

A defensive alliance, concluded between Elizabeth of Russia and George II. of England, materially diminished the influence of France in the north of Europe, and a considerable sum was sent from Russia to the Queen of Hungary as a pledge of her active support. In May 1743 Bavaria, which had been reoccupied by its sovereign the Emperor in the October of the preceding year, was again invaded, and it was soon completely subjugated. Six thousand Bavarians, with their baggage, standards, and cannons, were captured at Erblach. A French army under Broglie was driven beyond the Rhine. Another French army was expelled from the Upper Palatinate. Eger, the last Bohemian post occupied by the French, was blockaded, and in September it fell. The unhappy Emperor fled hastily from Munich, and being defeated on all sides, and having no hope of assistance, he signed a treaty of neutrality by which he renounced all pretensions to the Austrian succession, and yielded his hereditary dominions to the Queen of Hungary, till the conclusion of a general peace. His army was withdrawn to Franconia, and he himself retired to Frankfurt.

The Peace of Breslau had been chiefly the work of Carteret,¹ and he displayed equal zeal in urging the Dutch into the war. This object was at last so far accomplished that they very reluctantly consented to send a contingent to a great confederate army which was being formed in Flanders, under the direction of England and the command of the Earl of Stair, for the purpose of acting against the French, and, if possible, of invading France. It ultimately consisted of some 44,000 men, and was composed of about an equal number of British and Hanoverian soldiers, of 6,000 Hessians, in English pay, and of a contingent of Austrians and of Dutch. It started from Flanders in February 1742-43, marched slowly through the bishopric of Liège, where it was joined by the Austrians, under the Duke of Ahremberg, and by 16,000 Hanoverians in British pay, crossed the Rhine on May 14, and encamped on the 23rd in the neighbourhood of Frankfurt. It was, however, soon after hemmed in by a superior French force under Noailles. The defiles above Aschaffenburg and the posts

¹ Frederick, *Hist. de mon Temps*, ch. vii.

of the Upper Maine were occupied by the French. The allies were out-manceuvred and cut off from succours, and their difficulty in obtaining provisions was so great that a capitulation seemed not improbable. Under these disastrous circumstances, George II., accompanied by the Duke of Cumberland and Carteret, joined the army. A great battle was fought at Dettingen, on June 27, and the bravery of the allied forces and the rashness of the Duke of Grammont, which disconcerted the plans of Noailles, gave the victory to the confederates, extricated the army from its embarrassments, and compelled the French to recross the Maine. No other important consequences followed. Innumerable divisions paralysed the army. The King of Prussia showed hostile intentions. The other German princes were divided in their views. The Dutch discouraged all prosecution of the war, and the allied forces after successively occupying Hanau, Worms, and Spire, at last retired to winter quarters in Flanders. A deadly hostility had sprung up between the British and the Hanoverian troops, and public opinion at home was now violently opposed to Carteret and to the war.

This great revulsion of feeling is to be ascribed to many causes. The war I am describing was one of the most tangled and complicated upon record, but amidst all its confused episodes and various objects, one great change was apparent. It had been a war for the maintenance of the Pragmatic Sanction and of the integrity of Austria. It had become a war for the conquest and dismemberment of France. Few sovereigns have been more deeply injured than Maria Theresa, and her haughty, ambitious, and somewhat vindictive nature, now flushed with a succession of conquests, was burning to retaliate upon her enemies. She desired to deprive the Emperor of the imperial crown, and to place it on the head of her husband, to annex Bavaria permanently to the Austrian dominions, to wrest Alsace and Lorraine from France, and Naples from the Spanish line; and if it was in her power she would undoubtedly have attempted to recover Silesia. Her impracticable temper and her ambitious views had become the chief obstacle to the pacification of Europe. She had scornfully rejected the overtures of Fleury for peace. She refused, in spite of the remonstrances of England, to grant

the Emperor a definite peace, although he asked only the recognition of his perfectly legal title as Emperor of Germany, and the security of his old hereditary dominions. She long refused to grant the King of Sardinia the concessions that had been promised, and it was not until a whole summer had been wasted, and until the King had threatened to go over to her enemies, that she consented, in September 1743, to sign the Treaty of Worms. By this treaty she at last relinquished in his favour her pretensions to the Marquisate of Finale, which was then in the possession of the Genoese, ceded Placentia and some small districts in Austrian Italy, and made an offensive alliance with the King for the prosecution of the war. Her present object was the invasion of France by two great armies, that of Prince Charles, which was massed upon the frontiers of Alsace, and that of the confederates, who had taken up their quarters at Hanau and Worms. England had gone far in supporting her in this policy, but it was open to the very gravest objections. It was one thing to fulfil the obligations of a distinct treaty and to prevent the dismemberment of an Empire, which was essential to the balance of power. It was quite another thing to support Austria in projects of aggrandisement which alarmed all the conservative instincts of Europe, and could only be realised by a long, bloody, and expensive war. England had entered into the struggle as a mere auxiliary and for a definite purpose, and her mission might reasonably be looked upon as fulfilled. Silesia had, it is true, been ceded to Prussia, but both the Emperor and France would have been perfectly willing to accept a peace leaving the Queen of Hungary in undisturbed possession of all the remainder of the Austrian dominions. It was maintained, and surely with reason, that England should have insisted on the acceptance of such a peace, and that if she could not induce Maria Theresa to acquiesce, she should at least herself have withdrawn from the war.¹ She had not done so. She had, on the contrary, plunged more and more deeply into Continental affairs. By the Treaty of Worms she bound herself to continue the subsidy of the King of Sardinia. She was still paying Austrian troops, and a secret convention bind-

¹ See these arguments powerfully stated in a speech by Pitt, Dec. 1, 1743 (*Anecdotes of Chatham*, vol. i.).

ing her to continue the subsidy to the Queen of Hungary, 'as long as the war should continue, or the necessity of her affairs should require,' as well as a project for bestowing a subsidy on the Emperor, on condition of his joining the Austrians against his allies the French, had both been recently proposed by Carteret and the King, and had only been defeated by the Pelham influence at home. The army of Flanders was an English creation, and most of its soldiers were either English or in English pay. By forming it, England had completely abandoned the wise policy of confining herself as much as possible to maritime warfare, and she had also, in direct opposition to the wishes of the Dutch, added very seriously to the dangers of the war by gratuitously attracting it towards the Dutch barrier.

But that which made the war most unpopular was the alleged subordination of English to Hanoverian interests. On no other subject was English public opinion so sensitive, and the orators of the Opposition exerted all their powers to inflame the feeling. The invective of Pitt, who declared that 'it was now too apparent that this great, this powerful, this formidable kingdom is considered only as a province to a despicable Electorate;' the sarcasm of Chesterfield, who suggested that the one effectual method of destroying Jacobitism would be to bestow Hanover on the Pretender, as the English people would never again tolerate a ruler from that country; the bitter witticism of a popular pamphleteer,¹ who, alluding to the white horse in the arms of Hanover, selected for his motto the text in the Revelation, 'I looked, and behold a pale horse, and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed,' only represented in an emphatic form the common sentiment both of the army and of the people. The English and Hanoverians who fought side by side at Dettingen, probably hated each other more intensely than they hated the French, and the alleged partiality of the King to the Hanoverians even led to the angry resignation of Lord Stair.

It is impossible to doubt that amid much misrepresentation and exaggeration there was some real ground of complaint, and that England, as was said, was too often 'steered by a Hanoverian rudder.' As the sovereign of a small Continental state con-

¹ Dr. Shebbear.

stantly exposed to French ambition, as a German prince keenly interested in German politics, and especially anxious to have no superior in Germany except the Emperor, George II. had a far stronger interest in desiring, at one time the invasion and dismemberment of France, and at another the repression of the growing power of Prussia, than he could have had as a mere sovereign of England. The Electorate lay nearest his heart. Hanoverian interests undoubtedly coloured his foreign policy, and he had a strong disposition to employ the resources of his kingdom in the interests of his Electorate. The manner in which in the former reign England had been embroiled with both Sweden and Russia on account of Bremen and Verden, the Treaty of Hanover, the exaggerated German subsidies which had followed it, and the undoubted fact that many of those subsidies were rendered necessary only by the position of Hanover, had already produced a jealousy which the events of the new war greatly increased. The treaty of neutrality was regarded as a disgraceful abandonment, and the prolongation of the war, the attempted multiplication of German subsidies, and the too frequent custom of taking important resolutions, affecting England, on the Continent with little or no consultation with the English ministers, were all cited as examples of the partiality of the King. The most flagrant case, however, was his determination to throw the chief expense of the Hanoverian army, in time of war, upon England. After the Treaty of Breslau he declared his intention of reducing the Hanoverian army to its peace footing, as his German dominions were then unmolested, and the expense was too great for their resources, and his ministers in England then proceeded to prevent this measure by taking 16,000 Hanoverian troops into British pay. No measure of the time excited such violent hostility, and the intervention of Lord Orford was required to carry it. Pitt openly declared that the interest of England imperatively required complete separation from Hanover. In the House of Lords twenty-four peers signed a protest against it, in language so bitterly offensive to the sovereign that it almost savoured of revolution. They stated that some of the Hanoverian troops had refused to form the first line at Dettingen, that others disobeyed the English general after the battle, that the greater

number, 'not contented to avoid being of any use either in front or in the rear, determined to be of use nowhere, and halted as soon as they came within sight and reach of the battle, though pressed by the British officers, and invited by the British soldiers, to share the glory, and complete, as they might have done, the victory of the day.' They contended that 'the future co-operation of our national troops with these mercenaries has been rendered impracticable, and even their meeting dangerous;' they complained of 'the many instances of partiality by which the Hanoverians were unhappily distinguished, and our brave fellow subjects, the British forces, undeservedly discouraged'; of 'the constant preference' given to the former 'in quarters, forage, &c.'; of the fact that 'the Hanoverian Guards had for some days done duty upon his Majesty at Aschaffenburg,' which, they added, 'we look upon as the highest dishonour to his Majesty and this nation'; of 'the abject flattery and criminal misrepresentation which this partiality, blameless in itself, has unhappily given occasion to, and by which in its turn it has been fomented'; of the many instances 'wherein the blood and treasure of this nation have been lavishly employed when no British interest, and, as we conceive, some foreign interest alone, was concerned.' That 'the interests of one country are carried on in subordination to those of another, constitutes,' they said, 'the true and mortifying definition of a province,' and they insinuated, in no obscure terms, that England was actually in this position, that 'an inferior German principality was really, and Great Britain only nominally, the director' of the policy of the empire.¹

Pamphlets, the most remarkable of which were ascribed to

¹ Rogers' *Protest of the Lords*, ii. 37-42. Speaker Onslow relates the following remarkable dialogue with Walpole on the subject, 'A little while before Sir R. Walpole's fall, and as a popular act to save himself (for he went very unwillingly out of his offices and power) he took me one day aside and said: "What will you say, Speaker, if this hand of mine shall bring a message from the King to the House of Commons declaring his consent to having any of his family after his own death to be

made by Act of Parliament incapable of inheriting and enjoying the Crown and possessing the Electoral dominions at the same time?" My answer was: "Sir, it will be as a message from Heaven." He replied, "It will be done," but it was not done, and I have good reason to believe it would have been opposed and rejected at this time, because it came from him, and by the means of those who had always been most clamorous for it.'—Speaker Onslow's remarks, in Cox's *Walpole*, vol. ii. pp. 571-572.

The pen of Chesterfield, containing similar accusations in even stronger language, were widely circulated,¹ and no agitation was necessary to strengthen the indignation at the German policy of the Court. Of that policy Carteret was the special representative. He was usually abroad with the King. He based his power chiefly on his influence upon the King's mind, he cordially threw himself into the King's views about the German war, and he aimed at a German coalition, for the purpose of wresting Alsace and Lorraine from France, and thus compensating Maria Theresa for the loss of Silesia. His arrogance or recklessness offended all with whom he came in contact. Newcastle, especially, he treated with habitual insolence, and he contemptuously neglected that traffic in places which was then so essential to political power. He speedily became the most unpopular man in the country, and his unpopularity was not atoned for by any very splendid success. There was undoubtedly abundance of vigour, and considerable ability displayed in the measures I have enumerated, but Carteret did not, like Pitt, possess the art of inspiring the nation or the army with a high military enthusiasm, of selecting the ablest men for the most important commands, or of directing his blows against the most vulnerable points of the enemy. The formation of the army of Flanders was probably a mistake. The issue of the campaign was miserably abortive, and there can be but little doubt that Newcastle judged wisely in refusing to associate England with a project for the invasion and the dismemberment of France.

Under these circumstances a conflict between the two sections of the Government was inevitable. Lord Wilmington died in July 1743, having held the chief power for little more than sixteen months. Lord Bath, who clearly perceived the mistake he had made in declining office, now eagerly aspired to the vacant place, and he was warmly supported by Carteret, who designed to retain for himself the direction of the war, and to strengthen his position by bringing into office a considerable number of Tories. Bath was personally almost equally ob-

¹ See *The Case of the Hanover Troops*, the *Interest of Hanover*, the *Vindication of the Case of the Hanover Troops*. A curious collection of

passages from the principal pamphlets against these troops will be found in *Faction Defeated by the Evidence of Facts*, pp. 124-125 (7th ed.).

noxious to the King and to the people, but the influence of Carteret over the royal mind was so great that he would probably have gained his point had not the popular clamour been supported by the still powerful voice of Orford, who represented to the King the danger of admitting Tories to office, and the extreme and growing unpopularity of his Government. By the influence of the old statesman, the Pelham interest became supreme, Henry Pelham obtaining the position of Prime Minister. Being the younger brother of the Duke of Newcastle, he was supported by a vast amount of family and borough influence, and without any great or shining talents he succeeded in playing a very considerable part in English history. He had been first brought into office chiefly by the recommendation of Walpole, had supported his patron faithfully in the contest about the excise, and in the disastrous struggle of 1740 and 1741, and was looked upon as the natural heir of his policy. Like Walpole, he had none of the talents that are necessary for the successful conduct of war, and was, perhaps for that very reason, warmly in favour of peace. Like Walpole, too, he was thoroughly conversant with questions of finance, and almost uniformly successful in dealing with them. A timid, desponding, and somewhat fretful man, with little energy either of character or intellect, he possessed at least, to a high degree, good sense, industry, knowledge of business, and parliamentary experience; his manners were conciliatory and decorous, and he was content to hold the reins of power very loosely, freely admitting competitors to office, and allowing much divergence of opinion. Lord Hardwicke, the greatest lawyer of his day, and one of the greatest who ever took part in English politics, was his warm friend, and he attached to his cause both Chesterfield and Pitt. After a protracted struggle in the Cabinet, Carteret, who, by the death of his mother, had become Lord Granville, was compelled to yield, and resigned office in November 1744.

The ascendancy of the Pelhams in England, however, was far from leading to peace. On the contrary, in no other stage of the war did the martial energies of Europe blaze so fiercely or extend so widely as in 1744 or 1745. The death of Fleury removed the chief pacific influence from the councils of France; and Cardinal Tencin, who succeeded him, and who is said to

have obtained his hat by the friendship of the Pretender, resolved to signalise his government by the invasion of England. 15,000 men, under the command of Marshal Saxe, were assembled for that purpose at Dunkirk. A powerful fleet sailed from Brest and Rochefort for their protection, and the young Pretender arrived from Rome to accompany the expedition. In England every preparation was made for a deadly struggle. The forts on the Thames and Medway were strengthened. Several regiments were marched to the southern coast; the Kentish Militia were put under arms; troops were recalled from the Netherlands, and application was made to the States-General for the 6,000 men which in case of invasion Holland was bound by treaty to furnish. For a few weeks party warfare almost ceased, but in order to guard against every attempt at rebellion, the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, and a proclamation issued for enforcing the laws against Papists and Nonjurors. Towards the end of February, the French fleet appeared in the Channel; and, perceiving no enemy, the commander sent off a rapid message to Dunkirk, to hasten the embarkation, and soon after anchored off Dungeness Point. At this critical moment the English fleet, which was greatly superior in numbers, doubled the South Foreland. An action seemed imminent, but wind and tide were both unfavourable, and Sir John Norris, who commanded the English, resolved to postpone it till the morrow. That night a great tempest arose, before which the French fleet fled in safety, but which scattered far and wide the transports, and put an end for the present to all projects of invasion.

It is a somewhat curious coincidence, that, almost at the same time when a French fleet escaped from the English in the Channel, another fleet had a similar fortune in the Mediterranean. The combined fleet of the French and Spaniards was blockaded in Toulon by the British, under Admiral Matthews. On the 9th of February it sailed from the harbour, and a general engagement ensued. The battle on the part of the English officers appears to have been grossly mismanaged; and the mismanagement was in a great degree due to a deadly feud, which prevented all cordial co-operation between the commander and the Vice-Admiral Lestock. Night closed on the

action without any decisive result, but next morning the fleet of the enemy was in flight. A pursuit was ordered, and the Vice-Admiral had gained considerably upon the fugitives, when the English ships were somewhat unaccountably ordered to retrace their steps, and the enemy made their way in safety to Carthagea and Alicante. The escape of these two fleets threw much discredit upon the naval enterprise of England, and the Admiral and Vice-Admiral of the Mediterranean fleet mutually accused each other. There appear to have been grave faults on both sides; but the decision of the court martial was given against Admiral Matthews, who was removed from the service, and several commanders of ships were cashiered.

England and France, though taking a leading part in the war, had hitherto been engaged only as auxiliaries, and, though they had met in so many fields, they were still nominally at peace. This unnatural state of things now terminated. In March France declared war against England, and in April against Austria, and she at the same time prepared to throw her full energies upon the Austrian Netherlands. A French army of about 80,000 men, under the able leadership of Marshal Saxe, animated by the presence of Lewis XV., and accompanied by a train of artillery that was said to have been superior to any hitherto known, poured over the frontier, and was everywhere victorious. It is a curious fact, that among its officers, one of the most conspicuous and successful was by profession a Churchman. The Prince of Clermont, the great-grandson of the illustrious Condé, was the Abbé of St. Germain des Prés, but the Pope, Clement XII., gave him a dispensation to take part in the war, and he directed the principal attacks upon the fortress of Ypres. The allies were weak, divided, and incapable. In two months Ypres, Courtrai, Menin, and Furnes were taken, and the whole of the Low Countries would probably have been conquered, had not the invaders been arrested by sinister news from Alsace.

That province had been left under the protection of Marshal Coigny, and of the Bavarian General Seckendorf, whose combined armies were believed to be sufficient to guard the passes of the Rhine. General Khevenhuller had died in the previous winter; but Prince Charles of Lorraine, who commanded the

Austrians, and who was accompanied by Marshal Traun, one of the ablest soldiers in the Austrian service, succeeded in deceiving his enemies, and his army in three bodies crossed the Rhine. The war raged fiercely around Spire, Weissenburg, and Saverne, in that unhappy country which has been fated in so many contests to be the battlefield of Europe. The Austrians, with an army of 60,000 men, effected a secure lodgment in Alsace, and advanced to the frontiers of Lorraine; and the French King, leaving Marshal Saxe with 30,000 men, to maintain his conquests in the Netherlands, hastened with the remainder of the army to its relief. The King fell ill at Metz, and appeared for a time at the point of death, but after a somewhat dangerous delay, his troops arrived by forced marches in Alsace, which seemed destined to be the scene of the decisive struggle of the year, when a new enemy suddenly appeared in the field, and again diverted the course of the war.

