CHAPTER II

THE LAST YEARS OF CHARLES I

[1646–1649 A.D.]

> Nobody now could foretell the course of events; either extreme seemed possible, the abolition or the restoration of the crown, the exclusive predominance of one creed or the toleration of many, the continuation of parliament or its diminution, the complete sway of the army or its combination with other forces, the maintenance of existing laws or social resolution. — VON RANKE.[b]

FROM this period, the supreme authority openly acknowledged by the people of England, was no longer divided, according to local feeling or circumstances, between the king and the parliament. The condition of the sovereign became in effect that of a private person, and the two houses exercised the functions of an independent commonwealth. But these powers were too recent in their origin, and the parties who wielded them were too little agreed among themselves, to allow of their working without hindrance or disorder. The Puritan spirit, with its ardent love of freedom up to a certain point, and its lamentable intolerance with respect to everything beyond it, still animated the Presbyterian body in both kingdoms; while the Independents, as they gradually rose into importance, by the sagacity which they brought to the management of public affairs, hardly less than by their exploits in the fields, became more fixed and definite in their demands on the side of the rights of conscience, and of a more equal liberty.

The army under Fairfax, consisting of twenty-two thousand men, was made up almost entirely from the Independents, and greatly outnumbered the Presbyterians, who were in arms under Massey and Poyntz. The Independents could also boast at this juncture of a small majority on many questions even in the house of commons; but the city was still mostly Presbyterian, and found its great ally in the Scottish army, which, by possessing the king's person, had become capable of negotiating with increased authority.

[1646 A.D.]

Added to which, as a further element of probable discord, the royalists, though scattered, were by no means extinct. The number of the slain in the late struggle was comparatively small, and the passions of those who survived the conflict must have been rather exasperated than allayed by what had befallen them.

The struggle between the Presbyterians and Independents in the commons, which, during the present year, had appeared, in some important instances, to be in favour of the former, had not been such uniformly. A motion which required that part of the army under Fairfax should embark for Ireland was defeated by a majority of ninety-one to ninety; and a resolution to disband the troops under Massey, consisting mostly of Presbyterians, was carried in the commons, and executed by Ludlow, with the concurrence of Fairfax, notwithstanding a remonstrance against it by the lords. But the two parties were so nearly balanced in the commons during this year, that questions affecting either were rarely carried by a majority of more than eight or ten votes; and some instances of understood compromise were necessary that the ordinary business of government might proceed.

Another matter which served to manifest the power of the Independents in public affairs at this juncture, was the settlement of the exact form in which the Presbyterian government should be established. The Independents, as we have before remarked, were opposed to any civil establishment of religion; and those who aided them in their present struggle, without being strictly of their opinion in that respect, were careful that the mode of its establishment should be such as to give a secure ascendency to the civil power. Nothing, however, could be more unacceptable to the Presbyterian clergy than such doctrines, inasmuch as their principles taught them to regard the secular establishment of religion as the first duty of a state; and, at the same time, to assert their own pure independence of the civil power, even while looking to it for protection and endowments, and for the force with which to maintain their particular species of dominion.

There was a bill against blasphemy which this party endeavoured to carry in 1646, and which they succeeded in passing two years later, the provisions of which bespeak a frightful spirit of intolerance, reminding us very forcibly of the many similar decrees which occur in the pages of ecclesiastical history, and which were made the ground of proceedings so disgraceful to Christianity. By this act, any denial of the Trinity, of the proper deity or humanity of Christ, of his death as an atonement for the guilty, of his freedom from sin, of his resurrection, of the general rising from the dead, of the day of judgment, or of the authenticity of the canonical scriptures — was declared to be a capital offence! Many less considerable heresies are named as to be punished by other penalties. The authors of this enactment had imbibed the sentiment that truth must be one; that to themselves pertained the rare felicity of having discovered it; and that the more consistent evidence of their hallowed attachment to its interests was in the adoption even of such means with a view to its support. Thus the reasoning which had descended from Bonner to Laud, passed from the latter to the man who brought him to the block!

By the influence of the Independents, which operated to delay the act concerning blasphemy, the commons were induced to pass several of the most important of the propositions that had been rejected by the king, in the shape of ordinances — a proceeding which gave them the force of acts of parliament without waiting for the royal sanction. This republican principle was acted upon with respect to those parts of the propositions which related to the abolition of episcopacy, and the sale of the bishops' lands; to a justification of the

proceedings in parliament in both kingdoms since the commencement of hostilities; to the appointment of the great officers of state by the parliament; and to its retaining the command of the forces during the next twenty years.

THE ARMY VERSUS PARLIAMENT

The surrender of the king by the Scots, which was viewed with much satisfaction by the English Presbyterians, both as it would materially reduce the expenditure of the government, and as it seemed, by placing the king in their hands, to confer on them the power of dictating the conditions of a settlement, was soon found to have placed the affairs of the kingdom, as a matter at issue, between an unarmed Presbyterian majority in the parliament and the capital, and the Independent minority of the lower house, sustained by nearly the whole strength of the army. On the departure of the Scots, the Presbyterians ceased to have a military force in which they could confide; and it accordingly became their great object to disband the army under Fairfax, which, they well knew, had been for some time governed by principles and passions most hostile to their plans. It was given out, with this view, that the war had reached its close, and that the time for returning to a peace establishment had arrived.

Nor was this considered a difficult work to perform. The Presbyterians in the city, in the fulness of their confidence, prepared a petition to be presented to the two houses, which prayed that no person disaffected to the covenant should be promoted to, or allowed to retain, any public trust; that persons not duly ordained should be no more suffered to preach, nor the meetings of separate congregations be tolerated; and that an ordinance should be passed to put down all heresies and schisms, by visiting their abettors with exemplary punishments.

It was agreed that Fairfax should retain his office as commander-in-chief. But it was also voted that every officer under his command should take the covenant, and conform to the government of the church as established by ordinance; that no commander of a garrison should remain a member of parliament; and that all offices above that of a colonel should be abolished, excepting, of course, the rank of commander-in-chief. The object of the Presbyterians in these votes was to purify the army generally from its leaven of independency, and to compel Cromwell, and other formidable opponents, such as Ludlow, Hutchinson, Ireton, and Algernon Sidney, to relinquish their connection either with the army or with the parliament. With the votes already mentioned was another, which ordered an immediate embarkation of a great part of the army under Fairfax to serve against the insurgent Catholics in Ireland. At the same time, the discussions in parliament with respect to the payment of arrears, were attended with so many difficulties and delays as to warrant suspicion of a design to elude the just demands of the army even in that respect.

The crisis between the Presbyterians and the Independents was now at hand. The latter found themselves called upon to submit to a yoke under the name of Presbyterianism, hardly less oppressive than they had fought against under the name of prelacy. They saw every practicable slight cast upon their leaders; their boasted liberty of conscience about to be wrested from them; their dismission meditated, even without a just settlement of their pecuniary claims on the power which they had protected and established at the hazard of their lives; and, above all, one division of their strength on the eve of being

[1647 A.D.]

drafted to Ireland, that the remainder might not be sufficient to impede measures designed to place the whole kingdom, with its new ecclesiastical establishment, under the guardianship of an army pledged to the covenant.

It was in order to intimate a determination not to submit to such a course of affairs, that the forces under Fairfax began an advance towards London. The arrears at this time due to the army were forty-three weeks' pay to the horse, and eighteen weeks' to the foot, a sum in the whole, considerably above three hundred thousand pounds. By a deputation for the purpose, the commons apprised the army of the vote in which they had pledged themselves to raise sixty thousand pounds a month for its support, and promised two months' pay to such regiments as should be disbanded. This, it will be perceived, was not one-fifth of the sum due to the cavalry, and less than half the amount owing to the infantry. But the great object of this deputation, was to make arrangements for the embarkation of a large portion of the army to Ireland. Many difficulties were thrown in the way of this object by the council of officers in their conference with the deputation; and a petition was prepared, to express the desires both of the officers and soldiers on various matters, but particularly with respect to an act of indemnity securing them against all proceedings on account of anything in their conduct during the war — and also that measures should be adopted to satisfy them with respect to their arrears before disbanding.

ALGERNON SIDNEY
(1622–1683)

The commons became aware of this proceeding, and, in order to repress it, and to prevent any similar attempt, summoned several officers who were suspected of being its promoters to their bar. On the same day it was voted that three regiments, commanded by colonels who were known to be zealous Presbyterians, should form part of the force to be retained in England. Holles, who was not without that sort of courage which arises from an insensibility to danger, concluded this day of bold measures by proposing that all persons adhering to the said petition should be prosecuted as enemies of the state, and this motion, carried at a late hour in the commons, was approved the next day by the lords. Such proceedings, against an army consisting of such men, were unjust and singularly impolitic.

The deputation to the army from the commons on the twentieth of March, was followed by another, which appeared in its quarters on the thirteenth of April. Colonel Lambert, in behalf of the assembled officers, insisted on the terms stated in the former conference. In conclusion, it was stated that no objection would be made to the service in Ireland if the men were allowed to

embark for that kingdom under their present commanders. About ten days subsequent, the commons went into a debate on the propriety of accepting the offer thus made by the convention of officers. They voted that such of the army as did not proceed to the service in Ireland according to order should be paid arrears for six weeks and disbanded. Filled with this ill-grounded confidence they continued to summon the most popular officers to their bar, on the charge of tampering with the soldiery in opposition to the wishes of the government. Some they committed to prison, and the whole body was not only threatened with punishment should they be detected in fomenting discontents, but were commanded to abstain from taking any part with the men under them in their attempts to obtain a redress of their pretended grievances.

RISE OF THE AGITATORS

One immediate effect of the separation thus produced between the men and the officers, was the institution of a sort of representative body from among the former, consisting mostly of non-commissioned officers, which subsequently became so memorable under the name of the council of Agitators—[a designation once supposed to have originated in a corruption of the word adjutators, or helpers].

If the civilians at Westminster had found the convention of officers unmanageable, their difficulties were of necessity multiplied by the imprudence which called forth this new power. The officers were a kind of middle class between the men whom they commanded, and the parliament with which they were at issue, having interests and sympathies in common with both; but this new council promised to embody the extreme principles and passions of the great body of the military, without the benefit of those modifications which the superior intelligence of their leaders would naturally have suggested. The officers had been censured when appearing in the character of petitioners, though on matters strictly military; but a more dangerous body was now about to appear in that character, and one which was not likely to be content with an interference on military affairs alone.

The first public act of the council of Agitators was to present a letter to their generals, Fairfax, Cromwell, and Skippon, bearing date the twenty-eighth of April, in which they complained of having been denounced as enemies of their country, and that by men, who, suddenly tasting the sweets of power, had forgotten their duties and professions, and were degenerating into tyrants. They spoke of the expedition to Ireland as an affair which had been so managed as to become a manifest expedient for putting an end to the army; and they were not disposed to witness its dissolution, until those rights of the subject, for the sake of which they had become soldiers, should be conceded and secured.

When this document was presented to the commons, it was moved that the three soldiers from whom it had been received should be sent to the Tower. Cromwell considered it important to check this vindictive course for the present and by his strong assurances that the army was by no means in so unmanageable a condition as the house seemed to conclude, put an end to the debate. He also accepted a commission with Skippon, Ireton, and Fleetwood, to go to the quarters of the military, and, by promising a bill of indemnity, and a further payment of arrears, to bring about, if possible, a settlement of differences. It may be safely credited that all these commissioners except Skippon, had been chief parties in encouraging and directing the agitation which

[1647 A.D.]

they were sent to allay. But, with a majority against them in the two houses, it was only by such subtle policy, or by an immediate appeal to force, that their objects could be accomplished.[d]

The "Agitators"[1] discussed in a sort of committee all measures that were to be adopted, and subjected all the resolutions of the parliament to a subsequent examination. They formed a kind of lower house, and the officers an upper house, by which the plan of resistance became more consolidated and connected than was believed in London to be the case. As soon as Cromwell, who was the soul of the whole affair, arrived there, he bitterly complained, with profound dissimulation, of the state of affairs, but affirmed, however, with his associates, that they had found in the army no distemper, but many grievances. The parliament returned thanks, on the 21st of May, to him and his associates for their exertions, and on the following days came to many resolutions respecting the time and manner of paying the troops, of disbanding them, and of sending a part to Ireland. When it was proposed about this time to place some of the most violent of the agitators in strict custody, a Mr. Werenworth could venture to say they might be put in safe custody, but in the best tavern in the city, and be well provided with wine and sugar.

Cromwell, referring to some violent debates, said still more plainly to Ludlow, "These people will never leave off till the army takes them by the ears and turns them out of parliament." And in fact they still believed, as the king had done before, in their own inviolability and omnipotence, and did not take any right measures either to resist the army or to satisfy and gain it.

On the 29th of May, the new council of war declared that till all the grievances of the army were removed it could not be dissolved, so that the parliamentary commissioners were obliged to return without effecting anything. Three days later, on the 1st of June, Fairfax willingly received a decisive proposal of the council of war, namely: In order the better to superintend the regiments, and to keep them in order, they shall be collected from their scattered quarters; then the general will not be obliged to go from place to place, and the parliament will clearly see how far it may depend on the army, and the latter what it may expect from parliament. Fairfax communicated this resolution of the council to the parliament, recommending kindness and mildness, though the most blind could not but see in it a formal declaration of war. Holles, with the most zealous of his friends, advised therefore that at a moment of such great danger Cromwell ought to be arrested, though complete proofs of his guilt were still wanting; and, in fact, this perhaps would have been the only means of averting the approaching revolution. But before it could be regularly brought forward in the slow parliamentary course, Cromwell had again left London for the army, to which he gave a new preponderance by a bold and unexpected measure.

