

THE CAPTURED "ROYAL CHARLES" BEING CARRIED AWAY TO HOLLAND.
Picture by Storch, in the Museum at Amsterdam.

SEC. III
 CHARLES
 THE
 SECOND
 1667
 TO
 1673

Section III.—Charles the Second, 1667—1673

[*Authorities.*—To the authorities already mentioned, we may add the Memoirs of Sir William Temple, with Lord Macaulay's well-known Essay on that statesman, Reresby's Memoirs, and the works of Andrew Marvell. The "Memoirs of the Count de Grammont," by Anthony Hamilton, give a witty and amusing picture of the life of the court. Lingard becomes important from the original materials he has used, and from his clear and dispassionate statement of the Catholic side of the question. Ranke's "History of the XVII. Century" throws great light on the diplomatic history of the later Stuart reigns; on internal and constitutional points he is dispassionate but of less value. Dalrymple, in his "Memoirs of Great Britain and Ireland," was the first to discover the real secret of the negotiations with France; but all previous researches have been superseded by those of M. Mignet, whose "Négociations relatives à la Succession d'Espagne" is indispensable for a knowledge of the time.]

The thunder of the Dutch guns in the Medway and the Thames woke England to a bitter sense of its degradation. The dream of loyalty was over. "Everybody now-a-days," Pepys tells us, "reflect upon Oliver and commend him, what brave things he did, and made all the neighbour princes fear him." But Oliver's successor was coolly watching this shame and discontent of his people with the one aim of turning it to his own advantage. To Charles the Second the degradation of England was only a move in the political game which he was playing, a game played with so consummate a secrecy and skill that it deceived not only the closest observers of his own day but still misleads historians of ours. What his subjects saw in their King was a pleasant, brown-faced gentleman playing with his spaniels, or drawing caricatures of his ministers, or flinging cakes to the water-fowl in the park

Charles
 the
 Second



WATCH.
 English; 17th century.
 South Kensington Museum.

SEC. III

CHARLES

THE

SECOND

1667

TO

1673

To all outer seeming Charles was the most consummate of idlers. "He delighted," says one of his courtiers, "in a bewitching kind of pleasure called sauntering." The business-like Pepys soon dis-



CHARLES II.

Miniature by S. Cooper, in the Royal Collection at Windsor.

covered that "the King do mind nothing but pleasures, and hates the very sight or thoughts of business." He only laughed when Tom Killigrew frankly told him that badly as things were going there was one man whose industry could soon set them right, "and

this is one Charles Stuart, who now spends his time in using his lips about the Court, and hath no other employment." That Charles had great natural parts no one doubted. In his earlier days of defeat and danger he showed a cool courage and presence of mind which never failed him in the many perilous moments of his reign. His temper was pleasant and social, his manners perfect, and there was a careless freedom and courtesy in his address which won over everybody who came into his presence. His education indeed had been so grossly neglected that he could hardly read a plain Latin book ; but his natural quickness and intelligence showed itself in his pursuit of chymistry and anatomy, and in the interest he showed in the scientific inquiries of the Royal Society. Like Peter the Great his favourite study was that of naval architecture, and he piqued himself on being a clever ship-builder. He had some little love too for art and poetry, and a taste for music. But his shrewdness and vivacity showed itself most in his endless talk. He was fond of telling stories, and he told them with a good deal of grace and humour. His humour indeed never forsook him : even on his death-bed he turned to the weeping courtiers around and whispered an apology for having been so unconscionable a time in dying. He held his own fairly with the wits of his Court, and bandied repartees on equal terms with Sedley or Buckingham. Even Rochester in his merciless epigram was forced to own that Charles "never said a foolish thing." He had inherited in fact his grandfather's gift of pithy sayings, and his habitual irony often gave an amusing turn to them. When his brother, the most unpopular man in England, solemnly warned him of plots against his life, Charles laughingly bade him set all fear aside. "They will never kill me, James," he said, "to make you king." But courage and wit and ability seemed to have been bestowed on him in vain. Charles hated business. He gave to outer observers no sign of ambition. The one thing he seemed in earnest about was sensual pleasure, and he took his pleasure with a cynical shamelessness which roused the disgust even of his shameless courtiers. Mistress followed mistress, and the guilt of a troop of profligate women was blazoned to the world by the gift of titles and estates. The royal bastards were set amongst English nobles. The ducal house of Grafton springs from the

SEC. III

CHARLES
THE
SECOND
1667
TO
1673

SEC. III
—
CHARLES
THE
SECOND
1667
TO
1673
—

King's adultery with Barbara Palmer, whom he created Duchess of Cleveland. The Dukes of St. Albans owe their origin to his



NELL GWYNN.

Picture by Sir Peter Lely at Althorpe.

intrigue with Nell Gwynn, a player and a courtesan. Louise de Quérouaille, a mistress sent by France to win him to its interests, became Duchess of Portsmouth and ancestress of the house of

Richmond. An earlier mistress, Lucy Walters, was mother of a boy whom he raised to the Dukedom of Monmouth, and to whom the Dukes of Buccleuch trace their line ; but there is good reason for doubting whether the King was actually his father. But

SET. III
CHARLES
THE
SECOND
1667
TO
1673



JAMES, DUKE OF MONMOUTH.

Miniature by Samuel Cooper, in the Royal Collection at Windsor.

Charles was far from being content with these recognized mistresses, or with a single form of self-indulgence. Gambling and drinking helped to fill up the vacant moments when he could no longer toy with his favourites or bet at Newmarket. No thought of remorse

SEC. III
CHARLES
THE
SECOND
1667
TO
1673

or of shame seems ever to have crossed his mind. "He could not think God would make a man miserable," he said once, "only for taking a little pleasure out of the way." From shame indeed he was shielded by his cynical disbelief in human virtue. Virtue he regarded simply as a trick by which clever hypocrites imposed upon fools. Honour among men seemed to him as mere a pretence as chastity among women. Gratitude he had none, for he looked upon self-interest as the only motive of men's actions, and though soldiers had died and women had risked their lives for him, he "loved others as little as he thought they loved him." But



A

Form of PRAYER with THANKSGIVING

to be used yearly upon the XXIX. day of *MAY*;
Being the day of His Majesties Birth, and happy
Return to His Kingdoms.

From Book of Common Prayer, 1662.

if he felt no gratitude for benefits he felt no resentment for wrongs. He was incapable either of love or of hate. The only feeling he retained for his fellow-men was that of an amused contempt.

The
King's
Policy

It was difficult for Englishmen to believe that any real danger to liberty could come from an idler and a voluptuary such as Charles the Second. But in the very difficulty of believing this lay half the King's strength. He had in fact no taste whatever for the despotism of the Stuarts who had gone before him. His shrewdness laughed his grandfather's theory of Divine Right down the wind, while his indolence made such a personal administration as that which his father delighted in burthensome to him. He was

too humorous a man to care for the pomp and show of power, and too good-natured a man to play the tyrant. But he believed as firmly as his father or his grandfather had believed in the older prerogatives of the Crown ; and, like them, he looked on Parliaments with suspicion and jealousy. " He told Lord Essex," Burnet says, " that he did not wish to be like a Grand Signior, with some mutes about him, and bags of bowstrings to strangle men ; but he did not think he was a king so long as a company of fellows were looking into his actions, and examining his ministers as well as his accounts." " A king," he thought, " who might be checked, and have his ministers called to an account, was but a king in name." In other words, he had no settled plan of tyranny, but he meant to rule as independently as he could, and from the beginning to the end of his reign there never was a moment when he was not doing something to carry out his aim. But he carried it out in a tentative, irregular fashion which it was as hard to detect as to meet. Whenever there was any strong opposition he gave way. If popular feeling demanded the dismissal of his ministers, he dismissed them. If it protested against his declaration of indulgence, he recalled it. If it cried for victims in the frenzy of the Popish Plot, he gave it victims till the frenzy was at an end. It was easy for Charles to yield and to wait, and just as easy for him to take up the thread of his purpose again the moment the pressure was over. The one fixed resolve which overrode every other thought in the King's mind was a resolve " not to set out on his travels again." His father had fallen through a quarrel with the two Houses, and Charles was determined to remain on good terms with the Parliament till he was strong enough to pick a quarrel to his profit. He treated the Lords with an easy familiarity which robbed opposition of its seriousness. " Their debates amused him," he said in his indolent way ; and he stood chatting before the fire while peer after peer poured invectives on his ministers, and laughed louder than the rest when Shaftesbury directed his coarsest taunts at the barrenness of the Queen. Courtiers were entrusted with the secret " management" of the Commons : obstinate country gentlemen were brought to the royal closet to kiss the King's hand and listen to the King's pleasant stories of his escape after Worcester ; and still more obstinate country gentlemen were

SEC. III

CHARLES

THE

SECOND

1667

TO

1673

SEC. III
CHARLES
THE
SECOND
1667
TO
1673

bribed. Where bribes, flattery, and management failed, Charles was content to yield and to wait till his time came again. Meanwhile he went on patiently gathering up what fragments of



JOHN MAITLAND, EARL AND DUKE OF LAUDERDALE.

Picture by Vandyck, at Ham House.

*Dissolu-
tion of the
Union*
1660

the old royal power still survived, and availing himself of whatever new resources offered themselves. If he could not undo what Puritanism had done in England, he could undo its work in Scotland and in Ireland. Before the Civil War these

kingdoms had served as useful checks on English liberty, and by simply regarding the Union which the Long Parliament and the Protector had brought about as a nullity in law it was possible they might become checks again. In his refusal to recognize the Union Charles was supported by public opinion among his English subjects, partly from sheer abhorrence of changes wrought during "the troubles," and partly from a dread that the Scotch and Irish members would form a party in the English Parliament which would always be at the service of the Crown. In both the lesser kingdoms too a measure which seemed to restore somewhat of their independence was for the moment popular. But the results of this step were quick in developing themselves. In Scotland the Covenant was at once abolished. The new Scotch Parliament at Edinburgh, the Drunken Parliament, as it was called, outdid the wildest loyalty of the English Cavaliers by annulling in a single Act all the proceedings of its predecessors during the last eight-and-twenty years. By this measure the whole existing Church system of Scotland was deprived of legal sanction. The General Assembly had already been prohibited from meeting by Cromwell; the kirk-sessions and ministers' synods were now suspended. The Scotch bishops were again restored to their spiritual pre-eminence, and to their seats in Parliament. An iniquitous trial sent the Marquis of Argyll, the only noble strong enough to oppose the royal will, to the block, and the government was entrusted to a knot of profligate statesmen till it fell into the hands of Lauderdale, one of the ablest and most unscrupulous of the King's ministers. Their policy was steadily directed to the two purposes of humbling Presbyterianism—as the force which could alone restore Scotland to freedom, and enable her to lend aid as before to English liberty in any struggle with the Crown—and that of raising a royal army which might be ready in case of need to march over the border to the King's support. In Ireland the dissolution of the Union brought back the bishops to their sees; but whatever wish Charles may have had to restore the balance of Catholic and Protestant as a source of power to the Crown was baffled by the obstinate resistance of the Protestant settlers to any plans for redressing the confiscations of Cromwell. Five years of bitter struggle between the dispossessed loyalists and the new occupants left the Protestant

SEC. III

CHARLES
THE
SECOND

1667

TO

1673

SEC. III
CHARLES
THE
SECOND
1667
TO
1673

ascendency unimpaired ; and in spite of a nominal surrender of one-third of the confiscated estates to their old possessors, hardly a sixth of the profitable land in the island remained in Catholic



JAMES BUTLER, FIRST DUKE OF ORMOND.
From an engraving by Scriven, after Sir Godfrey Kneller.

holding. The claims of the Duke of Ormond too made it necessary to leave the government in his hands, and Ormond's loyalty was too moderate and constitutional to lend itself to any of the schemes of absolute rule which under Tyrconnell played so