This enemy was Frederick of Prussia. No prince of his time perceived his interests more clearly, or acted on them with such combined secrecy, energy, and skill; and as he was at the head of one of the best armies in Europe, and as it cost him nothing to break a treaty or to abandon an ally, he succeeded in a very great degree in making himself the arbiter of the war. By the Peace of Breslau he had once already suddenly changed its fortunes, and brought about the almost complete destruction of one of the armies of the ally whom he had deserted, and he had hitherto resisted all overtures to break the peace. He calculated, as he himself informs us, that 'the longer the war should continue the more would the resources of the House of Austria be exhausted, while the longer Prussia remained at peace the more strength she would acquire.' But, on the other hand, it was one of his maxims that 'it is a capital error in politics to trust a reconciled enemy;' and there was much in the present aspect of affairs to excite both his cupidity and his fears. He was alarmed by the ascendancy the Austrians had obtained in Alsace, and by the prospect of the annexation of Lorraine; by the growing ambition of the Queen of Hungary, which made it peculiarly unlikely that she would permanently acquiesce in the alienation of Silesia, and by intelligence that Saxony had agreed to join in the league

against France. It was a suspicious circumstance that the Treaty of Worms, while enumerating and guaranteeing many other treaties, had made no mention of the Peace of Breslau, by which he held Silesia; and George II. was reported to have used some language implying that he, at least, would not be reluctant to see that province restored. Even before the close of 1743 Frederick had been in secret negotiation with France, and the events in Alsace strengthened his determination. Maria Theresa had not committed the smallest act since the peace of Breslau that could be construed into hostility to Prussia, but Frederick concluded, with reason, that she had never forgiven his past treachery, and he feared that if she became too strong, she would endeavour to drive him from Silesia. This might be the result if she were victorious in Alsace. It might be equally the result if France, alarmed at her progress, made peace, and retired from the war. On the other hand, the wars of Alsace, the Netherlands, and Italy had left the Austrian provinces almost undefended, and the King saw the possibility of effecting a new spoliation by annexing a portion of Bohemia to his dominions. After some unsuccessful negotiation with Russia, he signed secret conventions with the Emperor, France, the Elector Palatine, and the Landgrave of Hesse; and engaged to invade Bohemia, stipulating that a considerable portion of that country which adjoined Silesia should be annexed to his dominions. In August 1744 he issued a manifesto, declaring that he had taken arms to support the rights of the Emperor, to defend the liberty and restore the peace of the Germanic empire. He marched through Saxony, in defiance of the wishes of the Elector, invaded Bohemia, captured Prague, with its entire garrison, on September 16, and speedily reduced all Bohemia to the east of the Moldau. At the same time a united army of Bavarians and Hessians expelled the Austrians from the greater part of Bavaria, and on October 22 reinstated the Emperor in Munich. At this point, however, his usual good fortune abandoned Frederick. Maria Theresa again fled to Hungary, and was again received with an enthusiasm that completely disconcerted her enemies. An army of 44,000 men was speedily equipped in Hungary, while on the other side Prince Charles of Lorraine and Marshal Traun hastened to



abandon Alsace, effected, with scarcely any loss, a masterly retreat over the Rhine, in the presence of the united French army, and marched rapidly upon Bohemia. The irregular troops, which played so prominent a part in Austrian warfare, assisted as they were by the good wishes of the whole population, and by the nature of the country, soon reduced the Prussians to extreme distress. The villages were deserted. No peasant came to the camp to sell provisions. The defiles of the mountains that surround Bohemia swarmed with hussars and Croats, who intercepted convoys and cut off intelligence; and their success was so great that on one occasion the King and army remained for four weeks absolutely without news. To add to their disasters, 20,000 Saxon troops marched to the assistance of Prince Charles, while a severe winter greatly aggravated the sufferings of the invaders. A rapid retreat became necessary, and the Prussians were compelled to abandon all their conquests, and to retire broken, baffled, and dispirited into Silesia. The French and the Emperor were the only gainers. Marshal Saxe maintained his position in the Netherlands. Alsace was freed from its invaders, and the French, crossing the Rhine, laid siege to the important town of Friburg. The Austrian General Darnitz defended it for thirty-five days, till it was little more than a mass of ruins, and till half the garrison and 15,000 of the besiegers had been killed; and its capture concluded the campaign.

While these events were happening in Germany, Italy also was the theatre of a bloody, desolating, but utterly indecisive war. Maria Theresa and the King of Sardinia were now professedly united, but they insisted on pursuing separate ends. The interests of the King were in the north, and his immediate object was the conquest of Finale. The Austrians, on the other hand, drove the Spaniards southwards from near Rimini to the Neapolitan frontier, when the King of Naples, breaking the neutrality he had signed, marched to the war with an army of 15,000 men. The Austrians, outnumbered and baffled, made one daring effort to retrieve their fortunes, and succeeded, in the night of August 10, in surprising the head-quarters of the King of Naples at Velletri. The King and the Duke of Modena were all but killed, and a long and most bloody fight

ensued. At last the Austrians, who had been disorganised by the opportunities of plunder, gave way, and the victory remained with the allies. The malaria arising from the Pontine marshes soon did its work among the German soldiers, and in November the army retired, in a greatly reduced condition, to the neighbourhood of Rimini, while their enemies were quartered between Viterbo and Civita Vecchia. The King of Sardinia, in the meantime, was engaged in a desperate contest with an invading army of French and Spaniards, which forced its way through Nice, fighting almost at every step, invested Coni, and defeated a large force that was sent to its relief. Genoa would have assisted the invaders, but was intimidated by the English fleet; and, in spite of many successes, the French were unable to take Coni, and on the approach of winter they recrossed the Alps, having lost, it is said, not less than 10,000 men in the campaign.

So ended the year 1744, during which a fearful sum of human misery had been inflicted on the world. Bohemia, Bavaria, the Austrian Netherlands and Italy had been desolated by hostile forces. Tens of thousands of lives had been sacrificed, millions of pounds had been uselessly squandered, all the interests of civilisation and industry had been injured or neglected, but it can scarcely be said that a single important result had been achieved. The relative forces of the belligerents at the end of the year were almost the same as they had been at the beginning, and there was as yet no sign of the approach of peace.

In 1745, however, the clouds began in some degree to break. On January 8, an offensive alliance was concluded between England, Holland, Austria, and Saxony, by which the King of Poland agreed, as Elector of Saxony, to furnish 30,000 troops for the defence of Bohemia on condition of receiving a subsidy of 100,000*l.* from England, and of 50,000*l.* from Holland. On January 20 the Emperor Charles VII. died, broken alike by sorrow and by sickness; and the young Elector, refusing to become a candidate for the Imperial dignity, made earnest overtures for peace. The Duke of Lorraine, the husband of Maria Theresa, was candidate for the Empire, and the Elector agreed to support him, to withdraw his troops from the war, and to recognise the Pragmatic Sanction, provided his Bavarian dominions were secured, and the validity of his father's election was recognised. On April

22 a peace between Austria and Bavaria was signed on these conditions at Fuessen, and in September, to the great disappointment of French politicians, the Imperial dignity reverted to the House of Austria by the almost unanimous election of the Duke of Lorraine as Emperor of Germany. Still more important was the peace between Austria and Prussia, which was negotiated at the end of the year. As may very easily be understood, Maria Theresa felt towards Frederick more bitterly than towards any other enemy. The recovery of Silesia was the object now nearest her heart. Upon the failure of Frederick's last campaign the war had been carried into that province, and, as all the forces that had been employed in Alsace were directed to its conquest, success appeared very probable. The reputation of Frederick was lowered by defeat. The French were concentrating all their efforts upon the Netherlands. Bavaria had seceded from the war, and the King of Poland, having at last extorted from Maria Theresa the promise of some territorial cessions in Silesia in the event of success, now threw himself heartily into the struggle. The extraordinary military abilities of the Prussian King, and the strenuous exertions of the Pelham ministry in favour of peace, overcame this combination. After several inconsiderable skirmishes, Frederick, on June 3, defeated the Austrians under Prince Charles in the great battle of Hohenfriedberg, and soon after followed them in their retreat into Bohemia. England then urgently interposed in favour of peace. Her ambassador urged that the Austrian Netherlands would inevitably succumb before the French if the German war continued, and he represented how impossible it was for England to continue the payment of subsidies to the allies, which in this year amounted to not less than 1,178,753*l*. The Queen refusing to yield, England for her own part signed on August 26 a preliminary convention with Prussia for the purpose of re-establishing peace, by which she guaranteed to Prussia the possession of Silesia according to the Treaty of Breslau, and promised to use every effort to obtain for it a general guarantee by all the Powers of Europe. The Queen of Hungary was indignant but still unshaken, and she resolved to continue the war. On September 30, however, the Austrians were again completely defeated at Sohr. On December 15 the Saxons were routed at



Kesseldorf, and the Prussians soon after marched in triumph into Dresden. Maria Theresa at last yielded, and on December 25 she signed the Peace of Dresden, guaranteeing Frederick the possession of Silesia and Glatz, while Frederick for his part evacuated Saxony, recognised the validity of the Imperial election, and acknowledged the disputed suffrage of Bohemia.

But before this peace was signed events had occurred very disastrous to the interests both of Austria and of England. In Italy Genoa now openly declared herself on the side of the French, and the accession of 10,000 Genoese soldiers, combined with the great military talents of General Gages, who commanded the Spaniards, determined for the present the fortunes of the war. The French, Spaniards, and Neapolitans were everywhere triumphant. Tortona, Placentia, Parma, Pavia, Cazale, and Asti were taken, Don Philip entered Milan in triumph and blockaded the citadel, and the King of Sardinia was driven to take refuge under the walls of his capital.

In Flanders Marshal Saxe, at the head of an army of 80,000 men was equally successful. The Austrians, in their zeal for the conquest of Silesia, spared little more than 8,000 men for the defence of this province, and the task of opposing the French rested chiefly upon the English and the Dutch. In April Marshal Saxe invested Tournay, and on May 11 he fought a great battle with the allies at Fontenoy. The Dutch gave way at an early period of the struggle, but the English and Hanoverians remained firm, and, gradually forming into a solid column of about 16,000 men, they advanced, through a narrow passage that was left between the fortified village of Fontenoy and the neighbouring woods, full against the centre of the French. Regiment after regiment assailed them in vain. Their sustained and deadly fire, their steady intrepidity and the massive power of their charge carried all before it, and the day was almost lost to the French, when Marshal Saxe resolved to make one last and almost despairing effort. Four cannon were brought to play upon the English, and at the same time the order to advance was given to the household troops of the French King, who had hitherto been kept in reserve, and to the Irish brigade, consisting of several regiments of Irish Catholics who had been driven from their country by the events of the Revolution and by the Penal Code, and who

were burning to avenge themselves on their oppressors. Their fiery charge was successful. The British column was arrested, shattered, and dissolved, and a great French victory was the result. In a few days Tournay surrendered, and its fall was followed by that of Ghent, Bruges, Oudenarde, Dendermonde, Ostend, Nieuport, and Ath.

An immediate consequence of the defeat of Fontenoy was the Jacobite rebellion in Scotland. On July 25, the young Pretender landed, without the support or knowledge of the French, relying only on the popularity of his manners and of his name, and on the assistance of a few Highland chiefs, to recover the throne of his ancestors. A wilder or more hopeless enterprise never convulsed a great empire. The Highlands, where alone he could count upon warm support, contained at this time about one-twelfth of the population of Scotland.¹ Even there many powerful chiefs were bound to the reigning dynasty by the strongest ties of interest. The clans, though they were ever ready to take up arms, and would follow their chiefs in any cause, were utterly destitute of the discipline and subordination of a regular army. Their great object was plunder, and after their first victory more than half the army disbanded to secure the spoil. In the Lowlands the balance of opinion was probably hostile to Jacobitism. The Episcopalians, it is true, were generally disaffected, the Union had left much discontent behind it, and the Scotch origin of the Stuarts was not forgotten, but on the other hand the Highlanders were detested as a race of marauders, the commercial and industrial classes dreaded change, and the great city of Glasgow was decidedly Hanoverian. In England, as the event showed, not a single real step had been taken to prepare an insurrection. The King was in Hanover when the movement began, and the greater part of the English army was endeavouring to protect the Netherlands, yet nothing but the grossest incapacity on the part of the military authorities at home, and an extraordinary want of public spirit in the nation, could have enabled the rebellion, unaided as it was from abroad, to acquire the dimensions which it did. On August 19 the standard of the Stuarts was raised, and before the end of September Prince Charles

¹ See Chambers' *Hist. of the Rebellion*.

was installed in Holyrood Palace, the army of Sir John Cope was completely defeated in the battle of Preston Pans, and almost the whole of Scotland acknowledged the Pretender. At the end of October he prepared, at the head of an army of less than 6,000 men, to invade England. He crossed the frontier on November 8, took Carlisle, after a short resistance on the 15th, marched without opposition through most of the great towns of Lancashire, penetrated as far as Derby, and had produced in London a disgraceful panic and a violent run upon the Bank of England,¹ when the chiefs insisted, in defiance of his wishes, in commencing a retreat. Three considerable armies were formed to oppose him. One of these, commanded by Marshal Wade, was assembled in Yorkshire, and might easily, with common skill, have cut off his retreat. Another, under the Duke of Cumberland, was prepared to intercept him if he marched upon Wales, while a third was assembled on Finchley Common for the protection of London. Dutch soldiers were brought over to support the Government.² There was no prospect of serious assistance from France, and in England, if the Pretender met with little active opposition among the people, he met with still less support. In Preston, where the Catholics were very numerous, there was some cheering. In Manchester several of the clergy, and a great part of the populace received him with enthusiasm, and a regiment of about 500 men was enlisted for his service, the first person enrolled being Captain James Dawson, whose mournful fate has been celebrated in the most touching ballad of Shenstone. But the recruits were scarcely equal to half the number of the Highlanders who had deserted in the march from Edinburgh to Carlisle. Liverpool was strongly Hanoverian, and its citizens subscribed 6,000*l.* for equipping a regiment in the service of the Government. In general, however, the prevailing disposition of the people was fear or sullen apathy, and few were disposed to risk anything on either side. The retreat began on December 6. It was skillfully conducted, and in several skirmishes the Scotch were victorious, but their cause was manifestly lost. They regained

¹ See the graphic description of this panic in Fielding's *True Patriot*. It was reported that the Bank saved itself by paying in sixpences.

² They were afterwards replaced by Hessians. See Stanhope's *Hist. of England*, iii. 299.

their country, were joined by a few French and a few Irish in the French service, and succeeded on January 17 in defeating a considerable body of English at Falkirk. This was their last gleam of success. Divisions and desertion speedily thinned their ranks. Enemies overwhelming from their numbers and their discipline were pressing upon them, and on April 16, 1746, the battle of Culloden for ever crushed the prospects of the Stuarts. The Hanoverian army, and the Duke of Cumberland who commanded it, displayed in their triumph a barbarity which recalled the memory of Sedgemoor and of the Bloody Assize, while the courage, the loyalty, and the touching fidelity of the Highlanders to their fallen chief cast a halo of romantic interest around his cause.

The extraordinary incapacity of English commanders, both by land and sea, is one of the most striking facts in the war we are considering. Frederick in Prussia, Prince Charles of Lorraine, General Khevenhuller, and Marshal Traun in Austria, General Gages in the service of Spain, and Marshal Saxe in the service of France, had all exhibited conspicuous talent, and both Noailles and Belleisle, though inferior generals, associated their names with brilliant military episodes; but in the English service mismanagement and languor were general. The battle of Dettingen was truly described as a happy escape rather than a great victory; the army in Flanders can hardly be said to have exhibited any military quality except courage, and the British navy, though it gained some successes, added little to its reputation. The one brilliant exception was the expedition of Anson round Cape Horn, for the purpose of plundering the Spanish merchandise and settlements in the Pacific. It lasted for nearly four years, and though it had little effect except that of inflicting a great amount of private misery, it was conducted with a skill and a courage equal to the most splendid achievements of Hawkins or of Blake. The overwhelming superiority of England upon the sea began, however, gradually to influence the war. The island of Cape Breton, which commanded the mouth of Gulf St. Lawrence, and protected the Newfoundland fisheries, was captured in the June of 1745. In 1747 a French squadron was destroyed by a very superior English fleet off Cape Finisterre. Another was defeated near Belleisle, and in the same

year as many as 644 prizes were taken.¹ The war on the part of the English, however, was most efficiently conducted by means of subsidies, which were enormously multiplied. The direct payment of the Hanoverian troops, against which so fierce a clamour had been raised, was, indeed, for a time suspended, but the Queen of Hungary was induced to take those troops into her pay. In order that she should do so her subsidy was increased, and next year the Government, without producing any considerable disturbance, reverted quietly to the former policy. The war, however, was now evidently drawing to a close, and the treaties of 1745 had greatly restricted its theatre. Austria, freed from apprehension on the side of Prussia and Bavaria, was enabled in 1746 to send 30,000 additional soldiers into Italy, where she speedily recovered almost everything she had lost in the preceding year, and defeated the united French and Spaniards in the battle of Placentia. The death of Philip V., which took place in July, made the Spaniards desirous of peace. The command of their army was taken from General Gages, and their troops were soon after ordered to evacuate Italy. Finale was occupied by the Sardinians. Genoa itself was captured by the Austrians, but rescued by a sudden insurrection of the populace. The project of the invasion of Naples was abandoned, in consequence of the opposition of the King of Sardinia, who had grown jealous of Austria, and feared to see her omnipotent in Italy. Provence, however, was invaded and devastated in the November of 1746, and Antibes besieged; but soon after the revolt of Genoa the Austrians were recalled. A second siege of Genoa was raised by a French army, under Belleisle, which burst through Nice, took town after town in that province, and compelled the Austrians and Sardinians to retire. An attempt was then made to capture Turin by a French corps, commanded by the brother of Belleisle, which endeavoured to force its way through the valley of Susa, but it was defeated with great loss at an entrenchment called the Assietta, the commander was killed, and Marshal Belleisle, who had counselled the expedition, and who intended to co-operate with it, fell back upon Nice.

While the fortune of the war was thus rapidly fluctuating in Italy, in the Netherlands it was uniformly in favour of the French.

¹ Smollett, *Hist. of England*, ch. ix.

The Scotch rebellion, which compelled England for a time to withdraw her troops, confirmed the military ascendancy which Marshal Saxe had already acquired. In 1746 Brussels with its whole garrison was captured, and soon after Mechlin, Louvain, Antwerp, Mons, Charleroi, and Namur succumbed. This last town, on whose fortifications the rival genius of Cohorn and Vauban had been in turn employed, now yielded after a siege of six days. The superiority of the French in numbers and especially in artillery, the genius of Marshal Saxe and the paralysing effect of a great domestic sorrow upon Prince Charles of Lorraine, who commanded the Austrians, made the campaign an uninterrupted triumph for the French, who, soon after the arrival of a British force, defeated the allies in the battle of Roucoux, and became masters of all the Austrian Netherlands, except Limburg and Luxemburg. Next year they invaded the Dutch Republic. Zealand was overrun by troops, 5,000 prisoners were taken in less than a month, and several towns and fortresses were occupied. The Dutch, who found their republican institutions much more adapted for securing their liberty in time of peace than for giving energy and concentration to their forces in time of war, adopted a policy which they had before pursued. During their long conflicts with the Spaniards they had confided the executive power to the House of Orange, but soon after the Peace of Westphalia had given Holland a recognised place among European States, the hereditary Stadtholdership was abolished and purely republican institutions were created. When the country, in 1672, was reduced to the verge of ruin by the invasion of Lewis XIV. it reverted to the former system and retained it for thirty years. It now again recurred to it, and a popular insurrection made the House of Orange hereditary rulers. The war, however, continued to be disastrous. The allies were defeated in a great battle at Lauffeld, near Maestricht, on July 2; Sir John Ligonier, who commanded the English cavalry, and who displayed extraordinary courage in the struggle, was taken prisoner, and the campaign ended with the surprise and capture of the almost impregnable fortress of Bergen-op-Zoom, by Count Lowendahl. It is a curious feature of this campaign that Ligonier, who distinguished himself most highly in the English ranks, was a

French refugee, while of the French commanders Marshal Saxe was by birth a German, and Lowendahl a Dane.

In the meantime the Pelham Government, though unsuccessful abroad, had acquired a complete ascendancy at home. The martial enthusiasm of the country had gone down, and public opinion being gratified by the successive deposition of Walpole and of Carteret, and being no longer stimulated by a powerful Opposition, acquiesced languidly in the course of events. The King for a time chafed bitterly against the yoke. He had been thwarted in his favourite German policy, deprived of the minister who was beyond comparison the most pleasing to him, and compelled to accept others in whom he had no confidence. He despised and disliked Newcastle. He hated Chesterfield, whom he was compelled to admit to office, and he was especially indignant with Pitt, who had described Hanover as 'a beggarly Electorate' and accused its soldiers of cowardice, and whose claims to office Pelham was continually urging. At length, in February 1745-46, while the rebellion was still raging, the perplexed monarch tried to extricate himself from his embarrassments by holding private communications with Bath and Granville. The ministers were apprised of it and at once resigned. The impotence of their rivals was speedily shown, and in forty-eight hours they were obliged to acknowledge themselves incapable of forming a Government. The Pelhams returned to power, but their position was immeasurably strengthened. The few remaining adherents of Bath were driven from office. The King acknowledged with great irritation that it was impossible for him to resist. He refused, indeed, to make Pitt Secretary of War, but sanctioned his appointment to the lucrative office of Joint Vice-Treasurer of Ireland, and soon after to the still more important position of Paymaster of the Forces.