THE ARMY ABDUCTS THE KING (1647 A.D.)

On the 3rd of June, 1647, Cornet Joyce, formerly a tailor, appeared at Holmby, at the head of a party of horse, and demanded to speak to the king. Being told that his majesty was already gone to bed, he paid the less regard to the objection, as his men had quickly come to an understanding with the garrison, and drunk to their brotherhood, and consequently neither the officers nor the commissioners of the parliament could depend upon their support.

[1 The form "Adjutator" is plainly a blunder, though it was contemporaneous with "Agitator," which was used in the now obsolete sense of "agent."]

When the king had been waked from his sleep, Joyce went to him, armed, and declared that he was come to take him to the army. Being asked by whose authority he came, Joyce answered: "The soldiers at the door are my authority." The king: "This authority is in truth written so legibly that it may be read without spelling." When the king reached the army, Fairfax affirmed, as we believe with perfect truth, that he had known nothing whatever of the whole enterprise, to which Charles answered that he could not believe this unless he hanged Joyce. The cornet being summoned to appear, said: "I have acted by instructions from the army; let it be assembled, and if three-fourths, at least, do not approve of my conduct, I am ready to be hung at the head of my regiment."

It is absolutely impossible that Cromwell and his associates should have known nothing of this plan; on the contrary, it cannot be doubted that they had contrived and brought about the whole, in order to anticipate and outmanœuvre the Presbyterians; wherefore Milton, the panegyrist of Cromwell, says: "The carrying off the king was indeed contrary to the laws; but, under such circumstances, the most worthy men have often boldly saved the state, and the laws have afterwards confirmed their proceedings." According to Huntingdon, Joyce said plainly that Cromwell had given him the commission; and the latter replied, "otherwise the parliament would have carried off the king." When news of all these proceedings was brought to London, the adversaries of the Independents were thrown into the utmost consternation. The Scotch deputies in London looked at this carrying off of the king from a very different point of view; they affirmed that it was contrary to the covenant and the express conditions stipulated for the security of Charles, when he was given up, and took it for granted that the English parliament had engaged to maintain and execute those conditions in which Scotland would readily afford every assistance.

At the instance of Cromwell, Ireton, Fleetwood, Harrison, and others, who, notwithstanding the Self-Denying Ordinance, held posts in the army, "A Solemn Engagement" had been brought about, on the 5th of June, and a document drawn up, in which the soldiers endeavoured to justify their preceding conduct, as well as the choice of agitators, and affirmed that it was by no means intended to overthrow the government of the Presbyterian constitution of the church, or to introduce general licentiousness, under the pretext of religious freedom; yet, at the same time, they speak of the injustice and tyranny of their enemies, and of the malicious and wicked designs and principles of certain persons in the parliament. They plainly declared, that till their grievances were redressed, and all their demands granted, the army would not suffer itself to be disbanded by anybody, either wholly or in part.

THE EXPULSION OF THE ELEVEN MEMBERS

Thus pressed by the disobedient refractory army, the parliament considered it as a very fortunate circumstance, when, on the 8th of June, a petition was presented from the city of London requesting all honourable means might be used to come to an understanding with the army, that bloodshed might be avoided, the covenant maintained, the king's person secured, fresh negotiations be commenced with him, Ireland assisted, and new laws made for the protection of the city and the parliament. On the same day numbers of discontented soldiers crowded round the house, and extorted a more prompt execution of what had been already granted. Thanks were, however, returned

[1647 A.D.]

to the city, and it was resolved on the 11th of June, that a committee of the parliament and of the capital should, for the safety of the kingdom and of the parliament, raise and arm men, and adopt all suitable measures; everybody was bound to obey and assist it. The army being speedily informed of all these circumstances, sent to the city of London a representation and justification of its conduct, and concluded their letter in the following words: "If you, or a great part of you, should be misled, notwithstanding these arguments, to employ arms against our just demands, we should, after this brotherly exhortation, be innocent of all the mischief that might befall your great and populous city."

Conjointly with these threats, the army caused a report to be spread that it intended to restore the king and civil order, to abolish taxes, establish peace, etc. Fairfax, too, sent to the parliament many petitions that were received in favour of the army. As it had formerly, in its mistrust, employed against the king arguments, reproaches, and conjectures, the same, now it had lost all credit and popularity, was done to itself, in scorn and ridicule, and all that it now ventured to do in its pretended omnipotence was to request that Fairfax, with the army, should not come within forty miles of London. He answered, on the 12th of June, that he was sorry not to be able to comply with this request, because the army, as circumstances had required, had already advanced within twenty miles of London. On the receipt of this intelligence, as Sanderson expresses it, such fear and boundless suspicion arose in the city that it seemed as if everybody were mad. The parliament deliberated day and night, but found that its resolutions, which at this time had been chiefly for the advantage of London, did not quiet the minds of the citizens, and that its measures did not alarm the soldiers. The latter and the general, on the contrary, answered the deputies of the parliament that the nearer they were to the city the more easy it was to obtain money, to restore order, and to establish peace.

From every concession of the parliament the army proved the justice of its earlier demands and raised them, referring to the principles which had been frequently declared by the two houses themselves. Instead of giving up the king as the parliament demanded, the army now treated him with uncommon respect, so that apprehensions were conceived that he might place himself at its head and disperse the parliament. The leaders of the Presbyterians, indeed, still preserved their courage, and endeavoured to prepare everything in London for serious resistance; but the violence of their opponents increased in an equal degree. When Holles, for instance, fell into a bitter dispute with Ireton, and challenged him, the latter answered it was contrary to his conscience to fight a duel. Hereupon Holles struck him in the face, and said, "Then let it be against your conscience to insult others." After such scenes between the leaders of the Presbyterians and Independents, no reconciliation could be thought of.

On the 14th of June, the parliament received a declaration of the army and the generals, drawn up principally by Ireton, with the assistance of Cromwell and Lambert, in which, among other things, they say: "We are no hired mercenaries, who must assist in all kinds of oppression, but came forward to defend the rights and liberties of the country, which are sufficiently known to us by the declaration of parliament, and by our own common sense. In Scotland, Portugal, and the Netherlands they went much further than the army has done; and the parliament itself has declared that where the rights of nature, of justice, and of nations are, there is no undue resistance to authority. We therefore demand the expulsion and impeachment of eleven members: viz.,

Hollis, Stapleton, Lewis, Clotworthy, Waller, Maynard, Massey, Glyn, Long, Harley, and Nichols, who had particularly spoken against the army; they likewise demanded a month's pay in two days, etc. Further, that the parliament should not raise any new troops, or grant the obedient soldiers and officers any advantages over those who had disobeyed; and should give a strict account of the application of the public revenue; that the rights of the king should be determined in harmony with the rights of the subjects, and an amnesty for the past must be proclaimed.

"The present parliament must not continue indefinitely, according to the will of the members, which is contrary to the constitution of the country and the rights of the people, and leads to tyranny. Triennial parliaments must be restored, the representation of inconsiderable and decayed places must be altered, and a more uniform system introduced, founded on judicious principles; for instance, with reference to the payment of taxes. No person desires to overthrow the Presbyterian church, but neither ought those who are restrained by their consciences from following certain forms and ceremonies, but otherwise live peaceably and according to the laws, to be punished on that account, or be debarred any rights and privileges. Our demands are, in short, for the general good, and are not founded on partial and selfish views. Wherefore we hope that God, in his goodness and mercy, will through us, as his blessed instruments, cause the peace and happiness of this unhappy kingdom to be established."

All these demands not only obtained the approbation of the commander-in-chief, Fairfax, in a special letter, but met with many friends in the country. The taxes, it was complained, become daily heavier, and a great portion of the revenue is employed for selfish purposes, and no account given. Unheard-of harshness is used towards the vanquished friends of the king, and to the bishops who are reduced to distress. The star chamber is, indeed, abolished; but the committees formed in the counties arrest and punish at their discretion, and exercise a greater tyranny than ever, and all this too is done under religious pretexts, and every crime is accompanied with prayers and scripture phrases. If, therefore, objections may be made in some instances to the demands of the army, and if its haughty bearing cannot be justified, as far as the form is concerned, yet there remains no other means to put down the temporal and spiritual tyranny of the parliament. In this situation, which must have been more bitter to the parliament, which was lately so revered, when it considered its own conduct towards the king, it revoked the ordinance against the army, assigned money for its pay, and put a stop to the levy of recruits and to the preparations for defence.

But it passed over other points in silence, observed that the expulsion of the eleven members could not take place without a precise statement of the complaints against them and proofs; and, lastly, it again demanded that the army should remove to the distance of forty miles, and that the king should be given up to the parliament. Fairfax did not pay the slightest attention to these demands, at first did not answer at all, then evasively, and it was not till the 23rd of June that a new "humble petition" of the army and its leaders appeared. After long and warm debates, the parliament resolved, on the 25th of June, that the accused members could not be suspended from sitting in the house till particulars were produced and proofs given. On the following day, however, news was brought that the army had advanced within fifteen English miles; but merely, as Fairfax said, for the ease of the country and the soldiers. In this situation, when arguments and representations had no effect, and means were wanting to repel force by force, the eleven accused

[1647 A.D.]

members desired leave to absent themselves from the house. This was readily granted, though the Independents thereby gained the majority in parliament, and carried motions which had before been rejected.

The Independents, on their part, endeavoured more and more to gain the king; they treated him much more mildly than the Presbyterians, allowed his children, friends, and chaplain to have access to him, and held out hopes of complying with his wishes respecting the constitution of the Church. They, however, did not make him any definite proposals; whence sharp-sighted persons correctly inferred that they meant to use him as an instrument, and to keep him in suspense, rather than to determine disputed points according to his wishes. Hence Lanerick wrote to him that the army would certainly propose very hard terms to him, and at the most offer him religious liberty for the loss of all temporal power. The king asking, in a conversation, by what right he had been removed against his will from Holmby House, Fairfax replied, from necessity; on which Charles said, "I never ventured at the height of my power to do so much violence to the law, and yet those people cry out give us justice, or —— ! !"

RIOTS IN LONDON

On the 8th of July, a letter from the commander-in-chief, recommending and justifying the milder treatment of the king, was received by the parliament. The letter advised not to use greater severity towards him without necessity, which would only excite a new interest in his favor. The mixture of truth and error, of humility and arrogance, of apparent obedience and direct resistance, which we find in the addresses of the army to the parliament, calls to our minds its own proceedings against the king, only the retaliation is the more bitter because the soldiers ironically quoted an example or model for every step they took, from the journals of the legislators, who had now lost all their power. The latter, however, did not give up their cause as desperate, but endeavoured to combat the army with its own weapons, by means of petitions, and to bring over the capital, which was for the most part inclined to the Presbyterians, entirely to their own side. On the 14th of July, a representation to the following effect, said to be signed by 10,000 well-disposed young men, was presented, requesting the "restoration of the king and the parliament to their rights, the regulation of the government of the church, the abolition of the conventicles and of the undue liberty of religion, the punishment of the evil-minded, and the disbanding of the army."

This petition being neutralised by a second of an opposite tenor on the following day, the formation of the militia in London impeded, and the Presbyterian commanders removed; a number of citizens, young men, apprentices, officers, sailors, and watermen presented, on the 24th of July, a third representation, founded on a solemn league and covenant. They demanded that the army should not come any nearer, but that the king should come to London; that peace should be concluded on the conditions proposed by him, on the 12th of May, and that all things still in dispute should be speedily settled, in concert with the Scotch. These proposals and resolutions, they were resolved to defend with their lives and fortunes. The parliament, now stripped of all dignity and independence, had no alternative but to yield to the power of the army or of the city. It chose the former, rejected the last-mentioned demands, and declared all persons who had joined in that petition to be traitors. The army, being informed of all these circumstances, had declared, on the 28th, that it would not suffer such disobedience of the city to the

parliament, and would free it from all violence. On the other hand, the citizens boasted that they would treat with the same generosity that part of the parliament which acceded to their views, and accordingly, on the 25th of July, the sheriffs and some members of the common council appeared before the house of commons, with a petition that it would restore the independence of the London militia, and favor its speedy organisation.

Before any resolution could be taken, several thousand apprentices and others preferred a similar but much more violent petition; nay, they behaved in so riotous a manner that the seven lords (to which number the whole upper house was now reduced), immediately granted their petition, but then fled through a back door, and escaped by water. The house of commons, which did not wish to offend the army, most earnestly entreated the insolent petitioners to retire; but as their secret intention immediately to adjourn became known, the mob occupied all the doors; nay, the boldest entered the hall, forcibly took the speaker, who was going to retire, back to his chair, made various demands, with loud cries, but especially the confirmation of what the upper house had granted: the recall of the king to London, the return of the eleven members of parliament, the restoration of the militia to its old footing, and the abolition of all ordinances against the petitioners.

THE HEADS OF THE PROPOSALS

Charles was not inobservant of these violent proceedings in the city, and secretly expressed his approval of them, everything which served to place the two parties in an equipoise, or to embroil their affairs, being regarded by him as favourable to the part which he was disposed to act as an umpire between them.

