all that followed were wise and far-sighted. He aimed at forcing Charles to dissolve the Parliament and appeal again to the nation. He aimed at driving Danby out of office and at forcing on Charles a ministry which should break his dependence on France and give a constitutional turn to his policy. He saw that no security would really avail to meet the danger of a Catholic sovereign, and he aimed at excluding James from the throne. But in pursuing these aims he threw himself from that moment wholly on the plot. He fanned the popular panic by accepting without question some fresh depositions in which Oates charged five Catholic peers with part in the Jesuit conspiracy. Two of these five, Lords Arundell and Bellasys, had in fact taken part in the preliminary conference which led to the Treaty of Dover. Of this nothing was known, but the five were sent to the Tower and two thousand suspected persons were hurried to prison. A proclamation ordered every Catholic to leave London. The train-bands were called to arms, and patrols paraded through the streets to guard against the Catholic rising which Oates declared to be at hand. Meanwhile Shaftesbury turned the panic to political account. He fiercely

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demanded in the House of Lords the exclusion of the Duke of York from the king's Council, and his demand was repeated in an address of the Commons. Charles met the attack with consummate skill. Anticipating the future Exclusion Bill, he declared himself ready to sanction any measures which secured the Protestant religion so long as they left untouched the right of hereditary succession and the just power of the Crown. Shaftesbury retorted by forcing through Parliament at the end of 1678 a bill which excluded Catholics from a seat in either House. The exclusion remained in force for a century and a half; but it had really been aimed against the Duke of York, and Shaftesbury was defeated by a proviso which exempted James from the operation of the bill.

Lewis and the Plot.

The plot, which had been supported for four months by the sole evidence of Oates, began to hang fire at the opening of 1679; but a promise of reward brought forward a villain named Bedloe with tales beside which those of Oates seemed tame. The two informers were pressed forward by an infamous rivalry to stranger and stranger revelations. Bedloe swore to the existence of a plot for the landing of a Catholic army and a general massacre of the Protestants. Oates capped the revelations of Bedloe by charging the queen herself at the bar of the Lords with knowledge of the plot to murder her husband. Monstrous as
6-298] such charges were they revived the waning frenzy of the people and of the two Houses. The peers under arrest were ordered to be impeached. A new proclamation enjoined the arrest of every Catholic in the realm. A series of judicial murders began with the trial and execution of Coleman which even now can only be remembered with horror. But the alarm must soon have worn out had it only been supported by perjury. What gave force to the false plot was the existence of a true one. Coleman's letters had won credit for the perjuries of Oates, and a fresh discovery now won credit for the perjuries of Bedloe.

Dissolution of the Parliament.

From the moment when the pressure of the Commons and of Danby had forced Charles into a position of seeming antagonism to France Lewis had resolved to bring about the dissolution of the Parliament, the fall of the minister, and the disbanding of the army which Danby still looked on as a weapon against him. The aims of the Country party were the same as those of the French king, and even before the Peace of Nimeguen the French ambassador, Barillon, had succeeded in opening a correspondence on these points with its leaders, with Shaftesbury, Halifax, and Lord Russell. A closer connexion was negotiated in 1678 through the mediation of Algernon Sidney; and money was entrusted to Russell and other prominent
6-299] members of the Country party by Barillon to be used in the bribery which, disgraceful as it was, was now almost necessary to counteract the bribery of Danby. The confederates soon brought a more effective weapon into play. The English ambassador at Paris, Ralph Montagu, returned home on a quarrel with Danby, obtained a seat in the House of Commons, and in spite of the seizure of his papers laid on the table of the House the despatch which had been forwarded to Lewis, demanding payment for the king's services to France during the late negotiations. The Commons were thunderstruck; for strong as had been the general suspicion the fact of the dependence of England on a foreign power had never before been proved. Danby's name was signed to the despatch, and he was at once impeached on a charge of high treason. But Shaftesbury was more eager to secure the election of a new Parliament than to punish his rival, and Charles was resolved to prevent at any price a trial which could not fail to reveal the disgraceful secret of his foreign policy. Charles was in fact at Shaftesbury's mercy, and the end for which Shaftesbury had been playing was at last secured. In January 1679 the Parliament of 1661, after the longest unbroken life in our Parliamentary annals, was at last dissolved.

The New Ministry.

A new Parliament was at once summoned and its election took place in a tumult of national excitement.
6-300] The process of Parliamentary corruption now took a further step. Danby had begun the bribery of members. With the election of 1679 began on a large and systematic scale the bribery or "treating" of constituents. If members had come to realize the money value of the seats they held, the voters for these members were quick to realize the money value of the seats they bestowed. "I am told," writes the Venetian ambassador, Sarotti, "that in the more conspicuous and populous places their election will cost some of the candidates five thousand scudi (about a thousand pounds) each." The new members were still for the most part Churchmen and country gentlemen, but they shared the alarm of the country, and even before their assembly in March their temper had told on the king's policy. James was sent to Brussels. Charles began to disband the army and promised that Danby should soon withdraw from office. In his speech from the throne he asked for supplies to maintain the Protestant attitude of his Government in foreign affairs. But it was impossible to avert Danby's fall. The Commons insisted on carrying his impeachment to the bar of the Lords. It was necessary to dismiss him from his post of Treasurer and to construct a new ministry. In the existing temper of the Houses such a ministry could only be found in the men who had brought about Danby's fall. Shaftesbury became President of the Council. The chiefs of the
6-301] Country party, Lord Russell and Lord Cavendish, took their seats at the board with Lords Holles and Robartes, the older representatives of the Presbyterian party which had merged in the general Opposition. Savile, Lord Halifax, as yet known only as a keen and ingenious speaker, entered the ministry in the train of Shaftesbury with whom his family was connected. Lord Sunderland, a man adroit and unscrupulous but as yet ranked in the Opposition, was admitted to the Council; while Lord Essex and Sir H. Capel, two of the most popular among the Country leaders, went to the Treasury and Admiralty. The recall of Sir William Temple, the negotiator of the Triple Alliance, from his embassy at the Hague to fill the post of Secretary of State promised a foreign policy which would again place England high among the European powers.