The great work of the Government was the pacification of Europe by the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. Another campaign had actually begun when the preliminaries were signed. Russia had at last been brought into the war, and 30,000 Russian soldiers subsidised by the maritime Powers were on the march to rescue the Netherlands. It was not impossible that this powerful reinforcement might have given a new course to the war. In Italy the balance of success was on the whole in



favour of the Austrians. The commerce of France had been almost annihilated by the English; her resources were nearly exhausted by the extraordinary exertions she had made, and the returning prosperity produced by the long pacific government of Fleury had been completely overcast. On the other hand, Nice and Savoy were still occupied by the French and Spaniards. The French were almost absolute masters of the Austrian Netherlands; the capture of Bergen-op-Zoom and the subsequent investment of Maestricht had rendered the condition of the Dutch Republic almost desperate, and it would probably have been crushed before any succour could arrive. Maria Theresa, it is true, ardently desired the continuance of the war, hoping to obtain in Italy some compensation for the loss of Silesia, and the Duke of Newcastle was inclined, in opposition to his brother, to support her; but she waged war chiefly by the assistance of the subsidies of England, and her ambition was clearly contrary to the general interests of Europe. Like many absolute sovereigns she appears to have been completely indifferent to the misery and desolation she caused, provided only she could leave her empire as extended as she had received it. She was resolved also to throw the defence of the Austrian Netherlands almost exclusively on the maritime Powers, employing the subsidies, which she received on the express condition of keeping a large army in those provinces, mainly in a war of aggression in Italy; and she was bitterly aggrieved because the English, under these circumstances, diminished her remittances. With the exception of the King of Sardinia, however, who saw prospects of pushing his fortunes in Italy, and who was determined, if possible, to avoid restoring the Duchy of Finale, she found little support in her hostility to peace. Spain was now governed by a perfectly unambitious sovereign, who wished for nothing but repose. Holland was reduced to such a condition that peace was her first necessity. England was ruled by an eminently pacific minister; and there was hardly any Opposition to impede his policy. The enormous subsidies which England had been for years scattering through Europe were rapidly adding to her debt and impairing her prosperity, and it was not clear what object she had to gain. The quarter in which the French arms were most successful was precisely that most dangerous to Eng-

land; and except the capture of Cape Breton, and of a number of prizes, she had obtained little or nothing as a compensation for her sacrifices. Even in India, where the small settlements of France appeared almost at the mercy of England, she had encountered reverses. Two Frenchmen of great abilities and enterprise, but separated from each other by a bitter jealousy, then presided over French interests in India. Dupleix, after a brilliant industrial career upon the Ganges, had been made Governor of the French settlement of Pondicherry, while La Bourdonnais, one of the bravest and most skilful seamen France has ever produced, directed affairs in the islands of Bourbon and Mauritius. La Bourdonnais succeeded, in the course of 1746, in repelling an English squadron under Admiral Barnet, and in besieging and taking Madras. As express orders from the ministry at home prohibited him from occupying permanently any conquests that might be made in India, a capitulation was signed by which the town was to be restored on the payment of a specified ransom. It passed, however, under the dominion of Dupleix, who shamefully broke the capitulation and subjected the English to scandalous outrages, while La Bourdonnais returned to France and was soon after, on false charges, flung into the Bastille, where he remained for nearly three years. In 1748 the English made a formidable attempt to retaliate upon the French, and a large force of English and Sepoy troops, under the command of Admiral Boscawen and of Major Lawrence, besieged Pondicherry. It was defended, however, by Dupleix with great energy and genius. The rainy season came on, sickness decimated the besiegers, and the enterprise was at last abandoned.

It was plain that the time for peace had arrived. France had already made overtures, and she showed much moderation, and at this period much disinterestedness in her demands, and the influence of England and Holland at length forced the peace upon Austria and Sardinia, though both were bitterly aggrieved by its conditions. France agreed to restore every conquest she had made during the war, to abandon the cause of the Stuarts, and expel the Pretender from her soil, to demolish, in accordance with earlier treaties, the fortifications of Dunkirk on the side of the sea, while retaining those on the side of the land, and to retire from the contest without acquiring any fresh terri-

tory or any pecuniary compensation. England in like manner restored the few conquests she had made, and submitted to the somewhat humiliating condition of sending hostages to Paris as a security for the restoration of Cape Breton. The right of search, in opposition to which she had originally drawn the sword against Spain, and the debt of 95,000*l.*, which the Convention of 1739 acknowledged to be owing to her by Spain, were not even mentioned in the peace. The disputed boundary between Canada and Nova Scotia, which had been a source of constant difficulty with France, was left altogether undefined. The Assiento treaty for trade with the Spanish colonies was confirmed for the four years it had still to run, but no real compensation was obtained for a war expenditure which is said to have exceeded sixty-four millions,¹ and which had raised the funded and unfunded debt to more than seventy-eight millions.² Of the other Powers, Holland, Genoa, and the little State of Modena retained their territory as before the war, and Genoa remained mistress of the Duchy of Finale, which had been ceded to the King of Sardinia by the Treaty of Worms, and which it had been a main object of his later policy to secure. Austria obtained a recognition of the election of the Emperor, a general guarantee of the Pragmatic Sanction, and the restoration of everything she had lost in the Netherlands, but she gained no additional territory. She was compelled to confirm the cession of Silesia and Glatz to Prussia, to abandon her Italian conquests, and even to cede a considerable part of her former Italian dominions. To the bitter indignation of Maria Theresa, the Duchies of Parma, Placentia, and Guastalla passed to Don Philip of Spain, to revert, however, to their former possessors if Don Philip mounted the Spanish throne, or died without male issue. The King of Sardinia also obtained from Austria the territorial cessions enumerated in the Treaty of Worms, with the important exceptions of Placentia, which passed to Don Philip, and of Finale, which remained with the Genoese. For the loss of these he obtained no compensation. Frederick obtained a general guarantee for the possession of his newly-acquired territory, and a long list of old treaties was formally confirmed.³

¹ Chalmers' *Estimate*, p. 105.

² Coxe's *Pelham*, ii. 77.

³ See on this war Frederick, *Mémoires de mon Temps*, the *Mémoires*

Thus small were the changes effected in Europe by so much bloodshed and treachery, by nearly nine years of wasteful and desolating war. The design of the dismemberment of Austria had failed, but no vexed question had been set at rest. International antipathies and jealousies had been immeasurably increased, and the fearful sufferings and injuries that had been inflicted on the most civilised nations had not even purchased the blessing of an assured peace. Of all the ambitious projects that had been conceived during the war, that of Frederick alone was substantially realised, and France, while endeavouring to weaken one rival, had contributed largely to lay the foundation of the greatness of another.

The definitive peace between England and Holland, and France was signed on October 18, 1748, and the other Powers acceded to it before the close of the year. From this time till the death of Pelham in March 1754, political rivalry in England almost ceased. The Tories were gratified by a few places, and almost every politician of talent and influence was connected with the Government. The Prince of Wales, who kept up some faint semblance of opposition, died in March 1750. Even Lord Granville, sated with ambition and broken by excessive drinking, joined the ministry in 1751, accepting the dignified but uninfluential post of President of the Council. During this period the leading ideas of the policy of Walpole were steadily pursued. Europe being at peace, and the dynasty firmly established by the suppression of the rebellion, the army and navy were both rigorously reduced; 20,000 soldiers and 34,000 sailors and marines were discharged, and some serious distress having in consequence arisen, it was met by the bold and novel expedient of a system of emigration, organised and directed by the Government. As early as 1735 Captain Coram, in a memorial to the Privy Council, had called attention to the deserted and unprotected state of Nova Scotia, to the ease with which the French carried their encroachments into that province, and to the insufficiency of the small British garrison which was collected at Annapolis for its protection. Nova Scotia was justly regarded as the key to North America, equally important in time of war for attacking Canada and

de Valori, Voltaire, *Louis XV.*, and the histories of Smollett, Coxe, Carlyle,

Ranke, Martin, and Lord Stanhope.

for defending New England. The adjacent sea teemed with fish, and its magnificent forests supplied admirable timber for the royal navy. It was accordingly determined to strengthen the colony by encouraging the officers and men lately dismissed from the land and sea service, to settle there with or without their families. To every private was offered a free passage, a free maintenance for twelve months, the fee simple of fifty acres of land, an additional grant of ten acres for every member of his family, and an immunity from taxation for ten years. The officers received still larger grants, varying according to their rank. The scheme was eminently successful. About 4,000 men, many of them with their families, embraced the Government offers. The expedition sailed in May under the command of Colonel Cornwallis, and with the protection of two regiments. It was joined on its arrival by an additional force, which had lately been withdrawn from Cape Breton, and soon after the new colonists founded the important town of Halifax, which derived its name from Lord Halifax, who, as President of the Board of Trade, was a principal person in organising the expedition, and which soon became the capital of a flourishing colony.¹

Not less successful was the financial policy of Pelham. The measures which were carried in 1717 and 1727 for reducing the interest of the debt have been already recounted, and another effort in the same direction had been made by Sir John Barnard in 1737. He had proposed to reduce gradually that portion of the debt which bore four per cent. interest to three per cent., enabling the Government to borrow money at the lower rate in order to pay off those creditors, who refused to accept the reduction. As the three per cents. were at this time at a premium, and as it was part of the scheme of Sir John Barnard that the contributors to the new loan should be guaranteed from payment of any part of the principal for fourteen years, there is not much doubt that the plan in its essential features could have been carried out, nor yet that it would have been very beneficial to the nation. It was, however, exceedingly unpopular. The great companies who contributed so powerfully to support the ministry of Walpole were opposed to it. A deep impression was made throughout the country by a

¹ Smollett's *Hist. of England*. Coxe's *Life of Pelham*.

statement that a very large proportion of the 4 per cent. funds were in the possession of widows and orphans and trustees, who would suffer greatly by the reduction. The growing complications with Spain made it probable that the Government would soon be compelled to have recourse to new loans, and especially important that it should take no step that could alienate the moneyed classes, or injure, however unjustly, the credit of the country. Besides this, the Government was now too weak to bear the strain of additional unpopularity, and Sir John Barnard, who originated the measure, was a prominent member of the Opposition. Under these circumstances Walpole, after some hesitation, placed himself in opposition to the Bill. He showed even more than his usual financial knowledge in pointing out the weak points in its details, and he succeeded without difficulty in defeating it.¹ The question of how far he was justified in this course by the special political circumstances of the time is one which can hardly be answered without a more minute knowledge of the dispositions of Members of Parliament and of the currents of feeling in the country than it is now possible to attain. The strong ministry of the Pelhams, however, was able to carry out a somewhat similar measure, in spite of the strenuous opposition both of the Bank and of the East India Company, in 1749. By far the larger part of the national debt was at 4 per cent., a part was at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., and another part at 3 per cent. As the 3 per cents. were selling at par, and the $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cents above par,² the time had evidently come when a reduction was feasible. Availing himself largely of the assistance, without absolutely adopting the plan, of Sir J. Barnard, Pelham introduced and carried a scheme by which such holders of 4 per cent. stock as consented by February 28, 1749–50, to accept the arrangement were to receive $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest from December 1750 to December 1757, with a security that no part of their stock should be redeemed before the latter date except what

¹ Compare Coxe's *Life of Walpole*, ch. xlvii.; Sinclair's *Hist. of the Revenue*, i. 500–502; and Lord Hervey's *Memoirs*, ii. 325–332. It is remarkable that this was almost the only question on which Henry Pelham ever voted against Walpole.

² Coxe states that an individual

was said at this time to have purchased 3 per cents. at 109 $\frac{1}{4}$. This, however, must have been quite an isolated transaction, and the ordinary price appears to have been from par to 101. Coxe's *Pelham*, ii. 77–85. Sinclair's *Hist. of the Revenue*, i. 504–507.

was due to the East India Company. After December 1757 the interest was to sink to 3 per cent. till reduced by the Government, while those who refused the arrangement were to be paid off by a loan raised at 3 per cent. The offer does not appear very tempting, but the normal rate of interest was then so low, commercial investments were so few, and the attraction of the Government security was so great, that the majority of holders accepted it, and when February arrived only eighteen or nineteen millions had not been brought under the arrangement. The success, of course, increased its popularity, and Pelham accordingly renewed the offer, though on less favourable conditions, for in the case of these second subscribers the $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest was to be exchanged for 3 per cent. interest in December 1755. The result of this prolongation was, that not much more than 3 millions remained excluded, and the holders of this stock were paid off in 1751. For seven years after 1750 an annual saving was thus made of 288,517*l.*, and after 1757 it amounted in the whole to 577,034*l.*, which was to be applied to the reduction of the national debt. The success of this measure reflected great credit on the Government, and it furnished an extremely remarkable proof of how prosperous and wealthy the country remained at the close of a long and exhausting war. In 1752 Pelham completed his financial reforms by a measure simplifying and consolidating the different branches of the national debt, and thus removing a cause of much perplexity and some expense both to the public and to individuals.¹

It was in this department of legislation that the Governments of the Walpole and Pelham period were most successful. In very few periods in English political history was the commercial element more conspicuous in administration. The prevailing spirit of the debates was of a kind we should rather have expected in a middle-class Parliament than in a Parliament consisting in a very large measure of the nominees of great families. A competition of economy reigned in all parties. The questions which excited most interest were chiefly financial and commercial ones. The increase of the national debt, the

¹ Coxe's *Pelham*, Sinclair's *Hist. of the Revenue*, Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*.

possibility and propriety of reducing its interest, the advantages of a sinking fund, the policy of encouraging trade by bounties and protective duties, the evils of excise, the reduction of the land-tax, the burden of Continental subsidies, were among the topics which produced the most vehement and the most powerful debates. Burke, in a letter which he wrote in 1752 describing the House of Commons during the Pelham administration, summed up the requirements of a Member of Parliament in one pregnant sentence, which would hardly have been true of the next generation: 'A man, after all, would do more by figures of arithmetic than by figures of rhetoric.'¹ Even the religious questions which produced most excitement throughout the country, the naturalisation of Jews and the naturalisation of foreign Protestants, were argued chiefly in Parliament upon commercial grounds. The question in home politics, however, which excited most interest in the nation was of a different kind, and it was one which, for very obvious reasons, Parliament desired as much as possible to avoid. It was the extreme corruption of Parliament itself, its subserviency to the influence of the Executive, and the danger of its becoming in time rather the oppressor than the representative of the people.

This danger had been steadily growing since the Revolution, and it had reached such a point that there were many who imagined that the country had gained little by exchanging an arbitrary King for a corrupt and often a tyrannical Parliament. The extraordinary inequalities of the constituencies had long attracted attention. Cromwell had for a time remedied the evil by a bold measure, sweeping away the rotten boroughs, granting members to the greatest unrepresented towns, strengthening the county representation, and at the same time summoning Irish and Scotch Members to the Parliament in London; but although Clarendon described this as 'a warrantable alteration, and fit to be made in better times,' the old state of things returned with the Restoration. The Revolution had been mainly a conflict between the Crown and the Parliament, and its effect had been greatly to increase the authority of the latter; but, with the exception of the Triennial Bill, nothing of much real value had been done to make it

¹ Prior's *Life of Burke*, i. 38.

a more faithful representation of the people. Locke, in a memorable passage, complained that 'the bare name of a town, of which there remains not so much as the ruins, where scarce so much housing as a sheepcot or more inhabitants than a shepherd is to be found, sends as many representatives to the grand Assembly of lawmakers, as a whole county, numerous in people and powerful in riches'; but he could discover no safe remedy for the evil.¹ Defoe² and the Speaker Onslow³ both desired an excision of the rotten boroughs, but there was no general movement in this direction, and the party which was naturally most inclined to change shrank from a reform which might have been fatal to the Government of the Revolution. The Scotch union aggravated the evil by increasing the number of sham boroughs and of subservient Members. If the anomalies were not quite so great as they became after the sudden growth of the manufacturing towns in the closing years of the eighteenth century, and in the early years of the nineteenth century, the Parliament was at least much more arbitrary and corrupt. Only a fraction of its Members were elected by considerable and independent constituencies. The enormous expense of the county elections, where the poll might be kept open for forty days, kept these seats almost exclusively in the hands of a few families, while many small boroughs were in the possession of rich noblemen, or were notoriously offered for sale. The Government, by the proprietary rights of the Crown over the Cornish boroughs, by the votes of its numerous excise or revenue officers, by direct purchase, or by bestowing places or peerages on the proprietors, exercised an absolute authority over many seats,⁴ and its means of influencing the assembled Parliament were so great that it is difficult to understand how, in the corrupt moral atmosphere that was prevalent, it was possible to resist it. The

¹ *On Civil Government*, bk. ii. ch. xiii.

² *Tour in England*.

³ Note to Burnet's *Own Times*, ii. 458.

⁴ Thus in a debate in 1743, Chesterfield said: 'Many of our boroughs are now so much the creatures of the Crown that they are generally called Court boroughs, and very properly they are called so. For our ministers for the time being

have always the nomination of their representatives, and make such an arbitrary use of it that they often order them to choose gentlemen whom they never saw, nor heard of, perhaps, till they saw their names on the minister's order for choosing them. This order they always punctually obey, and would, I believe, obey it, were the person named in it the minister's footman.'—*Parl. Hist.* xiii. 90.

legal and ecclesiastical patronage of the Crown was mainly employed in supporting a parliamentary influence. Great sums of secret service money were usually expended in direct bribery, and places and pensions were multiplied to such an extent that it is on record that out of 550 Members there were in the first Parliament of George I. no less than 271, in the first Parliament of George II. no less than 257, holding offices, pensions, or sinecures.¹ And the body which was thus constituted was rapidly becoming supreme in the State. The control of the purse was a prerogative which naturally would make it so; but during the triennial period the frequency of elections made the Members to a great extent subservient to the people who elected, or to the noblemen who nominated them, and gave each Parliament scarcely time to acquire much self-confidence, fixity of purpose, or consistency of organisation. The Septennial Act and the presence of Walpole in the House of Commons during the whole of his long ministry, gradually made that body the undoubted centre of authority.² In the reign of Anne it was thought quite natural that Harley and St. John should accept peerages in the very zenith of their careers. In the reign of George II., Walpole only accepted a title in the hour of defeat, and Pulteney, by taking a similar step, gave a death-blow to his political influence.

It is obvious that a body such as this might become in the highest degree dangerous to the liberties it was supposed to protect, and it showed itself in many respects eminently arbitrary and encroaching. The cases of Fenwick and Bernardi were sufficiently alarming instances of the assumption by the Legislature of judicial functions, but in these cases at least all the three branches had concurred. In other cases, however, the lower House acted alone. One of the rights of the subject specially guaranteed by the Bill of Rights was that of petition, but it was not then foreseen that the House of Commons might prove as hostile to it as the King. The case of the Kentish petitioners, however, clearly showed the reality of this danger.

¹ Sir E. May's *Const. Hist.* i. 317.

² Onslow has left on record his opinion that the Septennial Act formed 'the era of the emancipation

of the Commons from its former dependence on the Crown and on the House of Lords.'—Coxe's *Life of Walpole*, i. 75.