As the natural consequence of such proceedings, and of the attempts which were continually made to detach the disaffected and the wavering from its ranks, the army had become more and more united and organised with a view to the accomplishment of its objects, and much less scrupulous about an immediate proposal of those political reforms and arrangements which were deemed expedient for the public interest. While the city was the scene of the excitement and disorder now described, the wisest men in the army, some of whom had been educated as lawyers, and others were naturally profound politicians, were employing themselves in framing a scheme for the settlement of affairs which was to be submitted to the approval of the king and of the two houses.[1]

This scheme provided that a new parliament should be convened every two years, upon a principle of election which required the extinction of decayed boroughs, and which regulated the number of members for boroughs and counties according to their relative extent and property. In its first session each parliament was to deliberate for one hundred and twenty days, after which space, and not before, it might be adjourned or dissolved by the king; and at the close of a second session of the same extent it dissolved of course. In all cases of impeachment, the judgment of the commons was made to be necessary to any sentence of condemnation pronounced by the lords, and the king was not to have the power to pardon when the two houses agreed in their verdict. The command of the militia was to be vested in the two houses for the next ten years, and to be resumed by the king at the close of that interval with the consent of parliament.

[1 This scheme called "The Heads of the Proposals" was drawn up by Ireton.]

[1647 A.D.]

The persons who should constitute the council of state now to be appointed were to be chosen with the concurrence of all the negotiating parties, and to hold their offices during good behaviour, but not for a longer period than seven years. The parliament, which was to retain the power of war and peace, was also to nominate the officers of state for the next ten years, and after that time was to be empowered to present three candidates for each of such offices, from which the king might make his selection. The prelates might be restored, but without the power to inflict any civil penalty upon any man on account of religion; nor were any means to be employed to compel the use of the common prayer, or the adoption of the covenant. With these more important provisions, were some enlightened proposals with respect to the choosing of grand jurymen, the appointment of sheriffs, the right of petitioning, and the reform of various evils connected with tithes, law-suits, and imprisonment for debt.

Some of the men who had been most occupied in the preparation of this scheme — a scheme which, all circumstances considered, was singularly wise and moderate — were determined republicans; but they felt that they had to negotiate for a nation in which an attachment to monarchy was still the prevailing sentiment, and not for the comparatively small sect which shared with them in their greater admiration of the commonwealths of the ancient world. The conduct of the monarch, however, made this effort in the way of compromise wholly unavailing. His language, when these overtures were made to him, was so haughty and irritating as to destroy all hope of conciliation in those who proposed them, and excited regret and astonishment among his friends who listened to it.

The mobs of the capital extorted the required votes from the parliament on Monday the 26th of June, and on the following Thursday the speakers of both houses, with about fourteen lords, and one hundred commoners, left the city, and two days later placed themselves under the protection of the army on Hounslow Heath. Little authority attached to the fragments of the two houses which remained at Westminster, and though the force at the command of the city was more numerous than the army advancing against it, the want of that discipline, and deep interest in the matters at issue which characterised the army under Fairfax, rendered all the hostile preparations made by his opponents rather ridiculous than formidable. On the seventh of August the army marched through London without the slightest appearance of opposition or disorder; the two houses assembled; the speakers resumed their seats; Fairfax received their thanks, and accepted from the hands of the lords and commons the office of constable of the Tower.

The parliament, being reassembled after the interval of disorder from the 26th of July to the 6th of August, was prevailed upon by the officers to make one more effort for the restoration of peace, which was done by recommending the old propositions submitted to the king at Newcastle to his further consideration. But those propositions were based upon the league and covenant, and the military leaders heard with much pleasure that the king professed to look upon the recent propositions of the army as more tolerant and equitable, and as being in consequence more adapted to become the groundwork of an adjustment. It was hoped that not more than three weeks would be required to complete a settlement upon that basis. But nearly two months passed, and Cromwell and his colleagues were still, notwithstanding all their labour, at some distance from their object — so difficult was it to bring the council of officers and the agitators, and the lords and commons, to such an agreement as might be expected to obtain the approval of the king.

In the mean time it was ascertained that the monarch had no sincere intentions toward peace upon such terms. He still indulged the hope of obtaining military aid from Ireland and Scotland, and flattered himself that by bringing an army of covenanters from the north against the army of the Independents, he should soon be placed in a position to summon the scattered royalists in both kingdoms to his standard, and so to recover what he had lost. His intrigues with all these parties had led to the adoption of some extended and definite plans of action, when they were detected by Cromwell and Ireton, who, at their next meeting with Ashburnham, expressed high indignation on account of the perfidy which they had discovered in his master. Charles soon experienced the evil effects of this conduct. The spirit of the army became daily more violent; and those who had been accustomed to exercise the greatest control over it, began to look upon their power with apprehension. The agitators were heard to change their discourse, and to complain openly in council, both of the king, and of the malignants about him.

Much of the dangerous efficiency which these men possessed as speakers was the effect of their having taken upon them the office of preaching. The clergy who were at first connected with the several regiments as chaplains, soon retired from a mode of life so little congenial with their habits. They first saw war at the battle of Edgehill, and few of them exposed themselves to the sight a second time. But the consequence was, that the services of religion were left to fall almost into disuse, or to be conducted by military men. It is not to be doubted, however, that the republicanism of the private soldiers had been connected from the first with not a little fanatical extravagance; and as this feeling increased in that quarter, and as more moderate men sometimes deemed it prudent to make use of it in the struggle of parties, it is not surprising that the more sober commonwealthmen and the levellers should have been confounded by their enemies, and that the same obnoxious appellation should often have been given to both. The individuals who placed themselves at the head of the malcontents in the army at this moment were Major Scott, and the colonels Ewer and Rainsborough; and their jealousy was particularly directed against Cromwell, Ireton, and Vane.

On the 1st of November the agents of no less than sixteen regiments concurred in the adoption of a paper bearing the title of An Agreement of the People, and containing the leading principles of this sect. According to this avowal of their opinions, they were concerned to vest the sovereign power in the representatives of the nation, independent of the consent or concurrence of any other person or persons — their constituents being their only superior. They claimed equal protection from the laws; exemption from all forced service either in the army or navy; and full liberty of religious worship. That parliaments might be a more adequate representation and exercise of the popular sovereignty, it was urged that the right of suffrage should be much extended, and that all such assemblies should be convened anew at the close of every two years, and the session of each year be a sitting of six months.

These proceedings were opposed with some spirit by the two houses, and were discountenanced in every practicable way by Cromwell and Ireton, who, whatever may have been their private speculations, were satisfied that the country was in no state to be governed by such principles, and still less by such men.[1] That something might be conceded to the temper of this faction, the

[1] Ludlow, with his usual prejudice against Cromwell, ascribes his conduct in this particular to a desire of making the army more subservient to his plans of personal ambition. But of this there is no proof. His plans, so far as they can be known, no doubt promised more advantage to himself than those which obtained the suffrage of the agitators and their adher-

[1647 A.D.]

parliament agreed to deprive the crown of its negative voice on bills, after passing the lords and commons; and Cromwell so far yielded to the stream as to vote with the council of officers upon the resolution that no further attempt should be made toward negotiating with the king. But these concessions did little to check the present spirit of insubordination, and it was manifest to sagacious men that, without prompt and decisive measures to curb this arrogance, all would be lost.

RENDEZVOUS AT WARE—MUTINY SUPPRESSED

Fairfax, who had always looked on the proceedings of the agitators with suspicion and displeasure, assembled a council of officers to deliberate on the best means of counteracting these projects, and of removing the distempered feeling in which they originated. It was resolved that the officers and agitators should repair from the head-quarters at Putney to their different regiments, in order that their influence might be employed in restoring discipline — the "agents" having been the parties just now most employed in producing this spirit of discontent, on which both the country and the parliament began to look with alarm. Several places of rendezvous were accordingly appointed, in the hope of finally adjusting all differences. In the mean time, the general urged on the parliament the importance of making some speedy arrangement for the payment of arrears, and on similar matters, as a course of proceeding that could not fail of rendering it manifest that the army was still intent on the good of the kingdom.

This was on the 9th of November, the day after the meeting of the council of officers at Putney. On the same day a petition was presented to the house from certain agents of the army — the same who had drawn up "the case" of that body — praying the house to take the latter document into consideration. The "petition" and the "case" were both condemned, as opposed to the privileges of parliament, and to the fundamental government of the kingdom; but some steps were taken with a view to the payment of arrears, and toward making a better provision for the wants of the soldiers.

On the 13th, the appointed rendezvous took place at Ware, the headquarters having been removed two days previously to Hertford. One brigade only had received orders to be present on that day; but besides the six regiments which it included, two others made their appearance. The general began by reading to each regiment a remonstrance agreed upon by the council of officers, and addressed the men in such terms as called forth loud applause, and all seemed to join in the pledge "to adhere to the general," notwithstanding the efforts made by Scott, Eyre, and others to induce them to declare for "the Agreement of the People."

But the two regiments present without orders were those commanded by Harrison and Lilburne, long known, particularly the latter, as the most mutinous in the army. Harrison's regiment appeared with a motto in their hat — "England's freedom and soldiers' rights;" but were prevailed on by the gen-

ents, but they were such as may have originated in a more enlightened regard to the claims of his country. Mr. Godwin[h] also, has represented Cromwell as insincere in his transactions with the king, but founds his views on a tissue of surmisings which are much more amusing than satisfactory. Berkeley[i] states that the king distrusted the officers, particularly Cromwell and Ireton, because they would not accept of favours from him. Such conduct seems to bespeak the sincerity of their dealing with the king, and to refute the slanders which were circulated as to their intended promotion in the king's government. Mrs. Hutchinson[j] expresses herself fully satisfied as to Cromwell's sincerity in these proceedings. According to a rumour sent abroad by that notorious court gossip the countess of Carlisle, Charles was pledged to create Cromwell earl of Essex, and to make him commander of the guard.

eral to destroy the mottoes, and to promise obedience. Cromwell now rode up to Lilburne's regiment, and called upon them to follow so proper an example. But he called in vain. The moment required decision. A council of war was called on the field, some fourteen of the more mutinous were seized, three were condemned, and one of this number, chosen by lot, was instantly shot at the head of his regiment. Eleven were placed in the hands of the marshal as a security for the obedience of the rest. By this decided method of proceeding the boldest were intimidated, and discipline was restored.

THE KING ESCAPES FROM HAMPTON COURT

Five days before this occurrence, Charles had made his escape from Hampton Court. He had been led to regard the changing temper of the army with apprehension. The officers who endeavoured to serve him had become on that account exceedingly unpopular. Ireton was excluded from the council of his colleagues, and Cromwell was threatened with impeachment; and the monarch saw, that, should the effort about to be made to restore subordination prove unsuccessful, not only his throne, but his life might be in imminent danger. But in what quarter should he seek an asylum? It was the advice of some that he should go to London and present himself at once in the house of lords. But it was objected that such a proceeding would probably lead to a collision between the city and the army, and subject the king to the charge of encouraging a second war.

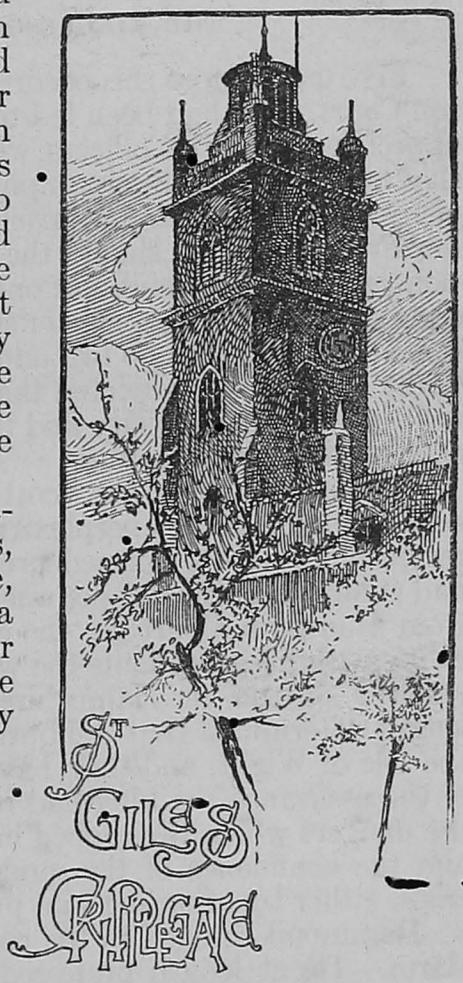
In the mean time, the Scottish commissioners pressed him to deliver himself at once from his perplexities by accepting their propositions. His final resolution, and one formed probably under the direction of the parties who had connived at his escape, was to go to the Isle of Wight. Charles withdrew from Hampton Court on the evening of the 11th of November, and after riding with his attendants the whole of the night, which was dark and stormy, reached Sutton in Hampshire the next morning at daybreak. Charles at length determined that Ashburnham and Berkeley should proceed at once to the Isle of Wight, and that, having apprised the governor, Colonel Hammond, of the assurance the king had received from Cromwell and others concerning the dangers which threatened him at Hampton Court, they should express to him the confidence of the monarch in his readiness to serve him at such a crisis, either by affording him protection or favouring his escape.