Temple and his Council.

Temple returned with a plan of administration which, fruitless as it directly proved, is of great importance as marking the silent change which was passing over the English Constitution. Like many men of his time he was equally alarmed at the power both of the Crown and of the Parliament. In moments of national excitement the power of the Houses seemed irresistible. They had overthrown Clarendon. They had overthrown Clifford and the Cabal. They had just overthrown Danby. But though they were strong enough in the end to punish ill government they showed no power of securing good government or of
6-302] permanently influencing the policy of the Crown. For nineteen years in fact with a Parliament always sitting Charles had had it pretty much his own way. He had made war against the will of the nation and he had refused to make war when the nation demanded it. While every Englishman hated France he had made England a mere dependency of the French king. The remedy for this state of things, as it was

afterwards found, was a very simple one. By a change which we shall have to trace the ministry has now become a Committee of State-officers named by the majority of the House of Commons from amongst the more prominent of its representatives in either House, whose object in accepting office is to do the will of that majority. So long as the majority of the House of Commons itself represents the more powerful current of public opinion it is clear that such an arrangement makes government an accurate reflection of the national will. But obvious as such a plan may seem to us, it had as yet occurred to no English statesman. To Temple the one remedy seemed to lie in the restoration of the royal Council to its older powers.

The Cabinet.

This body, composed as it was of the great officers of the Court, the royal Treasurer and Secretaries, and a few nobles specially summoned to it by the sovereign, formed up to the close of Elizabeth's reign a sort of deliberative assembly to which the graver matters of public administration were commonly
6-303] submitted by the Crown. A practice, however, of previously submitting such measures to a smaller body of the more important councillors must always have existed; and under James this secret committee, which was then known as the Cabala or Cabal, began almost wholly to supersede the Council itself. In the large and balanced Council which was formed after the Restoration all real power rested with the "Cabala" of Clarendon, Southampton, Ormond, Monk, and the two Secretaries; and on Clarendon's fall these were succeeded by Clifford, Arlington, Buckingham, Ashley, and Lauderdale. It was by a mere coincidence that the initials of the latter names formed the word "Cabal," which has ever since retained the sinister meaning their unpopularity gave to it. The effect of these smaller committees had undoubtedly been to remove the check which the larger numbers and the more popular composition of the royal Council laid upon the Crown. The unscrupulous projects which made the Cabal of Clifford and his fellows a byword among Englishmen could never have been laid before a Council of great peers and hereditary officers of State. To Temple therefore the organization of the Council seemed to furnish a check on mere personal government which Parliament was unable to supply. For this purpose he proposed that the Cabala or Cabinet, as it was now becoming the fashion to term the confidential committee of the Council, should be
6-304] abolished. The Council itself was restricted to thirty members, and their joint income was not to fall below £300,000, a sum little less than what was estimated as the income of the whole House of Commons. A body of great nobles and proprietors, not too numerous for secret deliberation and wealthy enough to counterbalance either the Commons or the Crown, would form, Temple hoped, a barrier against the violence and aggression of the one power and a check on the mere despotism of the other.

The Habeas Corpus Act.

Whatever might be the fate of these schemes the new Council and the new ministry gave fair hope of a wise and patriotic government. But the difficulties were still great. The nation was frenzied with suspicion and panic. The elections to the new Parliament had taken place amidst a whirl of excitement which left no place for candidates of the Court. The appointment of the new ministry indeed was welcomed with a general burst of joy, and its policy and that of the two Houses showed at once that a more liberal spirit had entered into public affairs. In two remarkable acts of the new Parliament English freedom made an advance even on the work of 1641. From the moment when printing began to tell on public opinion it had been gagged by a system of licenses. The regulations framed under Henry the Eighth subjected the press to the control of the Star Chamber, and the Martin Marprelate libels brought about a yet more stringent
6-305] control under Elizabeth. Even the Long Parliament laid a heavy hand on the press, and the great remonstrance of Milton in his "Areopagitica" fell dead on the ears of his Puritan associates. But the statute for the regulation of printing which was passed immediately after the Restoration expired finally in 1679 and the temper of the present Parliament at once put an end to any attempt at re-establishing the censorship. To the new freedom of the press the Habeas Corpus Act added new security for the personal freedom of every Englishman. Against arbitrary imprisonment provision had been made in the earliest ages by a famous clause in the Great Charter. No free man could be held in prison save on charge or conviction of crime or for debt; and every prisoner on a criminal charge could demand as a right from the court of King's Bench the issue of a writ of "habeas corpus," which bound his gaoler to produce both the prisoner and the warrant on which he was imprisoned that the court might judge whether he was imprisoned according to law. In cases, however, of imprisonment on a warrant of the royal Council it had been sometimes held by judges that the writ could not be issued, and under Clarendon's administration instances had in this way occurred of imprisonment without legal remedy. But his fall was quickly followed
6-306] by the introduction of a bill to secure this right of the subject, and after a long struggle the Act which is known as the Habeas Corpus Act passed finally in the Parliament of 1679. By this great statute the old practice of the law was freed from all difficulties and exceptions. Every prisoner committed for any crime save treason or felony was declared entitled to his writ even in the vacations of the courts, and heavy penalties were enforced on judges or gaolers who refused him this right. Every person committed for felony or treason was entitled to be released on bail unless indicted at the next session of gaol-delivery after his commitment, and to be discharged if not indicted at the sessions which followed. It was forbidden under the heaviest penalties to evade this operation of the writ as it had been evaded under Clarendon by sending a prisoner to any places or fortresses beyond the seas.

The Bill of Securities.