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

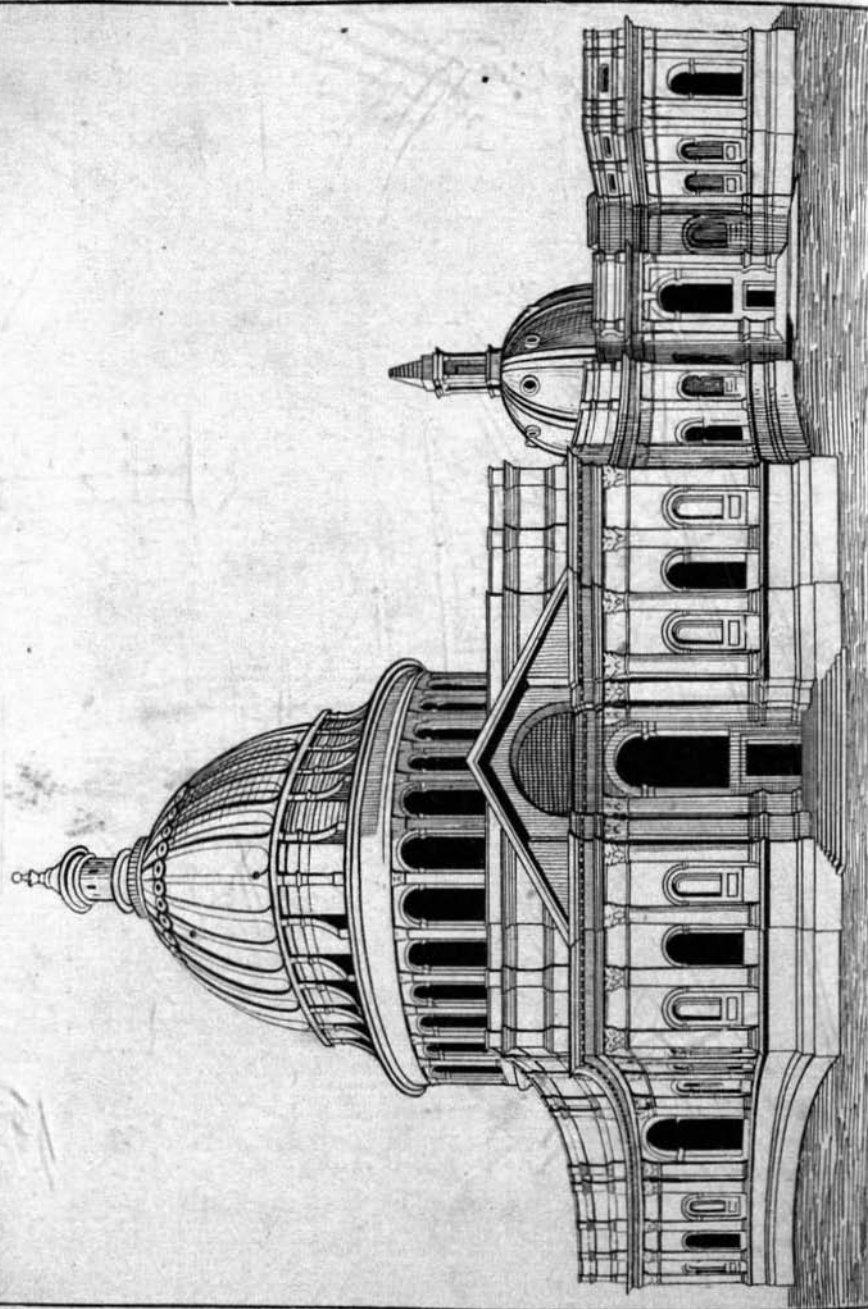
But Charles was too quick-witted a man to believe, as his brother James believed, that it was possible to break down English freedom by the royal power or by a few thousand men in arms. It was still less possible by such means to break down, as he wished to break down, English Protestantism. In heart, whether the story of his renunciation of Protestantism during his exile be true or no, he had long ceased to be a Protestant. Whatever religious feeling he had was on the side of Catholicism ; he encouraged conversions among his courtiers, and the last act of his life was to seek formal admission into the Roman Church. But his feelings were rather political than religious. The English Roman Catholics formed a far larger part of the population then than now ; their wealth and local influence gave them a political importance which they have long since lost, and every motive of gratitude as well as self-interest led him to redeem his pledge to procure toleration for their worship. But he was already looking.

SEC. III
CHARLES
THE
SECOND
1667
TO
1673

*The Royal
Army*

Charles
and
France

SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN'S ORIGINAL MODEL FOR S. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL



however vaguely, to something more than Catholic toleration. He saw that despotism in the State could hardly co-exist with free inquiry and free action in matters of the conscience, and that government, in his own words, "was a safer and easier thing where the authority was believed infallible and the faith and submission of the people were implicit." The difficulties in the way of such a religious change probably seemed the less to him from his long residence in Roman Catholic countries, and from his own religious scepticism. Two years indeed after his restoration he had already despatched an agent to Rome to arrange the terms of a reconciliation between the Anglican Church and the Papacy. But though he counted much for the success of his project of toleration on taking advantage of the dissensions between Protestant Churchmen and Protestant Dissenters he soon discovered that for any real success in his political or religious aims he must seek resources elsewhere than at home. At this moment France was the dominant power in Europe. Its young King, Lewis the Fourteenth, was the champion of Catholicism and despotism against civil and religious liberty throughout the world. France was the wealthiest of European powers, and her subsidies could free Charles from dependence on his Parliament. Her army was the finest in the world, and French soldiers could put down, it was thought, any resistance from English patriots. The aid of Lewis could alone realize the aims of Charles, and Charles was willing to pay the price which Lewis demanded for his aid, the price of concurrence in his designs on Spain. Spain at this moment had not only ceased to threaten Europe but herself trembled at the threats of France; and the aim of Lewis was to complete her ruin, to win the Spanish provinces in the Netherlands, and ultimately to secure the succession to the Spanish throne for a French prince. But the presence of the French in Flanders was equally distasteful to England and to Holland, and in such a contest Spain might hope for the aid of these states and of the Empire. For some years Lewis contented himself with perfecting his army and preparing by skilful negotiations to make such a league of the great powers against him impossible. His first success in England was in the marriage of the King. Portugal, which had only just shaken

SEC. III

CHARLES
THE
SECOND

1667

TO

1673

*Charles
and
Catholic-
ism**Marriage
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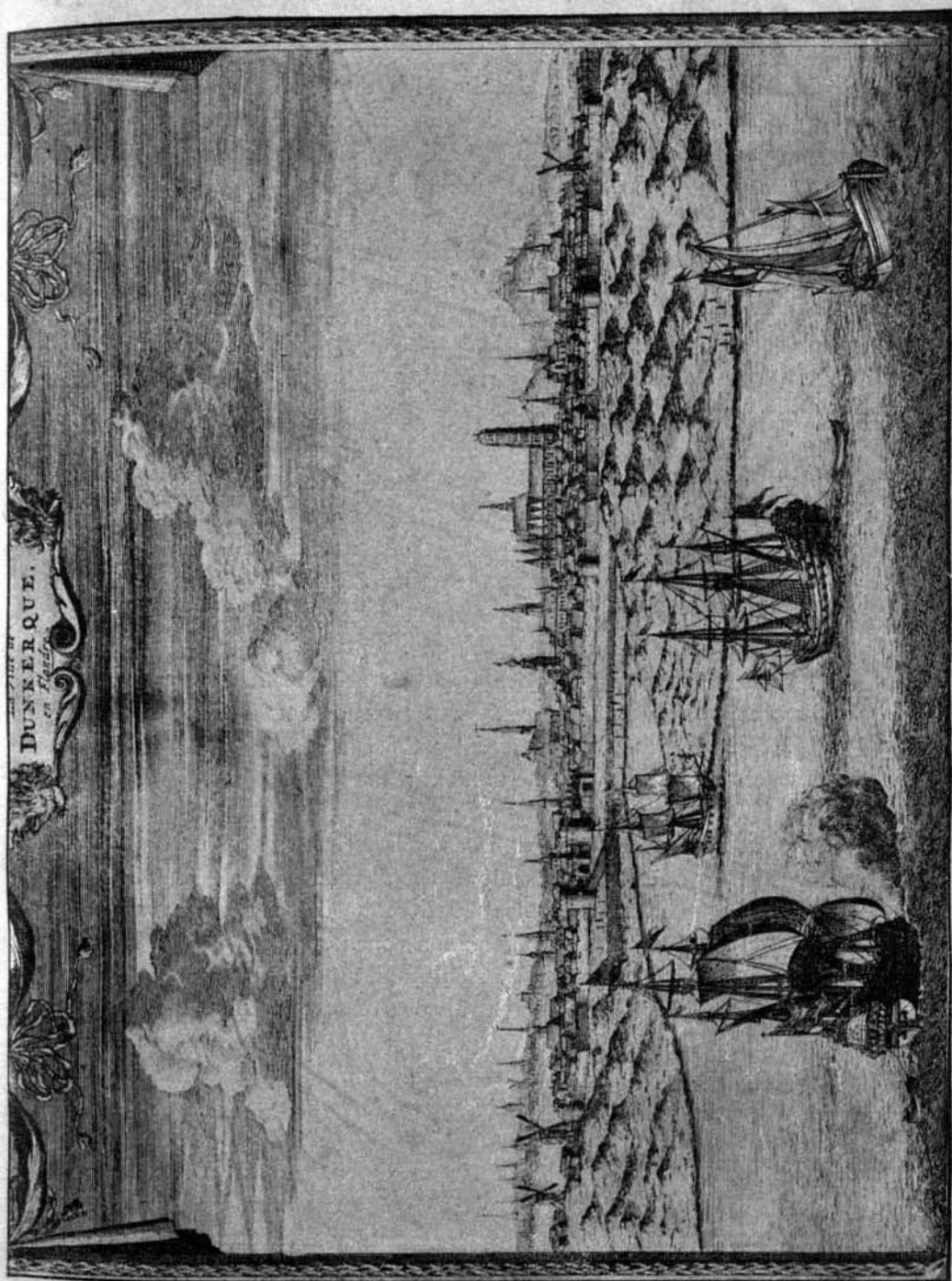
SEC. III
CHARLES
THE
SECOND
1667
TO
1673

off the rule of Spain, was really dependent upon France ; and in accepting the hand of Catharine of Braganza in spite of the protests of Spain, Charles announced his adhesion to the



THE COMTE D'ESTRADES, AMBASSADOR OF FRANCE IN ENGLAND, 1661.
Jusserand, "A French Ambassador at the Court of Charles II.", from an engraving by Etienne Pivert.

alliance of Lewis. Already English opinion saw the danger of such a course, and veered round to the Spanish side. As early as 1661 the London mob backed the Spanish ambassador in a street squabble for precedence with the ambassador of



— 1750 —
DUNKERQUE.
en France

DUNKIRK.
Dutch engraving, Seventeenth or Early Eighteenth Century.

SEC. III
CHARLES
THE
SECOND
1667
TO
1673

France. "We do all naturally love the Spanish," says Pepys, "and hate the French." The marriage of Catharine, the sale of Dunkirk, the one result of Cromwell's victories, to France, aroused the national jealousy and suspicion of French influence; and the war with Holland seemed at one time likely to end in a war with Lewis. The Dutch war was in itself a serious stumbling-block in the way of French projects. To aid either side was to throw the other on the aid of the House of Austria, and to build up a league which would check France in its aim. Only peace could keep the European states disunited, and enable Lewis by their disunion to carry out his design of seizing Flanders. His attempt at mediation was fruitless; the defeat of Lowestoft forced him to give aid to Holland, and the news of his purpose at once roused England to a hope of war. When Charles announced it to the Houses, "there was a great noise," says Louvois, "in the Parliament to show the joy of the two Houses at the prospect of a fight with us." Lewis, however, cautiously limited his efforts to narrowing the contest to a struggle at sea, while England, vexed with disasters at home and abroad, could scarcely maintain the war. The appearance of the Dutch fleet in the Thames was followed by the sudden conclusion of peace which again left the ground clear for the diplomatic intrigues of Lewis.