Hammond listened to the communication of his visitors with distrust and alarm. He at length professed his readiness to receive the monarch, but it was in terms so cautious as to justify suspicion. The governor accompanied his guests on their return to Tichfield, where Ashburnham, leaving him with Berkeley and another military officer below, ascended to the king's apartment, and, stating what had passed, added that the governor was in the house, prepared to fulfil the pledges he had given. Charles, with that wavering judgment which he so often manifested during these vicissitudes, immediately laid his hand upon his breast, and exclaimed, "What! have you brought Hammond with you? then I am undone, for I can now stir no more!" Ashburnham was much affected on hearing this expression, and others to the same effect; but the king added, that things must now take the course they had assumed, and he so far suppressed his feelings, as to receive the governor with an air of cheerfulness and apparent cordiality. The monarch, on his landing on the island, was lodged with much courtesy in Carisbrooke castle; and the two houses were immediately apprised of his being there.

Four days subsequent to his landing in the Isle of Wight, Charles sent a

[1647 A.D.]

message to the parliament, stating the reasons which prevented his consenting to the abolition of Episcopacy, and to some other things proposed. About the same time Berkeley was sent to the head-quarters of the army at Windsor, to ascertain from the officers whether, as they had succeeded in their attempt to subdue the spirit of the mutineers, they were now prepared to forward a settlement on the basis of their late propositions. His communication was made to a council of officers, but was received in a manner which gave no promise of success. It was added, that these communications, which had been made by one regiment after another, had so far intimidated the more moderate men in the council of officers, that even Cromwell had confessed himself in fault, in having gone so far in his endeavours to promote an agreement with the king. It was also stated, that the leaders in this disaffection had formed a resolution to bring the king to trial, and that many trembled to think of what might in that case ensue. The king, in the language of Cromwell, "could not be trusted." The army was more thoroughly persuaded of that fact than himself; and these two circumstances at once determined the conduct of Cromwell and the fate of the monarch.



OLIVER CROMWELL WAS MARRIED IN THIS CHURCH

The parliament, in answer to the letter received from the king, determined that four bills, relating to the most material points at issue, should be submitted for his assent, and that a treaty should be commenced to settle the minor questions which remained. The first of these bills provided that the command of the military should be vested in the parliament during the next twenty years, together with a power of resuming that command even after that period, whenever the two houses should deem such a proceeding necessary to the safety of the kingdom; the second required a proclamation to be issued, justifying the acts of the parliament in the late war, and making void all declarations to the contrary; the third called upon the king to annul all patents of peerage of a date subsequent to the removal of the great seal from London in 1642, and declared that peers created in future should not have the power of sitting and voting in parliament without the consent of the lords and commons; and the fourth gave the two houses the power of adjournment from place to place, and from time to time, at their own pleasure.[1]

[1] The following is the account given by Clarendon[k] of the import of these bills:—"By one of them he was to confess the war to have been raised by him, and that he was guilty of all the blood that had been spilt. By another, he was totally to dissolve the government of the church by bishops, and to grant all the lands belonging to the church to such uses as they proposed, leaving the settling a future government in the place thereof to further time and councils. By a third, he was to grant and settle the militia in the manner and in the persons proposed, reserving not so much power in himself as any subject was capable of. In the last place, he was to sacrifice all those who had served or adhered to him to the mercy of the parliament." How are we to account for such misrepresentation?

The answer of the king was, that nothing which he had hitherto suffered, or could at present apprehend, would induce him to give his assent to these preliminaries so long as the matters which were to follow remained undetermined. Charles appears to have been disposed to this course, partly by his fear that the parliament might not be able to make good its overtures against the less friendly temper of the army; and still more by the interference of the Scotch commissioners, who assured him that Scotland was willing to forego her absolute demands on the matter of the covenant, for the sake of a peace with him, and in order to prevent the affairs of the country from passing into the hands of the Independents. In fact, a treaty to this effect was signed at Carisbrooke, before the king returned his answer to the two houses.

When Charles despatched that message, it was in the hope of being able to make his escape, and, by placing himself at the head of an army of covenanters and royalists on the borders of the two kingdoms, to accomplish by a second war what he failed to achieve in the first. But every attempt so far to elude the vigilance of Hammond was without effect, though the monarch found means of frequent correspondence with his family and adherents. Parliament, on receiving his message, decided that no further address should be made to him, and the army pledged itself to support the two houses in that resolution; and, with a reference to the conduct of the Scots, it was declared that all persons making an overture to the monarch without consent of parliament should be liable to the penalties of high treason.[d]

THE VOTE OF NON-ADDRESSES AND THE "SECOND CIVIL WAR"

Cromwell exultingly communicated the result of the proceedings at Carisbrooke to Col. Hammond. "The house of commons has this day voted as follows:—1st. They will make no more addresses to the king; 2nd. None shall apply to him without leave of the two houses, upon pain of being guilty of high treason; 3rd. They will receive nothing from the king, nor shall any other bring anything to them from him, nor receive anything from the king." The lords adopted the resolution, after some debate. Unless there be some speedy change, the end will be accomplished that the majority in parliament contended for, "to settle the commonwealth without the king." That majority in the commons was a very formidable one — 141 to 91; and their resolution is justly described by Hallam[m] as "a virtual renunciation of allegiance." But, however the notion of a sovereign representative assembly as the government suited for England might please the political enthusiasts and the military fanatics, the great body of quiet people, who desired the protection of the law under a limited monarchy, were not prepared to endure that a democracy should be thrust upon them at the point of the sword. Discontent was very generally spread. Murmurings would shortly grow into revolts. Cromwell, who saw better than most men the inevitable result of political and religious discords, whilst the supreme authority was so unsettled, tried to effect some reconciliation between Presbyterians and Independents. The dinner at which Cromwell assembled them was given in vain. "One would endure no superior, the other no equal."

Ludlow,[g] who thus describes the result of this attempt, relates more minutely the proceedings of another meeting at which he was present. The grandees of the house and army, of whom he terms Cromwell the head, "would not declare their judgments either for a monarchical, aristocratical, or democratical government; maintaining that any of them might be good in themselves, or for us, according as Providence should direct us." The common-

[1647 A.D.]

wealth's men boldly declared against monarchy; that the king had broken his oath, and dissolved their allegiance; maintained that he had appealed to the sword, and should be called to account for the effusion of blood; after which an equal commonwealth, founded upon the consent of the people. The discussion, solemn as it was, had a ludicrous termination. "Cromwell," says Ludlow, "professed himself unresolved; and having learned what he could of the principles and inclinations of those present at the conference, took up a cushion and flung it at my head, and then ran down the stairs; but I overtook him with another, which made him hasten down faster than he desired." Cromwell told Ludlow the next day that "he was convinced of the desirableness of what was proposed, but not of the feasibleness of it."

There was a meeting some time after, conducted in a very different mood by Cromwell — a meeting of officers of the army at Windsor Castle, as reported by Adjutant-General Allen. These zealous men spent one whole day in prayer. They were exhorted by Cromwell to a thorough consideration of their actions as an army, and of their ways as private Christians. They became convinced that the Lord had departed from them, through "those carnal conferences which they held in the preceding year with the king and his party." They, with bitter weeping, took sense and shame of their iniquities. They came to a clear agreement that it was their duty to go forth and fight the enemies that had appeared against them. They finally came to a resolution, "That it was our duty, that, if ever the Lord brought us back again in peace, to call Charles Stuart, that man of blood, to an account for that blood he had shed, and mischief he had done to his utmost, against the Lord's cause and people in these poor nations." These men, not hypocrites, not wholly fanatics, are very terrible in their stern resolves. They will go forth to fight "the enemies that had appeared against them" — and then! There is a reaction in many quarters in England. The Scots are preparing to invade. A second civil war is fast approaching.

When the parliament passed their resolution to receive no more communications from the king, and to forbid all correspondence with him, they published a declaration imputing all the misfortunes of his reign to himself personally, and not to evil counsellors, as had been the custom before monarchy had lost its respect even in the eyes of those who were opposed to its evil government. But the nation was tired of its distractions. It wearied for some permanent settlement that might end the hoarse disputes and subtle intrigues of parliament and army, of Presbyterian and Independent; that might free the possessors of rank and property from the dread of wild men with notions of social equality; that might restore industry to its healthful functions, and put an end not only to the cost of a standing military force, but to its fearful resistance to civil power. The desire of the peaceful portion of the nation was feebly heard amidst the surrounding clamour.

The attempt to express their impatience of existing evils by riot and revolt was necessarily a vain attempt. This spirit was displayed in the city of London, at the beginning of April. Cromwell and some of the other leaders attend a common-council; but they find the Presbyterians indisposed to listen to what they call "their subtleties." The next day there is a formidable riot. It is Sunday. The Puritan strictness in religious observances, and in minor matters, has come to be less respected than before the close of the war. Royalists, amidst their contempt for what they deem fanaticism, are now mixing again in the ordinary intercourse with the despised roundheads. The theatre is now not wholly proscribed. On that Sunday, the 9th of April, there are apprentices playing at bowls in Moorfields during church-time. They are

ordered to disperse by the militia guard; but they fight with the guard, and hold their ground. Soon routed by cavalry, they raise the old cry of "Clubs"; are joined by the watermen, a numerous and formidable body; fight on through the night; and in the morning have possession of Ludgate and Newgate, and have stretched chains across all the great thoroughfares.

There are forty hours of this tumult, in which the prevailing cry is "God and King Charles." At last a body of cavalry arrive from Westminster; there is an irresistible charge of the men who had ridden down far more terrible assailants; and that movement is at an end. But in many towns there are similar riots.

In Wales some Presbyterian officers of the parliamentary army, with Colonel Poyer at their head, have raised a far more formidable insurrection. Pembroke Castle is in their hands. They soon have possession of Chepstow Castle. The gentry have proclaimed the king. It is a Presbyterian-royalist insurrection, allied in principle with the purposes of the moderate Presbyterians of Scotland, who are organising their army for the march into England. The Welsh outbreak is somewhat premature; but nevertheless it is very formidable. It is alarming enough to demand the personal care of Lieutenant-General Cromwell. He leaves London on the 3rd of May, with five regiments. The Londoners are glad to be freed from his presence; for a rumour has been spread that the army at Whitehall are about to attack and plunder the city. Petitions were addressed to the commons that the army should remove further; and that the militia should be placed under the command of Skippon.

The reaction gave the Presbyterians again the command in parliament; and it was voted on the 28th of April, that the fundamental government of the kingdom by king, lords, and commons, should not be changed; and that the resolutions forbidding all communication with the king should be rescinded. Popular demonstrations immediately followed the departure of Cromwell. Surrey gentlemen, freeholders, and yeomen, came to Westminster with a petition that the king should be restored with all the splendour of his ancestors. A broil ensued between the parliamentary guard and these petitioners, who asked the soldiers, "Why do you stand here to guard a company of rogues?" Several of the Surrey men, and one of the guard, were killed. The royalists of Kent organised themselves in a far more formidable shape. They secured Sandwich and Dover; appointed as general, Goring, Earl of Norwich; and assembled at Rochester to the number of seven thousand. Troops were raised for the royal service in the eastern and midland counties.

More dangerous to the ruling powers than all these demonstrations, was the defection of the fleet. The unsteadiness and the inconstancy, the jealousy of the government under which the sailors served, belonged to a period when the government had long been indifferent to the national honour. These characteristics altogether passed away when the first thought of the English fleet was how "not to be fooled by the foreigner."

The sailors of 1648 put their admiral on shore, and carried their ships to Holland, to place them under the command of the prince of Wales, who appeared in the Channel — and did nothing. The royalists were in the highest exultation. They expected the king soon to be again at their head. The earl of Holland had turned once more to what he thought would be the winning side; and his mansion at Kensington was again the resort of cavaliers. But the king does not appear amongst them. An attempt at escape from Carisbrooke has a second time failed. On the 31st of May, Hammond wrote to the parliament that the king had again nearly effected his escape.

Another dread now came over the Presbyterian party. They would

[1648 A.D.]

negotiate with the king; but they would take strong measures against the royalists. All papists and malignants were banished from London under more severe penalties than before. Fairfax was directed to proceed with all his forces against the insurgents in Kent and Essex and the other counties around London. They issued new ordinances against heresy, which affected the Independents; and against swearing, which touched the cavaliers very nearly. The general and the army marched into Kent; dispersed the insurgents after an obstinate fight at Maidstone; and by rapid successes, wherever else there was resistance, put down the rising spirit. Lord Goring, after having led several thousand men to Blackheath, expecting assistance in London, was compelled to see the desertion of his followers, and he crossed the Thames into Essex. There the contest was more prolonged. Lord Capel and Sir Charles Lucas had collected a large force, with which they intended to march from Colchester upon London. Fairfax invested the town; and for two months there was a renewal of the former work of blockade and siege, until the place was surrendered on the 27th of August.

The triumph of Fairfax was tarnished by an exception to his usual humanity. Sir Charles Lucas and Sir George Lisle were tried by court-martial, and were shot. The earl of Holland and the young duke of Buckingham broke out in revolt at Kingston-on-Thames, when the main army of the parliament was investing Colchester. There was an action near Kingston, in which they were defeated; and passing into Hertfordshire, the remnant was cut up at St. Neot's by a detachment from the army of Fairfax, and Holland was taken prisoner. In all these movements, we see the absence of any supreme organising power. They were isolated efforts, which were quickly suppressed. Whatever miseries England had still to endure, it was freed from the misery of a long partisan warfare.

THE SCOTCH INVASION AND THE BATTLE OF PRESTON (1648 A.D.)