Great as was the value of the Habeas Corpus Act it passed almost unnoticed amidst the political storm which the ministry had to face. The question of the Succession threw all others into the shade. At the bottom of the national panic lay the dread of a Catholic king, a dread which the after history of James fully justified. Unluckily on the question of the succession the new ministers were themselves divided. Shaftesbury was earnest for the exclusion of James and he was followed in his plan of exclusion by Lord
6-307] Russell. Against a change in the order of hereditary succession however Charles was firm; and he was supported in his resistance by a majority of the Council with Temple and Lord Essex, Lord Halifax, and Lord Sunderland at its head. It was with the assent of this party that Charles brought forward a plan for preserving the rights of the Duke of York while restraining his powers as sovereign. By this project the presentation to Church livings was to be taken out of his hands on his accession. The last Parliament of the preceding reign was to continue to sit; and the appointment of all Councillors, Judges, Lord-Lieutenants, and officers in the fleet, was vested in the two Houses so long as a Catholic sovereign was on the throne. The extent of these provisions showed the pressure which Charles felt, but Shaftesbury was undoubtedly right in setting the plan aside as at once insufficient and impracticable. The one real security

for English freedom lay in a thorough understanding between King and Parliament; and the scheme of Charles set them against one another as rival powers in the realm. It was impossible in fact that such a harmony could exist between a Protestant Parliament and a Catholic sovereign.

The Exclusion Bill.

Shaftesbury therefore continued to advocate the Exclusion in the royal Council; and a bill for depriving James of his right to the Crown and for devolving it on the next Protestant in the line of succession was
6-308] introduced into the Commons by his adherents. In spite of a powerful opposition from patriots like Lord Cavendish and Sir William Coventry who still shrank from a change in the succession the bill passed the House by a large majority. It was known that Charles would use his influence with the Peers for its rejection, and the Earl therefore fell back on the tactics of Pym. A bold Remonstrance was prepared in the Commons. The City of London, in which Shaftesbury's popularity had now risen to its greatest height, was ready with an address to the two Houses in favour of the bill. All Charles could do was to gain time by a sudden prorogation of the Parliament and by its dissolution at the end of May. But delay would have been useless had the Country party remained at one. The temper of the nation and of the House of Commons was so hotly pronounced in favour of the Exclusion of the Duke that but for the disunion among the ministers it must in the end have been secured. England would then have been spared the necessity for the Revolution of 1688. Though the disunion grew greater and hotter indeed the wiser leaders of the Country party were already leaning to the very change which the Revolution brought about. If James were passed over his daughter Mary, the wife of the Prince of Orange, stood next in the order of succession; and the plan devised by Temple, Lord Essex, and Lord Halifax after the failure of their Bill of Securities
6-309] was to bring the Prince over to England during the prorogation, to introduce him into the Council, and to pave his way to the throne.

Shaftesbury and Monmouth.

Unhappily Shaftesbury was contemplating a very different course. Ever since William had set aside his proposals in 1674, and above all since his marriage with the Duke's daughter, Shaftesbury had looked on the Prince of Orange as a mere adherent of the royal house and a supporter of the royal plans. He saw, too, that firm as was William's Protestantism he was as jealous as Charles himself of any weakening of the royal power or invasion of the royal prerogative. Shaftesbury's keen wit was already looking forward to the changes which a few years were to bring about; and his motive for setting aside William's claims is probably to be found in the maxim ascribed to him, that "a bad title makes a good king." Whatever were his motives however he had resolved not only to set aside the claims of the Duke and the Duke's children, Mary and Anne, as well as William's own claim as grandson of Charles I., but to place the Duke of Monmouth on the throne. Monmouth, reputed to be the eldest of the king's bastards, a weak and worthless profligate in temper, was popular through his personal beauty and his reputation for bravery. The tale was set about of a secret marriage between the king and his mother which would have made him lawful heir to the throne, and Shaftesbury brought him into public notice by inducing the king to put him
6-310] at the head of the troops sent to repress a rising of the extreme Covenanters which broke out at this moment in the western counties of Scotland. Monmouth showed courage in routing the insurgents at Bothwell Brig on the Clyde as well as judgement in the mercy he extended to them after their defeat; and on his return Shaftesbury pressed the king to give him the command of the Guards, which would have put the only military force possessed by the Crown in Monmouth's hands.

Shaftesbury's Second Dismissal.

Sunderland, Halifax, and Essex, on the other hand—for Temple took less and less part in public affairs—were not only steadily opposed to Shaftesbury's project, but saw themselves marked out for ruin in the event of its success. They had advised the dissolution of the last Parliament; and the Earl's anger had vented itself in threats that the advisers of the dissolution should pay for it with their heads. The danger came home to them when a sudden illness of the king and the absence of James made Monmouth's accession a possible contingency. The three ministers at once induced Charles to recall the Duke of York; and though he withdrew to Scotland on the king's recovery Charles deprived Monmouth of his charge as Captain-General of the Forces and ordered him like James to leave the realm. Left alone in his cause by
6-311] the opposition of his colleagues, Shaftesbury threw himself more and more on the support of the Plot. The prosecution of its victims was pushed recklessly on. Three Catholics were hanged in London. Eight priests were put to death in the country. Pursuivants and informers spread terror through every Catholic household. He counted on the reassembling of the Parliament to bring all this terror to bear upon the king. But Charles had already marked the breach which the Earl's policy had made in the ranks of the Country party. He saw that Shaftesbury was unsupported by any of his colleagues save Russell. To Temple, Essex, or Halifax, it seemed possible to bring about the succession of Mary without any violent revolution; but to set aside the rights not only of James but of his Protestant children and even of the Prince of Orange was to ensure a civil war. It was with their full support therefore that Charles in October 1679 deprived Shaftesbury of his post of Lord President of the Council.

Shaftesbury's struggle.