*Peace of
Breda
1667*

**The
Fall of
Clarendon**

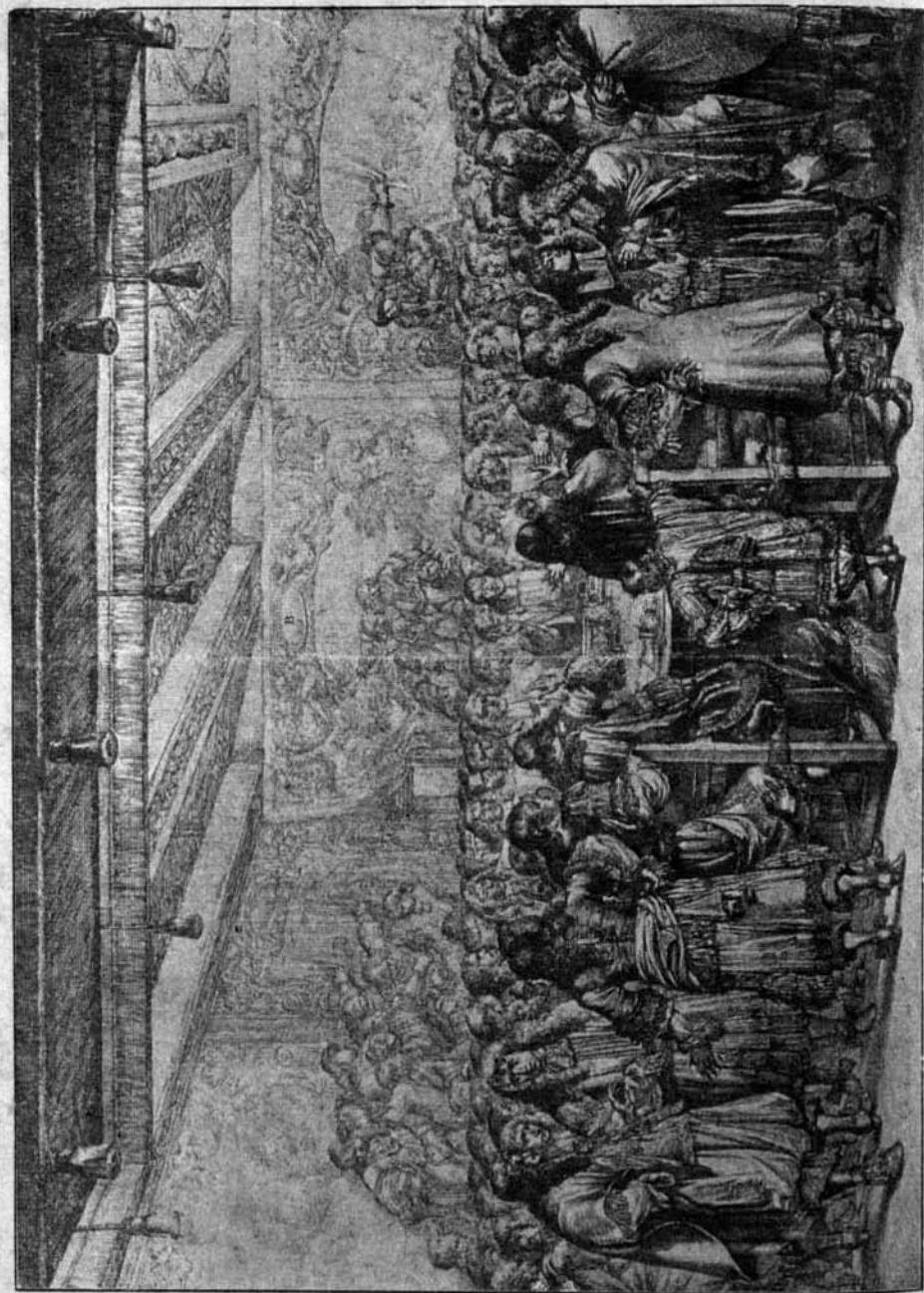
In England the irritation was great and universal, but the public resentment fell on Clarendon alone. Charles had been bitterly angered when in 1663 his bill to vest a dispensing power in the Crown had been met by Clarendon's open opposition. The Presbyterian party, represented by Ashley, and the Catholics, led by the Earl of Bristol, alike sought his overthrow; in the Court he was opposed by Bennet, afterwards Earl of Arlington, a creature of the King's. But Clarendon was still strong in his intimate connexion with the King's affairs, in the marriage of his daughter, Anne Hyde, to the Duke of York, in his capacity for business, above all in the support of the Church, and the confidence of the royalist and orthodox House of Commons. Foiled in their efforts to displace him, his rivals had availed themselves of the jealousy of the merchant-class to drive him against his will into the war with Holland; and though the Chancellor succeeded in

SEC. III
CHARLES
THE
SECOND
1667
TO
1673

The Cabal

1668

forcing the Five Mile Act through the Houses in the teeth of Ashley's protests, the calculations of his enemies were soon verified. The union between Clarendon and the Parliament was broken by the war. The Parliament was enraged by his counsel for its dissolution, and by his proposal to raise troops without a Parliamentary grant, and his opposition to the inspection of accounts, in which they saw an attempt to re-establish the one thing they hated most, a standing army. Charles could at last free himself from the minister who had held him in check so long; the Chancellor was dismissed from office, and driven to take refuge in France. By the exile of Clarendon, the death of Southampton, and the retirement of Ormond and Nicholas, the party of constitutional loyalists in the Council ceased to exist; and the section which had originally represented the Presbyterians, and which under the guidance of Ashley had bent to purchase toleration even at the cost of increasing the prerogatives of the Crown, came to the front of affairs. The religious policy of Charles had as yet been defeated by the sturdy Churchmanship of the Parliament, the influence of Clarendon, and the reluctance of the Presbyterians as a body to accept the Royal "indulgence" at the price of a toleration of Catholicism and a recognition of the King's power to dispense with Parliamentary statutes. The first steps of the new ministry in releasing Nonconformists from prison, in suffering conventicles to reopen, and suspending the operation of the Act of Uniformity, were in open defiance of the known will of the two Houses. But when Charles again proposed to his counsellors a general toleration he no longer found himself supported by them as in 1663. Even Ashley's mood was changed. Instead of toleration they pressed for a union of Protestants which would have utterly foiled the King's projects; and a scheme of Protestant comprehension which had been approved by the moderate divines on both sides, by Tillotson and Stillingfleet on the part of the Church as well as by Manton and Baxter on the part of the Nonconformists, was laid before the House of Commons. Even its rejection failed to bring Ashley and his party back to their old position. They were still for toleration, but only for a toleration the benefit of which did not extend to Catholics, "in respect the laws have determined the principles



SIGNING THE TREATY OF BRED A, 1667.

of the Romish religion to be inconsistent with the safety of your Majesty's person and government." The policy of the Council in fact was determined by the look of public affairs abroad. Lewis had quickly shown the real cause of the eagerness with which he had pressed on the Peace of Breda between England and the Dutch. He had secured the neutrality of the Emperor by a secret treaty which shared the Spanish dominions between the two monarchs in case the King of Spain died without an heir. England, as he believed, was held in check by Charles, and like Holland was too exhausted by the late war to meddle with a new one. On the very day therefore on which the treaty was signed he sent in his formal claims on the Low Countries, and his army at once took the field. The greater part of Flanders was occupied and six great fortresses secured in two months. Franche Comté was overrun in seventeen days. Holland protested and appealed to England for aid ; but her appeals remained at first unanswered. England sought in fact to tempt Holland, Spain, and France in turn by secret offers of alliance. From France she demanded, as the price of her aid against Holland and perhaps Spain, a share in the eventual partition of the Spanish dominions, and an assignment to her in such a case of the Spanish Empire in the New World. But all her offers were alike refused. The need of action became clearer every hour to the English ministers, and wider views gradually set aside the narrow dreams of merely national aggrandizement. The victories of Lewis, the sudden revelation of the strength of France, roused even in the most tolerant minds a dread of Catholicism. Men felt instinctively that the very existence of Protestantism and with it of civil freedom was again to be at stake. Arlington himself had a Dutch wife and had resided in Spain ; and Catholic as in heart he was, thought more of the political interests of England, and of the invariable resolve of its statesmen since Elizabeth's day to keep the French out of Flanders, than of the interests of Catholicism. Lewis, warned of his danger, strove to hush the general excitement by offers of peace to Spain, while he was writing to Turenne, "I am turning over in my head things that are far from impossible, and go to carry them into execution whatever they may cost." Three armies were, in fact, ready to march on Spain,

SEC. III

CHARLES
THE
SECOND1667
TO
1673*The
policy of
France*

1667

*The
Triple
Alliance*
1668

SEC. III
—
CHARLES
THE
SECOND
1667
TO
1673
—

Germany, and Flanders, when Arlington despatched Sir William Temple to the Hague, and the signature of a Triple Alliance between England, Holland, and Sweden bound Lewis to the terms he had offered as a blind, and forced on him the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle.



SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE.

Picture by Sir Peter Lely, in the National Portrait Gallery.

The
Treaty of
Dover

Few measures have won a greater popularity than the Triple Alliance. "It is the only good public thing," says Pepys, "that hath been done since the King came to England." Even Dryden, writing at the time as a Tory, counted among the worst of

Shaftesbury's crimes that "the Triple Bond he broke." In form indeed the Alliance simply bound Lewis to adhere to terms of peace proposed by himself, and those advantageous terms. But in fact it utterly ruined his plans. It brought about too that

SEC. III
CHARLES
THE
SECOND
1667
TO
1673



HUGUES DE LIONNE, FOREIGN SECRETARY TO LEWIS XIV.

Jusserand, "A French Ambassador at the Court of Charles II.;" from an engraving by N. de Larroissin, 1664.

union of the powers of Europe against which, as Lewis felt instinctively, his ambition would dash itself in vain. It was Arlington's aim to make the Alliance the nucleus of a greater confederation; and he tried not only to perpetuate it, but to

SEC. III
CHARLES
THE
SECOND
1667
TO
1673

include within it the Swiss Cantons, the Empire, and the House of Austria. His efforts were foiled; but the "Triple Bond" bore within it the germs of the Grand Alliance which at last saved Europe. To England it at once brought back the reputation which she had lost since the death of Cromwell. It was a sign of her re-entry on the general stage of European politics, and of the formal adoption of the balance of power as a policy essential to the welfare of Europe at large. But it was not so much the action of England which had galled the pride of Lewis, as the action of Holland. That "a nation of shopkeepers" (for Lewis applied the phrase to Holland long before Napoleon applied it to England) should have foiled his plans at the very moment of their realization, "stung him," he owned, "to the quick." If he refrained from an instant attack it was to nurse a surer revenge. His steady aim during the four years which followed the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was to isolate the United Provinces, to bring about the neutrality of the Empire in any attack on them, to break the Triple Alliance by detaching Sweden from it and securing Charles, and to leave the Dutch without help, save from the idle goodwill of Brandenburg and Spain. His diplomacy was everywhere successful, but it was nowhere so successful as with England. Charles had been stirred to a momentary pride by the success of the Triple Alliance, but he had never seriously abandoned his policy, and he was resolute at last to play an active part in realizing it. It was clear that little was to be hoped for from his old plans of winning toleration for the Catholics from his new ministers, and that in fact they were resolute to bring about such a union of Protestants as would have been fatal to his designs. From this moment he resolved to seek for his advantage from France. The Triple Alliance was hardly concluded when he declared to Lewis his purpose of entering into an alliance with him, offensive and defensive. He owned to be the only man in his kingdom who desired such a league, but he was determined to realize his desire, whatever might be the sentiments of his ministers. His ministers, indeed, he meant either to bring over to his schemes or to outwit. Two of them, Arlington and Sir Thomas Clifford, were Catholics in heart like the King; and they were summoned, with the Duke of York, who had already