In 1701, when a Tory House of Commons, in bitter opposition to the King and to the House of Lords, had impeached Somers, delayed the supplies, and thwarted every attempt to put the country in a state of security, a firm, but perfectly temperate and respectful petition to the House was signed by the grand jury and other freeholders of Kent recalling the great services of William, and imploring the House to turn its loyal addresses into Bills of supply, and to enable the King to assist his allies before it was too late. A more strictly constitutional proceeding could hardly be imagined, but because this petition reflected on the policy of the majority, the House voted it scandalous, insolent, and seditious, ordered the five gentlemen who presented it into custody, and kept them imprisoned for two months, till they were released by the prorogation. Nor was this all. At the ensuing dissolution Mr. Thomas Colepepper, who had been one of the five, stood for Maidstone, but was defeated by two votes. He petitioned the new House of Commons for the seat, but it at once condemned him as guilty of corruption, and proceeded to show the spirit in which it had tried the case by reviving the question of the Kentish petition, passing a new resolution to the effect that the petitioner had been guilty of 'scandalous, villanous, and groundless reflections upon the late House of Commons,' directing the Attorney-General to prosecute him for that offence, and committing him to Newgate, where he remained until he had made a formal apology.¹

No less scandalous, in a different way, was the case of the Aylesbury election. In 1703 an elector at Aylesbury, being denied his right to vote at an election, carried his case before the law courts. At the assizes his right to vote was affirmed and damages were given against those who had denied it; but the Queen's Bench quashed the proceedings, the majority of the Judges maintaining, in opposition to Chief Justice Holt, the very dangerous doctrine that the House of Commons alone had jurisdiction in all cases relating to elections. The case was then carried before the House of Lords as the highest judicial tribunal in the realm. By a large majority, it reversed the judgment of the Queen's Bench, and decided that

¹ *Parl. Hist.* vol. v.; Somers, *Tracts*, xi. 242. Hallam's *Const. Hist.* vol. iii.

the franchise being a right conferred by law, upon certain specified conditions, the law courts had the power of determining how far those conditions were fulfilled. But far from acquiescing in this judicial sentence, the House of Commons at once passed resolutions defying it, threatened severe punishment against all who carried questions of disputed votes into the law courts, and against all lawyers who assisted them, and actually threw four persons into Newgate for taking measures in accordance with the formal judgment of the supreme law court of the nation. The dispute between the two Houses ran so high that it was found necessary to end it by a prorogation.¹

In many other ways the same spirit was shown. For a considerable time, and especially during the reign of Anne, the House of Commons assumed a regular censorship over the press. I have already referred to the number of acts of severity against public writers in that reign, and it is one of the worst features connected with them that in numerous cases they were simply party measures effected by the mere motion of the House of Commons. Thus Steele was expelled for political libels, and Asgill on the pretext of an absurd book 'On the Possibility of Avoiding Death.' Defoe was prosecuted by the House of Commons for his 'Shortest Way with Dissenters.' Tutchin, by order of the House, was whipped by the hangman. Wellwood, the editor of the 'Mercurius Rusticus,' Dyer, the editor of the well-known 'News Letter,' and Fogg, the proprietor of 'Mist's Journal,' were compelled to express on their knees their contrition to the House. Whitehead's poem called 'Manners' was voted a libel. The sermon of Binckes, comparing the sufferings of Charles I. to those of Christ, a treatise by a physician named Coward, asserting the material nature of the soul, the sermons of Fleetwood, the bishop of St. Asaph's, were all, by order of the House, burnt by the hangman. Occasionally, as in the case of Hoadly, the House passed resolutions of approval.² Of the value of its approbation and of its censure we have a curious illustration in an incident which took place long after the period I am now describing. In 1772 Dean Nowell was

¹ *Parl. Hist.* vi.; *State Trials*,
xiv. Hallam's *Const. Hist.* vol. iii.

² Hunt's *Fourth Estate*. Andrew's

Hist. of British Journalism. Towns-
end's *Hist. of the House of Commons*,
ii. 194-196.

appointed to preach the customary sermon before the House on the anniversary of the Restoration. Only three or four Members were present, and they are said to have been asleep during the sermon, but the House, as usual, passed, unanimously, a vote of thanks to the preacher, and in terms of high eulogy ordered the sermon to be printed. When it appeared it was found that the preacher, being an extreme Tory, had availed himself of the occasion to denounce in the strongest language the Puritans and their principles, to extol the royal martyr in terms of which it can be only said that they were a faithful echo of the Church service for the day, and to urge that the qualities of Charles I. were very accurately reproduced in the reigning sovereign. The House of Commons, which was at this time strongly Whig, was both exasperated and perplexed. It was felt that it would be scarcely becoming to condemn to the flames a sermon which had been printed by its express order and honoured by its thanks, and it accordingly contented itself with ordering, without a division, that its vote of thanks should be expunged.¹

There were many other prerogatives claimed by the House of Commons which savoured largely of despotism. The term privilege comprised an extended and ill-defined domain of power external to the law. The House claimed the right of imprisoning men to the end of the current session by its sole authority, and its victims could be neither bailed nor released by the law courts.² It even claimed for itself collectively, and for each of its Members in his parliamentary capacity, a complete freedom from hostile criticism.³ Its Members, though they were presumed by the property qualification to be men of means, enjoyed an immunity from all actions of law and suits of equity, and were thus able to set their creditors at defiance, and the same privilege, till the reign of George III., was ex-

¹ *Parl. Hist.* xvii. 311-318. Gibbon's *Miscellaneous Works*, ii. p. 78.

² Thus in 1699 the Commons resolved, 'That to assert that the House of Commons have no power of commitment but of their own members tends to the subversion of the constitution of the House of Commons.'

³ 'That to print or publish any books or libels reflecting upon the proceedings of the House of Commons or of any Member thereof, for or relating to his service therein, is a high violation of the rights and privileges of the House of Commons.' Burgh's *Political Disquisitions*, i. 208.

tended to their servants.¹ An immense amount of fraud, violence, and oppression was thus sheltered from punishment, and the privilege appeared peculiarly odious at a time when the ascendancy of law was in other departments becoming more complete. Almost every injury in word or act done to a Member of Parliament was, during the reign of George II., voted a breach of privilege, and thus brought under the immediate and often vindictive jurisdiction of the House. Among the offences thus characterised were shooting the rabbits of one Member, poaching on the fishponds of another, injuring the trees of a third, and stealing the coal of a fourth.²

The abuse of the judicial functions that were properly and reasonably assumed by the House was scandalous and notorious. Even the occasional expulsions of Members for corruption were often themselves the corrupt acts of a corrupt majority, perfectly indifferent to the evidence before them, and intent only on driving out an opponent. The decisions on disputed elections were something more than a scandal. They threatened to subvert the whole theory of representation. The trial of disputed elections had been originally committed to select committees specially nominated, and afterwards to a single body called the Committee of Privileges and Elections, chosen by the House, and composed, for the most part, of Privy Counsellors and eminent lawyers. In 1672, however, it was delegated to an open committee, in which all who came were allowed to have voices, and afterwards elections were tried at the bar of the House, and decided by a general vote.³ This vote was soon openly and almost invariably given through party motives. It is impossible to conceive a more grotesque travesty of a judicial proceeding than was habitually exhibited on these occasions, when private friends of each candidate and the members of the rival parties mustered their forces to vote entirely irrespectively of the merits of the case, when, the farce of hearing evidence having been gone through in an empty

¹ See much curious information about these abuses of privilege in Burgh's *Political Disquisitions; or, an Inquiry into Public Errors and Abuses* (Lond. 1774), i. pp. 205-235.

² Lord Stanhope's *Hist. of England*,

iv. 20-21. See, too, the chapters on Parliamentary Privilege in Hallam and Townsend.

³ Sir E. May's *Const. Hist.* i. 307-308.

House, the Members, who had been waiting without, streamed in, often half intoxicated, to the division, and when the plainest and most incontestable testimony was set aside without scruple if it clashed with the party interests of the majority.¹ The evil had already become apparent in the latter days of William,² but some regard for appearances seems then to have been observed, and the partiality was shown chiefly in the very different degrees of stringency with which corruption was judged in the case of friend and foe. Soon, however, all shame was cast aside. In the Tory parliament of 1702, the controverted elections, in the words of Burnet, 'were judged in favour of Tories with such a barefaced partiality, that it showed the party was resolved on everything that might serve their ends.'³ When the Whigs triumphed in 1705 they exhibited the same spirit, and in the few cases in which they did not decide in favour of the Whig candidate the result was ascribed exclusively to some private animosity.⁴ Speaker Onslow, who for thirty-three years presided over the House with great dignity and integrity, declared that it had 'really come to be deemed by many a piece of virtue and honour to do injustice in these cases. "The right is in the friend and not in the cause" is almost avowed, and he is laughed at by the leaders of parties who has scruples upon it,' 'and yet,' he adds, 'we should not bear this a month in any other judicature in the kingdom, in any other object of jurisdiction, or—in this; but we do it ourselves and that sanctifies it, and the guilt is lost in the number of the guilty and the support of the party without doors.'⁵ In the Parliament which met in 1728 there were nearly seventy election petitions to be tried, and Lord Hervey has left us an account of how the House discharged its functions. 'I believe,' he says, 'the manifest injustice and glaring violation of all truth in the decisions of this Parliament surpass even the most flagrant and infamous instances of any of their predecessors. They voted in one case forty more than ninety; in another they cut off the votes of about seven towns, and some thousand voters, who had not only been determined to have voices by former Committees of Elections, but

¹ *Parl. Hist.* xvii. 1064.

² Burnet's *Own Times*, ii. 162, 259.

³ *Ibid.* p. 334.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 429.

⁵ Onslow's note in *Burnet*, ii. 410.

had had their right of voting confirmed to them by the express words of an Act of Parliament and the authority of the whole Legislature. There was a string of these equitable determinations in about half a dozen instances, so unwarrantable and indefensible that people grew ashamed of pretending to talk of right and wrong, laughed at that for which they ought to have blushed, and declared that in elections they never considered the cause but the men, nor ever voted according to justice and right, but from solicitation and favour.¹ The true character of these professedly judicial proceedings was so clearly recognised that a defeat in a division about the Chippenham election was the immediate cause of the resignation of Walpole, and the votes of the 'King's friends' against the Government in election cases formed, in the beginning of the next reign, one of the great complaints of Rockingham. A small majority, consisting mainly of the representatives of rotten boroughs, could thus easily convert itself into a large one, and override the plainest wishes of constituencies; and it is no exaggeration to say that a considerable proportion of the Members of the House of Commons owed their seats, not to the electors, but to the House itself.

Next to the existence of open constituencies, and a fair mode of election, the best security a nation can possess for the fidelity of its representatives is to be found in the system of parliamentary reporting. But this also was wanting. The theory of the statesmen of the first half of the eighteenth century was that the electors had no right to know the proceedings of their representatives, and it was only after a long and dangerous struggle, which was not terminated till the reign of George III., that the right of printing debates was virtually conceded. A few fragmentary reports, as early as the reign of Elizabeth, have come down to us; but the first systematic reporting dates from the Long Parliament, which in 1641 permitted it in a certain specified form. The reports appeared under the title of 'Diurnal Occurrences of Parliament,' and continued until the Restoration; but all unlicensed reporting was stringently forbidden, and the House even expelled and imprisoned in the Tower one of its

¹ Lord Hervey's *Memoirs*, i. 102, *George II.*, ii. 14, *Parl. Hist.* vi. 49, 103. See, too, Walpole's *Memoirs of* 50.

Members, Sir E. Dering, for printing, without permission, a collection of his own speeches. The secrecy of debate was originally intended as a protection from the King, but it was soon valued as a shelter from the supervision of the constituencies. At the Restoration all reporting was forbidden, though the votes and proceedings of the House were printed by direction of the Speaker, and from this time till the Revolution only a few relics of parliamentary debates were preserved. Andrew Marvell, the friend of Milton, and his assistant, as Secretary to Cromwell, sent regular reports to his constituents, from 1660 to 1678. Locke, at the suggestion of Shaftesbury, wrote a report of a debate which took place in the House of Lords in 1675, and he printed it under the title of 'A Letter from a Person of Quality to his Friend,' but, by order of the Privy Council, it was burnt by the hangman. Shaftesbury himself wrote some reports. Anchitell Grey, a Member for Derby, was accustomed for many years to take notes of the debates, which were published in 1769, and which form one of our most important sources of information about the period immediately following the Revolution. Occasionally a newsletter published an outline of what had occurred, but this was done in direct defiance of the resolutions of the House, and was often followed by a speedy punishment. In the latter years of Anne, however, the circle of political interests had very widely extended, and, to meet the demand, short summaries of parliamentary debates, compiled from recollections, began to appear every month in Boyer's 'Political State of Great Britain,' and in the following reign in the 'Historical Register.' Cave, who was one of the most enterprising booksellers of the eighteenth century, perceived the great popularity likely to be derived from such reports, and he showed great resolution in procuring them. In 1728 he was brought before the House of Commons, confined for several days, and obliged to apologise for having furnished his friend Robert Raikes with minutes of its proceedings for the use of the 'Gloucester Journal,' and at the same time the House passed a strong resolution, declaring such reports a breach of privilege. They were too popular, however, to be put down, and in the next year Raikes again incurred the censure of the House for the same offence. In 1731 Cave started the

‘Gentleman’s Magazine,’ which was soon followed by its rival the ‘London Magazine,’ and in 1736 Cave began to make parliamentary reports a prominent feature of his periodical. He was accustomed to obtain entrance to the gallery of the House with a friend or two, to take down secretly the names of the speakers and the drift of their arguments, and then to repair at once to a neighbouring coffee-house, where, from the united recollections of the party, a rude report was compiled, which was afterwards elaborated and adorned by a more skilful writer. This latter function was at first fulfilled by a now forgotten historian named Guthrie. From November 1740 to February 1742-43 it was discharged by Dr. Johnson, and afterwards by Hawkesworth, the well-known editor of ‘Travels’ and biographer of Swift. Reports compiled in a somewhat similar manner, by a Scotch Presbyterian minister, named Gordon, appeared in the ‘London Magazine,’ and they speedily spread into different newspapers. To elude, if possible, the severity of the House, they only appeared during the recess, and only the first and last letters of the names of the speakers were given.¹

The subject was brought before the House of Commons by the Speaker Onslow, in April 1738, and a debate ensued, of which a full report has been preserved. It is remarkable that the only speaker who adopted what we should now regard as the constitutional view of the subject was the Tory leader, Sir W. Windham. He concurred, indeed, in the condemnation of the reports that were appearing, but only on the ground of their frequent inaccuracy, and took occasion to say that ‘he had indeed seen many speeches that were fairly and accurately taken; that no gentleman, where that is the case, ought to be ashamed that the world should know every word he speaks in this House,’ ‘that the public might have a right to know somewhat more of the proceedings of the House than what appears from the votes,’ and that if he were sure that the sentiments of gentlemen were not misrepresented, he ‘would be against coming to any resolution that would deprive them of a knowledge that is so necessary for their being able to judge of the merits of their representatives.’

¹ See Dr. Johnson’s *Life of Cave*; 422; and the History of Reporting, Nichols’ *Literary Anecdotes*, v. 1-18; in Hunt’s *Fourth Estate*, and Andrews’ May’s *Constitutional History*, i. 421-*Hist. of British Journalism*.

The language, however, of the other speakers was much more unqualified. 'If we do not put a speedy stop to this practice,' said Winnington, 'it will be looked upon without doors that we have no power to do it. . . . You will have every word that is spoken here misrepresented by fellows who thrust themselves into our gallery. You will have the speeches of this House every day printed, even during your Session, and we shall be looked upon as the most contemptible assembly on the face of the earth.' 'It is absolutely necessary,' said Pulteney, 'a stop should be put to the practice which has been so justly complained of. I think no appeals should be made to the public with regard to what is said in this assembly, and to print or publish the speeches of gentlemen in this House, even though they were not misrepresented, looks very like making them accountable without doors for what they say within.' Walpole was equally unqualified in his condemnation, but he dwelt exclusively on the inaccuracy and dishonesty of the reports, which were, no doubt, very great, and were a natural consequence of the way in which they were taken. 'I have read debates,' he said, 'in which I have been made to speak the very reverse of what I meant. I have read others of them wherein all the wit, the learning, and the argument has been thrown into one side, and on the other nothing but what was low, mean, and ridiculous, and yet when it comes to the question, the division has gone against the side which upon the face of the debate had reason and justice to support it.' 'You have punished some persons for forging the names of gentlemen on the backs of letters; but this is a forgery of a worse kind, for it misrepresents the sense of Parliament, and imposes on the understanding of the whole nation.' The result of the debate was a unanimous resolution 'that it is a high indignity to, and a notorious breach of the privileges of this House' to print the debates or other proceedings of the House 'as well during the recess as the sitting of Parliament, and that this House will proceed with the utmost severity against such offenders.'¹

The threat was only partially effectual. Cave continued the publication in a new form, as 'Debates in the Senate of Great Lilliput,' and substituted extravagant fancy names for the

¹ *Parl. Hist.* x. pp. 800-811. Coxe's *Life of Walpole*, ch. 50.

initials of the speakers. In the 'London Magazine,' debates 'of the Political Club' appeared, and the affairs of the nation were discussed under a transparent disguise by personages in Roman history. Meagre, inaccurate, and often obscure, as these reports necessarily were, they were still very popular; but there was no small risk in producing them. Careful disguise was necessary, and Cave thought it henceforth advisable to print under the name of his nephew. In 1747 the editors of both magazines were summoned before the House of Lords for having given an account of Lord Lovat's trial, and they only escaped imprisonment by an abject apology. In 1752 Cave returned to the former plan of inserting initials of the speakers, and he does not appear to have been again molested during the short remainder of his life.¹ Many other printers, however, were summoned before the battle was finally won. So jealous was the House of everything that could enable the constituencies to keep a watchful eye upon their representatives, that it was only in the eighteenth century that the votes of the House were printed without formal permission,² while the names of the Members who had voted were wholly concealed. In 1696 the publication of the names of a minority was voted a breach of privilege 'destructive to the freedom and liberties of Parliament.' During almost the whole of the eighteenth century the publication of division lists was a rare and exceptional thing, due to the exertions of individual Members, and it was not until 1836 that it was undertaken by the House itself.³

The system of Parliamentary reporting contributed, perhaps, more than any other influence to mitigate the glaring corruption of Parliament, for although several laws dealing directly with

¹ He died Jan. 1754.

² In the discussion on the publication of debates, to which I have just referred, Pulteney is reported to have said: 'I remember the time when this House was so jealous, so cautious of doing anything that might look like an appeal to their constituents, that not even the votes were printed without leave. A gentleman every day rose in his place and desired the Chair to ask leave of the House that their votes for that day should be printed. How this custom came to be

dropped I cannot so well account for, but I think it high time for us to prevent any further encroachment upon our privileges.'—*Parl. Hist.* x. 806–807. In 1703, during the discussions of the House of Commons with the Lords, the former passed a resolution 'that the votes of the House should not be printed, and that this might be a standing order.' Boyer's *Queen Anne*, p. 47.

³ May's *Constitutional Hist.* i. 439–441.

the evil were enacted in obedience to the clamour out-of-doors, they were allowed to a very large extent to remain inoperative. It was useless to arraign offenders before a tribunal of accomplices, and as long as the Executive and the majority in Parliament conspired to practise and to shelter corruption, laws against it were a dead letter. Bribery at elections had been condemned by a law of William III.,¹ and another measure of great stringency was carried against it in 1729. By this law any elector might be compelled on demand to take an oath swearing that he had received no bribe to influence his vote, and any person who was convicted of either giving or receiving a bribe at elections was deprived for ever of the franchise and fined 500*l.* unless he purchased indemnity by discovering another offender of the same kind.² Some measures had also been taken to limit the number of placemen and pensioners in Parliament. In 1692 a Bill for expelling all who accepted places after a certain date from the House of Commons passed that House, but was rejected in the Lords. In 1693, after undergoing material alterations it was carried through both Houses, but vetoed by the Crown. In 1694 a new Place Bill was introduced, but this time it was defeated in the Commons. A clause of the Act of Settlement, however, carried out the principle in the most rigid form, providing that after the accession of the House of Hanover no person who held any office, place of profit, or pension from the King should have a seat in the House of Commons, but this clause, which would have banished the ministers from the popular branch of the Legislature, never came into operation. It was repealed in 1706, while Anne was still on the throne, and replaced by a law providing that every Member of the House of Commons who accepted office under the Crown should be compelled to vacate his seat and could only sit after re-election. Occasionally, when a new class of offices was created, its members were incapacitated by law from sitting in the House of Commons. Thus in 1694, when certain duties on salt, beer, and other liquors were granted for the purpose of carrying on the war with France, it was enacted that no Member of the House of Commons might be concerned in farming, collecting, or

¹ 7 William III. c. 4.