The dismissal was the signal for a struggle to whose danger Charles was far from blinding himself. What had saved him till now was his cynical courage. In the midst of the terror and panic of the Plot men "wondered to see him quite cheerful amidst such an intricacy of troubles," says the courtly Reresby, "but it was not in his nature to think or perplex himself much about anything." Even in the heat of the tumult which followed on Shaftesbury's dismissal Charles was seen fishing and sauntering as usual in Windsor
6-312] Park. But closer observers than Reresby saw beneath this veil of indolent unconcern a consciousness of new danger. "From this time," says Burnet, "his temper was observed to change very visibly." He became in fact "sullen and thoughtful; he saw that he had to do with a strange sort of people, that could neither be managed nor frightened." But he faced the danger with his old unscrupulous coolness. He reopened secret negotiations with France. Lewis was as alarmed as Charles himself at the warlike temper of the nation, and as anxious to prevent the calling of a Parliament; but the terms on which he offered a subsidy were too humiliating even for the king's acceptance. The failure forced him to summon a new Parliament; and the panic which Shaftesbury was busily feeding with new tales of massacre and invasion returned members even more violent than the members of the House he had just dismissed. The project of Monmouth's succession was pressed with more daring than ever. Pamphlets appeared in open support of his claim. The young Duke himself suddenly quitted Holland and reappeared at Court; and though Charles forced him after a time to leave London he refused to leave England altogether. Shaftesbury counted on

the new Parliament to back the Duke's claim, and a host of petitions called on the king to suffer it to meet
6-313] at the opening of 1680. Even the Council shrank from the king's proposal to prorogue its assembly to the coming November. But Charles prorogued it in the teeth of his counsellors. Alone as he stood he was firm in his resolve to gain time, for time, as he saw, was working in his favour. The tide of public sympathy was beginning to turn. The perjury of Oates was proving too much at last for the credulity of juries; and the acquittal of four of his victims showed that the panic was beginning to ebb. A far stronger proof of this was seen in the immense efforts which Shaftesbury made to maintain a belief in the plot. Fresh informers were brought forward to swear to a conspiracy for the assassination of the Earl himself, and to the share of the Duke of York in the designs of his fellow-religionists. A paper found in a meal-tub was produced as evidence of the new danger. Gigantic torchlight processions paraded the streets of London, and the effigy of the Pope was burnt amidst the wild outcry of a vast multitude.

The Reaction begins.

Acts of yet greater daring showed the lengths to which Shaftesbury was ready to go. He had grown up amidst the tumults of civil war, and, greyheaded as he was, the fire and vehemence of his early days seemed to wake again in the recklessness with which he drove on the nation to a struggle in arms. Early in 1680 he formed a committee for promoting agitation throughout the country; and the petitions which it
6-314] drew up for the assembly of the Parliament were sent to every town and grand jury and sent back again with thousands of signatures. Monmouth, in spite of the king's orders, returned at Shaftesbury's call to London; and a daring pamphlet pointed him out as the nation's leader in the coming struggle "against Popery and tyranny." So great was the alarm of the Council that the garrison in every fortress was held in readiness for instant war. But the danger was really less than it seemed. The tide of opinion had fairly turned. Acquittal followed acquittal. A reaction of horror and remorse at the cruelty which had hurried victim after victim to the gallows succeeded to the pitiless frenzy which Shaftesbury had fanned into a flame. Anxious as the nation was for a Protestant sovereign its sense of justice revolted against the wrong threatened to James's Protestant children; and every gentleman in the realm felt insulted at the project of setting Mary aside to put the crown of England on the head of a royal bastard.

Petitioners and Abhorrers.

The memory too of the Civil War was still fresh and keen, and the rumour of an outbreak of revolt rallied men more and more round the king. The host of petitions which Shaftesbury procured from the counties was answered by a counter-host of addresses from thousands who declared their "abhorrence" of the plans against the Crown; and the country saw itself divided into two great factions of "petitioners" and
6-315] "abhorrers," the germs of the two great parties which have played so prominent a part in our political history from the time of the Exclusion Bill. It was now indeed that these parties began to receive the names of Whig and Tory by which they were destined to be known. Each was originally a term of reproach. "Whig" was the name given to the extreme Covenanters of the west of Scotland, and in applying it to the members of the Country party the "abhorrer" meant to stigmatize them as rebels and fanatics. "Tory" was at this time the name for a native Irish outlaw or "bogtrotter," and in fastening it on the loyalist adherents of James's cause the "petitioner" meant to brand the Duke and his party as the friends of Catholic rebels.

Charles at once took advantage of this turn of affairs. He recalled the Duke of York to the Court. He received the resignation of Lord Russell as well as those of Lord Cavendish and the Earl of Essex who had at last gone over to Shaftesbury's projects "with all his heart." Temple had all but withdrawn from the Council; and public affairs were now left in the hands of Lord Sunderland and Lord Halifax, of Godolphin, a laborious financier, and of Laurence Hyde, a younger son of Lord Clarendon. Shaftesbury met the king's defiance with as bold a defiance of his own. Followed by a crowd of his adherents he attended before the Grand Jury of Middlesex to indict the Duke of York as a Catholic recusant and the king's mistress, the
6-316] Duchess of Portsmouth, as a national nuisance, while Monmouth made a progress through the country and gained favour everywhere by his winning demeanour. Above all Shaftesbury relied on the temper of the Commons, elected as they had been in the very heat of the panic and irritated by the long delay in calling the Houses together.

France and Europe.

At this moment, however, a new and formidable opponent to Shaftesbury's plans presented himself in the Prince of Orange. The position of William had for some time been one of singular difficulty. He had been forced, and chiefly through the treacherous diplomacy of Charles the Second, to consent to the Treaty of Nimeguen which left France matchless in arms and dominant over Europe as she had never been before. Holland indeed was saved from the revenge of Lewis, but fresh spoils had been wrested from Spain, and Franche-Comté which had been restored at the close of the former war was retained at the end of this. Above all, France overawed Europe by the daring and success with which she had faced single-handed the wide coalition against her. From the moment when the war came to an end her king's arrogance became unbounded. Lorraine was turned into a subject-state. Genoa was bombarded and its Doge forced to seek pardon in the ante-chambers of Versailles. The Pope was humiliated by the march of an army upon Rome to avenge a slight offered to the French ambassador. The Empire was outraged by a
6-317] shameless seizure of Imperial fiefs in Elsass and elsewhere which provoked remonstrances even from Charles. The whole Protestant world was defied by the increasing persecution of the Huguenots, a persecution which was to culminate in the revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

William and England.