*Charles
turns to
France*

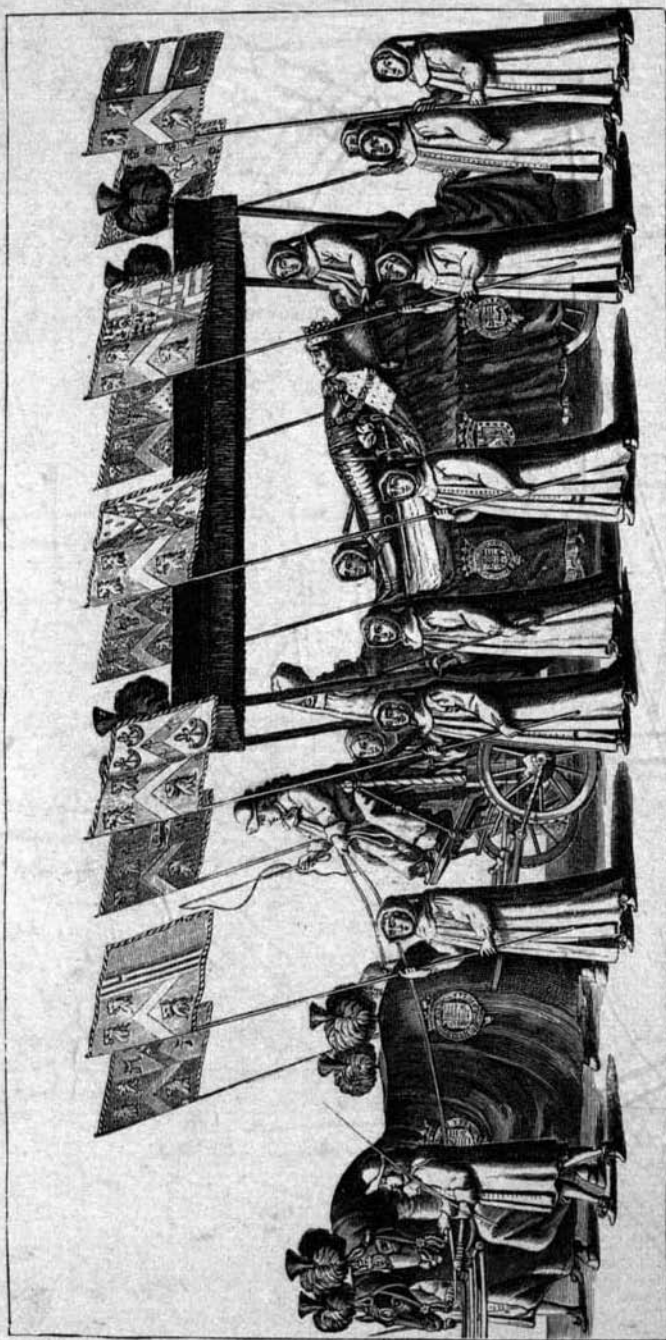
secretly embraced Catholicism, and two Catholic nobles, to a conference in which Charles, after pledging them to secrecy, declared himself a Catholic, and asked their counsel as to the means of establishing the Catholic religion in his realm. It was resolved to apply to Lewis for aid in this purpose; and Charles proceeded to seek from the King a "protection," to use the words of the French ambassador, "of which he always hoped to feel the powerful effects in the execution of his design of changing the present state of religion in England for a better, and of establishing his authority so as to be able to retain his

SEC. III
CHARLES
THE
SECOND
1667
TO
1673
1669



TWO "DRUMMS AND A FIFE AND THE DRUMME-MAJOR."
F. Sanford, "Funeral of the Duke of Albemarle," 1670.

subjects in the obedience they owe him." The fall of Holland was as needful for the success of the plans of Charles as of Lewis; and with the ink of the Triple Alliance hardly dry, Charles promised help in Lewis's schemes for the ruin of Holland and the annexation of Flanders. He offered therefore to declare his religion and to join France in an attack on Holland, if Lewis would grant him a subsidy equal to a million a year. In the event of the King of Spain's death without a son Charles pledged himself to support France in her claims upon Flanders, while Lewis promised to assent to the designs of England on the



FUNERAL CAR OF GEORGE MONCK, DUKE OF ALBEMARLE.
Sandford, "Funeral of the Duke of Albemarle," 1670.

Spanish dominions in America. On this basis, after a year's negotiations, a secret treaty was concluded at Dover in an interview between Charles and his sister Henrietta, the Duchess of Orleans. It provided that Charles should announce his conversion and that in case of any disturbance arising from such a step he should be supported by a French army and a French subsidy. War was to be declared by both powers against Holland, England furnishing a small land force, but bearing the chief burthen of the

SEC. III

CHARLES

THE

SECOND

1667

TO

1673

May 1670



TWO OF THE DUKE OF ALBEMARLE'S WATERMEN.

F. Sandford, "Funeral of the Duke of Albemarle," 1670.

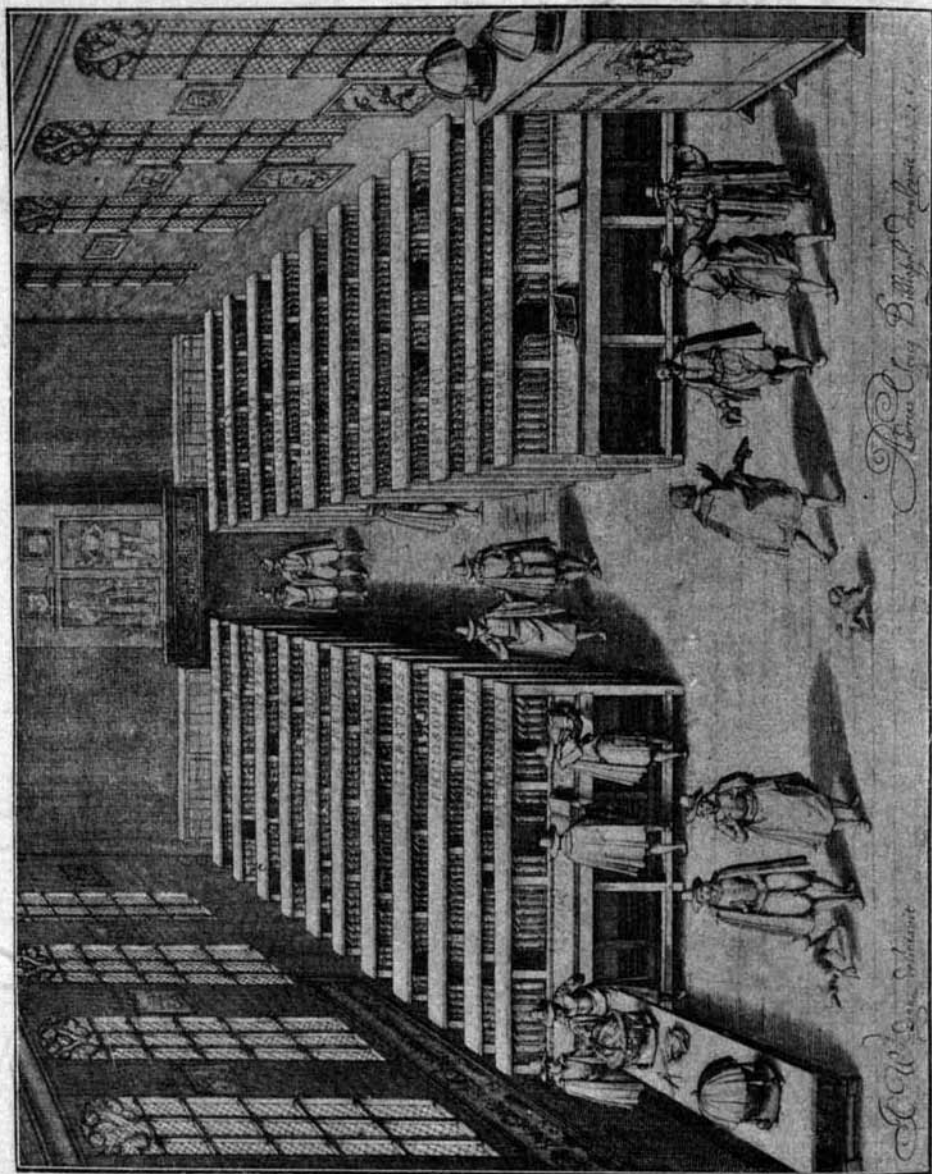
TWO MASTERS OF THE CHANCERY.

contest at sea, on condition of an annual subsidy of three hundred thousand pounds.

Nothing marks better the political profligacy of the age than that Arlington, the author of the Triple Alliance, should have been chosen as the confidant of Charles in his treaty of Dover. But to all save Arlington and Clifford the King's change of religion or his political aims remained utterly unknown. It would have been impossible to obtain the consent of the party in the royal council which represented the old Presbyterians, of Ashley or Lauderdale or the Duke of Buckingham, to the Treaty of Dover. But it was possible to trick them into approval of a war with Holland by play-

The
Declara-
tion of
Indul-
gence

*The Cabal
and the
war*



THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY AT LEYDEN IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

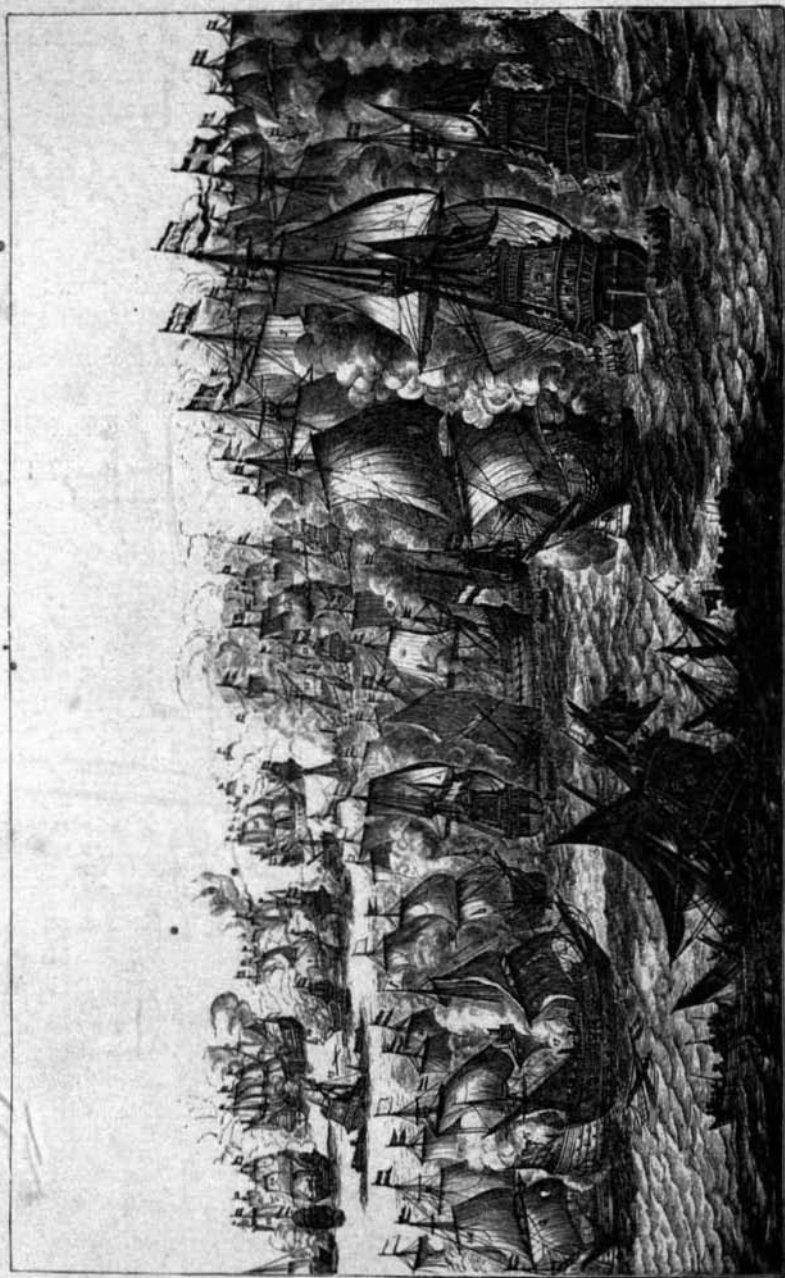
After J. C. Woudanus, 1610.