In Wales, where the resistance to the parliament was more concentrated, the presence even of Cromwell was not at first successful. He is before Pembroke, but he has no artillery to make short work of the siege. It was not till the 10th of July that the town and castle of Pembroke were surrendered to him. Six days before the capitulation the Scottish army entered England, under the duke of Hamilton. He was joined by five thousand English under Sir Marmaduke Langdale. The English general, Lambert, was retreating before them, having been directed by Cromwell to avoid an engagement, and to fall back. Two days after the surrender of Pembroke, Cromwell was on his march from the west. He waited not for orders. He knew where he was wanted. At this juncture a charge of treason had been preferred against him by Major Huntington, an officer of the army, which had been countenanced by some members of both houses. He was accused of endeavouring, by betraying the king, parliament, and army, to advance himself. The occasion was not opportune for such an attempt. When he left London he was equally distasteful to the Presbyterians and the commonwealth's men — who, with some, went by the general name of levellers.

The Scottish army that entered England could not be regarded as the army of the Scottish nation. The treaty which had been concluded with the king at Carisbrooke gave satisfaction only to a portion of the Presbyterians. The Scottish parliament, influenced by the duke of Hamilton and others, who professed moderate principles of ecclesiastical government, gave the engagements of that treaty their zealous support, especially that clause which pro-

vided that a military force should be sent to England to reinstate the king in his authority. They were in consequence called the "engagers." But the clergy generally proclaimed that Charles had not conceded enough for the establishment of their form of worship in England to warrant a war for his assistance. The marquis of Argyll, and other powerful chiefs who had fought against Montrose, were burning with resentment against the royalists of their own country, and were strenuously opposed to what was meant as an aid to the royalists of England. An army was however raised; and the engagers, with a raw and ill-disciplined force, crossed the Border.

The march of Cromwell, from the extremity of South Wales to the heart of Lancashire, was accomplished with a rapidity which belongs only to the movements of great commanders. He had to gather scattered forces on his way, and to unite himself with Lambert in Yorkshire. He was determined to engage with an enemy whose numbers were held to double his own. Through the whole breadth of South Wales, then a pastoral country, but now presenting all the unpicturesque combinations of mining industry, he advanced to Gloucester. This forced march of some hundred and fifty miles through Wales was an exhausting commencement. "Send me some shoes for my poor tired soldiers," wrote Cromwell to the executive committee in London. At Leicester he received three thousand pairs of shoes. At Nottingham he confers with Colonel Hutchinson, and leaves his prisoners with him. His cavalry have pushed on, and have joined Lambert at Barnard Castle. All Cromwell's forces have joined the northern troops by the 12th of August. The Scots, who, having passed Kendal, had debated whether they would march direct into Yorkshire, and so on towards London, have decided for the western road. The duke of Hamilton thinks he is sure of Manchester. Sir Marmaduke Langdale is their guide through the unknown ways into Lancashire, and leads the vanguard. There is very imperfect communication between the van and the rear of this army.

On the 16th of August the duke is at Preston. The same night Cromwell is at Stonyhurst. Langdale, to the left of Hamilton's main body, has ascertained that the dangerous enemy is close at hand and sends notice to the duke. "Impossible," exclaims Hamilton; "he has not had time to be here." The next morning Cromwell has fallen upon Sir Marmaduke, and utterly routed him, "after a very sharp dispute." Hamilton's army is a disjointed one. His cavalry in considerable numbers are at Wigan, under the command of Middleton. When the affair was settled with Langdale, there was a skirmish close by Preston between Hamilton himself and some of Cromwell's troopers. The duke was separated from his main force of infantry, under Baillie, but rejoined them only to see the bridge of the Ribble won by the enemy in a general battle. Cromwell describes the first four hours' fighting in a country all enclosure and miry ground, as "a hedge dispute." This being ended, the Scots were charged through Preston; and then not only was the bridge of the Ribble won, but the bridge of Over Darwen. Night was approaching, which put an end to any further fighting on the 17th.

The Scottish generals in a council of war determined to march off, as soon as it was dark, without waiting for Middleton and his cavalry. The weather was rainy; the roads heavy; their men were wet, weary, and hungry. They left their ammunition behind; and the next morning were at Wigan Moor, with half their number. No general engagement took place that day; and the Scots held Wigan.

Cromwell writes, "We lay that night in the field close by the enemy; being very dirty and weary, and having marched twelve miles of such ground as I

[1648 A.D.]

never rode in all my life, the day being very wet.'" The next day the Scots moved towards Warrington; and after some hard fighting, General Baillie surrendered himself, officers, and soldiers, as prisoners of war. The duke, with three thousand horse, was gone towards Nantwich. His course was undetermined. The country people were hostile. His own men were mutinous. He surrenders to Lambert, and is sent prisoner to Nottingham.

The Scottish army was now utterly broken and dispersed. The news of Hamilton's complete failure in the invasion of England was the signal for the great Presbyterian party that had opposed the policy of the engagers to rise in arms. Argyll assembled his highland clans. In the western lowlands large bodies of peasantry, headed by their preachers, marched to Edinburgh. The memory of this insurrection has endured to this hour in the name of Whig. It was called "the whiggamore raid," from the word used in the west of Scotland when the carter urges forward his horses with Whig! whig! (get on); as the English carter says, Gee! gee! (go). Argyll was restored to power. The most zealous covenanters were again at the head of the executive authority. Cromwell entered Scotland on the 20th of September, and was received at Edinburgh, not as the man to whose might their brave countrymen had been compelled to yield; but as the deliverer from a royalist faction that might again have put the national religion in peril.[n]

At the commencement of this second war, a resolution had passed in the parliament, May 11th, which declared that no quarter should be given to the persons found in arms on the pretence of serving the king. Two years had passed since a war waged against the king had ended in making him prisoner; and as the parliament was now in fact the great authority of the nation, all men taken in arms against it were to be treated as rebels, and became liable to the penalties of treason. A council of war was accordingly convened at Colchester, on the fate of the leading delinquents who had now become prisoners; and it was determined that, in consequence of the innocent blood which they had caused to be shed, three of their number should suffer death, two of the condemned persons being Sir Charles Lucas and Sir George Lisle. Capel, and several others, generously declared that they were themselves as guilty as the men doomed to die, and requested to share in their fate. But the council adhered to its decision.

Lucas, making bare his chest, shouted in defiance, "Fire, rebels!" His body fell lifeless; Lisle embraced it affectionately, and, turning to the soldiers, bid them approach nearer. One of them said, "Fear not, sir, we shall hit you." He replied, "I have been nearer to you, my friends, and you have missed me." This sanguinary deed, whoever may have been its great mover, attaches indelible disgrace to all who were parties to it. The royalists had descended to many acts of cruelty; but this proceeding was without parallel in the history of the civil war. After the ordinance of the 11th of May, these sufferers might have been dealt with by the civil power as traitors, with as much appearance of justice as was usually attendant on state prosecutions; but their death, inflicted under such circumstances, could not fail to exhibit them, in the view of dispassionate men, as the victims of revenge, and the martyrs of loyalty.

It was with great difficulty that Hamilton had prevailed on the estates in Scotland to concur in the proposed invasion of England; and the news of his defeat at once turned the scale against him in that country. Argyll, his great opponent, took possession of the government. Cromwell himself soon made his appearance in Edinburgh, and, having done what was considered expedient to secure the ascendancy of the party of Argyll, contented himself

with procuring that no person who had taken arms against the English parliament should be deemed eligible to any place of trust or emolument. From the extent and the determination of the efforts which were made during this summer in favour of the king, it is manifest that the Presbyterians, in proposing so considerable a reduction of the army, must have been insincere, or have been almost entirely ignorant of the feeling of the country which they aspired to govern. The army in which, according to their policy, it would have been necessary to confide at this juncture, must have been one having its discipline and valour in a great degree to acquire, and one, in consequence, that would, in all probability, have been speedily subdued by the English royalists alone.

But by a series of actions, which the bravest and the most disciplined army in Europe could alone have achieved, the risings in the south were suppressed, and the invasion from the north was made to end in the subjection of the invaders. The Presbyterians, however, continued to flatter themselves with having acted prudently, inasmuch as this double overthrow of the royalists must serve to destroy all hope in the king of assistance from his more immediate adherents, while the avowed hostility of the soldiery must show that from them he had everything to fear — leaving him no prospect of regaining his throne, except by such a concurrence with the overtures of the Presbyterians as should unite them entirely in his favour, and enable them to resist the machinations and the power of his more relentless opponents.

TREATY OF NEWPORT AND ANTI-ROYALIST FEELING

Such was the condition and temper of parties, when, the vote of non-addresses being repealed, further negotiation was entered upon between the parliament and the king. This treaty, known by the name of the treaty of Newport, was based upon the propositions which had been submitted to the monarch at Hampton Court; and Charles, after many attempts to evade or modify the proposals of the parliamentary commissioners, assented to the whole, with the following exceptions only:— that the office of the bishops should be suspended for three years, but not abolished; that the Episcopal lands which had been sold should be reclaimed, at the farthest after ninety-nine years; that an act of indemnity should be passed in favour of his followers, without exception — so far as to admit the most obnoxious of the excepted persons to compound for their offences; and that the adoption of the covenant should not be enforced either in his own case, or in that of any other person.

But it soon became evident that the army and the party which adhered to it in the city were not disposed to an agreement with the king even upon his full acceptance of the propositions now submitted to him. A petition was presented to the commons from "thousands of well-affected persons in and near London," which, while it recognised the monarchy and the peerage, deprived them of nearly all their privileges, and prayed that the parliament "would lay to heart the blood spilt, and the infinite spoil and havoc that had been made of peaceable, harmless people, by express commission from the king, and to consider whether an act of oblivion was likely to satisfy the justice of God, and to appease His remaining wrath."

The course of proceeding thus suggested from the city was dwelt upon, with the greatest confidence in its rectitude, by one to another in the army. It was commonly said that the land had been defiled with blood, and could not be cleansed but by the blood of him who had shed it; and petitions were presented to Fairfax from the regiments under Ireton and Ingoldsby, which

[1648 A.D.]

urged that "impartial and steady justice should be done upon all criminal persons, that the same course should be taken in the case of king or lord, as in that of the poorest commoner; and that all persons who should speak or act in behalf of the king, until acquitted of the charge of shedding innocent blood, might be proceeded against as traitors." This petition was presented on the 18th of October. On the 20th of November, a remonstrance, adopted unanimously by the council of officers, was presented by a deputation from that body, and recommended to the attention of the house by Fairfax, in which it was urged that the present treaty with the king should be abandoned, and that judicial proceedings should be instituted against him, on account of the evils done by him; that the monarchy should be elective; that future parliaments should be annual or biennial, with a sure provision for their being regularly convened; that the elective franchises should be rendered more general and equal; and that no monarch should be allowed a negative voice on bills.

The Presbyterians, when these demands came before them, opposed them with courage and perseverance, and on a division exhibited a large majority. They knew the feeling of the country to be against such extreme measures; and they hoped, by a speedy agreement with the king, to overwhelm the abettors of them with confusion. But the military leaders were not ignorant that such was the policy of their opponents, and they adopted means for the greater security of the king's person. Nor could Charles avoid seeing the danger which threatened him. He accordingly, as in the eleventh hour, consented, with still smaller modifications, to the most obnoxious of the propositions from the two houses. He did not agree, even at this time, to abolish Episcopacy, or to alienate its wealth for ever, but he allowed the restoration of them to be matters dependent on the pleasure of parliament.

Charles, in parting from the parliamentary commissioners, expressed his fears that what he had now done would prove to have been done too late. On the following morning news was privately conveyed to him that an armed force was on its way to make him prisoner. His attendants entreated him to consult his safety by an immediate escape; but he spoke of his promise to wait twenty days for the answer of parliament; of his pledge not to break the parole which had been granted to him; and clung to so many sources of hesitation, that night came, and, instead of flying for his life, he retired to his chamber. About midnight the expected force arrived; early in the morning the king was summoned to leave his present lodgings; and in the course of that day was committed a prisoner to Hurst Castle, an edifice standing on a low projecting piece of land, joined by a narrow causeway to the coast of Hampshire. The removal of the king from Carisbrooke was on the 30th of November. On the day preceding, a declaration was issued by the officers, which described the majority of the parliament as consisting of men who, in the possession of power, had ceased to value their principles, and set forth, in obscure, but significant terms, the high trust which at this extraordinary crisis had been committed by the manifest will of Providence to the army.[d]

PRIDE'S PURGE

On the Monday the commons are debating all day — they are debating till five o'clock on Tuesday morning the 5th of December, 1648 — whether the king's concessions in the treaty of Newport are a ground of settlement. The practised orators have been heard again and again on this great question.

There is an old man amongst them — one who has only been a member three weeks — who boldly stands up for the cause of fallen majesty. He is no royal favourite, he says. The favours he has received from the king and his party were, the loss of his two ears — his pillorings, his imprisonments, his fines. It was Prynne, who spoke for hours; with honest energy, but with no great prudence when he described the army at their very doors as "inconstant, mutinous, and unreasonable servants." Yet, whatever might have been the effect of this learned man's courageous effort for reconciliation, the very recital of his ancient sufferings must have revived in some a bitter recollection of past tyrannies, and a corresponding dread of their return. The house decided, by one hundred and twenty-nine to eighty-three, that the king's concessions are a ground of settlement.