² George II. c. 24. See *Parl. Hist.*

xii. 648. *Ralph's Use and Abuse of Parliaments*, ii. 382-384.

managing any of the sums granted to his Majesty by this Act 'except the Commissioners of the Treasury, Customs, and Excise, not exceeding the present number in each office, and the Commissioners of the land tax.' In 1700 all Commissioners and other officers of the Customs were disqualified from sitting in the House, and the Act of 1706 extended the disability to all offices created after that date, limited the number of Commissioners appointed to execute any office, and excluded all who held pensions from the Crown during pleasure. Under George I. this exclusion was extended to those who held pensions during a term of years. Had these laws been enforced, they would have done very much to purify Parliament, but the pension bills at least, were treated with complete contempt. The pensions were secret. The Government refused all information concerning them. A Bill was three times brought forward compelling every Member to swear that he was not in receipt of such a pension, and that if he accepted one he would within fourteen days disclose it to the House, but by the influence of Walpole it was three times defeated. A similar fate during the Walpole administration befell Bills for restricting the number of placemen in the House, but in the great outburst of popular indignation that followed his downfall one measure of this kind was carried. The Place Bill of 1743 excluded a certain number of inferior placeholders from Parliament, and in some degree mitigated the evil.¹ It was, however, the only step that was taken. Pelham would, probably, never have corrupted Parliament had he found it pure,² but he inherited a system of corruption, and he bequeathed it almost intact to his successors.

The efforts that were made to shorten the duration of Parliament were still less successful. We have already seen the chief reasons that induced the Whig party to pass the Septennial Act, and some of the results which it produced. Its beneficial effect in repressing disorder and immorality, in giving a new

¹ See Hallam's *Const. Hist.* ch. xv. and xvi. Fischel on the *English Constitution*, p. 433.

² Horace Walpole, who hated Pelham, and always put the worst colouring on his acts, admitted this. He says: 'I believe Mr. Pelham would never have wet his finger in

corruption if Sir R. Walpole had not dipped up to the elbow; but as he did dip, and as Mr. Pelham was persuaded that it was as necessary for him to be minister as it was for Sir R. Walpole, he plunged as deep.'—Horace Walpole's *Memoirs of George II.* i. 235.

stability to English policy, a new strength to the dynasty, and a new authority to the House of Commons, can never be forgotten. It was accompanied, however, by no measure of parliamentary reform, and it had the inevitable effect of greatly increasing corruption both at elections and in the House. The price of seats at once rose when their tenure was prolonged, and the change in the class of candidates which had been in progress since the Revolution was greatly accelerated. In most rural constituencies it was impossible, when elections were very frequent, for any stranger to compete with the steady influence of the resident landlord. When, however, elections became comparatively rare, money became in many districts more powerful than influence. The value of the prize being enhanced, men were prepared to give more to obtain it; and rich merchants, coming down to constituencies where they were perfect strangers, were able, by the expenditure of large sums at long intervals, to wrest the representation from the resident gentry. At the same time, the means of corruption at the disposal of the Government were enormously increased. It was a common thing for a minister to endeavour to buy the vote of a new Member by the offer of a pension. Under the old system the Member knew that in three years he would be called to account by his constituents, and might lose both his pension and his seat. By the Septennial Act the value of the bribe was more than doubled, for its enjoyment was virtually secured for seven years.

To these arguments it was added that the Septennial Act had a social influence which was far from beneficial. Then as now Parliament contributed largely to set the tone of manners. Under the former system a landlord who aspired to a political position found an almost constant residence on his estate indispensable. When Parliaments became less frequent the necessity grew less stringent, and it was noticed as a consequence of the Septennial Act that country gentlemen were accustomed to spend much more of their time and fortune than formerly in the metropolis.

There can, however, I think, be little doubt that the Government were right in maintaining the Septennial Act, and that a return to the system which had rendered English politics so

anarchical in the closing years of the seventeenth and the opening years of the eighteenth century would have produced more evils than it could have cured. It is a remarkable illustration of the changes that may pass over party warfare, that the Republican Milton at one time advocated the appointment of Members for life;¹ that the Tory party under Walpole and Pelham advocated triennial and even annual Parliaments, which afterwards became the watchwords of the most extreme radicals; that the Whigs, taking their stand upon the Septennial Act, contended against the Tories for the greater duration of Parliament, and that a reform which was demanded as of capital importance by the Tories under George I. and George II., and by the Radicals in the succeeding reigns, has at present scarcely a champion in England. It must, however, be added that recent reforms have considerably diminished the average duration of Parliaments, and that since the Septennial Act there had been only one instance of a premature dissolution² before 1784. In the early part of the eighteenth century the proposed reduction of the duration of Parliaments was very popular throughout the country. It was supported with great power by Sir W. Windham in 1734, and in 1745 a motion for annual Parliaments was only defeated by 145 to 113.

It is not easy to understand how a Parliament so thoroughly vicious in its constitution, so narrow, corrupt, and often despotic in its tendencies as that which I have described, should have proved itself, in any degree, a faithful guardian of English liberty, or should have produced so large an amount of wise, temperate, and tolerant legislation as it unquestionably did. Reasoning from its constitution and from some of its acts, we might have supposed that it would be wholly inaccessible to public opinion, and would have established a system of the most absolute and most ignoble tyranny; yet no one who candidly considers the general tenour of English administration during the long period of Whig ascendancy in the eighteenth century can question that Voltaire and Montesquieu were correct in describing it as greatly superior to the chief governments of the Continent. In truth the merits of a government depend much more upon

¹ See his *Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Commonwealth*.

² In 1747.

the character of men than upon the framework of institutions. There have been legislative bodies, constructed on the largest, freest, and most symmetrical plan, which have been the passive instruments of despotism; and there have been others which, though saturated with corruption and disfigured by every description of anomaly, have never wholly lost their popular character. The parliamentary system at the time we are considering was a government by the upper classes of the nation; those classes possessed in an eminent degree political capacity, and although public spirit had sunk very low among them, it was by no means extinguished. Men who on ordinary occasions voted through party or personal motives rose on great emergencies to real patriotism. The enthusiasm and the genius of the country aspired in a great degree to political life; and large boroughowners, who disposed of some seats for money and of others for the aggrandisement of their families, were accustomed also, through mingled motives of patriotism and vanity, to bring forward young men of character and promise. Even if they restricted their patronage to their sons they at least provided that many young men should be in the House, and they thus secured the materials of efficient legislators. Statesmanship is not like poetry, or some of the other forms of higher literature, which can only be brought to perfection by men endowed with extraordinary natural genius. The art of management, whether applied to public business or to assemblies, lies strictly within the limits of education, and what is required is much less transcendent abilities than early practice, tact, courage, good temper, courtesy, and industry. In the immense majority of cases the function of statesmen is not creative, and its excellence lies much more in execution than in conception. In politics possible combinations are usually few, and the course that should be pursued is sufficiently obvious. It is the management of details, the necessity of surmounting difficulties, that chiefly taxes the abilities of statesmen, and these things can to a very large degree be acquired by practice. The natural capacities, even of a Walpole, a Palmerston, or a Peel, were far short of prodigy or genius. Imperfect and vicious as was the system of parliamentary government, it at least secured a school of statesmen quite competent for the management

of affairs, and the reign of corruption among them, though very threatening, was by no means absolute. Among the rich who purchased their seats there were always some few who were actuated by an earnest desire to benefit their country, and who, like Romilly and Flood, chose this way of entering Parliament as that which made them most independent. The county representation continued tolerably pure;¹ of the other constituencies a proportion, though a small proportion, were really free, and some of these, through the operation of the scot and lot franchise, which was equivalent to household suffrage, were eminently popular. All placemen did not always vote with the Government, and all the forms of corruption did not act in the same direction. There was not much public spirit exhibited, but there was always some, and there was much of that spirit of moderation and compromise, that aversion to raising dangerous questions or disturbing old customs, that anxiety not to strain allegiance or abuse strength, or carry political conflicts to extremities, which has almost always characterised English politics, and which Walpole had done more than any other single man to sustain. Besides this, the influence of the House of Lords and a network of old customs, associations, and traditions opposed formidable barriers to precipitate or violent action. As Burke once said with profound truth, 'it is of the nature of a constitution so formed as ours, however clumsy the constituent parts, if set together in action, ultimately to act well.'

But perhaps the most important guarantee of tolerable government in England was the fear of the Pretender. During all the early years of the Hanoverian dynasty, it was more probable than otherwise that the Stuarts would be restored, and it was only by carefully and constantly abstaining from every course that could arouse violent hostility that the tottering dynasty could be kept upon the throne. This was the ever present check upon the despotism of majorities, the great secret of the deference

¹ Chatham, in a speech which he made in 1770, while dwelling strongly on the corruption of the small boroughs, added: 'The representation of the counties is, I think, still pure and uncorrupted, that of the

great cities is upon a footing equally respectable, and there are many of the larger trading towns which still preserve their independence.'—*Anecdotes of Chatham*, ii. 35.

of Parliament to the wishes of the people. The conciliatory ministry of Walpole turned the balance of probabilities in favour of the reigning family, but the danger was not really averted till after Culloden, and the Jacobite party did not cease to be a political force till the great ministry of Pitt. There were persons of high position—the most noted being the Duke of Beaufort—who were believed every year to send large sums to the Pretender. Jacobite cries were loud and frequent during the riots that followed the Bill for naturalising Jews in 1753. The University of Oxford was still profoundly disaffected. Complaints were made in Parliament in 1754 of treasonable songs sung by the students in the streets, of treasonable prints sold in its shops.¹ Dr. King, whose sentiments were not doubtful, in his speech on opening the Ratcliffe Library in 1754, introduced three times the word ‘redeat,’ pausing each time for a considerable space while the crowded theatre rang with applause.² As late as 1756, when Lord Fitzmaurice travelled through Scotland, he observed that the people of that country were still generally Jacobite.³

Such a state of affairs was well fitted to moderate the violence of parties. The people had little power of controlling or directly influencing Parliament, but whenever their sentiments were strongly expressed on any particular question, either by the votes of the free constituencies or by more irregular or tumultuous means, they were usually listened to, and on the whole obeyed. The explosions of public indignation about the Sacheverell case, the Peace of Utrecht, the commercial treaty with France, the South Sea Bubble, the Spanish outrages, the Bill for naturalising the Jews, the Hanoverian policy of Carteret, foolish as in most instances they were, had all of them, at least, a great and immediate effect upon the policy of the country. It should be added that the duties of Government were in some respects much easier than at present. The vast development of the British Empire and of manufacturing industry, the extension of publicity, and the growth of an inquiring and philanthropic spirit that discerns abuses in every

¹ Walpole's *Memoirs of George II.* i. p. 413. See, too, Smollett's *Hist.* book iii. ch. l.

² Lord Shelburne's *Life*, i. p. 35. See too, on Oxford disaffection at an

earlier period, the description of the Excise riots. Lord Hervey's *Memoirs*, i. 205.

³ Lord Shelburne's *Life*, i. p. 50.

quarter, have together immeasurably increased both the range and the complexity of legislation. In the early Hanoverian period the number of questions treated was very small, and few subjects were much attended to which did not directly affect party interests.

The general level of political life was, however, deplorably low. Politics under Queen Anne centred chiefly round the favourites of the sovereign, and in the first Hanoverian reigns the most important influences were Court intrigues or parliamentary corruption. Bolingbroke secured his return from exile by the assistance of the Duchess of Kendal, one of the mistresses of George I., whom he is said to have bribed with 10,000*l.* Carteret at first based his hopes upon the same support, but imagining that he had met with coldness or infidelity on the part of the Duchess, he transferred his allegiance to her rival, the Countess of Platen.¹ On the death of George I. a crowd of statesmen and writers—Chesterfield, Pulteney, Swift, Bolingbroke, and Gay—were at the feet of Mrs. Howard, the mistress of the new king. A curious letter has been preserved, in which Mrs. Pitt, the mother of the great Lord Chatham, endeavoured by a bribe of 1,000 guineas to obtain from her, for her brother, the position of Lord of the Bedchamber.² Chesterfield, towards the end of his career, intrigued against Newcastle with the Duchess of Yorkmouth; and Pitt himself is stated, on very good authority, to have secured his position in the Cabinet in a great degree by his attentions to the same lady.³ The power of Walpole and Newcastle rested upon a different but hardly upon a nobler basis—upon the uniform employment of all the patronage of the Crown, and of a large proportion of the public money at their disposal, for the purpose of maintaining a parliamentary majority. Weapons we should now regard as in the highest degree dishonourable were freely employed. The secrecy of the Post Office was habitually violated. The letters of Swift, Bolingbroke, Marlborough, and Pope are full of complaints of its insecurity, and we know from Walpole himself that he had no scruple in opening the letters of a political rival.⁴

¹ *Marchmont Papers*, i. 3-5.

² *Suffolk Correspondence*, i. 102.

³ See the very remarkable passages on this subject in Lord Shelburne's

Autobiography, pp. 83-84. Mrs. Montagu's *Letters*, iv. 46.

⁴ Writing to Lord Townshend, Nov. 29, 1725, Walpole says: 'It is fit

Of these facts that which is most really important is the manner in which the Crown patronage and secret service money were disposed of. The system of habitually neglecting the moral and intellectual interests of the country, and of employing the resources of the Government solely with a view to strengthening political influence, was chiefly due to Walpole and Newcastle, and it was one which had very wide and very important consequences. The best argument that has ever been urged in favour of leaving at the disposal of the Government large sums of money in the form of pensions, sinecures, and secret service money, is that the Government is the trustee of the nation, and that it should employ at least a portion of these funds in encouraging those higher forms of literature, science, or art, which are of the greatest value to mankind, which can only be attained by the union of extraordinary abilities with extraordinary labour, and which are at the same time of such a nature that they produce no adequate remuneration for those who practise them. It has been contended, with reason, that it is neither just nor politic that great philosophers, or poets, or men of science should be driven by the pressure of want from the fields of labour to which their genius naturally called them, or should be tempted to degrade the rarest and most inestimable talents, in order by winning popularity to obtain a livelihood, or should be deprived, when pursuing investigations of the highest moment to mankind, of the means of research which easy circumstances can furnish. That each man should obtain the due and proportionate reward of his services to the community is an ideal which no society can ever attain, but towards which every society in a healthy condition must endeavour to approxi-

you should likewise be acquainted that the Pulteneys build great hopes upon the difficulties they promise themselves will arise from the foreign affairs, and especially from the Hanover treaty. I had a curiosity to open some of their letters and found them full of this language. The last foreign mail brought a letter from Count Staremberg to William Pulteney, giving him great expectations of the materials he could furnish him with, when it might be done with safety, and very strong in general terms upon

what is transacting with you. Wise Daniel fills all his inland correspondence with reflections of the same kind.—Coxe's *Walpole*, ii. 492-493. See, too, *Marchmont Papers*, ii. 205, 245, 248. Coxe's *Marlborough*, ch. xcvii. c. *Chatham Correspondence*, i. 167-168. *Swift's Correspondence*.

In 1723 Walpole even succeeded in making an arrangement with the Postmaster-General in Brussels to open and send him copies of all the correspondence of Atterbury. Coxe's *Walpole*, ii. 284.

mate ; and although in matters of material production, of which common men are good judges, the law of supply and demand may at least be trusted to produce the requisite article in sufficient quantity and of tolerable quality, it is quite otherwise with the things of mind. In these fields reward is often in inverse proportion to merit, and many of the qualities that are of the most incontestable value have a direct tendency to diminish popularity. As a great writer has truly said 'the writings by which one can live are not the writings which themselves live.' To infuse into a book deep thought that will strain the attention of the reader, to defend unpopular opinions, or open new veins of thought, to condense into a small space the reflections and researches of a lifetime, to grapple with subjects that involve subtle distinctions or close and complicated reasoning, is a course plainly contrary to the pecuniary interest of an author. The discoveries and the books which have proved of the most enduring value, have usually at first been only appreciated by a very few, and have only emerged into general notoriety after many years of eclipse. A skilful writer who looks only to the market, will speedily perceive that the taste of the great majority of readers is an uncultivated one, and that if he desires to be popular he must labour deliberately to gratify it. If his talent take the form of books he will expand his thoughts into many brilliant, gaudy, and superficial volumes, rapidly written and easily read, and, remembering that most men read only for amusement, he will avoid every subject that can fatigue attention or shock prejudices, and especially every form of profound, minute, and laborious investigation. There are demagogues in literature as well as in politics. There is a degradation of style springing from a thirst for popularity, which is at least as bad as the pedantry of scholars, and a desire to conform to middle-class prejudices may produce quite as real a servility as the patronage of aristocracies or of courts. The inevitable result of the law of supply and demand, if left without restriction, is either to degrade or destroy both literature and science, or else to throw them exclusively into the hands of those who possess private means of subsistence. This is not a matter of speculation or of controversy, but of fact, and anyone who is even moderately acquainted with literary or scientific biography

may abundantly verify it. It is certain that the higher forms of literature and science are as a rule unsupporting, that men of extraordinary abilities have spent the most useful and laborious lives in these pursuits without earning the barest competence, that many of the most splendid works of genius and many of the most fruitful and conscientious researches are due to men whose lives were passed between the garret and the spunging house, and who were reduced to a penury sometimes verging upon starvation. Neither Bacon, nor Newton, nor Locke, nor Descartes, nor Gibbon, nor Hume, nor Adam Smith, nor Montesquieu, nor Berkeley, nor Butler, nor Coleridge, nor Bentham, nor Milton, nor Wordsworth, could have made a livelihood by their works, and the same may be said of all, or nearly all, writers on mathematics, metaphysics, political economy, archæology, and physical science in all its branches, as well as of the great majority of the greatest writers in other fields. Very few of those men whose genius has irradiated nations, and whose writings have become the eternal heritage of mankind, obtained from their works the income of a successful village doctor or provincial attorney.

In truth, the fact that for many years a main object of English politicians has been to abolish the foolish restrictions by which commerce was hampered, has produced among large classes, by a process of hasty generalisation which is very familiar to all who have studied the history of opinions, a belief in the all-sufficiency of the law of supply and demand, and in the uselessness of government interference, which in speculation is one of the most superficial of fallacies, and in practice one of the most deadly of errors. Even in the sphere of material things this optimist notion egregiously fails. No portions of modern legislation have been more useful or indeed more indispensable than the Factory Acts and the many restrictive laws about the sale of poisons, vaccination, drainage, railways, or adulteration, and few men who observe the signs of the times will question that this description of legislation must one day be greatly extended. But in other spheres of the utmost importance, the law of supply and demand is far more conspicuously impotent. Thus education in its simplest form, which is one of the first and highest of all human interests, is a

matter in which Government initiation and direction are imperatively required, for uninstructed people will never demand it, and to appreciate education is itself a consequence of education. Thus the higher forms of literature and science cannot be left to the unrestricted law of supply and demand, for the simple reason that, while they are of the utmost importance to mankind, most of their professors under such a system would starve. No reasonable man will question either that a civilisation is mutilated and imperfect in which a considerable number of men of genius do not devote their lives to these subjects, or that the world owes quite as much to its writers and men of science as it does to its statesmen, its generals, or its lawyers. No reasonable man who remembers on the one hand how small a proportion of mankind possess the strong natural aptitude which produces the highest achievements in science or literature, and on the other hand how inestimable and enduring are the benefits they may confer, will desire that the cultivation of these fields should become the monopoly of the rich. To evoke the latent genius of the nation, and to direct it to the spheres in which it is most fitted to excel, is one of the highest ends of enlightened statesmanship. In every community there exists a vast mass of noble capacity hopelessly crushed by adverse circumstances, or enabled only to develop in a tardy, distorted, and imperfect manner. Every institution or system that enables a poor man who possesses a strong natural genius for science or literature, to acquire the requisite instruction, and to develop his distinctive capabilities instead of seeking a livelihood as a second-rate lawyer or tradesman, is conferring a benefit on the human race. The benefit is so great that an institution is justified if it occasionally accomplishes it, even though in the great majority of cases it proves a failure. It is, no doubt, true that these unremunerative pursuits may often be combined with more lucrative employments, but only where such employments are congenial, and allow an unusual leisure for thought and study, and even then a divided allegiance is seldom compatible with the highest results. It is also true that men of great natural powers will sometimes follow their guiding light in spite of every obstacle. The martyrs of literature who pursued their path through hopeless poverty to ends of the highest value to



mankind, have been scarcely less memorable than those of religion. But apart from all nobler and more generous considerations, it is not for the benefit of society that these fields of labour should be cultivated only by those who possess a far higher amount of self-sacrifice than is "demanded in other spheres, or that men whose influence may mould the characters of succeeding generations should exercise that influence, with hearts acidulated and perhaps depraved by the pains of poverty or the sense of wrong. It is difficult to over-estimate the amount of evil in the world which has sprung from vices in literature that may be distinctly traced to the circumstances of the author. Had Rousseau been a happy and a prosperous man, the whole history of modern Europe might have been changed.