In the mind of Lewis peace meant a series of outrages on the powers around him; but every outrage helped the cool and silent adversary who was looking on from the Hague in his task of building up that Great Alliance of all Europe from which alone he looked for any effectual check to the ambition of France. The experience of the last war had taught William that of such an alliance England must form a part, and the efforts of the Prince ever since the peace had been directed to secure her co-operation. A reconciliation of the king with his Parliament was an indispensable step towards freeing Charles from his dependence on France, and it was such a reconciliation that William at first strove to bring about; but he was for a long time foiled by the steadiness with which Charles clung to the power whose aid was needful to carry out the schemes which he was contemplating. The change of policy, however, which followed on the fall of the Cabal and the entry of Danby into power raised new hopes in William's mind, and his marriage with Mary dealt Lewis what proved to be a fatal blow. James was without a son, and the
6-318] marriage with Mary would at any rate ensure William the aid of England in his great enterprise on his

father-in-law's death. But it was impossible to wait for that event, and though the Prince used his new position to bring Charles round to a decided policy his efforts remained fruitless. The storm of the Popish Plot complicated his position. In the earlier stages of the Exclusion Bill, when the Parliament seemed resolved simply to pass over James and to seat Mary at once on the throne after her uncle's death, William stood apart from the struggle, doubtful of its issue though prepared to accept the good luck if it came to him. But the fatal error of Shaftesbury in advancing the claims of Monmouth forced him into action. To preserve his wife's right of succession with all the great issues which were to come of it, as well as to secure his own, no other course was left than to adopt the cause of the Duke of York. Charles too seemed at last willing to purchase the support of the Prince in England by a frank adhesion to his policy abroad. He protested against the encroachments which Lewis was making in Germany. He promised aid to Holland in case of attack. He listened with favour to William's proposal of a general alliance of the European powers, and opened negotiations for that purpose with Brandenburg and Spain. William indeed believed that the one step now needed to bring England to his side in the coming struggle with Lewis was
6-319] a reconciliation between Charles and the Parliament grounded on the plan for providing Protestant securities which Charles was ready again to bring forward.

William and the Exclusion.

But he still remained in an attitude of reserve when the Parliament at last met in October. The temper of the Commons was as bitter as Shaftesbury had hoped. It was in vain that Charles informed them of his negotiations for an European alliance and called on them to support him by reason and moderation. The House was too full of the sense of danger at home to heed dangers abroad. Its first act was to vote that its care should be "to suppress Popery and prevent a Popish successor." Rumours of a Catholic plot in Ireland were hardly needed to set aside all schemes of Protestant securities, and to push the Exclusion Bill through the Commons without a division. So strong had Monmouth's party become that a proposal to affirm the rights of Mary and William by name in the Bill was evaded and put aside. From this moment the course of the Prince became clear. So resolute was the temper of the Lower House that even Temple and Essex now gave their adhesion to the Exclusion Bill as a necessity, and Sunderland himself wavered towards accepting it. But Halifax, whose ability and eloquence had now brought him fairly to the front, opposed it resolutely and successfully in the Lords; and Halifax was but the mouthpiece of William. "My
6-320] Lord Halifax is entirely in the interest of the Prince of Orange," the French ambassador, Barillon, wrote to his master, "and what he seems to be doing for the Duke of York is really in order to make an opening for a compromise by which the Prince of Orange may benefit." The Exclusion Bill once rejected, Halifax followed up the blow by bringing forward a plan of Protestant securities which would have taken from James on his accession the right of veto on any bill passed by the two Houses, the right of negotiating with foreign states, or of appointing either civil or military officers save with the consent of Parliament. This plan, like his opposition to the Exclusion, was no doubt prompted by the Prince of Orange; and the States of Holland supported it by pressing Charles to come to an accommodation with his subjects which would enable them to check the perpetual aggressions which France was making on her neighbours.

Trial of Lord Stafford.

But if the Lords would have no Exclusion Bill the Commons with as good reason would have no Securities Bill. They felt—as one of the members for London fairly put it—that such securities would break down at the very moment they were needed. A Catholic king, should he ever come to the throne, would have other forces besides those in England to back him. "The Duke rules over Scotland; the Irish and the English Papists will follow him; he will be obeyed by the officials of high and low rank whom the king has
6-321] appointed; he will be just such a king as he thinks good." Shaftesbury, however, was far from resting in a merely negative position. He made a despairing effort to do the work of exclusion by a Bill of Divorce, which would have enabled Charles to put away his queen on the ground of barrenness and by a fresh marriage to give a Protestant heir to the throne. The Earl's course shows that he felt the weakness of Monmouth's cause; and perhaps that he was already sensible of a change in public feeling. This, however, Shaftesbury resolved to check and turn by a great public impeachment which would revive and establish the general belief in the Plot. Lord Stafford, who from his age and rank was looked on as the leader of the Catholic party, had lain a prisoner in the Tower since the first outburst of popular frenzy. He was now solemnly impeached; and his trial in December 1680 mustered the whole staff of informers to prove the truth of a Catholic conspiracy against the king and the realm. The evidence was worthless; but the trial revived, as Shaftesbury had hoped, much of the old panic, and the condemnation of the prisoner by a majority of his peers was followed by his death on the scaffold. The blow produced its effect on all but Charles. Sunderland again pressed the king to give way. But deserted as he was by his ministers and even by his mistress, for the Duchess of Portsmouth had been cowed into supporting the Exclusion by the
6-322] threats of Shaftesbury, Charles was determined to resist. On the coupling of a grant of supplies with demands for a voice in the appointment of officers of the royal garrisons he prorogued the Parliament.

Charles turns again to France.