There was another assembly on the same day whose resolutions at that moment were of more importance even than a vote of the commons. Ludlow says, "Some of the principal officers of the army came to London with expectation that things would be brought to this issue, and consulting with some members of parliament and others, it was concluded, after a full and free debate, that the measures taken by the parliament were contrary to the trust reposed in them, and tending to contract the guilt of the blood that had been shed, upon themselves and the nation: that it was therefore the duty of the army to endeavour to put a stop to such proceedings." They went about this work in a very business-like manner. "Three of the members of the house, and three of the officers of the army, withdrew into a private room to attain the ends of our said resolution; when we agreed that the army should be drawn up the next morning, and guards placed in Westminster hall, the Court of Requests, and the Lobby; that none might be permitted to pass into the house but such as continued faithful to the public interests. To this end we went over the names of all the members, one by one. Commissary-General Ireton went to Sir Thomas Fairfax, and acquainted him with the necessity of this extraordinary way of proceeding." Lieutenant-General Cromwell was still in the north.

What was thus deliberately resolved on the 6th of December was as promptly effected on the 7th. An order is given that the trained bands of the city shall withdraw from their accustomed duty of guard at Westminster. Colonel Rich's regiment of horse take up a position on that morning in Palace Yard. Colonel Pride's regiment of foot throng Westminster Hall, and block up every entrance to the house of commons. Colonel Pride has a written list of names in his hand — the names of those against whom the sentence of exclusion has been passed. As the members of the house approach, Lord Grey of Groby, who stands at the elbow of Colonel Pride, gives a sign or word that such a one is to pass, or to be turned back. Forty-one were ordered that day to retire to "the queen's court."

It is easier to imagine than to describe the indignation expressed by the ejected. They are kept under restraint all the day; and in the evening are conducted to a tavern. There were two taverns abutting upon and partly under the hall, known as "Heaven" and "Hell" — very ancient places of refreshment much used by the lawyers in term-time; mentioned by Ben Jonson; and which, with a third house called "Purgatory," are recited in a grant of the time of Henry VII. To "Hell," perhaps without the intention of a bad joke, these forty-one of the parliamentary majority were led, and lodged for the night. The process went on for several days; till some hundred members are disposed of. Before the minority have obtained an entire ascendancy Colonel Pride is questioned for his conduct; but no satisfaction is given. The

[1649 A.D.]

house makes a show of disapprobation; but the serjeant-at-arms has brought a message that the excluded members are detained by the army; and business proceeds as if the event were of small consequence.

Cromwell has arrived on the night after the sharp medicine known as "Pride's purge" has been administered; and, says Ludlow, "lay at Whitehall, where, and at other places, he declared that he had not been acquainted with this design; yet since it was done he was glad of it, and would endeavour to maintain it." Vane, who had spoken vehemently in the great debate of the 4th, against accepting the king's concessions as a ground of settlement, even boldly proclaiming himself for a republic, appears to have taken no part in the illegal proceedings which laid the parliament at the feet of the army. He retired to his estate, and did not come again to parliament till a month after the final blow against monarchy had been struck. The parliamentary minority, being now almost unanimous in their resolve to overthrow the existing government, though perhaps not yet agreed as to the mode of accomplishing this as far as regarded the person of the king, voted to rescind all the votes which had recently passed as to the grounds of a settlement. Another act of military power soon marshalled the way to a resolution of such doubts.

THE KING TAKEN TO WINDSOR

The drawbridge of Hurst Castle is lowered during the night of the 17th of December, and the tramp of a troop of horse is heard by the wakeful prisoner. He calls for his attendant Herbert, who is sent to ascertain the cause of this midnight commotion. He is informed that the troop are to conduct him to Windsor. Two days after, the king sets out. At Winchester he is received in state by the mayor and aldermen; but they retire alarmed on being told that the house has voted all to be traitors who should address the king. The king urged his desire to stop at Bagshot, and dine in the forest at the house of Lord Newburg. He had been apprised that his friend would have ready for him a horse of extraordinary fleetness, with which he might make one more effort to escape. The horse had been kicked by another horse the day before, and was useless. That last faint hope was gone. On the night of the 23rd of December the king slept, a prisoner surrounded with hostile guards, in the noble castle which in the days of his youth had rung with Jonson's lyrics and ribaldry; and the gypsy of the masque had prophesied that his "name in peace or wars, nought should bound." But he had an undoubting confidence that he should be righted, by aid from Ireland, from Denmark, from other kingdoms: "I have three more cards to play, the worst of which will give me back everything." After three weeks of comparative comfort, the etiquette observed towards him was laid aside; and with a fearful sense of approaching calamity in the absence of "respect and honour, according to the ancient practice," he exclaimed, "is there anything more contemptible than a despised prince?"

During the month in which Charles had remained at Windsor, there had been proceedings in parliament of which he was imperfectly informed. On the day he arrived there, it was resolved by the commons that he should be brought to trial. On the 2nd of January, 1649, it was voted that, in making war against the parliament, he had been guilty of treason; and a high court was appointed to try him. One hundred and fifty commissioners were to compose the court — peers, members of the commons, aldermen of London. The ordinance was sent to the upper house, and was rejected. On the 6th, a fresh ordinance, declaring that the people being, after God, the source of all

just power, the representatives of the people are the supreme power in the nation; and that whatsoever is enacted or declared for law by the commons in parliament hath the force of a law, and the people are concluded thereby, though the consent of king or peers be not had thereto. Asserting this power, so utterly opposed either to the ancient constitution of the monarchy, or to the possible working of a republic, there was no hesitation in constituting the high court of justice in the name of the commons alone. The number of members of the court was now reduced to one hundred and thirty-five. They had seven preparatory meetings, at which only fifty-eight members attended.

A CAVALIER OF THE 17TH CENTURY

Algernon Sidney, although bent upon a republic, opposed the trial, apprehending that the project of a commonwealth would fail, if the king's life were touched. It is related that Cromwell, irritated by these scruples, exclaimed, "No one will stir. I tell you, we will cut his head off with the crown upon it." Such daring may appear the result of ambition, of fear, or revenge, or innate cruelty, in a few men who had obtained a temporary ascendency. These men were, on the contrary, the organs of a wide-spread determination amongst thousands throughout the country, who had long preached and argued and prophesied about vengeance on "the great delinquent"; and who had ever in their mouths the text that "blood defileth the land, and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it." They had visions of a theocracy, and were impatient of an earthly king.

Do we believe, as some, not without reasonable grounds, may believe, that the members of the high court of justice expressed such convictions upon a simulated religious confidence? Do we think that, in the clear line of action which Cromwell especially had laid down for his guidance, he cloaked his worldly ambition under the guise of being moved by some higher impulse than that of taking the lead in a political revolution? Certainly we do not. The infinite mischiefs of assuming that the finger of God directly points out the way to believers, when they are walking in dangerous and devious paths, may be perfectly clear to us, who calmly look back upon the instant events which followed upon Cromwell's confidence in his solemn call to a fearful duty. But we are not the more to believe, because the events have a character of guilt in the views of most persons, that such a declared conviction was altogether, or in any degree, a lie. Those were times in which men believed in the immediate direction of a special Providence in great undertakings. The words, "God hath given us the victory," were not with them a mere form. If we trace amidst these solemn impulses the workings of a deep sagacity — the union of the fierce resolves of a terrible enthusiasm with the foresight and energy of an ever-present common-sense — we are not the more to conclude that their spiritualism, or fanaticism, or whatever we please to call their ruling principle, was less sincere by being mixed up with the ordinary motives through which the affairs of the world are carried on.

[1649 A.D.]

THE KING BEFORE THE HIGH COURT

On the 19th of January, Major Harrison appeared again at Windsor with his troop. There was a coach with six horses in the court-yard, in which the king took his seat; and, once more, he entered London, and was lodged at St. James's Palace. The next day, the high court of justice was opened in Westminster Hall. The king came from St. James's in a sedan; and after the names of the members of the court had been called, sixty-nine being present, Bradshaw, the president, ordered the serjeant to bring in the prisoner. Silently the king sat down in the chair prepared for him. He moved not his hat, as he looked sternly and contemptuously around. The sixty-nine rose not from their seats, and remained covered.

It was scarcely eight years since he was a spectator of the last solemn trial in this hall — that of Strafford. What mighty events have happened since that time! There are memorials hanging from the roof which tell such a history as his saddest fears in the hour of Strafford's death could scarcely have shaped out. The tattered banners taken from his cavaliers at Marston Moor and Naseby are floating above his head. There, too, are the same memorials of Preston. But still he looks around him proudly and severely. Who are the men that are to judge him, the king, who, says Blackstone,[o] "united in his person every possible claim by hereditary right to the English as well as the Scottish throne, being the heir both of Egbert and William the Conqueror?" These men are, in his view, traitors and rebels, from Bradshaw, the lawyer, who sits in the foremost chair calling himself lord-president, to Cromwell and Marten in the back seat, over whose heads are the red-cross of England and the harp of Ireland, painted on an escutcheon, whilst the proud bearings of a line of kings are nowhere visible. Under what law does this insolent president address him as "Charles Stuart, king of England," and say, "The commons of England being deeply sensible of the calamities that have been brought upon this nation, which are fixed upon you as the principal author of them, have resolved to make inquisition for blood"? He will defy their authority.

The clerk reads the charge, and when he is accused therein of being tyrant and traitor, he laughs in the face of the court. "Though his tongue usually hesitated, yet it was very free at this time, for he was never discomposed in mind," writes Warwick.[p] "And yet," it is added, "as he confessed himself to the bishop of London that attended him, one action shocked him very much: for whilst he was leaning in the court upon his staff, which had a head of gold, the head broke off on a sudden. He took it up, but seemed unconcerned, yet told the bishop it really made a great impression upon him." It was the symbol of the treacherous hopes upon which he had rested — golden dreams that vanished in this solemn hour. Again and again contending against the authority of the court, the king was removed, and the sitting was adjourned to the 22nd. On that day the same scene was renewed; and again on the 23rd. A growing sympathy for the monarch became apparent. The cries of "Justice, justice," which were heard at first, were now mingled with "God save the king."

He had refused to plead; but the court nevertheless employed the 24th and 25th of January in collecting evidence to prove the charge of his levying war against the parliament. Coke, the solicitor-general, then demanded whether the court would proceed to pronouncing sentence; and the members adjourned to the painted chamber. On the 27th the public sitting was resumed. When the name of Fairfax was called, a voice was heard from the

gallery, "He has too much wit to be here." The king was brought in; and, when the president addressed the commissioners, and said that the prisoner was before the court to answer a charge of high treason, and other crimes brought against him in the name of the people of England, the voice from the gallery was again heard, "It's a lie — not one half of them." The voice came from Lady Fairfax. The court, Bradshaw then stated, had agreed upon the sentence. Ludlow[g] records that the king "desired to make one proposition before they proceeded to sentence; which he earnestly pressing, as that which he thought would lead to the reconciling of all parties, and to the peace of the three kingdoms, they permitted him to offer it, the effect of which was, that he might meet the two houses in the painted chamber, to whom he doubted not to offer that which should satisfy and secure all interests." Ludlow goes on to say, "Designing, as I have been since informed, to propose his own resignation, and the admission of his son to the throne upon such terms as should have been agreed upon."

The commissioners retired to deliberate, "and being satisfied, upon debate, that nothing but loss of time would be the consequence of it, they returned into the court with a negative to his demand." Bradshaw then delivered a solemn speech to the king, declaring how he had through his reign endeavoured to subvert the laws and introduce arbitrary government; how he had attempted, from the beginning, either to destroy parliaments, or to render them subservient to his own designs; how he had levied war against the parliament, by the terror of his power to discourage for ever such assemblies from doing their duty, and that in this war many thousands of the good people of England had lost their lives. The clerk was commanded to read the sentence, that his head should be severed from his body; "and the commissioners," says Ludlow, "testified their unanimous assent by standing up." The king attempted to speak; "but being accounted dead in law, was not permitted."

On the 29th of January, the court met to sign the sentence of execution; addressed to "Colonel Francis Hacker, Colonel Huncks, and Lieutenant-Colonel Phayr, and to every one of them." This is the memorable document:—

"Whereas Charles Stuart, king of England, is and standeth convicted, attainted and condemned of High Treason and other high Crimes: and Sentence upon Saturday last was pronounced against him by this Court, to be put to death by the severing of his head from his body; of which Sentence execution remaineth to be done:

"These are therefore to will and require you to see the said Sentence executed, in the open street before Whitehall, upon the morrow, being the thirtieth day of this instant month of January, between the hours of ten in the morning and five in the afternoon with full effect. And for so doing, this shall be your warrant.

"And these are to require all Officers and Soldiers, and others the good People of this Nation of England, to be assisting unto you in this service.

"Given under our hands and seals,

"JOHN BRADSHAW.
"THOMAS GREY.
"OLIVER CROMWELL."
And fifty-six others.

The statements of the heartless buffoonery, and the daring violence of Cromwell, at the time of signing the warrant, must be received with some suspicion. He smeared Henry Marten's face with the ink of his pen, and Marten in return smeared his, say the narratives. Probably so. With reference to this anecdote it has been wisely observed by Foster,[i] "Such 'toys of desperation' commonly bubble up from a deep flowing stream below." Another anecdote is told by Clarendon[k]; that Colonel Ingoldsby, one who signed the warrant, was forced to do so with great violence, by Cromwell and

Warrant to Execute King Charles the First: A. D. 1648.

At the high Court of Justice for the tryinge and judginge of Charles Stewart kinge of England January xxix^th Anno Dm 1648.

