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IN THE

XVIIITH CENTURY

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A

HISTORY OF ENGLAND

IN THE

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

BY

WILLIAM EDWARD HARTPOLE LECKY

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PREFACE.

THE HISTORY of a nation may be written in so many different ways that it may not be useless, in laying these volumes before the public, to state in a few words the plan which I have adopted, and the chief objects at which I have aimed.

I have not attempted to write the history of the period I have chosen year by year, or to give a detailed account of military events or of the minor personal and party incidents which form so large a part of political annals. It has been my object to disengage from the great mass of facts those which relate to the permanent forces of the nation, or which indicate some of the more enduring features of national life. The growth or decline of the monarchy, the aristocracy, and the democracy, of the Church and of Dissent, of the agricultural, the manufacturing, and the commercial interests; the increasing power of Parliament and of the press; the history of political ideas, of art, of manners, and of belief; the changes that have taken place in the social and economical condition of the people; the influences that have modified national character; the relations of the mother country to its dependencies, and the causes that have accelerated or retarded the advancement of the latter, form the main subjects of this book.

In order to do justice to them within moderate limits it is necessary to suppress much that has a purely biographical, party, or military interest; and I have also not hesitated in some cases to depart from the strict order of chronology. The history of an institution or a tendency can only be written by collecting into a single focus facts that are spread over many years, and such matters may be more clearly treated according to the order of subjects than according to the order of time.

It will appear evident, I think, from the foregoing sketch, that this book differs widely from the very valuable history of Lord Stanhope, which covers a great part of the same period. Two writers, dealing with the same country and the same time, must necessarily relate many of the same events; but our plans, our objects, and the classes of facts on which we have especially dwelt, are so very different that our books can hardly, I hope, come into any real competition; and I should much regret if it were thought that the present work had been written in any spirit of rivalry, or with any wish to depreciate the merits of its predecessor. Lord Stanhope was not able to bring to his task the artistic talent, the power, or the philosophical insight of some of his contemporaries; but no one can have studied with care the period about which he wrote without a feeling of deep respect for the range and accuracy of his research, for the very unusual skill which he displayed in the difficult art of selecting from great multitudes of facts those which are truly characteristic and significant, and, above all, for his transparent honesty of purpose, for the fulness and fairness with which he seldom failed to recount the faults of those with whom he agreed and the merits of those from whom he differed. This last quality is one of the rarest in history, and it is especially admirable in a writer who had himself strong party convictions, who passed much of his life in active politics,

and who was often called upon to describe contests in which his own ancestors bore a part.

To the great courtesy of the authorities of the French Foreign Office I am indebted for copies of some valuable letters relating to the closing days of Queen Anne; and I must also take this opportunity of acknowledging the unwearied kindness I have received from Sir BERNARD BURKE, Ulster King of Arms, during my investigation of those Irish State Papers which he has arranged so admirably and which he knows so well.

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HISTORY OF ENGLAND

IN

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

CHAPTER I.

THE political history of England in the eighteenth century falls naturally into two great divisions. After a brief period of rapid fluctuations, extending over the latter days of William and through the reign of Anne, the balance of parties was determined on the accession of George I. The Whigs acquired an ascendancy so complete that their adversaries were scarcely able even to modify the course of legislation, and that ascendancy continued without intermission, and almost without obstruction, for more than forty-five years. But on the accession of George III. the long period of Whig rule terminated. After about ten years of weak governments and party anarchy, Lord North succeeded, in 1770, in forming a Tory ministry of commanding strength. The dominion of the party was, indeed, broken in 1782 for a few months, in consequence of the disasters of the American War; but on the failure of the Coalition Ministry it was speedily re-established. It became as absolute as the Whig ascendancy had ever been. It lasted, without a break, to the end of the century, and it was only overthrown on the eve of the Reform Bill of 1832.

There is one theory on the subject of these political vicissitudes to which it is necessary briefly to advert, for it has been advocated by an historian of great eminence, has been fre-

quently repeated, and has, in some respects, considerable plausibility. It has been alleged that the policy of the two great parties has been not merely modified, but reversed, since the first half of the eighteenth century; that the Tories of the time of Queen Anne and of the first two Georges were substantially the same as the Whigs of the early years of the present century, and the older Whigs as the modern Tories. The Tories, we are reminded, opposed Marlborough and the French war, as the Whigs of the nineteenth century opposed Wellington and the Peninsular war. The Tories in 1711 overcame the opposition of the House of Lords by the creation of twelve peers, as the Whigs in 1832 overcame the same opposition by the threat of a still larger creation. The Tories advocated, and the Whigs opposed, free trade principles at the peace of Utrecht. The Tories had at least some Catholic sympathies, while the Whigs were the chief authors of the penal laws against Catholics. The Tories agitated in the early Hanoverian period for short parliaments and for the restriction of the corrupt influence of the Crown. The Whigs carried the Septennial Act, and were the usual opponents of place bills and pension bills.

I think, however, that a more careful examination will sufficiently show that, in spite of these appearances, the ground for assuming this inversion of principles is very small. The main object of the Whig party in the early part of the eighteenth century was to establish in England a system of government in which the will of the people as expressed by parliament should be supreme, and the power of the monarch should be subject to the limitations it imposed. The substitution of a parliamentary title for Divine right as the basis of the throne, and the assertion of the right of the nation to depose a dynasty which had transcended the limits of the constitution, were the great principles for which the Whigs were contending. They involved or governed the whole system of Whig policy, and they were assuredly in perfect accordance with its later developments. The Tory party, on the other hand, under Queen Anne was to a great extent, and under George I. was almost exclusively, Jacobite. The overwhelming majority of its members held fervently the doctrines of the divine right of kings and

of the sinfulness of all resistance, and they accordingly regarded the power of Parliament as altogether subordinate to that of a legitimate king. The difference of dynasties was thus not merely a question of persons but a question of principles. Each dynasty represented a whole scheme of policy or theory of government, the one being essentially Tory and the other essentially Whig. The maintenance of the Hanoverian dynasty on the throne was, therefore, very naturally the supreme aim of the Whig party. They adopted whatever means they thought conducive to its attainment, and in this simple fact we have the key to what may appear the aberrations of their policy.

If we enter more into detail there can be no question that the Tory party of the present century has been essentially the party of the landed gentry and of the Established Church, while it has been a main function of the Whigs to watch over the interests of the commercial classes and of the Nonconformists. But these characteristics are just as true of the days of Oxford and Bolingbroke as of those of Eldon and Castlereagh. The immense majority of the country gentry and clergy in the early years of the eighteenth century were Tories, and the party was called indifferently the 'Church party,' or the 'country party,' while the commercial classes and the Dissenters uniformly supported the Whigs. The law making the possession of a certain amount of landed property an essential qualification for all members of Parliament, except a few specified categories, was a Tory law, carried under Queen Anne, in spite of the opposition of the Whigs, and it continued unaltered till 1838, when the land qualification was exchanged for a general property qualification, which in its turn was abolished by the Liberals in 1858. The two ecclesiastical measures which excited most discussion under Anne were the Occasional Conformity Act, which was intended to break the political power of the Dissenters by increasing the stringency of the Test Act, and the Schism Act, which was intended to prevent them from educating their children in their faith. Both of them were Tory measures; both of them became law in a period of Tory ascendancy; both of them were repealed at the triumph of the Whigs. A very analogous conflict raged in the present century

around the Test Act and around the restrictions that excluded the Dissenters from the Universities. Like their predecessors in the eighteenth century, the modern Whigs were the steady advocates of the Dissenters. Like their predecessors in the eighteenth century, the Tories contended vehemently for restrictions which they believed to be useful to the Church. In no respect were the Tory Governments in the days of Pitt and Castlereagh more remarkably distinguished from their Whig successors than by their extreme jealousy of the Press, their desire to limit its influence, and the severity with which they punished its excesses. But precisely the same contrast between the parties existed in the earlier phases of their history. The Whig Government that followed the Revolution established the liberty of the Press. The first of the series of taxes on knowledge which the modern Liberals, after a long struggle against Tory opposition, succeeded in abolishing were the stamp upon paper and the duty upon advertisements, which were imposed by the Tory ministry of Anne. The same ministry was prominent in the eighteenth century for the frequency and bitterness of its Press prosecutions, while the long Whig ministry of Walpole was in no respect more remarkable than for its uniform tolerance of the most virulent criticism.

In the face of these facts it is not, I think, too much to say that the notion of the two parties having exchanged their principles is altogether fallacious, and the force of the instances that have been alleged will, on examination, be much weakened, if not wholly dispelled. The attitude of parties towards European wars is so slightly and remotely connected with their political principles that the fact of a party having opposed a war in one century and supported a war in another can hardly be regarded as a reasonable presumption of apostacy. The free trade policy which the Tories upheld in the reign of Anne has never been distinctively Whig, and in promoting its triumph the party which counts Hume and Tucker among its writers, and Pitt and Huskisson among its statesmen, deserves a credit at least equal to its opponents. The attacks which the Whigs directed in 1713 against the free trade clauses of the Tory commercial treaty with France, were scarcely more vehement than those which Fox and Grey directed on the same

ground against the commercial treaty negotiated by Pitt in 1786. It is true that the Whigs in the seventeenth, and in the first half of the eighteenth, century, were more actively anti-Catholic in their policy than the Tories, and that they are responsible for the most atrocious of the penal laws against Catholicism; but the obvious explanation is to be found in the fact that the Whigs were struggling for a Protestant succession, while the legitimate line adhered to Catholicism. Apart from this, the Tories had little or no sympathy with the Catholics. If the Dissenters were more strongly antipapal than the clergy of the Established Church, the commercial classes were certainly more tolerant than the country gentry. The Tory Government under Anne did nothing for the Catholics; it even issued a proclamation in 1711 for putting the laws against them into force, and it is a remarkable fact that the only minister in the first quarter of the 18th century who showed any real disposition to relieve them of their disabilities was the Whig Stanhope. The Bill substituting septennial for triennial parliaments was, it is true, a Whig measure, and it is also true that the Tories in the early Hanoverian period were, in conjunction with a large body of discontented Whigs, energetic parliamentary reformers, advocating triennial or even annual parliaments, and inveighing bitterly against pensions and places. But in this there is nothing perplexing. The Whigs carried the Septennial Act because they believed that a dissolution immediately after the accession of George I. and the rebellion of 1715 would be of the utmost danger to the dynasty which it was their great object to defend. They maintained the Septennial Act mainly because they were in power, and desired, like all administrations, to avoid any unnecessary shock that would endanger their stability. That short parliaments are not naturally Tory, or long parliaments naturally Whig, is abundantly shown by the earlier history of the Triennial Bill, which, having been first carried by the revolutionary Long Parliament in 1641, was repealed in the Tory reaction of the Restoration, and re-enacted in 1694, after a struggle that lasted for several years, during which the Whigs had generally supported and the Tories had usually opposed it. The Whigs, when in office under Walpole, maintained and multiplied places and pensions because they

were at their disposal, and were powerful instruments in maintaining their majority. The Tories acted in the same manner when they regained power under George III. If, at a time when they were in almost hopeless opposition, they took a different course, they were merely adopting the ordinary tactics of an Opposition.

The great triumph of Whig principles that was achieved at the Revolution was much less due to any general social, or intellectual development than to the follies of a single sovereign, and the abilities of a small group of statesmen. For a long time, indeed, the tendency of events had been in the opposite direction. In the earlier periods of English history, perhaps the most important element of English liberty lay in the great multitude of independent yeomen or small landed proprietors. In the reign of Henry VI. Fortescue had declared that in no other country in Europe were they so numerous as in England, and he attributed to this fact a very large part of the well-being of the nation.[1] For many generations, however, this class had been steadily declining. The relaxation of the feudal system enabled proprietors to alienate their land; the increase of wealth had the inevitable result of accumulating landed properties; the great extension of the woollen trade, combined with the high rate of agricultural wages under Henry VII., made it the interest of landlords to turn arable land into pasture; the sudden alteration in the value of money resulting from the gold discoveries in America, and the violent changes in the distribution of wealth produced by the confiscation of Church property aggravated the tendency; and in the latter Tudor reigns there were bitter complaints that the small proprietors were being rapidly absorbed, that tenants were being everywhere turned adrift, and that great tracts which had once been inhabited by a flourishing yeomanry were being converted into sheepwalks. More, Roger Ascham, Harrison, Latimer, Strafford, and Bacon bear abundant testimony to the magnitude of the evil. A long series of attempts was made to check it by laws placing obstacles in the way of new enclosures, prohibiting the pulling down of farm-houses to which twenty acres

[1] Fortescue *De Laudibus Legum Angliæ*, cap. xxix.

of arable land were attached, restraining the number of sheep in a flock, and even regulating the number of acres under tillage; but this legislation, which had been warmly eulogised, and in part originated, by Bacon, was probably imperfectly executed and was certainly insufficient to arrest the tendency. The yeomanry formed the chief political counterpoise to the country gentry. In the Civil War they were conspicuous on the side of the Parliament, and even after the Restoration it was estimated that there were more than 160,000 small landed proprietors in England. Every year, however, their number diminished.[1] If they continued in the country districts, they sank into peasants, or rose into country gentry, and in the first case they lost all political power while in the second case they usually passed into the Tory ranks. The towns, and the commercial classes who inhabited them, had, no doubt, rapidly increased under the Stuarts, but they had hardly made a corresponding advance in political importance. The guilds which gave the commercial classes a large amount of political concentration, had disappeared. The modern inventions that have given manufacturing industry an unparalleled extension had not yet arisen, and by a recent and skilful innovation the political power of the commercial classes had been fatally impaired. Under Charles II. the corporations most hostile to the Crown had been accused of petty irregularities and misdemeanours. Sentences of forfeiture had been pronounced against them; new charters were granted, framed in such a manner that the members were necessarily subject to the approval of the Crown, and by this process almost the whole borough representation throughout England had been reduced to a condition of complete subserviency. The judicial bench has more than once proved the most formidable bulwark against the encroachments of despotism, but in England the judges were removable at pleasure, and had become the mere creatures of the Crown. In no age, and in no country have State trials been conducted with a more flagrant disregard for justice and for decency, and with a

[1] See Eden's *Hist. of the Working Classes*, vol. i. 73, 115; Macaulay's *Hist.* chap. iii.; Fischel *On the Constitution*, 315–316, and the admirable chap. on the History of the English Peasantry in Mr. Thornton's *Overpopulation*. Bacon has dwelt strongly on the evil in his *History of Henry VII.*, and in his essay *On the True Greatness of Kingdoms*.

more scandalous subserviency to the Crown, than in England under Charles II., and eleven out of the twelve judges gave their sanction to the claim of his successor to dispense with the laws.

Nor was the balance of intellectual influences more favourable to freedom. There existed, it is true, a small body of able men who adopted the principles of Sidney or of Locke, and who often carried them almost or altogether to the verge of republicanism; but the universities, which were the very centres of intellectual life, were thoroughly Tory. Hobbes, who was the most influential freethinker of the Restoration, advocated a system of the most crushing despotism, and the ecclesiastical influences which exercised an overwhelming influence over the great mass of the English people were eminently inimical to freedom. In the old Catholic times an Archbishop of Canterbury had combined with the barons at Runnymede, and, in opposition to the Pope and to his legate had wrested the great charter of English liberty from the Sovereign, but the Church which succeeded to the sceptre of Catholicism was essentially Erastian, and the instincts of its clergy were almost uniformly despotic. The free spirit generated in the Reformation had taken refuge in Puritanism, but in the reaction that accompanied and followed the Restoration, Puritanism seemed hopelessly discredited and crushed. The hostility which the country gentry and the established clergy had always felt towards it was intensified by the many battles which the first had fought, and by the many humiliations which the latter had undergone, while the populace hated it for its austerity, and the deepest feelings of the English nation were stung to madness at the memory of their slaughtered king. The doctrine of non-resistance in its extreme form was taught in the Homilies of the Church, embodied in the oath of allegiance,[1] in the corporation oath of Charles II.[2] and in the declaration prescribed by the Act of Uniformity,[3] enrolled by great Anglican casuists among the leading tenets of Christianity, and persistently enforced from the pulpit. It had become, as a later bishop truly said, 'the distinguishing character

[1] 'I, A B, do declare and believe that it is not lawful *upon any pretence whatever* to take up arms against the king.'

[2] 13 Car. ii. c. 2.

[3] 14 Car. ii. stat. ii. c. 1.

of the Church of England.'[1] At a time when the constitution was still unformed, when every institution of freedom and every bulwark against despotism was continually assailed, the authorised religious teachers of the nation were incessantly inculcating this doctrine, and it may probably be said without exaggeration that it occupied a more prominent position in the preaching and the literature of the Anglican Church than any other tenet in the whole compass of theology. Even Burnet and Tillotson, who were men of unquestionable honesty, and who subsequently took a conspicuous part on the side of the Revolution, when attending Russell in his last hours, had impressed upon him in the strongest manner the duty of accepting the doctrine of the absolute unlawfulness of resistance, and had clearly intimated that if he did not do so they could feel no confidence in his salvation.[2] The clergy who attended Monmouth at his execution told him he could not belong to the Church of England unless he acknowledged it.[3] The University of Cambridge in 1679, and the University of Oxford on the occasion of the death of Russell, authoritatively proclaimed it, and the latter university consigned the leading Whig writings in defence of freedom to the flames, and prohibited all students from reading them.[4] The immense popularity which the miracle of the royal touch had acquired, indicated only too faithfully the blind and passionate loyalty of the time; nor was there any other period in English history in which the spirit of independence and the bias in favour of freedom which had long characterised the English people were so little shown as in the years that followed the Restoration.

It was impossible that this could last. The enthusiasm of loyalty was strung to so high a pitch that reaction was inevitable, but had it not been for a very rare combination of causes it would never have been carried to the point of revolution. The immorality of the court of Charles which shocked the sober feelings of the middle-class, the contemptible character of the King, the humiliation which French patronage

[1] See the dying profession of Lake, Bishop of Chichester, Lathbury's *Hist. of the Non-jurors*, p. 50.

[2] Birch's *Life of Tillotson* (2nd ed.) 109–122.

[3] See Fox's *James II.* p. 265.

[4] See on these decrees Cooke's *Hist. of Parties*, i. 105, 345–355. Somers' *Tracts*, viii. 420–424; ix. 367.

and Dutch victories imposed upon the nation, the growth of religious scepticism, which at last weakened the influence of the clergy, the atrocious persecution of Nonconformists, and the infamy of the State trials, had all considerable effect, but they operated chiefly upon a small body of enlightened men. The popularity of the Revolution, so far as it existed, arose from the conflict between the three great passions of the English mind. These were attachment to the throne, attachment to the Church, and dread of Catholicism. The 'No Popery' feeling under Charles II. had burst out fiercely in the panic about the Popish plot and in the atrocities that followed it; but when the Whigs endeavoured to avail themselves of it to pass the Exclusion Bill their efforts recoiled upon themselves, and it became evident that even this passion was less powerful than attachment to the legitimate order of succession. Yet it was to this feeling that the triumph of the Revolution was mainly due. Had the old dynasty adhered to the national faith its position would have been impregnable, and in the existing disposition of men's minds it was neither impossible nor improbable that the free institutions of England would have shared the fate of those of Spain, of Italy, and of France. Most happily for the country, a bigoted Catholic, singularly destitute both of the tact and sagacity of a statesman, and of the qualities that win the affection of a people, mounted the throne, devoted all the energies of his nature and all the resources of his position to extending the religion most hateful to his people, attacked with a strange fatuity the very Church on whose teaching the monarchical enthusiasm mainly rested, and thus drove the most loyal of his subjects into violent opposition. Without the assistance of the Church and Tory party the Revolution would have been impossible, and it is certain that the Church would never have led the opposition to the dispensing power had not that power been exerted to remove the disabilities of the Catholics and Dissenters. The overtures of the King to the Nonconformists, whom the Church regarded as her bitterest enemies, his manifest intention to displace Protestants by Catholics in the leading posts of the Government, the violation of the constitution of an Oxford college which assailed the clergy in the very citadel of their power, and finally, the prosecution

of the seven bishops, at last forced the advocates of passive obedience into reluctant opposition to their sovereign. Yet even then attachment to the legitimate line might have prevailed but for the belief that was industriously spread that the Prince of Wales was a supposititious child, and every stage in the intricate drama that ensued was governed more by the action of individuals and by accidental circumstances than by general causes. The defection of Marlborough, and of almost every leading politician on whom the King relied, brought William without opposition to London, but this was only the first step of the change. The Whigs were themselves by no means unanimous in desiring his accession to the throne, and it is quite certain that the great majority of the English people had no wish to break the natural order of succession. The doctrine of the indefeasible right of the legitimate sovereign, and of the absolute sinfulness of resistance, was in the eyes of the great majority of Englishmen the cardinal principle of political morality, and a blind, unqualified, unquestioning loyalty was the strongest and most natural form of political enthusiasm. This was the real danger to English liberty. Until this tone of thought and feeling was seriously modified, free institutions never could take root, and even after the intervention of William it was quite possible, and in the eyes of most Englishmen eminently desirable, that a Government should have been established so nearly legitimate as to receive the support of this enthusiasm—the consecration of this belief.

The most obvious method of achieving this end would have been to have retained James on the throne, imposing on him new parliamentary restrictions; but his flight to France rendered this impracticable, removed the greatest difficulty from the path of the Whigs, and made it possible for them to construct the ingenious fiction of abdication, which was of much use in quieting the consciences of the Tories. Assuming that James had abdicated, the infant prince was the natural heir, and he might have been called to the throne under a Protestant regency. But this, too, was made impossible by circumstances. The child had been carried to France, and the popular belief that he was supposititious damped the enthusiasm of his supporters. Assuming that James had

abdicated, and that his alleged son was supposititious, the coronation of Mary as sole sovereign would have established a legitimate monarchy. The wishes of the queen and the resolution of William, who threatened at once to retire to Holland and leave the country to anarchy, prevented this solution and made it absolutely necessary to call to the throne a sovereign whose title was manifestly a parliamentary one. Had any one of the other three courses been pursued, a shock would, no doubt, have been given to the Tory theory of government; but the old current of political thought would soon have resumed its course. The sovereignty would have still been regarded as of Divine right. The political enthusiasm of the great majority of the nation would have centred upon it, and the belief that it possessed a sanctity generically different from, and immeasurably transcending that of any other institution in the country would have given it a fatal power in every conflict with the parliament. By a very rare concurrence of circumstances, by the extraordinary folly of the legitimate sovereign, by the ambition and consummate statesmanship of William and of a small group of Whig statesmen, a form of government was established and maintained in England for which the mass of the people were intellectually wholly unprepared. The French war soon roused the national feeling, while James, with great folly, identified himself ostentatiously with the enemies of his country; and the indignation produced by the plots against the life of William, and at a later period by the recognition of the Pretender by Lewis XIV., conspired powerfully to the maintenance of the new Government. The Whig leaders employed in the interests of toleration and liberty an opportunity which was the result of violent currents of public feeling of a very different kind. A considerable portion of the Tories were gradually won over, and it is a remarkable fact that the Act of Settlement was passed by a Tory majority. Religious liberty was extended probably quite as far as the existing condition of opinion would allow. The ancient limits of the constitution which had been grievously infringed in the last two reigns, were reasserted by the Declaration of Rights, and new guarantees of national freedom were enacted, so efficient, and at the same time so moderate, that very few of them were subsequently annulled.

The law limiting the duration of Parliament to three years was, indeed, as we have seen, replaced by the Septennial Act, and three of the clauses of the Act of Settlement were in a few years repealed. That excluding all servants of the Crown from the House of Commons would have destroyed the harmony between the executive and legislative bodies, which is one of the chief advantages of parliamentary government, and by withdrawing the ministers from the Lower House, would have fatally weakened its influence. That compelling every member of the privy council to sign his opinions was thought an excessive restriction on the liberty of statesmen. That forbidding the sovereign to leave the British isles without the consent of Parliament was revoked at the desire of George I. But these were comparatively small matters. The great legislative changes that were effected at the Revolution—the immobility of the judges, the reform of the trials for treason, the liberty of the press, the more efficient control of the income of the sovereign, the excision from the oath of allegiance of the clause which, in direct contradiction to the great charter, asserted that under no pretence whatever might subjects take up arms against their king; the establishment of Presbyterianism in Scotland, and the partial toleration of Dissenters in England, have all been justified by history as measures of real and unquestionable progress.

The English Revolution belongs to a class of successful measures of which there are very few examples in history. In most cases where a permanent change has been effected in the government and in the modes of political thinking of a country, this has been mainly because the nation has become ripe for it through the action of general causes. A doctrine which had long been fervently held, and which was interwoven with the social fabric, is sapped by intellectual scepticism, loses its hold on the affections of the people, and becomes unrealised, obsolete, and incredible. An institution which was once useful and honoured has become unsuited to the altered conditions of society. The functions it once discharged are no longer needed, or are discharged more efficiently in other ways, and as modes of thought and life grow up that are not in harmony with it, the reverence that consecrates it slowly ebbs away.

Social and economical causes change the relative importance of classes and professions till the old political arrangements no longer reflect with any fidelity the real disposition of power. Causes of this kind undermine institutions and prepare great changes, and it is only when they have fully done their work that the men arise who strike the final blow, and whose names are associated with the catastrophe. Whoever will study the history of the downfall of the Roman Republic; of the triumph of Christianity in the Roman Empire; of the dissolution of that empire; of the mediæval transition from slavery to serfdom; of the Reformation, or of the French Revolution, may easily convince himself that each of these great changes was the result of a long series of religious, social, political, economical, and intellectual causes, extending over many generations. So eminently is this the case, that some distinguished writers have maintained that the action of special circumstances and of individual genius, efforts, and peculiarities, counts for nothing in the great march of human affairs, and that every successful revolution must be attributed solely to the long train of intellectual influences that prepared and necessitated its triumph.

It is not difficult, however, to show that this, like most very absolute historical generalisations, is an exaggeration, and several instances might be cited in which a slight change in the disposition of circumstances, or in the action of individuals, would have altered the whole course of history. There are, indeed, few streams of tendency, however powerful, that might not, at some early period of their career, have been arrested or deflected. Thus the whole religious and moral sentiment of the most advanced nations of the world has been mainly determined by the influence of that small nation which inhabited Palestine; but there have been periods when it was more than probable that the Jewish race would have been as completely absorbed or extirpated as were the ten tribes, and every trace of the Jewish writings blotted from the world. Not less distinctive, not less unique in its kind, has been the place which the Greek, and especially the Athenian, intellect has occupied in history. It has been the great dynamic agency in European civilisation. Directly or indirectly it has contributed more than any other single influence, to stimulate its energies, to

shape its intellectual type, to determine its political ideals and canons of taste, to impart to it the qualities that distinguish it most widely from the Eastern world. But how much of this influence would have arisen or have survived if, as might easily have happened, the invasion of Xerxes had succeeded, and an Asiatic despotism been planted in Greece? It is a mere question of strategy whether Hannibal, after Cannæ, might not have marched upon Rome and burnt it to the ground, and had he done so, the long train of momentous consequences that flowed from the Roman Empire would never have taken place, and a nation widely different in its position, its character, and its pursuits, would have presided over the developments of civilisation. It is, no doubt, true that the degradation or disintegration of Oriental Christianity assisted the triumph of Mohammedanism; but if Mahomet had been killed in one of the first skirmishes of his career, there is no reason to believe that a great monotheistic and military religion would have been organised in Arabia, destined to sweep with resistless fanaticism over an immense part both of the Pagan and of the Christian world, and to establish itself for many centuries and in three continents as a serious rival to Christianity. As Gibbon truly says, had Charles Martel been defeated at the battle of Poitiers, Mohammedanism would have almost certainly overspread the whole of Gallic and Teutonic Europe, and the victory of the Christians was only gained after several days of doubtful and indecisive struggle. The obscure blunder of some forgotten captain, who perhaps moved his troops to the right when he should have moved them to the left, may have turned the scale, and determined the future of Europe. Even the changes of the French Revolution, prepared as they undoubtedly were by a long train of irresistible causes, might have worn a wholly different complexion had the Duke of Burgundy succeeded Lewis XIV. and directed, with the intelligence, and the liberality that were generally expected from the pupil of Fénelon, the government of his country. Profound and searching changes in the institutions of France were inevitable, but had they been effected peacefully, legally, and gradually, had the shameless scenes of the Regency and of Lewis XV. been avoided, that frenzy of democratic enthusiasm

which has been the most distinctive product of the Revolution, and which has passed, almost like a new religion, into European life, might never have arisen, and the whole Napoleonic episode, with its innumerable consequences, would never have occurred.

The English Revolution is an example, though a less eminent one, of the same kind. It was a movement essentially aristocratic. The whole course of its policy was shaped by a few men who were far in advance of the general sentiments of the nation. The King, in spite of his great abilities, was profoundly unpopular, and his cold and unsympathetic manners, and his manifest dislike to the island over which he reigned, checked all real enthusiasm even among the Whigs. The Church was sullen and discontented, exasperated by the Act of Toleration, which the clergy were anxious to repeal, implacably hostile to the scheme of comprehension, by which William wished to unite the Protestant bodies, and to the purely secular theory of government which triumphed at the Revolution. In the existing state of public opinion it was impossible that any system which the Church disliked could be really popular, and many causes, both just and unjust, contributed to the discontent. The moral feelings of the community were scandalised by the spectacle of a child making war upon her father, by the base treachery of many whom the dethroned sovereign had loaded with benefits, by the tergiversation of multitudes, who, in taking the oaths to a revolutionary Government, were belying the principles which for years they had most strenuously maintained. There was an uneasy consciousness that the Revolution, though singularly unstained by bloodshed and by excess, was far from glorious to the English people. It was effected by a foreign prince with a foreign army. It was rendered possible, or, at least, bloodless, by an amount of aggravated treachery, duplicity, and ingratitude seldom surpassed in history. Besides this, national prosperity had rapidly declined. A great and by no means successful war was entailed upon the nation, and thousands of Englishmen had been mown down by the sword or by disease in Flanders and in Ireland. The lavish sums bestowed on Dutch favourites, the immense subsidies voted to the confederates in the war, the rapid increase of taxation, the creation of a national debt,

and of great standing armies, the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, the defeat of Steinkirk, when five regiments of Englishmen were cut to pieces by a superior force while whole battalions of allied forces remained passive spectators of the scene, the desolation of Ireland, the massacre of Glencoe, the abandonment of the Darien colonists, the 'rabbling' of about 300 Episcopalian clergymen in Scotland, the Partition Treaty, signed by William without consultation with any English minister except Somers, all added to the flame. The discontent was unreasonably, but not unnaturally, aggravated by a long series of bad harvests. From 1690 to 1699 there was hardly a single year of average prosperity. The loaf which in the last reign had cost threepence rose to ninepence. Great multitudes who had been employed in the woollen manufactories, or in the mines, were turned adrift. In the eight years from 1688 to 1696 it was stated in official documents that the value of the merchandise exported from England sank from 4,086,087*l.* to 2,729,520*l.*, and the Post Office revenue from 76,318*l.* to 58,672*l.* Every shopkeeper and innkeeper bore witness to the increasing poverty. In every part of the kingdom there were accounts of rents being unpaid, of tenants breaking, of impoverished landlords; and alarming bread riots broke out at Worcester, Gloucester, Hereford, Stafford, Northampton, Sudbury, Colchester, and other places.[1]

The most formidable element in this discontent was that hatred of foreigners which was so deeply rooted in the English mind, and which has played a part that can hardly be exaggerated in English history. Hatred of foreign interference lay at the root of that old antipathy to Rome which alone rendered possible the English Reformation. Hatred of the Irish and hatred of the French were leading elements in the popular feeling against James II., while the adherents of the Stuarts continually appealed to the hatred of the Dutch, of the Germans, and of the French refugees. The very name of each of the great parties in the State bears witness to the feeling, for it was at first only an offensive nick-

[1] Somers' *Tracts*, ix. 457, x. 356–358. Short's *Hist. of the Increase and Decrease of Mankind, in England* (1767) p. 87. Chalmers' *Estimate*. Craik's *Hist. of Commerce*, p. 117.

name, deriving its point and its popularity from a national antipathy. The 'Tory' was originally an Irish robber, and the term was applied by Oates to the disbelievers in the Popish plot, was afterwards extended to the Irish Catholic friends of the Duke of York at the time of the Exclusion Bill, and soon became the designation of the whole body of his supporters. The term 'Whig' was a nickname applied to the Scotch Presbyterians. It began at the time when the Cameronians took up arms for their religion, and was derived from the whey, or refuse milk, which their poverty obliged them to use, or, according to another version, from 'Whiggam,' a word employed by Scotch cattle-drovers of the west in driving their horses.[1] In many cases these national jealousies might be justified by a real national danger, but there lay behind them a vast mass of unreasoning prejudice which the insular position of England made exceptionally strong, and which was one of the most powerful forces in English politics.

In the latter Stuart reigns this sentiment was strongly on the side of the Whigs. The sale of Dunkirk to France, the shameful day when the Dutch fleet sailed unmolested into the Thames, burnt the shipping at Chatham, and menaced the security of the capital, and, still more, the growing subordination of England to the policy of Lewis XIV., had irritated to the very highest degree the national sentiment. England, which had shattered the power of France at Agincourt, Crecy, and Poitiers, which under Elizabeth and Cromwell had been feared or honoured in every quarter of the Continent, had now sunk into complete disrepute, and followed humbly in the wake of her ancient rival. Year by year the power and the ambition of Lewis increased, and threatened to overshadow all the liberties of Europe, but no danger could rouse the English sovereign from his ignoble torpor, and both he and his ministers were suspected with only too good reason of being the paid vassals of the French King.

It may easily be understood how galling such a subserviency to foreigners must have been to large classes who were very indifferent to questions of constitutions and

[1] North's *Examen*, p. 321. Burnet's *Hist. of his own time* (folio ed.), i. 43.

parliaments, and the indignation was greatly increased by the close connection between the foreign policy of England and the interests of Protestantism in Europe. In England Protestantism was the religion of so large and so energetic a majority of the people that any attempt to overthrow it was hopeless, but on the Continent its prospects at the time of the Revolution were extremely gloomy. For several generations over a great part of Europe the conflict had been steadily against it, and there was much reason to believe that it might sink into complete political impotence. Partly by the natural reaction that follows a great movement of enthusiasm, partly by the superior attraction of a pictorial form of worship, partly through the skilful organisation of the Society of Jesus, and still more by a systematic policy of repression, Protestantism had almost disappeared in many countries, in which, some fifty years after the Reformation, it appeared to have taken the firmest root. Bohemia had once been mainly Protestant. In Hungary, Transylvania, Poland, Austria proper, and even Bavaria, Protestants had formed either a majority, or nearly half of the population. In France they had occupied great towns, and organised powerful armies. They might once have been found in numbers in the northern provinces of Italy, in Flanders, in Cologne, Bamberg, Wurzburg, and Ems. In all these quarters the ascendancy of Catholicism was now almost undivided, and the balance of political power was immensely in its favour. Spain, though in a state of decadence, was still the greatest colonial power in the world. The Emperor and the King of France were by far the greatest military powers on the Continent, and the Emperor was persecuting Protestants in Hungary, while Lewis XIV. made it a main object of his home policy to drive them from France, and a main object of his foreign policy to crush Holland, which was then the most powerful bulwark of Protestantism on the Continent. Of the Protestant States Sweden was too poor and too remote to exercise much permanent influence, and she had for many years been little more than a satellite of France; Holland had been raised under a succession of able leaders to an importance much beyond her natural resources, but her very existence as an independent power was menaced by her too powerful neighbour;

England had sunk since the Restoration into complete insignificance, and a bigoted Catholic had now mounted her throne. The Peace of Westphalia had been more than once violated in Germany to the detriment of the Protestants, and several petty German princes had already abandoned the faith. That great Protestant country which is now Prussia, was then the insignificant Electorate of Brandenburg, and was but just beginning, under an Elector of great ability, to emerge from obscurity. That great country, which now forms the United States of America, consisted then of a few rude and infant colonies, exercising no kind of influence beyond their borders, and although the policy of Roman Catholic nations was by no means invariably subservient to the Church, the movement of religious scepticism which now makes the preponderance of intelligence and energy in every Roman Catholic country hostile to the priests had not yet arisen. From almost every point of the compass dark and threatening clouds were gathering around the Protestant cause, and the year 1685 was pronounced the most fatal in all its annals. In February an English king declared himself a Papist. In June Charles, the Elector Palatine, dying without issue, the electoral dignity passed to the bigoted Popish house of Neuburg. In October Lewis XIV. revoked the edict of Nantes, and began that ferocious persecution which completed the work of St. Bartholomew in France. In December the Duke of Savoy was induced by French persuasion to put an end to the toleration of the Vaudois.[1]

Happily for the interests of the world the religious difference was not the sole or the chief line of national division, and the terror that was excited by the ambition of France enlisted a great part of Catholic Europe on the side of William. The King of Spain was decidedly in his favour, and the Spanish ambassador at the Hague is said to have ordered masses in his chapel for the success of the expedition.[2] The Emperor employed all his influence at Rome on the same side, and by singular good fortune the Pope himself looked with favour on the Revo-

[1] See a striking picture of the light in which this struggle appeared to contemporaries in the Somers' *Tracts*, ix. 593–595; Calamy's *Life*, i. 125–126; Kemble's *State Papers*, p. xli., xlii.

[2] Macpherson's *Original Papers*, i. p. 301.

lution. Odescalchi, who, under the name of Innocent XI., had mounted the Papal throne in 1676, was a man of eminent virtue and moderation, and he had, in conjunction with a considerable body of the English Catholics, steadily disapproved of the violent and unconstitutional means by which James, under the advice of Father Petre, was endeavouring to bring the English Catholics to power. He appears to have seen the probability of a reaction, and he wished the King to restrict himself to endeavouring to obtain toleration for his coreligionists, and the English Catholics to abstain as much as possible from political ambition and from every course that could arouse the popular indignation. He had directed the general of the Jesuits to rebuke Father Petre for his ambition, and he positively refused the urgent request of James to raise his favourite to the episcopate and to the purple. On the other hand he looked with extreme apprehension and dislike upon the policy of Lewis XIV. In the interests of Europe he clearly saw that the overwhelming power and the insatiable ambition of the French king formed the greatest danger of the time, and that the complete subserviency of England was a main element of his strength. In the interests of the Church he dreaded the attempts of Lewis, while constituting himself the great representative and protector of Catholicism in Europe, to make himself almost as absolute in ecclesiastical as in temporal affairs. The French king had for some time shown a peculiar jealousy of papal authority, and a peculiar desire to humiliate it. In a former pontificate he had made use for this purpose of a quarrel which had arisen between some Corsican guards of the Pope and some Frenchmen attached to the embassy at Rome, had seized Avignon, had threatened to invade Rome, and had compelled Alexander VII. to make the most abject apologies, to engage for the future to admit no Corsicans into his service, and even to erect a monument commemorating the transaction.[1] Soon after the accession of Innocent XI., the feud again broke out, and it was so bitter that the papal court began to look upon the French king as the worst enemy to the Church. The antagonism arose on the question of the right, or the alleged right, of the French

[1] De Flassan, *Hist. de la Diplomatie Française*, iii. 292–302.

sovereign to appoint to ecclesiastical benefices in France during the vacancy of the episcopal sees. The claim had long been contested by the Pope, but it was admitted by the French clergy, who were now closely allied to the sovereign, and were looking forward to the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The dispute led to the famous articles of 1682, by which the French Church denied that the Pope possessed by Divine right any temporal jurisdiction, declared its adhesion to the decrees by which the Council of Constance asserted the supremacy of general councils, and maintained that the rules and customs of the Gallican Church must prevail in France, that the apostolic power should only be exercised in accordance with the canons, and that even on questions of dogma the papal decrees were fallible, unless they had been confirmed by the general adoption of the Church. These articles, which were the foundation of Gallican liberties, were published by order of the king, and registered by the parliaments and universities, while the Pope protested strongly against them, and began to refuse bulls to those whom the king nominated to vacant bishoprics.

A still more bitter quarrel speedily followed. The Pope desired to abolish the scandalous right of sanctuary, by virtue of which the precincts of the hotels of the ambassadors of the Great Powers at Rome had become nests of smugglers, bankrupts, and thieves, and as all the Great Powers except France readily acquiesced in the reform, he announced his intention of receiving no ambassador who would not renounce the shameful privilege. Lewis, however, determined to maintain it. Contrary to the expressed desire of the Pope, he sent an ambassador to Rome, with instructions to assert the right of sanctuary, and he directed him to enter Rome as if it were a conquered town, escorted by a large body of French troops. The Pope refused to receive the ambassador, excommunicated him, and placed the French church at Rome, in which he had worshipped, under interdict, while the King retaliated by arresting the Nuncio at Paris. Nearly at the same time the important electorate and archbishopric of Cologne became vacant, and the Pope opposed a favourite scheme of Lewis by refusing his assent to the promotion to these dignities of the French candidate, Cardinal Furstenberg. Lewis, on the other hand, accused the Pope of

conspiring with the enemies of France. He espoused the claims of the Duke of Parma to some parts of the Papal dominions, seized Avignon, and threatened to send an army to Italy. Under these circumstances Innocent was fully disposed to listen with favour to any scheme which promised to repress the ambition and arrest the growing power of the French king. He was assured that William would grant toleration to the English Catholics, and he actually favoured the enterprise with his influence, and it is said even with his money.[1] The effect of the Revolution, in some degree at least, corresponded with the expectation of the allies. The balance of power was redressed. The whole weight of English influence was thrown into the scale against France, and a servitude which had incessantly galled the national sentiment of England was removed.

Very soon, however, the antipathy to foreigners began to act against the Whigs. It was not simply that William was a foreign prince, who had overthrown a sovereign of English birth. It was not simply that he never concealed his partiality for his own country, that he surrounded himself with Dutch guards and with Dutch favourites, whom he rewarded with lavish profusion. There lay beyond this another and a deeper complaint. William was the ruler of a continental State placed in a position of extreme and constant danger. He was above all the head of a great European confederation against France, and he valued his accession to the English throne chiefly as enabling him to employ the resources of England in the struggle. The Tory party soon began to complain with great plausibility, and with not a little truth, that English interests were comparatively lost sight of, that English blood and English treasure were expended to secure a stronger barrier for Holland, that the Revolution had deprived England of the inestimable advantage of her insular position and involved her inextricably in continental complications. For several generations it became the maxim of Tory statesmen that England should, as far as possible, isolate herself from continental embarrassments,

[1] *Memoires du Maréchal de Berwick*, i. 17–18. Macpherson's *Original Papers*, i. 301–302. Dalrymple's *Memoirs of Great Britain*, part i. bk. v. Burnet's *Own Times*, i. 661–662, 706–707, 772–774. De Flassan's *Hist. de la Diplomatie Française*, iv. 94–105. See too Ranke's *Hist. of England*, xviii. 1.

and, if compelled to wage war, should do so only on her natural element, the sea.[1] After the Peace of Ryswick especially, this feeling gathered strength, and it became evident that the Tory party, which now rose to power, and which undoubtedly represented the true national sentiment, was resolved to pursue a steady policy of isolation and of peace. The army, to the bitter indignation of the king, was reduced to 10,000, and afterwards to 7,000 men. The sailors were reduced from 40,000 to 8,000. Even the Dutch guards were summarily dismissed, and these measures were taken at a time when a danger of the greatest magnitude was looming on the horizon. Charles II. of Spain, was sinking rapidly to the grave, leaving no child to inherit his vast dominions, and there were three rival claimants for the succession. The nearest in point of birth was the Dauphin, the son of the elder sister of the Spanish king, but his claim was barred by a formal renunciation of all right of succession made by his mother when she married Lewis XIV., and ratified with great solemnity by the oath and the word of honour of her husband when he accepted the treaty of the Pyrenees. Next to the Dauphin came the electoral prince of Bavaria, whose mother was the daughter of the younger sister of the Spanish king, but in this case also an express renunciation barred the title. The third competitor was the Emperor, who could claim only as the son of Charles's aunt, but his claim was barred by no renunciation. The Emperor waived his claim in favour of his second son, the Archduke Charles, but beyond this he would make no concession, though France was prepared to oppose to the last, and England was far from desiring, so great an increase of power to the House of Hapsburg. The electoral prince of Bavaria was still in infancy; his father was the sovereign of an inconsiderable State, and unable to enforce his claims. The queen mother of Spain, who had warmly favoured this disposition of the crown, died in 1696, and although William would gladly have supported it, neither the Austrians nor the French would acquiesce in the arrangement.

[1] As Bolingbroke tersely expressed it, 'Our true interests require that we should take few engagements on the Continent, and never those of making a land war unless the conjunction be such that nothing less than the weight of Great Britain can prevent the scales of power from being quite overturned.'—*Marchmont Papers*, ii. 314.

The Dauphin resigned his claim in favour of his second son, the Duke of Anjou, but Austria was desperately opposed to his succession, and William considered so great an aggrandisement of the House of Bourbon fatal to the freedom of Europe and to the whole policy of his life.