William's policy had failed to bring the Commons round to the king's plans and Charles sullenly turned again to France. All dreams of heading Europe in her strife against Lewis were set aside. Charles became deaf to the projects of the Prince of Orange, and listened to the remonstrances which James addressed to him through his favourite Churchill in favour of an alliance with the Catholic king. With characteristic subtlety, however, he dissolved the existing Parliament and called a new one to meet in March 1681. The act was a mere blind. The king's aim was to frighten the country into reaction by the dread of civil strife; and his summons of the Parliament to Oxford was an appeal to the country against the disloyalty of the capital, and an adroit means of reviving the memories of the Civil War. With the same end he ordered his guards to accompany him on the pretext of anticipated disorder; and Shaftesbury, himself terrified at the projects of the Court, aided the king's designs by appearing with his followers in arms on the plea of self-protection. The violence of the Earl's party only strengthened the resolution of the king. Monmouth renewed his progresses through the country, and was met by deputations and addresses in every town he
6-323] visited. London was so restless that riots broke out in its streets. Revolt seemed at hand, and Charles hastened to conclude his secret negotiations with France. Lewis was as ready for an agreement as Charles. The one king verbally pledged himself to a policy of peace, in other words to withdrawal from any share in the Grand Alliance which William was building up. The other promised a small subsidy which with the natural growth of the Royal revenue sufficed to render Charles, if he remained at peace, independent of Parliamentary aids.

The Parliament at Oxford.

It was with this arrangement already concluded that Charles met his Parliament at Oxford. The members of the House of Commons were the same as those who had been returned to the Parliaments he had just dissolved, and their temper was naturally embittered by the two dissolutions. But their violence simply played into the king's hands. William's party still had hopes of bringing about a compromise; but the rejection of a new Limitation Bill brought forward by Halifax, which while conceding to James the title of king would have vested the actual functions of government in the Prince and Princess of Orange during his reign, alienated the more moderate and sensible of the Country party. They were alienated still more by a bold appeal of Shaftesbury to Charles himself to recognize Monmouth as his successor. The attempt of the Lower House to revive the panic by impeaching an informer named Fitzharris before the House of
6-324] Lords, in defiance of the constitutional rule which entitled him as a commoner to a trial by his peers in the course of common law, did still more to throw public opinion on the side of the Crown. Shaftesbury's course, in fact, went wholly on a belief that the penury of the Treasury left Charles at his mercy, and that a refusal of supplies must wring from the king his assent to the Exclusion. But the gold of France had freed the king from his thraldom. He had used the Parliament simply to exhibit himself as a sovereign whose patience and conciliatory temper were rewarded with insult and violence; and now that his end was accomplished he no sooner saw the Exclusion Bill reintroduced into the Commons than he suddenly dissolved the Houses after but a month's sitting and appealed in a royal declaration to the justice of the nation at large.

Dryden.

The appeal was met by an almost universal burst of loyalty. The Church rallied to the king; his declaration was read from every pulpit; and the Universities solemnly decided that "no religion, no law, no fault, no forfeiture" could avail to bar the sacred right of hereditary succession. The arrest of Shaftesbury on a charge of suborning false witnesses to the Plot marked the new strength of the Crown. The answer of the nation at large was uttered in the first great poem of John Dryden. Born in 1631 of a good
6-325] Northamptonshire family, Dryden had grown up amidst the tumult of the civil wars in a Puritan household. His grandfather, Sir Erasmus Dryden, had gone to prison at seventy rather than contribute to a forced loan. His father had been a committee-man and sequestrator under the Commonwealth. He entered life under the protection of a cousin, Sir Gilbert Pickering, who sate as one of the judges at the king's trial. Much of this early training lived in Dryden to the last. He never freed himself from the Puritan sense of religion, from the Puritan love for theological discussion and ecclesiastical controversy. Two of his greatest poems, the "Religio Laici," and the "Hind and Panther," are simply theological treatises in verse. Nor did the Commonwealth's man ever die in him. "All good subjects," he could say boldly in an hour of royal triumph, "abhor arbitrary power whether in one or in many"; and no writer has embodied in more pregnant words the highest claim of a people's right, that

> "right supreme
> To make their kings, for kings are made for them."

Dryden grew up too amidst the last echoes of the Elizabethan verse. Jonson and Massinger, Webster and Shirley, were still living men in his childhood. The lyrics of Herrick, the sweet fancies of George Herbert, were fresh in men's ears as he grew to manhood. Even when he entered into the new world of the
6-326] Restoration some veterans of this nobler school, like Denham and Waller, were still lingering on the stage. The fulness and imaginative freedom of Elizabethan prose lived on till 1677 in Jeremy Taylor, while Clarendon preserved to yet later years the grandeur and stateliness of its march. Above all Milton still sate musing on the "Paradise Lost" in the tapestried chamber of his house in Bunhill Fields.

Dryden and the Critical Poets.

Throughout his life something of the spirit of the age which he was the last to touch lived on in Dryden. He loved and studied Chaucer and Spenser even while he was copying Molière and Corneille. His noblest panegyric was pronounced over Shakspere. At the time when Rymer, the accepted critic of the Restoration, declared "our poetry of the last age as rude as our architecture," and sneered at "that Paradise Lost of Milton's which some are pleased to call a poem," Dryden saw in it "one of the greatest, most noble and sublime poems which either this age or nation hath produced." But whether in mind or in life Dryden was as unlike the Elizabethans as he was in his earlier years unlike the men of the poetic school which followed him. Of that school, the critical school as it has been called of English poetry, he was indeed the founder. He is the first of our great poets in whom "fancy is but the feather of the pen." Whether he would or no Dryden's temper was always intellectual. He was a poet, for if dead to the subtler
6-327] and more delicate forms of imaginative delight he loved grandeur, and his amazing natural force enabled him to realize in great part the grandeur which he loved. But beneath all his poetry lay a solid bottom of reason. His wildest outbursts of passion are broken by long passages of cool argument. His heroes talk to his heroines in a serried dialectic. Every problem of morals, of religion, of politics, forces itself into his verse, and is treated there in the same spirit of critical inquiry.

His Tragedies.