ing on their desire for a toleration of the Nonconformists. The announcement of the King's Catholicism was therefore deferred; and a series of mock negotiations, carried on through Buckingham, ended in the conclusion of a sham treaty which was communicated to Lauderdale and to Ashley, a treaty which suppressed all mention of the religious changes or of the promise of French aid in bringing them about, and simply stipulated for a joint war against the Dutch. In such a war there was no formal breach of the Triple Alliance, for the Triple Alliance only guarded against an attack on the dominions of Spain, and Ashley and his colleagues were lured into assent to it in 1671 by the promise of a toleration on their own terms. Charles in fact yielded the point to which he had hitherto clung, and, as Ashley demanded, promised that no Catholic should be benefited by the Indulgence. The bargain once struck, and his ministers outwitted, it only remained for Charles to outwit his Parliament. A large subsidy had been demanded in 1670 for the fleet, under the pretext of upholding the Triple Alliance; and the subsidy was granted. In the spring the two Houses were adjourned. So great was the national opposition to his schemes that Charles was driven to plunge hastily into hostilities. An attack on a Dutch convoy was at once followed by a declaration of war, and fresh supplies were obtained for the coming struggle by closing the Exchequer, and suspending under Clifford's advice the payment of either principal or interest on loans advanced to the public Treasury. The suspension spread bankruptcy among half the goldsmiths of London; but with the opening of the war Ashley and his colleagues gained the toleration they had bought so dear. By virtue of his ecclesiastical powers the King ordered "that all manner of penal laws on matters ecclesiastical against whatever sort of Nonconformists or recusants should be from that day suspended," and gave liberty of public worship to all dissidents save Catholics, who were allowed to say mass only in private houses. The effect of the Declaration went far to justify Ashley and his colleagues (if anything could justify their course) in the bargain by which they purchased toleration. Ministers returned, after years of banishment, to their homes and their flocks. Chapels were reopened. The gaols were emptied

SEC. III
CHARLES
THE
SECOND
1667
TO
1673

1671

1672



SEA-FIGHT WITH THE DUTCH IN SOLEBAY, JUNE 7, 1672.
Dutch print, 1673 (British Museum).

Bunyan left his prison at Bedford ; and hundreds of Quakers, who had been the special objects of persecution, were set free to worship God after their own fashion.

The Declaration of Indulgence however failed to win any expression of gratitude from the bulk of the Nonconformists. Dear as toleration was to them, the general interests of religion were dearer, and not only these but national freedom was now at stake. The success of the Allies seemed at first complete. The French army passed the Rhine, overran three of the States without opposition, and pushed its outposts to within sight of Amsterdam. It was only by skill and desperate courage that the Dutch ships under De Ruyter held the English fleet under the Duke of York at bay in an obstinate battle off the coast of Suffolk. The triumph of the English cabinet was shown in the elevation of the leaders of both its parties. Ashley was made Chancellor and Earl of Shaftesbury, and Clifford became Lord Treasurer. But the Dutch were saved by the stubborn courage which awoke before the arrogant demands of the conqueror. The plot of the two Courts hung for success on the chances of a rapid surprise ; and with the approach of winter which suspended military operations, all chance of a surprise was over. The death of De Witt, the leader of the great merchant class, called William the Prince of Orange to the head of the Republic. Young as he was, he at once displayed the cool courage and tenacity of his race. "Do you not see your country is lost?" asked the Duke of Buckingham, who had been sent to negotiate at the Hague. "There is a sure way never to see it lost," replied William, "and that is to die in the last ditch." With the spring the tide began to turn. Holland was saved and province after province won back from France by William's dauntless resolve. In England the delay of winter had exhausted the supplies which had been so unscrupulously procured, while the closing of the Treasury had shaken credit and rendered it impossible to raise a loan. It was necessary in 1673 to appeal to the Commons, but the Commons met in a mood of angry distrust. The war, unpopular as it was, they left alone. What overpowered all other feelings was a vague sense, which we know now to have been justified by the facts, that liberty and

SEC. III

CHARLES
THE
SECOND

1667

TO

1673

The
War with
Holland

1673

*Rise
of the
Country
Party*

SEC. III
CHARLES
THE
SECOND
1667
TO
1673

religion were being unscrupulously betrayed. There was a suspicion that the whole armed force of the nation was in Catholic hands. The Duke of York was suspected of being in heart a Papist, and he was in command of the fleet. Catholics had been placed as



BARBARA PALMER, COUNTESS OF CASTLEMAINE AND DUCHESS OF CLEVELAND.
From an engraving by W. Sherwin, 1670.

officers in the force which was being raised for the war in Holland. Lady Castlemaine, the King's mistress, paraded her conversion; and doubts were fast gathering over the Protestantism of the King. There was a general suspicion that a plot was on foot

for the establishment of Catholicism and despotism, and that the war and the Indulgence were parts of the plot. The change of temper in the Commons was marked by the appearance of what was from that time called the Country party, with Lord Russell, Lord Cavendish, and Sir William Coventry at its head, a party which sympathized with the desire of the Nonconformists for religious toleration, but looked on it as its first duty to guard against the designs of the Court. As to the Declaration of Indulgence, however, all parties in the House were at one. The Commons resolved "that penal statutes in matters ecclesiastical cannot be suspended but by consent of Parliament," and refused supplies till the Declaration was recalled. The King yielded; but the Declaration was no sooner recalled than a Test Act was passed through both Houses without opposition, which required from every one in the civil and military employment of the State the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, a declaration against transubstantiation, and a reception of the sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England. It was known that the Protestant dissidents were prepared to waive all objection to oath or sacrament, while the Bill would wholly exclude Catholics from share in the government. Clifford at once counselled resistance, and Buckingham talked flightily about bringing the army to London. But the grant of a subsidy was still held in suspense; and Arlington, who saw that all hope of carrying the "great plan" through was at an end, pressed Charles to yield. A dissolution was the King's only resource, but in the temper of the nation a new Parliament would have been yet more violent than the present one; and Charles sullenly gave way. Few measures have ever brought about more startling results. The Duke of York owned himself a Catholic and resigned his office as Lord High Admiral. Throngs of excited people gathered round the Lord Treasurer's house at the news that Clifford, too, had owned to being a Catholic and had laid down his staff of office. Their resignation was followed by that of hundreds of others in the army and the civil service of the Crown. On public opinion the effect was wonderful. "I dare not write all the strange talk of the town," says Evelyn. The resignations were held to have proved the existence of the dangers which the

SEC. III

CHARLES
THE
SECOND

1667

TO

1673

*The Test
Act*

SEC. III
CHARLES
THE
SECOND
1667
TO
1673
—

Test Act had been framed to meet. From this moment all trust in Charles was at an end. "The King," Shaftesbury said bitterly, "who if he had been so happy as to have been born a private gentleman had certainly passed for a man of good parts, excellent breeding, and well natured, hath now, being a Prince, brought his affairs to that pass that there is not a person in the world, man or woman, that dares rely upon him or put any confidence in his word or friendship."



HUNTERS, c. 1680—1700
Ballad in Roxburghe Collection.

SEC. IV

DANBY

1673

TO

1678

Section IV.—Danby, 1673—1678

[*Authorities.*—As before. Mr. Christie's "Life of Shaftesbury," a defence, and in some respects a successful defence, of that statesman's career, throws a fresh light on the policy of the Whig party during this period.]

The one man in England on whom the discovery of the King's perfidy fell with the most crushing effect was the Chancellor, Lord Shaftesbury. Ashley Cooper had piqued himself on a penetration which read the characters of men around him, and on a political instinct which discerned every coming change. His self-reliance was wonderful. In mere boyhood he saved his estate from the greed of his guardians by boldly appealing in person to Noy, who was then Attorney-General. As an undergraduate at Oxford he organized a rebellion of the freshmen against the oppressive customs which were enforced by the senior men of his college, and succeeded in abolishing them. At eighteen he was a member of the Short Parliament. On the outbreak of the Civil War he took part with the King; but in the midst of the royal successes he foresaw the ruin of the royal cause, passed to the Parliament, attached himself to the fortunes of Cromwell, and became member of the Council of State. Before all things a strict Parliamentarian, however, he was alienated by Cromwell's setting up of absolute rule without Parliament; and a temporary disgrace during the last years of the Protectorate only quickened him to an active opposition which did much to bring about its fall. His bitter invectives against the dead Protector, his intrigues with Monk, and the active part which he took, as member of the Council of State, in the King's recall, were rewarded at the Restoration with a peerage, and with promotion to a foremost share in the royal councils. Ashley was then a man of forty, and under the Commonwealth he had been, in the contemptuous phrase of Dryden when writing as a Tory, "the loudest bagpipe of the squeaking train;" but he was no sooner a minister of Charles than he flung himself into the debauchery of the Court with an ardour which surprised even his master. "You are the wickedest dog in England!" laughed Charles at some unscrupulous jest of his

SEC. IV

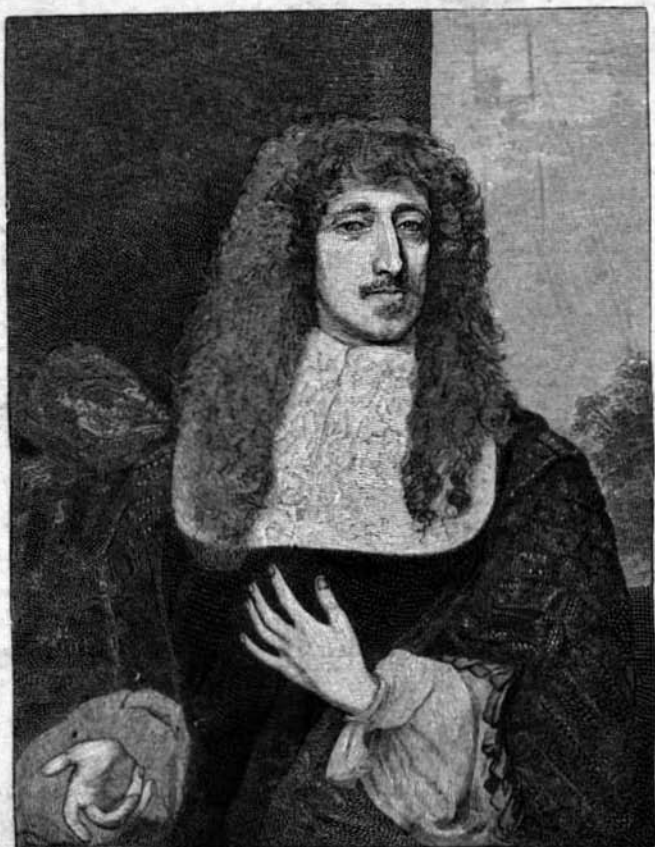
DANEY

1673

TO

1678

counsellor's. "Of a subject, Sir, I believe I am!" was the unabashed reply. But the debauchery of Ashley was simply a mask. He was in fact temperate by nature and habit, and his ill-health rendered any great excess impossible. Men soon found



ANTHONY ASHLEY COOPER, FIRST EARL OF SHAFTESBURY.
Miniature by S. Cooper, in the possession of the Earl of Shaftesbury.

that the courtier who lounged in Lady Castlemaine's boudoir, or drank and jested with Sedley and Buckingham, was a diligent and able man of business. "He is a man," says the puzzled Pepys, three years after the Restoration, "of great business, and yet of pleasure and dissipation too." His rivals were as envious of the

ease and mastery with which he dealt with questions of finance, as of the "nimble wit" which won the favour of the King. Even in later years his industry earned the grudging praise of his enemies. Dryden owned that as Chancellor he was "swift to despatch and easy of access," and wondered at the restless activity which "refused his age the needful hours of rest." His activity indeed was the more wonderful that his health was utterly broken. An accident in early days left behind it an abiding weakness, whose traces were seen in the furrows which seared his long pale face, in the feebleness of his health, and the nervous tremor which shook his puny frame. The "pigmy body" was "fretted to decay" by the "fiery soul" within it. But pain and weakness brought with them no sourness of spirit. Ashley was attacked more unscrupulously than any statesman save Walpole; but Burnet, who did not love him, owns that he was never bitter or angry in speaking of his assailants. Even the wit with which he crushed them was commonly good-humoured. "When will you have done preaching?" a bishop murmured testily, as Shaftesbury was speaking in the House of Peers. "When I am a bishop, my Lord!" was the laughing reply.