It is not necessary here to relate at length how Lewis and William endeavoured to meet the difficulty by the treaty of partition of 1698, providing that on the death of the Spanish king the Milanese should pass to the Archduke Charles, the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, the Tuscan ports, the marquisate of Finale, and the province of Guipuscoa to the Dauphin, and the remainder of the Spanish dominions to the electoral prince of Bavaria; how, on the death of the last-named prince a second partition treaty was signed in 1700, granting Spain, the Spanish Netherlands, and the Indies, to the Archduke, increasing the compensation to France by the Duchies of Lorraine and Bar, and transferring the Duke of Lorraine to the Milanese; how these treaties were made without communication with the sovereign and statesmen of the Spanish monarchy, which was so unceremoniously disposed of, without the assent of the Emperor, who refused to diminish any of his pretensions, without any real regard for the opinion of English ministers, though an English army would probably be required to enforce their provisions; how when the project became known in Spain a fierce storm of indignation convulsed the land, and the dying king, who had once favoured the Bavarian succession, was induced, after many vacillations, to endeavour to save his kingdom from dissolution by bequeathing the whole to the Duke of Anjou; and how upon the death of Charles, in the November of 1700, Lewis tore to shreds the treaty he had signed, and boldly accepted the bequest for his grandson. What we have especially to notice is the attitude of parties in England. The whole Tory party, which was now rising to the ascendant, steadily censured the interference of England in the contest. When the projects of partition were announced they were received with the severest disapprobation, and when the will of Charles was published the Tories strenuously urged that England should acquiesce. 'It grieves me to the soul,' wrote William with extreme bitterness, 'that almost everyone rejoices that France

has preferred the will to the treaty.'[1] Independently of the gross injustice of measures for dividing by force a great monarchy which had given no provocation to its neighbours, it was contended that the terms of the partition treaty would have given France a most dangerous ascendancy, that the possession of Naples and the Tuscan ports would have made her supreme in the Mediterranean, that the possession of Guipuscoa would have given her the trade of the West Indies and of South America, and have placed Spain at her mercy in time of war, that the acquisition of so long a line of valuable seaboard, in addition to what she already possessed, would have imparted an immense impulse to her naval power. The dangers resulting from the will were, it was said, much less. The strong national sentiment of the Spanish people, who have been pre-eminently jealous of foreign interference, might fairly be relied on to counteract the French sympathies of their sovereign; and Spanish jealousy had been rendered peculiarly sensitive by the participation of Lewis in the partition treaties. Nor was it likely that a prince, placed at a very early age on a great throne, surrounded by Spanish influences, and courted by every Power in Europe, would be characterised by an excessive deference to his grandfather. Above all, it was a matter of vital importance to England that she should enjoy a period of repose after her long and exhausting war, and that the system of standing armies, of national debts, and of foreign subsidies, should come to an end.

These were the views of the Tory party, and there can be little question that they would have prevailed, in spite of the opposition of the king, had Lewis, at this critical moment, acted with common prudence and common moderation. There was one point on the Continent, however, which no patriotic Englishman, whether Whig or Tory, could look upon with indifference. The line of Spanish fortresses which protected the Netherlands from the ambition of France was of vital importance to the security of Holland, and if Holland passed into French hands it was more than doubtful whether English independence would long survive. To preserve these fortresses from French aggrandisement had been for generations a main end of English policy; during the last fifty years torrents of English

[1] Hardwicke's State Papers, ii. 396.

blood had been shed to secure them; and with this object, William had agreed with the Elector of Bavaria, who governed them as the representative of the Spanish King, that they should be garrisoned in part with Dutch troops. Propositions for the absolute cession of the Spanish Netherlands to the Elector of Bavaria had been made, but for various reasons abandoned; but the maintenance of the Dutch garrisons was of extreme importance, and if, as was alleged, the transfer of the Spanish monarchy to the grandson of Lewis XIV. did not mean the subserviency of Spain to French policy, it was on this, beyond all other questions, that the most careful neutrality should have been shown. Lewis, however, was quite determined that these garrisons should cease, and he at the same time saw the possibility of forcing the Dutch to recognise the validity of the will of Charles II. With the assent of the Spanish authorities he sent a French army into the Spanish Netherlands, occupied the whole line of Spanish fortresses in the name of his grandson, and in a time of perfect peace detained the Dutch garrison prisoners until Holland had recognised the title of the new sovereign to the Spanish throne.

It would be difficult to exaggerate either the arrogance or the folly of this act. The Tory party, which in the beginning of 1701 was ascendant in England, was bitterly hostile to William; the partition treaties excited throughout the country deep and general discontent, and the ardent wish of the English people was to detach their country as far as possible from continental complications, and to secure a long and permanent peace on the basis of a frank acceptance of the will of Charles II. But it was impossible that any English party, however hostile to William, could see with indifference the whole line of Spanish fortresses, including Luxemburg, Mons, Namur, Charleroi, and the seaports of Nieuport and Ostend occupied by the French, the whole English policy of the last war overthrown without a blow, and the transfer of the Spanish monarchy to Philip immediately employed in the interests of French ambition. When the Dutch formally applied for the succour which, under such circumstances, England was bound by treaty to furnish, both Houses of Parliament declared their determination to fulfil their obligations, and English troops were actually sent to Holland;

but still several months of anxious negotiation ensued, and on the side of England there was a most sincere and earnest desire to avert the war. Party spirit ran furiously at home. The two Houses were engaged in bitter quarrels, and the Tories lost no opportunity of irritating the king. The Commons ordered Portland, Somers, Halifax, and Orford to be impeached; they censured in the severest terms the treaties of partition, and the Tory ministers compelled William, even after the French aggression on the Dutch, to recognise Philip as king of Spain. The Act of Settlement, which was made necessary by the death of the young Duke of Gloucester, the last surviving child of Anne, secured, indeed, the crown to the Protestant House of Brunswick, but surrounded it with limitations extremely offensive to the king. The House of Commons, which was so violently Tory, had been but just elected, and though a warlike spirit was slowly growing in the country, it was not only possible, but easy to have allayed it. Had the French sovereign consented to re-establish the Dutch garrisons in some at least of the frontier towns, or had he consented to the transfer of the Spanish Netherlands either to the Emperor or to Holland, the peace of Europe might have been preserved. But he was seized at this moment with what appeared a judicial blindness. He did not desire war, but he imagined that his power would intimidate all opponents. If a war broke out, the great resources of France and Spain would be united. France had secured the alliance of the Dukes of Savoy and of Mantua in Italy, of the Electors of Bavaria and Cologne in Germany, and had opened what appeared to be promising negotiations with Portugal. The Emperor was embarrassed by troubles produced in Hungary by Rákóczy, the bravest and most popular of Hungarian chiefs, and in Germany itself he had aroused much jealousy among the princes of the Empire, by creating a new electorate for Hanover, and by raising the electorate of Brandenburg into the kingdom of Prussia. The King of England seemed paralysed by the opposition of his Parliament, while the fortresses that were the key to Holland were in French hands. Under these circumstances, Lewis persuaded himself that there was nothing to fear. He released the Dutch troops, indeed, on obtaining a recognition of the title of his grandson, and he

offered to withdraw his troops from the fortresses they had seized as soon as the Spaniards were able fully to garrison them, but he would give no further security to Holland. The light in which he looked upon events was very clearly shown in his speech to the constable of Castille in the beginning of 1701. 'The French and Spanish nations,' he said, 'are so united that they will henceforth be only one. . . . . My grandson, at the head of the Spaniards, will defend the French. I, at the head of the French, will defend the Spaniards.'[1] The Emperor was already in arms. A great change passed over public opinion in England. It was chiefly shown in the House of Lords, but it appeared also, though much less strongly, in the House of Commons, and on the 7th of September, 1701, William concluded the triple alliance of England, Holland, and the Emperor, for the purpose of recovering the Low Countries from the hands of the French, securing them as a barrier to protect the United Provinces from the French, and redressing the balance of power by obtaining for the Emperor the Spanish dominions in Italy.

Such was the foundation of that great alliance which for a time brought the French power to the lowest depth. It was strengthened in 1702 by the accession of the new kingdom of Prussia, and afterwards of nearly the whole Empire, and in the following year by the accession of Portugal, and by the change of sides of the Duke of Savoy. Its prospects of success were at first, however, very gloomy. William was now dying. The Tory party, which was bitterly hostile to him and exceedingly reluctant to engage in the war, had a large majority in the Commons. War was not yet declared, and the treaty of alliance provided that two months should pass before any active steps of hostility were taken. It was not improbable that before that time the king, who was the soul of the policy of war, would be in his grave, and it was certain that the alliance itself could easily have been broken up by very moderate concessions. The jealousy between England and Holland, the profound dislike of the ruling party in the former to continental wars, the difference of aim between the Emperor, who claimed the whole

[1] De Flassan, *Hist. de la Diplomatie Française*, iv. 203.

Spanish dominions, and the Dutch and English, who desired only to secure Holland and to restore the balance of power by a partition, threatened to prevent all energetic and united action, and it was more than doubtful whether the Commons would vote adequate subsidies, when Lewis himself, by an act of gratuitous folly, changed the whole aspect of affairs. Only ten days after the triple alliance was signed James II. died, and Lewis, who had bound himself by the peace of Ryswick to take no step calculated to disturb William in his possession of the throne of England, resolved, in spite of the earnest entreaty of his ministers, to recognise the Pretender as king of England. The effect on the English nation was instantaneous. The storm which had for some months been slowly gathering burst into a hurricane. The attempt of a French king to prescribe to the English people the sovereign whom they should obey touched acutely that sentiment of national jealousy of foreign interference which was then the strongest of English sentiments, and William, by dissolving parliament while the resentment was at its height, overthrew the Tory power and obtained a large majority pledged to the policy of war.

William died on the 8th of March, 1702. He did not live to declare the war, but he lived to fill his ministry with statesmen who were favourable to it, and to see the new House of Commons carry addresses and vote military supplies which made it inevitable. The sudden fluctuation of the national sentiments in 1701 is very remarkable. In that year there had been the most unusual spectacle of two new parliaments violently antagonistic in their policy. The parliament which met for the first time in February was vehemently and aggressively Tory. The parliament which met in December contained a large majority of Whigs. The change, however, was in reality more superficial than might appear. The strong national jealousy of foreign rulers, and foreign politics, and foreign interference, which was usually the strength of the Tory party, was as vehement as ever, though it had for the moment been enlisted on the side of the Whigs. It was no attachment to the Dutch sovereign, no desire to alter the disposition of power on the Continent in the general interests of Europe that animated the electors, but solely resentment at French interference; and few English sovereigns

have ever sunk to the tomb less regretted by the mass of the English nation than William III.

With such sentiments prevailing in the nation, it is not surprising that the accession of Anne should have been followed by a violent reflux of Tory feeling. The queen herself was intensely Tory in her sympathies, and though intellectually she was below the average of her subjects, she was in many respects well fitted to revive the party. Her character, though somewhat peevish and very obstinate, was pure, generous, simple, and affectionate, and she had displayed, under bereavements far more numerous than fall to the share of most, a touching piety that endeared her to her people. Her part in the Revolution had been comparatively small. She was, as she stated in her first speech from the throne, 'entirely English' at heart, and the strongest and deepest passion of her nature was attachment to the English Church. Though promising her protection to the Dissenters, she looked with secret horror on the toleration they enjoyed, and her own severe orthodoxy had been undimmed in the Popish court of her father, and in the latitudinarian atmosphere of the Revolution. Her reverence for ecclesiastical authority was early shown when she rebuked her chaplain at Windsor for administering to her the sacrament before the clergy;[1] her zeal against the Dissenters, when she compelled her husband, though himself a Lutheran, holding high office under the Crown, to vote for the bill against occasional conformity; her care for the interests of the Church, when she surrendered to it those firstfruits and tenths which had originally been claimed by the Pope, and had been afterwards appropriated by the Crown; her generosity, when she devoted 100,000*l.* out of the first year's income of her civil list, to alleviate the public burdens. In the eyes of the upholders of Divine right, she was as near a legitimate sovereign as it was then possible for a Protestant to be, and it was felt that her own sympathies would be entirely with the legitimate cause, but for her stronger affection for the English Church. In this respect she represented with singular fidelity the feelings of her people, and she became the provisional object of much of that peculiar attachment which is usually bestowed only on a sovereign whose title

[1] Coke's *Detection*.

is beyond dispute. It was also a happy circumstance for the glory of her reign, though not for the Tory party, that the wife of the greatest living Englishman exercised at this time an almost absolute empire over the royal mind. A great war was inevitable and imminent, and Marlborough became almost omnipotent in the State. Within a few days of the accession of the sovereign he was nominated Knight of the Garter; he was made Captain-General of the Forces, and was sent to Holland on a special mission to ratify the new alliance against France, while his wife was intrusted with the management of the privy purse, and made groom of the stole, mistress of the robes, and ranger of Windsor Park. Godolphin, whose son had married the daughter of Marlborough, and who was bound to Marlborough in the closest friendship, became Lord Treasurer. He had been actively engaged in political life since the first parliament of the Restoration, and his long career had been on the whole singularly unsullied at a time and under circumstances when political integrity was extremely rare. With the exception of Halifax, he was incontestably the foremost financier of his age; an old, wary, taciturn, plodding, unobtrusive, and moderate man, who, though he had voted in turn for the Exclusion Bill and for the regency, had won the confidence both of James and William, and who without any strong convictions, any charm of manners, or any brilliancy or fascination of intellect, had more than once stood in the first line of party warfare. He was now attached, though without fanaticism, to the Tories; and his experience, his prudence, his administrative talents, and his respectable and conciliatory character, made him well fitted to preside over the Government. The ministry was rapidly reorganised by the appointment of Tories to most of the leading places. Howe, the bitterest assailant of William, was now called to the Privy Council, and made one of the Paymasters of the Forces. Nottingham, who of all statesmen was most dear to the High Church party, was made one of the Secretaries of State, his colleague being Sir Charles Hedges. Harcourt, the ablest Tory lawyer, and Seymour, the most influential Tory country gentleman in the Lower House, were made respectively Solicitor-General and Comptroller of the Household. Lord Pembroke became Lord President, Lord Bradford, treasurer of

the household, and Lord Normanby, who was soon after created Duke of Buckingham, Privy Seal. Wright continued to be Chancellor, and Rochester Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. The great Whig names of Somers, Orford, and Halifax were omitted from the Privy Council. Prince George, the husband of the Queen, was gratified by the title of Generalissimo of the Forces, and he was also very injudiciously made High Admiral, and thus placed at the head of the naval administration. The House of Commons, in accordance with the law, was dissolved within six months of the death of the last sovereign, and the constituencies, which at the close of the preceding year had sent in a decided Whig majority, now returned a House in which the Tories were nearly double the number of the Whigs.

The victory of the party was complete, but it was very transient, and the exigencies of foreign policy again speedily modified the home policy of England. It was a strange fortune that bequeathed to the Tory party, in the very moment of its triumph, a Whig war, and the great general who rose to power had the strongest personal reasons for promoting it. William, who had been reconciled to him at the close of his reign, had taken him with him on his last journey to Holland, and had given him the chief part in negotiating the triple alliance. Independently, therefore, of all considerations of military ambition, Marlborough was personally committed to the policy of war. Nor, indeed, was it possible to avoid it. The engagements of the allies were too explicit; the feeling aroused in England by the recognition of the Pretender was too strong; the dangers arising from the will of Charles II., as disclosed by the proceedings of Lewis in the Netherlands, were too glaring for any English party to remain passive. The Tories felt this, and though it was one of the main objects of their policy to withdraw the country from Continental complications, they in general concurred in the declaration of war which was issued on the fourth of May. Dissensions, however, speedily arose. Rochester, who had been regarded as the leader of the party, was bitterly disappointed at not obtaining a more influential place than that of Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. The second son of the great Lord Clarendon, and consequently the uncle of the Queen, he had long viewed with

great jealousy the ascendancy the Marlboroughs had obtained over her mind. His Toryism was of a very different complexion from that of Marlborough and Godolphin, and he wished to push the victory of the party to its extreme consequences, expelling the few Whigs who remained from the former administration. Nottingham, with several other members of the party, dissented for less personal reasons. They had been forced reluctantly into a war which had been prepared by William; but they desired at least that it should be carried on within the narrowest limits; that England should, as much as possible, restrict herself to defensive operations and to the Spanish Netherlands, that she should enter into the struggle not as a principal, but as an auxiliary. They objected to every vigorous measure that was taken—to the march of the English troops into Germany, to the encouragement given to the Protestant insurrection of the Cevennes. It was not likely that a Government virtually ruled by a great and ambitious general would yield to such views, and Godolphin and Marlborough, finding their foreign policy most cordially supported by the Whigs, began from this time steadily to gravitate to that party. The defection of Rochester in 1702, and of Nottingham in 1704; the dismissal in the same year of Lord Jersey and Sir Edward Seymour; the dismissal of the Duke of Buckingham from the Privy Seal in 1705, changed the whole spirit of the Government, while the great popularity of the war produced a corresponding change in the spirit of the country. There were many reasons why this war should be regarded in a light wholly different from that of William. From the time when Lewis recognised the Pretender, it became a truly national war, produced by a great outburst of national resentment. The English troops were now commanded by an English general, and by a general of whose transcendant genius his countrymen were soon justly proud. The army, which during the greater part of the last war was still raw and almost undisciplined, had now acquired the qualities of veterans,[1] and the nation was soon

[1] 'What I remember to have heard the Duke of Marlborough say before he went to take on him the command of the army in the Low Countries in 1702 proved true. The French misreckoned very much if they made the same comparison between their troops and those of their enemies, as they

excited by the struggle and intoxicated by the cup of military glory.

This change in the political character of the ministry at a time when its two principal figures remained the same, is very remarkable. Both Godolphin and Marlborough, however, were wholly destitute of strong party feelings, and both of them desired a ministry in which each party was represented. The first was naturally a very moderate Tory; the second held, as far as possible, aloof from party contests. He had acted in turn with each party, and he had several private grounds of sympathy with the Whigs. His wife had decided Whig leanings; his son-in-law, Sunderland, was one of the most violent members of the Whig party; and when Marlborough was made Duke, in 1702, the Tory majority in the House of Commons had rejected the proposal of the Queen to annex a grant of 5,000*l.* a year for ever to the title. The strong Tory sympathies of the Queen, and the great outburst of Church enthusiasm that followed her accession had given the administration a more exclusively Tory character than either of its chiefs desired, and they had no sympathy with that large section of their followers who were endeavouring to carry matters to extremities, who desired to expel the Whigs even from the most subordinate offices, and who would gladly have repealed the Toleration Act. The fierce party spirit shown by the Tory party towards the close of the preceding reign had deeply injured its reputation with moderate men, and there were signs that a similar spirit was again animating it. The bill against occasional conformity was supported by all the weight of the Crown; a manifest censure upon the late king was implied in the resolution complimenting Marlborough on having 'signally retrieved the ancient honour and glory of the English nation;' the attitude of the House of Commons to the House of Lords, in which the Whig element preponderated, was extremely offensive; and it is probable that a most dangerous reaction would have ensued but for the counteracting influence of the war.

had made in precedent wars. Those that had been opposed to them in the last, were raw for the most part when it began, the British particularly, but they were disciplined, if I may say so, by their defeats. They were grown to be victorious at the peace of Ryswic.' — Bolingbroke's *Sketch of the Hist. of Europe.*

During the first two years, however, there was but little to arouse enthusiasm. In July 1701, before England had engaged in the war, Eugene, at the head of an Austrian army, entered Italy by the valley of the Trent, defeated the French at Carpi, on the Adige, and compelled Catinat to retreat beyond the Oglio, and in the June of the following year the Imperial and Dutch forces succeeded, after a long and bloody siege, in capturing Kaiserswerth on the Rhine. It had been put into the hands of the French by the Elector of Cologne, and, as it exposed both the circle of Westphalia and the dominions of the States to invasion, it was of great military importance. In September 1702 the still more important fortress of Landau was taken by the Prince of Baden. Marlborough commanded an army of invasion in the Spanish Guelderland, but he was thwarted and trammelled at every step by his Dutch and German allies; and, though he took the line of fortresses along the Meuse, captured Bonn, and subdued Limburg and the whole bishopric of Liége, he fought no pitched battle, and gained no very brilliant success. The only regular battle in the Netherlands was at Eckeren, near Antwerp, where a Dutch detachment, commanded by the Dutch general Obdam, was surprised and defeated by a very superior French force commanded by Boufflers. In Spain, the failure of an English expedition against Cadiz was redeemed by the capture or destruction of a large fleet of Spanish galleons under the escort of some French frigates in the Bay of Vigo; but in Italy, on the Danube, and on the Rhine, the advantage lay decidedly with the French. Eugene failed in his attempt to take Cremona, though he succeeded in capturing Villeroy, the French commander; he was compelled to raise the siege of Mantua, and the battle of Luzzara, in which he encountered Vendome, was indecisive in its issue. Visconti was defeated by Vendome in the battle of San Vittoria, and the defection of the Duke of Savoy from the French was punished by the occupation of a great part of his territory. In Germany several serious disasters befell the allies. The Prince of Baden was defeated by Villars in the battle of Friedlingen, and the Count de Stirum in the battle of Hochstadt. Ulm was seized by the Elector of Bavaria, who was in alliance with the French. Brisach was captured by the Duke of Burgundy. Tallard,

having defeated the Germans in the battle of Spirbach, recaptured Landau, and Augsburg was taken by the Elector of Bavaria. On both sides the dangers of foreign war were soon complicated by those of rebellion at home, for the atrocious persecution of the Protestants had roused a fierce storm in the Cevennes, while in Hungary the insurrection, which had been for a short time suppressed, broke out anew. The fortunes of the war were not fully changed till 1704, when Marlborough, in spite of innumerable obstacles from his own allies, marched to the Danube, and having broken the Bavarian lines near Donauwerth, succeeded, in combination with Eugene, in striking a fatal blow at the power of France. That year was indeed one of the most glorious in the military annals of England. By the great victory of Blenheim, the united forces of the French and Bavarians were hopelessly shattered. The prestige of the French arms received a shock from which it never recovered during the war. The conquests in Germany during the preceding years were all recovered, and the French being driven headlong from Germany, Bavaria was compelled to cede all her strong places to the Emperor, and to withdraw from her alliance with France. Lorraine and Alsace were both seriously menaced by the occupation of Trèves, and by the capture of Landau, whilst in another region Rooke planted the British flag on the rock of Gibraltar, from which the most desperate and most persevering efforts have been unable to displace it.

It was inevitable that such success should strengthen the party especially associated with the war, and the changed spirit of the Government was shown by its attitude towards the Occasional Conformity Bill. In 1702 the Court had warmly and ostentatiously supported it; in 1703 it was coldly neutral. The Tories were divided on the question whether to tack it to a bill of supply in order to overcome the opposition of the Lords, and at the end of 1704 this question gave rise to a great schism in their ranks. The clergy, on the other hand, who had expected the speedy repeal of the Toleration Act, were furious at the change. The cry of 'Church in danger!' was raised, and a fierce ecclesiastical agitation began. At Cambridge the opponents of the Occasional Conformity Bill were hooted by the students. At Oxford, which had so long prided

itself on its loyalty, a weather-cock was erected, bearing the Queen's motto *semper eadem*, with the translation 'worse and worse.'[1] The Lower House of Convocation rang with complaints of the conduct of the bishops, who usually leaned to counsels of moderation; of the administration of baptism by Dissenting ministers in private houses; of the schools and seminaries in which the Dissenters educated their young; of the hardship of obliging the parochial clergy to administer the Sacrament as a qualification for office to notorious schismatics. The Church was described in many pulpits as on the brink of destruction, and the ministers were accused of treacherously alienating the Queen from its interests. The country, however, was still under the spell of the victories of Marlborough. The popularity of the war, the influence of the ministers, who leaned more and more to the Whig side, and the division of the Tories, together produced another great revulsion of power, and at the election of 1705 a large Whig majority was returned to Parliament.

The Government was still in a great degree Tory. Harley, one of the most sagacious leaders, and St. John, the most brilliant orator of the party, had been appointed, the first, Secretary of State, and the second, Secretary of War, at the time of the dismissal of Nottingham. The Whig leaders were still out of office, though several less prominent members of the party were incorporated in the ministry. Prior to the general election, the Privy Seal had been taken from the Duke of Buckingham, who was conspicuous among the Tories, and given to the Whig Duke of Newcastle, and Walpole obtained a subordinate office in the Admiralty. The election of 1705 naturally aided the transformation, and by the Marlborough influence the Queen was very reluctantly induced to take a step which gave a decisive ascendancy to the Whig element in the Cabinet. The Tory Chancellor Wright, who had been appointed at the dismissal of Somers in 1700, was turned out of an office for which he was notoriously unfit, and the place was given to Cowper, one of the most eminent of the Whigs. The Tory party, exasperated with the Queen for yielding to the pressure, brought in a motion wholly repugnant to their ordinary politics, and intended chiefly to be personally offensive to the sovereign, petitioning her to

[1] Oldmixon, p. 380.

invite over the Electress Sophia, the heir presumptive, to reside in the country. It was, of course, defeated, but it served to shake the sympathies of the Queen, and the Whigs availed themselves skilfully of the occasion to carry a regency bill, still further strengthening that Hanoverian succession for which their rivals had very little real predilection. It provided that, on the death of the reigning sovereign, the government should pass into the hands of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Chancellor, Lord Keeper, Lord Treasurer, Lord President, Lord Privy Seal, Lord High Admiral, and the Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench, for the time being; that with them should be joined a list of persons named by the successor to the throne, in a sealed paper, of which three copies were to be previously sent to England; one to be deposited with the Archbishop of Canterbury, another with the Lord Keeper, a third with his own minister residing in England; and that Parliament was to be immediately convoked and empowered to sit for six months. At the same time, in order if possible to allay the ecclesiastical outcry, resolutions were carried in both Houses affirming that whoever asserted or insinuated that the Church was in danger was an enemy to the Queen and to the kingdom.

The ministry of Godolphin and Marlborough lasted till 1710, and it was one of the most glorious in English history. It was rendered illustrious by the great victories of Blenheim, Ramillies, Oudenarde, Malplaquet, and Saragossa; by the expulsion of the French from Flanders and from Germany; by the brilliant though somewhat barren achievements of Peterborough in Spain; by the capture of Gibraltar by Rooke, and of Minorca by Stanhope; by the defeat of the combined efforts of the French and Spaniards to retake the former; by the successful accomplishment of the union with Scotland; by the complete failure of the French attempt to invade Scotland in 1708. It was, however, chequered by more than one serious calamity. The allies were expelled from Castille, and defeated in the great battle of Almanza. The siege of Toulon was unsuccessful; the English plantations in St. Christopher were ruined; a considerable part of the British navy was destroyed in the great storm of 1703; the great admiral Sir Cloudesley Shovel perished ingloriously in a shipwreck off the Scilly Isles

in 1707. In Italy and Spain the fortune of arms violently fluctuated, and the natural consummation of the war was growing more and more evident. The passionate attachment displayed by all the Spaniards except the Catalans for the cause of Philip plainly showed how impossible was the scheme of the allies to place, or at least permanently to maintain, an Austrian prince on the Spanish throne. On the other hand, the dismemberment of the Spanish dominions was already accomplished in Italy, for the French had been driven completely from the territory of Milan, and the Austrians had conquered the whole kingdom of Naples. France, though making heroic efforts against her enemies, was reduced to the lowest depths of exhaustion. The distress of many years of desperate warfare, aggravated by the financial incapacity of Chamillart, and still more by the persecution of the Protestants, which had driven a vast part of her capital and commercial energy to other lands, had at length broken that proud spirit which aimed at nothing short of complete ascendancy in Europe. If England desired no other objects than those which were assigned in the treaty of alliance; if she wished only to secure an adequate barrier for Holland, and 'a reasonable satisfaction' for the Emperor by obtaining for him the Spanish dominions in Italy, there was absolutely no obstacle to the establishment of peace. The Government, however, had gradually undergone a complete change. Unity of action and energy was especially needed for a ministry conducting a great war. Many leading Tories who had been expelled from it were now in opposition, and were suspected of holding communications with those who remained. The Whig party were in the ascendant in the House of Commons after the election of 1705, and in the Cabinet after the appointment of Cowper, and they put a constant pressure upon the Queen and upon the ministry. Under these circumstances, the system of a divided cabinet became completely untenable, though both the Queen and Godolphin clung tenaciously to it, and the remnants of Tory influence were gradually extruded. Sunderland, the son-in-law of Marlborough, and one of the most violent of the Whigs, was introduced into the Cabinet as Secretary of State in 1707. In 1708 Harley, who had for some time been acquiring the foremost place in the confidence of the Queen, was driven from

office. It was known or suspected that he was busily intriguing against his colleagues, and especially against Godolphin, and he desired to strengthen the Tory and Church element in the ministry. The course of events, however, was evidently running counter to his policy; and a recent incident had involved him in much suspicion and obloquy. A clerk in his office, named Gregg, was found to have despatched copies of important state papers to the French. Gregg underwent a searching examination before the Privy Council, and afterwards before a Committee of the House of Lords; pleaded guilty at the Old Bailey, and was sentenced to be hung, but his execution was respited for nearly three months, in hopes of extorting from him a confession implicating Harley. Nothing, however, except great carelessness was proved against the minister, and Gregg before execution solemnly exculpated him from all participation in the crime. Still the circumstance weakened his position. Marlborough and Godolphin insisted on his dismissal, and the Queen having refused, they tendered their resignations. The Queen, who is said to have regarded that of Godolphin with great equanimity, though she felt that the retirement of Marlborough in the midst of the war would have been a national calamity, procrastinated, and showed much disposition to enter into a hopeless struggle, but the prudence of Harley averted it. He retired from office, and was accompanied by St. John, the Secretary of War; by the Attorney-General, Sir Simon Harcourt, who was the most eminent of the Tory lawyers; and by Sir Thomas Mansell, Comptroller of the Household. The position of Attorney-General remained for some time vacant, but the others were filled with Whigs; and it was at this time that Walpole attained the dignity of Secretary of War.

One more step remained to be accomplished. A well-planned Jacobite expedition, intended to raise Scotland, which was then bitterly exasperated by the Union, was despatched from Dunkirk in the March of 1708. 4,000 French troops were on board; and, as Scotland was at this time generally disaffected, and as it was almost denuded of troops, the hopes of the French ministers were very sanguine. The vigilance of the Government, however, discovered the secret; and when the expedition was already in sight of Scotland it was attacked by

an overwhelming fleet under Byng, put to flight, and, with the loss of one ship, driven to France. This expedition aroused a strong resentment in England, which was very favourable to the Whigs; and the energy shown by the Government also tended to strengthen its position. The election of 1708 immediately followed, and it resulted in another large Whig majority. The party was now too strong, not only for the Queen, but also for Godolphin himself, who desired to temporise, and, at least, to exclude the great Whig leaders from power. In a few months the revolution, which had long been in progress, was completed. On the death of the Prince Consort in the October of this year, Lord Pembroke who was both President of the Council and Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland was removed to the vacant place at the head of the Admiralty, and the Queen was compelled to admit Somers into the Government as President of the Council; to make Wharton Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, where he distinguished himself by his rapacity and his oppression, and soon after on the resignation of Pembroke to place Orford at the head of the Admiralty. The Church party, being now wholly in opposition, and the Nonconformists wholly on the Ministerial side, a corresponding change was shown in the spirit of legislation. The Occasional Conformity Act now entirely disappeared. The Scotch Union of 1707, which was the most important domestic measure of this period, and which will be more fully considered in another chapter, was carried in a spirit very favourable to the Kirk, and the same spirit was still more strongly shown by a measure carried in 1709 for naturalising all foreign Protestants who settled in England. In the same year the Jacobite cause was seriously injured by an Act extending the English law of treason to Scotland; but the Government at the same time passed an act of grace granting an indemnity for all past treasons, with certain specified exceptions. Marlborough and Godolphin, who had both corresponded with the Pretender, and who must have seen with some apprehension the advent of the most uncompromising Whigs to power, secured themselves, by this measure, against the very possible hostility of their present allies.

In the meantime the Queen was completely alienated from her ministers. Her ideal was a Government in which neither

Whigs nor Tories possessed a complete ascendancy; but above all things, she dreaded and hated a supremacy of the Whigs. She had the strongest conviction that they were the enemies of her prerogative, and still more the enemies of the Church; and a long series of particular incidents had contributed to intensify her feelings.[1] She remembered with indignation the treatment she had received from William in the latter part of his life, and with gratitude the support the Tories had given her in the matter of her settlement. A bill granting her husband the enormous income of 100,000*l.* a year in the event of his surviving her, had been introduced by the Tories in 1702, and had been carried in spite of the protests of some conspicuous Whigs. On the other hand, the Whigs had repeatedly assailed the maladministration of the Prince, and a desire to avert a threatened and most ungenerous attack upon him when he was on his death-bed was the chief motive which at last induced her to admit Somers to the Cabinet.[2] All the great Whig appointments after 1705 were wrung from her almost by force, and caused her the deepest and most heartfelt anguish. The tie of warm personal friendship which had long bound her to the wife of Marlborough was at length cut. The furious, domineering, and insolent temper of the Duchess at last wore out a patience and an affection of no common strength; and Abigail Hill, who as Mrs. Masham played so great a part during the remainder of the reign, rose rapidly into favour. She was lady of the bedchamber, and was cousin to the Duchess of Marlborough, to whom she owed her position at Court; but her influence over the Queen appears to have been due to her

[1] See her remarkable letter (Oct. 24, 1702), in the *Account of the Conduct of the Duchess of Marlborough*, pp. 138–140. This book contains much curious evidence of the sentiments of the Queen.

[2] Coxe's *Marlborough*, ch. lxxv. *Parl. Hist.* vi. 602–603, 619–662. According to the Hamilton papers the change was accelerated by a discovery which Wharton had made of some earlier negotiations of Godolphin with the Pretender. See a note in Burnet, ii. 516. It is obvious that the balance of power inclined so much to the Whigs that the speedy admission of their leaders to office was inevitable. The disregard shown for the feelings of the Queen is very striking. Her husband, to whom she was passionately attached, died on Oct. 28, 1708. On Jan. 28, following, both Houses presented an address to her, 'that she would not suffer her just grief so far to prevail, but would have such indulgence to the hearty desires of her subjects as to entertain thoughts of a second marriage.'—*Parl. Hist.* vi. 777.

sweet and compliant temper; and she soon formed a close alliance with Harley, and aided powerfully in the overthrow of the ministry. As early as 1707 the presence of a new Court influence was felt, and the Queen had marked her feelings to her servants by appointing two High Church bishops without even announcing her intention to the Cabinet.

The effect of these events upon the foreign policy of the Government was very pernicious. The question of the Protestant succession, which might have rallied the country around the Whigs, was now in abeyance. The Church party, which in peaceful times was naturally by far the strongest in England, was in violent hostility to the Government, and it became more and more evident that in the moment of crisis, the influence of the Queen would be on the same side. Under these circumstances the Whig leaders perceived clearly that their main party interest was to prevent the termination of the war. As long as it continued, Marlborough, who was now completely identified with them, could scarcely fail to be at the head of affairs, and the brilliancy of his victories had given the party a transient and abnormal popularity. In 1706 Lewis, being thoroughly depressed, opened a negotiation with the Dutch, and offered peace to the allies on terms which would have abundantly fulfilled every legitimate end of the war. The battle of Ramillies had utterly ruined the French cause in the Spanish Netherlands, and had been followed by the loss of Louvain, Brussels, Ghent, Bruges, Antwerp, Menin, and other places. In Spain the victory was for the time no less complete. Philip had been compelled to abandon the siege of Barcelona, and to take refuge in France, and the allies, after a long series of successes, had occupied Madrid, where they proclaimed his rival, king. In Italy, however, Philip was still powerful; his cause had been of late almost uniformly successful, and although, with the victory of Eugene over Marsin before Turin, the tide had begun to turn, yet the kingdom of the Two Sicilies was still in his complete possession. Under these circumstances the French king proposed that Philip should relinquish all claim to the Spanish throne, that he should be compensated out of the Spanish dominions in Italy by a separate kingdom consisting of the Milanese territory, of Naples, and of Sicily,

that the strong places of the Spanish Netherlands should be all ceded as a barrier to Holland, and that important commercial privileges should be granted to the maritime powers. Something might, no doubt, be said about the cession of the Milanese, which would endanger the territory of the Duke of Savoy, but this question of detail could easily have been arranged, for Lewis showed himself quite prepared in the subsequent negotiations to restrict the kingdom he desired for his grandson to Naples, Sicily, and Sardinia, with a small part of Tuscany, to Naples and Sicily, or, if absolutely necessary, to Sicily alone. By the proposition of France the union of the crowns of France and Spain would have been effectually prevented. The division of the Spanish dominions would have fully realised the object of the treaties of partition, and the great danger arising to Europe from the weakness of Holland would have been as far as possible removed. The Emperor, however, claimed for the Archduke the whole Spanish succession, and this claim, which, if realised, would have created in Europe a supremacy for the House of Austria, hardly less dangerous than that which Lewis desired for France, was so strenuously supported by the Whig ministers of England that they made the cession of all the Spanish dominions to the Austrian Prince an essential preliminary to the peace. No such condition had been laid down by William in the treaty of alliance, but in 1707 Somers induced both Houses of Parliament to carry resolutions to the effect that no peace could be safe or honourable if Spain, the West Indies, or any part of the Spanish monarchy were suffered to remain under the House of Bourbon. 'I am fully of your opinion,' said the Queen, in replying to the address, 'that no peace can be honourable or safe for us or our allies till the entire monarchy of Spain be restored to the House of Austria.'[1] A year later the House of Lords again pledged itself by an address to the same policy.

The danger and the impolicy of such pledges were very clearly shown by the event. Had the peace been made in 1706 instead of 1713, more than thirty millions of English money as well as innumerable English lives would have been saved, and there can be little doubt that the party interest of the

[1] *Parl. Hist.* vi. 609–610. See too Marlborough's Letters in Coxe, ch. 1.

Whig ministers was a main cause of the failure of the negotiation. Still more indefensible was their conduct in 1709. The years that had elapsed since the previous negotiation, though very chequered, had, on the whole, been disastrous to France. The allies had, it is true, been compelled to raise the siege of Toulon, and in the beginning of 1708 the French had retaken some of the towns they had lost in Flanders, but the battle of Oudenarde speedily ruined all their hopes in that quarter, and Mons, Nieuport, and Luxembourg were soon the only towns of the Spanish Netherlands which were not in the hands of the allies. The English had taken Port Mahon and Sardinia; the Duke of Savoy had taken Exilles and Fenestrelles, and a succession of Austrian victories had driven the French out of Lombardy and out of Naples. In Spain, however, a brilliant gleam of success had lit up the fallen fortunes of Lewis. In the great battle of Almanza the allies were utterly defeated by Berwick, and all Spain, except Catalonia, was again under the sceptre of Philip. The position of France itself, however, was most deplorable. Lewis, who in the beginning of the war had given his orders on the banks of the Danube, the Po, and the Tagus, was now reduced to such straits that it was doubtful whether he could long be secure in his capital. To the ruin of the finances, the frightful drain of men, the despondency produced by a long train of crushing calamities in the field, were now added the horrors of famine. A winter of almost unparalleled severity had ruined the olives and a great proportion of the vineyards throughout France; the corn crops were everywhere deficient, and the people were reduced to the most abject wretchedness. Even in Paris, though every effort was made to produce an artificial plenty at the expense of the provinces, it was noticed that in 1709 the death-rate was nearly double the average, while the decrease in the average of births and marriages amounted to one quarter.[1] Under these circumstances Lewis, resolving on peace at any price, submitted to the allies the most humiliating offers ever made by a French king. He consented, after a long

[1] St. Simon's *Memoirs*. Torcy's *Memoirs*. M. Martin in his *Hist. de France* has collected much evidence of the French distress at this period. See too Cooke's *Hist. of Parties*, i. 573.

and painful struggle, to abandon the whole of the Spanish dominions to the Austrian Prince without any compensation whatever, to yield Strasburg, Brisach, and Luxembourg to the Emperor, to yield ten fortresses as a barrier to the Dutch, including Lille and Tournay, which were justly regarded as essential to the security of France, to yield Exilles and Fenestrelles to the Duke of Savoy, to recognise the titles of the Queen of England, of the King of Prussia, and of the Elector of Hanover, to expel the Pretender from his dominions, to destroy the fortifications and harbour of Dunkirk, and to restore Newfoundland to England. All these concessions, together with considerable commercial advantages to the maritime powers, were offered by France without any compensation whatever except the peace, and they were all found to be insufficient. By a provision as impolitic as it was barbarous—for it once more kindled the flagging enthusiasm of the French into a flame—it was insisted, as a preliminary to the peace, that Lewis should join with the allies in expelling, if necessary, by force of arms, his grandson from Spain, that this task must be accomplished within two months, that if it was not accomplished within that time the war should begin anew, but that in the meantime the fortifications of Dunkirk should be demolished, and all the strong places mentioned in the treaty which were still in French hands should be ceded, so that at the expiration of what might be merely a truce of two months, France should be helpless before her enemies.[1]

There are few instances in modern history of a more scandalous abuse of the rights of conquest than this transaction. It may be in part explained by the ambition of the Emperor, who desired a complete ascendancy in Europe; and in part also by the excessive demands and animosity of the Dutch, who remembered the unprovoked invasion of their country in 1670, and the almost insane arrogance with which Louvois had threatened their ambassador with the Bastille. The prolongation of the war, however, would have been impossible but for the policy of the Whig ministers, who supported the most extravagant claims of their allies. Marlborough himself went over to the Hague, and

[1] Torcy's *Memoirs*. Coxe's *Life of Marlborough*. Burnet's *Own Times*, Martin *Hist. de France*, tom. xiv.

the French endeavoured to bribe him by graduated offers, ranging from two to four millions of livres, in case he could obtain for Philip a compensation in Italy, and for France Strasburg and Landau and the integrity of Dunkirk, or at least some part of these boons.[1] The offer was unavailing; no one of these several advantages was conceded, and Marlborough steadily opposed the peace. His conduct was very naturally ascribed to his interest as a general and a politician in the continuance of the war, but his private correspondence shows the imputation to be unfounded. It appears from his letters to his wife that he, at this time, earnestly desired repose, that he considered the demands of the allies, in more than one respect, excessive, and that the chief blame of the failure rests upon his colleagues. He took, however, about this time, a step which greatly injured him with the country. It was evident that his position was very precarious. The old affection of the Queen for his wife, which had been the firm basis of his power, was gone. The war, which made him necessary, could hardly be greatly protracted. Godolphin, who of all statesmen was most closely allied with him, was evidently declining. The Tories and Jacobites could never forgive the part which Marlborough had taken in the Revolution, and since the accession of Anne; while, on the other hand, he had tried to secure himself from possible ruin by more than one Jacobite intrigue, and his conversion to Whiggism was too recent and too partial to enable him to win the confidence of the uncompromising Whigs who had now risen to power. It must be added, that he had recently undergone a very serious disappointment. In 1706, when the battle of Ramillies had driven the French out of the Spanish Netherlands, the Emperor, filling up a blank form which had been given him by his brother, conferred upon Marlborough the governorship of that province. It was a post of much dignity and power, and of very great emolument, and Marlborough earnestly desired to accept it. The Queen at this time cordially approved of the appointment; the ministers supported it; and Somers, who was the most important Whig outside the ministry, expressed a strong opinion in its favour.

[1] See the curious letter of Lewis authorising these offers. — Torcy's *Memoirs*.

But in Holland it excited the most violent opposition. The Dutch desired that no step should be taken conferring the province definitely upon the Austrian claimant till the question of the barrier had been settled. They hoped that some of the towns would pass under their undivided dominion, and that the system of government would be such as to give them a complete ascendancy in the rest; and the danger of breaking up the alliance was so great that Marlborough at once gracefully declined the offer. It was renewed by Charles himself in 1708, after the battle of Oudenarde, in terms of the most flattering description, but was again, on public grounds, declined. Under these circumstances, Marlborough considered himself justified, in 1709, in taking the startling step of asking the position of Captain-General for life. It is possible, and by no means improbable, that his motive was mainly to secure himself from disgrace, and to disentangle himself from party politics. In his most confidential letters he frequently speaks of his longing for repose, of his weariness of those personal and political intrigues which had so often paralysed his military enterprise, of his sense of the growing infirmities of age. The position of commander-in-chief for life would at once free him from political apprehensions and embarrassments, and enable him to restrict himself to that department in which he had no rival. But if, on the other hand, his object was ambition, it is plain that the position to which he aspired would give him a power of the most formidable kind. Cautious, reticent, and, at the same time, in the highest degree sagacious and courageous, he had ever shrunk from identifying himself absolutely with either side, and it had been his aim to hold the balance between parties and dynasties, to dictate conditions, to watch opportunities. A general who was the idol of his troops, who possessed to the highest degree every military acquirement, and who, at the same time, held his command independently of the ministers and even of the Crown, might easily, in a divided nation and in the crisis of a disputed succession, determine the whole course of affairs. Had the request been made soon after the battle of Blenheim, it is not impossible that it might have been conceded, but the time for making it had passed. The Chancellor Cowper, on being apprised of it, coldly answered

that it was wholly unprecedented. The Queen, to the great indignation of Marlborough, absolutely refused it; when the transaction was divulged, the nation, which had at least learnt from Cromwell a deep and lasting hatred of military despotism, placed upon it the worst construction, and it contributed much to the unpopularity of the Whigs.