A curious and valuable book might be written describing the provisions which have been made in different nations and ages for the support of these unremunerative forms of talent. In Germany at the present day the immense multiplication of professorships provides a natural sphere for their exertions; but the results of this system would have been less satisfactory had not the general simplicity of habits, the cheapness of living, and the low standard of professional remuneration made such a life hitherto attractive to able men. In England several agencies combine directly or indirectly to the same end. The vast emoluments of the Universities enable them to do something. In the eyes of a superficial economist no institution will appear more indefensible than an English fellowship to which no definite duties whatever are attached. A real statesman will probably think that something, at least, may be said for emoluments which, won by severe competition, give a young man a subsistence during the first unproductive years of a profession, render possible for him lines of study or employment from which he would otherwise be absolutely excluded, and enable him, if he desires it, during some of the best years of his life to devote his undivided energies to intellectual labours. The endowments, whether derived from public or private sources, which are attached to scientific careers, at least furnish the means of subsistence to some men who are engaged in studies of the most transcendent importance. They are, however, miserably inadequate, and this inadequacy diverts from scientific

pursuits many who are admirably fitted to follow them, compels many others to turn away from original investigation, and depresses the whole subject in the eyes of those large classes who estimate the relative importance of different branches of knowledge by the magnitude of the emoluments attached to them. Hardly any other of the great branches of human knowledge is at present so backward, tentative, and empirical as medicine, and there is not much doubt that the law of supply and demand is a main cause of the defect. Almost all the finer intellects which are devoted to this subject are turned away from independent investigations to the lucrative paths of professional practice; their time is engrossed with cases most of which could be treated quite as well by men of inferior capacity, and they do little or nothing to enlarge the bounds of our knowledge. For literature of the graver kinds the Church provides important, though indirect assistance. In many country parishes the faithful discharge of clerical duties is quite compatible with the life of a scholar; and the valuable, dignified, and almost sinecure appointments connected with the Cathedrals are peculiarly suited for literary rewards. Solid literary attainments usually lead to them, and to the tranquil leisure which they secure we owe, perhaps, the greater number of those noble monuments of learning which are the truest glory of the Anglican Church.

The disadvantages attaching to this system of providing for literature by ecclesiastical appointments are sufficiently obvious. Such rewards are restricted to men of only one class of opinions, are offered for proficiency only in special forms of literature, and have a direct tendency to discourage independence of thought. They are open to the grave objection of constituting a gigantic system of bribery in favour of a certain class of opinions, and of inducing many who are not conscious hypocrites to stifle their doubts and act falsely with their intellects. To the poor, ambitious, and unbelieving scholar, the Church holds out prospects of the most seductive nature, and he must often hear the voice of the tempter murmuring in his ear, 'All these things will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me.' But, grave as are these disadvantages, the literary benefits resulting from Church sinecures, in my judg-

ment, outweigh them, and they will continue to do so as long as the Church maintains her present latitude of belief, and as long as a considerable proportion of able men can conscientiously join her communion. These appointments have, as a matter of fact, produced many works of "great and sterling value, which would never have been written without them, and which are of great benefit to men of all classes and opinions. They discharge a function of the utmost importance in English life, for they form the principal counterpoise to the great prizes attached to the law and to commerce, which would otherwise divert a very disproportionate amount of the talent of the community into these channels. They are especially valuable as encouraging deep research and considerable literary enterprise at a period when, under the influence of the law of supply and demand, literary talent is passing, to a most excessive and deplorable degree, into ephemeral or purely critical writing. Apart from all its other effects, valuable Church patronage, if judiciously employed, may be of inestimable intellectual advantage to the nation. An ingenious man may easily imagine institutions that would confer the same advantages without the attending evils; but ecclesiastical appointments exist; they actually discharge these functions, and it would be practically much more easy to destroy than to replace them. Strong popular enthusiasm may be speedily aroused for the defence or the destruction of an establishment, but considerations such as I am now urging are of too refined a nature ever to become popular. They are never likely to furnish election cries or party watchwords, and the creation of lucrative appointments, without adequate and engrossing duties being definitely attached to them, is too much opposed to all democratic notions to be in our day a possibility.

Among the means of encouraging the higher intellectual influences, direct Government patronage was in the early part of the eighteenth century conspicuous, and it was bestowed, on the whole, with much disregard of party considerations. Whigs and Tories were in this respect about equally liberal, the Whigs Somers and Montague, and the Tories Harley and St. John being, perhaps, the ministers to whom literature owed most. It was the received opinion of the time that it was part



of the duty of an English minister to encourage the development of promising talent, and that a certain proportion of the places and pensions at his disposal should be applied to this purpose. No doubt, this system was sometimes abused, and sometimes had a bad effect upon the character of the recipient; but in itself it implied no degradation. Many of the kinds of labour assisted were of such a nature as to leave no room for sycophancy, and could not otherwise have been carried on, and the practical results were in general eminently beneficial. The splendid efflorescence of genius under Queen Anne was in a very great degree due to ministerial encouragement, which smoothed the path of many whose names and writings are familiar in countless households, where the statesmen of that day are almost forgotten. Among those who obtained assistance from the Government, either in the form of pensions, appointments, or professional promotion, were Newton and Locke, Addison, Swift, Steele, Prior, Gay, Rowe, Congreve, Tickell, Parnell, and Phillips, while a secret pension was offered to Pope, who was legally disqualified by his religion from receiving Government favours. Upon the accession of the Hanoverian dynasty, however, Governmental encouragement of literature almost absolutely ceased. It is somewhat singular that the son of the Electress Sophia, who had been the devoted friend of Leibnitz, and the nephew of Elizabeth of Bavaria, who had been the most ardent disciple of Descartes, should have proved himself, beyond all other English sovereigns, indifferent to intellectual interests; but George I. never exhibited any trace of the qualities that had made his mother one of the most brilliant, and his aunt one of the most learned, women in Europe. The influence of Walpole was in this respect still more fatal. Himself wholly destitute of literary tastes, he was altogether indifferent to this portion of the national development, and he looked upon the vast patronage at his disposal merely as a means of Parliamentary corruption, of aggrandising his own family, or of providing for the younger sons of the aristocracy. It has been said that one of the great distinctions between ancient and modern political theories is, that in the one the ends proposed were chiefly moral, and in the other almost exclusively material; and this last description, though it does not

apply to every portion of English history, was eminently true of the reigns of George I. and of his successor.

It can never be a matter of indifference to a country what qualities lead naturally to social eminence, and it was a necessary consequence of this neglect of literature that a great change passed over the social position of its possessors. Formerly high intellectual attainments counted in society for almost as much as rank or wealth. Addison had been made a Secretary of State. Prior had been despatched on important embassies. Swift had powerfully influenced the policy of a ministry. Steele was a conspicuous Member of Parliament. Gay was made Secretary to the English ambassador at the Court of Hanover. In the reign of the first two Georges all this changed. The Government, if it helped any authors, helped only those who would employ their talents in the lowest forms of party libel, and even then on the most penurious scale. The public was still too small to make literature remunerative. The great nobles, who took their tone from the Court and Government, no longer patronised it, and the men of the highest genius or of the greatest learning were the slaves of mercenary booksellers, wasted the greater part of their lives in the most miserable literary drudgery, lived in abject poverty, and rarely came in contact with the great, except in the character of suppliants. It was in the reign of George I. that Steele, struck down by the ingratitude of the party he had so faithfully served, closed a career, which had been pre-eminently useful to his country, in poverty and neglect; that Ockley concluded his 'History of the Saracens' in a debtor's prison; that Bingham composed the greater part of his invaluable work on the 'Antiquities of the Christian Church' in such necessity that it was with the utmost difficulty he could obtain the books that were indispensable to his task. It was in the reign of George II. that Savage used to wander by night through the streets of London for want of a lodging, that Johnson spent more than thirty years in penury, drudgery, or debt, that Thomson was deprived by Lord Hardwicke of the small place in the Court of Chancery which was his sole means of subsistence, that Smollett was compelled to degrade his noble genius to unworthy political libels, and at last, after a life

which was one long struggle for bread, died in utter poverty in a foreign land. And at this very time literature in the neighbouring country had acquired a greater social influence than in any other period of recorded history. No contrast, indeed, can be more complete than that which was in this respect presented by England and France. That brilliant French society which Rousseau¹ and so many others have painted, was, no doubt, in many respects corrupt, frivolous, and chimerical, but it had at least carried the art of intellectual conversation to an almost unexampled perfection, and it was pervaded and dignified by a genuine passion and enthusiasm for knowledge, by a noble, if delusive confidence in the power of intellect to regenerate mankind. This intellectual tone was wholly wanting in society in England. Horace Walpole, who reflected very faithfully the fashionable spirit of his time, always speaks of literary pursuits as something hardly becoming in a gentleman, and of such men as Johnson and Smollett as if they were utterly contemptible. The change in the position of writers was at least as injurious to society as to literature. It gave it a frivolous, unintellectual, and material tone it has never wholly lost.²

We must, however, make an exception to this censure. The influence of Queen Caroline in patronage was for many years most judiciously exercised. This very remarkable woman, who governed her husband with an absolute sway in spite of his infidelities, and who often exhibited an insight into character, a force of expression, and a political judgment worthy

¹ *Nouvelle Héloïse*, 2me partie. See, too, the admirable sketch of French society at this period in Taine's *Ancien Régime*.

² Chesterfield has noticed the contrast in the usual conversation of the fashionable circles of the two capitals. 'It must be owned that the polite conversation of the men and women of fashion in Paris, though not always very deep, is much less futile and frivolous than ours here. It turns at least upon some subject, something of taste, some point of history, criticism, and even philosophy; which, though probably not quite so solid as Mr. Locke's, is,

however, better and more becoming rational beings than our frivolous dissertations upon the weather or upon whist.'—*Letters to his Son*, April 22, 1752.

So another writer observes, 'A knowledge of books, a taste in arts, a proficiency in science, was formerly regarded as a proper qualification in a man of fashion. . . . It will not, I presume, be regarded as any kind of satire on the present age to say that among the higher ranks this literary spirit is generally vanished. Reading is now sunk at best into a morning's amusement.'—Browne's *Estimate of the Times*, i. 41-42.



of a great statesman, was the firmest of all the friends of Walpole, and deserves a large share of the credit which is given to his administration. She first fully reconciled her husband to him. She supported him through innumerable intrigues, and every act of policy was determined together by the minister and the Queen before it was submitted to the King. Unlike Walpole, however, and unlike her husband, who despised every form of literature and art, she had strong intellectual sympathies, which she sometimes displayed with a little pedantry, but which on the whole she exercised to the great advantage of the community. She was the friend and correspondent of Leibnitz,¹ and, in spite of the ridicule of many of the English nobles, the warm and steady patron of Handel. By her influence the poet Savage, when under sentence of death, received his pardon, the Nonjuror historian Carte was recalled from exile, the Arian Whiston was assisted by a pension. Her generosity was at once wide and discriminating and singularly unfettered by the prejudices of her time. She secured for the Scotch Jacobites at Edinburgh permission to worship in peace, and although her own views were as far as possible removed from their theology² she was a special benefactress of the persecuted Catholics. She contributed largely from her private means to encourage needy talent, and she exercised a great and most useful influence upon Church patronage. There has seldom been a time in which the religious tone was lower than in the age of the first two Georges, but it is a remarkable fact that this age can boast of the two greatest intellects that have ever adorned the Protestant Episcopate.

¹ It is curious how extremely badly she wrote French. Her letters are so misspelt and ungrammatical as to be sometimes nearly unintelligible, and she always chose that language for corresponding with Leibnitz. The following specimen from one of her letters to Leibnitz gives an idea of her attainments in two languages in 1715: 'Vous aurais remarqué dans le rapport contre le dernier ministre que le feu Lord Boulbrouck dit que les françois sont ausy mechant poëte que les anglois politicien. Je suis pourtant fort pour ceu de cornelle, Racine, beaulau, Rénie. Il se peut que ne

possitan pas sy bien la langue anglois que la françoise j'admire plus se que j'antan.'—Kemble's *State Papers and Letters*, p. 532.

² She had refused to marry the Archduke Charles, afterwards Emperor, because he was a Catholic and she could not change her faith. Gay wrote of her—

The pomp of titles easy faith might shake.
She scorned an empire for religion's sake.

She appears, however, to have had very little religious feeling, and her opinions on those subjects, as far as she had any, were of a latitudinarian cast.

Butler was drawn from his retirement by Caroline, was appointed chaplain and recommended by her on her death-bed, and to that recommendation he himself attributed his subsequent promotion. Berkeley was first offered a bishopric by the Queen, but being at this time absorbed by his famous missionary scheme he declined it. She tried also earnestly and repeatedly to induce Clarke to accept a seat on the bench, but he resolutely refused, declaring that nothing would induce him again to subscribe the Articles. She secured the promotion of Sherlock, contrary to the wish of Walpole. She favoured the promotion of Hoadly and of Secker, and she endeavoured to draw the saintly Wilson from his obscure diocese in the Isle of Man to a more prominent and lucrative position, but he answered that 'he would not in his old age desert his wife because she was poor.' On the death of the Queen, however, Church patronage, like all other patronage, degenerated into a mere matter of party or personal interest. It was distributed for the most part among the members or adherents of the great families, subject to the conditions that the candidates were moderate in their views and were not inclined to any description of reform.¹

It is not surprising that under such circumstances the spirit of the nation should have sunk very low. In the period between the Reformation and the Revolution England had been convulsed by some of the strongest passions of which large bodies of men are susceptible. The religious enthusiasm that accompanies great changes and conflicts of dogmatic belief, the enthusiasm of patriotism elicited by a deadly contest with a foreign enemy, the enthusiasm of liberty struggling with despotism, and the enthusiasm of loyalty struggling with innovation, had been the animating principles of large bodies of Englishmen. Different as are these enthusiasms in their nature and their objects, various as are the minds on which they operate, and great as are in some cases the evils that accompany their

¹ 'I would no more employ a man to govern and influence the clergy,' said Sir R. Walpole, 'who did not flatter the parsons, or who either talked, wrote, or acted against their authority, their profits, or their privileges, than I would try to govern the soldiery by setting a general over

them who was always haranguing against the inconveniences of a standing army, or make a man Chancellor who was constantly complaining of the grievances of the Bar and threatening to rectify the abuses of Westminster Hall.'—Lord Hervey's *Memoirs*, i. pp. 453-454.

excess, they have all the common property of kindling in large bodies of men an heroic self-sacrifice, of teaching them to subordinate material to moral ends, and of thus raising the tone of political life. All these enthusiasms had now gradually subsided, while the philanthropic and reforming spirit, which in the nineteenth century has in a great degree taken their place, was almost absolutely unfelt. With a Church teaching a cold and colourless morality and habitually discouraging every exhibition of zeal, with a dynasty accepted as necessary to the country, but essentially foreign in its origin, its character, and its sympathies, with a Government mild and tolerant, indeed, but selfish, corrupt, and hostile to reform, the nation gradually sank into a condition of selfish apathy. In very few periods was there so little religious zeal, or active loyalty, or public spirit. A kindred tone pervaded the higher branches of intellect. The philosophy of Locke, deriving our ideas mainly if not exclusively from external sources, was supreme among the stronger minds. In literature, in art, in speculation the imagination was repressed; strong passions, elevated motives, and sublime aspirations were replaced by critical accuracy of thought and observation, by a measured and fastidious beauty of form, by clearness, symmetry, sobriety, and good sense. We find this alike in the prose of Addison, in the poetry of Pope, and in the philosophy of Hume. The greatest wit and the most original genius of the age was also the most intensely and the most coarsely realistic. The greatest English painter of the time devoted himself mainly to caricature. The architects could see nothing but barbarous deformity in the Gothic cathedral, and their own works had touched the very nadir of taste. The long war of the Spanish Succession failed signally to arouse the energies of the nation. It involved no great principle that could touch the deeper chords of national feeling. It was carried on chiefly by means of subsidies. It was one of the most ill directed, ill executed, and unsuccessful that England had ever waged, and the people, who saw Hanoverian influence in every campaign, looked with an ominous supineness upon its vicissitudes. Good judges spoke with great despondency of the decline of public spirit as if the energy of the people had been fatally impaired. Their attitude during

the rebellion of 1745 was justly regarded as extremely alarming. It appeared as if all interest in those great questions which had convulsed England in the time of the Commonwealth and of the Revolution, had died away—as if even the old courage of the nation was extinct. Nothing can be more significant than the language of contemporary statesmen on the subject. ‘I apprehend,’ wrote old Horace Walpole when the news of the arrival of the Pretender was issued, ‘that the people may perhaps look on and cry “Fight dog! fight bear!” if they do no worse.’ ‘England,’ wrote Henry Fox, ‘Wade says, and I believe, is for the first comer, and if you can tell whether the 6,000 Dutch and ten battalions of English, or 5,000 French and Spaniards will be here first, you know our fate.’ ‘The French are not come—God be thanked! But had 5,000 landed in any part of this island a week ago, I verily believe the entire conquest of it would not have cost them a battle.’ Alderman Heathcote, writing to the Earl of Marchmont in September 1745, and describing the condition of the country, no doubt indicated very truly the causes of the decline. ‘Your Lordship will do me the justice,’ he writes, ‘to believe that it is with the utmost concern I have observed a remarkable change in the dispositions of the people within these two years; for numbers of them, who, during the apprehensions of the last invasion, appeared most zealous for the Government, are now grown absolutely cold and indifferent, so that except in the persons in the pay of the Government and a few Dissenters, there is not the least appearance of apprehension or concern to be met with. As an evidence of this truth, your Lordship may observe the little influence an actual insurrection has had on the public funds; and unless some speedy stop be put to this universal coldness by satisfying the demands of the nation and suppressing by proper laws that parliamentary prostitution which has destroyed our armies, our fleets, and our constitution, I greatly fear the event.’² The Government looked upon the attitude of the people simply as furnishing an argument for increasing the standing army, but the fact itself they admitted as freely as their opponents. ‘When the late rebellion broke out,’ says Lord Hardwicke in 1749, ‘I believe most men were convinced that if

¹ Campbell's *Lives of the Chancellors*, vi. 236–238. Walpole's *Letters*,

ii. 65 (note).

² *Marchmont Papers*, ii. 342–343.

the rebels had succeeded, Popery as well as slavery would have been the certain consequence, and yet what a faint resistance did the people make in any part of the kingdom!—so faint that had we not been so lucky as to procure a number of regular troops from abroad time enough to oppose their approach, they might have got possession of our capital without any opposition except from the few soldiers we had in London.’¹

These statements are very remarkable, and they are especially so because the apathy that was shown was not due to any sympathy with the Pretender. The disgraceful terror which seized London when the news of the Jacobite march upon Derby arrived was a sufficient evidence of the fact. ‘In every place we passed through,’ wrote the Jacobite historian of the rebellion, ‘we found the English very ill-disposed towards us, except at Manchester. . . . The English peasants were hostile towards us in the highest degree.’² When a prisoner who was for a time believed to be the Young Pretender was brought to London, it was with the utmost difficulty that his escort could conduct him to the Tower through a savage mob, who desired to tear him limb from limb.³ Even in Manchester, the day of thanksgiving for the suppression of the rebellion was celebrated by the populace, who insulted the nearest relatives of those who had perished on the gallows, and compelled them to subscribe to the illuminations. In Liverpool a Roman Catholic chapel was burnt, and all who were supposed to be guilty of Jacobite tendencies were in serious danger.⁴ Nor did the executions which followed the suppression of the movement excite any general compassion. ‘Popularity,’ wrote Horace Walpole at this time, ‘has changed sides since the year ’15, for now the city and the generality are very angry that so many rebels have been pardoned.’⁵

The impression which this indifference to public interests produced in the minds of many observers was well expressed in a work which appeared in 1757 and 1758. Browne’s ‘Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times’ is now hardly remembered except by brief and disparaging notices in one of

¹ Campbell’s *Lives of the Chancellors*, vi. 256–257.