SEC. IV

DANBY

1673

TO

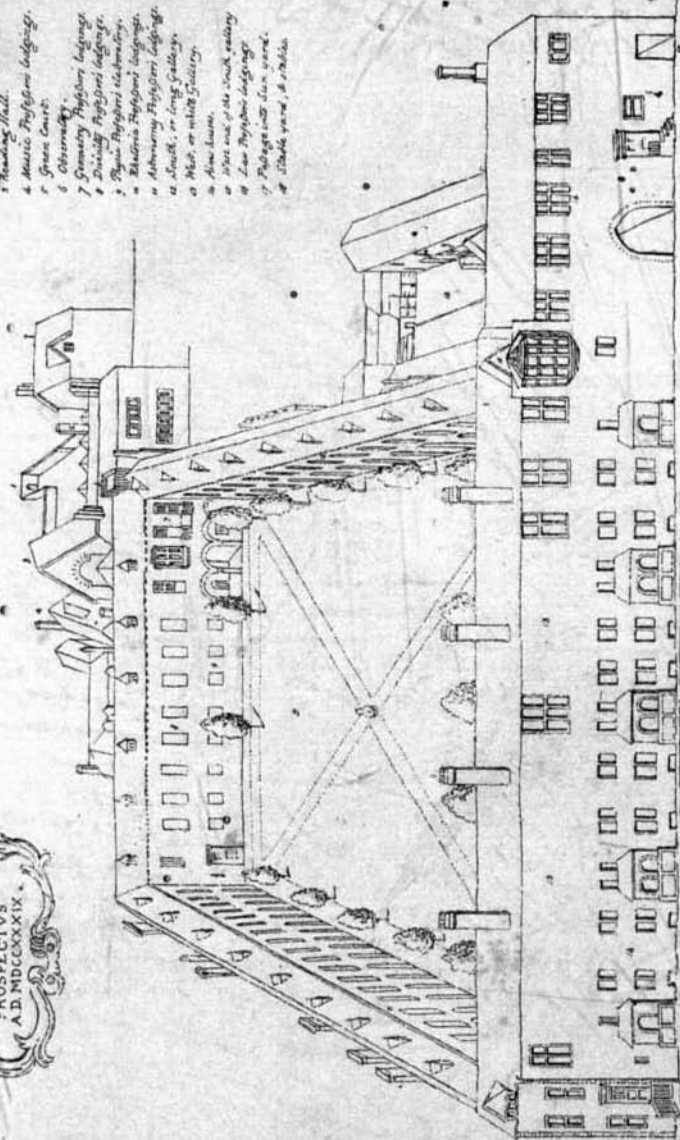
1678

Shaftes-
bury's
Policy

As a statesman Ashley not only stood high among his contemporaries from his wonderful readiness and industry, but he stood far above them in his scorn of personal profit. Even Dryden, while raking together every fault in his character, owns that his hands were clean. As a political leader his position was to modern eyes odd enough. In religion he was, at best a Deist, with some fanciful notions "that after death our souls lived in stars." But Deist as he was, he remained the representative of the Presbyterian and Nonconformist party in the royal council. He was the steady and vehement advocate of toleration, but his advocacy was based on purely political grounds. He saw that persecution would fail to bring back the Dissenters to the Church, and that the effort to recall them only left the country disunited, and thus exposed English liberty to invasion from the Crown, and robbed England of all influence in Europe. The one means of uniting Churchmen and Dissidents was by a policy of toleration, but in the temper of England after the Restoration he saw no hope of obtaining toleration save from the King. Wit, debauchery,



- 1 Gate and Buildings Court.
- 2 Physics Professor's Lodgings.
- 3 Reading Hall.
- 4 Medical Professor's Lodgings.
- 5 Green Court.
- 6 Observatory.
- 7 Geometry Professor's Lodgings.
- 8 Divinity Professor's Lodgings.
- 9 Physics Professor's Laboratory.
- 10 Botany Professor's Lodgings.
- 11 Astronomy Professor's Lodgings.
- 12 South, or Long Gallery.
- 13 West, or White Gallery.
- 14 Anne House.
- 15 West end of the South Gallery.
- 16 East Professor's Lodgings.
- 17 Passage under Anne House.
- 18 Church-yard, &c. &c.



GRESHAM-HOUSE, IN BISHOPOATE STREET, AFTERWARDS GRESHAM-COLLEGE: PULLED DOWN A.D. 1768

From Verme's Plate, engraved in 1789
The Meetings of the Royal Society were held here till 1673.

SEC. IV

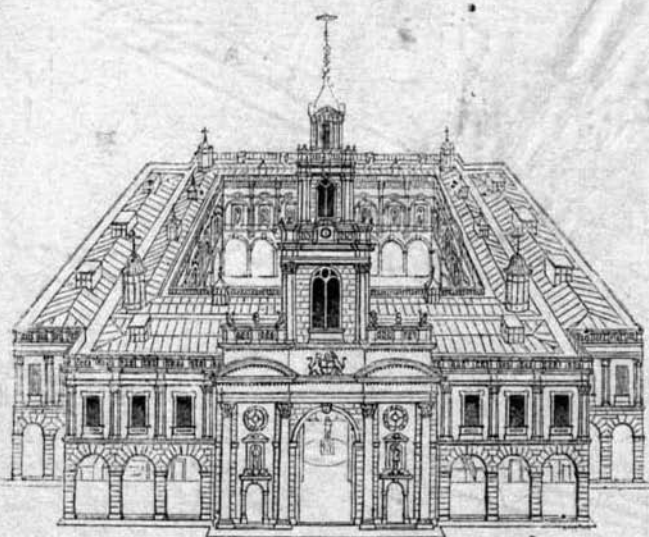
DANBY

1673

TO

1678

rapidity in the despatch of business, were all therefore used as a means to gain influence over the King, and to secure him as a friend in the struggle which Ashley carried on against the intolerance of Clarendon. Charles, as we have seen, had his own game to play and his own reasons for protecting Ashley during his vehement but fruitless struggle against the Test and Corporation Act, the Act of Uniformity, and the persecution of the Dissidents. Fortune at last smiled on the unscrupulous ability with which he

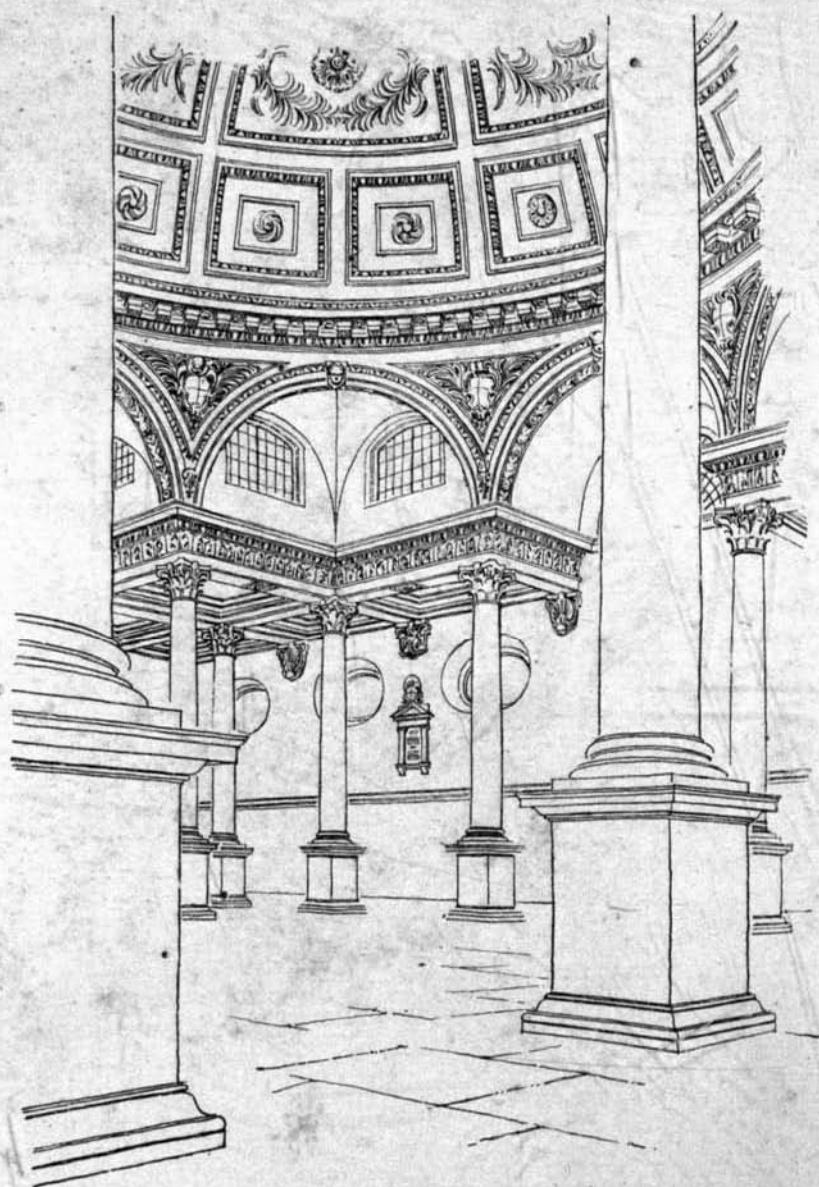


THE NEW ROYAL EXCHANGE.

(Built 1667—1669.)

Where the lectures of Gresham College were given from 1768.

entangled Clarendon in the embarrassments of the Dutch war of 1664, and took advantage of the alienation of the Parliament to ensure his fall. By a yet more unscrupulous bargain Ashley had bought, as he believed, the Declaration of Indulgence, the release of the imprisoned Nonconformists, and freedom of worship for all dissidents, at the price of a consent to the second attack on Holland; and he was looked on by the public at large as the minister most responsible both for the measures he advised and the measures he had nothing to do with. But while facing the



INTERIOR OF S. STEPHEN'S CHURCH, WALBROOK.
Built by Sir Christopher Wren, 1672-1679.

gathering storm of unpopularity Ashley learnt in a moment of drunken confidence the secret of the King's religion. He owned to a friend "His trouble at the black cloud which was gathering over England ;" but, troubled as he was, he still believed himself strong enough to use Charles for his own purposes. His acceptance of the Chancellorship and of the Earldom of Shaftesbury, as well as his violent defence of the war on opening the Parliament, identified him yet more with the royal policy. It was after the opening of the Parliament, if we credit the statement of the French Ambassador, that he learnt from Arlington the secret of the Treaty of Dover. Whether this were so, or whether suspicion, as in the people at large, deepened into certainty, Shaftesbury saw he had been duped. To the bitterness of such a discovery was added the bitterness of having aided in schemes which he abhorred. His change of policy was rapid and complete. He pressed in the royal council for the withdrawal of the Declaration of Indulgence. In Parliament he supported the Test Act with extraordinary vehemence. The displacement of James and Clifford by the Test left him, as he thought, dominant in the royal council, and gave him hopes of revenging the deceit which had been practised on him by forcing his policy on the King. He was resolved to end the war. He had dreams of meeting the danger of a Catholic successor by a dissolution of the King's marriage and by a fresh match with a Protestant princess. For the moment indeed Charles was helpless. He found himself, as he had told Lewis long before, alone in his realm. The Test Act had been passed unanimously

SEC. IV

DANBY

1673

TO

1678

*Shaftesbury's
change of
policy*



FIGURE OF S. HELEN, IN S. HELEN'S CHURCH, BISHOPSGATE, c. 1680.