Besides this cause of division and discontent, some murmurs arose at the reckless prolongation of a war which produced much distress among the poor; but on the whole they were not very serious, and the approaching downfall of the ministers was mainly due to the alienation of the Queen and to the opposition of the Church. For some time the controversy about the doctrine of non-resistance had been raging with increased intensity, and there were many evident signs that the Church opposition, which had been thrown into the shade by the glories of Blenheim, was acquiring new strength. A sermon preached by Hoadly against the doctrine of passive obedience, in 1705, was solemnly condemned by the Lower House of Convocation. Blackhall, one of the bishops appointed by Anne without consultation with her ministers, being called upon to preach before the Queen shortly after his consecration, availed himself of the occasion to assert the Tory doctrine of non-resistance in its extreme form; and the sermon, which was in fact a condemnation of the Revolution, was published without any sign of royal disapprobation. The Scotch Union was violently denounced as introducing Presbyterians into Parliament, recognising by a great national act the non-Episcopal Establishment of Scotland, and providing a powerful ally for the enemies of the Church. The Act for naturalising foreign Protestants was even more unpopular. It was certain to swell the ranks of the Nonconformists. It excited all the English animosity against foreigners; and soon after it had passed, more than 6,000 Germans, from the Palatinate, came over in a state of extreme destitution at a time when a period of great distress was already taxing to the utmost the benevolence of the rich. Nearly at the same time too, the Church acquired a considerable accession, not indeed in numbers, but in moral force, by the partial extinction of the non-juror schism. Ken had resigned his pretensions to his bishopric. Lloyd, the deposed bishop of

Norwich, died on January 1, 1709-10, and there remained no other of the prelates who had been deprived by William. One section of the non-jurors, it is true, took measures to perpetuate the division, but Dodwell, Nelson, Brokesby, and some others reverted to the Church.[1] The language of the clergy became continually more aggressive. The pulpits rang with declamations about the danger of the Church, with invectives against Nonconformists, with covert attacks upon the ministers. The train was fully laid; the impeachment of Sacheverell produced the explosion that shattered the Whig ministry of Anne.

The circumstances of that singular outbreak of Church fanaticism are well known. The hero of the drama was fellow of Magdalen College and rector of St. Saviour, Southwark; and, though himself the grandson of a dissenting minister who soon after the Restoration had suffered an imprisonment of three years for officiating in a conventicle,[2] he had been for some time a conspicuous preacher and an occasional writer[3] in the High Church ranks. It was alleged by his opponents, and, after the excitement of the contest had passed, it was hardly denied by his friends, that he was an insolent and hot-headed man, without learning, literary ability, or real piety; distinguished chiefly by his striking person and good delivery, and by his scurrilous abuse of Dissenters and Whigs. Of the two sermons that came under the consideration of Parliament, the first was preached at the Assizes of Derby, and was published with a dedication to the high sheriff and jury, deploring the dangers that menaced the Church and the betrayal of its 'principles, interests, and constitution.' The second and more famous one, 'On the perils from false brethren,' was preached on November 5, 1709, in St. Paul's Cathedral, before the Lord Mayor and aldermen of London, and was dedicated to the former. In this sermon the preacher maintained at great length the doctrine of absolute non-resistance, inveighed against

[1] See Lathbury's *Hist. of the Non-jurors* and *Hist. of Convocation*.

[2] Tindal.

[3] He had published *A Fast-day Sermon*, preached at Oxford in 1702, which was one of the works that produced Defoe's *Shortest Way with the Dissenters*, an assize sermon at Oxford, preached in 1704, and two pamphlets called *Political Union*, and *The Rights of the Church of England*.

the principle of toleration, described the Church as in a condition of imminent danger, insinuated very intelligibly that the ministers were amongst the false brethren, reflected severely upon Burnet and Hoadly, and glanced at Godolphin himself under the nickname of Volpone.[1] Referring to the vote of Parliament declaring that the Church was in no danger, he rather happily reminded his hearers that a similar vote had been carried, about the person of Charles I., at the very time when his future murderers were conspiring his death. The sermon being delivered on a very conspicuous occasion, and conveying with great violence the sentiments of a large party in the State, had an immense circulation and effect; and Mr. Dolben, the son of the last Archbishop of York, brought both it and the sermon at Derby under the notice of the House of Commons. The House voted both sermons scurrilous and seditious libels, and summoned Sacheverell to the bar. He at once acknowledged the authorship, and stated that the Lord Mayor, who was a Tory member, had encouraged him to publish the sermon at St. Paul's. This assertion would probably have led to the expulsion of the Lord Mayor had he not strenuously contradicted it. The House ultimately resolved to proceed against Sacheverell in the most formal and solemn manner in its power—by an impeachment at the bar of the House of Lords. It was desired to obtain a condemnation of the doctrine of the sermon, invested with every circumstance of dignity that could strike the imagination, and, if possible, prevent a revival of the agitation. The House, at the same time, took great pains that there should be no doubt of the main issue that was raised. The ablest and most conspicuous assailant of the doctrine of passive obedience was Hoadly, who had recently been answering the sermon of Bishop Blackhall on this very question. The House of Commons accordingly, when condemning Sacheverell, passed a resolution warmly eulogising the writings of Hoadly in defence of the Revolution, and petitioning the Queen to bestow upon him some piece of Church preferment. It refused to admit Sacheverell to bail; but this favour was soon afterwards granted him by the House of Lords.

[1] A character in the 'Fox' of Ben Jonson.

The extreme impolicy of the course which was adopted was abundantly shown by the event. Had Sacheverell been merely prosecuted in the ordinary law courts, or had the House by its own authority burnt the sermon and imprisoned the preacher for the remainder of the Session, the matter would probably have excited but little commotion. Somers, and Eyre the Solicitor-General, from the beginning opposed the impeachment, and there is reason to believe that both Marlborough and Walpole joined in the same view. Godolphin, however, actuated, it was said,[1] by personal resentment, urged it on, and it was voted by a large majority, and was at once accepted by the Church as a challenge. The necessary delay was sufficient for the organisation of a tremendous opposition, and an outburst of enthusiasm was manifested such as England had never seen since the day of the acquittal of the bishops. The ablest Tory counsel undertook the defence of Sacheverell. Atterbury, the most brilliant of the High Church controversialists, took a leading part in composing the speech which he delivered. The Vice-Chancellor of Oxford was one of his bail. He appeared in court ostentatiously surrounded by several of the chaplains of the Queen. Prayers were offered in all the leading churches, and even in the royal chapel, for 'Dr. Sacheverell under persecution,' and the pulpits all over England were enlisted in his cause. When the Queen went to listen to the proceedings, her sedan chair was surrounded by crowds crying, 'God bless your Majesty! We hope your Majesty is for High Church and Sacheverell.' When Sacheverell himself drove to Westminster Hall, the people thronged in multitudes to kiss his hand, and every head was uncovered as he passed. The meeting-houses of the Dissenters were everywhere wrecked, and that of Burgess, one of their most conspicuous preachers in London, was burnt. The houses of the Lord Chancellor, of Wharton, of Burnet, Hoadly, and Dolben, were threatened. All who were believed to be hostile to Sacheverell, all who refused to join in the cry of 'High Church and Sacheverell,' were insulted in the streets, and the condition of London became so serious that large bodies of troops were called out. The excitement propagated itself to every part of the country and to every class of society, and the

[1] See the *Hist. of the Last Four Years of Queen Anne.*

Church agitations under Anne are among the first political movements in England in which women are recorded to have taken a very active part.[1]

The prosecution, on the other hand, was conducted with much skill. The charges were that Sacheverell had described the necessary means to bring about the Revolution as odious and unjustifiable, had denounced the Toleration Act, and, in defiance of the votes of both Houses of Parliament, had represented the Church as in great danger, and the administration, both in ecclesiastical and civil affairs, as tending to the destruction of the constitution. Whatever may be thought of the conduct of a party which treated such expressions of opinion as criminal offences, it must be admitted that the speeches of the managers of the impeachment were distinguished both for moderation and ability, and it is remarkable that Burke, long afterwards, when separating from the Whig party at the French Revolution, appealed to them as the ablest and most authentic expression of the Whig policy of the statesmen of 1688.[2] It is impossible, indeed, to read those of Jekyll, Walpole, Lechmere, Parker, Eyre, and the other managers, without being struck with the guarded caution they display in asserting the rights of nations to resist their sovereigns. They carefully restrict it to cases in which the original contract was broken, in which the sovereign has violated the laws, endeavoured to subvert the scheme of government determined on in concert by King, Lords, and Commons. It is on these grounds, and on these alone, that they

[1] See Swift's *Examiner*, No. 31, Defoe has given a characteristic description of the female enthusiasm for Sacheverell. 'Matters of government and affairs of state are become the province of the ladies . . . they have hardly leisure to live, little time to eat and sleep, and none at all to say their prayers . . . Little Miss has Dr. Sacheverell's picture put into her prayer-book, that God and the Doctor may take her up in the morning before breakfast; and all manner of discourse among the women runs now upon war and government . . . This new invasion of the politician's province is an eminent demonstration of the sympathetic influence of the clergy upon the sex and the near affinity between the gown and the petticoat; since all the errors of our present and past administrators, and all breaches made upon our politics could never embark the ladies till you fall upon the clergy. But as soon as you pinch the parson he holds out his hand to the ladies for assistance, and they appear as one woman in his defence.' Wilson's *Life of Defoe*, iii. 124–126. See too the *Spectator*, No. lvii. Clarendon, however, notices a similar outburst of feminine zeal in the semi-religious Politics of the Rebellion.

[2] *Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs.*

justify the Revolution. The notion that the son of James II. was a supposititious child, which had borne a greater part in the struggle than Whig writers like to admit, was completely abandoned. The managers rested their case solely on the ground that a sovereign may be legitimately resisted who has infringed the constitutional compact by which he was bound; but at the same time they acknowledge fully that a grave and distinct violation of a fundamental law is necessary as a justification, that obedience is in all normal times a stringent duty, and that the instability of a government exposed without defence in its most essential parts to perpetual revision, at every fluctuation of popular caprice, is wholly foreign to the genius of the English constitution. To state in the fullest and most authentic manner the principles on which the Whig party justified the Revolution was one great object of the impeachment, and that object was fully attained. Another important result was that the Tory defenders of Sacheverell abandoned in the law courts the obvious meaning of the teaching of the pulpit, and, aiming chiefly at acquittal, met the charges rather by evasion than by direct defence. The right of nations in extreme cases to resist their sovereign was the main question discussed, and the language of the pulpit on the subject had been perfectly unequivocal. The clergy had long taught that royalty was so eminently a divine institution that no injustice, no tyranny, no persecution could justify resistance. Sacheverell, it is true, in his speech during the trial, reaffirmed this doctrine without qualification, and numerous passages were cited from the homilies and from the works of Anglican divines, supporting it; but his counsel, on the other hand, admitted the right of resistance in extreme cases. They contended that a preacher was justified in laying down broad moral precepts, without pausing to enumerate all possible exceptions to their application; and one of the ablest of them maintained, in direct opposition to the spirit of Tory theology, that the supreme power in England was not in the sovereign, but in the legislature.[1] In the same spirit they urged that the term 'Toleration Act' was a popular expression unknown to the law, that the proper designation of the law referred to was the 'Act

[1] See Sir Simon Harcourt's Speech for Sacheverell.

of Indulgence;' and that when Sacheverell denounced 'toleration' he alluded only to the insufficient prosecution of sceptical or blasphemous books. Many passages from such books were cited, and Sacheverell himself scandalised a large part of his audience by calling God to witness, in opposition to the plain, direct, and unquestionable meaning of his sermon, that 'he had neither suggested, nor did in his conscience believe, that the Church was in the least peril from Her Majesty's administration.' Such an assertion could have no effect, except to shake the credit of him who made it; and the House of Lords voted him guilty, by sixty-nine to fifty-two.

Here, however, ended the triumph of the Whigs. The popular feeling in favour of Sacheverell throughout England had risen almost to the point of revolution. The immense majority of the clergy were ardently on his side. The sympathies of the Queen were in the same direction. In the excited condition of the public mind, any act of severity might lead to the most dangerous consequences, and the House did not venture to impose more than a nominal penalty. The Dukes of Argyle and Somerset, who had for some time been wavering in their allegiance, took this occasion of abandoning the ministry, and several other Whig peers accompanied them.[1] Sacheverell was merely suspended from preaching for three years, and his sermons, together with the Oxford decree of 1683, were burnt. A resolution, that during the three years of his suspension he should be ineligible for promotion, was rejected by a majority of one. The House of Commons at the same time ordered the collection of sceptical passages which had been made for the defence to be burnt, as well as two books, 'On the Rights of the Christian Church' and a treatise 'On the Word Person,' of which the friends of Sacheverell had complained.

The sentence was very naturally regarded as a triumph for the accused, and it was followed by a long and fierce burst of popular enthusiasm. In London and almost every provincial town the streets were illuminated, and the blaze of bonfires attested the exultation of the people. Addresses to the Queen poured in from every part of the country, sometimes asserting in abject form the doctrine of passive obe-

[1] Coxe's *Marlborough*, ch. lxxxvii.

dience, censuring the conduct of her ministers, and in many cases imploring her to dissolve a Parliament which no longer represented the sentiments of her people.[1] Sacheverell, within a few months of his trial, obtained a living in Shropshire, and his journey to take possession of it was almost like a royal progress. At Oxford, where he continued for some time, he was magnificently entertained by the Earl of Abingdon, by the Vice-Chancellor of the University, and by the heads of the colleges. At Banbury the Mayor, Recorder, and Aldermen came, in full robes and with the mace before them, to bring him a present of wine, and to congratulate him on his deliverance. At Warwick, at Wrexham, at Shrewsbury, at Bridgenorth, at Ludlow, hundreds of the inhabitants, on horseback, escorted him into the town, while the church bells rang in his honour, and the steeples were draped with flags, and the streets hung with flowers. Drums beat and trumpets sounded at his approach, and wherever he appeared, his steps were thronged by admirers, wearing the oak-leaf so popular since the Restoration. He was forbidden to preach, but the churches could not contain the multitudes who pressed to hear him read the prayers, and crowds of infants were borne to the fonts where he presided. The Dissenters all over England were fiercely assailed. At Bristol one of their places of worship was pulled down, and the materials were flung into the river. At Exeter, Cirencester, Oxford, Gloucester, and many other places their meeting-houses and habitations were attacked, and the Low Churchmen were regarded with scarcely less virulence. One clergyman—the rector of the important and populous parish of Whitechapel—signalised himself by exhibiting, as an altar-piece in his church, a picture of the Last Supper, in which Judas was represented attired in a gown and band, with a black patch upon his forehead, and seated in an elbow-chair. The figure is said to have been at first intended for Burnet, but the painter, fearing prosecution, ultimately fixed upon Dean Kennet, a somewhat less powerful opponent of Sacheverell.[2]

[1] A collection of these addresses has been published in a single volume (1710).

[2] *Kennet's Life*, p. 140–142. Kennet wore a patch on account of a gun-shot received in early youth. This book gives a curious picture of the animosity against the Low

The policy of the Queen during this outbreak was marked by much cautious skill. However strong may have been her private sympathies, she appears during the trial to have acted in accordance with the wishes of her ministers. The chaplain who prayed for Sacheverell in her chapel was dismissed. Chief Justice Holt having died during the trial, Parker, one of the most eloquent managers of the impeachment, was promoted to his place, and a fortnight after the verdict the Queen prorogued Parliament with a speech, deploring that some had insinuated that the Church was in danger under her administration, and expressing her wish 'that men would study to be quiet, and to do their own business, rather than busy themselves in reviving questions and disputes of a very high nature.' She soon, however, perceived that the country was with the Tories, and manifested her own inclination without restraint. Among the minor incidents of the impeachment one of the most remarkable had been the reappearance in public life of the Duke of Shrewsbury. He had been conspicuous among the great Whig nobles who invited William to England, but after a brief, troubled, and vacillating career, had abandoned politics, and retired, embittered and disappointed, to Italy. 'I wonder,' he wrote with great bitterness to Somers in 1700, 'how any man who has bread in England will be concerned in business of State. Had I a son, I would sooner bind him a cobbler than a courtier, and a hangman than a statesman.' After a long period of occultation, however, he again took his place in that assembly of which he had once been the brightest ornament, and when the Sacheverell case arose he gave the weight of a name and influence that were still very great to the Tory side, and was one of those who voted for the acquittal. About a week after the prorogation, the Queen, without even apprising her ministers till the last moment of her intention, dismissed Lord Kent, the Lord Chamberlain, and gave the staff to Shrewsbury. The ministry should, undoubtedly, have resigned, but, partly through the constitutional indecision of Godolphin, and partly perhaps in order to avoid a dissolution of Parliament

Churchmen during the Sacheverell episode. See too Wright's *House of Hanover*, Wilson's *Life of Defoe*, and the Histories of Burnet, Boyer, Somerville, and Tindal.

at a time when the current flowed strongly against their party, they remained to drink the cup of humiliation to the dregs. Godolphin, it is true, wrote a very singular letter of frank and even angry remonstrance to the Queen.[1] 'Your Majesty,' he said, 'is suffering yourself to be guided to your own ruin and destruction as fast as it is possible for them to compass it to whom you seem so much to hearken;' and he proceeded to expatiate upon the new appointment, in terms which few ministers would have employed towards their sovereign. But this letter had no result. In the following month Marlborough was compelled to bestow the command of two regiments upon Colonel Hill, the brother of Mrs. Masham, who had displaced his wife in the favour of the Queen. In June, Sunderland, the Secretary of State and son-in-law of Marlborough, was summarily dismissed, and the seals were bestowed upon Lord Dartmouth, one of the most violent of Tories. In August a still bolder step was taken. Godolphin himself was dismissed. The treasury was placed in commission, Harley being one of the commissioners, and that statesman became at the same time Chancellor of the Exchequer and virtually Prime Minister. In September, the remaining ministers were dismissed. Parliament was dissolved. An election took place, which was one of the most turbulent ever known in England, and the defeat of the Whigs was so crushing that the ascendancy of their opponents during the remaining years of the reign was undisputed.

The immense power displayed by the Church in this struggle was not soon forgotten by statesmen. The utter ruin of a ministry supported by all the military achievements of Marlborough and by all the financial skill of Godolphin was beyond question mainly due to the exertions of the clergy. It furnished a striking proof that when fairly roused no other body in the country could command so large an amount of political enthusiasm, and it was also true that except under very peculiar and abnormal circumstances no other body had so firm and steady a hold on the affections of the people. The fact is the more remarkable when we consider the very singular intellectual and political activity of the time. If we measure the age of Anne by its highest intellectual achievements, a period

[1] See this curious letter in Boyer, pp. 470–471.

that was adorned among other names by those of Newton, Pope, Swift, Addison, Steele, Defoe, Bolingbroke, and Prior, can hardly find a rival in English history between the age of Shakespeare and Bacon and the age of Byron and Scott. If we measure it less by its highest achievements than by its efforts to enlarge the circle of intellectual interests it will appear scarcely less eminent. It was in the reign of Anne that Defoe created the realistic novel, that Steele originated, and Addison brought to perfection, the periodical essay which for about three-quarters of a century was the most popular form of English literature, that the first daily newspaper was published in England, that the first English law was enacted for the protection of literary property. A passion for physical science had spread widely through the nation. Except in the University of Leyden, where it was taught by an eminent professor named 's Gravesande, the great discovery of Newton had scarcely found an adherent on the Continent till it was popularised by Voltaire in 1728, but in England it had already acquired an ascendancy. Bentley, Whiston, and Clarke enthusiastically adopted it. Gregory and Keill made it popular at Oxford, and Desaguliers, who gave lectures in London in 1713, says that he found the Newtonian philosophy generally received among persons of all ranks and professions, and even among the ladies, by the help of experiments.[1] Never before had so large an amount of literary ability been enlisted in politics. Swift, Bolingbroke, Atterbury, Arbuthnot, and Prior were prominent among the Tories; Addison, Steele, and Defoe among the Whigs. Side by side with the 'Tatler,' the 'Spectator,' the 'Guardian,' and the 'Englishman,' in which the political was in a great degree subordinate to the literary element, there arose a multitude of purely political newspapers and periodicals. The 'Observator' of Tutchin, the 'Review' of Defoe, the 'Rehearsal' of Leslie, the 'Examiner' of Swift, 'Fog's Journal,' 'Dyer's News Letter,' the 'Medley,' the 'Mercurius Rusticus,' the 'Postman,' the 'Flying Post,' the 'English Post,' the 'Athenian Mercury,' and many others contributed largely to the formation of public opinion. The licentiousness of the press was made a matter of formal complaint in an address by the Lower House

[1] See Whewell's *Hist. of Inductive Philosophy*, ii. 145–155.

of Convocation in 1703, and in a Queen's Speech in 1714, and the Tory Ministry endeavoured to repress it by the Stamp Act of 1712, and by a long series of prosecutions. 'There is scarcely any man in England,' said a great Whig writer a few years later, 'of what denomination soever that is not a free thinker in politics, and hath not some particular notions of his own by which he distinguishes himself from the rest of the community. Our island, which was formerly called a nation of saints, may now be called a nation of statesmen.'[1] The extraordinary multiplication of pamphlets published at a very low price, and industriously dispersed in the streets, was especially noticed,[2] and political writings which happened to strike the popular taste acquired in the beginning of the eighteenth century a circulation perhaps greater in proportion to the population than any even of our own time. The 'True-born Englishman' of Defoe, which was published in 1700-1 in order to check the clamour against William as a foreigner, went through nine editions on good paper in about four years, was printed in the same period twelve times without the concurrence of the author, and no less than 80,000 copies of the cheap editions are said to have been disposed of in the streets of London.[3] About 40,000 copies of the famous sermon of Sacheverell were sold in a few days.[4] More than 60,000 copies of a now forgotten Whig pamphlet, by an author named Benson, published in answer to the Tory addresses to the Queen after the impeachment of Sacheverell, are said to have been sold in London.[5] Bisset's 'Modern Fanatic,' a scurrilous pamphlet against Sacheverell, ran through at least twelve editions. Of Swift's 'Conduct of the Allies,' which was written to prepare the country for the Peace of Utrecht, 11,000 copies were sold in a single month.[6] The 'Spectator,' as Fleetwood assures us,

[1] *Freeholder*, No. 53.

[2] See Wilson's *Life of Defoe*, ii. 29. Leibnitz, a few years before, wrote, 'Les feuilles volantes ont plus d'efficace en Angleterre qu'en tout autre pays.' — *Correspondance avec L'Electrice Sophie*, tom. ii. p. 224.

[3] Wilson's *Life of Defoe*, i. 346.

[4] Burnet's *Own Times*, ii. 538.

[5] Wilson's *Life of Defoe*, iii. p. 129. The pamphlet was entitled, *A Letter to Sir Joseph Banks, by birth a Swede, but naturalised and a Member of the present Parliament, concerning the late Minehead doctrine which was established by a certain free Parliament of Sweden, to the utter enslaving of that country.*

[6] Wilson's *Life of Defoe*, iii. p. 300.

attained at last a daily circulation of 14,000. The unprecedented multiplication of political clubs, which forms one of the most remarkable social features of the period, attests no less clearly the almost feverish activity of political life. Never was there a period less characterised by that intellectual torpor which we are accustomed to associate with ecclesiastical domination, yet in very few periods of English history did the English Church manifest so great a power as in the reign of Anne.

Another consideration which adds largely to the impressiveness of this fact is the nature of the doctrine that was mainly at issue. Whatever may be thought of its truth, the opinion that it is unlawful for subjects to resist their sovereign under any circumstances of tyranny and misgovernment does not appear to be well fitted to excite popular enthusiasm. This, however, was the doctrine which, during the whole of the Sacheverell agitation, was placed in the fore-front of the battle both by the Whigs who assailed and by the Tories who maintained it. It is obvious that in its plain meaning it amounted to a condemnation of the Revolution, and it is equally manifest that those who conscientiously held it would eventually gravitate rather to the House of Stuart than to the House of Brunswick. The position of the clergy during the whole of the preceding reign had been a very false one. A small minority had consistently refused to take the oath of allegiance to the new sovereign. A minority, which was probably still smaller, consistently maintained the Whig theory of government. The immense majority, however, held the doctrines of the indefeasible title of hereditary royalty, and of the sinfulness of all resistance to oppression, and they only took the oaths to the Revolutionary Government with much equivocation, and after long and painful misgiving. Much was said about the supposed vacancy of the throne by the abdication of James. Much was said about the suspicions attaching to the birth of the Prince of Wales, though in a few years these appear to have gradually disappeared. Burnet in 1689 had written a pastoral letter, in which he spoke of William as having a legitimate title to the throne of James 'in right of conquest over him,' and although the House of Commons, resenting the expression, had ordered the letter to be burnt, the theory it advocated was probably

adopted by many.[1] Among the clergy, however, who subscribed the oath of allegiance, the usual refuge lay in the distinction between the king *de jure* and the king *de facto*. Sherlock and many other divines, who asserted the doctrine of passive obedience, contended that it should be paid to the king who was actually in power. They were not called upon to defend the Revolution. They were quite ready to admit that it was a crime, and that all concerned in it had endangered their salvation, but, as a matter of fact, William was upon the throne, and rebellion being in all cases a sin, they were bound to obey him. As long, therefore, as they were not expected to pronounce any judgment upon his title, they could conscientiously take the oath of allegiance. They believed it to be a sin to resist the actual sovereign, and they could therefore freely swear to obey him. The statesmen of the Revolution at first very judiciously met the scruples of the clergy by omitting from the new oath of allegiance the words 'rightful and lawful king,'[2] which had formed part of the former oath, but in the last year of William this refuge was cut off. On the death of James, and on the recognition of the Pretender by Lewis, the Parliament, aiming expressly at this clerical distinction,[3] imposed upon all ecclesiastical persons, as well as upon all other officials, the oath of abjuration, which required them to assert that the pretended Prince of Wales had no right whatever to the crown, and to swear allegiance to the existing sovereign as 'rightful' and 'lawful.'

This harsh and impolitic measure was only carried after a violent struggle, and it was very naturally expected that it would produce a great schism in the Church. The new oath involved a distinct judgment on the Revolution, and it is not easy to see how anyone who held the doctrine of the divine right of kings as it was commonly taught in the English Church from the time of the Restoration, could possibly take it.[4] The resources of

[1] See Somers' *Tracts*, xii. 242.

[2] Lathbury's *Hist. of the Non-jurors*, p. 52–54. A writer in 1696 said with much truth, 'The Shibboleth of the Church now is King William's *de facto* title, and no conformity to homilies and rubricks will make you owned by the present Church if you should acknowledge the King to be otherwise so than *de facto*.'—*An Account of the Growth of Deism in England*, p. 10.

[3] Burnet's *Own Times*, ii. 297.

[4] Burnet gives us a summary of the methods that were resorted to. 'Though in the oath they declared that the pretended Prince of Wales had not any right whatsoever to the

casuistry, however, have never been a monopoly of the disciples of Loyola; and State Churches, though they have many merits, are not the schools of heroism. At the time of the Reformation the great body of the English clergy, rather than give up their preferments, oscillated to and fro between Protestantism and Catholicism at the command of successive sovereigns, and their conduct in 1702 was very similar. With scarcely an exception they bowed silently before the law, and consented to take an oath which to every unsophisticated mind was an abnegation of the most cherished article of their teaching. At the time when the Act came into force Anne had just mounted the throne, and the hopes which the clergy conceived from her known affection for the Church made them peculiarly anxious to remain attached to the Government. The abjuration oath contributed to perpetuate the non-juror schism by repelling those who would otherwise have returned to the Church at the death of James. It lowered the morality of the country by impairing very materially the sanctity of oaths, but it neither paralysed the energies nor changed the teaching of the Tory clergy. At no period since the Restoration did they preach the doctrine of the divine right of kings and the duty of passive obedience more strenuously than in the reign of Anne, and at very few periods did they exercise a greater influence on the English people.

One of the most characteristic features of this teaching was the language that was adopted about Charles I. The memory of that sovereign had long since been transfigured in the Tory legend, and immediately after his execution it became the custom of the Episcopal clergy to draw elaborate parallels between his sufferings and those of Christ. The service in the Prayer-book commemorating the event, by appointing the narrative of the sufferings of Christ to be read from the Gospel, suggested the parallel, which was also faintly intimated by

crown, yet in a paper (which I saw) that went about among them, it was said that *right* was a term of law which had only relation to *legal rights*, but not to a *Divine right* or to *birth-rights*; so, since that right was condemned by law, they by abjuring it did not renounce the *Divine right* that he had by his birth. They also supposed that this abjuration would only bind during the present state of things, but not in case of another revolution or conquest.' Burnet's *Own Times*, ii. p. 314. See too a curious letter in Byrom's *Remains*, vol. i. part i. pp. 30–31.

Clarendon, and developed in some of the Royalist poems and sermons with an astonishing audacity.[1] Foremost in this branch of literature was a very curious sermon preached before Charles II. at Breda in 1649.[2] The preacher declared that 'amongst all the martyrs that followed Christ into heaven bearing his cross never was there any one who expressed so great conformity with our Saviour in his sufferings' as King Charles. He observed that the parallel was so exact that it extended to the minutest particulars, even to the hour of execution, for both sufferers died at three in the afternoon. 'When Christ was apprehended,' he continued, 'he wrought a miraculous cure for an enemy, healing Malchus' ear after it was cut off; so it is well known that God enabled our sovereign to work many wonderful cures even for his enemies. . . . . When our Saviour suffered, there were terrible signs and wonders, for there was darkness over all the land; so during the time of our sovereign's trial there were strange signs seen in the sky in divers places of the kingdom. When our Saviour suffered, the centurion, beholding his passion, was convinced that he was the Son of God, and feared greatly. So one of the centurions who guarded our sovereign . . . . was convinced and is to this day stricken with great fear, horror, and astonishment. When they had crucified our Saviour, they parted his garments amongst them, and for his coat (because being without seam it could not easily be divided) they did cast lots; even so, having crucified our sovereign, they have parted his garments amongst them, his houses and furniture, his parks and revenues, his three kingdoms, and for Ireland, because it will not be easily gained, they have cast lots who should go thither to conquer it, and, so, take it to themselves; in all these things our sovereign was the living image of our Saviour.' In the reign of Anne language of this kind again became common, and in 1702 a noted clergyman, named Binckes, in a sermon before the Lower House of Con-

[1] See two curious collections called *Monumentum Regale; or, Select Epitaphs and Poems on Charles I.* (1649), and *Vaticinium Votivum, with Elegies on Charles I., Lord Capel, and Lord Villiers* (*1st year of Charles I.'s Martyrdom*). I subjoin one specimen:

Kings are gods once removed. It hence appears
No court but Heaven's can trie them by their peers,
So that for Charles the Good to have been tryed
And cast by mortal votes was Deicide.

[2] It was reprinted in the defence of the sermon of Dr. Binckes in 1702.

vocation, not only intimated that the plague and the fire of London were due to the death of Charles, but even proceeded to argue that his execution transcended in enormity the murder of Christ. 'If, with respect to the dignity of the person, to have been born King of the Jews was what ought to have screened our Saviour from violence; here is also one not only born to a crown but actually possessed of it. He was not only called king by some and at the same time derided by others for being so called, but he was acknowledged by all to be a king. He was not just dressed up for an hour or two in purple robes, and saluted with a "Hail, King!" but the usual ornaments of royalty were his customary apparel. . . . Our Saviour declaring that "His kingdom was not of this world" might look like a sort of renunciation of his temporal sovereignty, for the present desiring only to reign in the hearts of men, but here was nothing of this in the case before us. Here was an indisputable, unrenounced right of sovereignty, both by the laws of God and man. . . . Christ was pleased to set himself out of the reach of the usual temptations incident to royal greatness, and chose a condition which in all respects seemed to be the reverse to majesty, as if it had been with design to avoid the snares which accompany it, notwithstanding that he knew himself otherwise sufficiently secure, having neither been conceived in sin, nor in any way subject to the laws of it. Though the prince whom God was pleased to set over us was no way excepted from human frailty, had no other guard against sin when surrounded with temptations, but only a true sense of religion and the usual assistance of God's grace . . . . yet his greatest enemies . . . . could never charge him with the least degree of vice. . . . When Pilate asked the Jews, "Shall I crucify your king?" they thought themselves obliged to express their utmost resentment against anyone that should pretend to be their king in opposition to Cæsar. This they did upon a principle of loyalty, and out of a misguided zeal, and some stories they had got of a design he had to destroy their temple, to set himself up, and pull down the Church; but in the case before us he against whom our people so clamorously called for justice was one whose greatest crime was his being a king and a friend to the Church.' This sermon was censured by the House of Lords as 'containing

several expressions which gave just scandal and offence to all Christian people,'[1] but the author was soon after appointed Dean of Lichfield, and was twice elected by the clergy Prolocutor of Convocation. The publication of Clarendon's history in 1702 and the two following years probably contributed something to the enthusiasm for Charles. A writer during the Sacheverell agitation, speaking of the doctrine of passive obedience, said, 'I may be positive, at Westminster Abbey where I heard one sermon of repentance, faith, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, I heard three of the other, and it is hard to say whether Jesus Christ or King Charles were oftenest mentioned and magnified.'[2] The University of Oxford caused two similar pictures to be painted, the one representing the death of Christ, and the other the death of Charles. An account of the sufferings of each was placed below; and they were hung in corresponding places in the Bodleian library.[3] The poet Young, in a dedication to Queen Anne, described her grandsire as standing at the last judgment among 'the spotless saints and laurelled martyrs,' while the Almighty Judge, bending from the throne, examined the scars on the neck of Charles, and then looked at his own wounds.[4]

Another and still more curious feature of the Church enthusiasm under Queen Anne was the revival of the old belief that the sovereign was endowed with the miraculous power of curing the struma, or scrofulous tumours, by his touch. This singular superstition had existed from a very early time, both in England and in France. The English kings were supposed to have inherited the power from Edward the Confessor; the French, according to some writers, from St. Lewis, according to others, from Clovis.[5] The miracle was performed with every

[1] *Parl. Hist.*, vi. 23–24. Burnet's *Own Times*, ii. 316.

[2] Bisset's *Modern Fanatick* (12th ed.) p. 57.

[3] G. Agar Ellis's *Inquiries respecting Clarendon* (1827), p. 177.

[4] His lifted hands his lofty neck surround,
To hide the scarlet of a circling wound.
Th' Almighty Judge bends forward from His throne
Those scars to mark, and then regards His own.
Dedication to Queen Anne prefixed to Young's Poem on the Last Day.

Young had the grace to suppress this dedication in later editions of the poem.

[5] There was, however, some controversy on the subject, and a good deal of national jealousy was shown. Tooker thinks that the gift was originally the sole prerogative of the English kings, that they derived it from Lucius, who was converted before Clovis, and that the French kings derived it from alliance of

circumstance of publicity, under the inspection of the royal surgeons, and in the presence of the King's chaplains, and the tenacity with which it survived so many changes of civilisation and of religion, is one of the most curious facts in ecclesiastical history. In France it was an old custom for the King, immediately after his consecration, to go in pilgrimage to the monastery of St. Marcoul, in Champagne, where, after a period of preparatory devotion, he performed the cure. The patients were first visited by the chief physician of the King. They were then ranged in the church, or, if they were too numerous, in the adjoining cloisters and park. The King went among them, accompanied by his grand almoner, the captain of his guards, and his chief physician, and he made the sign of the cross on the face of each, pronouncing the words 'Dieu te guerisse, le Roy te touche.' It was pretended that the cures were more numerous in France under the third race of kings than under the two preceding ones, and it is recorded that Lewis XIV., three days after his consecration, in 1654, touched more than 2,500 sick persons in the church of St. Remy, at Rheims.[1] In England a special Latin service was drawn up for the occasion under Henry VII., and it appears to have continued, with the omission of some Popish phraseology, till the end of the reign of Elizabeth.[2] The Reformation in no degree weakened the belief. A Doctor of Divinity, named William Tooker, in the reign of Elizabeth, wrote a work describing the cures he had himself witnessed, and he relates among other cases that of a Popish recusant who was converted to Protestantism, when he found by experience that the excommunicated Queen had cured his scrofula by her touch. The Catholics were much perplexed by the miracle, and were inclined to argue that it was performed by virtue of the sign of the cross which was

blood with the English. *Charisma seu Donum Sanationis* (1597). Laurentius, a physician of Henry IV. of France, wrote a book *De Mirabili Strumarum Curatione*, in which he appropriates the power solely to the French kings. Usually the English writers admitted that the French kings derived the power from St. Lewis, and contented themselves with asserting the superior antiquity of the British prerogative derived from Edward the Confessor. See Collier's *Ecclesiastical Hist.*, Bk. iii. ch. 2. Fuller's *Church Hist.*, Bk. ii.

[1] Menin, *Histoire du Sacre et Couronnement des Rois de France* (1723), pp. 307–314. St. Marcoul is said during his life to have cured many scrofulous persons.

[2] See Lathbury's *Hist. of Convocation*, p. 435.

employed, but in the following reign this sign was omitted from the ceremony without in any degree impairing its efficacy. Under Charles I. the service was drawn up in English, and in the conflict between the royal and republican parties the miracle assumed a considerable prominence. One cure worked by this sovereign was especially famous. As he was being brought by his enemies through Winchester, on his way to the Isle of Wight, an innkeeper of Winchester, who was grievously ill and in daily fear of suffocation, and who had vainly sought help from the doctors, flung himself in the way of the royal prisoner. He was driven back by the guards and not suffered to touch the King, but he threw himself on his knees upon the ground, imploring help, and crying 'God save the king!' The King, struck by the spectacle of so much loyalty, said 'Friend, I see thou art not permitted to come near me, and I cannot tell what thou wouldst have, but God bless thee and grant thy desire.' The prayer was heard; the illness vanished, and, strange to relate, the blotches and tumours which disappeared from the body of the patient appeared in the bottle from which he had before taken his unavailing medicine, and it began to swell both within and without. The story is related by Dr. John Nicholas, warden of Winchester College, who declares it 'within his own knowledge to be every word of it essentially true.'[1] After the death of the King it was found that handkerchiefs dipped in his blood possessed the same efficacy as the living touch. Richard Wiseman, 'sergeant chirurgeon of Charles II.,' published, in 1676, a very curious work called 'Chirurgical Treatises,' in which he entered largely into the treatment of the king's evil, and declared that many hundreds had derived benefit from the blood of Charles.[2] A case was related of a girl of fourteen or fifteen, at Deptford, who had become quite blind through the king's evil. She had sought in vain for help from the surgeons, till at last her eyes were touched with a handkerchief stained with the royal blood, and she at once regained her sight. Hundreds of persons, it was said, came daily to see her from London and other places.[3] Charles II. retained the

[1] Browne's *Charisma Basilicon*, pp. 132–137.

[2] P. 247. See too Browne's *Charisma Basilicon*, p. 109.

[3] This case is related in a tract in the British Museum, called, *A Miracle*

power in exile, as Francis had done when a prisoner at Madrid, and he touched for the scrofula in Holland, Flanders, and even France.[1] In the great outburst of enthusiastic loyalty that followed the Restoration the superstition attained its climax, and it may be seriously questioned whether in the whole compass of history there is any individual to whom a greater number of miracles has been ascribed than to the most worthless and immoral of English kings. Wiseman assures us that he had been 'a frequent eye-witness of cures performed by his Majesty's touch alone, without any assistance from chirurgery, and these many of them such as had tired out all the endeavours of all chirurgeons before they came thither.' One of his surgeons, named John Browne, whose official duty it was, during many years, to inspect the sick and to witness and verify the cures, has written a book on the subject, which is among the most curious in the literature of superstition, and which contains a history of the cures, a description of numerous remarkable cases which came before the author, and a full calendar, year by year, of the sick who were touched. It appears that in a single year Charles performed the ceremony 8,500 times, and that in the course of his reign he touched nearly 100,000 persons. Before the sick were admitted into the presence of the King it was necessary that they should obtain medical certificates attesting the reality of the disease, and in 1684 the throng of sufferers demanding these was so great that six or seven persons were pressed to death before the surgeon's door.[2] Some points, however, connected with the miracle were much disputed. It was a matter of controversy whether, as was popularly believed, the touch had a greater efficacy on Good Friday than on any other day; whether, as Sir Kenelm Digby maintained, the cure was so dependent upon the gold medal which the King hung around the neck of the patient that if this were lost the malady returned; whether the King obtained the power directly from God or through the medium of the oil of consecration. The Catholicism of James did not impair his power, and he

of Miracles wrought by the Blood of Charles I. upon a Mayd at Detford, four miles from London (1649).

[1] Wiseman's *Chirurgical Treatises*, p. 245. Browne's *Charisma Basilicon*, pp. 63–64.

[2] Evelyn's *Diary*, March 28, 1684. See too Evelyn's description of the ceremony, July, 1660.

exercised it to the very eve of the Revolution. A petition has been preserved in the records of the town of Portsmouth, in New Hampshire, asking the Assembly of that province, in 1687, to grant assistance to one of the inhabitants who desired to make the long journey to England in order to obtain the benefit of the royal touch.[1] In that same year, in the centre of the learned society of Oxford the King touched seven or eight hundred sick on a single Sunday.[2] In the preceding year, in the midst of what is termed the Augustan age of French literature, the traveller Gemelli saw Lewis XIV. touch, on Easter Sunday, about 1,600 at Versailles.[3]

The political importance of this superstition is very manifest. Educated laymen might deride it, but in the eyes of the English poor it was a visible, palpable attestation of the indefeasible sanctity of the royal line. It placed the sovereignty entirely apart from the category of mere human institutions, and proved that it possessed a virtue and a glory which the other political forces of the nation could neither create, nor rival, nor destroy. It proved that no personal immorality, no misgovernment, no religious apostacy, no deprivation of political power, could annul the consecration which the Divine hand had imparted to the legitimate heir of the British throne. The Revolution in England at once suspended the miracle, for William, being a stranger, was not generally believed to possess the power, though Whiston relates that on one solitary occasion the King was prevailed upon to touch a sick person, 'praying God to heal the patient, and grant him more wisdom at the same time,' and that the touch, in spite of the manifest incredulity of the Sovereign, proved efficacious.[4] In the person of Anne, however, the old dynasty was again upon the throne, and in the ecclesiastical and political reaction of her reign the royal miracle speedily revived. The service, which was before printed separately, was now inserted in the Prayer-book. The Privy Council issued proclamations stating when the Queen would perform the miracle. The announcement was read in all the parish churches. Dr.

[1] Graham's *Hist. of the United States*, i. 419.

[2] *Life of Anthony Wood.*

[3] Churchill's *Collection of Voyages*, iv. p. 630.

[4] Whiston's *Memoirs* (Ed. 1753), i. p. 377. Whiston ascribed the cures to the prayers of the priests.

Dicken, the Sergeant Surgeon to the Queen who examined the patients, attested in the strongest terms the reality of many of the cures.[1] Swift mentions, in his 'Journal to Stella,' making an application through the Duchess of Ormond, in 1711, in favour of a sick boy. In a single day, in 1712, 200 persons were touched, and among the scrofulous children who underwent the operation was Samuel Johnson.[2] The Nonjurors were especially zealous in urging the miracle as a proof of the necessity of adhering to the ancient line, and it is indeed remarkable how many eminent authorities, in different periods, may be cited in favour of the belief. It found its way into the greatest of the plays of Shakespeare,[3] and Fuller, Heylin, Collier, and Carte among historians, as well as Sancroft, Whiston, Hickes, and Bull among divines, have expressed their firm belief in the miracle. Nothing can be more emphatic than the language of some of them. 'This noisome disease,' says Fuller, speaking of the king's evil, 'is happily healed by the hands of the Kings of England stroking the sore, and if any doubt of the truth thereof, they may be remitted to their own eyes for further confirmation.'[4] 'To dispute the matter of fact,' said Collier, 'is to go to the excesses of scepticism, to deny our senses, and to be incredulous even to ridiculousness.'[5] 'That divers persons desperately labouring under the king's evil,' said Bull, 'have been cured by the mere touch of the royal hands, assisted with the prayers of the priests of our Church attending, is unquestionable, unless the faith of all our ancient writers, and the consentient report of hundreds of most credible persons in our own ages, attesting the same, is to be questioned.'[6] We may observe, however, that even Tooker and Browne acknowledged that there were some who questioned the miracle, and it was admitted that the sick were not always cured and that the cures were not always lasting. The force of imagination to which the ceremony powerfully appealed doubtless effected much. Many impostors came for the purpose of obtaining the gold medal which was bestowed on the occasion in England, or the alms which

[1] Douglas' *Criterion* (Ed. 1807), pp. 203–205.

[2] Boswell's *Johnson* (Croker's ed.) p. 7.

[3] *Macbeth*, Act iv. Scene 3.

[4] Fuller's *Church Hist.*, Bk. ii.

[5] Collier's *Ecclesiastical Hist.*, Bk. iii. ch. 2.

[6] *Sermon on St. Paul's Thorn in the Flesh.*

were distributed in France, and the great political utility of the belief, as well as simple sycophancy, combined with honest credulity to sustain the delusion.[1]

What has been said will be sufficient to show the extent and the nature of the political influence the Anglican clergy at this time exercised in England. It will show that their theory of the nature of royalty was radically different from that of a constitutional government; that, but for the happy fact of the Catholicism of James II. and of his son, the whole stress of their influence would have been thrown into the scale of arbitrary government; and that, in spite of that Catholicism, they were accustomed to preach doctrines from the pulpit which could have no other legitimate or logical conclusion than the restoration of the Stuarts. They were, it is true, sincerely devoted to the reigning sovereign. It is true also that they looked forward with real alarm to a Catholic king, that they sometimes at least professed themselves attached to the Protestant succession,[2] and that very few of them were prepared to make serious sacrifices for a restoration which might be injurious to the Church. Still, the natural issue of their teaching could not be mistaken. When the nation was called to choose between a sovereign whose title was lineal descent and a sovereign whose title rested upon a revolution and an Act of Parliament, there

[1] In addition to the older books I have cited, the reader may find much information on this curious subject in Wilson's *Life of Defoe*, ii. 15–21; Nichols' *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century*, ii. 495–504; Lathbury's *Hist. of Convocation*, pp. 428–439; Bishop Douglas' *Criterion*, pp. 195–210; Tindal's *Hist. of England*, Book xxvi.