In other words Dryden was the poet of his day. But he was the poet of a time of transition, and his temper is transitional. It was only by slow and uncertain steps that he advanced to the full rationalism of the Critical school. His first little poem, some verses written in 1659 on the death of Lord Hastings, is a mass of grotesque extravagances in the worst style of Donne. The dramas of his early work after the Restoration are crowded with the bombastic images, the affected conceits, the far-fetched metaphors which it is the merit of the critical school to have got rid of. In his tragedies indeed the tradition of a freer and larger time jarred against the unities and the critical rules with which he strove to bind himself. If he imitated the foreign stage he could not be blind to the fact that the Elizabethan playwrights possessed "a more masculine fancy and a greater spirit in the writing than there is in any of the French." He followed
6-328] Corneille but he was haunted by memories of "the divine Shakspere." His failure indeed sprang from the very truth of his poetic ideal. He could not be imaginative in the highest dramatic sense, but the need of imaginativeness pressed on him while it was ceasing to press on his brother playwrights. He could not reach the sublime, but neither could he content himself as they did with the prosaic; he rants, fumes, and talks wild bombast in the vain effort after sublimity.

His Comedies.

Dryden failed in Comedy as he failed in Tragedy, but here the failure sprang from the very force and

vigour of his mind. He flung himself like the men of his day into the reaction against Puritanism. His life was that of a libertine; and his marriage with a woman of fashion who was yet more dissolute than himself only gave a new spur to his debaucheries. Large as was his income from the stage, and it equalled for many years the income of a country squire, he was always in debt and forced to squeeze gifts from patrons by fulsome adulation. Like the rest of the fine gentlemen about him he aired his Hobbism in sneers at the follies of religion and the squabbles of creeds. The grossness of his comedies rivalled that of Wycherley himself. But it is the very extravagance of his coarseness which shows how alien it was to the real temper of the man. A keen French critic has contrasted the libertinism of England under the Restoration with the
6-329] libertinism of France, and has ruthlessly pointed out how the gaiety, the grace, the naturalness of the one disappears in the forced, hard, brutal brilliancy of the other. The contrast is a just one. The vice of the English libertine was hard and unnatural just because his real nature took little share in it. In sheer revolt against the past he was playing a part which was not his own and which he played badly, which he forced and exaggerated, just because it was not his own. Dryden scoffs at priests and creeds, but his greater poetry is coloured throughout with religion. He plays the rake, but the two pictures which he has painted with all his heart are the pictures of the honest country squire and the poor country parson. He passes his rivals in the grossness of his comedies, he flings himself recklessly into the evil about him because it is the fashion and because it pays. But he cannot sport lightly and gaily with what is foul. He is driven if he is coarse at all to be brutally coarse. His freedom of tone, to borrow Scott's fine remark, is like the forced impudence of a timid man.

The New Criticism.

Slowly but ceaselessly, however, the critical taste of his time told on Dryden. The poetry of good sense, as it proudly called itself, triumphed in Boileau, and the rules of taste and form which Boileau laid down were accepted as the law of letters on the one side of the Channel as well as on the other. Andrew
6-330] Marvell, in whom the older imaginative beauty still found a worshipper, stood alone in his laughter at the degradation of poetry into prose. Fancy was set aside for reason, "that substantial useful part which gains the head, while Fancy wins the heart." It was the head and not the heart that poetry now cared to gain. But with all its prose the new criticism did a healthy work in insisting on clearness, simplicity, and good sense. In his "Rehearsal" Buckingham quizzed fairly enough the fume and bombast of Dryden's tragedies. But Dryden was already echoing his critics' prayer for a year "of prose and sense." He was tired of being "the Sisyphus of the stage, to roll up a stone with endless labour, which is perpetually falling down again." "To the stage," he owned, "my genius never much inclined me," and he had long had dreams, stirred no doubt by his admiration for Milton, of undertaking some epic story. But need held him to the boards and years passed by, and Dryden still stood in the second rank of English poetry, outdone in comedy by men like Etherege and rivalled in tragedy by men like Settle. Only in a single poem, that of the "Annus Mirabilis," in 1671, had he given any true indications of his surpassing powers.

Dryden and the Plot.

It was in this mood of failure and disappointment that the Popish Plot found him. Of its reality he made no question; "a plot," he says emphatically, "there was." But his cool good sense saw how the truth had
6-331] been "dashed and brewed with lies." What stirred him more was, as he believed, the return of anarchy. Puritan as his training had been he had grown up like the bulk of the men about him with a horror of the social and religious disorders which the civil war had brought in its train. He clung to authority as a security against revolution. It was this that drove him from the Puritanism of his youth to the Anglican dogmatism of the "Religio Laici," and from thence to the tempered Catholicism of the "Hind and Panther." It was this which made him sing by turns the praises of Cromwell and the praises of the king whom Cromwell had hunted from one refuge to another. No man denounced the opponents of the Crown with more ruthless invective. No man humbled himself before the throne with more fulsome adulation. Some of this no doubt was mere flattery, but not all of it. Dryden like his age was conscious that new currents of feeling and opinion were sweeping him from the old moorings of mankind. But he shrank in terror from the wide ocean over whose waters he drifted. In religion he was a rationalist, a sceptic, whether he would or no; but he recoiled from the maze of "anxious thoughts" which spread before him, of thoughts "that in endless circles roll without a centre where to fix the soul," and clung to the Church that would give him, if
6-332] not peace, at least quiet. In politics he was as much a rationalist as in religion, but he turned horrorstruck from the sight of a "state drawn to the dregs of a democracy," and in the crisis of the Popish Plot he struck blindly for the Crown.

"Absalom and Achitophel."

Dryden like the Royalists generally believed that the arrest of Shaftesbury had alone saved England from civil war, and from that worst of civil wars where a son fights against his father's throne. In his "Absalom and Achitophel" the poet told the story of the threatened strife under the thin veil of the revolt against David. Charles was the Hebrew king, Monmouth was Absalom, Shaftesbury was the wily Achitophel who drew him into revolt. The "Absalom" was a satire, and it was the first great English satire, for the satires of Marston and Hall were already forgotten. It is in ages indeed like the Restoration that satire naturally comes to the front. In the reaction after a time of high ideals and lofty efforts the sense of contrast between the aims and the powers of man, between his hopes and their fulfilment, takes form whether in the kindly pitifulness of humour or in the bitter revulsion of satire. And mingled with this in Dryden was an honest indignation at the hypocrisy around him. The men he attacks are not real men but actors. Buckingham and Shaftesbury, the infidel leader of the Independents and the deistical leader of the Presbyterians, were alike playing a part. But the largeness and fairness of his temper saved Dryden's
6-333] satire from the vicious malignity of that of Pope. He has an artistic love of picturesque contrast, he has a great writer's pride in the consciousness of power. But he has no love of giving pain for the mere pain's sake, and he has a hatred of unfairness. Even in his contempt for the man he is just to Buckingham, and his anger does not blind him to the great qualities of Shaftesbury.