² Johnstone’s *Memoirs of the Rebellion*, pp. 70, 81.

³ Walpole’s *Letters to Mann*, Dec.

9, 1745.

⁴ Picton’s *Memorials of Liverpool*, i.

⁵ Walpole’s *Letters to Mann*, August 12, 1746.

the later writings of Burke and in one of the 'Essays' of Macaulay; but it had once a wide popularity and a considerable influence on public opinion. Its author was a clergyman well known in the history of ethics by his answer to Shaftesbury, which contains one of the ablest defences in English literature of the utilitarian theory of morals. His object was to warn the country of the utter ruin that must ensue from a decadence of the national spirit, which he maintained was only too manifest, and which he attributed mainly to an excessive development of the commercial spirit. He fully admits that constitutional liberty had been considerably enlarged, that a spirit of growing humanity was exhibited both in manners and in laws; that the administration of justice was generally pure, and that the age was not characterised by gross or profligate vice. Its leading quality was 'a vain, luxurious, and selfish effeminacy,' which was rapidly corroding all the elements of the national strength. 'Love of our country,' he complained, 'is no longer felt, and except in a few minds of uncommon greatness, the principle of public spirit exists not.' He appealed to the disuse of manly occupations among the higher classes, to their general indifference to religious doctrines and neglect of religious practices, to the ever-widening circle of corruption which had now passed from the Parliament to the constituencies, and tainted all the approaches of public life; to the prevailing system of filling the most important offices in the most critical times by family interest, and without any regard to merit or to knowledge. The extent of this evil, he maintained, was but too plainly shown in the contrast between the splendid victories of Marlborough and the almost uniform failure of the British arms in the late war, in the want of fire, energy, and heroism manifested in all public affairs, and, above all, in the conduct of the nation during the rebellion, 'when those of every rank above a constable, instead of arming themselves and encouraging the people, generally fled before the rebels; while a mob of ragged Highlanders marched unmolested to the heart of a populous kingdom.' He argued with much acuteness that the essential qualities of national greatness are moral, and that no increase of material resources could compensate for the deterioration which had in this respect passed over the English people.

It is, perhaps, difficult for us, who judge these predictions in the light which is furnished by the Methodist revival, and by the splendours of the administration of Chatham, to do full justice to their author. He appears to have been constitutionally a very desponding man, and he ended his life by suicide. The shadows of his picture are undoubtedly overcharged, and the marked revival of public spirit in the succeeding reign, when commerce was far more extended than under George II., proves conclusively that he had formed a very erroneous estimate of the influence of the commercial spirit. Yet it is certain that the disease, though it might still be arrested, was a real one, and its causes, as we have seen, are not difficult to trace. There was, undoubtedly, less of gross and open profligacy than in the evil days of the Restoration, and less of deliberate and organised treachery among statesmen than in the years that immediately followed the Revolution. The fault of the time was not so much the amount of vice as the defect of virtue, the general depression of motives, the unusual absence of unselfish and disinterested action. At the same time, though there had been a certain suspension of the moral influences that had formerly acted upon English society, the conditions of that society were at bottom sound, and contrasted in most respects favourably with those of the greatest nations on the Continent. In the middle of the eighteenth century the peasants of Germany were uniformly serfs, and the peasantry of France, though freed from the most oppressive, were still subject to some of the most irritating of feudal burdens, while in both countries political liberty was unknown, and in France, at least, religious and intellectual freedom were perpetually violated. In France, too, that fatal division of classes which has been the parent of most subsequent disasters, was already accomplished. The selfish infatuation of the Court which desired to attract to itself all that was splendid in the community, the growing centralisation of government, the want in the upper classes of all taste for country sports and duties, and the increasing attraction of town life, had led the richer classes almost invariably to abandon their estates for the pleasures of the capital, where, in the absence of healthy political life, they lost all sympathy with their fellow-countrymen, and speedily degenerated into hypo-

criters or profligates. Their tenants, on the other hand, deprived of the softening influence of contact with their superiors, reduced to penury by grinding and unequal taxation, and finding in the village priest their only type of civilisation, sank into that precise condition which transforms some men into the most implacable revolutionists, and others into the most superstitious of bigots. But in England nothing of this kind took place. The mixture of classes, on which English liberty and the perfection of the English type so largely depends, still continued. The country gentlemen were actively employed upon their estates, administering a rude justice, coming into constant and intimate connection with their tenants, and acquiring in the duties, associations, and even sports of a country life, elements of a practical political knowledge more valuable than any that can be acquired in books. Habits of hard and honest industry, a respect for domestic life, unflinching personal courage, were still general through the middle classes and among the poor, and if the last was suspected during the rebellion, it was at least abundantly displayed by the British infantry at Dettingen and Fontenoy. While all these subsisted, there remained elements of greatness which might easily, under favourable circumstances, be fanned into a flame.

It must be added, too, that the qualities most needed for the success of constitutional government, are not the highest, but what may be called the middle virtues of character and intellect. Heroic self-sacrifice, brilliant genius, a lofty level of generosity, intelligence, or morality, a clear perception of the connection and logical tendency of principles, have all, no doubt, their places under this as under other forms of government; but it is upon the wide diffusion of quite a different category of qualities or attainments that the permanence of constitutional government mainly depends. Patience, moderation, persevering energy, the spirit of compromise, a tolerance of difference of opinions, a general interest in public affairs, sound sense, love of order, a disposition to judge measures by actual working and not by any ideal theory, a love of practical improvement, and a great distrust of speculative politics, a dislike to change as change, combined with a readiness to recognise necessities when they arise, are the qualities which must be generally diffused through a

community before free institutions can take firm root among them. Judged by these tests the period we are considering exhibited, no doubt, in several respects a great decadence and deficiency, but not so great as if we measured it by a more ideal standard, and it may be safely asserted that in no other great nation were these qualities at this time so commonly exhibited.

A very similar judgment may be passed upon the system of government. It was corrupt, inefficient, and unheroic, but it was free from the gross vices of Continental administrations; it was moderate, tolerant, and economical; it was, with all its faults, a free government, and it contained in itself the elements of reformation.

I have examined in a former chapter the theory according to which the rival English parties have exchanged their principles since the early years of the eighteenth century, and I have endeavoured to show that it is substantially erroneous, that the historic identity of each party may be clearly established, whether we consider the classes of interests it represented, or the leading principles of its policy. We are now, however, in a position to see more clearly the facts which have given that theory its plausibility. The ministries of Walpole and Pelham represented especially the commercial classes and the Dissenters, aimed beyond all things at the maintenance of the type of monarchy established by the Revolution, and leaned almost uniformly towards those principles of religious liberty which the Tory party detested; but undisputed power had made them corrupt, selfish, and apathetic, and they sought, both in their own interest and in that of the dynasty, to check every reform that could either abridge their power or arouse strong passions in the nation. They also made it a great end of their policy to humour and conciliate to the utmost the country gentry, who were the natural opponents of their party. Though not Tory, they were in the true sense of the word Conservative, Governments; that is to say, Governments of which the supreme object and preoccupation was not the realisation of any unattained political ideal, or the redressing of any political grievances, but merely the maintenance of existing institutions against all assailants. The lines of party division were blurred and confused, and while only those who called themselves Whigs

were in general admitted to power, many were ranked in that category who, in a time of keener party struggles, would have been enrolled among the Tories. The characteristics of the two great parties have varied much with different circumstances. The idiosyncrasies of leaders whose attachment to their respective parties was often in the first instance due to the mere accident of birth or of position, the calm or luring aspect of foreign affairs, the dominant passion of the nation, the question whether a party is in office or in opposition, whether if in power its position is precarious or secure, and if in opposition it is likely soon to incur the responsibilities of office, have all their great influence on party politics. Still there is a real natural history of parties, and the division corresponds roughly to certain broad distinctions of mind and character that never can be effaced. The distinctions between content and hope, between caution and confidence, between the imagination that throws a halo of reverent association around the past and that which opens out brilliant vistas of improvement in the future, between the mind that perceives most clearly the advantages of existing institutions and the possible dangers of change and that which sees most keenly the defects of existing institutions and the vast additions that may be made to human well-being, form in all large classes of men opposite biases which find their expression in party divisions. The one side rests chiefly on the great truth that one of the first conditions of good government is essential stability, and on the extreme danger of a nation cutting itself off from the traditions of its past, denuding its government of all moral support, and perpetually tampering with the main pillars of the State. The other side rests chiefly upon the no less certain truths that Government is an organic thing, that it must be capable of growing, expanding, and adapting itself to new conditions of thought or of society; that it is subject to grave diseases, which can only be arrested by a constant vigilance, and that its attributes and functions are susceptible of almost infinite variety and extension with the new and various developments of national life. The one side represents the statical, the other the dynamical element in politics. Each can claim for itself a natural affinity to some of the highest qualities of mind and character, and each, perhaps,

owes quite as much of its strength to mental and moral disease. Stupidity is naturally Tory. The large classes who are blindly wedded to routine, and are simply incapable of understanding or appreciating new ideas, or the exigencies of changed circumstances, or the conditions of a reformed society, find their natural place in the Tory ranks. Folly, on the other hand, is naturally liberal. To this side belongs the cast of mind which, having no sense of the infinite complexity and interdependence of political problems, of the part which habit, association, and tradition play in every healthy political organism, and of the multifarious remote and indirect consequences of every institution, is prepared with a light heart and a reckless hand to recast the whole framework of the constitution in the interest of speculation or experiment. The colossal weight of national selfishness gravitates naturally to Toryism. That party rallies round its banner the great multitude who, having made their position, desire merely to keep things as they are, who are prepared to subordinate their whole policy to the maintenance of class privileges, who look with cold hearts and apathetic minds on the vast mass of remediable misery and injustice around them, who have never made a serious effort, or perhaps conceived a serious desire, to leave the world in any respect a better place than they found it. Even in the case of reforms which have no natural connection with party politics, and which, by diverting attention from other changes, would be eminently beneficial to the Tories, that party is usually less efficient than its rival, because its leaders are paralysed by the atmosphere of selfishness pervading their ranks, and because most of the reforming and energetic intellects are ranged among their opponents. On the other hand, the acrid humours and more turbulent passions of society flow strongly in the liberal direction. Envy, which hates every privilege or dignity it does not share, is intensely democratic, and disordered ambitions and dishonest adventurers find their natural place in the party of progress and of change.

The Whig Governments, from the accession of George I. to the death of Henry Pelham, only exhibited in a very subdued and diluted form both the virtues and the vices of liberalism; and though this period is very important in the history of

English politics, its importance lies much more in the silent and almost insensible growth of Parliamentary government than in distinct remedial measures. The measures of reform that were actually passed were usually such as were almost imperatively demanded by critical circumstances, or by the growth of some great evil in the nation. Some of them were of great importance. The rebellion of 1745 made it absolutely necessary to put an end to the anarchy of the Highlands, and to the almost complete independence which enabled the Highland chief to defy the law, and to rally around him in a few days, and in any cause, a considerable body of armed men. The Acts for the abolition of hereditary jurisdictions, for disarming the Highlanders, and for depriving them of their national dress, were carried with this object, and the first, which made the English law supreme throughout the island, has, as we shall see in another chapter, proved one of the most important measures in Scotch history, the chief cause of the rapid progress of Scotland in wealth and civilisation.

Another measure of the Pelham ministry was intended to check a still graver evil than Highland anarchy. The habit of gin-drinking—the master curse of English life, to which most of the crime and an immense proportion of the misery of the nation may be ascribed—if it did not absolutely originate, at least became for the first time a national vice, in the early Hanoverian period. Drunkenness, it is true, had long been common, though Camden maintained that in his day it was still a recent vice, that there had been a time when the English were ‘of all the Northern nations the most commended for their sobriety,’ and that ‘they first learnt in their wars in the Netherlands to drown themselves with immoderate drinking.’¹ The Dutch and German origin of many drinking terms lends some colour to this assertion, and it is corroborated by other evidence. Superfluity of drink,’ wrote Tom Nash in the reign of Elizabeth, ‘is a sin that ever since we have mixed ourselves with the Low Countries is counted honourable; but, before we knew their lingering wars, was held in the highest degree of hatred that might be.’ ‘As the English,’ said Chamberlayne, ‘returning from the wars in the Holy Land brought home the foul disease of leprosy. . . . so in our fathers’ days the English

¹ Camden’s *Hist. of Elizabeth*, A.D. 1581.

returning from the service in the Netherlands brought with them the foul vice of drunkenness.' But the evil, if it was not indigenous in England,¹ at least spread very rapidly and very widely. 'In England,' said Iago, 'they are most potent in potting. Your Dane, your German, and your swag-bellied Hollander are nothing to your English.'² 'We seem,' wrote a somewhat rhetorical writer in 1657, 'to be steeped in liquors, or to be the dizzy island. We drink as if we were nothing but sponges . . . or had tunnels in our mouths. . . . We are the grape-suckers of the earth.'³ The dissipated habits of the Restoration, and especially the growing custom of drinking toasts, greatly increased the evil, but it was noticed that the introduction of coffee, which spread widely through England in the last years of the seventeenth century, had a perceptible influence in diminishing it,⁴ and among the upper classes drunkenness was, perhaps, never quite so general as between the time of Elizabeth and the Revolution. French wines were the favourite drink, but the war of the Revolution for a time almost excluded them, and the Methuen Treaty of 1703, which admitted the wines of Portugal at a duty of one-third less than those of France, gradually produced a complete change in the national taste. This change was, however, not fully accomplished for nearly a century, and it was remarked that in the reign of Anne the desire to obtain French wines at a reasonable rate greatly strengthened the opposition to Marlborough and the war.⁵ The amount of hard drinking among the upper classes was still very great, and it is remarkable how many of the most conspicuous characters were addicted to it. Addison, the foremost moralist of his time, was not free from it.⁶ Oxford, whose private character was in most respects singularly high, is said to have come, not unfrequently, drunk into the very presence of the Queen.⁷ Bolingbroke, when in office, sat up whole nights

¹ See the early history of English drinking, in Disraeli's *Curiosities of Literature; Drinking Customs in England*; and Malcolm's *Manners and Customs of London*, i. pp. 285-289.

² *Othello*, act ii. scene 3.

³ Reeve's 'Plea for Nineveh,' quoted in Malcolm's *Manners and Customs of London*, i. p. 286.

⁴ Chamberlayne. See, too, a curious testimony on this subject quoted in Jesse's *London*, iii. 250.

⁵ Cunningham's *Hist.*, ii. pp. 200-201. Dr. Radcliffe is said to have ascribed much of the sickness of the time to the want of French wines. See, too, on the history of French wines, Craik's *Hist. of Commerce*, ii. 165, 166, 180, 181. Davenant's *Report to the Commissioners for Stating the Public Accounts*.

⁶ Spence. Swift's *Correspondence*.

⁷ E. Lewis to Swift.

drinking, and in the morning, having bound a wet napkin round his forehead and his eyes, to drive away the effects of his intemperance, he hastened, without sleep, to his official business.¹ When Walpole was a young man his father was accustomed to pour into his glass a double portion of wine, saying, 'Come, Robert, you shall drink twice while I drink once; for I will not permit the son in his sober senses to be witness of the intoxication of his father.' This education produced its natural fruits, and the entertainments of the minister at Houghton were the scandal of his county, and often drove Lord Townshend from his neighbouring seat of Rainham.² The brilliant intellect of Carteret was clouded by drink,³ and even Pulteney, who appears in his later years to have had stronger religious convictions than any other politician of his time, is said to have shortened his life by the same means.⁴

Among the poor, however, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, the popular beverage was still beer or ale, the use of which—especially before the art of noxious adulteration was brought to its present perfection—has always been more common than the abuse. The consumption appears to have been amazing. It was computed in 1688 that no less than 12,400,000 barrels were brewed in England in a single year, though the entire population probably little exceeded 5,000,000. In 1695, with a somewhat heavier excise it sank to 11,350,000 barrels, but even then almost a third part of the arable land of the kingdom was devoted to barley.⁵ Under Charles I. a company was formed with the sole right of making spirits and vinegar in the cities of London and Westminster and within twenty-one miles of the same, but this measure had little fruit; the British distilleries up to the time of the Revolution were quite inconsiderable and the brandies which were imported in large quantities from France, were much too expensive to become

¹ Mrs. Delany's *Correspondence*, vi. 168.

² Coxe's *Walpole*, i. 5, 758, 759.

³ Chesterfield's *Characters*.

⁴ 'Speaker Onslow's Remarks (Coxe's *Walpole*, vol. ii. p. 559).

⁵ Gregory King's *State of England*, pp. 55-56. In an edition of Chamberlayne's *Magna Britannia Notitia*, published in 1710, it is stated that in 1667, when the greater part of

London was in ashes after the fire, and many of the inhabitants were forced to retire to the country, no less than 1,522,781 barrels of beer and ale were brewed in the city, each of them containing from 32 to 36 gallons, that the amount brewed annually in London had since risen to near two million of barrels, and that the excise for London was farmed out for 120,000*l.* a year (p. 219).

popular. Partly, however, through hostility to France, and partly in order to encourage the home distilleries, the Government of the Revolution, in 1689, absolutely prohibited the importation of spirits from all foreign countries,¹ and threw open the trade of distillery, on the payment of certain duties, to all its subjects.² These measures laid the foundation of the great extension of the English manufacture of spirits, but it was not till about 1724 that the passion for gin-drinking appears to have infected the masses of the population, and it spread with the rapidity and the violence of an epidemic. Small as is the place which this fact occupies in English history, it was probably, if we consider all the consequences that have flowed from it, the most momentous in that of the eighteenth century—incomparably more so than any event in the purely political or military annals of the country. The fatal passion for drink was at once, and irrevocably, planted in the nation. The average of British spirits distilled, which is said to have been only 527,000 gallons in 1684, and 2,000,000 in 1714, had risen in 1727 to 3,601,000, and in 1735 to 5,394,000 gallons. Physicians declared that in excessive gin-drinking a new and terrible source of mortality had been opened for the poor. The grand jury of Middlesex, in a powerful presentment declared that much the greater part of the poverty, the murders, the robberies of London, might be traced to this single cause. Retailers of gin were accustomed to hang out painted boards announcing that their customers could be made drunk for a penny, and dead drunk for twopence, and should have straw for nothing; and cellars strewn with straw were accordingly provided, into which those who had become insensible were dragged, and where they remained till they had sufficiently recovered to renew their orgies. The evil acquired such frightful dimensions that even the unreforming Parliament of Walpole perceived the necessity of taking strong measures to arrest it, and in 1736 Sir J. Jekyll brought in and carried a measure, to which Walpole reluctantly assented, imposing a duty of 20s. a gallon on all spirituous liquors, and prohibiting any person from selling them in less quantities than

¹ *Parl. Hist.*, xii. 1212.