[2] The ablest of the Tory clergy, writing with the object of repelling the charge of Jacobitism, says, 'The logick of the highest Tories is now that this was the Establishment they found as soon as they arrived at a capacity of judging, that they had no hand in turning out the late King, and, therefore, had no crime to answer for if it were any; that the inheritance to the crown is in pursuance of laws made ever since their remembrance, by which all Papists are excluded, and they have no other rule to go by; that they will no more dispute King William III.'s title than King William I.'s, since they must have recourse to history for both; that they have been instructed in the doctrines of passive obedience, non-resistance, and hereditary right, and find them all necessary for preserving the present Establishment in Church and State, and for continuing the succession in the House of Hanover, and must, in their own opinion, renounce all those doctrines by setting up any other title to the crown. This, I say, seemeth to be the political creed of all the high-principled I have for some time met with of forty years old and under.' Swift's *Free Thoughts upon the Present State of Affairs*. The language commonly used about Charles I. is quite sufficient to show that the clergy were not as unhistorical as was alleged.

was not much doubt to which side the consistent adherent of the divine right of kings should incline. Had the Queen died during the excitement of the Sacheverell agitation, it is more than probable that the Pretender would have at once been summoned to the throne, and the strength of the Church party in England was the most serious danger which then menaced the parliamentary institutions of England. Monopolising, as it did, by its command of the universities, the higher education, and attracting by its great rewards a very large proportion of the talent of the country, its power in an age when there was very little serious scepticism among the educated, and no considerable rival organisation among the poor, appeared almost irresistible. The Church was the natural leader of the country gentry and peasants. Its influence ramified through all sections of society. Its pulpits were to thousands the sole vehicle of instruction.

Still, great as was its power, several influences had been at work undermining or restricting its authority. The Church had gained something at the Reformation in the increased credibility of its theology, and it had gained much more by purging away the taint of its foreign origin. In a country where the national sentiment was as strong and as insular as in England it would be difficult to overrate the accession of strength thus acquired. Italian intervention had been for centuries a source of perpetual irritation to the national sentiment, while the Church that was founded at the Reformation was of all institutions the most intensely and most distinctively English. Occasionally, indeed, great outbursts of political sycophancy or of sacerdotal extravagance within its borders have brought it into collision with the broad stream of English thought, but considered as a whole and in most periods of its history it may justly claim to have been eminently national. Its love of compromise, its dislike to pushing principles to extreme consequences, its decorum, its social aspects, its instinctive aversion to abstract speculation, to fanatical action, to vehement, spontaneous, mystical, or ascetic forms of devotion, its admirable skill in strengthening the orderly and philanthropic elements of society, in moderating and regulating character, and blending with the various phases of national life,

all reflected with singular fidelity English modes of thought and feeling, the strength and the weakness of the English character. But on the other hand ecclesiastical influence in England was seriously reduced at the Reformation, not only by the creation of the new doctrine of the royal supremacy, and by the abolition of some of the doctrines most favourable to ecclesiastical despotism, but also more directly by the expulsion of twenty-seven mitred abbots from the House of Lords, and the proportion of spiritual to lay peers has since then been continually diminishing by the increase of the latter. Before the abolition of the monasteries the spiritual peers formed a majority of the Upper House. Even after the removal of the abbots and priors they were about one-third; at present they are less than one-fifteenth.[1]

Accompanying this change there was a great revolution in the social position of the clergy. An enormous proportion of the revenues of the Church had been swept away by the confiscations under Henry VIII., and at the very time when the absolute or nominal incomes of the clergy were thus immensely reduced the great influx of American gold was lowering the value, or in other words, the purchasing power, of money more rapidly and more seriously than in any other recorded period. Besides this the abolition of the rule of celibacy, while it deprived the clergy of much of the dignity that belongs to a separate caste, greatly increased their usual wants. The force of these three causes reduced the great body of the parochial clergy to extreme destitution. In the time of Elizabeth they were often driven to become shoemakers or tailors in order to earn their bread,[2] and several generations passed before there was much perceptible improvement. 'The revenues of the English Church,' said a writer in the latter half of the seventeenth century, 'are generally very small and insufficient, so that a shopkeeper or common artisan would hardly change their conditions with ordinary pastors of the Church. This is the great reproach and shame of the English Reformation, and will one day prove the ruin of Church and State. The clergy . . . are accounted by many as the dross and refuse of

[1] Buckle's *Hist. of Civilisation*, i. 381.

[2] See Perry's *Hist. of the Church of England*, i. 7.

the nation. Men think it a stain to their blood to place their sons in that function, and women are ashamed to marry with any of them.'[1] Another writer, who wrote nearly at the same time, tells us that many hundreds of the parochial clergy lived on incomes of not more than 20*l.* to 30*l.* a-year. He describes the impoverished clergyman driven to fill the dung-cart or to heat the oven, and he notices especially the discredit reflected on the order by the fact that sons of clergymen were found holding horses or waiting on tapsters on account of the utter inability of their parents to provide for them.[2] At the time when Queen Anne's Bounty was granted, Burnet assures us there were still some hundreds of cures that had not a certain provision of 20*l.* a-year, and some thousands that had not 50*l.*[3] Swift, in a tract published a few years later, maintains that the position of the rural clergyman in England was better than that of the same class in Ireland, but his description of the English country clergyman amply corroborates all that has been said of his low social position. 'He liveth like an honest plain farmer, as his wife is dressed but little better than Goody. He is sometimes graciously invited by the squire, where he sitteth at humble distance. If he gets the love of his people they often make him little useful presents. He is happy by being born to no higher expectation, for he is usually the son of some ordinary tradesman or middling farmer. His learning is much of a size with his birth and education, no more of either than what a poor hungry servitor can be expected to bring with him from his college.'[4] The position of such a curate was by no means the worst. The system of pluralities, which had been necessary under Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, partly on account of the small value of many benefices, and still more on account of the difficulty of finding a sufficient number of Reformed clergymen to officiate over England, had been much aggravated during the period that immediately followed the Act of Uniformity, and it produced a class of clergymen of the

[1] Chamberlayne's *Angliæ Notitiæ*, 3rd ed. (1669), pp. 367–369.

[2] Eachard's *Contempt of the Clergy*.

[3] Burnet's *Hist. of his Own Times*, ii. 370.

[4] *Considerations on Two Bills relating to the Clergy of Ireland* (1731).

lowest type. 'The cheapest curates,' wrote Archbishop Tennison to Queen Anne in 1713, 'are, notwithstanding the care of the bishops, too often chosen, especially by lay impropriators, some of whom have sometimes allowed but 5*l.* or 6*l.* a-year for the service of the Church, and such having no fixed place of abode, and a poor and precarious maintenance, are powerfully tempted to a kind of vagrant and dishonourable life, wandering for better subsistence from parish to parish, even from north to south.'[1] Some clergymen were hired by laymen to read prayers at their houses for 10*s.* a month, and many others lived as private chaplains either with noblemen or with country gentlemen at salaries of from 10*l.* to 30*l.* a year, with vales.[2] These clergymen were popularly known as Mess Johns, trencher chaplains, or young Levites. They were usually treated like upper menials. They lived on familiar terms with the servants, were made the butt of the squire and of his children, were dismissed from the dinner table as soon as the pastry appeared,[3] and if they had not already formed a connection with the cook and the housemaid, they often closed their career by purchasing some small living at the expense of a marriage with the cast-off mistress of their patron. This great evil has been attributed to the period of the civil war, when numbers of the proscribed clergy found shelter in the houses of small country gentry; but the trencher chaplains existed at an earlier date; they are vividly painted both by Bishop Hall[4] and by

[1] See a remarkable MSS. letter about pluralities, by the Archbishop, in the *Domestic Papers* at the Record-office, Jan. 1712–13.

[2] Compare Eachard's *Causes of the Contempt of the Clergy* (10th ed.), p. 25; Oldham's poem, *To a Friend about to leave the University*; Swift's *Project for the Advancement of Religion*,' the *Intelligencer*, No. 5.

[3] See a very curious collection of passages from the *Tatler* and *Guardian*, from Oldham's *Satires*, and from some other sources in Calamy's *Life*, pp. 217–219. So too Gay speaks of

Cheese that the table's closing rites denies,
And bids me with th' unwilling chaplain rise.
Trivia, Book ii.

[4] A gentle squire would gladly entertain
Into his house some trencher chappelain,
Some willing man that might instruct his sons
And that could stand to good conditions:
First, that he lie upon the truckle bed
While his young maister lieth over-head;
Second, that he do on no default
Ever presume to sit above the salt;
Third, that he never charge his trencher twice;
Fourth, that he use all common courtesies,
Sit bare at meales, and one half rise and wait;

Burton,[1] and the results of their treatment were very evident. The Non-juror Lesley justly described it as one of the great causes of the discredit of the clergy that 'chaplains are now reckoned under the notion of servants,' and he complained that instead of being appointed by the bishops it was 'left to everyone's fancy (and some very unable to judge) to take in and turn out at their pleasure, as they do to their footmen, that they may be wholly subservient to their humour and their frolics, sometimes to their vices; and to play upon the chaplain is often the best part of the entertainment, and religion suffers with it.'[2] A cringing and obsequious character was naturally formed, and the playwriters found in these clergymen one of the easiest subjects for their ridicule. Even in the towns where the stamp was much superior, the clergy had their separate clubs and coffeehouses, mixed little with the laity, and were nervously apprehensive of ridicule.[3] The town rectors and the great church dignitaries were, it is true, second to none in Europe in genius and in learning, and they occupied a very conspicuous social position, but even they were by no means uniformly opulent. Swift assures us that there were at least ten bishoprics in England, whose incomes did not average 600*l.* a year.[4] The beautiful picture which Herbert has drawn of an ideal country clergyman shows that a high conception of clerical duty was not unknown among the rustic clergy; and Addison probably drew his portrait of the chaplain

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Last, that he never his young master beat
But he must aske his mother to define
How many jerks she would his breech should line;
All these observed, he would contented be
To give five markes and winter liverie.
Hall's *Satires*, Book ii. Sat. 6.

[1] *Anatomy of Melancholy*, Part i. sec. 2, Mem. 3, Subs. 15.

[2] The *Case of the Regale and Pontificate stated.* See, too, the descriptions of these chaplains in Eachard and in the *Athenian Oracle* (3rd ed., vol. i. p. 542), and on their marriages a characteristic passage in Swift's *Directions to the Waiting Maid.* Macaulay's well-known description of the clergy in the latter part of the seventeenth century, has been very severely criticised in a little volume by Churchill Babington. It is clear that Macaulay greatly understated the number of men of good family that entered the Church, and his picture is, perhaps, in other respects a little over-coloured, but the passages I have cited, are, I think, quite sufficient to establish its substantial accuracy.

[3] Swift's *Project for the Advancement of Religion.*

[4] *Preface to the Bishop of Sarum's Introduction.*

of Sir Roger de Coverley from living examples;[1] but the class in the early years of the eighteenth century was necessarily ignorant and coarse, and an impoverished married clergy mix too closely in the secular affairs of life to retain the kind and degree of reverence with which the mendicant friar is often invested.

Something was done about the time of the Revolution to remedy these evils by private benevolence,[2] and Queen Anne's Bounty placed a sum of about 17,000*l.* a year at the disposal of the Church for the augmentation of small livings.[3] The custom of keeping chaplains, as distinguished from tutors, in great houses, fell about the same time into desuetude, and this fact was one cause of the general neglect of family worship during the Hanoverian period.[4] But though an amelioration of the social position of the clergy undoubtedly took place, it was very slow, and it was not until 1809 that Parliament adopted the policy of making direct grants for the augmentation of small livings. The low social position of the country clergy did not prevent them from forming one of the most powerful forces in the country, but it no doubt enfeebled the Church interest, which might have otherwise been irresistible in English politics. The practice of bestowing high political posts upon clergymen almost disappeared in England after the Reformation; the last instance of the kind was under Queen Anne, when the Privy Seal was bestowed on Robinson, the Bishop of Bristol, but in Ireland, as we shall see, political affairs were largely administered by prelates at a much later period. The power of imposing direct taxation on the clergy had from a very early date been reserved for Convocation, whose enactments, however, on this point required the confirmation of Parliament, but in 1664 the right of self-taxation was withdrawn from the Church; Convocation thus lost its most important prerogative, and the loss was not at all adequately supplied by the privilege of voting for members of parliament, which was then bestowed on the clergy. The attitude of the Church towards the Revolution still further weakened its

[1] *Spectator*, No. 106.

[2] Eachard notices that bishops had done something to augment the vicarages in their dioceses.

[3] Burnet's *Hist. of his Own Times*, ii. 369. It was at first, however, encumbered by some very heavy charges. See Hodgson's account of *Queen Anne's Bounty*, p. 8.

[4] Burnet's *Own Times*, ii. 655.

influence. The servile doctrine of passive obedience which it proclaimed when the liberties of England seemed tottering to their fall; its virtual abandonment of that doctrine the moment its own interests were touched; its vacillation and ultimate disloyalty when the Government of William was established; the non-juror schism which divided its influence, withdrew from it many of its most energetic teachers, and affixed an imputation of time-serving on those who remained; the Toleration Act, which enabled Dissenters to celebrate their worship under the protection of the law; and lastly, the abjuration oath, which brought into strong relief the contrast between the principles and the conduct of a large proportion of the clergy, were all steps in emancipating England from ecclesiastical despotism. It was impossible to disguise the fact that the Government was based upon and could only be justified by principles directly antagonistic to those which the majority of the clergy had taught as essential doctrines of their Church.

There was one other agency at work which was partly favourable and partly unfavourable to the Church. There existed among the clergy a small body of able and enlightened men who had adopted the principles of Locke and Chillingworth, who cordially welcomed the civil and religious liberty established by the Revolution, and who, regarding with considerable contempt the minute questions that created such animosity between the High Church clergy and the Dissenters, were themselves hated by their brethren with all the virulence of theological rancour. The most prominent, and to the majority of the clergy the most obnoxious of them, was Burnet, whose promotion to the bishopric of Salisbury was the first and most significant of the Church appointments of William. Scarcely any other figure in English ecclesiastical history has been so fully portrayed, and the lines of his character are indeed too broad and clear to be overlooked. No one can question that he was vain, pushing, boisterous, indiscreet, and inquisitive, overflowing with animal spirits and superabundant energy, singularly deficient in the tact, delicacy, reticence, and decorum that are needed in a great ecclesiastical position. Having thrown himself, with all the

enthusiasm of his nature, into the cause of the Revolution from the very beginning of the design, he became one of the most active politicians of his time. He was a constant pamphleteer and debater. On at least one occasion, when he advocated the Act of Attainder that brought Sir John Fenwick to the scaffold, he stooped to services that were very little in harmony with his profession. He was one of the last writers of authority who countenanced the fable of the supposititious birth of the Pretender, and in many other points he allowed the passions of a violent partizan to discolour that brilliant history which is one of the most authentic records of the times of the Revolution. But if his faults were very manifest, they were much more than balanced by great virtues and splendid acquirements. He was a man of real honesty and indomitable courage; of a kind, generous, and affectionate nature, of fervent piety, of wide sympathies, of rare tolerance. In the time of the Stuarts he had more than once refused lucrative employments through conscientious motives; he had boldly remonstrated with Charles upon his vices; he had reclaimed the brilliant Rochester to the paths of virtue; he was one of the very few Whigs who never countenanced the delusion of the Popish plot. He was the friend of Russell, whom he attended on the scaffold. He had received the thanks of both Houses of Parliament for the publication of that great 'History of the Reformation,' which was one of the strongest and most enduring barriers to the Catholic tendencies of the age of the Stuarts. Raised to power by the Revolution, he made it the supreme object of his life to extend religious liberty to all English Protestants, and, if possible, to bring the great Nonconforming bodies into union with the Church. His own mother had been an ardent Presbyterian. In Holland and in Switzerland he had formed intimate connections with members of different creeds; and, while maintaining a strong and fervent orthodoxy of doctrinal belief, he soon convinced himself that the points of discipline or ceremony that chiefly divided the Established Church from Nonconformity were immaterial, and he was quite ready to purchase unity by surrendering the cross at baptism, the surplice, and the custom of chanting prayers, and even by abandoning or modifying the subscription to the Articles. With these principles he was naturally the foremost

advocate of every measure for removing the disabilities of the Dissenters, while on the other hand, he tried to save the High Church clergy from the obligation of taking the abjuration oath; and although on grounds of political necessity he supported the laws against the Catholics, and the expulsion of the non-jurors, he is said, in particular instances, to have shown much kindness to members of both bodies. He also laboured alone in 1709 to abolish the penalty of confiscation for treason, which ruined the children of Jacobites for the faults of their parents.

Hardly any other member of the Whig party excited such violent hostility. During his life he was the constant object of the most scurrilous abuse. His coffin was insulted by the mob as it was borne to the tomb,[1] and his memory has been pursued, even to our own day, with implacable hatred by a large section of his brethren. His eminently masculine mind looked down with undisguised contempt on the questions that were most dear to the Church, and he never lost an opportunity of expressing his indignation at the perpetual attempts that were made to excite popular animosity against the Dissenters, and at the pretensions to sacerdotal power which were the root and the essence of the High Church teaching. At the same time his bitterest detractors were unable with any colour of reason to deny either his talents, his piety, or the great services he rendered to the Church. In intellectual ability, Atterbury and Swift could alone, in the High Church ranks, be compared with him; but Atterbury was a mere brilliant incendiary, and was tainted with the guilt of the most deliberate perjury; while Swift was evidently wholly unsuited to his profession, and his splendid but morbid genius was fatally stained by coarseness, scurrility, and profanity. Burnet, whatever may have been his faults, had at least never written a line at which the most modest need blush, and he was one of the most active and laborious clergymen, one of the most considerable theologians, one of the ablest religious writers in the Church. His work on the Thirty-nine Articles is perhaps the most accredited exposition of the doctrines of Anglicanism. He had originally suggested to Mary the scheme of applying the firstfruits to the augmentation of small livings, which was afterwards carried

[1] See *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1788, p. 952.

out by Anne. His influence probably contributed more than any other single cause to prevent the Whig party from being wholly severed from the Church. His sermons, delivered extempore, and with the most fervid and impassioned earnestness, made an impression which was remembered long after with regret during the stagnation of the Hanoverian period.[1] As a bishop, his censors were compelled reluctantly to admit that, if no one took a lower view of sacerdotal pretensions, no one insisted on, or himself maintained, a higher standard of clerical duty. It might easily have been expected that a life spent in great literary and political labours would have proved a bad preparation for the petty and often irksome administrative duties of a bishopric. Burnet himself appears to have been conscious of the danger. Few things in religious biography are more touching than the discriminating, delicate, and tender strokes with which he delineated the infirmity of Usher,[2] who had allowed the saintly gentleness of his temper to interfere with the rough work of reforming abuses, who flinched too often at the prospect of opposition and discord, and buried himself in private devotions and profound studies, while he ought to have been engaged in the active duties of his diocese. But no such charge could be brought against Burnet. No English bishop exhibited a greater activity in combating the evil of pluralities; in watching over the character and education of his clergy; in making himself intimately acquainted with the wants and circumstances of the parishes under his care, than this great scholar and active politician.[3]

The small school of latitudinarian divines, among whom Burnet was conspicuous, counted several other names eminent for learning and piety. It had grown up chiefly at Cambridge at the time when Cudworth, Henry More, Wilkins, and Thomas Burnet were the leading intellects of that university, and the

[1] See the striking testimony of Speaker Onslow, in a note to *Burnet*, ii. 721. Dartmouth noticed that the vehemence of Burnet's delivery impaired the effect of his speaking in the House of Lords.

[2] *Life of Bedell*, pp. 85–87.

[3] Nearly everything that can be said against Burnet will be found in the annotations to the Oxford edition of his history. See too Hickes' scurrilous attack and the severe criticism in Lathbury's *History of the Nonjurors*, pp. 69–75. His best defence is in his own works and in his life by Thomas Burnet. I need hardly refer to the admirable character of Burnet in Macaulay's History, ch. vii.

Revolution thrust it into a prominence it would not naturally have assumed. William, as might have been expected, turned to it in the selection of his bishops; and owing to deaths and to the expulsion of the Nonjurors, he had soon no less than fifteen bishoprics to fill. Among the new prelates were, Patrick, who was author of devotional works which are still occasionally read, and who was famous for his skill in the composition of prayers; Cumberland, who will always be remembered as the defender of the doctrine of an innate law of nature against the Utilitarianism of Hobbes; Stillingfleet, the antagonist of Locke, and one of the most profound scholars of his age; and Tillotson, who was incontestably the most popular of living preachers. A great change had passed over the character of pulpit oratory a few years before the Revolution, chiefly under the influence of the last-named divine, who finally discredited the false taste which, since the days of James I., had been prevalent, and which has been ascribed in a great degree to the success and example of Bishop Andrewes.[1] The passion for long, involved sentences, for multitudinous divisions, for ingenious and far-fetched conceits, and for great displays of patristic and classical learning, passed away, and a clearer and less ornate style became popular. The change was somewhat analogous to that which had passed over English poetry between the time of Cowley and Donne and that of Dryden and Pope; and over English prose between the time of Glanvil and Browne and that of Addison and Swift. Nor was it merely in the form. Appeals both to authority and to the stronger passions gradually ceased. The more doctrinal aspects of religion were softened down or suffered silently to recede, and, before the eighteenth century had much advanced, sermons had very generally become mere moral essays, characterised chiefly by a cold good sense, and appealing almost exclusively to prudential motives. The essay writers, whose works consisted in a great measure of short moral dissertations, set the literary taste of the age; and they had a powerful effect on the pulpit. The popularity of the sermons of Secker greatly strengthened the tendency,[2] and it was only towards the close of the century that the influence of the

[1] Birch's *Life of Tillotson*, p. 20–21. Evelyn's *Diary*, July 15, 1683.

[2] Walpole's *Mem. of George II.* vol. i. pp. 65–66.

Methodist movement, extending gradually through the Established Church, introduced a more emotional, and at the same time a more dogmatic, type of preaching.

The results of these numerous latitudinarian appointments after the Revolution were very remarkable. The bishops as a body soon constituted the most moderate, the most liberal, the most emphatically Protestant portion of the clergy, and they had every disposition to enter into alliance with the Dissenters. Burnet had been the strongest advocate of the Comprehension Bill, and, as he has himself informed us, he had no scruple in communicating with non-episcopal churches in Holland and Geneva. Kidder was suspected of a leaning towards Presbyterianism. Stillingfleet, though in his later life he was much less latitudinarian than his colleagues, had accepted a living in Cambridgeshire at a time when Episcopacy was proscribed. Patrick had been educated as a Dissenter, had received his first orders from the Presbytery during the Commonwealth, and had taken a prominent part, in conjunction with Burnet, Tillotson, and Stillingfleet, in the scheme of comprehension. Tillotson himself was avowedly of the school of Chillingworth, and if we may believe the assertion of Hickes, he had shown his indifference to forms very practically by allowing communicants to receive the sacrament sitting, if they were foolish enough to object to receiving it kneeling. The measure which aroused the strongest clerical indignation in the reign of Anne was undoubtedly the impeachment of Sacheverell, but seven out of twelve bishops voted for his condemnation. The measures which excited the warmest clerical enthusiasm were the Occasional Conformity and the Schism Acts, but the majority of the bishops opposed the first Act both in 1703, when it was ardently supported by the Court, and in 1704, when the Court held aloof from it, and five bishops signed a protest against the second. In the eyes of the majority of the bishops the Church of England was emphatically a Protestant Church, and the differences between the Establishment and the chief Nonconformist bodies were on matters of comparatively little moment. They were in this respect of the school of Leighton, and still more clearly of the school of Chillingworth, and there can be no doubt that they carried with them the great body of educated laymen in the towns. Three

men—Chillingworth, Locke, and Tillotson—had set the current of religious thought in this class, and their influence extended with but little abatement through the greater part of the eighteenth century. On the other hand the great body of the clergy, who hated the Revolution, the Toleration Act, and the Dissenters, and who perceived with rage and indignation that political ascendancy was passing from their hands, strained all their energies to aggrandise their priestly power, and to envenom the difference between themselves and the Nonconformists. The Nonjuror theology represented this tendency in its extreme form, and exercised a wide influence beyond its border. The writers of this school taught that Episcopalian clergymen were as literally priests as were the Jewish priests, though they belonged not to the order of Aaron, but to the higher order of Melchisedek; that the communion was literally and not metaphorically a sacrifice; that properly constituted clergymen had the power of uttering words over the sacred elements which produced the most wonderful, though unfortunately the most imperceptible, of miracles; that the right of the clergy to tithes was of direct divine origin, antecedent to and independent of all secular legislation; that the sentence of excommunication involved an exclusion from heaven; that the Romish practice of prayers for the dead was highly commendable; that the Church of England, in violently severing itself from the authority of the Pope, proscribing the religious worship which before the Reformation had been universal in Christendom, persecuting even to death numbers who were guilty only of remaining attached to the old order of things, and branding a leading portion of its former theology as 'blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits,' had done no act at all savouring of schism, but that all non-episcopal communities who dissented from the Anglican Church were schismatics, guilty of the sin and reserved for the fate of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Aiming especially at sacerdotal power, these theologians had naturally a strong leaning towards the communities in which that power had been most successfully claimed, and negotiations were accordingly at one time opened for union with the Gallican, at another with the Eastern Church. Some of them contended that all baptisms except those by Episcopalian clergymen were not

only irregular but invalid, and that therefore Dissenters had no kind of title to be regarded as Christians. Brett, some time before he joined the sect, preached and published a sermon maintaining that repentance itself was useless unless it were followed by priestly absolution, which could only be administered by an Episcopalian clergyman, and both Dodwell and Lesley were of opinion that such absolution was essential to salvation. The former of these writers, who was perhaps the most learned of the party, contended in one of his works that 'there is no communicating with the Father or the Son but by communion with the bishops;' in another that all marriages between members of different religious creeds are of the nature of adultery; in a third that even the immortality of the soul is ordinarily dependent upon the intervention of a bishop. Our souls, he thought, are naturally mortal, but become immortal by baptism, if administered by an Episcopalian clergyman. Pagans and unbaptised infants cease to exist at death; but Dissenters who have neglected to enter the Episcopalian fold are kept alive by a special exercise of the divine power in order that they may be, after death, eternally damned.[1]

It was in this conflict of opinions during the reign of Anne that the terms High and Low Church first came into use,[2] and it is a very remarkable fact that the episcopacy was the special representative of the latter. The one party, which included many grades of sacerdotal pretension, and was characterised by intense hatred of Dissenters, carried with it the sympathy of the great body of the country clergy, of the country gentry, and of the poor. The other party consisted of perhaps one-tenth of the clergy,[3] but it contained a very disproportionate number of adherents of high position and of great ability, and it exercised a commanding influence over the educated classes in the towns. The co-existence of these two schools adapted to different orders

[1] See Dodwell's *One Priesthood*, his *Discourse on the Obligation to Marry within the True Communion*, annexed to Lesley's *Sermon against Mixed Marriages*, and his *Discourse on the Soul 'wherein is proved that none have the power of giving this Divine immortalising spirit since the apostles, but only the bishops.'* For the other Nonjuror notions, see especially the works of Hickes, Lesley, and Brett. Lathbury, in his *History of the Nonjurors*, has summarised many of their works. See too Burnet's *Own Times*, ii. 603, 604.

[2] Burnet, ii. 347.

[3] Macaulay.

of mind and education may perhaps have in some cases extended the religious influence of the Church, but it in a great degree paralysed its political action. One feature of the struggle has been curiously reproduced in our own day. It might have been imagined from the solemnity of the ordination vow, and from the peculiar sanctity supposed to attach to the clerical profession, that clergymen would be distinguished from lawyers, soldiers, and members of other mere secular professions by their deference and obedience to their superiors. It might have been imagined that this would have been especially true of men who were continually preaching the duty of passive obedience in the sphere of politics, and the transcendant and almost divine prerogatives of episcopacy in the sphere of religion. As a matter of fact, however, this has not been the case. If the most constant, contemptuous, and ostentatious defiance both of civil and ecclesiastical authorities be a result of the Protestant principle of private judgment, it may be truly said that the extreme High Church party, in more than one period of its history, has shown itself, in this respect at least, the most Protestant of sects. While idolising episcopacy in the abstract, its members have made it a main object of their policy to bring most existing bishops into contempt, and their polemical writings have been conspicuous, even in theological literature, for their feminine spitefulness, and for their recklessness of assertion. The last days of Tillotson were altogether embittered by the stream of calumny, invective, and lampoons of which he was the object. One favourite falsehood, repeated in spite of the clearest disproof, was that he had never been baptised. He was charged, without a shadow of foundation, with infamous conduct during his collegiate life. He was accused of Hobbism. He was accused, like Burnet and Patrick, of being a Socinian, though the plainest passages were cited from his writings, as well as from those of his colleagues, asserting the divinity of Christ. One writer, who was eulogised by Hickes as a person 'of great candour and judgment,' described the Archbishop as 'an atheist as much as a man could be, though the gravest certainly that ever was.'[1] Nor was this a mere transient ebullition

[1] Birch's *Life of Tillotson*, p. 269. Dr. Jortin says, 'I heard Dr. B. say in a sermon, "If anyone denies the uninterrupted succession of bishops,

of scurrility. All through the reign of Anne, and for several years of the Hanoverian period, the bishops were the objects of the incessant and virulent attacks of the High Church party. Bishops complained pathetically in Parliament of the factions formed and fomented in their dioceses by their own clergy, 'of the opprobrious names the clergy gave their bishops, and the calumnies they laid on them, as if they were in a plot to destroy the Church.'[1] 'One would be provoked by the late behaviour of the bishops,' said a prominent Tory member under Anne, 'to bring in a bill for the toleration of episcopacy, for, since they are of just the same principles with the Dissenters, it is but just, I think, that they should stand on the same foot.'[2] A satirist of the day faithfully and wittily described the prevailing High Church sentiments when he represented the Tory fox-hunter thinking the neighbouring shire very happy in having 'scarce a Presbyterian in it—except the bishop!'[3]

The antagonism between the higher and lower clergy was very apparent in Convocation. This body, from the time when it was deprived of its taxing functions, had sunk into insignificance. Having crushed the scheme of William for uniting the Dissenters with the Church, a period of ten years elapsed before it again sat. The clergy, however, at last grew impatient. An anonymous 'Letter to a Convocation Man,' which appeared in 1696, asserting the right of Convocation to meet for the transaction of business whenever the lay Parliament was summoned, excited a violent controversy in the ecclesiastical world, which raged for several years, and in which the most remarkable disputants were Wake and Kennet on the side of the civil power, and Atterbury on the side of Convocation. In 1701 the two Houses of Convocation were again summoned to meet, and they immediately plunged into a contest. They wrangled about the limits of their authority, about the right of the Lower House to adjourn or prolong its debates independently of the Upper House, about an address which the Lower House desired

I shall not scruple to call him a downright atheist." . . . This when I was young was sound, orthodox, and fashionable doctrine.'—Jortin's *Tracts*, i. 436.

[1] See, *e.g.*, the complaints of Patrick, Hough, and Burnet. *Parl. Hist.* vi. 496–497.

[2] *Parl. Hist.* vi. 154.

[3] *Freeholder*, No. 22.

to present on the accession of Anne, reflecting injuriously upon her predecessor, about the right of Convocation to pass judicial censures on men and books, about several minute points of order. The Lower House condemned Burnet's book on the Thirty-nine Articles, which is now one of the classics of the Church. It censured at different periods Toland, Clarke, and Whiston. It passed resolutions lamenting the immorality of the age, denouncing the theatre, and pointing out that a Unitarian congregation had been allowed to meet, and that Popish and Quaker books were disseminated. It also, in conjunction with the Upper House, drew up some forms of prayer for special occasions; but, on the whole, its performances were so trivial, and the tone of the Lower House to the bishops was so petulant, that it served chiefly to discredit the character and to impair the influence of the Church.

These considerations will, I hope, be sufficient to explain why it was that the Church party, though it was naturally incomparably the most powerful in England, and was in general animated by a spirit of intense Toryism, was unable to overthrow the religious settlement that had been made at the Revolution. That the danger was very serious cannot reasonably be denied. Politics had passed into the pulpit to a degree unknown in England since the Commonwealth.[1] The Toleration Act, the establishment of the Kirk in Scotland, and perhaps still more the seminaries which, on account of their exclusion from the Universities, the Dissenters had lately set up for the education of their sons, were the object of the bitterest hatred of the High Church party. But the efforts of that party were only very partially successful. In Scotland, although there were some thoughts of the restoration of Episcopacy,[2] the new establishment was confirmed by the Union, but the Tories carried in 1712 a very righteous Act securing toleration to the Scotch Episcopalians, as well as an Act which has proved fertile in division,

[1] 'Les ecclesiastiques auroient en même temps grand besoin d'une réforme, mais personne veut toucher icy à une corde si delicate; ils se mêlent tous de politique; c'est la morale qu'ils traitent dans leur sermon. On l'abolira d'autant moins que les deux partis croyent trouver tour à tour leur conte dans cette métode.'—Baron de Bothmar to the Electress Sophia, April 10, 1711. Kemble's *State Papers*, p. 480.

[2] See Stanhope's *Hist. of Queen Anne*, i. 97.

even to our own day, taking away from the Presbyterian elders and heritors in each parish the right of choosing their ministers, which had been granted them at the Revolution, and restoring in a restricted form the old system of lay patronage. A third measure, which would appear almost too trivial to be noticed, were it not for the violent outcry it created among the more rigid Presbyterians, revived the old 'Yule Vacance,' or Christmas holidays, in the law courts, and also made the 30th of January a legal holiday. In Ireland the worst of the penal laws, which in this reign were enacted against the Catholics, originated with the Whig party, but the imposition of the sacramental test on the Irish Protestant Dissenters, though it took place at a time when the Tory power was tottering, was probably due to Tory influence. The history of this measure is a curious one. The Irish Parliament in 1703 having carried an atrocious penal law against the Catholics, sent it over to England for the necessary ratification. It was returned, with an additional clause extending, for the first time, the Test Act to Ireland. According to the constitutional arrangements then prevailing, the Irish Parliament could not alter a Bill returned from England, though it might reject it altogether, and, in order to save the anti-Popery clauses of the Bill, it reluctantly accepted the test clause. Burnet ascribes the introduction of the clause to the desire of the English ministers to throw out the whole Bill, which they imagined the Irish Parliament would refuse to ratify if burdened with the test,[1] but this explanation is very improbable. The Irish House of Commons only contained ten or twelve Presbyterians. It had recently shown its hostility to the Presbyterians by voting the *Regium Donum* an unnecessary expense, and, although it had not demanded the test, there was no reason to believe it would make any serious resistance to its imposition.[2] The simplest explanation is probably the true one. The ministry consisted of two parts, the party of Godolphin and Marlborough, who, on the ground of foreign policy, but on this alone, were rapidly approximating to the Whigs, and the party of Nottingham, who was vehemently

[1] *Hist. of his Own Time*, ii. 361–362.

[2] Killen's *Ecclesiastical Hist. of Ireland*, ii. 191, 198.

Tory, and who made it the very first object of his home policy to increase the stringency of the Test Act. These two sections were rapidly diverging, and it was only by much management and compromise that they were kept together. It is probable the Irish Test Act was due to the influence of Nottingham, and was accepted the more readily as it applied to a country which had then no weight in English politics, and excited no interest in the English mind.[1] In the same spirit the Tory ministry, in the closing years of Anne, suspended the *Regium Donum*—a small annual endowment which William had given towards the support of the Presbyterian ministers in Ireland. In England a Bill for the repeal of the Act naturalising foreign Protestants was carried through the Commons in 1711, but rejected by the Lords. In the following year, however, it became law, and the Tory House of Commons in 1711 also manifested its ecclesiastical zeal by voting a duty of 1*s.* on every chaldron of coal for three years, to be applied to the erection of fifty new churches in London.[2]

The subject, however, around which the ecclesiastical struggle raged most fiercely was the Occasional Conformity Bill. The Test Act making the reception of the Anglican Sacrament a necessary qualification for becoming a member of corporations, and for the enjoyment of most civil offices, was very efficacious in excluding Catholics, but was altogether insufficient to exclude moderate Dissenters, whose nonconformity was solely due to a preference for a presbyterian to an episcopal form of worship, or to disagreement with some petty detail in the church discipline or doctrine. Such men, while habitually

[1] According to Calamy the clause 'was commonly said to have been inserted here in Council by the Lords Nottingham and Rochester, after the Bill was sent from Ireland.' Calamy's *Life*, ii. 28. See too Wilson's *Life of Defoe*, ii. 186–190.

[2] A similar duty had formerly been employed in building St. Paul's. Somers' *Tracts*, xii. p. 328. Swift, in 1709, had forcibly called attention to the want in a passage which is said to have given rise to the bill. 'Parliament ought to take under consideration whether it be not a shame to our country and a scandal to Christianity that in many towns where there is a prodigious increase in the number of houses and inhabitants, so little care should be taken for the building of churches, that five parts in six of the people are absolutely hindered from hearing Divine service? Particularly here in London, where a single minister with one or two sorry curates, has the care sometimes of above 20,000 souls incumbent on him—a neglect of religion so ignominious, in my opinion, that it can hardly be equalled in any civilised age or country.'—*A Project for the Advancement of Religion.*

attending their own places of worship, had no scruple about occasionally entering an Anglican church, or receiving the sacrament from an Anglican clergyman. The Independents, it is true, and some of the Baptists, censured this practice, and Defoe wrote vehemently against it, but it was very general, and was supported by a long list of imposing authorities. It was remembered that the very year of the Act of Uniformity the principal ejected ministers in London had met together and resolved that they would occasionally attend the services of the Anglican Church and communicate at its altars.[1] The great names of Baxter, Howe, and Henry might be cited in favour of occasional conformity, and their opinion was adopted by the whole body of the Presbyterians. In the city of London the Dissenters were numerous and opulent, and they soon acquired an important place in the Corporation. Sir John Shorter, who became Lord Mayor of London in the year of the Revolution, was a Dissenter, and, having died during his year of office, his place was supplied by Sir John Eyles, who was of the same persuasion. Sir Humphry Edwin, who was also a Presbyterian, was elected Lord Mayor in 1697, and he greatly strengthened the growing feeling against occasional conformity by very imprudently going in state, with the regalia of the City, to a Dissenting meeting-house. From this time the High Church party made the prohibition of occasional conformity a main object of their policy. Another Dissenter, Sir John Abney, became Lord Mayor in 1701, and in the following year the question was brought into Parliament. In 1702, in 1703, and in 1704, measures for suppressing occasional conformity were carried through the Commons, but on each occasion they were defeated by the Whig preponderance in the Lords. In 1702 the question gave rise to a free conference between the Houses. In 1704, as we have already seen, an attempt was unsuccessfully made to tack the measure to a Money Bill. From this time the question was suffered to drop until the Sacheverell agitation had annihilated the Whig ministry and the Whig majority in the Commons. It revived in 1711, but a very singular transformation of parts took place. The Tories were completely in the ascendant in the House of Com-

[1] See Hunt's *Hist. of Religious Thought in England*, ii. 314.

mons, but it was in the House of Lords that the measure was first brought forward, and it was carried without a division. The explanation of the change is very easy. The Whig party had at this time made it their main object to defeat the negotiations that led to the Peace of Utrecht. A section of the extreme Tories, guided by Nottingham, concurred with this view, but they made it the condition of alliance that the Occasional Conformity Bill should be accepted by the Whigs. The bargain was made; the Dissenters were abandoned, and, on the motion of Nottingham, a measure was carried providing that all persons in places of profit or trust, and all common councilmen in Corporations, who, while holding office, were proved to have attended any Nonconformist place of worship, should forfeit the place, and should continue incapable of public employment till they should depose that for a whole year they had not attended a conventicle. The House of Commons added a fine of 40*l.* which was to be paid to the informer, and with this addition the Bill became law. Its effects during the few years it continued in force were very inconsiderable, for the great majority of conspicuous Dissenters remained in office, abstaining from public worship in conventicles, but having Dissenting ministers as private chaplains in their houses.

The House of Lords, and especially the Whig party, have been very bitterly censured for their desertion of the Nonconformists on this occasion, but their conduct is not, I think, incapable of defence. Three times the House of Commons, by a large majority, had carried the Bill. Since the measure had last been introduced the election of 1710 had taken place. It had turned expressly upon Church questions, and it proved, beyond all dispute, that the country was on the side of the High Church party. Neither as a matter of principle, nor as a matter of policy, ought the House of Lords to oppose a permanent veto to the wish of the great majority of the Lower House, when that wish clearly reflects the sentiments of the nation. There can be no question that the House of Commons would have carried the measure by a majority at least as large as in former years, and it was stated that the Court was resolved to use its utmost powers to make it law. Under these circumstances the Lords might

justly consider that they were consulting their own dignity by taking the first step when concession was inevitable; that a measure, mitigated in some of its provisions by amicable compromise, and taking its rise in a friendly rather than an unfriendly House, was likely to be less injurious to the Dissenters than a measure framed by a hostile party, and carried by another explosion of fanaticism; and, lastly, that it was for the advantage of the nation that the opportunity should not be lost of endeavouring by a coalition of parties to avert the great evils apprehended from the peace.

The object of the Occasional Conformity Bill was to exclude the Dissenters from all Government positions of power, dignity, or profit. It was followed in 1714 by the Schism Act, which was intended to crush their seminaries and deprive them of the means of educating their children in their faith. The seminaries of the Dissenters had been severely noticed in a dedication of the second part of Lord Clarendon's history to Queen Anne, which was ascribed to the pen of Rochester, by the Archbishop of York in the House of Lords, and by Bromley in the House of Commons, and they were denounced with extraordinary violence, as schools of immorality and sedition, by Sacheverell, and by Samuel Wesley, the father of the great founder of Methodism. They appear to have been ably conducted, and it is a curious fact that both Archbishop Secker and Bishop Butler were partly educated at the dissenting academy of Tewkesbury.[1] The measure for suppressing them was one of the most tyrannical enacted in the eighteenth century, and it appears especially shameful from the fact that those who took the most prominent part in carrying it were acting without the excuse of religious bigotry. Bolingbroke, who introduced it in the Lords, and Windham, who introduced it in the Commons, were both men of the laxest principles, and of the laxest morals, and it was finally defended by the former mainly on the ground that it was necessary for the party interest of the Tories to prevent the propagation of Dissent.[2] As carried through the House of Commons it provided that no one, under pain of three months' imprisonment, should keep either a public or a private school, or should

[1] Calamy's *Life*, ii. 503.
[2] Bolingbroke, Letter to Windham.

even act as tutor or usher, unless he had obtained a licence from the Bishop, had engaged to conform to the Anglican liturgy, and had received the sacrament in some Anglican church within the year. In order to prevent occasional conformity it was further provided that if a teacher so qualified were present at any other form of worship he should at once become liable to three months' imprisonment, and should be incapacitated for the rest of his life from acting as schoolmaster or tutor. In order to prevent latitudinarian Anglicans from teaching Dissenting formularies, a clause was carried, making any licensed teacher who taught any catechism other than that of the Church of England liable to all the penalties of the Act. The Bill was supported by the whole weight of the Tory ministry, and was carried in the House of Commons by 237 to 126 votes. In the House of Lords the feeling against it was very strong, but the recent creation of twelve peers had weakened the ascendancy of the Whigs. It is remarkable, however, that on this occasion Nottingham himself spoke on the side of religious liberty. The Dissenters petitioned to be heard by counsel against the Bill, but their petition was rejected. The measure having been defended, among other reasons, by the allegation that many children of Churchmen had been attracted to Nonconformist schools, Halifax moved that the Dissenters might have schools for the exclusive education of children of their own persuasion, but he was defeated by 62 against 48, and the Bill was finally carried through the Lords by 77 to 72. Some important clauses, however, were introduced by the Whig party qualifying its severity. They provided that Dissenters might have schoolmistresses to teach their children to read; that the Act should not extend to any person instructing youth in reading, writing, or arithmetic, in any part of mathematics relating to navigation, or in any mechanical art only; that tutors in the houses of noblemen should be exempt from the necessity of obtaining an episcopal licence; and that the infliction of penalties under the Act should be removed from the jurisdiction of the justices of the peace, and placed under that of the superior courts.