Progress of the Reaction.

The even and effortless force of the poem, the disappearance of inequalities and faults of taste, showed that Dryden was at last master of his powers. But it was not this nervous strength alone which suddenly brought him to the forefront of English letters. It was the general sense that his "Absalom" was the opening of a new literary developement. Its verse, free from the old poetic merits as from the old poetic faults, clear, nervous, condensed, argumentative, proclaimed the final triumph of the "poetry of good sense." Its series of portraits showed the new interest in human character which had been stirred by the

Civil War, and which was deepening with the growing indifference to larger thoughts of nature and the growing concentration of man's thoughts on man. They led the way to that delight in the analysis of character in its lowest as in its highest forms which produced the essayists and the novel. Above all the "Absalom" was the first work in which literature became a great political power. In it Dryden showed
6-334] himself the precursor of Swift and of Bolingbroke, of Burke and of Cobbett. The poem was bought eagerly, and it undoubtedly helped to bring about that triumph of the king with the prophecy of which it closed. But prisoner as Shaftesbury was, the struggle with him was not yet over. London was still true to him; only a few days after the appearance of the "Absalom and Achitophel" the Middlesex Grand Jury ignored the bill of his indictment, and his discharge from the Tower was welcomed in every street with bonfires and ringing of bells. But a fresh impulse was given to the loyal enthusiasm of the country at large by the publication of a plan said to have been found among his papers, the plan of a secret association for the furtherance of the Exclusion whose members bound themselves to obey the orders of Parliament even after its prorogation or dissolution by the Crown. So general was the reaction that Halifax, who had now become the most conspicuous member of the royal Council, though scared by the Whig threats of impeachment, advised the calling of a new Parliament in the belief that it would be a loyal one. William of Orange too visited England to take advantage of the turn of affairs to pin Charles to the policy of the Alliance.

Shaftesbury's Death.

The king met both counsels with evasion. He kept his own secret. Hyde was the only one of his ministers whom he had trusted with the knowledge of his French negotiations, and they remained as unknown to
6-335] William as to Halifax. But their effect was seen in the new vigour which Lewis gave to his policy at home and abroad. He was resolved to bring about national unity by crushing the French Protestants, to gain a strong frontier to the East, and to be ready to seize the Spanish heritage on the death of Charles the Fourth. The agreement was no sooner made with Charles than persecution fell heavy on the Huguenots; and the seizure of Strassburg and Casale, the keys of Germany and Italy, with that of Luxemburg, the key of the United Provinces, brought Europe to the verge of war. Charles, indeed, was anxious to avoid war and he was as anxious to avoid Parliaments whose assembly war would certainly force upon him as Lewis himself. The tide of loyal reaction was mounting in fact higher every day. The king secured the adhesion of the Church by a renewed persecution of the Nonconformists, which drove Penn from England and thus brought about the settlement of Pennsylvania as a refuge for his fellow-Quakers. He was soon strong enough to call back James to Court and to arrest Monmouth, who had resumed his almost royal progresses as a means of again stirring opinion in his favour. London alone remained firm for the Whigs; but the friendship of a Tory mayor secured the nomination of Tory sheriffs in the summer of 1682, and the juries they packed left the life of every Exclusionist at the mercy of the Crown. Shaftesbury saw himself
6-336] threatened with ruin. It was in vain that he offered to waive his plans of exclusion and to fall in with the king's older proposals of a limited monarchy in the case of James's accession. The loss of London left him without a shelter, and drove him to wild conspiracies with a handful of adventurers who were as desperate as himself. He hid himself in the City where he boasted that ten thousand "brisk boys" were ready to appear at his call. From his hiding-place he urged his friends to rise in arms. But their delays drove him to flight; and in January 1683, two months after his arrival in Holland, the soul of the great leader, great from his immense energy and the wonderful versatility of his genius, but whose genius and energy had ended in wrecking for the time the fortunes of English freedom and in associating the noblest of causes with the vilest of crimes, found its first quiet in death.

The Rye-House Plot.

The flight of Shaftesbury proclaimed the triumph of the king. His marvellous sagacity had told him when the struggle was over and further resistance useless. But the country leaders who had delayed to answer the Earl's call still believed opposition possible, and looked for support to the discontent of the Nonconformists at the revival of the penal laws. Monmouth, with Lord Essex, Lord Howard of Escrick, Lord Russell, Hampden, and Algernon Sidney, held meetings with the view of founding an association
6-337] whose agitation should force on the king the assembly of a Parliament. The more desperate spirits who had clustered round Shaftesbury as he lay hidden in the City took refuge in plots of assassination, and in a plan for murdering Charles and his brother as they passed the Rye-House on the road from London to Newmarket. Both projects were betrayed, and though they were wholly distinct from one another the cruel ingenuity of the Crown lawyers blended them into one. Lord Essex saved himself from a traitor's death by suicide in the Tower. Lord Russell, convicted on a charge of sharing in the Rye-House plot, was beheaded on the 21st of July 1683, in front of his father the Earl of Bedford's house in Lincoln's Inn Fields. The same fate awaited Algernon Sidney. Monmouth fled in terror over sea, and his flight was followed by a series of prosecutions for sedition directed against his followers.

END OF VOL. VI

TRANSCRIBER'S NOTES:

The following words appear with and without hyphens. They have been left as in the original.

Franche Comté	Franche-Comté
goodwill	good-will

Ellipses match the original.

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