Whereas Charles Stewart kinge of England is and standeth convicted attaynted and condemned of high Treason and other high Crymes And Sentence vppon Saturday last was pronounced against him by this Court to be putt to death by the Severinge of his Head from his Body Of w^ch Sentence execution yet remayneth to be done These are therefore to will and require you to see the said Sentence executed In the open Street before Whitehall vppon the morrow being the Thirtieth day of this instant month of January betweene the houres of Ten in the morninge and five in the afternoone of the same day w^th full effect And for soe doeing this shall be yo^r Sufficient warrant And these are to require All Officers and Souldiers and other the good people of this Nation of England to be assistinge vnto you in this Service Given vnder o^r Hands and Seales.

To Collonell ffrancis Hacker Colonell Hunck Hair Waller and Lieutenant Colonell Phayre and to every of them

Jo. Bradshawe
Tho. Grey
Oliver Cromwell
Edw. Whalley
Mr Ewesly
John Okey
Danvers
Jo. Bourchier
H Greton
Tho. Mauleverer
John Blakiston
Hutchinson
Willigoff
Thos Pride
Pe Temple
Ffarrison
Hewson
Hen Smyth
Per Pelham
R. Deane
Robert Tichborne
David Blagrave
Owen Rowe
Willm Jerson
P. Scrope
James Temple
H. Cleland
Edm. Ludlowe
Henry Marten
Wm Constable
Rich Ingoldesby
Will Cawley
Jo Barkstead
Waa Ewer
John Dixwell
Valentine Wauton
Symon Mayne
Tho: Horton
J Jones
John Moore
Gilbt Millington
G Fleetwood
J Hewson
Rob Lilburne
Will Say
Anth Stapley
Gre Norton
Tho. Challoner
Tho. Wogan
John Venne
Gregory Clement
Jo Downes
Thos Waite
Tho Scot
Jo Carew
Mich Corbet

FROM THE ORIGINAL DOCUMENT IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

[1649 A.D.]

others; "and Cromwell, with a loud laughter, taking his hand in his, and putting the pen between his fingers, with his own hand writ 'Richard Ingoldsby,' he making all the resistance he could." Ingoldsby gave this relation, in the desire to obtain a pardon after the Restoration; and to confirm his story he said, "if his name there were compared with what he had ever writ himself, it could never be looked upon as his own hand." Warburton in a note upon this passage, says, "The original warrant is still extant, and Ingoldsby's name has no such mark of its being wrote in that manner." The king knew his fate. He resigned himself to it with calmness and dignity.[n]

GUIZOT'S ACCOUNT OF CHARLES' EXECUTION

Before reading his last sentence Bradshaw addressed to the king a long discourse — a solemn apology for the parliament's conduct: he recounted all the faults of which the king had been guilty, and referred all the evils of the civil war to him alone, since his tyranny had rendered resistance a duty as well as a necessity. The language of the speaker was severe and bitter, but grave, pious, free from insult, and expressive of an evidently profound conviction, although mingled with something of a vindictive character. The king listened to him without interruption, and with equal gravity. Still, as the discourse drew towards its close, visible agitation took possession of him; and as soon as Bradshaw had finished speaking, he attempted himself to speak. Bradshaw would not permit this, but ordered the clerk to read the sentence. When it was finished, Bradshaw said, "The sentence now read and published is the act, sentence, judgment, and resolution of the whole court;" and the whole court rose in token of assent.

"Sir," said the king, suddenly, "will you hear me a word?"

Bradshaw.—"Sir, you are not to be heard after sentence."

The king.—"No, sir?"

Bradshaw.—"No, sir; by your favour, sir. Guards, withdraw your prisoner!"

The king.—"I may speak after sentence; by your favour, sir, I may speak after my sentence, ever. By your favour—"

"Hold!" said Bradshaw.

"The sentence, sir — I say, sir, I do — I am not suffered to speak. Expect what justice other people will have!"

At this moment, the soldiers surrounded him, removed him from the bar, and conveyed him with violence as far as the place where his sedan-chair was waiting for him. He had, while descending the staircase, to endure the grossest insults: some threw their lighted pipes before him as he passed; others blew the smoke of their tobacco into his face; all shouted in his ears, "Justice! Execution!" Amid these cries, however, others were still to be heard occasionally from the people, "God save your majesty! God deliver your majesty out of such enemies' hands!" And until he was seated in the chair, the bearers of it remained with their heads uncovered, notwithstanding the commands of Axtell, who even went so far as to strike them for their disobedience. They set out for Whitehall: on both sides, the way was lined with troops; before all the shops, doors, and windows, there were crowds of people, most of them silent, some weeping, some praying aloud for the king. The soldiers incessantly renewed their cries of "Justice! justice! Execution! execution!" in order to celebrate their triumph. But Charles had recovered his wonted serenity, and, too haughty to believe in the sincerity of their hatred, he said

as he came out of his chair, "Poor souls! for a piece of money they would do so for their commanders!"

As soon as he reached Whitehall, he said to Herbert, "Hark ye! my nephew the prince elector will endeavour to see me, and some other lords that love me: which I should take in good part; but my time is short and precious, and I am desirous to improve it as best I may in preparation. I hope they will not take it ill that none have access now to me but my children. The best office they can do me is to pray for me." He then sent a request that his young children, the princess Elizabeth and the duke of Gloucester, who remained under the care of the parliament, might come to him; he also sent for Juxon, the bishop of London. Both requests were granted. The next day, the 28th, the bishop came to St. James's, whither the king had just been transferred. When he first met the king again, he burst into uncontrollable lamentations. "Leave off this, my lord," said Charles, "we have not time for it; let us think of our great work, and prepare to meet that great God, to whom, ere long, I am to give an account of myself; and I hope I shall do it with peace, and that you will assist me therein. We will not talk of these rogues, in whose hands I am: they thirst after my blood, and they will have it; and God's will be done! I thank God I heartily forgive them, and I will talk of them no more." He passed the rest of the day in pious conference with the bishop.

On the next day, the 29th, almost at daybreak, the bishop returned to St. James's. When morning prayers were over, the king brought out a box containing broken crosses of St. George and the order of the Garter: "You see," said he to Juxon and Herbert, "all the wealth now in my power to give to my two children." They were brought to him. The princess Elizabeth, who was twelve years old, on seeing her father burst into tears; the duke of Gloucester, who was only eight, wept when he saw the tears of his sister. Charles took them on his knee, shared his jewels among them, comforted his daughter, gave her counsels as to the books she should read in order to fortify her mind against the papacy, charged them to tell their brothers that he had forgiven his enemies, and their mother that his thoughts never wandered from her, and that he would love her up to the last moment as he had loved her on their marriage-day. Then turning to the little duke, "Sweetheart," he said, "they will soon cut off thy father's head." The child looked steadfastly at him, with a very serious air. "Mark, child, what I say: they will cut off my head and perhaps make thee king; but mark what I say, thou must not be king so long as thy brothers Charles and James live; but they will cut off thy brothers' heads if they can catch them; and thine, too, they will cut off at last! Therefore, I charge thee, do not be made a king by them." "I will be torn in pieces first," replied the child, with great fervour. Charles kissed him passionately; placed him on the ground, kissed his daughter, blessed them both, and prayed God to bless them; then suddenly rising, "Have them taken away," he said to Juxon. The children sobbed. The king, standing upright, resting his head against the window, repressed his tears; the door was opened, and the children were about to leave him. Charles hastily left the window, took them again in his arms, blessed them once more, and, tearing himself at length from their caresses, fell on his knees and prayed with the bishop and Herbert, the sole witnesses of this affecting farewell.

On his last morning, after four hours' profound sleep, Charles rose from his bed. "I have a great work to do this day," said he to Herbert, "I must get up immediately;" and he commenced his toilet. Herbert, in his agitation, combed his hair with less care than usual. "I pray you," said the king, "though my head be not long to stand on my shoulders, take the same pains

[1649 A.D.]

with it as you were wont to do. This is my second marriage-day. I would be as trim to-day as may be; for before night I hope to be espoused to my blessed Jesus." As he was dressing, he asked to have an extra shirt: "The season is so sharp," he said, "as probably may make me shake, which some observers will imagine proceeds from fear. I would have no such imputation; I fear not death; death is not terrible to me. I bless my God that I am prepared." Shortly after daybreak Bishop Juxon arrived, and commenced the religious exercises of the day. Several companies of infantry were drawn up in the park, and formed a double line on his passage; a detachment of halberdiers marched in front, with flying banners; drums were beating — their noise drowned all other sounds. At the king's right hand was the bishop; on his left was Colonel Tomlinson, the commander of the guard. His head was uncovered, and Charles was so moved with the marks of respect which he showed that he requested him not to move from his side till the last moment. Charles conversed with him on the way, spoke of his funeral, and of the persons to whom he desired the care of it should be entrusted: his whole air was indicative of calmness and serenity; his look was steady and penetrating; his step was firm, and he walked even more quickly than the soldiers, expressing surprise at their slow pace.

On arriving at Whitehall, he mounted the stairs with a light step, passed along the great gallery, and entered his bedroom, where he was left alone with the bishop, who had prepared to administer the sacrament. Some Independent ministers, Nye and Goodwin, among others, knocked at his door, saying that they desired to offer their services to the king. The bishop replied by telling them that the king was at his own private devotions. They still pressed their services. "Then thank them from me," said Charles to the bishop, "for the tender of themselves; but tell them plainly that they, that have so often and causelessly prayed against me, shall never pray with me in this agony. They may, if they please, pray for me, and I'll thank them for it." They retired. The king kneeled, received the holy communion from the bishop's hands, and rising from his knees, with a cheerful and steady countenance, "Now," said he, "let the rogues come; I have heartily forgiven them, and am prepared for all I am to undergo." His dinner had been prepared, but he had resolved to touch nothing after the sacrament; the bishop expostulated with him, reminded him how long he had fasted, how severe the weather was, and how some fit of fainting might seize him upon the scaffold, which he knew he would regret, on account of the interpretation his murderers would put upon it. The king yielded to these representations, and took a piece of bread and a glass of claret. At one o'clock Hacker knocked at the door.

The king walked to the scaffold, with his head erect, looking about him on all sides for the people, intending to speak to them; but the space all round was filled with troops, so that no one could approach. He turned towards Juxon and Tomlinson, and said, "I shall be very little heard of anybody else; I shall, therefore, speak a word to you here," and accordingly he addressed to them a short speech that he had prepared; it was grave and calm, even to frigidity, its sole object being to maintain that he was in the right — that contempt for the rights of the sovereign had been the true cause of the miseries of the people — that the people ought to have no share in the government — and that on this condition only would the kingdom recover its liberties and tranquillity. While he was speaking, some one touched the axe. He turned round hastily, saying, "Do not hurt the axe that may hurt me." And after his address was finished, some one again approached it. "Take heed of the

axe! pray, take heed of the axe!" he repeated in a tone of alarm. The profoundest silence prevailed; he put a silk cap on his head, and, addressing the executioner, said, "Does my hair trouble you?" The man begged his majesty to put it under his cap. The king so arranged it, with the help of the bishop. "I have a good cause and a gracious God on my side," said he, while doing this.

"There is but one stage more," said Juxon; "the stage is turbulent and troublesome; it is a short one; but you may consider it will soon carry you a very great way; it will carry you from earth to heaven." "I go from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown, where no disturbance can be," answered the king; and, turning towards the executioner, he said, "Is my hair well?" He took off his cloak and gave it to the bishop, saying at the same time "Remember!" It was never known to what this injunction referred. He then took off his coat, put on his cloak again, and looking at the block, said to the executioner, "You must set it fast." "It is fast, sir," was the reply. The king told him to wait while he offered up a short prayer; "When I put out my hands this way," said he, stretching them out, "then——" He passed a few minutes in meditation, uttering a few words in a low tone of voice, raised his eyes to heaven, kneeled, placed his head on the block: the executioner touched his hair in order to put it more completely under his cap; the king thought he intended to strike. "Stay for the sign," he said. "Yes, I will, an't please your majesty," said the man.

After an instant, the king stretched out his hands; the axe fell, and his head was severed from his body at a single blow. "Behold the head of a traitor!" cried the executioner, holding it up to the view of the people; a long, deep groan rose from the multitude; many rushed to the foot of the scaffold in order to dip their handkerchiefs in the king's blood. Two bodies of cavalry, advancing in different directions, slowly dispersed the crowd. The scaffold was cleared, and the body was taken away. It was already enclosed in the coffin, when Cromwell desired to see it: he looked at it attentively, raised the head with his own hands as if to assure himself that it was really severed from the trunk, and remarked upon the sound and vigorous appearance of the body, which he said, promised a long life.

The coffin remained at Whitehall for seven days, exposed to public view: an immense concourse of people pressed to the door, but few obtained permission to enter. On the 6th of February, by the order of the commons, it was delivered to Herbert and Mildmay, who were authorised to bury it in St. George's Chapel, in Windsor Castle, in a vault which also contains the remains of Henry VIII. The funeral procession was decent but not pompous. Six horses, covered with black cloth, drew the hearse; four carriages followed, two of which, also covered with black cloth, carried those faithful servants who had attended upon the king in his last hours, and those who had accompanied him to the Isle of Wight. On the next day, the 8th of February, the duke of Richmond, the marquis of Hertford, the earls of Southampton and Lindsay, and Bishop Juxon, arrived at Windsor, having come with the consent of the commons to attend the funeral. These words only were engraved on the coffin: Charles, Rex. 1648.[1]

As they were removing the body from the interior of the castle to the chapel, the weather, which until then had been clear and serene, suddenly changed; snow fell abundantly; the black velvet pall was entirely covered

[1 Old Style. The year in England began at that time on the 24th of March, as it had not yet been arranged according to the Gregorian calendar. Therefore the 30th of January, 1648, the day of Charles' death, corresponds to the 9th of February, 1649, in our year.]