The facility with which this atrocious Act was carried, abundantly shows the danger in which religious liberty was placed in the latter years of the reign of Queen Anne. There

can, indeed, be little doubt that, had the Tory ascendancy been but a little prolonged, the Toleration Act would have been repealed, and it is more than doubtful whether the purely political conquests of the Revolution would have survived. The more, indeed, those very critical years are examined the more evident it becomes on how slender a chain of causes the political future of England then depended. There can be little doubt that if, while the Pretender remained a Catholic, a son of Anne had survived, he would have mounted the throne amid the acclamations of the English people, and would have been the object of an enthusiasm of unqualified loyalty even more intense than that which was subsequently bestowed upon George III. There can also, I think, be little doubt that if, after the death of the children of Anne, the Pretender had consented to conform to the English Church, the immense majority of the people would have reverted irresistibly to the legitimate heir. It is less certain, but far from improbable, that if the life of the Queen had been prolonged for a single year, the Act of Settlement would have been disregarded, and the Pretender, in spite of his Catholicism, would have been brought back by a Tory ministry. In order, however, to understand the position of parties at the time of the death of the Queen it will be necessary to turn from domestic affairs to foreign politics, and to give a brief outline of the chief work of the Tory ministry—the negotiation of the Peace of Utrecht.

At the time when this momentous measure was carried, the political aspects of the war had in some respects very materially changed. When the Whig ministry fell, the chances of Philip of Spain inheriting the crown of France were so remote that they might have been almost disregarded, but the shadows of death soon fell darkly around the French King. In February 1710–11 the Dauphin fell sick of small-pox complicated with fever, and after a short illness he died, leaving as his heir the young pupil of Fénelon, whose virtues and solid acquirements had inspired ardent hopes, only too soon to be overcast. In February 1711–12 the wife of the new Dauphin was seized with a deadly sickness, and in a few days she expired. A week had hardly passed when her husband followed her to the tomb, and in another month the elder of her two

children was also dead. Thus, by a strange fatality which gave rise to the darkest suspicions, three successive heirs to the French throne, representing three successive generations, had, in little more than a year, been swept away, and the old King and a sickly infant alone remained between Philip and the crown of France. On the Austrian side the change was even more important. The Emperor Leopold I., who began the war, had died in May 1705. His successor, Joseph I., died in April 1711, leaving no son, and Charles, the Austrian claimant, now wore the Imperial crown.

The military conditions in the meantime had not been very seriously modified. France was still reduced to extreme and abject wretchedness. Her finances were ruined. Her people were half starving. Marlborough declared that in the villages through which he passed in the summer of 1710, at least half the inhabitants had perished since the beginning of the preceding winter, and the rest looked as if they had come out of their graves.[1] All the old dreams of French conquests in the Spanish Netherlands, in Italy, and in Germany were dispelled, and the French generals were now struggling desperately and skilfully to defend their own frontier. The campaign of 1709 had been marked by the capture of Menin and Tournay by the allies, by the bloody victory of Malplaquet, in which the losses of the conquerors were nearly double the losses of the conquered, and finally by the capture of Mons. In 1710, while the Whig ministry was still in power, but at a time when it was manifestly tottering to its fall, Lewis had made one more attempt to obtain peace by the most ample concessions. The conferences were held at the Dutch fortress of Gertruydenberg. Lewis declared himself ready to accept the conditions exacted as preliminaries of peace in the preceding year, with the exception of the article compelling Philip within two months to cede the Spanish throne. He consented, in the course of the negotiations, to grant to the Dutch nearly all the fortresses of the French and Spanish Netherlands, including among others Ypres, Tournay, Lille, Furnes, and even Valenciennes, to cede Alsace to the Duke of Lorraine, to destroy the fortifications of

[1] Coxe's *Marlborough*, ch. lxxxviii. See, too, the striking description of the country by Fénelon, in Martin, *Hist. de France*, xiv. 528-529.

Dunkirk, and those on the Rhine from Bâle to Philipsburg. The main difficulty was on the question of the Spanish succession. The French urged that Philip would never voluntarily abdicate unless he received some compensation in Italy or elsewhere, and the Dutch and English ministers now seemed inclined to accept the proposition, but the opposition of the Emperor and of the Duke of Savoy was inflexible. The French troops had already been recalled from Spain, and Lewis consented to recognise the Archduke as the sovereign, to engage to give no more assistance to his grandchild, to place four cautionary towns in the hands of the Dutch as a pledge for the fulfilment of the treaty, and even to pay a subsidy to the allies for the continuance of the war against Philip. The allies, however, insisted that he should join with them in driving his grandson by force of arms from Spain, and on this article the negotiations were broken off.[1]

The English ministers in this negotiation showed themselves a little more moderate in their inclinations than on former occasions, but they yielded to the wish of the allies, and the war was for a third time needlessly and recklessly prolonged. It is always an impolitic thing to impose on a great power conditions so ignominious and dishonouring as to produce enduring resentment, and it would be difficult to exaggerate either the folly or the injustice of the course which on this occasion was pursued. England and Holland had absolutely no advantage to expect from the war, which Lewis was not prepared to concede. They prolonged it in order to impose on the Spaniards a sovereign they hated, and to deprive them of a sovereign they adored, in order to obtain the Spanish dominions for a prince who was now the heir to the Austrian throne, though a revival of the Empire of Charles V. would have disturbed the whole balance of European power. If a general peace was not signed, the war might have at least been narrowed into a duel between Austria and Spain, and in any case its object was almost unattainable. Spain is not, and never has been, one of those centralised countries in which the capture of the capital implies the subjugation of the nation. Stanhope, who knew it well, frankly declared 'that armies of 20,000 or 30,000 men might

[1] Compare *Memoires de Torcy*, i. 352-428. Martin, *Hist. de France*, xiv. 525-527. Coxe's *Life of Marlborough*, ch. lxxxviii.

walk about that country till doomsday, that wherever they came the people would submit to Charles out of terror, and as soon as they were gone proclaim Philip V. again out of affection; that to conquer Spain required a great army, to keep it a greater.'[1] The fortunes of the war had more than once fluctuated violently, but no success of the allies had abated the hostility of the great body of the Spaniards. When Lewis withdrew his troops from Spain, the cause of Charles was for a brief period completely triumphant; but when, after the victory of Saragossa, Madrid was for the second time occupied by the allies in September 1710, it was found to be nearly deserted, almost the whole active population having retired with Philip to Valladolid. When it became evident that the conferences at Gertruydenberg would lead to no result, Lewis sent Vendome to command the Spanish forces. Charles was compelled to abandon Madrid for Toledo, where his troops added to their unpopularity by burning the Alcazar. He soon after left his army and retreated with 2,000 men to Barcelona. Bands of guerillas cut off communications on every side, and it was found almost impossible, in the face of the determined hostility of the population, to obtain either provisions or information. Stanhope, at the head of an English army of between 5,000 and 6,000 men, was surrounded at Brihuega, and after a desperate resistance the whole army was forced to surrender. Staremberg had marched at the head of the Austrian army to his assistance, but the battle of Villaviciosa compelled him to evacuate Aragon, and to retreat with great loss into Catalonia, while at the same time a French corps, commanded by Noailles, descending from Rousillon, invested and captured Gerona, so that, with the exception of the seaboard of Catalonia, the cause of Charles at the close of the year was ruined in Spain. In the meantime the cost of the war to England was rapidly increasing, while her interest in the result had greatly diminished. In 1702, when the war began, its expense for the year was estimated at about 3,700,000*l.* In 1706, when Lewis offered terms more than fulfilling every legitimate object of the war, it had risen to nearly 5,700,000*l.* In 1711 it was about 6,850,000*l.*[2] A heavy debt had been in-

[1] Bolingbroke's *Sketch of the History of Europe.*

[2] See Ralph's *Use and Abuse of Parliaments*, i., pp. 167-168.

curred. Nearly 800 corsairs had sailed, during the war, from Dunkirk to prey upon English and Dutch commerce,[1] and the former had been severely crippled by the heavy duties rendered necessary by the increasing expenses. Not less than 20,000 of the allied troops had been killed or wounded at Malplaquet. England, too, which of all the allied powers had the least direct interest in the war, bore by far the greatest share of the burden. Holland had obtained from England, in 1709, a treaty guaranteeing her, in return for a Dutch guarantee of the Protestant succession, the right of garrisoning a long line of barrier fortresses, including Nieuport, Furnes, Knocke, Ypres, Menin, Lille, Tournay, Condé, Valenciennes, Maubeuge, Charleroy, Namur, and other strong places, hereafter to be captured from France, while some strong places were to be incorporated absolutely in her dominions. The war, therefore, offered her advantages of the most vital nature, but she had invariably fallen short of the proportion of soldiers and sailors which at the beginning of the struggle she agreed to contribute; she refused even to prohibit her subjects from trading with France, and, with the exception of a duty of one per cent. for encouraging her own privateers, she had imposed no additional trade duty during the war. The Emperor had acquired immense territories in Italy and Germany, and he was fighting for the claims of an Austrian Prince to the Spanish throne; but he, too, as well as the Princes of the Empire, continually fell short of the stipulated quota. The minor powers in the alliance were chiefly subsidised by England, who had at one time no less than 244,000 men in her pay.[2]

Nor was this all. It was quite evident that the alliance must soon fall to pieces. From the first the mutual jealousies and the conflicting objects of the confederate powers had thrown obstacles in the way of the military operations, which it required

[1] Martin, *Hist. de France*, xiv. 572.

[2] At the beginning of the war England had agreed to furnish only 40,000 men, the Emperor 90,000, and the States-General no less than 102,000, of whom 42,000 were to supply their garrisons, and 60,000 to act against the enemy. Of the ships five-eighths were to be supplied by England and three-eighths by the States. On the extent to which England exceeded and the other powers fell short of the stipulated proportion, see the Representation of the House of Commons, *Parl. Hist.* vi. 1095–1105.

all the genius and all the admirable patience and dexterity of Marlborough and Eugene to surmount. The absurd habit adopted by the Dutch, of sending deputies with their armies to control their generals, had again and again paralysed the allies. Marlborough thus lost his most favourable opportunity of crushing Boufflers at Zonhoven in 1702. He was prevented by the same cause from invading French Flanders in 1703, and from attacking Villars on the plain of Waterloo in 1705, though he expressed his confident belief that he could have gained a victory even more decisive than Blenheim; and Dutch jealousy was plausibly said to have been the chief reason why the war was never carried into the Spanish West Indies, where conquests would have been very easy and very lucrative to England. The conduct of the Emperor was no less open to censure. In the beginning of 1707 he had entered into separate and secret negotiations with the French; had concluded with them, without the consent of any of the allies except the Duke of Savoy, a treaty for the neutrality of Italy, and had thus enabled them to send reinforcements from Lombardy to Spain, which prepared the way for the great disaster of Almanza. In the course of the same year he insisted, contrary to the wishes of his allies, upon sending a large body of troops to conquer Naples for himself; and the want of his co-operation led to the calamitous failure of the siege of Toulon. There was hardly an expedition, hardly a negotiation, in which bickerings and divergent counsels did not appear. The Dutch and the English were animated by the bitterest spirit of commercial jealousy; and when Charles assumed the imperial crown, the alliance was at once placed in the most imminent danger. Portugal and Savoy formally declared that they would carry on the war no longer to unite the crown of Spain with that of Austria; and there was probably scarcely a statesman out of Germany who considered such a union in itself a good.[1]

[1] See, on the reasons for making peace, Swift's *Conduct of the Allies*, *The History of the Last Four Years of Queen Anne*, ascribed to Swift, the very forcible *Representation of the House of Commons*, drawn up by Sir Thomas Hanmer, Ralph's *Use and Abuse of Parliaments*, i., 166-176, Bolingbroke's *Sketch of the History of Europe*. Coxe's *Life of Marlborough*, though written from the Whig point of view, abundantly illustrates the selfish conduct of the allies. As early as Nov. 1710, Bolingbroke wrote to Drummond, 'Our trade sinks, and several channels of it, for want of the

Such was the state of affairs when the Tory ministry rose to power. It was evidently in the highest degree their party interest to negotiate a speedy peace. The war was originally a Whig war. It had been mainly supported by the Whig party. The great general who chiefly conducted it had been the pillar of the Whig ministry, and every victory he gained redounded to its credit. The principal allies of England during the struggle had, moreover, shown themselves actively hostile to the Tories. When the change of ministry was contemplated, the Emperor wrote to Anne to dissuade her from the step; and the Dutch Government directed their envoy to make a formal remonstrance to the same effect.[1] Besides this, it was a favourite doctrine of the Tory leaders that the large loans necessitated by the war had given an unnatural importance to the moneyed classes, who were the chief supporters of the Whigs, and who were regarded with extreme jealousy by the country gentry.[2] The mixture of party with foreign policy in times when a great national struggle is raging, is perhaps the most serious danger and evil attending parliamentary government; and it was shown in every part of the reign of Anne. But if the foregoing arguments are just, it will appear evident that in this case the party interest which led the Tory ministers to desire the immediate termination of the war was in complete accordance with the most momentous and pressing interests of the nation. It will appear almost equally evident that the essential article of the Peace of Utrecht, which was the recognition by England of Philip as the sovereign of Spain, was perfectly righteous and politic. The permanent maintenance of Charles on the

usual flux, become choked, and will in time be lost; whilst in the meanwhile the commerce of Holland extends itself and flourishes to a great degree. I can see no immediate benefit likely to accrue to this nation by the war, let it end how, and when it will, besides the general advantages common to all Europe of reducing the French power; whilst it is most apparent that the rest of the confederates have in their own hands already very great additions of power and dominion obtained by the war, and particularly the States.' — Bolingbroke's *Letters*, i. 26-27. See, too, i., pp. 54–55, 191–195, and also his able letter to the *Examiner* in 1710, which was answered by no less a person than the Chancellor Cowper. — *Somers' Tracts*, xiii. 71-75

[1] Coxe's *Life of Marlborough*. Bolingbroke's *Letters*, i. 9, iii. 76.

[2] See Bolingbroke's *Letters*, ii., 74, 211. The same idea frequently occurs in Swift. In his letter to Sir W. Windham, Bolingbroke very frankly admitted that the peace was a supreme party interest.

Spanish throne was, probably, an impossibility. If it had been effected, so great an accession of power to the Empire would have been most dangerous to Europe. No other solution than the recognition of Philip was possible without a great prolongation of the war, and the dangers apprehended from that recognition might never arise, and could be at least partially averted. Philip might never become the heir to the French throne, and as long as the two kingdoms remained separate, there was no reason to believe that the relationship between their sovereigns would make Spain the vassal of France. The intense national jealousy of the Spanish character was a sufficient safeguard. More than half the wars which desolated Europe had been wars between sovereigns who were nearly related; and if it was true that Lewis exercised a great personal ascendancy over Philip, it was also true that Lewis was now so old a man, and his kingdom so reduced, that another war during his lifetime was almost impossible. If, on the other hand, the death of the infant Dauphin made Philip the heir to the French throne, a real danger would arise; but serious measures were taken by the Peace of Utrecht to mitigate it. In the first place, Philip made a solemn renunciation of his claims to the succession of France, and that renunciation was confirmed by the Spanish Cortes and registered by the French Parliaments. It was, it is true, only too probable that this renunciation would be disregarded if any great political end was to be attained. The examples of such a course were only too recent and glaring, and in this case an admirable pretext was already furnished. French lawyers had laid down the doctrine that such a renunciation, by the fundamental laws of France, would be null and invalid; that the next prince to the throne is necessarily the heir, by the right of birth; and that no political act of his own, or of the sovereign, could divest him of his title. In the earlier stages of the negotiation Torcy had maintained this doctrine in his correspondence with St. John, and if it was found convenient it would probably be revived. But even in case Philip became the heir to the French throne, it by no means followed that peace would be broken; for, as a mere matter of policy, it was probable that Philip would remain faithful to his engagement, and would content himself with one crown. An attempt to

unite the French and Spanish thrones would undoubtedly be met by another European coalition, and the offending sovereign would be weakened, not only by the great reluctance of the Spanish people to become subsidiary to a more powerful nation, but most probably also by the divisions of a disputed succession in France. In the face of these considerations, there was a fair prospect of the maintenance of peace; and even if events assumed their darkest aspect, the English, by the Peace of Utrecht, retained Gibraltar, Port Mahon, and Minorca, which gave them the command of the Mediterranean, while the Spanish possessions in Italy and the Netherlands were added to the dominions of the Empire.

For these reasons the abandonment by the Tory ministry of the articles before insisted on, requiring Philip to give up the Spanish throne, and Lewis to employ his arms against him, appears perfectly justifiable, nor can we, I think, remembering the fate of the former negotiations, blame English statesmen very severely if, before attempting to negotiate a formal treaty, they entered into some separate explanation with the French. Here, however, the language of eulogy or apology must end, for the tortuous proceedings that terminated in the Peace of Utrecht form, beyond all question, one of the most shameful pages in English history. A desire for peace was hardly a stronger feeling with the Ministers than hatred and jealousy of the Dutch, and their first object was to outwit them by separate and clandestine negotiation; to obtain for England a monopoly of commercial privileges, and to obtain them, in a great degree, at the cost of the towns which would otherwise have been ceded for the Dutch barrier. As early as the autumn of 1710 a secret negotiation was carried on with the French, but for some time the aspect of the war was not very materially changed. For the first year after the new ministry came to power, Marlborough was still at the head of the army, though his position was a most painful one. The parliamentary vote of thanks to him was withheld; his opinion, even on military matters, was ostentatiously disregarded; his wife—who had, indeed, made herself intolerable to the Queen—was dismissed from her posts. Godolphin, who, of all his political friends, was most closely attached to him, was falsely and vindictively accused of having

left no less than 35,000,000*l.* of public money unaccounted for,[1] and in spite of the urgent protest of Marlborough, more than 5,000 men were withdrawn from the army to be employed in an enterprise from which St. John expected the most brilliant results. The Tories had long complained, with some reason, that the Whig Government carried on the war by land rather than by sea, and in the centre of Europe, where England had nothing to gain, rather than in distant quarters, where her colonial empire might be largely increased. St. John accordingly, anticipating one of the great enterprises of the elder Pitt, sent out[2] an expedition, consisting of twelve ships of war and fifty transports, for the conquest of Canada. The naval part was under the command of Sir Hoveden Walker, and the soldiers were under that of Brigadier Hill, the brother of Mrs. Masham. It was, however, feebly conducted, and, having encountered some storms and losses at sea, it returned without result.

It may appear strange that Marlborough should have continued in command in spite of so many causes of irritation, but he was implored by his Whig friends to do so. Besides this, there is some reason to believe that his resolution of character was not altogether what it was; and his conduct in civil affairs never displayed the same decision as his conduct in the field. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that he might, by a prompt intervention, supported by a threat of resignation, have retarded, if not prevented, the fall of Godolphin; and in the period immediately preceding the Peace of Utrecht, he displayed considerable weakness and hesitation. It is curious to observe that, of all public men, he showed the greatest sensitiveness to the libels of the press; and he complained to Harley and St. John, in terms of positive anguish, of the attacks to which he was subject.[3] His frequent negotiations with both Hanoverians and Jacobites rendered his position peculiarly perplexing. His love of money amounted to a disease, and made it difficult for him to sacrifice his official emoluments.

[1] Walpole very ably refuted this calumny. When Godolphin died in the following year his whole personal property, after his debts were paid, is said to have been scarcely sufficient to pay his funeral expenses. See a letter of the Duchess of Marlborough, Coxe's *Marlborough*, ch. cix.

[2] May 1711.

[3] Coxe's *Marlborough*, ch. c., cv.

He had tried without success at the time when the Whig ministry was falling to obtain from the Emperor the government of the Spanish Netherlands which on two previous occasions he had refused.[1] He had the natural desire of a great general to remain at the head of the army during the war, and of an adroit politician to preserve a position of much power at a time when the question of a disputed succession was impending. He was so incomparably the greatest English general that it seemed scarcely possible to displace him, and at one moment there were symptoms of reconciliation between himself and St. John. In September 1711 he succeeded, by a masterly movement, in breaking through the lines of Villars, and having captured Bouchain, the struggle seemed about to take a more decisive form. Quesnoy and Landrecies were the only strong places of the French barrier that were now interposed between the allies and a rich and open country extending to the very walls of Paris. The Emperor and the Dutch were straining all their powers for a new effort, and there can be little doubt that, under the guidance of Marlborough and Eugene, it would have been successful. The ministers, however, had by this time arrived at such a point in their secret negotiations that they looked forward to an immediate peace, and were anxious, if possible, to paralyse the operations of war. On September 27, 1711, two sets of preliminaries of peace were secretly signed. The first, the most important, and by far the most explicit, concerned England mainly or exclusively, were signed on the part of both England and France, and were kept carefully secret from the allies. By these preliminaries the title of Anne and her successors, as by law established, was recognised; the cession of Gibraltar, Port Mahon, and Newfoundland, with a reservation of the right of fishing to the French, was granted or confirmed; the port and fortifications of Dunkirk were to be destroyed at the peace, France receiving an equivalent to be determined in the final treaty; a treaty of commerce with France was promised; the lucrative right of supplying the Spanish colonies in America with negroes was transferred from a French company to the English, and some places in America were assigned to the English for the refreshment and sale of the

[1] Coxe's *Marlborough*, ch. xcvi.

negroes. The other set of preliminaries which were communicated to the Dutch and were signed only on the part of France, comprised the recognition of the title of the Queen and of the succession established by law, the article relating to Dunkirk and a promise of commercial advantages for England and Holland; they made no mention of the special advantages England secured for herself, but provided that measures should be taken to prevent the union of the crowns of France and Spain; that barriers, the nature and extent of which were as yet undefined, should be formed for the Dutch and for the Empire; and, by a separate article, that the places taken from the Duke of Savoy should be restored, and his power in Italy aggrandised. These articles were communicated by the English to the allies, who were summoned to a conference for the negotiation of a definite peace.

The difficulties of the ministers were very great. The Dutch, though they at length consented to join the proposed conference at Utrecht, expressed strong dissatisfaction with the preliminaries of which they had been apprised. The Emperor was still more emphatic, and he only consented to take part in the proceedings on condition that the preliminaries should be regarded as mere propositions, without any binding force. The Elector of Hanover, whose judgment had naturally a special weight with English politicians, was prominent on the same side; and although the ministers could count on a large majority in the Commons, a majority in the House of Lords, supported by Marlborough himself, voted that no peace could be safe or honourable which left Spain and the Indies to a Bourbon prince. Public opinion received a severe shock when, at the close of the year, the greatest of England's generals was removed ignominiously from the command of the army, and was replaced by the Duke of Ormond, a strong Tory, but a man of no military ability. The conference, however, met at Utrecht at the close of January 1711–12, and early in the next month the French made their propositions for a peace. Lewis offered to recognise the Queen of England and the succession established by law, but only on the signature of peace; to destroy the fortifications of Dunkirk after the peace, on condition of receiving a satisfactory equivalent; to cede to Eng-

land St. Christopher, Hudson's Bay, and Newfoundland, reserving, however, the fort of Placentia and the right of fishing around Newfoundland, and receiving again the whole of Acadia; and he also undertook to make a treaty of commerce with England, based on the principle of reciprocity. When, however, the question of the Dutch barrier arose, the French propositions showed the enormous change which had passed over the pretensions of Lewis since the conferences of Gertruydenberg. He now demanded that the sovereignty of the Spanish Netherlands should be granted to his ally the Elector of Bavaria; and, although he recognised the right of the Dutch to garrison the frontier towns, he prescribed limits for their barrier wholly different from those which had been guaranteed by England in the treaty of 1709, and recognised by France in the conferences of 1710. He demanded the surrender of both Lille and Tournay as an equivalent for the destruction of the harbour of Dunkirk. Of the cession of Valenciennes there was no longer any question. He offered, it is true, to cede Furnes, Knocke, Ypres, and Menin, but only in exchange for Aire, St. Venant, Bethune, and Douay. These demands were made, though not a single success in Flanders had improved the position of the French since 1709, while the immense concession the allies were preparing to make in leaving Philip undisturbed on the Spanish throne entitled them to demand that in other respects at least the conditions accepted in that year should be rigidly exacted. The arrogance, as it was deemed, of the French King excited not only indignation, but astonishment; but those who blamed it did not know the secret stipulations by which England was now bound to France. They did not know that the English ministers were on far more confidential terms with the enemy than with their allies; that St. John had informed the French negotiator that, though they could not avoid demanding a barrier for the Dutch, they desired it to be neither very extended nor very strong; that he had specially urged the French to stand firm against Holland, in order to resist any attempt she might make to obtain a share of the advantages conceded to England.[1] Under such circumstances, the position of France in the nego-

[1] Torcy's *Memoirs*.

tiations was not that of an isolated and defeated Power. She had a weighty ally at the Council-board—an ally all the more valuable because her position was unavowed; because her statesmen had entered upon a course in which failure or even exposure might lead to impeachment. The other French demands were in the same key. Lewis consented, indeed, in the name of his grandson, to the abandonment of the Spanish dominions in Italy, which were already in the hands of the allies; but he demanded that the frontiers between France and Germany, between France and the territory of the Duke of Savoy, and between Portugal and Spain, should be re-established as they were before the war. He consented to give guarantees against the possible union of the crowns of France and Spain, and to recognise those titles in Germany which he had hitherto refused to acknowledge; but he demanded in return that Philip should retain the thrones of Spain and of the Indies, and that the Electors of Cologne and Bavaria should be fully re-established in the territory and the position from which they had been driven by the war.

It is not surprising that such demands, made after a long succession of crushing defeats, by a Power which less than three years before would have gladly purchased peace by a complete abandonment of the cause of Philip, by the cession of all or almost all the strong places on the Dutch frontier, and by the restoration of Strasburg to the Emperor, should have been branded by the House of Lords as scandalous, frivolous, and dishonouring to the Queen and to the allies. The English ministers, however, were not discouraged, and they advanced fearlessly in the path which they had chosen. The course of duty before them at this time was very clear. The terms or propositions of peace should have been fully, frankly, and unreservedly laid before the plenipotentiaries assembled at Utrecht. As long as no conclusion was arrived at, military operations should have been strenuously pursued, but if after mature deliberation England desired to make peace on terms which were unacceptable to the allies, she had a perfect right to withdraw formally from the alliance. Harley and St. John, however, though widely different in most respects, agreed in preferring tortuous to open methods, and they at this time

carried on the foreign policy of the Government rather in the manner of conspirators than of statesmen. They plunged deeper and deeper into separate clandestine negotiations, and they allowed these negotiations to interfere fatally with military operations. The allied army in Flanders in the spring of 1712 considerably outnumbered that of Villars which was opposed to it, and although the English contingent was feebly commanded the presence of Eugene gave great promise of success. The opposing armies were in close proximity, and there was every reason to look forward to brilliant results, when Ormond received peremptory orders from St. John to engage in no siege and to hazard no battle till further instructions, and to keep this order strictly secret from the general with whom he was co-operating. A postscript was added, in which the seriousness of the matter contrasted strangely with the levity of the form. 'I had almost forgot to tell your Grace that communication is made of this order to the Court of France, so that if the Marshal de Villars takes, in any private way, notice of it to you, your Grace will answer accordingly.'[1] Twelve days later another letter directed Ormond to take the first step by sending a messenger to Villars,[2] and a secret correspondence was thus opened between the English general and the enemy who was opposed to him in the field. The suspicions of Eugene were at last aroused. He perceived an opportunity of compelling the enemy either to fight a battle at great disadvantage, or else to repass the Somme, and he at once prepared a general attack. The English general was overwhelmed with confusion: he tried by excuses that were palpably futile to evade the request, and he finally begged a postponement. The treachery now could no longer be concealed. Eugene insisted on besieging Quesnoy. Ormond could find no excuse, and yielded. The siege was formally begun when Ormond announced to the Austrian commander and to the Dutch that England had signed a suspension of arms for two months, and that the British troops and the auxiliaries who were subsidised by Great Britain were about, in the face of the enemy, to retire from the confederate army.

These transactions formed afterwards one of the most formidable of the articles of impeachment against Bolingbroke,

[1] Bolingbroke's *Letters*, ii. 321 (May 10). [2] Ibid. p. 344.

and they admit of but little palliation. The scene when the suspension of arms was announced to the army was a very memorable one. The Austrian and Dutch generals protested in vain. The subsidised allies loudly declared that they would be no parties to an act of such aggravated treachery. Their pay was considerably in arrear, and with a rare refinement of meanness it was threatened that their arrears would not be paid unless they withdrew, but the threat with the great majority was unavailing. Among the British troops the sentiment was but little different. When the withdrawal was announced at the head of each regiment a general hiss and murmur ran through the ranks. In order to prevent the spread of disaffection, strict orders were given that there should be no communication between the troops who were to retire and those who were to remain; but yet, in the words of a contemporary, the British camp resounded 'with curses against the Duke of Ormond as a stupid tool and general of straw. The colonels, captains, and other brave officers were so overwhelmed with vexation that they sat apart in their tents, looking on the ground for very shame with downcast eyes, and for several days shrank from the sight even of their fellow soldiers. . . . . Some left their colours, to serve among the allies, and others afterwards withdrew, and whenever they recollected the Duke of Marlborough and the late glorious times their eyes filled with tears.'[1] At length, on the 12th of July, the British troops, numbering 12,000 men, and accompanied only by four squadrons and one battalion of the Holstein auxiliaries, and by a regiment of dragoons from the contingent of Liége, marched in dejected silence from the confederate camp. The Dutch governors of Bouchain, Douay, and Tournay refused to open their gates, and the English in reprisal seized upon Ghent and Bruges. One of the terms of the agreement with France was that a British garrison should at once occupy Dunkirk, but the French, alleging that the greater part of the auxiliaries in the pay of England still remained with the confederate army, declared that the treaty was broken, and refused to open the gates, nor was it till after considerable negotiations and urgent appeals that Lewis consented, more as a matter of favour than of right, to admit the English into Dunkirk.

[1] Cunningham.

This defection left a deep stain on the honour of England, and, as might have been expected, it gave a complete turn to the war. Quesnoy, it is true, surrendered on the very day of the retreat of Ormond, and Landrecies was besieged, but the tide of fortune speedily receded. Villars, strengthened by the garrisons of towns which the English armistice relieved, attacked and defeated one section of the weakened army of Eugene at Denain. Douay was invested by the French and compelled to surrender. Quesnoy was retaken, and the campaign closed with the recapture of Bouchain, the last great conquest of Marlborough. Had not the allies in the pay of England for the most part refused to abandon the army of Eugene, it is not improbable that it would have been totally destroyed. Immediately after the battle of Denain the French minister, Torcy, wrote in characteristic terms to St. John to communicate to him the disaster which had befallen the allies of England. 'The King of France,' he said, 'is persuaded that the advantage which his troops have obtained will give the Queen so much the more pleasure, as it may be an aid to overcome the obstinacy of the enemies to peace.'[1] Three months later we find Ormond informing Bolingbroke of the intention of the Dutch to attempt the surprise of Nieuport or Furnes. 'If it be thought more for Her Majesty's service to prevent it,' he added, 'I am humbly of opinion some means should be found to give advice of it to Marshal Villars.'[2]

While these events were taking place, the Government at home had been pressing on the peace by measures of almost unparalleled violence. Supported by a large majority in the House of Commons it resolved to silence or crush all opposition. The first and most conspicuous victim was Marlborough. It was alleged, and alleged with truth, that while commanding in the Netherlands he had during several years received an annual present of about 6,000*l.* from the contractor who supplied his army with bread, and also that he had appropriated two-and-a-half per cent. of the money which had been voted by Parliament for paying the subsidised troops, and on these grounds he was accused of peculation. The answer, however, in ordinary times would have been accepted as conclusive. It was shown that the former sum

[1] Bolingbroke's *Letters*, ii. 443.

[2] Report of the Secret Committee.

was a perquisite always granted to the commander in the Netherlands and employed by him for obtaining that secret intelligence which is absolutely essential to a general, and which was never more complete than under Marlborough, and that the deduction from the subsidies was expressly authorised by the foreign powers who were subsidised, and by a royal warrant which granted it to the commander-in-chief 'for extraordinary contingent expenses.' Whatever irregularity there might be in providing by these means a supply of secret-service money, it was of old standing; there was no reason whatever to believe that the fund was misappropriated, though from its very nature it could not be accounted for in detail, and it was proved that the expenditure of secret-service money in the campaigns of Marlborough was considerably smaller than it had been in the incomparably less successful campaigns of William.[1] Prince Eugene afterwards very candidly declared that he had himself given for intelligence three times as much as Marlborough was charged with on that head.[2] The object of the dominant party, nowever, was at all costs to discredit Marlborough. He was dismissed from all his employments, pronounced guilty by a party vote of the House of Commons, and exposed to a storm of mendacious obloquy. When Eugene came over to England in order to use his influence against the peace in the January of 1711–12, he perceived with no little generous indignation that every effort was made to extol his military talents at the expense of the great English commander. Marlborough was assailed as he drove through the streets with cries of 'Stop thief!' He was grossly insulted in the House of Lords. He was accused of the most atrocious plots against the Queen and against the State. The scurrilous pens of Mrs. Manley and of a host of other libellers were employed against him. Ballads describing him as the basest of men were sung publicly in the highways. The funds which the Queen had hitherto provided for the construction of Blenheim were stopped, and the tide of calumny and vituperation ran so strongly that he thought it advisable to abandon the country, and accordingly proceeded in November 1712 almost alone to Flanders, and soon after to Germany. He

[1] Coxe.
[2] W. Watson to Jas. Dawson, June 22, 1711.—*MSS. Dublin State Paper Office.*

was received in both countries with a respect and an enthusiasm that contrasted strangely with his treatment at home, and he at the same time invested 50,000*l.* in Holland, in case the state of home politics should exclude him for ever from his country.

English history contains no more striking instance of the sudden revulsion of popular feeling. Beyond comparison the greatest of English generals, Marlborough had raised his country to a height of military glory such as it had never attained since the days of Poitiers and of Agincourt, and his victories appeared all the more dazzling after the ignominious reigns of the two last Stuarts, and after the many failures that chequered the enterprises of William. His military genius, though once bitterly decried by party malignity,[1] will now be universally acknowledged, and it was sufficient to place him among the greatest captains who have ever lived. Hardly any other modern general combined to an equal degree the three great attributes of daring, caution, and sagacity, or conducted military enterprises of equal magnitude and duration without losing a single battle or failing in a single siege. He was one of the very few commanders who appear to have shown equal skill in directing a campaign, in winning a battle, and in improving a victory. It cannot, indeed, be said of him, as it may be said of Frederick the Great, that he was at the head of a small Power, with almost all Europe in arms against it, and that nearly every victory he won was snatched from an army enormously outnumbering his own. At Blenheim and Oudenarde the French exceeded by a few thousands the armies of the allies. At Ramillies the army of Marlborough was slightly superior. At Malplaquet the opposing forces were almost equal. Nor did the circumstances of Marlborough admit of a military career of the same brilliancy, variety, and magnitude of enterprise as that of Napoleon. But both Frederick and Napoleon experienced crushing disasters, and both of them had some advantages which Marlborough did

[1] Thus in the *History of the four last years of Queen Anne*, Swift—if he be indeed the author of this work—says: 'I will say nothing of his military accomplishments, which the opposite reports of his friends and enemies among the soldiers have rendered problematical' (p. 14). Wellington as is well known, was depreciated in the same manner in Whig circles. Thus Byron—

> Oh, bloody and most bootless Waterloo!
> Which proves how fools may have their fortune too,
> Won half by blunder, half by treachery.
>
> *The Age of Bronze.*

not possess. Frederick was the absolute ruler of a State which had for many years been governed exclusively on the military principle, in which the first and almost the sole object of the Government had been to train and discipline the largest and most perfect army the nation could support. Napoleon was the absolute ruler of the foremost military Power on the Continent at a time when the enthusiasm of a great revolution had given it an unparalleled energy, when the destruction of the old hierarchy of rank and the opening of all posts to talent had brought an extraordinary amount of ability to the forefront, and when the military administrations of surrounding nations were singularly decrepit and corrupt. Marlborough, on the other hand, commanded armies consisting in a great degree of confederates and mercenaries of many different nationalities, and under many different rulers. He was thwarted at every step by political obstacles, and by the much graver obstacles arising from divided command and personal or national jealousies; he contended against the first military nation of the Continent, at a time when its military organisation had attained the highest perfection, and when a long succession of brilliant wars had given it a school of officers of consummate skill.

But great as were his military gifts, they would have been insufficient had they not been allied with other qualities well fitted to win the admiration of men. Adam Smith has said, with scarcely an exaggeration, that 'it is a characteristic almost peculiar to the great Duke of Marlborough, that ten years of such uninterrupted and such splendid successes as scarce any other general could boast of, never betrayed him into a single rash action, scarcely into a single rash word or expression.'[1] Nothing in his career is more admirable than the unwearied patience, the inimitable skill, the courtesy, the tact, the self-command with which he employed himself during many years in reconciling the incessant differences, overcoming the incessant opposition, and soothing the incessant jealousies of those with whom he was compelled to co-operate. His private correspondence abundantly shows how gross was the provocation he endured, how keenly he felt it, how nobly he bore it. As a negotiator he ranks with the most skilful

[1] *Moral Philosophy.*

diplomatists of his age, and it was no doubt his great tact in managing men that induced his old rival Bolingbroke, in one of his latest writings, to describe him as not only the greatest general, but also 'the greatest minister our country or any other has produced.'[1] Chesterfield, while absurdly depreciating his intellect, admitted that 'his manner was irresistible,' and he added that, of all men he had ever known, Marlborough 'possessed the graces in the highest degree.'[2] Nor was his character without its softer side. Though he cannot, I think, be acquitted of a desire to prolong war in the interests of his personal or political ambition, it is at least true that no general ever studied more, by admirable discipline and by uniform humanity, to mitigate its horrors. Very few friendships among great political or military leaders have been as constant or as unclouded by any shade of jealousy as the friendship between Marlborough and Godolphin, and between Marlborough and Eugene. His conjugal fidelity, in a time of great laxity and under temptations and provocations of no common order, was beyond reproach. His attachment to the Church of England was at one time the great obstacle to his advancement. It appears never to have wavered through all the vicissitudes of his life; and no one who reads his most private letters with candour can fail to perceive that a certain vein of genuine piety ran through his nature, however inconsistent it may appear with some portions of his career.

Yet it may be questioned whether, even in the zenith of his fame, he was really popular. He had grave vices, and they were precisely of that kind which is most fatal to public men. His extreme rapacity in acquiring and his extreme avarice in hoarding money contrasted forcibly with the lavish generosity of Ormond, and alone gave weight to the charges of peculation that were brought against him. It is true that this, like all his passions, was under control. Torcy soon found that it was useless to attempt to bribe him, and he declined, as we have seen, with little hesitation the enormously lucrative post of Governor of the Austrian Netherlands, when he found that the appointment aroused the strong and dangerous hostility of the Dutch.

[1] *Letters on the Study of History.* [2] *Letters to his Son*, Nov. 18, 1748.

In these cases his keen and far-seeing judgment perceived clearly his true interest, and he had sufficient resolution to follow it. Yet still, like many men who have risen from great poverty to great wealth, avarice was the passion of his life, and the rapacity both of himself and of his wife was insatiable. Besides immense grants for Blenheim, and marriage portions given by the Queen to their daughters, they at one time received between them an annual income of public money of more than 64,000*l.*[1]

Nor can he be acquitted of very gross and aggravated treachery to those he served. It is, indeed, not easy to form a fair estimate in this respect of the conduct of public men at the period of the Revolution. Historians rarely make sufficient allowance for the degree in which the judgments and dispositions even of the best men are coloured by the moral tone of the age, society, or profession in which they live, or for the temptations of men of great genius and of natural ambition in times when no highly scrupulous man could possibly succeed in public life. Marlborough struggled into greatness from a very humble position, in one of the most profligate periods of English politics, and he lived through a long period when the ultimate succession of the crown was very doubtful. A very large proportion of the leading statesmen during this long season of suspense made such overtures to the deposed dynasty as would at least secure them from absolute ruin in the event of a change; and their conduct is surely susceptible of much palliation. The apparent interests and the apparent wishes of the nation hung so evenly and oscillated so frequently that strong convictions were rare, and even good men might often be in doubt. But the obligations of Churchill to James were of no common order, and his treachery was of no common dye. He had been raised by the special favour of his sovereign from the position of a page to the peerage, to great wealth, to high command in the army. He had been trusted by him with the most absolute trust. He not only abandoned him in the crisis of his fate, with circumstances of the most deliberate and aggravated treachery, but also employed his influence over the daughter of his benefactor to induce her to fly from her father, and to array herself with his

[1] Lord Stanhope's *History of England*, i. 20. Swift's 'Contrast between Roman Gratitude and British Ingratitude,' in the *Examiner*, No. 16.

enemies. Such conduct, if it had indeed been dictated, as he alleged, solely by a regard for the interests of Protestantism, would have been certainly, in the words of Hume, 'a signal sacrifice to public virtue of every duty in private life;' and it 'required ever after the most upright, disinterested, and public-spirited behaviour, to render it justifiable.' How little the later career of Marlborough fulfilled this condition is well known. When we find that, having been loaded under the new Government with titles, honours, and wealth, having been placed in the inner council and entrusted with the most important State secrets, he was one of the first Englishmen to enter into negotiations with St. Germain's; that he purchased his pardon from James by betraying important military secrets to the enemies of his country, and that during a great part of his subsequent career, while holding office under the Government, he was secretly negotiating with the Pretender, it is difficult not to place the worst construction upon his public life. It is probable, indeed, that his negotiations with the Jacobites were never sincere, that he had no real desire for a restoration, and that his guiding motive was much less ambition than a desire to secure what he possessed; but these considerations only slightly palliate his conduct. At the period of his downfall his later acts of treason were for the most part unknown, but his conduct towards James weighed heavily upon his reputation, and his intercourse with the Pretender, though not proved, was at least suspected by many. Neither Hanoverians nor Jacobites trusted him, neither Whigs nor Tories could regard him without reserve as their own.

And with this feeling of distrust there was mingled a strong element of fear. In the latter years of Queen Anne the shadow of Cromwell fell darkly across the path of Marlborough. To those who prefer the violent methods of a reforming despotism to the slow process of parliamentary amelioration, to those who despise the wisdom of following public opinion and respecting the prejudices and the associations of a nation, there can be no better lesson than is furnished by the history of Cromwell. Of his high and commanding abilities it is not here necessary to speak, nor yet of the traits of magnanimity that may, no doubt, be found in his character. Everything that great

genius and the most passionate sympathy could do to magnify these has in this century been done, and a long period of unqualified depreciation has been followed by a reaction of extravagant eulogy. But the more the qualities of the man are exalted the more significant are the lessons of his life. Despising the national sentiment of loyalty, he and his party dethroned and beheaded the King. Despising the ecclesiastical sentiment, they destroyed the Church. Despising the deep reverence for the constitution, they subverted the Parliament. Despising the oldest and most cherished customs of the people, they sought to mould the whole social life of England in the die of an austere Puritanism. They seemed for a time to have succeeded, but the result soon appeared. Republican equality was followed by the period of most obsequious, servile loyalty England has ever known. The age when every amusement was denounced as a crime was followed by the age when all virtue was treated as hypocrisy, and when the sense of shame seemed to have almost vanished from the land. The prostration of the Church was followed, with the full approbation of the bulk of the nation, by the bitter, prolonged persecution of Dissenters. The hated memory of the Commonwealth was for more than a century appealed to by every statesman who desired to prevent reform or discredit liberty, and the name of Cromwell gathered around it an intensity of hatred approached by no other in the history of England. This was the single sentiment common in all its vehemence to the Episcopalians of England, the Presbyterians of Scotland, and the Catholics of Ireland, and it had more than once considerable political effects. The profound horror of military despotism, which is one of the strongest and most salutary of English sentiments, has been, perhaps, the most valuable legacy of the Commonwealth. In Marlborough, for the first time since the Restoration, men saw a possible Cromwell, and they looked forward with alarm to the death of the Queen as a period peculiarly propitious to military usurpation. Bolingbroke never represented more happily the feelings of the people than in the well-known scene at the first representation of the 'Cato' of Addison. Written by a great Whig writer, the play was intended to advocate Whig sentiments; but when the Whig

audience had made the theatre ring with applause at every speech on the evil of despotism and arbitrary principles, the Tory leader availed himself of the pause between the acts to summon the chief actor, to present him with a purse of money, and to thank him publicly for having defended the cause of liberty so well against a perpetual military dictator.

These considerations help to explain the completeness of the downfall of Marlborough. His secretary Cardonnel was at the same time expelled from the House of Commons, on the charge of having received a gratuity from some bread contractors; and Walpole, who was rapidly rising to a foremost place in the Whig ranks, was on a very similar charge not only expelled, but sent to the Tower. The opposition of the Upper House was met by the simultaneous creation of twelve peers—one of them being a brother to Mrs. Masham—and the friends of Marlborough in the Lords were also seriously weakened by the death of Godolphin in September 1712. The language adopted towards the Dutch was that of undisguised and implacable hostility. The treaty of 1709, by which England had guaranteed Holland a strong barrier, while Holland guaranteed the Protestant succession in England, and undertook, in time of danger, to support it by arms, was brought before the House of Commons, and severely censured as too favourable to the Dutch; and Lord Townshend, who negotiated it, was voted an enemy to his country. Strong resolutions were carried, censuring the conduct of Holland, in falling below the stipulated proportion of troops and sailors, and a powerful representation, which was in fact an indictment against the allies, was drawn up. The States issued a memorial in reply, but it was voted by the House of Commons 'a false, scandalous, and malicious libel,' and orders were given that those who had printed and published it in England should be taken into custody. In the same spirit two protests of peers against the proceedings of the ministers were expunged from the records of the House of Lords. Fleetwood, the bishop of St. Asaph's, having published some sermons, preached many years before, with a very moderate preface, repudiating the doctrines of passive obedience, deploring the ingratitude shown to William, and complaining that the spirit of discord had entered into the

councils and impaired the glory of England, this preface, by order of the House of Commons, was burnt by the hangman.[1] Libels of the most virulent kind, some of them from the pen of Swift, were showered upon the allies and upon the Whigs, while the hand of power was perpetually raised against the writings of the Opposition. Prosecutions of this kind had for some time been very numerous, and the Stamp Act of 1712, imposing a stamp of a halfpenny on every sheet, gave a severe blow to the rising activity of the press.