SEC. IV

DANBY

1673

TO

1678

by both Houses. Even the Nonconformists deserted him, and preferred persecution to the support of his plans. The dismissal of the Catholic officers made the employment of force, if he ever contemplated it, impossible, while the ill success of the Dutch war robbed him of all hope of aid from France. The firmness of the



PORCH OF NAG'S HEAD INN, LEICESTER.

Built 1663.

Richardson's "Studies from Old English Mansions."

Prince of Orange had roused the stubborn energy of his countrymen. The French conquests on land were slowly won back, and at sea the fleet of the allies was still held in check by the fine seamanship of De Ruyter. Nor was William less successful in diplomacy than in war. The House of Austria was at last roused

to action by the danger which threatened Europe, and its union with the United Provinces laid the foundation of the Grand Alliance. If Charles was firm to continue the war, Shaftesbury, like the Parliament itself, was resolved on peace; and for this purpose he threw himself into hearty alliance with the Country party in the Commons, and welcomed the Duke of Ormond and Prince Rupert, who were looked upon as "great Parliament men,"

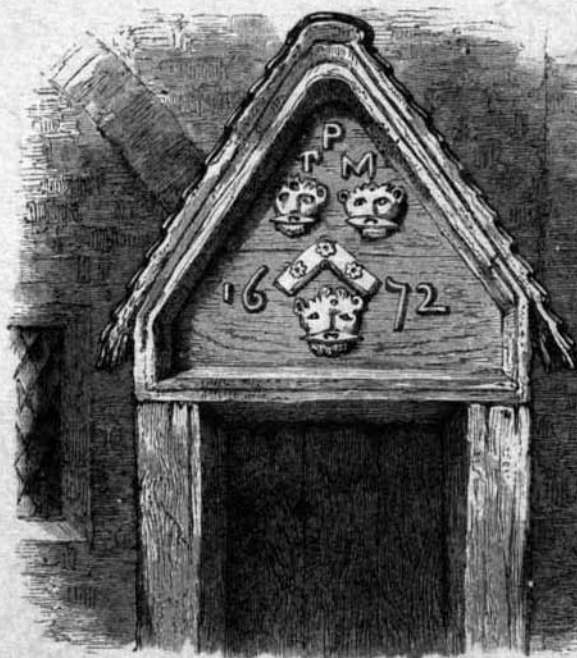
SEC. IV

DANBY

1673

TO

1678

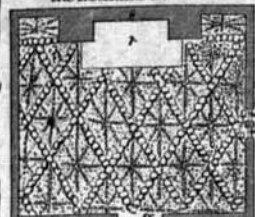


DOORWAY OF PEARCE'S CLOTHING FACTORY, NEWBURY, BERKS.
Built 1672.

back to the royal council. It was to Shaftesbury's influence that Charles attributed the dislike which the Commons displayed to the war, and their refusal of a grant of supplies until fresh religious securities were devised. It was at his instigation that an address was presented by both Houses against the plan of marrying James to a Catholic princess, Mary of Modena. But the projects of Shaftesbury were suddenly interrupted by an unexpected act of

Shaftesbury's Dismissal
1673

The Plan of the Hall, with
the Tessellated Floor.



at the Door It is great Oak or Iron Stone
By y^e Chimney's feet high, & Wide: Each y^e other



Propylaeum or the Entrance
to Antiquity Hall.



Typegraphice. to be depicted on y^e
inside of y^e Hall opposite to y^e Window.



1677 J. Dietel 1677

The Ancient Latin belonging to this Hall

A Vase to drink of the Capital of y^e Antients Call'd
by y^e Modern Antiquarians call'd

ANTIQUITY HALL Suburbanū Oxon.



- A The Hall.
- B The Mansion House.
- C The Typothetaeum behind y^e House

- D The Way leading to y^e Hall.
- E The Manner of Entering
- F On assembling for Company.

- G The Stone Seats at y^e Door.
- H A Stone Wall for y^e enclosure.

INN CALLED ANTIQUITY HALL, NEAR OXFORD.
Built before 1675.
From an Engraving by G. Vertue.

vigour on the part of the King. The Houses were no sooner prorogued in November than the Chancellor was ordered to deliver up the Seals.

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

SEC. IV
DANEV
1673
TO
1678

Charles
and
Shaftes-
bury

*The
public
panic*

1674

SEC. IV

DANBY

1673

TO

1678

assembling of the Houses. The Commons called on the King to dismiss Lauderdale, Buckingham, and Arlington, and to disband the troops raised since 1664. A bill was brought in to prevent all Catholics from approaching the Court, in other words for removing James from the King's councils. A far more important bill was



ENTRANCE TO ARBOUR OF SHOEMAKERS' GILD, SHREWSBURY.

Built 1679.

Drawing by Mr. F. A. Hibbert.

that of the Protestant Securities, which was pressed by Shaftesbury, Halifax, and Carlisle, the leaders of the new Opposition in the House of Lords, a bill which enacted that any prince of the blood should forfeit his right to the Crown on his marriage with a Catholic. The bill, which was the first sketch of the

later Exclusion Bill, failed to pass, but its failure left the Houses excited and alarmed. Shaftesbury intrigued busily in the City, corresponded with William of Orange, and pressed for a war with France which Charles could only avert by an

appeal to Lewis, a subsidy from whom enabled him to prorogue the Parliament. But Charles saw that the time had come to give way. "Things have turned out ill," he said to Temple with a burst of unusual petulance, "but had I been well served I might have made a good business of it." His concessions however were as usual complete. He dismissed Buckingham and Arlington. He made peace with the Dutch. But Charles was never more formidable than in the moment of defeat, and he had already resolved on a new policy by which the efforts of Shaftesbury might be held at bay.

SEC. IV

DANBY

1673

TO

1678

*Peace
with
Holland
1674*



WAIT'S BADGE, LEICESTER.

Seventeenth Century.

Art Journal.

Ever since the opening of his reign he had clung to a system of balance, had pitted Churchman against Nonconformist, and Ashley against Clarendon, partly to preserve his own independence, and partly with a view of winning some advantage to the Catholics from the political strife. The temper of the Commons had enabled Clarendon to baffle the King's efforts; and on his fall Charles felt strong enough to abandon the attempt to preserve a political balance, and had sought to carry out his designs with the single support of the Nonconformists. But the new policy had broken down like the old. The Nonconformists refused to betray the cause of Protestantism, and Shaftesbury, their leader, was pressing on measures which would rob Catholicism of the hopes it had gained from the conversion of James. In straits like these Charles resolved to win back the Commons by boldly adopting the policy on

BADGE OF EDMUND
SUTTON, MAYOR OF
LEICESTER, 1676.*Art Journal.*



THOMAS OSBORNE, EARL OF DANBY.

From an engraving "ad vivum," by Robert White, in the National Portrait Gallery.

which the House was set. The majority of its members were Cavalier Churchmen, who regarded Sir Thomas Osborne, a dependant of Arlington's, as their representative in the royal councils. The King had already created Osborne Earl of Danby, and made him Lord Treasurer in Clifford's room. In 1674 he frankly adopted the policy of Danby and his party in the Parliament.

SEC. IV
DANBY
1673
TO
1678

The policy of Danby was in the main that of Clarendon. He had all Clarendon's love of the Church, his equal hatred of Popery and Dissent, his high notions of the prerogative tempered by a faith in Parliament and the law. His first measures were directed to allay the popular panic, and strengthen the position of James. Mary, the Duke's eldest child, and after him the presumptive heir to the Crown, was confirmed by the royal order as a Protestant. Secret negotiations were opened for her marriage with William of Orange, the son of the King's sister Mary, who if James and his house were excluded stood next in succession to the crown. Such a marriage secured James against the one formidable rival to his claims, while it opened to William a far safer chance of mounting the throne at his father-in-law's death. The union between the Church and the Crown was ratified in conferences between Danby and the bishops; and its first fruits were seen in the rigorous enforcement of the law against conventicles, and the exclusion of all Catholics from court; while the Parliament which was assembled in 1675 was assured that the Test Act should be rigorously enforced. The change in the royal policy came not a moment too soon. As it was, the aid of the Cavalier party which rallied round Danby hardly saved the King from the humiliation of being forced to recall the troops he still maintained in the French service. To gain a majority on this point Danby was forced to avail himself of a resource which from this time played for nearly a hundred years an important part in English politics. He bribed lavishly. He was more successful in winning back the majority of the Commons from their alliance with the Country party by reviving the old spirit of religious persecution. He proposed that the test which had been imposed by Clarendon on municipal officers should be extended to all functionaries of the State; that every member of either House, every magistrate and public officer, should swear never to take

Danby

Danby
and the
Commons

SEC. IV

DANBY
1673
TO
1678

arms against the King or to "endeavour any alteration of the Protestant religion now established by law in the Church of England, or any alteration in the Government in Church and State as it is by law established." The Bill was forced through the Lords by the bishops and the Cavalier party, and its passage through the Commons was only averted by a quarrel on privilege

between the two Houses which Shaftesbury dexterously fanned into flame. On the other hand the Country party remained strong enough to hamper their grant of supplies with conditions unacceptable to the King. Eager as they were for the war with France which Danby promised, the Commons could not trust the King; and Danby was soon to discover how wise their distrust had been. For the Houses were no sooner prorogued than Charles revealed to him the negotiations he had been all the while carrying on with Lewis, and required



SIGN OF THE BELL, KNIGHTRIDER STREET,
1668.

Guildhall Museum.

1675

him to sign a treaty by which, on consideration of a yearly pension guaranteed on the part of France, the two sovereigns bound themselves to enter into no engagements with other powers, and to lend each other aid in case of rebellion in their dominions. Such a treaty not only bound England to dependence on France, but freed the King from all Parliamentary control. But his minister pleaded in vain for delay and for the advice of the Council. Charles answered his entreaties by signing the treaty

with his own hand. Danby found himself duped by the King as Shaftesbury had found himself duped; but his bold temper was only spurred to fresh plans for rescuing Charles from his bondage to Lewis. To do this the first step was to reconcile the King and the Parliament, which met after a prorogation of fifteen months. The Country party stood in the way of such a reconciliation, but Danby resolved to break its strength by measures of unscrupulous vigour, for which a blunder of Shaftesbury's gave an opportunity. Shaftesbury despaired of bringing the House of Commons, elected as it had been fifteen years before in a moment of religious and

SEC. IV

DANBY

1673

TO

1678

*Danby's
measures**Feb. 1677*

SIGN OF THE BOAR'S HEAD, EASTCHEAP.
Guildhall Museum.

political reaction, to any steady opposition to the Crown. He had already moved an address for a dissolution; and he now urged that as a statute of Edward the Third ordained that Parliaments should be held "once a year or oftener if need be," the Parliament by the recent prorogation of a year and a half had ceased legally to exist. The Triennial Act deprived such an argument of any force. But Danby represented it as a contempt of the House, and the Lords at his bidding committed its supporters, Shaftesbury, Buckingham, Salisbury, and Wharton, to the Tower. While the Opposition cowered under the blow, Danby pushed on a measure which was designed to win back alarmed Churchmen to confidence in the

SEC. IV

DANBY

1673

TO

1678

Crown. By the Bill for the security of the Church it was provided that on the succession of a king not a member of the Established Church the appointment of bishops should be vested in the existing prelates, and that the King's children should be placed in the guardianship of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Treaty of
Nime-
guen

The bill however failed in the Commons ; and a grant of supply was only obtained by Danby's profuse bribery. The progress of the war abroad, indeed, was rousing panic in England faster than



SIGN OF THE ANCHOR, 1669.

Guildhall Museum.