[1649 A.D.]

with it, and the servants of the king were pleased to see, in the sudden whiteness that covered their unfortunate master's coffin, a symbol of his innocence. The procession arrived at the spot selected for sepulture, and Bishop Juxon was preparing to officiate according to the rites of the Anglican church, when Whichcott, the governor of the castle, objected "that it was improbable the parliament would permit the use of what they had so totally abolished, and therein destroy their own act," and he would not permit the service to be so performed. They submitted; no religious ceremony took place, the coffin was lowered into the vault, all left the chapel, and the governor closed the doors. The house of commons had an account of the expenses of the funeral laid before them, and allowed five hundred pounds to pay them. On the very day of the king's death, before any messenger had left London, they published an ordinance declaring any one to be a traitor who should proclaim in his place, and as his successor, "Charles Stuart, his son, commonly called prince of Wales, or any other person whatever." On the 6th of February, after a long debate, and in spite of the opposition of twenty-nine voices against forty-four members, the house of lords was formally abolished.[r]

VARIOUS ESTIMATES OF THE EVENT

Clarendon: Milton: Guizot: Knight

It is scarcely necessary that we should offer any opinion upon this tremendous event. The world had never before seen an act so daring conducted with such a calm determination; and the few moderate men of that time balanced the illegality, and also the impolicy of the execution of Charles, by the fact that "it was not done in a corner," and that those who directed or sanctioned the act offered no apology, but maintained its absolute necessity and justice. "That horrible sentence upon the most innocent person in the world; the execution of that sentence by the most execrable murder that was ever committed since that of our blessed Saviour"; forms the text which Clarendon[k] gave for the rhapsodies of party during two centuries. On the other hand, the eloquent address of Milton[s] to the people of England has been in the hearts and mouths of many who have known that the establishment of the liberties of their country, duly subordinated by the laws of a free monarchy, may be dated from this event: "God has endued you with greatness of mind to be the first of mankind, who, after having conquered their own king, and having had him delivered into their hands, have not scrupled to condemn him judicially, and, pursuant to that sentence of condemnation, to put him to death."

In these times we can afford to refuse our assent to the blasphemous comparison of Clarendon (blasphemy more offensively repeated in the church service for the 30th of January), and at the same time affirm that the judicial condemnation which Milton so admires was illegal, unconstitutional, and in its immediate results dangerous to liberty. But feeling that far greater dangers would have been incurred if "the caged tiger had been let loose," and knowing that out of the errors and anomalies of those times a wiser revolution grew, for which the first more terrible revolution was a preparation, we may cease to examine this great historical question in any bitterness of spirit, and even acknowledge that the death of Charles, a bad king, though in some respects a good man, was necessary for the life of England, and for her "teaching other nations how to live."

We must accept as just and true Milton's admonition to his countrymen

in reference to this event, which he terms "so glorious an action," with many reasonable qualifications as to its glory; and yet apply even to ourselves his majestic words: — "After the performing so glorious an action as this, you ought to do nothing that is mean and little, not so much as to think of, much less to do anything but what is great and sublime. Which to attain to, this is your only way: as you have subdued your enemies in the field, so to make appear, that unarmed, and in the highest outward peace and tranquillity, you of all mankind are best able to subdue ambition, avarice, the love of riches, and can best avoid the corruptions that prosperity is apt to introduce (which generally subdue and triumph over other nations), to show as great justice, temperance, and moderation in the maintaining of your liberty, as you have shown courage in freeing yourselves from slavery."

There was, at the time of the king's execution, a book being printed which was to surround his life with the attributes of a saint, and to invest him in death with the glory of a martyr. The "Eikon Basilike, or Portraiture of his Sacred Majesty in his Solitudes and Sufferings," purported to be written by Charles the First himself. Milton, who was directed by the parliament to answer this Eikon, or Image, treats it in his Eikonoklastes, or Image-breaker, as if the king had "left behind him this book as the best advocate and interpreter of his own actions"; but at the same time Milton is careful to add, "as to the author of these soliloquies, whether it were the late king, as is vulgarly believed, or any secret coadjutor (and some stick not to name him), it can add nothing, nor shall take from the weight, if any be, of reason which he brings." The question of the authorship of this book has now passed out of the region of party violence; the controversy on that matter has almost merged, as a literary problem, into the belief that it was written by Gauden, afterwards bishop of Exeter. This divine probably submitted it to Charles during his long sojourn in the Isle of Wight; he published it as the work of the king; but he claimed the authorship after the restoration.

Hallam[m] remarks upon the internal evidence of its authenticity that "it has all the air of a fictitious composition. Cold, stiff, elaborate, without a single allusion that bespeaks the superior knowledge of facts which the king must have possessed, it contains little but those rhetorical commonplaces which would suggest themselves to any forger." But these "rhetorical commonplaces" are the best evidence, not of the genuineness of the book, but of the skill of the author. They were precisely what was required to make "attachment to the memory of the king become passion, and respect, worship"; — so Guizot[r] describes the effect of the Eikon. It was an universal appeal to the feelings, in a style moving along with a monotonous dignity, befitting royalty, though occasionally mingled with cold metaphors. It set forth the old blind claims to implicit obedience — or, as Milton has it, maintained "the common grounds of tyranny and popery, sugared a little over," — amidst the manifestations of a sincere piety and a resigned sadness. In one year there were fifty editions of this book sold. "Had it appeared a week sooner it might have preserved the king," thinks one writer. That may be doubted. But it produced the effect which those so-called histories produce which endeavour to fix the imagination solely upon the personal attributes and sorrows of kings and queens, instead of presenting a sober view of their relations to their subjects. Sentiment with the majority is always more powerful than reason; and thus Milton's "Eikonoklastes," being a partisan's view of Charles' public actions — a cold though severe view, in the formal style of a state-paper — produced little or no effect upon the national opinions, and is now read only for the great name of the author.[n]

[1649 A.D.]

John Lingard.

Such was the end of the unfortunate Charles Stuart; an awful lesson to the possessors of royalty, to watch the growth of public opinion, and to moderate their pretensions in conformity with the reasonable desires of their subjects. Had he lived at a more early period, when the sense of wrong was quickly subdued by the habit of submission, his reign would probably have been marked with fewer violations of the national liberties. It was resistance that made him a tyrant. The spirit of the people refused to yield to the encroachments of authority; and one act of oppression placed him under the necessity of committing another, till he had revived and enforced all those odious prerogatives, which, though usually claimed, were but sparingly exercised, by his predecessors. For some years his efforts seemed successful; but the Scottish insurrection revealed the delusion; he had parted with the real authority of a king, when he forfeited the confidence and affection of his subjects.

But while we blame the illegal measures of Charles, we ought not to screen from censure the subsequent conduct of his principal opponents. From the moment that war seemed inevitable, they acted as if they thought themselves absolved from all obligations of honour and honesty. They never ceased to inflame the passions of the people by misrepresentation and calumny; they exercised a power far more arbitrary and formidable than had ever been claimed by the king; they punished summarily, on mere suspicion, and without attention to the forms of law; and by their committees they established in every county a knot of petty tyrants, who disposed at will of the liberty and property of the inhabitants. Such anomalies may, perhaps, be inseparable from the jealousies, the resentments, and the heart-burnings, which are engendered in civil commotions; but certain it is that right and justice had seldom been more wantonly outraged, than they were by those who professed to have drawn the sword in the defence of right and justice.

Neither should the death of Charles be attributed to the vengeance of the people. They, for the most part, declared themselves satisfied with their victory; they sought not the blood of the captive monarch; they were even willing to replace him on the throne, under those limitations which they deemed necessary for the preservation of their rights. The men who hurried him to the scaffold were a small faction of bold and ambitious spirits, who had the address to guide the passions and fanaticism of their followers, and were enabled through them to control the real sentiments of the nation. Even of the commissioners appointed to sit in judgment on the king, scarcely one-half could be induced to attend at his trial; and many of those who concurred in his condemnation subscribed the sentence with feelings of shame and remorse. But so it always happens in revolutions: the most violent put themselves forward; their vigilance and activity seem to multiply their number; and the daring of the few wins the ascendancy over the indolence or the pusillanimity of the many.[v]

S. R. Gardiner

Only after long years does a nation make clear its definite resolve, and for this reason wise statesmen — whether monarchical or republican — watch the currents of opinion, and submit to compromises which will enable the national sentiment to make its way without a succession of violent shocks.

Charles' fault lay not so much in his claim to retain the negative voice as in his absolute disregard of the condition of the time, and of the feelings and opinions of every class of his subjects with which he happened to disagree. As long as he remained a factor in English politics, government by compromise was impossible. All can perceive that with Charles' death the main obstacle to the establishment of a constitutional system was removed.[u]

Lord Macaulay

The king could not be trusted. The vices of Charles had grown upon him. They were, indeed, vices which difficulties and perplexities generally bring out in the strongest light. Cunning is the natural defence of the weak. A prince, therefore, who is habitually a deceiver when at the height of power, is not likely to learn frankness in the midst of embarrassments and distresses. Charles was not only a most unscrupulous but a most unlucky dissembler. There never was a politician to whom so many frauds and falsehoods were brought home by undeniable evidence. He publicly recognised the houses at Westminster as a legal parliament, and, at the same time, made a private minute in council, declaring the recognition null. He publicly disclaimed all thought of calling in foreign aid against his people: he privately solicited aid from France, from Denmark, and from Lorraine. He publicly denied that he employed papists: at the same time he privately sent to his generals directions to employ every papist that would serve. He publicly took the sacrament at Oxford, as a pledge that he never would even connive at Roman Catholicism: he privately assured his wife, that he intended to tolerate Roman Catholicism in England; and he authorised Lord Glamorgan to promise that Roman Catholicism should be established in Ireland. Then he attempted to clear himself at his agent's expense. Glamorgan received, in the royal handwriting, reprimands intended to be read by others, and eulogies which were to be seen only by himself.

To such an extent, indeed, had insincerity now tainted the king's whole nature, that his most devoted friends could not refrain from complaining to each other, with bitter grief and shame, of his crooked politics. His defects, they said, gave them less pain than his intrigues. Since he had been a prisoner, there was no section of the victorious party which had not been the object both of his flatteries and of his machinations: but never was he more unfortunate than when he attempted at once to cajole and to undermine Cromwell. Cromwell had to determine whether he would put to hazard the attachment of his party, the attachment of his army, his own greatness, nay his own life, in an attempt, which would probably have been vain, to save a prince whom no engagement could bind. With many struggles and misgivings, and probably not without many prayers, the decision was made. Charles was left to his fate. The military saints resolved that, in defiance of the old laws of the realm, and of the almost universal sentiment of the nation, the king should expiate his crimes with his blood. He for a time expected a death like that of his unhappy predecessors, Edward II and Richard II. But he was in no danger of such treason. Those who had him in their gripe were not midnight stabbers. What they did they did in order that it might be a spectacle to heaven and earth, and that it might be held in everlasting remembrance.

They enjoyed keenly the very scandal which they gave. That the ancient constitution and the public opinion of England were directly opposed

[1649 A.D.]

to regicide made regicide seem strangely fascinating to a party bent on effecting a complete political and social revolution. In order to accomplish their purpose, it was necessary that they should first break in pieces every part of the machinery of the government; and this necessity was rather agreeable than painful to them. The commons passed a vote tending to accommodation with the king. The soldiers excluded the majority by force. The lords unanimously rejected the proposition that the king should be brought to trial. Their house was instantly closed. No court, known to the law, would take on itself the office of judging the fountain of justice. A revolutionary tribunal was created. That tribunal pronounced Charles a tyrant, a traitor, a murderer, and a public enemy; and his head was severed from his shoulders before thousands of spectators, in front of the banqueting hall of his own palace.

In no long time it became manifest that those political and religious zealots, to whom this deed is to be ascribed, had committed, not only a crime, but an error. They had given to a prince, hitherto known to his people chiefly by his faults, an opportunity of displaying, on a great theatre, before the eyes of all nations and all ages, some qualities which irresistibly call forth the admiration and love of mankind, the high spirit of a gallant gentleman, the patience and meekness of a penitent Christian. Nay, they had so contrived their revenge that the very man whose whole life had been a series of attacks on the liberties of England now seemed to die a martyr in the cause of those liberties. No demagogue ever produced such an impression on the public mind as the captive king, who, retaining in that extremity all his regal dignity, and confronting death with dauntless courage, gave utterance to the feelings of his oppressed people, manfully refused to plead before a court unknown to the law, appealed from military violence to the principles of the constitution, asked by what right the house of commons had been purged of its most respectable members and the house of lords deprived of its legislative functions, and told his weeping hearers that he was defending not only his own cause, but theirs. His long misgovernment, his innumerable perfidies, were forgotten. His memory was, in the minds of the great majority of his subjects, associated with those free institutions which he had, during many years, laboured to destroy: for those free institutions had perished with him, and, amidst the mournful silence of a community kept down by arms, had been defended by his voice alone. From that day began a reaction in favour of monarchy and of the exiled house, a reaction which never ceased till the throne had again been set up in all its old dignity.[t]