I do not propose to follow in detail the negotiations which terminated in the Peace of Utrecht. Their story has been often told with a fullness that leaves nothing to be desired, and it will be sufficient to relate the general issue. The desertion of England and the disasters of the last campaign had broken the courage of the allies, and, with the exception of the Emperor, all the Powers consented to make separate treaties of peace with France on terms which were, in a very great measure, determined by English influence. On March 31, 1713, these several treaties were signed, and soon after, that between England and Spain. As far as England was concerned, the peace left little to be desired. The possession or restoration of Gibraltar, Minorca, Hudson's Bay, Acadia or Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and the French part of St. Christopher, and the immense accession of guilty wealth acquired through the Assiento treaty, by which England obtained the monopoly of the slave-trade to the Spanish colonies, did much to compensate for the great pecuniary sacrifices of the war; while some slight additional security was given to the nation by the French recognition of the Act of Settlement, by the expulsion of the Pretender from the French dominions, and, above all, by the destruction of the forts and harbour of Dunkirk. The Duke of Savoy obtained the restoration of the territory he had lost in Savoy and in Nice, a slight rectification of his frontier, and also the island of Sicily; and it was provided that, in the event of the failure of the line of Philip, the Spanish throne should descend to the House of Savoy. The treaty with Portugal was confined to some not very important articles relating to her frontier in America; but Prussia obtained from France for the first time

[1] It was republished in the *Spectator*, No. 384.

the recognition of the royal title of her sovereign, and of his right to the sovereignty of Neuchatel, which, on the death of the Duchess of Nemours in 1707, had been recognised by the States of Neuchatel, but violently repudiated by the French King. Prussia at the same time renounced in favour of France all claims to the principality of Orange, receiving Upper Guelderland instead. Holland obtained some advantages, but they were so much less than those which she had claimed, and than those she had been promised, and so insufficient to compensate her for the long struggle she had undergone, that she may be justly regarded as one of the chief sufferers by the peace. No new fortresses were incorporated in her territory, but the Spanish Netherlands, as they had been possessed by Charles II., were to be ceded to the House of Austria, the Dutch maintaining the right of garrisoning the strong places so as to form a barrier against France. By this means the Dutch and Austrian power would combine to shelter Holland from French invasion; but the Dutch occupation of Austrian towns could hardly fail to produce discord between Austria and the Netherlands. Holland was compelled to restore Lille, Aire, Bethune, and St. Venant to France; Quesnoy, which was strategically of great importance, and which had been lost through the treacherous desertion of England, remained in French hands; Tournay would have almost certainly been surrendered had not St. John feared the indignation of English public opinion;[1] and although Holland procured a treaty of commerce with France, her statesmen complained bitterly that she was excluded from all share in the Assiento contract, and in the advantages which England obtained by her new stations in the Mediterranean. As the Emperor refused to accede to the Peace of Utrecht, the Spanish Netherlands were placed in Dutch hands till peace was finally concluded, and in this quarter, therefore, the war was at an end. The Spanish dominions in Italy, with the exception of Sicily and of a small portion of the Milanese, which passed to the Duke of Savoy, were ceded to the Emperor, and a military convention, signed just before the Peace of Utrecht, established the neutrality of Italy, while,

[1] See Bolingbroke's correspondence on the subject with Torcy.

by another similar convention, guaranteed by both England and France, the Emperor agreed to withdraw his troops from Catalonia and from the islands of Majorca and Ivica. He still refused to abandon his claims to the whole Spanish dominions, or to treat with Philip; and the German frontier on the side of France was only determined after another campaign in which Villars captured in a few weeks both Landau and Fribourg. The Emperor then came to terms, and peace was signed, at Rastadt, on March 6 (N.S.), and confirmed by the treaty of Baden, in September, 1714. By this peace France restored to the Empire Brisach, Fribourg, and Kehl; engaged to destroy the fortresses she had built since the peace of Ryswick along the Rhine, and recognised the new electoral dignity in the House of Hanover, while the Emperor, on his side, consented to the re-establishment of the Electors of Bavaria and Cologne in the territory and dignities they had lost by the war. Alsace continued French, and Landau was for a time added to the French dominions. The Emperor refused to include the Spanish King in the treaty, but without any formal peace active hostilities ceased, and though the ambition of the House of Hapsburg was baffled, it was hoped that the great end of the allies was accomplished by the solemn and reiterated renunciation by Philip of all claim to the French throne.

France, which had been reduced to an almost hopeless condition, emerged from the struggle much weakened for a time by the exhaustion of the war, but scarcely injured by the peace. With the exception of a very few fortresses, her European territory was intact; her military prestige was in some degree restored by the victory of Denain and by the last campaign of Villars on the Rhine; and her ascendancy in Europe, which had proved a source of many dangers, was not permanently impaired. Spain had undergone the dismemberment she so greatly feared; but the severance of distant, ill-governed, and discontented provinces did not seriously diminish her strength. She retained the sovereign of her choice. She preserved the colonial possessions which were the great source of her wealth, and she was in some degree reinvigorated by the infusion of a foreign element into her government. Alone among the Spaniards the Catalans had real reason to regret the peace.

They had clung to the cause of Charles with a desperate fidelity, and the Peace of Utrecht rang the death-knell of provincial liberties to which they were passionately attached. From the beginning of 1705 they had been the steady and faithful allies of England; they had again and again done eminent service in her cause; they had again and again received from her ministers and generals the most solemn assurances that they would never be abandoned. When England first opened a separate negotiation for peace she might easily have secured the Catalonian liberties by making their recognition an indispensable preliminary of peace; but, instead of this, the English ministers began by recognising the title of Philip, and contented themselves with a simple prayer that a general amnesty might be granted. When the convention was signed for the evacuation of Catalonia by the Imperial troops, the question of the provincial liberties was referred to the definite peace, the Queen and the French King promising at that time to interpose their good offices to secure them. The Emperor, who was bound to the Catalans by the strongest ties of gratitude and honour, could have easily obtained a guarantee of their fueros at the price of an acknowledgment of the title of Philip; but he was too proud and too selfish for such a sacrifice. The English, it is true, repeatedly urged the Spanish King to guarantee these privileges, and their ambassador, Lord Lexington, represented 'that the Queen thought herself obliged, by the strongest ties, those of conscience and honour,' to insist upon this point; but these were mere representations, supported by no action, and were therefore peremptorily refused. The English peace with Spain contained a clause granting the Catalans a general armistice, and also a promise that they should be placed in the same position as the Castilians, which gave them the right of holding employments and carrying on a direct trade with the West Indies, but it made no mention of their provincial privileges. The Peace of Rastadt was equally silent, for the dignity of the Emperor would not suffer him to enter into any negotiations with Philip. The unhappy people, abandoned by those whom they had so faithfully served, refused to accept the position offered them by treaty, and, much to the indignation of the English Government, they still

continued in arms, struggling with a desperate courage against overwhelming odds. The King of Spain then called upon the Queen, as a guarantee of the treaty of evacuation, 'to order a squadron of her ships to reduce his subjects to their obedience, and thereby complete the tranquillity of Spain and of the Mediterranean commerce.' A fleet was actually despatched, which would probably have been employed against Barcelona, but for an urgent address of the House of Lords,[1] and the whole moral weight of England was thrown into the scale against the insurgents. The conduct of the French was more decided. Though the French King had engaged himself with the Queen by the treaty of evacuation to use his good offices in the most effectual manner in favour of the Catalan liberties, he now sent an army to hasten the capture of Barcelona. The blockade of that noble city lasted for more than a year. The insurgents hung up over the high altar the Queen's solemn declaration to protect them. They continued the hopeless struggle till 14,000 bombs had been thrown into the city; till a great part of it had been reduced to ashes; till seven breaches had been made; till 10,000 of the besieging army had been killed or wounded; and till famine had been added to the horrors of war. At last, on September 11, 1714, Barcelona was taken by storm. A frightful massacre took place in the streets. Many of the inhabitants were afterwards imprisoned or transported, and the old privileges of Catalonia were finally abolished.[2]

Such was the last scene of this disastrous war, and such were the leading articles of the treaties by which the balance and disposition of power in Europe were for a long period determined. France and Austria, whose competition for the dominions of Charles II. was the real cause of the war, would both have been more powerful had they never drawn the sword, but simply accepted the treaty of partition. As far as England was concerned, the peace was less blameable than the means by which it was obtained, and the foreign policy of the Tory party was hardly more deflected by dishonourable motives than

[1] April 3, 1714.

[2] See the Report of the Committee of Secrecy of the House of Commons on the Peace of Utrecht. *Mémoires de Berwick, tome* ii. Bolingbroke's *Letters*, iii. 365; Somers' *Tracts*, xiii. 636–638; Sismondi, *Hist. des Français*, xix. 32–40.

that of their adversaries. Those, indeed, who can look undazzled through the blaze of military glory that illuminates the reign of Anne will find very little in English public life during that period deserving of respect. Party motives on both sides were supreme. They led one party to prolong a war, which was once unquestionably righteous, beyond all just and reasonable limits. They led the other party to make a peace which was desirable and almost necessary, in such a manner that it left a deep and lasting stain on the honour of the nation. To those who care to note the landmarks of moral history which occasionally appear amid the vicissitudes of politics, it may not be uninteresting to observe that among the few parts of the Peace of Utrecht which appear to have given unqualified and unanimous satisfaction at home was the Assiento contract, which made England the great slave-trader of the world. The last prelate who took a leading part in English politics affixed his signature to the treaty. A *Te Deum*, composed by Handel, was sung in thanksgiving in the churches. Theological passions had been recently more vehemently aroused, and theological controversies had for some years acquired a wider and more absorbing interest in England than in any period since the Commonwealth; but it does not yet appear to have occurred to any class that a national policy which made it its main object to encourage the kidnapping of tens of thousands of negroes, and their consignment to the most miserable slavery, might be at least as inconsistent with the spirit of the Christian religion as either the establishment of Presbyterianism or the toleration of prelacy in Scotland.

While the peace was still in process of negotiation, the two leaders of the Government were raised to the peerage, but with unequal honours; and the fact that St. John was only made Viscount Bolingbroke, while Harley became Earl of Oxford, greatly strengthened the jealousy which had arisen between them. The position of the Government, however, on the conclusion of the peace, was very strong, for it was warmly supported by the Queen and by the two most powerful classes in England. The Church was gratified by the measures against the Dissenters. The country gentry had obtained in 1711 a Bill which they believed of the highest value to their interests. In 1703,

before the ascendancy of the Tories in the ministry had been overthrown, a Bill was carried through the House of Commons, providing that no person who did not possess sufficient real estates should be chosen member of that House; but the measure was thrown out by the Whig majority in the Lords. The Government now, however, succeeded in carrying through both Houses a measure providing that all Members of Parliament, except the eldest sons of peers and those who sat for Universities or for Scotch constituencies, must possess landed property, the borough members to the extent of 300*l.*, the county members to the extent of 600*l.* a-year. In times of peace, when no abnormal agency was disturbing the natural disposition of parties, it was believed that the ascendancy of the Tories must be indisputable; the desire for peace arising from many causes had for some time been growing in the country, and there was a general and well-founded conviction that the war had been needlessly prolonged through party motives; that no results could be hoped for at all equivalent to the sacrifices that were demanded; and that the allies had thrown upon England a very unfair and excessive proportion of the burden. Still, when all this was admitted, there was much in the foreign policy of the Government to give a great shock to the national pride. The abrupt termination of the splendid victories of Marlborough; the disgrace of the great general who had raised England to a loftier pinnacle than she had occupied in the palmiest days of Elizabeth; the many shameful, humiliating, and violent incidents which occurred during the negotiations; the final triumphs of France, due in a great measure to an English defection; the abandonment of the Catalan insurgents; the manifest inadequacy of the concessions exacted from France by the treaty, were all keenly felt by those large classes who were not blindly attached to party interests. Besides this, the great question of the succession to the throne began to rise into a greater prominence, and filled the minds of men with anxiety and doubt.

The characters of the ministers were not fitted to reassure them. With the exception of Ormond, none of the Tory leaders were personally popular, though a certain transient enthusiasm had for a few weeks centred upon Oxford after the attempt

upon his life by Guiscard in 1711. The character of Oxford bore in many respects a curious resemblance to that of Godolphin. Both of them were slow, cautious, temporising, moderate, and somewhat selfish men; tedious and inefficient in debate, and entirely without sympathy with the political and religious fanaticisms of their parties. Yet both statesmen passed in the race of ambition several who were far superior to them in intellect, and the qualities to which they owed their success were in a great degree the same. A good private character, great patience, courage, and perseverance, much sobriety of judgment and much moderation in victory, characterised both. But here the resemblance ceased. Cock-fighting, racing, and gambling occupied most of the leisure of Godolphin, while the literary tastes of Oxford made him the idol of the great writers of his day, and reacted very favourably on his position in history. He had, indeed, like Addison and Bolingbroke, the vice of hard-drinking; but in other respects his private life was unassailable. His simple manners, his wide culture, his generous but discriminating patronage of literature, his fidelity in friendship, his freedom from all sordid pecuniary views, gained for him in the circle of those who knew him well, a large measure of respect and even of affection. But in public life his faults were graver than those of Godolphin, and he was far inferior to him in the solid qualities of statesmanship. Though his business habits and his recognised caution and moderation gave him some weight with the mercantile classes, he had no pretension to the consummate financial ability of his rival. He had been Speaker during three parliaments, and his political knowledge was chiefly a knowledge of the forms of the House, and of the dispositions of its members. His special skill lay not in the higher walks of administration, but in parliamentary tactics and in political intrigues, and his intrigues seem to have seldom had any object except his own aggrandisement. He had that kind of mind and character that can attach itself firmly to no party or set of principles, and seeks only for compromise and delay. He was insincere, dilatory, mysterious, and irresolute, entirely incapable of giving his full confidence to his colleagues, of taking any prompt decision, or of committing himself without

reserve to one line of policy. And these defects he showed at a time when resolution and frankness were supremely necessary. One high political quality, it is true, he possessed perhaps more conspicuously than any of his contemporaries. It is the strength of slow and sluggish temperaments that they can often bear the vicissitudes of fortune with a calm constitutional courage rarely attained by more nervous and highly organised natures, and this attribute Oxford pre-eminently displayed. The keenest observer then living pronounced him to be, of all men he had ever known, the least changed either by adversity or prosperity[1]; and he was in this respect rather remarkably distinguished from his brilliant colleague. The genius and daring of Bolingbroke were, indeed, incontestable, but his defects as a party leader were scarcely less. No statesman was ever truer to the interests of his party, but, by a strange contradiction, no leader was ever less fitted to represent it. His eminently Italian character, delighting in elaborate intrigue, the contrast between his private life and his stoical professions, his notorious indifference to the religious tenets which were the very basis of the politics of his party, shook the confidence of the country gentry and country clergy, who formed the bulk of his followers; and he exhibited, on some occasions, an astonishing combination of recklessness and insincerity. In England the House of Commons was mainly Tory; but in the House of Lords the balance of power, even after the creation of the twelve peers, hung doubtfully; and there were several eminent men who had gone cordially with the Tories on the question of the peace, but whose allegiance on other questions was less certain. In Ireland, on the contrary, the peers were entirely subservient to the ministry, while the House of Commons was in violent opposition, and strenuously maintained the principles of the Revolution. Scotland had lost her parliament, but there can be little doubt that her dominant sentiment was Jacobite. In 1711 the Duchess of Gordon openly presented the Faculty of Advocates with a

[1] Swift. See the noble lines of Pope on Harley—

> 'A soul supreme in each hard instance tried,
> Above all pain, all passion, and all pride,
> The rage of power, the blast of public breath,
> The lust of lucre, and the dread of death.'

medal representing on one side the Pretender, with the words 'Cujus est,' and on the other the British Islands, with the motto 'reddite';[1] and the medal was accepted with thanks by that body. Among the Highlanders and the Episcopalian gentry Jacobitism had always been very powerful, and the Presbyterians of the Lowlands, who might naturally be regarded as the implacable enemies of a Catholic sovereign, and especially of a sovereign of the House of Stuart, were so bitterly hostile to the Union that great numbers of them were prepared to subordinate their whole policy to the single end of obtaining its repeal. Their discontent was greatly increased by the toleration accorded to the Episcopalians, and the Jacobites entertained ardent, though, no doubt, exaggerated, expectations, that the Pretender, by promising repeal, could rally all Scotland to his cause.[2] The Scotch Jacobite party, however, suffered a very serious loss in 1712 by the death of the Duke of Hamilton, who was killed in a duel with Lord Mohun.

In England the probabilities of the next succession were so nearly balanced that there were few leading statesmen who did not more or less enter into Jacobite intrigues, some of them in

[1] See an engraving of this medal in Boyer's *Anne* (folio ed.), p. 511.

[2] This appears very prominently in the Stuart papers. I may give as a sample a few lines from a very able memorial on the state of Jacobitism in the kingdom by Lesley (April, 1711): 'The affair of Greenshields, a minister of the Church of England, whom the Parliament has lately protected against the Presbyterians of Scotland, has irritated the latter to such a degree that they would concur in whatever might deliver them from the Union with England, which is universally detested in Scotland, where they are persuaded that nothing can deliver them from it but the return of their sovereign. . . . . There is not a man in Great Britain who is not convinced that if the King of England had landed the last time in Scotland he would have infallibly succeeded.'—Macpherson's *Original Papers*, ii. 211. See, too, the *Lockhart Papers*. On the other hand, Boyer says that one of the good results of the abortive invasion of Scotland in 1708 was that it 'opened the eyes of the Scotch Presbyterians, most of whom, having been seduced by the Pretender's partisans, had till then appeared obstinately averse to the Union.'—Boyer's *Anne*, p. 336. As late as 1717, Lockhart, reviewing the prospects of Jacobitism in Scotland, wrote: 'Though the King (the Pretender) does not want some friends in the western shires, yet the gross of the people, both gentry and commons, are either Presbyterians favourably disposed towards the present government or pretty indifferent as to all governments whatsoever; but as the far greatest part of both these have an heartie aversion to the Union, if once they were thoroughly convinced that the King's prosperity would terminate in the dissolution thereof, there is reason to believe a great many of the first would be converted at least so far as to be neutral, and most of the others declare for him.'—*Lockhart Papers*, ii. 20.

order to obtain a refuge for themselves in case of a restoration, others in order to obtain the parliamentary support of the Jacobite contingent, and others again through a sincere desire to revert to the old line. In the first category may be placed Marlborough and Godolphin. In July, 1710, when the Godolphin ministry was on the eve of dissolution Marlborough was engaged in intimate correspondence with the Pretender, and a letter is preserved written to him by the wife of the Pretender, imploring him in the most urgent terms not to resign his command, but to retain it in the interests of the Stuarts.[1] As late as 1713, at a time when Marlborough was engaged in the closest correspondence with the Hanoverian party, and when, as there is little reason to doubt, he was sincerely wedded to the Hanoverian cause, a Jacobite agent reports a conversation with him, in which he gave the strongest assurances of his attachment to the cause of the Stuarts.[2] Godolphin was more or less mixed up with Jacobite correspondence to the end of his life. The leaders of that party appear to have had some real belief in his sincerity, and he is said after his expulsion from office to have expressed his deep regret that he had not remained in power long enough to bring in the rightful king.[3] Harley, towards the end of 1710, had sent the Abbé Gaultier, who afterwards took a leading part in the negotiation of the peace, to treat with the Duke of Berwick for the restoration of the Pretender after the death of the Queen, and the Jacobite members were accordingly directed to support his measures,[4] but it does not appear that he had any real desire to restore the Stuarts. The hopes of the party for a time ran very high when the Jacobite Duke of Hamilton was appointed ambassador extraordinary to France, but they soon ceased to trust in Harley, and the leaders of the

[1] Marlborough was at this time also corresponding with the Elector of Hanover.—Macpherson, ii. 157-161, 183.

[2] See the very curious letter of Tunstal to Lord Middleton, Oct. 1713.—Macpherson's *Papers*, ii. 441, 442. See, too, the evidence furnished by the *Memoirs* of Torcy of the respectful way in which Marlborough was accustomed to speak of the Pretender.

[3] See Carte's memorandum, where Godolphin is described as the sincerest friend the Pretender ever had.—Macpherson's *Original Papers*, ii. 170.

[4] *Mémoires du Maréchal de Berwick*, ii. 126-127. A similar direction was given to the Jacobite members in Feb. 1712-3.—Macpherson, ii. 382-383.

Jacobites usually spoke of him with peculiar bitterness. He had in the former reign taken a leading part in framing the Act of Settlement. At the time when the Whig ministry fell, he desired to make a coalition administration, under which Marlborough could still retain his command, and in which he might himself turn the balance of power. When this became impossible he generally tried to moderate the violence of his colleagues, to support a policy of compromise and expedients, and to keep open for himself more than one path of retreat. 'It is my Lord of Oxford's politics,' said a Jacobite agent in 1712, 'to smoothe and check, and he would not have removed the Duke of Marlborough if it had not been absolutely necessary.'[1] As the struggle became more critical he wrapt himself in a veil of impenetrable mystery, avoided as far as possible confidential intercourse either with his colleagues or with Jacobite or Hanoverian agents, procrastinated, kept open communications with the Hanoverians, with the Jacobites, and even with the Whigs; intimated from time to time his willingness to co-operate with the more moderate Whigs; tried, to the great indignation of the October Club, to divide the employments between the High and Low Church; talked obscurely of the necessity of avoiding alike Scylla and Charybdis, and had the air of a man who was still uncertain as to the course he would ultimately pursue.[2] Bolingbroke, on the other hand, though utterly destitute of the beliefs and enthusiasms of a genuine Jacobite, flung himself, from the end of 1712,[3] with decisive impetuosity, into the Jacobite cause, which he now regarded as the only hope for the future of his party. The peace was emphatically a Tory measure, and he had taken, beyond all other statesmen, a leading part in

[1] Macpherson, ii. 280.

[2] Ibid. ii. 380, 390. In Feb. 1712–3, the best judges on both sides seem to have thought him Jacobite. Plunket, one of the leading Jacobite agents, wrote in this month, 'Mr. Harley manages the Low Church and Hannover till he can get the peace settled. Believes him hearty to the King's interest, and has several instances of it, though few of the Jacobites believe him to be so.'—Macpherson, ii. 388. In the same month Robethon, the Hanoverian secretary, wrote: 'My Lord Oxford is devoted irrecoverably to the Pretender and to the King of France.'—Ibid. p. 472. There are numerous other passages in these papers illustrating the fluctuations, uncertainties, and intrigues of Oxford. See, too, the *Lockhart Papers*, i. 365, 482. *Mém. de Berwick*, ii. 126–133.

[3] Macpherson, ii. 366–7. *Lockhart Papers*, i. 412–413.

negotiating it, but the Court of Hanover had protested against it in the strongest terms, and had thrown all its influence into the scale of the Whigs. Besides this a bitter animosity and jealousy had arisen between Bolingbroke and Oxford; and while the more moderate Tories usually supported the latter, the former endeavoured to rally around him the extreme Church party by the stringency of his measures against the Dissenters, and the Jacobites by throwing himself heartily into the cause of the Pretender.

In this manner the balance in the last years of Queen Anne hung very doubtfully. The ministry and the Parliament, indeed, openly professed their attachment to the Protestant succession. The Queen, in more than one speech from the throne, declared that it was in no danger. Both Houses of Parliament passed votes to the same effect. Both Houses voted large sums for the apprehension of the Pretender in case he landed in Great Britain. In both Houses addresses were carried urging his expulsion from Lorraine, to which he had gone after the peace. But at this very time the leading ministers were deeply implicated in Jacobite plots, and the administration of every branch of the service was passing rapidly into Jacobite hands. Ormond, who was a Jacobite, was at the head of the army, and was made Governor of the Cinque Ports, at one of which the new sovereign would probably arrive. The government of Scotland was soon after bestowed on the Jacobite Earl of Mar, while the government of Ireland was in a great degree in the hands of its Jacobite Chancellor, Sir Constantine Phipps. When the army was reduced after the peace, it was noticed that officers of known Whig tendencies were systematically laid aside,[1] and the most important trusts were given to suspected Jacobites. The same process was gradually extending over the less conspicuous civil posts.[2] The sentiments of the Queen herself were undecided or vacillating. Her brother had written to her in 1711 and 1712,[3] but it does not appear that she replied. She was drawn to him by a feeling of natural affection, by a feeling, at least as strong, of jealousy and antipathy towards the Hanoverian dynasty, by a conviction that according to the

[1] Macpherson's *Original Papers*, ii. 412.

[2] Ibid. ii. 439; Coxe's *Marlborough*, ch. cxi.

[3] Macpherson, ii. 223, 295.

principles of her Church any departure from the strict order of succession was criminal, and in the last part of her reign by the influence of Lady Masham. On the other hand, she knew that if her brother's title was good, her own was invalid, she looked with dread upon the prospect of a Popish successor, and the Duchess of Somerset, who for a short time rivalled the influence of Lady Masham, was decidedly Hanoverian. The Queen felt at the same time the very natural antipathy of a nervous invalid to a constant discussion of what was to come after her death, and to the constant mention of a successor. In July 1712 she permitted the Duke of Buckingham to sound her on the subject, and he easily gathered that the Catholicism of her brother alone prevented her from favouring his succession.[1] She was said to attribute the death of her children to the part she had taken in dethroning her father.[2] Her health was rapidly giving way, and the perplexities of her own mind, and the intrigues and dissensions of her ministers probably accelerated her end. The Whig party now strongly urged the necessity of some member of the Electoral family being in England at the time of her death, but the Queen was inflexibly opposed to such a course, and it is probable if he had come over contrary to her wishes it would have produced a revulsion of feeling very unfavourable to his cause.[3] Alarming rumours were spread that the Pretender was about to be invited over, that he was receiving instructions from an Anglican clergyman, that he was about to declare his adherence to the Protestant Church. The Electress Sophia was now very old, and the

[1] Ibid. 327-331. See, too, the account of her interview with Lockhart, in 1710.—*Lockhart Papers*, i. 315.

[2] Macpherson, ii. 503–504.

[3] Baron von Steinghens, who was at this time residing in London as Minister of the Elector Palatine, and who, while a strong Hanoverian, was also a warm sympathiser with the Government, wrote, 'I can assure you, in spite of the fine promises of the Whigs, that the Parliament would never have voted one sou for the subsistence of this prince if he had come against the will of the Queen, and I can tell you still more, that I have learnt from people of the first order that if the prince had come to this kingdom in that way the Pretender would not have failed to follow him immediately, and that he would have found here all the dispositions which the spite and rage of an insulted Court and party could inspire; so much horror people have of falling again under the domination of the Whigs, the hatred of whom can be compared to nothing better than that of the Catholic Netherlands against the Dutch, either for atrocity or for extent; for I am well assured that there are more than thirty Tories for one Whig in this kingdom.'—To Schulenburg, June 5, 1714 (N.S.); Kemble *State Papers*, p. 502. See, too, Macpherson, ii. 629.

Elector, who managed her affairs, refused to make any real sacrifice in the cause, and appeared to be chiefly anxious to extract as much money as possible from the English Exchequer. He refused to send over his son. He refused, on the plea of poverty, to furnish the secret service money which his partisans pronounced to be absolutely indispensable, while at the same time he pertinaciously urged the Government to give a pension to his mother, and to pay the arrears due to his troops, which had remained with the allies before Quesnoy. Oxford favoured the latter claim, and his cousin, the auditor Harley, introduced the sum clandestinely into the estimates; but Bolingbroke, having heard of it, called a meeting of the Cabinet, and at his desire the claim was disallowed. A large proportion of the Tories were Jacobites, only because they inferred from the attitude of the Elector that he was completely identified with the Whigs, and that his accession to the throne would be a signal for the overthrow of the party, but George Lewis made no attempt whatever to calm their fears.[1] He made no overture to the ministry, which commanded a large majority in the House of Commons and in the country, and, since the creation of the twelve peers, a small majority in the House of Lords. He did not trouble himself to learn even the rudiments of the language of the people over whom he was to rule, nor did he show the smallest interest in their Church. His conduct in this respect was contrasted with that of William, who, some time before he came to the throne, went frequently with his wife to the English Church.[2]

It is impossible to deny that under these circumstances the Protestant succession was in extreme danger, and there was great fear that the intervention of French troops on the side of the Pretender, and of Dutch troops on the side of the Elector,

[1] This was strongly urged by some of the foreign observers. Thus Steinghens wrote: 'The Hanoverian Tories are the party which must be looked after, for it is an illusion to believe that the Whigs alone can bring in the House of Hanover.'—To Schulenburg, May 12, 1714 (N.S.); Kemble, p. 493. Leibnitz wrote: 'They would be very wrong at Hanover to attach themselves only to the Whigs; they ought to attach themselves to the bulk of the nation, and endeavour to abolish these factions.'—Ibid. p. 506.

[2] Swift's *Freethoughts on the Present State of Affairs*. Macpherson, ii. 467–468. See, too, on the great indifference shown by the Elector to the throne of England at the very time when the Queen was dying, a letter of Schulenburg to Leibnitz.—*Correspondance de Leibnitz avec L'Electrice Sophie*, iii. 76.

might have made England the theatre of a great civil war. The immense majority of the landed gentry and the immense majority of the lower clergy were ardent Tories; these two formed incomparably the strongest classes in England, and it appeared probable that in this great crisis of the national history, under the influence of counteracting motives, they would remain perfectly passive. They hated the Whigs and Nonconformists, and they saw in the Hanoverian succession the ruin of their party. Their leanings and their principles were all on the side of the legitimate line. They looked with a strong English aversion to a German Lutheran prince, who could not even speak the language of his subjects. On the other hand, they dreaded receiving a sovereign from France, and, above all, they would never draw the sword for a king of the religion which was most hateful to the English people, and most hostile to the English Church. Had the Pretender consented to change or even to dissemble his creed, everything would, most probably, have been changed, but, with a magnanimity that may be truly called heroic, all through these doubtful and trying years, he steadily resisted the temptation. He was always ready, indeed, to promise a toleration, but he suffered no obscurity to hang upon his own sentiments. 'Plain dealing is best in all things,' he wrote in May 1711, 'especially in matters of religion; and as I am resolved never to dissemble in religion, so I shall never tempt others to do it, and as well as I am satisfied of the truth of my own religion, yet I shall never look worse upon any persons because in this they chance to differ with me. . . . But they must not take it ill if I use the same liberty I allow to others, to adhere to the religion which I in my conscience think the best.'[1] In September 1713 the same sentiments were strenuously repeated by one of his confidential advisers, in reply to a remonstrance of Lord Mar. It was emphatically stated that there was no chance or possibility of a change of creed, and the Jacobites were ordered not only not to encourage, but steadily to deny all rumours to an opposite effect. 'If it were to receive a crown,' added the writer, 'the King would not do a thing that might reproach either his honour or sincerity. . . . If his friends require this

[1] Macpherson's *Original Papers*, ii. 225.

condition from him they do him no favour; for he could compound at that rate with his greatest enemies.'[1] In March 1714, when the Queen was manifestly dying, and when one more urgent demand was made upon the Pretender by those who had most weight in the government of England, he answered with his own hand: 'I neither want counsel nor advice to remain unalterable in my fixed resolution of never dissembling my religion; but rather to abandon all than act against my conscience and honour, cost what it will. . . . How could ever my subjects depend upon me or be happy under me if I should make use of such a notorious hypocrisy to get myself amongst them? . . . My present sincerity, at a time it may cost me so dear, ought to be a sufficient earnest to them of my religious observance of whatever I promise them.'[2] Such an appeal, coming from a Protestant, would have been irresistible, but coming from a Catholic it only increased the uneasiness and distrust. It showed that his devotion to his creed amounted to a passion, and it was the strong conviction of the English people that it is a peculiarity of the Catholic creed that in cases in which its interests are concerned, it can sap, in a thorough devotee, every obligation of secular honour. In a mind thoroughly imbued with the Catholic enthusiasm, attachment to the corporate interest of the Church gradually destroys and replaces the sentiment of patriotism. The belief in the power of the Church to absolve from the obligation of an oath annuls the binding force of the most solemn engagements. The Church is looked upon as so emphatically the one centre upon earth of guidance, inspiration, and truth, that duty is at last regarded altogether through its medium; its interests and its precepts become the supreme measure of right and wrong, and men speedily conclude that no course can possibly be criminal which is conducive to its progress and sanctioned by its head.

The language of the Jacobites and Hanoverians on this subject substantially agrees, and their numerous confidential letters enable us to form a very clear notion of the state of feeling prevailing in England. Thus the eminent Nonjuror Lesley wrote, in April 1711, that if James would induce the

[1] Macpherson's *Original Papers*, pp. 436–437. [2] Ibid. ii. 525–526.

French sovereign to connive at 'allowing the Protestant domestics of the King of England to assemble themselves from time to time at St. Germain's, in order to worship God in the most secret manner that possibly could be, that would do more service [to the Jacobite cause] than 10,000 men. For in England that would appear as a sort of toleration with regard to his attendants; and being obtained by his Britannic Majesty, everyone would consider it as a mark of his inclination to favour his Protestant subjects, and as a pledge of what they might expect from him when he was restored to his throne. . . . If it could be said in England that the King has procured for the Protestant servants who attend him the liberty which is here proposed for them, that would be half the way to his restoration. I only repeat here the very words which I have heard from sensible men in London.'[1] 'The best part of the gentry and half the nobility,' wrote another Jacobite a year later, 'are resolved to have the King, and Parliament would do it in a year if it could be believed he had changed his religion.'[2] 'I am convinced,' wrote the Duke of Buckingham in July 1712, 'that if Harry [the King] would return to the Church of England all would be easy. Nay, from what I know, if he would but barely give hopes he would do so, my brother [Queen Anne] would do all he can to leave him his estate.'[3] 'The country gentlemen,' said an agent of remarkable acuteness, 'are for the Princess Anne and her ministers, and will not be for Hanover. . . . The Parliament will declare neither way. Their business will be to secure the Protestant religion and order matters so that it will not be in the King's power ever to hurt it. . . . The country gentlemen will never be reconciled to the Whigs. . . . Most of them are for having the King, but will hazard nothing.'[4] Another Jacobite writes in April 1713 that if he were the Pope he would oblige James to declare himself a Protestant, as the safest way of securing the crown, and establishing Catholicism, 'and when he completes the work appear with safety in his own shape, and not be beholden to anybody.'[5] Another, writing in August 1713, predicted that the new Parlia-

[1] Macpherson's *Original Papers*, ii. 216.
[2] Ibid. ii. 296.
[3] Ibid. ii. 329.
[4] Ibid. pp. 392-393.
[5] Ibid. p. 399.

ment would effect the restoration if the Queen lived long enough to let it sit. 'But the terms will be cruel and unfit to be taken; but if once in possession the power of altering, in time, will of course follow.'[1] The language from the Hanoverian side was little different. Thus Robethon, a Secretary of the Embassy at Hanover, wrote in January 1712–13: 'The Pretender, on the slightest appearance of pretended conversion, might ruin all, the religion, the liberties, the privileges of the nation.'[2] Stanhope, in October 1713, laid his view of the state of affairs before Schutz, the envoy of the Elector in England. 'He does not think there will be fewer Whigs in the next Parliament than in the last, but he has a very bad opinion of it, . . . his opinion is that if things continue never so short a time upon the present footing, the Elector will not come to the crown unless he comes with an army. He believes the greatest number of the country gentlemen are rather against us than for us, but to make amends he assures us that the wisest heads and most honest members have our interest at heart.'[3] Marlborough again and again wrote describing the Protestant succession as in imminent danger.[4] Schutz wrote to his Court in February 1713–14, 'The real state of this kingdom is that all honest men, without distinction of party, acknowledge that although of every ten men in the nation, nine should be for us, it is certain that of fifteen Tories there are fourteen who would not oppose the Pretender in case he came with a French army; but instead of making any resistance to him would be the first to receive and acknowledge him.'[5]

In this conflict of parties the Whigs had some powerful advantages. The country districts, where Toryism was most rife, are never prompt in organising or executing a revolution; while the Whigs, though numerically fewer, were to be found chiefly in the great centres of commercial activity, among the active and intelligent population of the towns. Besides this the Whigs were earnest and united in advocating the Protestant succession, while their opponents were for the most part lukewarm, uncertain, or divided. The number of unqualified

[1] Macpherson, ii. p. 424.
[2] Ibid. p. 466.
[3] Ibid. ii. 505-506.
[4] Coxe's *Marlborough*, ch. cxi.
[5] Macpherson, ii. 556.

Jacobites who would place the government of the country without conditions in the hands of a Roman Catholic sovereign was, probably, very small. A large division of the party were only prepared to restore the Stuarts after negotiations that would secure their Church from all possible danger; and they were conscious that it was not easy to make such terms, that it was extremely doubtful whether they would be observed by a Catholic sovereign, and that the very idea of imposing terms and conditions of obedience was entirely repugnant to their own theory of monarchy. Another section, usually led by Sir Thomas Hanmer, regarded the dangers of a Catholic sovereign as sufficient to outweigh all other considerations, and its members were in consequence sincerely attached to the Hanoverian succession, and desired only that it should be preceded by such negotiations as would secure their party a reasonable share of power. The opinions of the great mass of the party who were not actively engaged in politics oscillated between these two, and were compounded, in different and fluctuating proportions, of attachment to the legitimate line, hatred of Germans, Whigs, and Dissenters, dread of French influence, and detestation of Popery. The Whigs, too, had the great advantage of resting upon the distinct letter of the law. It was, indeed, not forgotten that the reign of Elizabeth was, perhaps, the most glorious in English history, and that Elizabeth had mounted the throne in defiance of an Act of Parliament, which had pronounced her to be illegitimate; yet still, as long as the Act of Settlement remained, the Jacobite was in the position of a conspirator, he was compelled to employ one language in public while he employed another in private, and the great moral weight which in England always attaches to the law was against him. On the other hand, the power of a united administration, supported by a majority in the House of Commons, was extremely great. It was more than probable that it could determine the course of affairs immediately after the decease of the Queen, and when either claimant was in power he was sure to command the support of those large classes whose first desire was to strengthen authority and avert civil war.

But the Government was far from being powerful or united. The peace, though it had excited some clamours, was not

sufficient seriously to shake it, but the commercial treaty with France, which immediately followed it, led to an explosion of party feeling of the most formidable character. It is somewhat humiliating that the measure which most seriously injured the Tory ministry of Anne was that which will now be almost universally regarded as their chief glory. The object of Bolingbroke was to establish a large measure of free trade between England and France; and, had he succeeded, he would have unquestionably added immensely both to the commercial prosperity of England, and to the probabilities of a lasting peace.[1] The eighth and ninth articles of the Treaty, which formed the great subject of discussion, provided that all subjects of the sovereigns of Great Britain and France, in all places, subject to their power on either side, should enjoy the same commercial privileges in all matters relating to duties, impositions, customs, immunities, and tribunals, as the most favoured foreign nation; that within two months the English Parliament should pass a law repealing all prohibitions of French goods which had been imposed since 1664, and enacting that no French goods imported into England should pay higher duties than similar goods imported from any other European country; while, on the other hand, the French repealed all prohibitions of English goods enacted since 1664, and restored the tariff of that year. Some classes of goods, however, it was desired to exempt from these provisions, and commissioners on both sides were appointed to adjust their details.

One of the effects of this measure was virtually to abolish the Methuen treaty, which had been contracted with Portugal in 1703. By that treaty it had been provided that England should admit Portuguese wines at a duty one-third less than that imposed on French wines, and that in consideration of this favour English woollen manufactures should be admitted into Portugal on payment of moderate duties. A charge of bad faith was on this ground raised against the English Government, but the very words of the Methuen treaty were sufficient to refute it. The right of the English to revise their tariff was

[1] See his own admirably statesmanlike letters on the subject to Shrewsbury (May 29), and to Prior (May 31). Bolingbroke's *Letters*, iv. 137–142, 151–154.

clearly reserved by the clause which stated that, 'if at any time this deduction or abatement of customs, which is to be made as aforesaid, shall in any manner be attempted and prejudiced, it shall be just and lawful for his sacred royal Majesty of Portugal again to prohibit the woollen cloths, and the rest of the British woollen manufactures.' The question was solely one of expediency. The Portuguese announced, as they had a perfect right to do, that when the French wines were placed on a level with their own they would withdraw the privileges they had given to the English woollen manufactures, and the sole question for an English statesman was whether the advantages given to British trade by the treaty with France were sufficient to compensate for this withdrawal. On this subject there cannot be a shadow of rational doubt. The enormous market which the English woollen manufactures would have received in France immeasurably outweighed any advantages England could have received from the Portuguese trade. The manner, however, in which the proposition was received in England is one of the most curious instances on record of the influence of an entirely delusive theory of political economy on general policy. According to the mercantile theory which was then in the ascendant, money alone is wealth, the one end in commerce is to obtain as large a share as possible of the precious metals, and therefore no commerce can be advantageous if the value of the imports exceeds that of the exports. In estimating the comparative value of commerce with different nations we have not to consider the magnitude of the transaction—we have simply to ask in what form England receives the price of the articles she exports. If the balance is in money the affair is for her advantage; if it is in goods the commerce is a positive evil, for it diminishes the amount of the precious metals. In accordance with this theory elaborate statistics were made of every branch of national commerce, showing which were advantageous and which detrimental to the nation. In the former category was the trade of Portugal, which the new treaty would probably destroy, for although we brought home wine, oil, and some other things for our own consumption, considerably the greater part of our returns was in silver and gold. The commerce with Spain, with Italy, with Hamburg and other places

in Germany, and with Holland, was for the same reason advantageous, and continually increased the wealth of the community. The commerce with France, on the other hand, was a positive evil, for the productions of that country were so useful and so highly valued by Englishmen that England received goods to a greater value than she exported. The difference was, of course, paid in money, and the trade was, in consequence, according to the mercantile theory, a perpetual and a growing evil. It was estimated by leading commercial authorities that, if the provisions of the commercial treaty were executed, there would soon be an annual balance against England of more than 1,400,000*l.*, while, at the same time, France, by her greater cheapness of labour, could undersell the English in some of their most successful trades. The treaty left England at perfect liberty to impose whatever duties she pleased on the importation of French goods provided the same duties were imposed on similar articles imported from other countries, but in spite of this fact it was confidently asserted that French competition would ruin the wool trade and the silk trade at home. A wild panic passed through the trading classes, and was vehemently fanned by the whole Whig party and by the greatest financial authorities in the country. Godolphin was dead, but Halifax, the founder of the financial system of the Revolution, was prominent in the Opposition. Walpole, the ablest of the rising financiers, took the same side. Stanhope eulogised the law of Charles II. absolutely forbidding the importation of French goods into England. The Bank of England and the Turkey Company threw all their weight into the struggle. Three out of the four members of the City of London, as well as the two members for Westminster, voted against the Bill, and many merchants were heard on the same side at the bar of the House. Defoe attempted to stem the tide in a periodical called the 'Mercator,' but the leading merchants set up a rival paper called 'The British Merchant,' which acquired an extraordinary influence. They maintained that the treaty, if carried into effect, would be more ruinous to the British nation than if London were laid in ashes, that from that moment the wealth of England must be steadily drained away into the coffers of France, that England would lose her best markets both at home and abroad,

that rents must inevitably sink, and that the common people must either starve for want of work, be thrown for subsistence on the parish, or seek their bread in foreign lands. Still more alarming was the revolt of a large section of the Tories under the guidance of Sir Thomas Hanmer. The strength of these combined influences was such that at its last stage the Bill was lost in the Commons by 194 to 185.[1]

The effect of this defeat on the stability of the Government was very perceptible. The immediate danger of a catastrophe was, it is true, averted by a vote of confidence expressing a general satisfaction with the peace; but a ministry which has been once defeated on a capital question rarely recovers its moral force. As Bolingbroke graphically expressed it, 'Instead of gathering strength either as a ministry or a party, we grew weaker every day. The peace had been judged with reason to be the only solid foundation whereupon we could create a Tory system; and yet when it was made we found ourselves at a full stand. Nay, the very work which ought to have been the basis of our strength was in part demolished before our eyes, and we were stoned with the ruins of it.'[2] A Bill, which was immediately afterwards carried, for raising 500,000*l.* to pay the debts of the Queen, appeared somewhat strange to those who knew the great parsimony of her Court, and somewhat suspicious at a time when a general election was impending. The House was prorogued by the Queen with an angry speech in July 1713, and in the following month it was dissolved. It was noticed as a significant fact that in this last Speech from the Throne the customary assurance of the determination of the Queen to maintain the Protestant succession was omitted.

The election, however, did not at first sight appear to modify very seriously the condition of parties. Much use was made by the Whigs of the unpopularity of the commercial treaty and of the anti-popery feeling. Whig candidates appeared at the hustings wearing pieces of wool in their hats; figures of the Pope, the Pretender, and the devil were burnt in numerous places; and a few seats were won; but when the last Parliament

[1] *Parl. Hist.* vi. 1220–1225. Burnet's *Own Times*, ii. 622–623. The *British Merchant*. Craik's *Hist. of Commerce*, ii. 165–170.