Danby could allay it. New successes of the French arms in Flanders, and a defeat of the Prince of Orange at Cassel, stirred the whole country to a cry for war. The two Houses echoed the cry in an address to the Crown ; but Charles parried the blow by demanding a supply before the war was declared, and on the refusal of the still suspicious House prorogued the Parliament. Fresh and larger subsidies from France enabled him to continue this prorogation for seven months. But the silence of the Parliament did little to silence the country ; and Danby took advantage of the

popular cry for war to press an energetic course of action on the King. In its will to check French aggression the Cavalier party was as earnest as the Puritan, and Danby aimed at redeeming his failure at home by uniting the Parliament through a vigorous

SEC. IV

DANBY

1673

TO

1678



SIGN OF ABRAHAM BARTLETT, 1678.
Guildhall Museum.

policy abroad. As usual, Charles appeared to give way. He was himself for the moment uneasy at the appearance of the French on the Flemish coast, and he owned that "he could never live at ease with his subjects" if Flanders were abandoned. He allowed Danby, therefore, to press on both parties the necessity for mutual

SEC. IV
DARBY
1673
TO
1678

concessions, and to define the new attitude of England by a step which was to produce momentous results. The Prince of Orange



PRINCESS MARY.

From an etching by A. Mongin, in "The Portfolio," of a picture by Sir P. Lely at Hampton Court.

was invited to England, and wedded to Mary, the presumptive heiress of the Crown. The marriage promised a close political

union in the future with Holland, and a corresponding opposition to the ambition of France. With the country it was popular as a Protestant match, and as ensuring a Protestant successor to James. But Lewis was bitterly angered; he rejected the English propositions of peace, and again set his army in the field. Danby was ready to accept the challenge, and the withdrawal of the English ambassador from Paris was followed by an assembly of the Parliament. A warlike speech from the throne was answered by a warlike address from the House, supplies were voted, and an army raised. But the actual declaration of war still failed to appear. While Danby threatened France, Charles was busy turning the threat to his own profit, and gaining time by prorogations for a series of base negotiations. At one stage he demanded from Lewis a fresh pension for the next three years as the price of his good offices with the allies. Danby stooped to write the demand, and Charles added, "This letter is written by my order, C.R." A force of three thousand English soldiers were landed at Ostend; but the allies were already broken by their suspicions of the King's real policy, and Charles soon agreed for a fresh pension to recall the brigade. The bargain was hardly struck when Lewis withdrew the terms of peace he had himself offered, and on the faith of which England had ostensibly retired from the scene. Once more Danby offered aid to the allies, but all faith in England was lost. One power after another gave way to the new French demands, and though Holland, the original cause of the war, was saved, the Peace of Nimeguen made Lewis the arbiter of Europe.

Disgraceful as the peace was to England, it left Charles the master of a force of twenty thousand men levied for the war he refused to declare, and with nearly a million of French money in his pocket. His course had roused into fresh life the old suspicions of his perfidy, and of a secret plot with Lewis for the ruin of English freedom and of English religion. That there was such a plot we know; and from the moment of the Treaty of Dover the hopes of the Catholic party mounted even faster than the panic of the Protestants. But they had been bitterly disappointed by the King's withdrawal from his schemes after his four years ineffectual struggle, and by his seeming return to the policy of Clarendon. Their anger and despair were

SEC. IV

DANBY

1673

TO

1678

*Marriage
of
William
and Mary*
1678

July 1678

**The
Popish
Plot**

SEC. IV

DANBY

1673

TO

1678

revealed in letters from English Jesuits, and the correspondence of Coleman. Coleman, the secretary of the Duchess of York, and a busy intriguer, had gained sufficient knowledge of the real plans of the King and of his brother to warrant him in begging for money from Lewis for the work of saving Catholic interests from Danby's hostility by intrigues in the Parliament. A passage from one of his letters gives us a glimpse of the

wild dreams which were stirring among the hotter Catholics of the time. "They had a mighty work on their hands," he wrote, "no less than the conversion of three kingdoms, and by that perhaps the utter subduing of a pestilent heresy which had so long domineered over a great part of the northern world. Success would give the greatest blow to the Protestant religion that it had received since its birth." The suspicions which had been stirred in the public mind mounted into alarm when the Peace of Nimeguen suddenly left Charles master—as it seemed—of the position; and it was of this general



DESIGN FOR PLAYING-CARD, BY
W. FAITHORNE, 1684.
British Museum.

panic that one of the vile impostors who are always thrown to the surface at times of great public agitation was ready to take advantage by the invention of a Popish plot. Titus Oates, a Baptist minister before the Restoration, a curate and navy chaplain after it, but left penniless by his infamous character, had sought bread in a conversion to Catholicism, and had been received into Jesuit houses at Valladolid and St. Omer. While

Titus
Oates

he remained there, he learnt the fact of a secret meeting of the Jesuits in London, which was probably nothing but the usual congregation of the order. On his expulsion for misconduct this single fact widened in his fertile brain into a plot for the subversion of Protestantism and the death of the King. His story was laid before Charles, and received with cool incredulity; but Aug. 1678

SEC. IV
DANBY
1673
TO
1675

Oates made affidavit of its truth before a London magistrate, Sir Edmondsbury Godfrey, and at last managed to appear before the Council. He declared that he had been trusted with letters which disclosed the Jesuit plans. They were stirring rebellion in Ireland; in Scotland they disguised themselves as Cameronians; in England their aim was to assassinate the King, and to leave the throne open to the Papist Duke of York. The extracts from Jesuit letters however which he produced, though they showed the disappointment and anger



DESIGN FOR PLAYING-CARD, BY W. FAITHORNE,
1684.

British Museum.

of the writers, threw no light on the monstrous charges of a plot for assassination. Oates would have been dismissed indeed with contempt but for the seizure of Coleman's correspondence. His letters gave a new colour to the plot. Danby himself, conscious of the truth that there were designs which Charles dared not avow, was shaken in his rejection of the disclosures, and inclined to use them as weapons to check the King in his

SEC. IV

DANBY

1673

TO

1678

Catholic policy. But a more dexterous hand had already seized on the growing panic. Shaftesbury, released after a long imprisonment and hopeless of foiling the King's policy in any other way, threw himself into the plot. "Let the Treasurer cry as loud as he pleases against Popery," he laughed, "I will cry a note louder." But no cry was needed to heighten the popular

frenzy from the moment when Sir Edmondsbury Godfrey, the magistrate before whom Oates had laid his information, was found in a field near London with his sword run through his heart. His death was assumed to be murder, and the murder to be an attempt of the Jesuits to "stifle the plot." A solemn funeral added to public agitation; and the two Houses named committees to investigate the charges made by Oates.

In this investigation Shaftesbury took the lead. Whatever his personal ambition may have been, his public



DESIGN FOR PLAYING-CARD, BY W. FAITHORNE,
1684.

British Museum.

The
Fall of
Danby

aims in all that followed were wise and far-sighted. He aimed at forcing Charles to dissolve Parliament and appeal to the nation. He aimed at driving Danby out of office and at forcing on Charles a ministry which should break his dependence on France and give a constitutional turn to his policy. He saw that no security would really avail to meet the danger of a Catholic sovereign, and he aimed at excluding James from the

throne. But in pursuing these aims he rested wholly on the plot. He fanned the popular panic by accepting without question some fresh depositions in which Oates charged five Catholic peers with part in the Jesuit conspiracy. The peers were sent to the Tower, and two thousand suspected persons were hurried to prison. A proclamation ordered every Catholic to leave London. The trainbands were called to arms, and patrols

SEC. IV
DANBY
1673
TO
1678

paraded through the streets, to guard against the Catholic rising which Oates declared to be at hand. Meanwhile Shaftesbury turned the panic to political account by forcing through Parliament a bill which excluded Catholics from a seat in either House. The exclusion remained in force for a century and a half; but it had really been aimed against the Duke of York, and Shaftesbury was defeated by a proviso which exempted James from the operation of the bill. The plot, which had been supported for four months by the sole evidence of Oates, began to hang fire; but a promise of reward brought

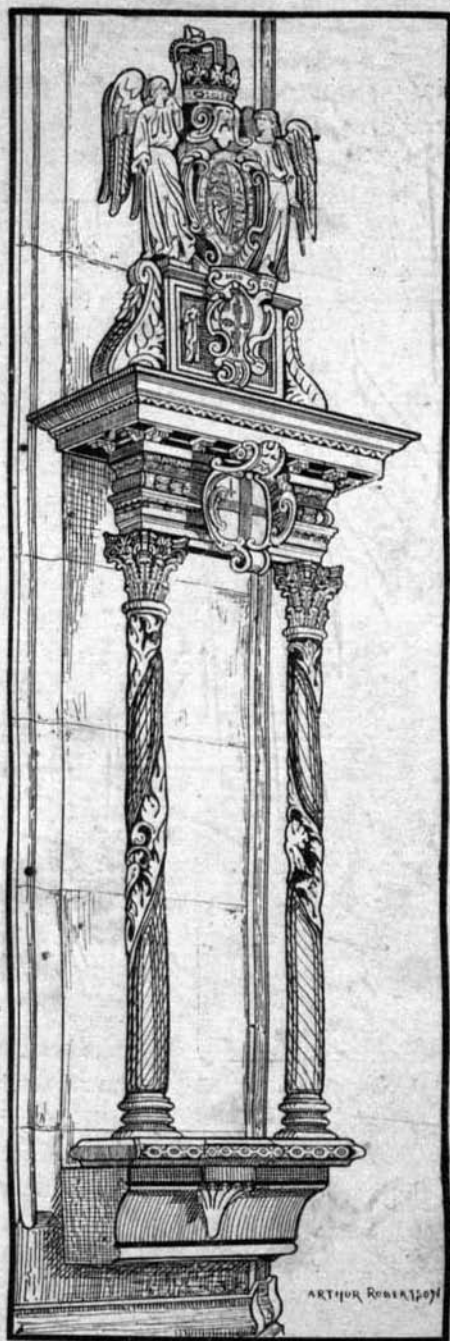
1678

1679



DESIGN FOR PLAYING-CARD, BY
W. FAITHORNE, 1684.
British Museum.

forward a villain, named Bedloe, with tales beside which those of Oates seemed tame. The two informers were now pressed forward by an infamous rivalry to stranger and stranger revelations. Bedloe swore to the existence of a plot for the landing of a Catholic army and a general massacre of the Protestants. Oates capped the revelations of Bedloe by charging the Queen herself, at the bar of the Lords, with knowledge of the plot to



SWORD-REST OF THE LORD MAYOR OF LONDON, c. 1680,
IN S. HELEN'S CHURCH, BISHOPSGATE.

murder her husband. Monstrous as such charges were, they revived the waning frenzy of the people and of the two Houses. The peers under arrest were ordered to be impeached. A new proclamation enjoined the arrest of every Catholic in the realm. A series of judicial murders began with the trial and execution of Coleman, which even now can only be remembered with horror. But the alarm must soon have worn out had it only been supported by perjury. What gave force to the false plot was the existence of a true one. Coleman's letters had won credit for the perjuries of Oates, and a fresh discovery now won credit for the perjuries of Bedloe. From the moment when the pressure of the Commons and of Danby had forced Charles into a position of seeming antagonism to France, Lewis had resolved to bring about the dissolution of the Parliament, the fall of the Minister, and the disbanding of the army which Danby still looked on as a weapon against him. For this purpose the French ambassador had entered into negotiations with the leaders of the Country party. The English ambassador at Paris, Ralph Montagu, now returned home on a quarrel with Danby, obtained a seat in the House of Commons, and in spite of the seizure of his papers, laid on the table of the House the despatch which had been forwarded to Lewis, demanding payment for the King's services to France during the late negotiations. The House was thunderstruck; for strong as had been the general suspicion, the fact of the dependence of England on a foreign power had never before been proved. Danby's name was signed to the despatch, and he was at once impeached on a charge of high treason. But Shaftesbury was more eager to secure the election of a new Parliament than to punish his rival, and Charles was resolved to prevent at any price a trial which could not fail to reveal the disgraceful secret of his foreign policy. Charles was in fact at Shaftesbury's mercy, and the end for which Shaftesbury had been playing was at last secured. In January, 1679, the Parliament of 1661, after the longest unbroken life in our Parliamentary annals, was at last dissolved.

SEC. IV

DANBY

1673

TO

1678

*Lewis
and the
Plot*

*Dissolu-
tion
of the
Parlia-
ment*