[2] Letter to Windham,

of Queen Anne assembled, it was found to contain a Tory majority not much smaller than its predecessor. The influence of the Government had been exerted to the utmost, and the Church was still unwavering in its allegiance. In the March preceding the dissolution, the period during which Sacheverell had been excluded from the pulpit by the House of Lords expired, and the event was celebrated with great rejoicings in many parts of the kingdom. He preached his first sermon in St. Saviour's from the text, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do,' drawing a tacit parallel between his own sufferings and those of Christ; and he was selected on the following anniversary of the Restoration to preach before the House of Commons, was rewarded for his services to the party by the valuable rectory of St. Andrew's, Holborn, and would have been made a bishop but for the refusal of the Queen.[1] In 1713 also, Atterbury, the ablest of the High Church Jacobites, was raised to the bench. The doctrine of the divine right of kings again assumed an alarming prominence in the pulpit, and there were many signs of the increasing confidence of the Jacobites. The birthday of the Pretender was celebrated in Edinburgh with bonfires and fireworks. In Ireland the Chancellor, Sir Constantine Phipps, was strongly suspected of Jacobite sentiments, and he was supported by the House of Lords, in which the bishops predominated, and by the Convocation. Men were openly enlisted for the service of the Pretender, and Shrewsbury, who had been sent over as Viceroy, found that the English Government paid much more attention to the recommendations of the Chancellor than to his own. Sir Patrick Lawless, an Irish Roman Catholic, well known to have been the envoy of the Pretender at Madrid, appeared in London with credentials from King Philip. It was reported that the health of the Stuart prince was constantly drunk at meetings and in clubs, and it was certain that Jacobite agents were constantly arriving from France. A metrical edition or adaptation of some of the Psalms, written in the highest strain of Tory loyalty, and entitled 'The Loyal Man's Psalter,' was widely circulated throughout England.

[1] See Lord Dartmouth's note to Burnet, ii. 630; Tindal. Swift is said to have induced Bolingbroke, who had a great contempt for Sacheverell, to give him the living.—Sheridan's *Life of Swift*, p. 116.

Anonymous letters were sent to the mayors and magistrates, during the elections, urging them to promote the interests of the Pretender, and suggesting that such a course would be acceptable to the Queen and to her ministers. A book which had lately appeared, called 'The Hereditary Right of the Crown of England Asserted,' maintaining the absolute criminality of all departure from the strict order of succession, was distributed gratuitously far and wide; its title-page appeared on Sunday mornings on every prominent door or post to attract the attention of the congregations, and a copy of it is said to have been presented by Nelson, the Nonjuror, to the Queen. Violent remonstrances, however, having been made, the Government ordered a prosecution to be instituted, and a Nonjuror clergyman, named Bedford, who was found guilty of having brought the manuscript to the printer,[1] incurred a severe sentence, part of which was remitted by the Queen.[2]

It was evident that the crisis was at hand. The Queen, in the beginning of 1714, had a very dangerous illness, and it was certain that her life could not be greatly prolonged. 'If in this life only they have hope,' said Wharton, with his usual profane wit, pointing in turn to the Queen and to the ministers, 'they are of all men the most wretched.' The reorganisation of the army in the Jacobite interest was rapidly proceeding. Considerable sums had been sent, in 1711, by the Treasurer to the chiefs of Scotch clans, who were notoriously Jacobite, with commissions empowering them to arm their followers for Her Majesty's service;[3] and in January 1713–14 Marlborough wrote to Robethon, 'The ministers drive on matters so fast in favour of the Pretender that everybody must agree if something farther be not done in the next sessions of Parliament towards securing the succession, it is to be feared it may be irretrievably lost.'[4] In February, Gaultier wrote, at the dictation of Oxford, a letter to the Pretender, in emphatic terms, urging him, as the indispensable condition to obtaining the support of the Queen and ultimately the crown, to change, or at least to dissemble,

[1] Its author was a Nonjuror, named Harbin. See Lathbury's *Hist. of the Nonjurors.*

[2] Boyer, Tindal, Somerville. Coxe, *Life of Marlborough.*

[3] *Lockhart Papers*, i. p. 377.

[4] Coxe's *Marlborough*, ch. cxi.

his creed; but the answer was a refusal so clear and so decisive that it completely disconcerted the tactics of the party. Bolingbroke said, with perfect truth, to Iberville, the French secretary of legation, that if the Elector of Hanover ever mounted the English throne it would be entirely the fault of the Pretender, who thus refused to accept the one essential condition; and Iberville himself fully shared the opinion, and predicted that, without conformity to the Church of England, King James would never obtain the sincere support of the Tories.[1] Argyle, whose enmity to Marlborough had been very useful to the ministry, but who was strongly attached to the Hanoverian succession, was removed from all his places; and Lord Stair, who was also Hanoverian, was obliged to dispose of his regiment. Oxford, however, hesitated more and more, kept up communications with the Jacobites, but threw obstacles in the path of every decisive measure in their favour, sent his cousin Harley to Hanover to express his sentiments of devotion to the Elector, tended slowly and irresolutely towards the Whigs, and was trusted by neither party, but courted by both.[2] Bolingbroke now looked upon his colleague with a deadly aversion, and made it a main object of his policy to displace him, and though he may, perhaps, have had no very settled or irrevocable design of bringing in the Pretender, he felt that he had gone too far for safety, and was anxious at least to reorganise the party on a strong Church basis, so that at the death of the Queen he might be the master of the situation.[3]

The Parliament met on the 16th of February, and it soon appeared that the strength of the Government was much shaken. In the Lords the Whig majority was all but re-

[1] See the passages from the Paris archives quoted in Lord Stanhope's *Hist. of England*, i. 55.

[2] See in Macpherson the Stuart and Hanoverian Papers for 1714; also the *Lockhart Papers*, i. 369, 370.

[3] See a very remarkable passage in one of his letters, April 13, 1713. 'The prospect before us is dark and melancholy. What will happen no man is able to foretell, but this proposition is certain, that if the members of the Church of England lay aside their little piques and resentments, and cement closely together, they will be too powerful a body to be ill-treated.' — Bolingbroke's *Letters*, iv. 499. In his letter to Sir W. Windham, he afterwards said, 'As to what might happen afterwards on the death of the Queen, to speak truly, none of us had any settled resolution.' See also a letter of his to Lord Marchmont. — *Marchmont Papers*, ii. 192.

stored. In the Commons the Tories formed a large majority, but their discipline was broken, they were divided between the Hanoverian Tories and the Jacobites, between the followers of Bolingbroke and the followers of Oxford, and the jealousies, the vacillations, the conflicting counsels of their leaders in a great degree paralysed their strength. The Queen, in her opening speech, spoke severely of the excesses of the press, and of those who had 'arrived to that height of malice as to insinuate that the Protestant succession in the House of Hanover is in danger under my government;' but there is little doubt that at this very time her sympathies were with the Pretender. The House of Commons expelled Steele ostensibly for the publication of a pamphlet called 'The Crisis,' really on account of his decided Whig views. The House of Lords retaliated by offering a reward for the discovery of the author of 'The Public Spirit of the Whigs,' an anonymous pamphlet which Swift had written in reply to 'The Crisis,' and which had excited much indignation in the North by its bitter reflections upon the Scots. The Whigs in the House of Lords brought forward, with much effect, the case of the Catalans who had been so shamefully abandoned, and also the commercial treaty; and Wharton, supported by Cowper and Halifax, introduced a scandalous resolution urging the Queen to issue a proclamation offering a reward for anyone who should apprehend her brother alive or dead. Nothing was said about this reward being contingent upon acts of hostility against England, and it might have been claimed by anyone who murdered the Pretender while he was living peacefully in Lorraine. The address was carried without a division, but the better feeling of the House of Lords, after some reflection, revolted against it, and a clause was substituted merely asking the Queen to offer a reward for the apprehension of the Pretender in case he landed in the kingdom.[1] The Queen answered that she saw no present necessity for such a proclamation. Several other motions for the defence of the Hanoverian succession were carried through Parliament, and were accepted with apparent alacrity by the Government, but Bolingbroke, on at least one occasion, privately assured the French envoy that they

[1] *Parl. Hist.*, vi. 1337–1338.

would make no difference.[1] Nor did they deceive the people. An uneasy feeling was abroad. Men felt as if on the brink of a great convulsion. The stocks fell, and it was evident that the dread of a Popish sovereign was in the ascendant. Mutinous proceedings were reported among the soldiers at Gibraltar and some other quarters, and Bolingbroke wrote with much alarm about the necessity of changing garrisons, and about the dangerous spirit of faction which had arisen among the troops.[2] The bishops also began to waver in their allegiance to the Government. A motion 'that the Protestant succession was in danger under the present administration,' moved by Wharton, in the House of Lords, was only defeated by a majority of twelve, and it was a very significant fact that the Archbishop of York and the majority of his brethren voted against the Government. In the House of Commons a similar motion was defeated by 256 to 208, and was supported by a considerable body of Tories under the leadership of Sir Thomas Hanmer who was Speaker of the House, and whose elevation to that position Oxford had warmly supported, in the vain hope of in this manner diverting him from opposition.[3] In a confidential letter to Lord Strafford, dated March 23, Bolingbroke said: 'In both Houses there are the best dispositions I ever saw, but I am sorry to tell you that these dispositions are unimproved; the Whigs pursue their plans with good order and in concert. The Tories stand at gaze, expect the Court should regulate their conduct and lead them on, and the Court seems in a lethargy. Nothing, you see, can come of this, but what would be at once the greatest absurdity and the greatest misfortune. The minority, and that minority unpopular, easily get the better of the majority who have the Queen and the nation on their side.'[4] Oxford still held the position of Prime Minister, and had the foremost place in the party and with the Queen, but his brilliant and impetuous colleague was in both quarters rapidly superseding him, and with him the star of Jacobitism rose in the ascendant. The Jacobite appointments were more decided and more numerous, and the Schism Act, which was

[1] Stanhope's *Hist. of England*, i. p. 85.
[2] Bolingbroke's *Letters*, iv. 489.
[3] Bunbury's *Life of Hanmer*, p. 42.
[4] Bolingbroke's *Letters*, iv. 494.

at this time carried," was believed by the party to have intimidated the Dissenters, and at the same time secured anew the full support of the Church.

And yet even at this time the policy of Bolingbroke was, probably, less unfaltering than has been supposed. When speaking at a later period of these anxious months, he said: 'Nothing is more certain than this truth, that there was at this time no formed design in the party, whatever views some particular men might have, against his Majesty's succession,'[1] and the assertion, if not strictly accurate, appears to me to have at least approximated to the truth. It is certain that though he now led the Jacobite wing, though he continually and unreservedly expressed to Jacobites his sympathy with their cause,[2] and though his policy manifestly tended towards a Restoration, he was never a genuine Jacobite. He was driven into Jacobitism by the force of the Jacobite contingent in his party, by his antagonism to Oxford, which led him to rely more and more upon that contingent, by the increasing difficulty of receding from engagements into which he had entered in order to obtain parliamentary support, by the necessity he was under as a minister of the Crown of opposing the Whig scheme of bringing over the Electoral Prince contrary to the strongest wishes of the Queen, by the violent opposition of Hanover to the peace, by the close and manifest alliance that had been established between the Hanoverian Court and the Whig party. In his eyes, however, the restoration of the House of Stuart was not an end but a means. The real aim of his policy was to maintain the ascendancy of that Church or Tory party which, as he truly boasted, represented, under all normal circumstances, the overwhelming preponderance of English opinion. To re-establish that ascendancy which had been shaken by the victories of Marlborough was the chief motive of the Peace of Utrecht; to secure its continuance was the real end

[1] Letter to Sir W. Windham.

[2] *Lockhart Papers*, i. 441, 442, 460, 461, 470, 477, 478. The extent of Bolingbroke's direct negotiations with the Pretender is chiefly shown by the papers from the French archives in the Mackintosh collection. Some of them have been printed in the *Edinburgh Review*, vol. lxii. and in Banbury's *Life of Hanmer*. Lord Stanhope has made use of them with his usual skill. See too the remarkable statement of Walpole. Coxe's *Walpole*, i. 48.

of his dynastic intrigues. If he could have obtained from the head of the House of Hanover an assurance that the royal favour, under the new dynasty, would still be bestowed on his party, it is very probable that he would have supported the Act of Settlement. But the Elector was plainly in the hands of the Whigs, and the party interest of the Tory leader attracted him to the Stuarts. At the same time, so far as we can judge his motives, his immediate object seems to have been to place the whole administration of civil and military matters into the hands of men who, while they had a certain leaning towards Jacobitism, were beyond all things Tories, and might be trusted fully to obey a Tory Government. Had this been done he would have commanded the position, and been able on the death of the Queen to dictate his terms and to decide the succession. That his decision would have been in favour of the Stuarts, his engagements and his present policy made most probable, but it is also probable that to the very close of his ministerial career he had never formed in his own mind an irrevocable decision. The result would probably have depended on the relative strength of the Jacobite and Hanoverian elements in the Tory party, on the power of the Opposition, on the policy of the rival candidates; and a change in the religion of one of them or in the political attitude of the other, might, even at the last moment, have proved decisive.

This, as far as I can understand it, is the true key to the policy of Bolingbroke. But his own very natural hesitation in taking a step that might cost him his head, the much greater hesitation of Oxford, and the activity of the Whig Opposition, had hitherto trammelled it. The Peace of Utrecht was carried, and it was a great step towards Tory ascendancy; but it is remarkable that, although it was supported by the Jacobites, its terms were by no means favourable to their interest. The recognition by France of the Hanoverian succession, and the removal of the Pretender to Lorraine, were not, indeed, matters of much consequence, but the arrangement with Holland was of a very different order of importance. We have seen that, by the barrier treaty of 1709, England guaranteed a very extensive barrier, while the States-General guaranteed the Hanoverian succession, and undertook 'to furnish by sea or land the suc-

cour and assistance' necessary to maintain it. This treaty, having been condemned by Parliament, was abrogated, but a new treaty, with the same general objects, was signed in January 1712–13. It was much less favourable than its predecessor to the Dutch, but it still retained the guarantee of the Hanoverian succession, and even made it more precise. England engaged to support Holland, if her barrier was assailed, with a fleet of twenty men-of-war, and an army of 10,000 men. Holland engaged to furnish the same number of vessels and an army of 6,000 men, at the request either of the Queen or of the Protestant heir, to defend the Protestant succession whenever it was in danger. This treaty was negotiated by the Tory Government, and its great value to the House of Hanover was at a later period abundantly shown. No measure was more obnoxious to the Jacobites. They were accustomed to ask with some plausibility whether the supporters of the House of Hanover were in reality the friends of English liberty which they pretended. They were about to place the sceptre of England in the hands of a German prince, who was wholly ignorant of the English constitution, and accustomed to despotic rule in his own country. He already disposed of a German army altogether beyond the control of the English Parliament. He would find in England many thousands of refugees driven from a despotic country, who would support his dynasty at any sacrifice as representing the cause of Protestantism in Europe, but who were likely to care very little for the British constitution; and if, by exceeding his powers, he arrayed his subjects against him, he could summon over 6,000 Dutch troops to his support. If the German prince happened to be an able, ambitious, and arbitrary man, he would thus be furnished with means of attacking the liberties of England such as Charles I. had never possessed.[1]

On the other hand, as the Jacobite wing rose with Bolingbroke to the ascendant, the reorganisation of the army rapidly advanced. At the time when Marlborough was removed from command, a project seems to have been much discussed in political circles of making the Elector of Hanover commander

[1] See the powerful statement of these dangers in the address issued by the Pretender, Aug. 29, 1714.

in Flanders;[1] but such a measure, if it was ever proposed, was speedily put aside, and it was doubtless expected that Ormond would in time make the army what he desired. But Bolingbroke had no wish to let the Jacobite movement pass out of his control; and it is remarkable that, even in the latter days of June 1714, he wrote to the Lords Justices of Ireland, urging them to search diligently for all persons who were recruiting for the Pretender, and to prosecute them with the full rigour of the law.[2]

It was difficult for the most sagacious man to predict the issue. Berwick strongly urged upon the Jacobites that they should induce the Queen to take the bold step of inviting the Pretender over during her lifetime, and presenting him to the Parliament as her successor, on the condition that he bound himself to defend the liberties of the Church;[3] and Lord Townshend wrote to Hanover that the Whig party entertained strong

[1] This is stated in a MS. letter from J. Williams to Josh. Dawson, Jan. 8, 1711, in the Irish State Paper Office. Rumours to the same effect seem to have been floating for some time. As early as 1703 this measure was discussed (*Correspondance de Leibnitz avec L'Électrice Sophie*, iii. 61–70). and on Feb. 14, 1707–8, one of the informants of Dawson (who was Secretary at Dublin Castle) wrote from London: 'There is a story in town, how true I cannot tell—you shall hear it—that at the Council, when Lord Marlborough said he could not serve any longer, several of the lords gave their opinion that if my lord laid down his commission we had none able to command the forces, nor none that had such interest with the allies as his Grace; on which Lord Wharton said there was one who he thought as able, and every way as well qualified to head the English army, and one who he thought should be better known to the English, and that he was not ashamed to name him, which was the Elector of Hanover. This, they say, made everybody there mute.'—B. Butler to Josh. Dawson, Irish State Paper Office. In 1707 the Elector actually obtained a command on the Rhine, which he resigned in 1710.

[2] 'I enclose a copy of a letter from Captain Rouse, Commander of Her Majesty's ship the "Saphire," wherein your Excellencies will find an account of several men who have been listed in Ireland and carried to France for the service of the Pretender, and that one Fitz-Simonds, a merchant of Dublin, is mentioned to be chiefly concerned in raising these recruits. I am, therefore, to acquaint your Excellencies it is Her Majesty's pleasure that you enquire into the conduct of this merchant, that you use your utmost diligence to gain a true knowledge of this fact, and to discover all practices of the like nature, and that by a rigorous prosecution of those who have been already found to be guilty of them your Excellencies should as much as possible deter others from attempting the same.' (June 15, 1714.) On the 26th he again writes, urging the prosecution of Fitz-Simonds 'if he appear guilty of conveying men out of Her Majesty's dominions into the service of the Pretender;' and another letter was written on the same subject after the death of the Queen (Aug. 7, 1714). MSS. Irish State Paper Office. Shrewsbury had issued a strong proclamation against enlistments for the Pretender (*Dublin Gazette*, May 28, 1714).

[3] *Mémoires de Berwick*, ii. 129–130.

fears that some such course might be adopted.[1] The Jacobite Lord Hamilton was reported to have said that 'he who would be first in London after the Queen's death would be crowned. If it is the Pretender he will have the crown, undoubtedly, and if it is the Elector of Hanover, he will have it.'[2] Schutz wrote in March to the same effect: 'Of ten who are for us, nine will accommodate themselves to the times, and embrace the interests of him who will be the first on the spot, and who will undoubtedly have the best game and all the hopes of success, rather than expose themselves by their opposition to a civil war, which appears to them a real and an immediate evil; whereas they flatter themselves that the government of the Pretender, whom they look upon as a weak prince, will not be such a great evil as civil war.'[3] The Whig leaders were not inactive. While the Government were placing Jacobites in the most important military posts, Stanhope was concerting measures with the French refugee officers, who were naturally violently opposed to the Pretender; Marlborough, who was still on the Continent, was arranging with the Dutch to send over a fleet and an army, and he undertook to employ his influence with the troops who were stationed at Dunkirk, and, if necessary, to invade England at their head. Another measure was taken which threw the Government into great perplexity. The Queen was inflexibly opposed to the residence of any member of the Hanoverian family in England; but the Electoral Prince, the son of the Elector, had been made Duke of Cambridge, and as such had a right to sit in the House of Lords. At the urgent request of the Whig leaders, Schutz, without informing either the Queen or the ministers, applied to the Chancellor Harcourt for a writ enabling the prince to take his seat. The chancellor, who was deeply mixed in Jacobite intrigues, was extremely embarrassed, but it was impossible to refuse the demand. The Government treated it as a direct insult to the sovereign. The Queen herself was exceedingly incensed. She wrote angry letters of remonstrance to the Electress Sophia, to the Elector, and to the Prince himself. She forbade Schutz to appear at her court, and insisted

[1] Macpherson, ii. 596–597.
[2] Ibid., ii. 557.
[3] Ibid., ii. 572–573.

on his recall. The Elector, to the rage and disappointment of the Whigs, refused to send over his son. On May 28th the old Electress Sophia died suddenly, her death having, it is said, been hastened by her annoyance at the letters from the Queen ;[1] and the Elector, according to the Act of Settlement, became the immediate heir to the British throne.

The Parliament was prorogued on July 9, and it left England in a condition of the strangest confusion. The Queen was dying, and the fierce conflicts among her servants and in her own mind at once embittered and accelerated her end. A Tory ministry, commanding a large majority in the House of Commons and a majority perhaps still larger in the country, was in power ; but both the Government and those whom it represented were distracted by internal dissensions, and were wholly uncertain in the object of their policy. A question, which was one of the most momentous in the history of the nation, was imminent. It was whether the monarchy of England should rest upon the Tory principle of the Divine right of kings, or on the principles established by the Revolution. The answer to this question might determine the fate of parliamentary institutions in England, and would certainly determine for more than a generation the character of its legislation, the position of its parties, the habitual bias of its Government. Had it been decided simply on this issue, there can be little doubt of the result. All the instincts, all the traditions, all the principles and enthusiasms of the Tory party inclined them to the Stuarts, and, as Bolingbroke truly said, a Whig ascendancy in England could in that age only rest upon adventitious and exceptional circumstances. Under all normal conditions, ' the true, real, genuine, strength of Britain ' lay with the Tories. The persistent Catholicism of the Pretender, however, had connected with this great issue another, on which the popular feeling ran strongly in the opposite direction, and the dread of Popery was the great counterpoise to the love of legitimacy. The Government had naturally an immense power of determining the result, but the fatal division between its chiefs, and the fatal irresolution of the character of Oxford,

[1] *Correspondance de Leibnitz avec L'Électrice Sophie*, iii. 481, 483. See too a letter of Mr. Molyneux to Marlborough. Coxe's *Marlborough*, ch. cxi.

had during several critical months all but suspended its action. On May 18, while Parliament was still sitting, Swift wrote a letter to Peterborough which clearly described the situation: 'I never led a life so thoroughly uneasy as I do at present. Our situation is so bad that our enemies could not, without abundance of invention and ability, have placed us so ill if we had left it entirely to their management. . . . . The Queen is pretty well at present, but the least disorder she has puts us all in alarm, and when it is over we act as if she were immortal. Neither is it possible to persuade people to make any preparation against the evil day.'[1]

The position of Swift at this time is well worthy of attention, for his judgment was that of a man of great shrewdness as well as great genius, and he probably represented the feelings of many of the more intelligent members of his party. Though a fierce, unscrupulous, and singularly scurrilous political writer, he was not, in the general character of his politics, a violent man,[2] and the inconsistency of his political life has been very grossly exaggerated. It was almost inevitable that a young man, brought up as Secretary to Sir W. Temple, should enter public life with Whig prepossessions. It was almost equally inevitable that a High Church divine should, in the party conflicts under Queen Anne, ultimately gravitate to the Tories. Personal ambition, no doubt, as he himself very frankly admitted, contributed to his change, but there was nothing in it of that complete and scandalous apostasy of which he has often been accused. From first to last an exclusive Church feeling was his genuine passion. It appeared fully, though in a very strange form, in the 'Tale of a Tub,'

[1] Swift's *Correspondence*. Bolingbroke's letters show a despondency quite as great. Writing to Prior, July 19, he said, 'These four or five months last past have afforded such a scene as I hope never again to be an actor in. All the confusion which could be created by the disunion of friends and malice of enemies has subsisted at Court and in Parliament.' — Bolingbroke's *Letters*, iv. 561-562. Writing to Swift on the 13th of the same month, he said, 'If my grooms did not live a happier life than I have done this great while I am sure they would quit my service.' — Swift's *Correspondence*, i. 469. (Ed. 1766.)

[2] His genuine political opinion was expressed by him in one very happy and characteristic sentence, 'Whoever has a true value for Church and State should avoid the extremes of Whig for the sake of the former, and the extremes of Tory on account of the latter.'—*Sentiments of a Church of England Man.*

which was published as early as 1704. It appeared still more strongly in his 'Project for the Reformation of Manners,' in his 'Sentiments of a Church of England Man,' in his 'Argument against abolishing Christianity,' in his 'Letter to a Member of Parliament against taking off the Test in Ireland;' all of which were published at the time when he was ostensibly a Whig.[1] It appeared not less clearly many years afterwards in his Irish tracts, written at a period when it would have been eminently conducive to the objects he was aiming at to have rallied all religions in opposition to the Government. In the later part of the reign of Anne political parties were grouped, much more than in the previous reign, by ecclesiastical considerations; and, after the impeachment of Sacheverell, the Tory party had become, before all things, the party of the Church. On the other hand, Swift never appears to have wavered in his attachment to the Protestant line; and there is not the smallest evidence that he had at any period of his life the slightest communication with St. Germain's. His position in the party was a very prominent one. He was, without exception, the most effective political writer in England at a time when political writing was of transcendent importance. His influence contributed very much to that generous and discriminating patronage of literature which was the special glory of the Tory ministry of Anne. To his pen we owe by far the most powerful and most rational defence of the Peace of Utrecht that has ever been composed; and although, like the other writers of his party, he wrote much in a strain of disgraceful scurrility against Marlborough, it is at least very honourable to his memory that he disapproved of, and protested against, the conduct of the ministers in superseding that great general in the midst of the war.[2] In the crisis which we are considering, he strongly urged upon them to reconcile themselves with the Elector; and he came over specially from Ireland in order to compose the differences in the Cabinet. Having failed

[1] See also a curious letter on the Occasional Conformity Bill, to Esther Johnson, written as early as 1703. Swift's *Correspondence*, pp. 1–4.

[2] *Journal to Stella*, Jan. 7, 1711–12. In one of his letters to Steele, dated May 27, 1713, he says, 'As to the great man (Marlborough) whose defence you undertake, though I do not think so well of him as you do, yet I have been the cause of preventing 500 hard things to be said against him.'—Scott's ed. xvi. p. 69.

in his attempt, he retired to the house of a friend in Berkshire, and there wrote a remarkable appeal to the nation, which shows clearly his deep sense of the dangers of the time. Though he was much more closely connected, both by personal and political sympathy, with Oxford than with Bolingbroke, he now strongly blamed the indecision and procrastination of the former, and maintained that the party was in such extreme and imminent danger that nothing but the most drastic remedies could save it. The great majority of the nation, he maintained, had two wishes. The first was, 'That the Church of England should be preserved entire in all her rights, power, and privileges; all doctrines relating to government discouraged which she condemned; all schisms, sects, and heresies discountenanced.' The second was, the maintenance of the Protestant succession in the House of Brunswick, 'not for any partiality to that illustrious house further than as it had the honour to mingle with the blood royal of England, and is the nearest branch of our royal line reformed from Popery.' He proceeded, in language which showed some insincerity or some blindness, to deny the existence of any considerable Jacobitism outside the Nonjuror body, maintaining that the supporters of the theory of passive obedience could have no difficulty in supporting a line which they found established by law, and were not at all called upon by their principles to enter into any historical investigation of the merits of the Revolution. But the danger of the situation lay in the fact that the heir to the throne had completely failed to give any assurance to the nation that he would support that Church party to which the overwhelming majority of the nation was attached; that he had, on the contrary, given all his confidence to the implacable enemies of that party—to the Whigs, Low Churchmen, and Dissenters. Swift maintained that the only course that could secure the party was the immediate and absolute exclusion of all such persons from every description of civil and military office. The whole government of the country, in all its departments, must be thrown into the hands of Tories, and it would then be impossible to displace them. This was necessary because the Whigs had already proved very dangerous to the constitution in Church and State, because they were highly

irritated at the loss of power, 'but principally because they have prevailed, by misrepresentations and other artifices, to make the successor look upon them as the only persons he can trust, upon which account they cannot be too soon or too much disabled; neither will England ever be safe from the attempts of this wicked confederacy until their strength and interests shall be so far reduced that for the future it shall not be in the power of the Crown, although in conjunction with any rich and factious body of men, to choose an ill majority in the House of Commons.' He at the same time urged that the Elector should be peremptorily called upon by the Queen to declare his approbation of the policy of the Queen's ministers, and to disavow all connection with the Whigs.[1]

It must be owned that this pamphlet showed very little of that extreme subservience to royal authority for which the Tory party had been so often reproached. The policy indicated, if openly avowed, might have led to a civil war, and Bolingbroke probably showed much wisdom in inducing Swift to withhold the publication. Though caring only for the ascendancy of the Tory party, Bolingbroke had by this time gone so far in the direction of Jacobitism that it was difficult to recede, and the policy of the Government tended more and more to a restoration of the Stuarts. Yet Oxford opposed to the last any step which amounted to an irrevocable decision, and at the time when Parliament was prorogued nothing had been arranged. Many military and civil appointments had, indeed, been made in the interest of the Pretender, but nothing had been done to induce the Queen to invite him over, or to determine formally the conditions on which he might mount the throne, or the plan of operations after the death of the Queen. The leaders in France became more and more convinced of the insincerity of Oxford. Berwick and Torcy wrote to him representing that the Queen's death might happen very shortly, and asking for a distinct account of his measures to secure in that case the interests of the legitimate heir, as well as of the steps the Prince himself should take; but they could obtain no other answer than that, if the Queen now died, the affairs both of the

[1] *Free Thoughts upon the Present State of Affairs* (1714).

Stuarts and of the Government were ruined without resource.[1] France was so exhausted after the late struggle that she could not venture, at the risk of another war, to support the Pretender by force of arms; and it was also an unfortunate circumstance for his cause that about this time Berwick, who was one of its chief supports, received a command in Catalonia.

The object of the Jacobites under these circumstances was to displace Oxford, and they had no great difficulty in accomplishing it. The influence which his good private character and his moderate and compromising temperament once gave him in the country had been rapidly waning. His party were disgusted with his habitual indecision. The Queen had to complain of many instances of gross and scandalous disrespect[2]; but the influence which at last turned the scale was that of Lady Masham. She was now wholly in the interests of the Jacobites. She had quarrelled violently with Oxford about a pension, and, at the request of the Jacobite leaders, she used her great influence with the Queen to procure his dismissal. Seldom has it been given to a woman wholly undistinguished by birth, character, beauty, or intellect to affect so powerfully the march of affairs. Her influence, though by no means the sole, was undoubtedly a leading, cause of the change of ministry in 1710, which saved France from almost complete ruin, and determined the Peace of Utrecht. Her influence in 1714 all but altered the order of succession in England, and with it the whole course of English politics. On July 27, after a long and violent altercation in the Cabinet, Oxford was dismissed, the Queen resumed the white staff of Treasurer, and Bolingbroke became Prime Minister.

The cause of the Protestant succession had now touched its nadir. Bolingbroke, it is true, on this memorable occasion invited the Whig leaders to a conference at his house,[3] but they would give him no support unless he attested his sincerity by insisting on the expulsion of the Pretender from Lorraine; and on that very day he assured Gaultier that his sentiments towards the Stuart prince were unchanged,[4] and he

[1] *Mém. de Berwick*, ii. 131.

[2] Erasmus Lewis to Swift, July 27, 1714.—Swift's *Correspondence*.

[3] Coxe's *Walpole*, i. 49. This fact is, I think, very significant of the true motives of Bolingbroke. See too Macpherson, ii. 532, 533.

[4] Stanhope's *Hist. of England*, i. 88.

proceeded to sketch the outlines of a ministry almost exclusively Jacobite. There is every reason to believe that such a ministry, supported by the Queen, presided over by a statesman eminently skilful, daring, and unscrupulous, and disposing of all the civil and military administration of the country, could, in the existing condition of England, have effected the restoration of the Stuarts. Pledges would have been exacted for the security of the Church, but such pledges would readily have been granted. Time was now of vital importance, and as Parliament had been recently prorogued, the ministers were likely, during several months, to be practically unfettered. Bolingbroke, a few days later, assured Iberville that his measures had been so well taken that in six weeks matters would have been placed in such a condition that he would have had nothing to fear.[1] He proposed to retain in the new Government his old position of Secretary of State with the control of all foreign affairs. Bromley and Lord Mar were to be the other two secretaries. Atterbury, whose fierce and brilliant genius was much more fitted for the arena of politics than for the episcopacy, and who was the idol of the lower clergy, was to have the Privy Seal. Harcourt was to continue Chancellor. The Dukes of Ormond and Buckingham, who were conspicuous among the adherents of the Pretender, were to be respectively Commander-in-Chief and Lord President. The Treasury, which had lately carried with it the chief power in the Government, was to be placed in commission. Windham, the brother-in-law and devoted friend of Bolingbroke, was to be placed at its head, but the names of the other commissioners were undecided after a long and angry discussion, which lasted far into the night. All these statesmen were Jacobites. One, however, remained, whose position was still ambiguous. The Duke of Shrewsbury occupied a position which made it difficult for him

See, too, the account of Bolingbroke's conversations with his Scotch supporters in the *Lockhart Papers*.

[1] After the death of the Queen, Iberville wrote to the French King: 'My Lord Bolingbroke est pénétré de douleur de la perte de la Reyne, au point de sa fortune particulière et de la consommation de toutes les affaires qui ont esté faites depuis quatre ans. Il m'a assuré que les mesures étoient si bien prises qu'en six semaines de temps on auroit mis les choses en tel estat qu'il n'y auroit eu rien à craindre de ce qui vient d'arriver.'—13 Août, 1714 (N.S.), MSS. Paris Foreign Office.

to be subordinate to any other minister, though at the same time a great disinclination for the rough work of public life, and some weakness of character, incapacitated him for the foremost place in active politics. On the death of the Duke of Hamilton he had been sent to Paris as ambassador to negotiate the peace. He was afterwards appointed Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and he held that position at the time of the dismissal of Oxford. He had there professed his attachment to the Protestant succession, but not more than Oxford and Bolingbroke in England, and he appears to have persuaded the latter that he was devoted to his fortunes. The Jacobite cause, under the influence of the Irish Chancellor, seemed ascendant in Ireland, with the important exception of the House of Commons, which continued violently Whig; and Shrewsbury, having vainly attempted to secure a Tory majority by an election, consented, at the desire of the ministers, to prorogue the Parliament abruptly, thus apparently destroying the best security of the Protestant succession in Ireland. He at the same time carefully concealed his own sentiments, came over to England to watch the course of events, and received constant private intelligence of the condition of the Queen's health from her physician, Dr. Shadwell.

Such was the condition of affairs when an event occurred in which the partisans of the Protestant succession long loved to trace the special intervention of a gracious Providence. On the very day following the dismissal of Oxford—when everything was still unsettled—when the destinies of the kingdom trembled in the balance—the Queen was struck down by a mortal illness. The excitement of the protracted struggle had been too much for her failing strength. The council sat in her presence till two in the morning of the 28th, and had been disturbed by the most furious altercations. She retired at last, weary, anxious, and agitated, saying to those about her that she would never outlive the scene, and she sank almost immediately into a lethargic illness. Next day the imposthume in her leg suddenly ceased. The gout flew to her brain, and she was manifestly dying.

The crisis had now come, and those who had been so lately flushed with the prospect of assured power were wholly

unprepared. They assembled in Privy Council at Kensington, where a strange scene is said to have occurred. Argyle and Somerset, though they had contributed largely by their defection to the downfall of the Whig ministry of Godolphin, were now again in opposition to the Tories, and had recently been dismissed from their posts. Availing themselves of their rank of Privy Councillors, they appeared unsummoned in the council room, pleading the greatness of the emergency. Shrewsbury, who had probably concocted the scene, rose and warmly thanked them for their offer of assistance; and these three men appear to have guided the course of events. At their request the physicians were examined, and they deposed that the Queen was in imminent danger. The Council resolved that the great office of Treasurer should be at once filled, and that it should be filled by Shrewsbury.[1] There was no opposition. Bolingbroke is said himself to have made the proposition, and both he and his colleagues appeared stupified by the sudden change. They knew

[1] This is the account given by Boyer, Tindal, and Oldmixon, and reproduced by most later historians. Mr. Wyon, however, has justly observed, in his valuable *History of Queen Anne* (vol. ii., pp. 524–526), that it is not quite consistent with the letters written by Ford to Swift (July 31 and Aug. 5). Ford, who was a Government official, and wrote from the spot, says: 'The Whigs were not in the Council when he (Shrewsbury) was recommended. Lord Bolingbroke proposed it there as well as to the Queen.' Boyer says that after Argyle and Somerset had appeared in the Council 'one of the Council' represented how necessary it was that the office of Treasurer should be filled, and that the board then unanimously approved of Shrewsbury.—Boyer's *Queen Anne*, p. 714. As Argyle and Somerset were Whigs, though very inconsistent ones, Mr. Wyon thinks the appointment was made before their arrival. It appears, however, that after the episode relating to Shrewsbury the Council agreed, on the motion of Argyle and Somerset, to summon all Privy Councillors in or near London without distinction of party, and that it was then only that Somers and other Whig statesmen appeared on the scene (Boyer, 714-715). This is, probably, all that was meant by Ford when he describes the appointment of Shrewsbury as having taken place before the arrival of the Whigs. Lord Stanhope, however, is mistaken in saying that the appointment was suggested by the two intruding dukes. Iberville, who had good means of information, corroborates the assertion that Argyle and Somerset appeared unsummoned at the Council. With reference to the appointment of Shrewsbury he only says, 'Aussitôt que la Reine avoit repris connoissance le conseil avoit proposé de faire M. le Duc de Shrewsbury Grand Trésorier, ce qu'elle fit de bon cœur. Il ne faut pour cela que donner la baguette, au lieu qu'il falloit une commission en chancellerie pour une nomination de commissionaires dont on n'étoit pas encore convenu, et qu'il auroit fallu bien du temps pour cela.'—Iberville to Torcy, 11 Août, 1714 (N.S.). Two days later he writes: 'On dit que c'est à la prière de my lord Bolingbroke que my lord Shrewsbury s'est determiné à accepter la charge.'—*MSS. Paris Foreign Office.*

that the coming King regarded them with complete hostility, but nothing had been organised for a restoration of the Stuarts, and there was no time or opportunity for making conditions. A deputation, headed by Bolingbroke, was sent to the dying Queen, who feebly assented to whatever was asked. Shrewsbury, who was already Chamberlain and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, became Lord Treasurer, and assumed the authority of Prime Minister. Summons were at once sent to all Privy Councillors, irrespective of party, to attend; and Somers and several others of the Whig leaders were speedily at their post. They had the great advantage of knowing clearly the policy they should pursue, and their measures were taken with admirable promptitude and energy. The guards of the Tower were at once doubled. Four regiments were ordered to march from the country to London, and all seamen to repair to their vessels. An embargo was laid on all shipping. The fleet was equipped, and speedy measures were taken to protect the seaports, and to secure tranquillity in Scotland and Ireland. At the same time despatches were sent to the Netherlands ordering seven of the ten British battalions to embark without delay; to Lord Strafford, the ambassador at the Hague, desiring the States-General to fulfil their guarantee of the Protestant succession in England; to the Elector, urging him to hasten to Holland, where on the death of the Queen he would be met by a British squadron, and escorted to his new kingdom. Marlborough, who had long oscillated between the parties, was now in the Hanoverian interest, and was hastening over to employ his influence, if necessary, with the army.

The Queen remained in a condition of stupor, broken by a few faint intervals of consciousness, till the morning of the 1st, when she died. On the 30th July Stanhope had written to the Emperor Charles VI. informing him of her sudden illness, and he predicted that if her death was postponed only for a few weeks the Protestant succession would be in grave danger.[1] The feelings of Bolingbroke may be clearly seen in his own words: 'The Earl of Oxford was removed on Tuesday,

[1] 'Cet accident subit et imprévu est un coup de foudre pour le parti Jacobite qui n'a point pris de mesures pour faire réussir leur projet aussitost qu'il seroit nécessaire et j'ose assurer à votre M. I. et C. que si les médecins ont deviné juste Mgr. L'Electeur d'Hanovre sera proclamé Roy et pren-

the Queen died on Sunday! What a world is this, and how does fortune banter us!'[1]

The new King was at once proclaimed, and it is a striking proof of the danger of the crisis that the funds, which had fallen on a false rumour of the Queen's recovery, rose at once when she died.[2] Atterbury is said to have urged Bolingbroke to proclaim James III. at Charing Cross, and to have offered to head the procession in his lawn sleeves, but the counsel was mere madness, and Bolingbroke saw clearly that any attempt to overthrow the Act of Settlement would be now worse than useless. He had assented to all measures for the security of the succession which had been taken in the last Council of Anne, and he cordially approved of the conduct of Iberville, who, the morning after the Queen's death, paid his official compliments to the Hanoverian minister.[3] The more violent spirits among the Jacobites now looked eagerly for a French invasion, but the calmer members of the party perceived that such an invasion was impossible, that

dra possession du Royaume aussi paisiblement que l'a fait aucun de ses prédécesseurs. Il est vray que si la maladie traînoit en longueur, quand ce ne seroit que quelques semaines nous pourrions être fort embarrassés.'—*Correspondance de Leibnitz*, iii. 504–505.

[1] Bolingbroke to Swift Aug. 3rd, 1714.—Swift's *Correspondence*.

[2] Two interesting MS. letters in the Irish State Paper Office, written by Edward Southwell to Josh. Dawson, from London immediately after the Queen's death, give a curious picture of the state of feeling: 'I attended my royal mistress to the hour of her death . . . . There is a superabundancy of joy on this occasion. The stocks rise prodigiously. The merchants expect vast commerce, the soldiers great employment, and those who have been out all the employments of those who are in.' 'Thank God, everything is very quiet, but the joy of the City of London is very peculiar, for the stocks sank as the news came from Kensington that her Majesty was like to recover, and rose as her case grew more desperate.' See, too, Ford to Swift (July 31, 1714), Swift's *Correspondence*. Iberville wrote to the French King: 'La tranquillité qu'on voit icy sans aucune apparence qu'il y ait le moindre mouvement en faveur du Chevalier, a fait hausser de sept à huit pour cent les actions sur les fonds publics.'—Aug. 13 (N.S.).

[3] Iberville to the French King, Aug. 13 (N.S.). Iberville adds: 'Il [Bolingbroke] croit que V. M. doit éviter avec grand soin la moindre démonstration en faveur du Chevalier qui pust fournir un prétexte aux Whigs de recommencer la guerre. Tous les gens sensez sans excepter les Jacobites declarez, en conviennent, même pour l'intérêt du Chevalier dont ils craignent une fin malheureuse, s'il se hazardoit légèrement sur la parole de certaines gens qu'ils traitent d'aventuriers, zèlés à la vérité, mais sans teste.' In one of his letters to Torcy on the 11th he said, 'La teste tourne à la plupart des Jacobites, surtout des Ecossais. Ils se figurent que le Roi va fournir au Chevalier ce qu'il faut pour passer en Ecosse et y soutenir la guerre et quand on leur dit que sa Majesté ne le pourroit sans contrevenir aux traités de paix et s'attirer sur les bras une nouvelle guerre ils répondent que le Chevalier est perdu pour jamais et que nous n'en serons pas plus exempts de la guerre.' MSS. Paris Foreign Office.

a Jacobite expedition unsupported by French arms would be entirely hopeless, and that the true policy of the Tory party was to abstain from every demonstration that savoured of Jacobitism. The calm of the city at this critical moment was very remarkable. Oxford was, it is true, insulted in the streets, but there was no serious disorder, and the guard which, as a measure of precaution, had been placed before the French Embassy was speedily withdrawn. The Regency Act of 1705 came at once into operation. The Hanoverian minister produced the sealed list of the names of those to whom the Elector entrusted the government before his arrival, and it was found to consist of eighteen names taken from the leaders of the Whig party, omitting, however, Somers, who was a confirmed invalid, and Marlborough, who was still profoundly distrusted by the Hanoverian party. Parliament, in accordance with the provisions of the Bill, was at once summoned, and it was soon evident that there was nothing to fear. The moment for a restoration was past, and the one object of the Tory party was now to proclaim their adhesion to the dynasty, and if possible to avoid proscription.[1] Dutiful addresses were unanimously voted. The Tories tried to win the favour of the new King by proposing that the Civil List which had been 700,000*l.* under Anne, should be raised to a million, but the danger of so extravagant an augmentation was felt and the former sum was voted. The arrears due to the Hanoverian troops were paid. A reward of 100,000*l.* was offered for the apprehension of the Pretender in case he attempted to land. That prince, on the news of the death of Anne, had hastened to Paris, but by this time a powerful fleet protected the English coast. The Jacobite party was unorganised or paralysed; the large class who dreaded beyond all things civil war, now supported the Government; the French were not prepared to draw the sword, and at the request of Torcy the Stuart Prince returned to

[1] Bolingbroke seems to have hoped for a time to attract the new King to his party. He wrote to Swift (Aug. 3), 'The Tories seem to resolve not to be crushed, and that is enough to prevent them from being so. . . . The Whigs are a pack of Jacobites; that shall be the cry in a month if you please.'—Swift's *Correspondence*.

On the 7th Erasmus Lewis wrote to Swift, 'We are gaping and staring to see who is to rule us. The Whigs think they shall engross all. We think we shall have our share.'—*Ibid.*

Lorraine. He issued a proclamation deploring 'the death of the Princess our sister, of whose good intentions towards us we could not for some time past well doubt, and this was the reason we then sate still, expecting the good effects thereof, which were unfortunately prevented by her deplorable death.'

It was in this manner that, contrary to all reasonable expectations, this great change was effected without bloodshed, and almost without difficulty. The King, either from policy or indifference, did not appear in England till September 18, when he was received with no opposition, and with some applause. Those who hoped that he might share his favours between both parties were speedily undeceived. Even before his landing, Bolingbroke was deprived of the office of Secretary of State, which he still held, in a manner of positive insult. Lord Townshend, the author of the barrier treaty, was appointed to the place, and he soon assumed the rank of Prime Minister. Ormond was not permitted to come into the King's presence. Oxford was made to undergo the most marked slights, and a Whig ministry was speedily formed. Townshend, Stanhope, Sunderland, Cowper, Marlborough, Nottingham, and Argyle filled the chief places, while Walpole, who was rising rapidly to the foremost rank among the young Whigs, became Paymaster-General, and Pulteney, who afterwards became his greatest rival, was Secretary at war. Shrewsbury, whose services in the crisis had been so transcendent, but who had been deeply implicated in the Peace of Utrecht, retained the office of Lord Chamberlain, but resigned those of Treasurer and Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and it was observed that though Marlborough became Commander-in-Chief, his power was always carefully restricted, and that the office of Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, which was regarded as a dignified banishment, was reserved for his son-in-law Sunderland. The Parliament, according to law, determined in six months after the decease of the sovereign; and at the election that ensued the influence of the Crown was thrown unscrupulously into the scale of the Whigs. An extraordinary Royal Proclamation was issued reflecting on the evil designs of men disaffected to the King, noticing the perplexity of public affairs, the interruption of commerce, and the grievous miscarriages of the late Government, and urging the electors, in

their choice of members, 'to have a particular regard to such as showed a firmness to the Protestant succession when it was in danger.' In the face of such a proclamation, emanating from the sovereign himself, a Tory Parliament would have been a direct incentive to civil war. The Government exerted all its powers over the electors. An immense Whig majority was returned, and the Parliament which assembled in the beginning of 1715 formed the commencement of that long period of Whig ascendancy, which continued without intermission till the accession of George III.

CHAPTER II.

It has been my object in the last chapter to show that the triumph of the Whig policy, which was effected by the Revolution, and confirmed by the accession of the House of Brunswick, was the triumph of the party which was naturally the weakest in England. Several isolated political events contributed to the result, but the chief causes were the superiority of the smaller party in energy, intelligence, concentration, and organisation, and the division and partial paralysis of the larger party, arising from the accidental conflict between the cause of legitimacy and the cause of Protestantism. Before proceeding to relate the methods by which the Whig power was consolidated, and the manner in which it was used, it will be necessary to examine the chief elements of which it was composed, and the causes of its political bias. Its strength lay in three quarters—the aristocracy, the commercial classes, and the Nonconformists.

The eminently popular character of the English aristocracy is of a very early date, and it has probably done more than any other single cause to determine the type and ensure the permanence of English freedom. The position of the Norman nobility in England had always been widely different from that of the same nobility at home, William being able to withhold in the one case important privileges he was compelled to recognise in the other; and a long conflict, in which the nobles, in alliance with the Commons, were struggling against the power of the monarchy, contributed, with other causes, to give a popular bias to the former. The great charter had been won by the barons, but, instead of being confined to a demand for new aristocratical privileges, it guaranteed the legal rights of all freemen, and the ancient customs and liberties of cities,

prohibited every kind of arbitrary punishment, compelled the barons to grant their subvassals mitigations of feudal burdens similar to those which they themselves obtained from the King, and even accorded special protection to foreign merchants in England. Philip de Comines had noticed as a remarkable fact the singular humanity of the nobles to the people during the civil wars. In these wars the nobility were almost annihilated, and as they were but little increased during the reign of Henry VII., the revival of the order in numbers and wealth dates in a great measure from the innovating and liberal movement of the Reformation. The Puritan rebellion was chiefly democratic, but the Revolution of 1688 was chiefly aristocratic; and while the reforms of the former were soon swept away, and its excesses followed by a long reaction towards despotism, the latter founded on a secure basis the liberties of England. Although Stuart creations had raised the temporal peerage from 59 to about 150,—although the introduction of Scotch peers at the Union, and the simultaneous creation of twelve Tory peers by Harley, had impaired the liberalism of the Upper House,—still from the time of the Revolution to the reign of George III. the Whig party almost always preponderated in it, and contained the families of the greatest influence and dignity. The House of Lords threw its shelter successively over Somers and Walpole when the House of Commons was ready to sacrifice them. By its strenuous opposition to the encroachments of the House of Commons it secured for electors in 1704 the all-important right of defending a disputed qualification before an impartial legal tribunal. It delayed or mitigated the persecuting legislation directed under Anne against the Dissenters. It steadily upheld the Protestant succession at the period of its greatest peril, and during the long Whig rule of Walpole and the Pelhams it not only gave the Government a secure majority in one House, but also, by the influence of the peers over the small boroughs, contributed very largely to the majority in the other.

The causes of the liberal tendencies that have so broadly distinguished the English nobility from those of most other countries are to be found not only in the traditions of its early history, but also in the constitution of the order. In most Con-

tinental countries an aristocracy has a tendency to become an isolated and at length an enervated caste, removed from the sympathies and occupations, and opposed to the interests, of the community at large, despising, and, therefore, discrediting, all active occupations except those of a soldier, and thus connecting in the minds of men the idea of social rank with that of an idle and frivolous life. But in England the interests of the nobles as a class, have been carefully and indissolubly interwoven with those of the people. They have never claimed for themselves any immunity from taxation. Their sons, except the eldest, have descended, after one or two generations, into the ranks of the commoners. Their eldest sons, before obtaining their titles, have usually made it a great object of their ambition to sit in the House of Commons, and have there acquired the tastes of popular politics. In the public school system the peers and the lower gentry are united in the closest ties. The intermarriage of peers and commoners has always been legal and common. A constant stream of lawyers of brilliant talents, but often of humble birth, has poured into the Upper House, which is presided over by one of them; and the purely hereditary character of the body has been still further qualified by the introduction of the bishops.

Not less distinctive and remarkable is the influence which the aristocracy in England has exercised on the estimate of labour. One of the chief ends of the whole social organisation is to develop to the highest point and apply to the greatest advantage the sum of talent existing in the community. In its first rudimentary stage Government accomplishes this end chiefly in a negative way, by discharging those police functions without which there can be no peaceful labour; but with the increased elaboration of society it becomes apparent that the Legislature can in two distinct ways directly and very powerfully assist the development. The first of these ways is by supplying opportunities for the exercise of talent which would otherwise be lost. There is at every period latent among poor men a large amount of special talent of the highest value which cannot be elicited without a long and expensive process of cultivation, or which, when elicited, is of a kind that would produce no pecuniary results at all commensurate with its importance, and which

would, therefore, in the natural course of things, either remain wholly uncultivated, or be diverted to lower but more lucrative channels. It is one of the most useful functions of government to provide means by which poor men who exhibit some special aptitude may be brought within the reach of an appropriate education; and it is one of the most important advantages of many institutions that they supply requisite spheres for the expansion of certain casts of intellect, and adequate rewards for pursuits which are of great value to the community, but which if left to the unassisted operation of the law of supply and demand would remain wholly, or in a great degree, unremunerative.

The manner in which this function of government has been executed is a subject to which I shall hereafter revert. At present, however, my object is to notice a second way in which legislation may assist intellectual development. If much talent is wasted on account of want of opportunities, much also is unemployed for want of incentives. It is not a natural or in most countries a common thing for those large classes who possess all the means of enjoyment and luxury, who have the world before them to choose from, and who have never known the pressure of want or of necessity, to devote themselves to long, painful, and plodding drudgery, to incur all the responsibilities, anxiety, calumny, ingratitude, and bondage of public life. If in the case of men of extraordinary ability the path of ambition may be itself sufficiently attractive, it is not naturally so to rich men of little more than average talent. On the other hand, the forms of useful labour which are unremunerative to the labourer are so numerous, the force of the example of the higher classes is so great, the advantages of independent circumstances for the prosecution of many kinds of labour are so inestimable, and in public life especially, such circumstances assist men so powerfully in resisting the most fatal temptations, that the existence of laborious tastes and habits among the richer classes is of the utmost value to the community. The legislation which can produce them will not only add directly to the amount of active talent, but will also set the whole current of society aright, and generate in the higher classes a moral influence that sooner or later will permeate all.

The indissoluble connection of the enjoyment and the dignity of property with the discharge of public duties was the pre-eminent merit of feudalism, and it is one of the special excellences of English institutions that they have in a great measure preserved this connection, notwithstanding the necessary dissolution of the feudal system. This achievement has been the result of more than one agency, and of the accumulated traditions of many generations. The formation of an unpaid magistracy, and the great governing duties thrown upon the House of Lords, combined with the vast territorial possessions and the country tastes of the upper classes, have made the gratuitous discharge of judicial, legislative, and administrative functions the natural accompaniment of a considerable social position, while the retrospective habits which an aristocracy creates perpetuate and intensify the feelings of an honourable ambition. The memory of great ancestors, and the desire not to suffer a great name to fade, become an incentive of the most powerful kind. A point of honour conducive to exertion is created, and men learn to associate the idea of active patriotic labour with that of the social condition they deem most desirable. A body of men is thus formed who, with circumstances peculiarly favourable for the successful prosecution of important unremunerative labours, combine dispositions and habits eminently laborious, and who have at the same time an unrivalled power of infusing by their example a love of labour into the whole community.

The importance of the influence thus exercised will scarcely, I think, be overlooked by those who will remember on the one hand, how many great nations and how many long periods have been almost destitute of developed talent, and, on the other hand, how very little evidence we have of the existence of any great difference in respect to innate ability between different nations or ages. The amount of realised talent in a community depends mainly on the circumstances in which it is placed, and, above all, upon the disposition that animates it. It depends upon the force and direction that have been given to its energies, upon the nature of its ambitions, upon its conception and standard of dignity. In all large classes who have great opportunities, and, at the same time, great temptations, there will

be innumerable examples of men who neglect the former and yield to the latter; but it can hardly, I think, be denied that in no other country has so large an amount of salutary labour been gratuitously accomplished by the upper classes as in England; and in the present day, at least, aristocratic influence in English legislation is chiefly to be traced in the number of offices that are either not at all or insufficiently paid. The impulse which was first given in the sphere of public life has gradually extended through many others, and in addition to many statesmen, orators, or soldiers,—in addition to many men who have exhibited an admirable administrative skill in the management of vast properties and the improvement of numerous dependants, the English aristocracy has been extremely rich in men who, as poets, historians, art critics, linguists, philologists, antiquaries, or men of science, have attained a great, or, at least, a respectable eminence. The peers in England have been specially connected with two classes. They are the natural representatives of the whole body of country gentlemen, while, from their great wealth and their town lives, they are intimately connected with that important and rapidly increasing class who have amassed or inherited large fortunes from commerce or manufactures, whose politics during the early Hanoverian period they steadily represented. It will be found, I think, that the House of Lords, even when most Tory, has been more liberal than the first class, and has produced in proportion to its numbers more political talent than the latter.

In this manner it appears that the existence of a powerful aristocracy, and the political functions with which it is invested cannot be regarded as isolated facts. They are connected with that whole condition of society which in England has always thrown on the upper classes the chief political leadership of the country, and as such they open out questions of the gravest kind. No maxim in politics is more certain than that, wherever a single class possesses a monopoly or an overwhelming preponderance of power, it will end by abusing it. Whatever may be the end of morals, 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number' is undoubtedly the rule of politics, and a system of government which throws all power into the hands of

one class, of the smallest class, and of the richest class, is assuredly not calculated to promote it. But it is one thing to give a class a monopoly of political power ; it is quite another thing to entrust it, under the restrictions of a really popular government, with the chief share of active administration. A structure of society like that of England which brings the upper class into such political prominence that they usually furnish the popular candidates for election, has at least the advantage of saving the nation from that government by speculators, adventurers, and demagogues which is the gravest of all the evils to which representative institutions are liable. When the suffrage is widely extended, a large proportion of electors will always be wholly destitute of political convictions, while every artifice is employed to mislead them. Under such circumstances it is very possible—in many countries it is even very probable—that the supreme management of affairs may pass into the hands of men who are perfectly unprincipled, who seek only for personal aggrandisement or personal notoriety, who have no real stake in the country, and who are perfectly reckless of its future and its permanent interests. It would be difficult to exaggerate the dangers that may result from even a short period of such rule, and they have often driven nations to take refuge from their own representatives in the arms of despotism. The disposal of the national revenue may pass into the hands of mere swindlers, and become the prey of simple malversation. The foreign policy of the country may be directed by men who seek only for notoriety or for the consolidation of their tottering power, and who with these views plunge the nation into wars that lead speedily to national ruin. In home politics institutions which are lost in the twilight of a distant past may, through similar motives, in a few months be recklessly destroyed. Nearly all great institutions are the growth of centuries; their first rise is slow, obscure, undemonstrative, they have been again and again modified, recast, and expanded ; their founders leave no reputation, and reap no harvest from their exertions. On the other hand, the destruction of a great and ancient institution is an eminently dramatic thing, and no other political achievement usually produces so much noisy reputation in proportion to the ability it requires. The catastrophe (however long preparing) is con-

centrated in a short time, and the name of the man who effects it is immortalised. As a great writer[1] has finely said, 'When the oak is felled, the whole forest echoes with its fall, but a hundred acorns are sown in silence by an unnoticed breeze.' Hence to minds ambitious only of notoriety, careless of the permanent interests of the nation, and destitute of all real feeling of political responsibility, a policy of mere destruction possesses an irresistible attraction.

From these extreme evils a country is for the most part saved by entrusting the management of its affairs chiefly to the upper classes of the community. A government of gentlemen may be and often is extremely deficient in intelligence, in energy, in sympathy with the poorer classes. It may be shamefully biassed by class interests, and guilty of great corruption in the disposal of patronage, but the standard of honour common to the class at least secures it from the grosser forms of malversation, and the interests of its members are indissolubly connected with the permanent well-being of the country. Such men may be guilty of much misgovernment, and they will certainly, if uncontrolled by other classes, display much selfishness, but it is scarcely possible that they should be wholly indifferent to the ultimate consequences of their acts, or should divest themselves of all sense of responsibility or public duty. When other things are equal, the class which has most to lose and least to gain by dishonesty will exhibit the highest level of integrity. When other things are equal, the class whose interests are most permanently and seriously bound up with those of the nation is likely to be the most careful guardian of the national welfare. When other things are equal, the class which has most leisure and most means of instruction will, as a whole, be the most intelligent. Besides this, the tact, the refinement, the reticence, the conciliatory tone of thought and manner characteristic of gentlemen are all peculiarly valuable in public men, whose chief task is to reconcile conflicting pretensions and to harmonise jarring interests. Nor is it a matter of slight importance to the political life of a nation, or to the estimate in which a nation is held by its neighbours, that its government should be in the

[1] Carlyle.

hands of men on whom no class can look down. Rightly or wrongly, nations are judged mainly by their politicians and by their political acts, and when these have ceased to command respect, the character of a nation in the world is speedily lowered.

To these advantages, arising indirectly from the intervention of an hereditary aristocracy in government, others may be added. In the first place such an aristocracy exists, and, rightly or wrongly, attracts to itself among great multitudes of men a warm feeling of reverence and even of affection. It is the part of wise statesmen—and it is one of the characteristics by which such men are distinguished from crude theorists—to avail themselves for the purposes of government of all those strong, enduring, and unreasoning attachments which tradition, associations, or other causes have generated. Such are, the sentiment of loyalty, the respect for religion, the homage paid to rank. These feelings endear government to the people, counteract any feeling of repulsion the sacrifices it exacts might produce, give it that permanence, security, and stability which are essential to the well-being of society. Sometimes, no doubt, the reverential, or conservative elements have an excessive force, and form an obstacle to progress; but that they should exist, and under some form be the basis of the national character, is the essential condition of all permanent good government. A state of society in which revolution is always imminent is disastrous alike to moral, political, and material interests, and it is much less a reasoning conviction than unreasoning sentiments of attachment that enable Governments to bear the strain of occasional maladministration, revolutionary panics, and seasons of calamity.[1]

These considerations may be carried a step farther. All civic virtue, all the heroism and self-sacrifice of patriotism spring ultimately from the habit men acquire of regarding their nation as a great organic whole, identifying themselves with its fortunes in the past as in the present, and looking forward anxiously to its future destinies. When the members of any nation have come to regard their country as nothing more than

[1] See on this subject a noble passage, full of profound wisdom, in Lord Russell's *Essay on the English Constitution*, pp. 271–272.

the plot of ground on which they reside, and their Government as a mere organisation for providing police or contracting treaties; when they have ceased to entertain any warmer feelings for one another than those which private interest, or personal friendship, or a mere general philanthropy, may produce, the moral dissolution of that nation is at hand. Even in the order of material interests the well-being of each generation is in a great degree dependent upon the forbearance, self-sacrifice, and providence of those who have preceded it, and civic virtues can never flourish in a generation which thinks only of itself. 'Those will not look forward to their posterity who never look backwards to their ancestors.'[1] To kindle and sustain the vital flame of national sentiment is the chief moral end of national institutions, and while it cannot be denied that it has been attained under the most various forms of government, it is equally certain that an aristocracy which is at once popular and hereditary, which blends and assimilates itself with the general interests of the present, while it perpetuates and honours the memories of the past, is peculiarly fitted to foster it.

Another advantage which should not be neglected in a review of the effects of aristocratic institutions is their tendency to bring young men into active political life. In politics, as in most other professions, early training is of extreme importance, and in a country where government is conducted mainly through the instrumentality of Parliament, this training, to be really efficient, must include an early practice of parliamentary duties. A young man of energy and industry, possessing the tact and manners of good society, and endowed with abilities slightly superior to those of the average of men, is likely, if brought into parliamentary and official life between 20 and 30, to acquire a skill in the conduct of public business rarely attained even by men of great genius whose minds and characters have been formed in other spheres, and who have come late into the arena of Parliament. The presence in Parliament of a certain number of young politicians, from whom the lower offices of administration may be filled, and who may gradually rise to the foremost places, is an essential

[1] Burke.

condition of the well-being of constitutional government, and it is one of the conditions which, since the abolition of the nomination boroughs, it has become most difficult to attain. Popular election is in this respect exceedingly worthless. It may be trusted to create, with a rough but substantial justice, a representation of public opinion. It may be trusted, but much less perfectly, to secure some recognition of old services and of matured genius, but an extended constituency has neither the capacity nor the desire to discover undeveloped talent, or to recognise the promise of future excellence. Hardly any other feature of our parliamentary system appears so ominous to a thoughtful observer as the growing exclusion of young men from the House of Commons, and if a certain number are still found within its walls, this is mainly due to that aristocratic sentiment which makes the younger members of noble families the favourite candidates with many constituencies.

There are other consequences which it will be sufficient simply to enumerate. The existence of a powerful, independent, and connected class, carrying with it a dignity, and in many respects an influence, fully equal to that of the servants of the Crown, has more than once proved the most formidable obstacle to the encroachments of despotism; while, on the other hand, in democratic times this hierarchy of ranks serves to mitigate the isolation of the throne, and is thus a powerful bulwark to monarchy. A second chamber is so essential to the healthy working of constitutional government that it may almost be pronounced a political necessity; and in times when the position of that chamber is a secondary one, when its leading functions are merely to delay and to revise, it is no small advantage that it should be composed of men possessing, indeed, great local knowledge and influence, but at the same time independent of local intrigues and jealousies, and of the transient bursts of popular passion. A permanent hereditary chamber has at least a tendency to impart to national policy that character of continuity and stability, and to infuse into its discussions that judicial spirit which it is most difficult to preserve amid the rapid fluctuations and the keen contests of popular government. It may even very materially contribute to make legislation a reflex of the popular will. No matter how per-

fect may be the system of election, an elected body can never represent with complete fidelity the political sentiments of the community. In particular constituencies purely local and personal considerations continually falsify the political verdict. In the country at large a general election usually turns on a single great party issue, or on the comparative popularity of rival statesmen, and hardly a year passes in which the politicians in whom, on the whole, the nation has most confidence do not act on some particular question in a manner opposed to the national sentiment. If the question is a subordinate one, this divergence does not make the country desire a change of ministry; and it is extremely difficult, under the system of party government, to enforce by any less violent means the national will. Under these circumstances a body such as the House of Lords, exempt from the necessity of popular election, representing at the same time most of the forms of public opinion, and exercising in the constitution a kind of revising, judicial, and moderating office, is of great utility; it is able to arrest or retard a particular course of policy, without producing a ministerial crisis, and it may thus be said, without a paradox, to contribute to the representative character of the government. Besides this, the peerage enables the country to avail itself of the talents of statesmen of ability and experience, who are physically incapable of enduring the fatigue inseparable from the position of a minister in the Lower House; it forms a cheap yet highly prized reward for great services to the nation or the Crown; and it exercises in some respects a considerable refining influence upon the manners of society by counteracting the empire of mere wealth, and sustaining that order of feelings and sentiments which constitutes the conception of a gentleman. Nor should we altogether disregard its minor uses in settling doubtful questions of precedence, and marking out the natural leaders for many movements, which would otherwise be weakened by conflicting claims and by personal jealousies.

There are, no doubt, serious drawbacks to these benefits. No human institution is either an unmitigated good or an unmitigated evil; and the main task of every statesman and of every sound political thinker is to weigh with impartiality the good and evil consequences that arise out of each. Considered

abstractedly, every institution is an evil which teaches men to estimate their fellows not according to their moral and intellectual worth, but by an unreal and factitious standard. The worship of baubles and phantasms necessarily perverts the moral judgment, nor can anyone who is acquainted with English society doubt that in this respect the evil of aristocratic institutions is deeply felt in every grade. Their moral effects are, on the whole, more doubtful than their political effects, and the servile and sycophantic dispositions, the vulgarity of thought and feeling they tend to foster in the community form the most serious counterpoise to their undoubted advantages. These evils, however, lie far too deep for mere political remedies; and when the worship of rank and the worship of wealth are in competition it may, at least, be said that the existence of the two idols diminishes by dividing the force of each superstition, and that the latter evil is an increasing one, while the former is never again likely to be a danger. The injurious effects of aristocratic influence may, however, be abundantly traced in the desire to aggregate the vast preponderance of family property in a single heir, which is often displayed in England to an extent that is an outrage upon morality; in the frequent spectacle of many children—often daughters, who are almost incapable of earning a livelihood—reduced to penury, in order that the eldest son may gratify the family vanity by an adequate display of ostentatious luxury; in the scandalous injustice of the law relating to intestacy. Although it would be an absurd exaggeration to attribute to the existence of an aristocracy the frightful contrast of extreme opulence and abject misery which is so frequent in England, it is undoubtedly true that the excessive inequality of the distribution of wealth, resulting from laws which were originally intended to secure the preponderance of a class, and from manners which were originally the product of those laws, has most seriously aggravated it. The laws have for the most part passed away, but the habits that grew out of them remain, and they operate over a far larger circle than that of the aristocracy. Great as is the use of the peerage in sustaining public spirit in the nation, it is unquestionable that the passion for founding families which it produces, dimi-

nishes largely the flow of private munificence to public objects, and its value in promoting laborious habits is in some degree counteracted by its manifest tendency to depress the purely intellectual classes. Rank is much less local in its influence than wealth, and wherever a powerful aristocracy exists, it overshadows intellectual eminence, and becomes its successful rival in most forms of national competition. The political advantages of an hereditary chamber are very great, but the power of unlimited veto resting in such a chamber is a grave anomaly in a free government. Nor is it one of those anomalies which are merely theoretical. On great questions on which popular passions are violently aroused, the spirit of compromise and political sagacity so general among the upper classes in England, may usually be counted on to prevent serious collisions; and the power of creating an unlimited number of peers provides in the last resort an extreme, dangerous, but efficient remedy. There are, however, many questions on which the national judgment is plainly pronounced, but which from their nature do not appeal to any strong passions, and on these the obstructive power of the House of Lords has sometimes proved very mischievous. More than one measure of reform has thus been rejected through several successive Parliaments, in spite of unbroken and repeated majorities in the Lower House.

Looking again at the question from a purely historical standing-point, it is certain that the politicians of the Upper House were deeply tainted with the treachery and duplicity common to most English statesmen between the Restoration and the American Revolution. Most of the Bills for preventing corrupt influence in the Commons during the administration of Walpole were crushed by the influence of the minister in the House of Lords. The country was long seriously burdened, and some of the professions were systematically degraded, in order to furnish lucrative posts for the younger members of the aristocratic families; and the representative character of the Lower House was so utterly perverted by the multiplication of nomination boroughs in the hands of the peers that a storm of indignation was at last raised which shook the very pillars of the constitution. Still, even in these respects, the English

nobility form a marked contrast to those of the Continent. Though rank has in England almost always brought with it a very disproportionate weight, although it is undoubtedly true that in the last years of George II. and in the first years of George III. three or four aristocratic families threatened to control the efficient power in the State, yet, on the whole, no other aristocracy has shown itself so free from the spirit of monopoly. In the great Whig period, from the Revolution till the death of Walpole, there were numerous instances of statesmen who were not of noble birth taking a foremost place in English politics.[1] The names of Somers, Montague, Churchill, Addison, Craggs, and many others will at once occur to the reader, and the most powerful leader of this age was a simple country gentleman, a member of the House of Commons, who was so far from allowing himself to be the puppet of anyone, that one of the chief faults of his administration was his extreme reluctance to part with the smallest share of the influence of the Government. The steady support which the Whig House of Lords gave to Walpole during every stage of his career is a decisive proof not only of its enlightenment but also of its moderation. Nor is this less true of the opposite party. No Tory minister has had so absolute an authority as William Pitt, and in the period of the darkest and most bigoted Toryism the House of Lords was governed with an almost absolute sway by the knowledge and the ability of Eldon. If the nomination boroughs were perverted, as they undoubtedly were to a very large extent, to the most selfish purposes, it is also true that there was sufficient public spirit among their proprietors to induce them to bring into the House of Commons a far larger proportion of young men of promise and genius than have ever, under any other system, entered its walls. If the numerous Tory creations of George III. at last altered the spirit of the body, it should at least not be forgotten that the old tradition never was extinct, that in the

[1] This has been noticed by Swift, in a very remarkable paper on the Decline of the Political Influence of the Nobility, in the *Intelligencer*, No. 9. He declares that 'for above sixty years past the chief conduct of affairs hath been generally placed in new men, with few exceptions.' He ascribes this chiefly to the defective education of the upper classes. Swift was, I believe, wrong, in imagining that aristocratic influence had declined.

great struggle of the Reform Bill some of the chief aristocratic borough-owners were among the foremost advocates of the people, and that the large majority of the peers of an older creation than George III. were on the same side,[1] while the most obstinate opponents of progress found their leaders in Eldon and Lyndhurst, who had but lately risen from the ranks.

There was, however, one marked exception to the general tenor of aristocratic politics. One attempt was made, which, if it had been successful, would have converted the English nobility into a separate caste. I allude, of course, to the Peerage Bill, which was introduced by the ministry of Sunderland and Stanhope, in 1719, and which was, perhaps, the most dangerous constitutional innovation since the Revolution. It was inspired by the party interest of the Whigs, and it was intended to prevent the son of George I., who was in opposition to his father, from overthrowing, if he came to the throne, the Whig majority in the Upper House by the creation of Tory peers. Had it been carried, it would have made the House of Lords an almost unchangeable body, entirely beyond the control of King or Minister or Commons. It provided that, with the exception of members of the Royal Family, the sovereign should at no time be allowed to add more than six to the number of the English hereditary peers existing when the Bill was passed; though, whenever a peerage became extinct, he might make a creation to replace it; and also that twenty-five Scotch peers, selected in the first instance by the sovereign and afterwards sitting by hereditary right, should be substituted for the sixteen elective peers. It is obvious that such a measure would have given the peerage all the characteristics of a close corporation, would have prevented that influx into its ranks of legal, political, and commercial talent which now constitutes one of its most distinctive merits, would have in consequence destroyed its value as a reward of genius, and its weight as a representative body, and would have abolished the only means which the constitution provides for overcoming, in extreme cases, the opposition of the Lords. Yet this Bill was introduced by the party which is the natural guardian of the popular

[1] Molesworth's *Hist. of England*, i. 203.

element in the constitution, and it had at first considerable prospect of success. The King readily relinquished his prerogative of unlimited creation. The indignation excited by the lavish creations of Harley in 1712 was largely made use of. The pen of Addison was enlisted in the cause. The Bill appealed at once to the party spirit of the Whigs, who designed to perpetuate their ascendancy, and to the class feeling of the peers, who desired, by preventing new creations, to increase their consequence; and it was carried without difficulty through the Lords. Fortunately, however, a great storm of indignation was soon aroused. Steele, whose judgment it is the custom of some writers invariably to decry, employed all his talent in exposing the dangers of the scheme, and his essays, though they destroyed his friendship with Addison, and brought down upon his head the prompt vengeance of the Government,[1] were of immense service to the real interests of the country. Walpole, who was at this time in opposition, both spoke and wrote against the Bill with consummate power. The jealousy of the country gentry was aroused when they saw the portals of the Upper House about to close for ever against them; and the Bill was lost in the Commons by 269 to 177.

This, however, was but a passing aberration; and it was due much more to party interest than to aristocratic exclusiveness. In general, the services of the peers to the cause of civil and religious liberty, at the time we are considering, were incontestable, and the advantage of an Upper House in this portion of our history can scarcely be questioned by anyone who regards the Revolution, and the principles it established, as good. Its members formed, perhaps, the most important section of the Whig party, for they were at this time almost at the acme of their influence. The overshadowing majesty of the Church had been broken at the Reformation. The monarchy had been seriously restricted by the Revolution, and the great democratic agencies of modern times were still in their infancy. In

[1] He had obtained a patent for the theatre of Drury Lane, but as soon as he opposed the Government scheme the Lord Chamberlain revoked his licence for acting plays, and thus reduced him to complete ruin. See Montgomery's *Life of Steele*, ii. 210-216. Few writers of the eighteenth century have received harder measure from modern critics than Steele. I must except, however, the essay on his life in Forster's *Biographical Essays*.

opulence the nobles were altogether unrivalled. The Indian nabobs, whose great fortunes in some degree competed with them, only came into prominence in the reign of George III., and the great commercial fortunes belong chiefly to a still later period. The numerous sinecures at their disposal secured the nobility a preponderance both of wealth and influence; the tone of manners before the introduction of railways was far more favourable than at present for a display of the pomp and the pretensions of rank; and the borough system gave the great families a commanding influence in the Lower House.

In addition to the aristocracy, the Whigs could usually count upon the warm support of the moneyed classes and of the Dissenters, who in this, as in most other periods, were very closely united. The country, it has been justly said, always represents the element of permanence, and the towns the element of progress. In the former the national spirit is usually the most intense, and the force of tradition, prejudice, and association most supreme. New ideas, on the other hand, appear most quickly, and circulate most easily, in the crowded centres of population; and the habits of industrial speculation, the migratory nature of capital, and the contact with many nations and with many creeds resulting from commercial intercourse, tend to sever, both for good and for ill, the chain of tradition. At the time of the Reformation the towns were the strongholds of Protestantism, at the time of the Commonwealth they were the strongholds of Puritanism, and in the Hanoverian, as in most subsequent periods, of liberal politics. On religious questions this bias has been especially strong. It is an ingenious, and, I believe, a just remark of Sir W. Petty that 'trade is most vigorously carried on in every state and government by the heterodox part of the same, and such as profess opinions different from what are publicly established.'[1] The fact may be ascribed partly, as I have said, to the superior accessibility of the town populations to new and innovating ideas, and partly also to persecuting laws which divorced heretics from the soil, and led them to seek forms of industry of which the fruits in seasons of trial can be easily realised and displaced.

[1] *Political Arithmetic*, p. 118.

The result has been that religious persecution has usually fallen with a peculiar severity upon commercial interests; and in the two centuries that followed the Reformation hardly any other single circumstance affected so powerfully the relative industrial position of nations as the degrees in which they conceded religious toleration. Among the less noticed consequences of the Reformation, perhaps the most important was the dispersion of industry produced by the many thousands of skilled artisans who were driven by persecution beyond their national borders, carrying with them trades which had hitherto been strictly or mainly local, and planting them wherever they settled. Nor was this the only result of the migration. Men who are prepared to abandon friends and country rather than forsake a religion which is not that of their nation are usually superior to the average of their fellow-countrymen in intelligence, and are almost always greatly superior to them in strength and nobility of character. Religious persecution, by steadily weeding out such men from a community, slowly but surely degrades the national type, while a policy of toleration which attracts refugees representing the best moral and industrial qualities of other nations is one of the most efficient of all means of expanding and improving it.

The effect of these influences on the well-being of nations has been very great. The ruin of Spain may be chiefly traced to the expulsion or extirpation of her Moorish, Jewish, and heretical subjects; and French industry, and still more French character, have never recovered the injury they received from the banishment of the most energetic and enlightened portion of the nation. By the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and by the savage persecution which immediately preceded and followed it, France probably lost upwards of a quarter of a million of her most industrious citizens;[1] and, amid the enthusiastic applause of the Catholic party, a blow was struck at her true interests, of which some of the effects may be perceived even to the present day. Bossuet, Massillon, and Fléchier,

[1] The estimates, as might be expected, vary greatly. Voltaire put the number as high as 600,000, and some writers still higher. See a collection of estimates from different writers, in Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, ii. 616–620.

vied with each other in extolling the new Theodosius who had banished heresy from the land. The Chancellor Le Tellier repeated the ecstatic words of Simeon as he affixed the great seal to the Act. The Abbé Tallemand eulogised it in glowing terms in the French Academy. Madame de Sevigné wrote that no other king either had done or could do a nobler act. The brush of Le Sueur was employed to illustrate it on the walls of Versailles, and medals were struck, and a bronze statue was erected in front of the Town Hall, to commemorate the triumph of the Church. The results of that triumph may be soon told. Many of the arts and manufactures which had been for generations most distinctively French passed for ever to Holland, to Germany, or to England. Local liberties in France received their death-blow when those who most strenuously supported them were swept out of the country. The destruction of the most solid, the most modest, the most virtuous, the most generally enlightened element in the French nation prepared the way for the inevitable degradation of the national character, and the last serious bulwark was removed that might have broken the force of that torrent of scepticism and vice, which, a century later, laid prostrate, in merited ruin, both the altar and the throne.[1]

Not less conspicuous was the benefit derived by nations which pursued an opposite course. Holland, which had suffered so severely, and in so many ways, from religious intolerance under the Spanish domination, made it a main object of her policy to attract by perfect religious liberty the scattered energies of Europe[2]; and Prussia owes to the same cause not a little of her moral and industrial greatness. Twenty thousand Frenchmen, attracted to Brandenburg by the liberal encouragement of the Elector, at the time of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, laid the foundation of the prosperity of Berlin, and

[1] Mr. Pattison, in his admirable *Life of Casaubon*, has made some striking remarks on the pre-eminence of the French Protestants in the very moral qualities in which the French nation as a whole is now most deficient.

[2] It is remarkable to find the leading English authority on trade as early as 1670, specifying among the causes of the great commercial prosperity of the Dutch, 'their toleration of different opinions in matters of religion, by reason of which many industrious people of other countries that dissent from the established government of their Church resort to them, with their

of most of the manufactures of Prussia;[1] and the later persecutions of Salzburg and Bohemia drove many thousands of Southern Germans to her soil. After the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, it was noticed that in Zell and Hanover French was spoken and written as purely as in Paris, and a refinement hitherto unknown began to distinguish the Northern Courts.[2] Even Russia sought to attract French energy for the development of her slumbering powers, and at the instance of the Elector of Brandenburg an imperial ukase was issued, offering liberty, settlement, and employment to the refugees.[3]

But no country owes more to her toleration than England. For nearly two centuries a steady stream of refugees, representing the best Continental types, poured into her population, blending with English life, transmitting their qualities of mind and character to English descendants, and contributing immensely to the perfection and variety of English industry. Elizabeth, though her religious opinions were very inimical to those of the Continental Protestants, with the instinct of true political genius, invariably encouraged the immigration, and, in spite of more than one remonstrance from the French sovereign, of much hatred of foreigners and Dissenters, of much jealousy of local interests and of rival trades, there was always sufficient good sense among the English rulers to maintain the toleration. For a short time, indeed, the persecuting and meddling policy of Laud threatened to overthrow it. That mischievous prelate had hardly obtained the See of Canterbury, when he ordered that those members of the foreign communities who had been born in England should be compelled to attend the Anglican Church, while the English liturgy was to be translated into Dutch and Walloon in the hope

families and estates, and after a few years' cohabitation with them become of the same common interest.'—Sir J. Child's *Discourse of Trade* (5th ed.), p. 4. On the other hand, we find the greatest Tory writer of the next generation denouncing 'the false politicks of a set of men who . . . take it into their imagination that trade can never flourish unless the country becomes a common receptacle for all nations, religions, and languages—a system only proper for small, popular States.'—Swift's *Examiner*, No. 21. See, too, his *Sentiments of a Church of England Man.*

[1] Frederick the Great (*Mœurs et Coutumes*), *Œuvres de Frèd.*, tom. i. p. 227, gives a long catalogue of the industries planted in Brandenburg by the refugees. See, too, Weiss's *Hist. des Réfugiés Français.*

[2] Kemble's *State Papers*, p. 386.

[3] Ibid. pp. 388–389.

of converting the others.[1] The civil war, however, restored the liberty of the refugees, and though they were afterwards exposed to much unpopularity and to serious riots, though, as we have seen, the Bill for the general naturalisation of foreign Protestants was repealed, they continued, far into the eighteenth century, to make England their favourite resort.

The extent and importance of the successive immigrations have hardly been appreciated by English historians. Those which were due to religious causes appear to have begun in 1567, when the news of the intended entry of Alva into the Netherlands was known, and when, as the Duchess of Parma wrote to Philip, more than 100,000 persons in a few days abandoned their country. Great numbers of them took refuge in England, and they were followed, in 1572, by a crowd of French Huguenots, who had escaped from St. Bartholomew; and in 1585, on the occasion of the sacking of Antwerp, by about a third part of the merchants and workmen of that city. A century later the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes produced a new immigration of French Protestants, variously estimated at from fifty to a hundred thousand. Several thousand Germans, chiefly from the Palatinate, came over in 1709; many others about 1732, after the persecutions in Salzburg; and towards the middle of the century a renewal of persecution in France was followed by a fresh French immigration. In this manner the commercial classes in England were at length thoroughly pervaded by a foreign element. Spitalfields was almost wholly inhabited by French silk manufacturers. In the beginning of the eighteenth century, when the population of London was probably about 600,000,[2] it contained no less than thirty-five French Protestant churches.[3] Important refugee settlements were planted at Norwich, Canterbury, Sandwich, Yarmouth, Ipswich, Exeter, Bideford, and Barnstaple; and there is hardly a town in England in which their presence may not be traced. Nor were they confined to England. Great

[1] See Southerden Burn's *Hist. of Protestant Refugees in England*, pp. 15–16.

[2] Petty, in his *Political Arithmetic*, published in 1687, estimated the population of London at 696,000. Gregory King, ten years later, computed it at only 530,000. See Craik's *Hist. of Commerce*, ii. 115.

[3] Smiles's *Huguenots in England*, p. 278.

numbers went over to Ireland. French Protestant churches were founded in New York and Charlestown, about 1724, and Salzburg refugees were very prominent in the colonisation of Georgia. About 1732, a colony of French Protestants settled in Edinburgh, where they introduced the manufacture of cambric. Some were incorporated in the British army, but by far the greater number were employed in manufactures, many of them in forms of industry which had been wholly unknown in England. Cloth makers from Antwerp and Bruges, lace makers from Valenciennes, cambric makers from Cambray, glass makers from Paris, stuff weavers from Meaux, potters from Delft, shipwrights from Havre and Dieppe, silk manufacturers from Lyons and Tours, paper manufacturers from Bordeaux and Auvergne, woollen manufacturers from Sedan, and tanners from the Touraine, were all plying their industries in England. The manufactures of silk, damask, velvet, cambric and baize, of the finer kinds of cloth and paper, of pendulum clocks, mathematical instruments, felt hats, toys, crystal and plate glass, all owe their origin in England wholly or chiefly to Protestant refugees, who also laid the foundation of scientific gardening, introduced numerous flowers and vegetables that had before been unknown, and improved almost every industry that was indigenous to the soil.[1]

It is a significant fact that at the close of the seventeenth century, while the balance of political and military power in Europe was still clearly on the side of Catholicism, the supremacy of industry was as decidedly on the side of Protestantism. It was computed that Great Britain, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, the Hanseatic towns, and the Protestant parts of Germany, possessed between them three-fourths of the commerce of the world;[2] while in France itself, before the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, an extraordinary proportion of the national industry was in the hands of the Huguenots. The immigration of these latter into England had

[1] The fullest account of the refugee settlements and industry is to be found in Southerden Burn's very valuable *Hist. of the Protestant Refugees in England.* See, too, Weiss's *Hist. des Réfugiés Français,* Mr. Smiles' two interesting volumes on *The Huguenots,* and the notices of the Refugee Manufactures, in Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce.*

[2] Petty's *Political Arithmetic,* p. 118.

the natural effect of strengthening the Whig party both in numbers and in zeal.[1] The industrial classes, who formed the bulk of the party, were largely increased. The anti-Gallican and anti-Papal enthusiasms were intensified by great personal wrongs. The Dissenting or Low Church interest obtained a great accession of power from the presence of a large body of men educated in non-episcopal churches; and the great Whig maxim, that a government should accord perfect toleration to all Protestant sects, derived a new strength from the manifest material benefits it produced.

The influence of the industrial classes had for a long time been steadily increasing, with the accumulation of industrial wealth. The reigns of the Stuarts, though in their political aspects they were in many respects chequered or disastrous, formed a period of almost uninterrupted material prosperity, the more striking because it was not due to any of those great mechanical inventions which in the present century have suddenly revolutionised great departments of industry. The progress was strictly normal. It may be ascribed to the reclamation of waste lands, to the extension and development of the colonies, to the freedom of the country for a long period from any serious land war. It was noticed, as a remarkable sign of the democratic spirit that followed the Commonwealth, that country gentlemen in England had begun to bind their sons as apprentices to merchants,[2] and also, that about the same time the desire to obtain large portions in marriage led to alliances between the aristocracy and the merchants. Sir W. Temple, writing in the last quarter of the seventeenth century, says:—'I think I remember within less than fifty years, the first noble families that married into the

[1] Thus Atterbury very bitterly wrote: 'I scarce ever knew a foreigner settled in England, whether of Dutch, German, French, Italian, or Turkish growth, but became a Whig in a little time after mixing with us.'—'English Advice to the Freeholders of England' (1714), Somers's *Tracts*, xiii. p. 537.

[2] See Hume's *Hist. of England*, ch. lxii.

So Pope—

Boastful and rough your first son is a squire,
The next a tradesman meek, and much a liar.
—*Moral Essays*, Es. i.

In a pamphlet published in 1722 called '*The danger of the Church and Kingdom from Foreigners considered*,' it is said, 'Now the greatest gentlemen affect to make their junior sons Turkey merchants, and while the diligent son is getting an estate by foreign traffic, the wise father at home employs his talent in railing at foreigners.'—See Southerden Burn's *Hist. of Protestant Refugees*, p. 13.

city for downright money, and thereby introduced by degrees this public grievance which has since ruined so many estates by the necessity of giving good portions to daughters.'[1] The increase of wealth was abundantly attested by all the best authorities. Thus Sir Josiah Child, who published his well-known 'Discourse on Trade' in 1670, assures us that both the merchants and shipping in England had doubled in twenty years. Petty, in his 'Political Arithmetic,' which was published a few years later, declared that within forty years the value of the houses of London had doubled, while most of the leading provincial towns had largely increased, that the royal navy had tripled or quadrupled, that the coal-shipping of Newcastle had quadrupled, that the value of the customs had tripled, that the postage of letters had multiplied twenty-fold, and that, through the great increase of money, the natural rate of interest had fallen from eight to six per cent. Davenant, who examined with great care the material condition of the country at the time of the Revolution, supplies much evidence to the same effect. He tells us that the tonnage of the merchant shipping in 1688 was nearly double of what it had been in 1666; that the royal navy had increased from 62,594 tons to 101,032 tons; that the customs, which in 1666 were farmed out for 390,000*l.* a year, had in the last seventeen years yielded on an average 555,752*l.* In a work published in 1698, he calculated that the general rental of England had risen, since the beginning of the century, from 6,000,000*l.* to 14,000,000*l.*, and the purchasing value of the land from 72,000,000*l.* to 252,000,000*l.*[2] The whole income of the country at the time of the Revolution was estimated at about 43,500,000*l.*[3]

Of the manufactures, the most important were still those of wool, which had already become famous under the Tudors, and were scattered through the valleys of the Thames and Severn, through East Norfolk, South Lancashire, Yorkshire, and Westmoreland. The iron and hardware manufactures of

[1] Temple's *Miscellanies.*

[2] Child's *Discourse on Trade.* Petty's *Political Arithmetic,* pp. 170–171. Davenant's *Discourses on the Public Revenue and Trade of England.* Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce,* ii. 629–630.

[3] Gregory King's *Conclusions upon the State of England,* § vi.