² *Ibid.*, xii. 1211-1214. Mac-

pherson's *Annals of Commerce*, ii. 639.

two gallons without paying a tax of 50*l.* a year.¹ Such a scale, if it could have been maintained, would have almost amounted to prohibition, but the passion for these liquors was now too widely spread to be arrested by law. Violent riots ensued. In 1737, it is true, the consumption sank to about 3,600,000 gallons, but, as Walpole had predicted, a clandestine retail trade soon sprang up, which being at once very lucrative and very popular, increased to such an extent that it was found impossible to restrain it. In 1742, more than 7,000,000 gallons were distilled, and the consumption was steadily augmenting. The measure of 1736 being plainly inoperative, an attempt was made in 1743 to suppress the clandestine trade, and at the same time to increase the public revenue by a Bill lowering the duty on most kinds of spirits to 1*d.* in the gallon, levied at the still-head, and at the same time reducing the price of retail licences from 50*l.* to 20*s.*² The Bill was carried in spite of the strenuous opposition of Chesterfield, Lord Hervey, and the whole bench of Bishops; and, while it did nothing to discourage drunkenness, it appears to have had little or no effect upon smuggling. In 1749 more than 4,000 persons were convicted of selling spirituous liquors without a licence, and the number of the private gin-shops, within the Bills of Mortality, was estimated at more than 17,000. At the same time crime and immorality of every description were rapidly increasing. The City of London urgently petitioned for new measures of restriction. The London physicians stated in 1750 that there were, in or about the metropolis, no less than 14,000 cases of illness, most of them beyond the reach of medicine, directly attributable to gin. Fielding, in his well-known pamphlet 'On the late Increase of Robbers,' which was published in 1751, ascribed that evil, in a great degree 'to a new kind of drunkenness, unknown to our ancestors;' he declared that gin was 'the principal sustenance (if it may so be called) of more than 100,000 people in the metropolis,' and he predicted that, 'should the drinking of this poison be continued at its present height during the next twenty years, there will, by that time, be very few of the common people left to drink it.' It was computed that, in 1750 and 1751, more than 11 millions of gallons of spirits were

¹ 9 Geo. II. c. 23.

² 16 Geo. II. c. 8.

annually consumed, and the increase of population, especially in London, appears to have been perceptibly checked. Bishop Benson, in a letter written from London a little later, said 'there is not only no safety of living in this town, but scarcely any in the country now, robbery and murder are grown so frequent. Our people are now become what they never before were, cruel and inhuman. Those accursed spirituous liquors, which, to the shame of our Government, are so easily to be had, and in such quantities drunk, have changed the very nature of our people; and they will, if continued to be drunk, destroy the very race of people themselves.'¹

In 1751, however, some new and stringent measures were carried under the Pelham ministry, which had a real and very considerable effect. Distillers were prohibited under a penalty of 10*l.* from either retailing spirituous liquors themselves, or selling them to unlicensed retailers. Debts contracted for liquors not amounting to twenty shillings at a time were made irrecoverable by law. Retail licences were conceded only to 10*l.* householders within the Bills of Mortality, and to traders who were subject to certain parochial rates without them, and the penalties for unlicensed retailing were greatly increased. For the second offence the clandestine dealer was liable to three months' imprisonment and to whipping; for the third offence he incurred the penalty of transportation.² Two years later another useful law was carried restricting the liberty of magistrates in issuing licences, and subjecting publichouses to severe regulations.³ Though much less ambitious than the Act of 1736 these measures were far more efficacious, and they form a striking instance of the manner in which legislation, if not over-strained or ill-timed, can improve the morals of a people. Among other consequences of the Acts it may be observed that dropsy, which had risen in London to a wholly unprecedented point between 1718 and 1751, immediately diminished, and the diminution was ascribed by physicians to the marked decrease of drunkenness in the community.⁴ Still these measures formed a palliation and not a cure, and from the early years of the eighteenth century gin-

¹ Fraser's *Life of Berkeley*, pp. 332-333.

² 24 Geo. II. c. 40.

³ 26 Geo. II. c. 13.

⁴ Heberden, *Observations on the Increase and Decrease of Different Diseases* (1801) p. 45.

drinking has never ceased to be the main counteracting influence to the moral, intellectual, and physical benefits that might be expected from increased commercial prosperity. Of all the pictures of Hogarth none are more impressive than those in which he represents the different conditions of a people whose national beverage is beer and of a people who are addicted to gin, and the contrast exhibits in its most unfavourable aspect the difference between the Hanoverian period and that which preceded it.¹

Something also was done to secure the maintenance of order, but there was still very much to be desired. The impunity with which outrages were committed in the ill-lit and ill-guarded streets of London during the first half of the eighteenth century can now hardly be realised. In 1712 a club of young men of the higher classes, who assumed the name of Mohocks, were accustomed nightly to sally out drunk into the streets to hunt the passers-by and to subject them in mere wantonness to the most atrocious outrages. One of their favourite amusements, called 'tipping the lion,' was to squeeze the nose of their victim flat upon his face and to bore out his eyes with their fingers. Among them were the 'sweaters,' who formed a circle round their prisoner and pricked him with their swords till he sank exhausted to the ground, the 'dancing masters,' so called from their skill in making men caper by thrusting swords into their legs, the 'tumblers,' whose favourite amusement was to set women on their heads and commit various indecencies and barbarities on the limbs that were exposed. Maid servants as they opened their masters' doors were waylaid, beaten, and their faces cut. Matrons inclosed in barrels were rolled down the steep and stony incline of Snow Hill. Watchmen were unmercifully beaten and their noses slit. Country gentlemen went to the theatre as if in time of war, accompanied by their armed retainers. A bishop's son was said to be one of the gang, and a baronet was among those who were arrested.² This atrocious

¹ See on this subject the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1751, pp. 136, 282-283, 321, 322; 1760, pp. 18-22. Short's *Hist. of the Increase and Decrease of Mankind in England*, p. 21. Coxe's *Life of Pelham*, ii. 182. Maty's *Life of*

Chesterfield, p. 209. Walpole's *George II.*, i. 66-67. Smollett's *Hist. Fielding's Increase of Robbers. Parl. Debates.*

² Swift's *Journal to Stella*. Gay's *Trivia. The Spectator*, 324, 335, 347.

fashion passed away, but other, though comparatively harmless, rioters were long accustomed to beat the watch, to break the citizens' windows, and to insult the passers-by, while robberies multiplied to a fearful extent. Long after the Revolution, the policy of the Government was to rely mainly upon informers for the repression of crime, but the large rewards that were offered were in a great degree neutralised by the popular feeling against the class. The watchmen or constables were as a rule utterly inefficient, were to be found much more frequently in beer-shops than in the streets, and were often themselves a serious danger to the community. Fielding, who knew them well, has left a graphic description of one class. 'They were chosen out of those poor decrepit people who are, from their want of bodily strength, rendered incapable of getting a livelihood by work. These men, armed only with a pole, which some of them are scarcely able to lift, are to secure the persons and houses of his Majesty's subjects from the attacks of gangs of young, bold, desperate, and well-armed villains. If the poor old fellows should run away, no one, I think, can wonder, unless it be that they were able to make their escape.'¹ Of others an opinion may be formed from an incident related by Horace Walpole in 1742. 'A parcel of drunken constables took it into their heads to put the laws in execution against disorderly persons, and so took up every woman they met, till they had collected five or six and twenty, all of whom they thrust into St. Martin's roundhouse, where they kept them all night, with doors and windows closed. The poor creatures, who could not stir or breathe, screamed as long as they had any breath left, begging at least for water . . . but in vain. . . . In the morning four were found stifled to death, two died soon after, and a dozen more are in a shocking way. . . . Several of them were beggars, who from having no lodging were necessarily found in the street, and others honest, labouring women. One of the dead was a poor washerwoman, big with child, who was retiring home late from washing. One of the constables is taken, and others absconded; but I question if any of them will suffer death, though the greatest criminals in this town are the officers of justice; there is no tyranny they do not exercise, no villany of

¹ *Amelia*, bk. i. ch. 2.

which they do not partake.¹ The magistrates were in many cases not only notoriously ignorant and inefficient, but also what was termed 'trading justices,' men of whom Fielding said that 'they were never indifferent in a cause but when they could get nothing on either side.'² The daring and the number of robbers increased till London hardly resembled a civilised town. 'Thieves and robbers,' said Smollett, speaking of 1730, 'were now become more desperate and savage than they had ever appeared since mankind were civilised.'³ The Mayor and aldermen of London in 1744 drew up an address to the King, in which they stated that 'diver confederacies of great numbers of evil-disposed persons, armed with bludgeons, pistols, cutlasses, and other dangerous weapons, infest not only the private lanes and passages, but likewise the public streets and places of usual concourse, and commit most daring outrages upon the persons of your Majesty's good subjects whose affairs oblige them to pass through the streets, by robbing and wounding them, and these acts are frequently perpetrated at such times as were heretofore deemed hours of security.'⁴ The same complaints were echoed in the same year in the 'Proposals of the Justice's of the Peace for Suppressing Street Robberies,' and the magistrates who drew them up specially noticed, and ascribed to the use of spirituous liquors 'the cruelties which are now exercised on the persons robbed, which before the excessive use of these liquors were unknown in this nation.'⁵ They recommended an extension of the system of rewards, the suppression or restriction of gaming-houses, public gardens, fairs, and gin-shops, and also measures for systematically drafting into the army and navy suspected and dangerous persons against whom no positive crime could be proved.

The evil, however, appears to have continued. 'One is forced to travel,' wrote Horace Walpole in 1751, 'even at noon as if one were going to battle.'⁶ The punishments were atrocious and atrociously executed, but they fell chiefly on the more

¹ To Sir H. Mann, July, 1742.

² See his picture of Justice Thrasher, in *Amelia*, and his sketch of Justice Squeezum, in *The Coffee-house Politician*. See, too, Lawrence's *Life of Fielding*, pp. 236-239, and Harris's *Life of Hardwicke*, i. 390-

391.

³ *Hist. of England*.

⁴ Andrews' *Eighteenth Century*, p. 230.

⁵ Harris's *Life of Hardwicke*, ii. 97-99.

⁶ To Sir H. Mann. March 23, 1752.

insignificant and inexperienced offenders. On a single morning no less than seventeen persons were executed in London.¹ One gang of robbers in 1753 kept the whole city in alarm from the number and skill of their robberies and the savage wounds they inflicted on their victims. A recompense of 100*l.* was offered for the apprehension of each of them, but its chief effect was to encourage men who deliberately decoyed poor and unwary wretches into robbery in order that by informing against them they might obtain the reward.² The more experienced robbers for a time completely overawed the authorities. 'Officers of justice,' wrote Fielding, 'have owned to me that they have passed by such, with warrants in their pockets against them without daring to apprehend them; and, indeed, they could not be blamed for not exposing themselves to sure destruction; for it is a melancholy truth that at this very day a rogue no sooner gives the alarm within certain purlieus than twenty or thirty armed villains are found ready to come to his assistance.'³ When the eighteenth century had far advanced, robbers for whose apprehension large rewards were offered, have been known to ride publicly and unmolested, before dusk, in the streets of London, surrounded by their armed adherents, through the midst of a half-terrified, half-curious crowd.⁴

This state of things was very alarming, and the evil was apparently growing, though some real measures had been taken to improve the security of London. One very important step in this direction was accomplished under George I. The districts of Whitefriars and the Savoy had for centuries the privilege of sheltering debtors against their creditors, and they had become the citadels of the worst characters in the community, who defied the officers of justice and were a perpetual danger to the surrounding districts. In 1697 a law had been passed annulling their franchises; but similar privileges, though not legally recognised, were claimed for the Mint in Southwark, and for many years were successfully maintained. Multitudes of debtors, and with them great numbers of more serious crimi-

¹ To Sir H. Mann. March 23, 1752.

² Sir John Fielding's *Account of the origin and effects of a police set on foot in 1753.*

³ *Causes of the Increase of Robbers.*

⁴ See an extraordinary instance of this in Andrews' *Eighteenth Century*, p. 235.

nals, fled to this quarter. The attempts of the officers to arrest them were resisted by open violence. Every kind of crime was concocted with impunity and every conspirator knew where to look for daring and perfectly unscrupulous agents. It was not until 1723 that the Government ventured to grapple firmly with this great evil. An Act making it felony to obstruct the execution of a writ, and enabling the Sheriff of Surrey to raise a *posse comitatus* for taking by force debtors from the Mint finally removed this plague-spot from the metropolis, and put an end for ever in England to that right of sanctuary which had for many generations been one of the most serious obstructions to the empire of the law.¹

Another and still more important step was the measure which was carried in 1736 for the proper lighting of the streets. Up to this date London was probably in this respect behind every other great city in Europe. The lighting was done by contract, and the contractors, by a singular arrangement, agreed to pay the City 600*l.* a-year for their monopoly. In return for this they were empowered to levy a rate of 6*s.* a-year from all housekeepers who paid poor rate, and from all who had houses of over 10*l.* per annum, unless they hung out a lantern or candle before their doors, in which case they were exempt from paying for the public lamps. The contractors were bound to place a light before every tenth house, but only from Michaelmas to Lady Day, and then only until midnight, and only on what were termed 'dark nights.' The 'light nights' were ten every month from the sixth after the new moon till the third after the full moon. The system was introduced at the end of the reign of Charles II., and was then a great improvement, but it left the streets of London absolutely unlighted for far more than half the hours of darkness. Under such conditions the suppression of crime was impossible, and few measures enacted during the eighteenth century contributed more to the safety of the metropolis than that which was passed in 1736 enabling the Lord Mayor and Aldermen to erect glass lamps in sufficient numbers throughout London, to keep them lighted from the setting to the rising of the sun, and to levy a considerable and general rate for their maintenance. More than

¹ Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, iii. 127-128.

15,000 lamps are said in a few years to have been erected, and it was calculated that, while under the old system London was only lit by public lamps for about 750 hours in the year, under the new system it was lighted for about 5,000.¹

Yet, in spite of this great change, street robberies continued for some years to increase, and the inefficiency of the watchmen, and the great multiplication of the criminal classes under the influence of gin, were constant subjects of complaint. The great novelist Fielding, when driven by narrowed circumstances to accept the office of Bow Street magistrate, did much both to call attention to and to remedy the evil. Under the direction of the Duke of Newcastle, he and his brother, who succeeded him in his post, instituted a new police, consisting of picked men who had been constables, and who were placed under the direct control of the Bow Street magistrates. A very remarkable success rewarded their labours. The gang which had so long terrified London was broken up; nearly all its members were executed, and the change effected was so great that Browne, writing in 1757, was able to say that 'the reigning evil of street robberies has been almost wholly suppressed.'² At the same time a serious attempt was made, at once to remove the seeds and sources of crime, and to provide a large reserve for the navy, by collecting many hundreds of the destitute boys who swarmed in the streets, clothing them by public subscription, and drafting them into ships of war, where they were educated as sailors.³ The police-force soon became again very inefficient, but the condition of London does not appear to have been at any subsequent period as bad as in the first half of the eighteenth century, though the country highways were still infested with robbers. The early Hanoverian period has, indeed, probably contributed as much as any other portion of English history to the romance of crime. The famous burglar, John Sheppard, after two marvellous escapes from Newgate, which made him the idol of the populace, was at last hung in 1724. The famous thief-taker, Jonathan Wild, after a long career of crime, being at last convicted of returning stolen goods to the rightful owner without prosecuting the

¹ Maitland's *Hist. of London*, i. 565-567.

² Browne's *Estimate*, i. p. 219.

³ Sir John Fielding *on the police* of 1753.

thieves, which had lately been made a capital offence,¹ was executed in the following year, and was soon after made the subject of a romance by Fielding. The famous highwayman, Dick Turpin, was executed in 1739. Another well-known highwayman named M'Lean is said to have been the son of an Irish Dean and brother of a Calvinist minister in great esteem at the Hague. He had a lodging in St. James's Street; his manners were those of a polished gentleman, and the interest he excited was so great that the day before his execution in 1750 no less than 3,000 persons visited his cell.² The weakness of the law was also shown in the great number of serious riots which took place in every part of the kingdom. The Porteous riots and the riots against the malt-tax in Scotland, the Spitalfields riots directed against Irish weavers, and the numerous riots occasioned by the Gin Act, and at a later period by the system of turnpikes and by the preaching of the Methodists, were the most remarkable, while the characteristic English hatred of foreigners was shown by a furious disturbance in 1738 because French actors were employed at the Haymarket, and some years afterwards by the sacking of Drury Lane theatre because Garrick had employed in a spectacle some French dancers. Outrages connected with smuggling were in many parts of the kingdom singularly daring and ferocious, and they were often countenanced by a large amount of popular sympathy.³ In Hampshire a gang of deer-stealers, known as the Waltham Blacks, were in the reign of George I. so numerous and so audacious, that a special and most sanguinary law, known as the 'Black Act,' was found necessary for their suppression.⁴

Another crime, strikingly indicative of the imperfect civilisation of the country, was the plunder of shipwrecked sailors, who were often lured by false signals upon the rocks. In some of the Northern countries of Europe, till a comparatively recent period, the law expressly permitted the inhabitants to seize, as a prize, any property that was wrecked upon their coast.⁵ In

¹ The goods were stolen, and as soon as a reward was offered restored by a confederate.

² Horace Walpole to Mann. Aug. 1750. Walpole had himself been robbed by M'Lean. Some curious particulars of the crime of this period

will be found in Harris's *Life of Hardwicke*.

³ See Pike's *Hist. of Crime*, ii. 399, 652.

⁴ 9 George I. c. 22. See White's *Selborne*, p. 29, 30.

⁵ Blackstone, bk. i. ch. viii. § 2.

England, without any such permission, it became a prevalent custom. At the close of the seventeenth century Defoe mentions that many Englishmen had been sacrificed abroad in resentment for these barbarities, and he tells us how, when a ship of which he was himself a shareholder was sinking on the coast of Biscay, a Spanish ship refused to give any assistance, the captain declaring, 'that, having been shipwrecked somewhere on the coast of England, the people, instead of saving him and his ship, came off and robbed him, tore the ship almost to pieces, and left him and his men to swim ashore for their lives while they plundered the cargo; upon which he and his whole crew had sworn never to help an Englishman in whatever distress he should find them, whether at sea or on shore.'¹ About the middle of the eighteenth century the crime increased to an enormous degree on many parts of the British coast.² In order to check it a law had been passed in the reign of Anne and made perpetual under George I., making it felony, without the benefit of clergy, to do any act by which a ship was destroyed, fining anyone who secreted shipwrecked goods treble their value, and enabling the authorities in every seaport town to take special measures for the relief of ships in distress, and in case of success to exact a certain sum from the owners as salvage.³ It was ordered that this act should be read four times yearly in all the parish churches and chapels of all seaport towns in the kingdom.⁴ It proved, however, utterly insufficient, and in the administration of Pelham the plunder of a shipwrecked or distressed vessel was made a capital offence.⁵ Notwithstanding this enactment, however, the crime was by no means suppressed. It was the especial scandal of Cornwall. In visiting that county in 1776, Wesley learnt that it was still as common there as ever; he severely censured the connivance or indifference of the gentry, who might have totally suppressed it,⁶ and he also found the custom very general on the western coast of Ireland.⁷

¹ Wilson's *Life of Defoe*, i. 209.

² Cox's *Life of Pelham*, ii. 272.

³ 12 Anne II. c. 18; 4 George I. c. 12.

⁴ Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, iii. pp. 39-41.

⁵ 26 George II. c. 19.

⁶ Wesley's *Journal*, Aug. 1776.

⁷ 'A Swedish ship being leaky put into one of our harbours. The Irish, according to custom, ran to plunder her. A neighbouring gentleman hindered them; and for so doing demanded a fourth part of the cargo. And this, they said, the law allows.' — Wesley's *Journal*, June 1760.

The long list of social reforms passed under the Pelham ministry may be fitly closed by the Marriage Act of Lord Hardwicke, which put a stop to those Fleet marriages which had become one of the strangest scandals of English life. Before this Act, the canon law was in force in England, and according to its provisions the mere consent of the parties, followed by cohabitation, constituted, for many purposes, a valid marriage; and a marriage valid for all purposes could be celebrated by a priest in orders at any time or place, without registration and without the consent of parents or guardians. Stamped licences were indeed required by law, but not for the validity of the contract, and their omission was only punished as a fraud upon the revenue. In such a state of the law atrocious abuses had grown up. A multitude of clergymen, usually prisoners for debt and almost always men of notoriously infamous lives, made it their business to celebrate clandestine marriages in or near the Fleet. They performed the ceremony without licence or question, sometimes without even knowing the names of the persons they united, in public-houses, brothels, or garrets. They acknowledged no ecclesiastical superior. Almost every tavern or brandy shop in the neighbourhood had a Fleet parson in its pay. Notices were placed in the windows, and agents went out in every direction to solicit the passers by. A more pretentious, and perhaps more popular establishment was the Chapel in Curzon-street, where the Rev. Alexander Keith officiated. He was said to have made a 'very bishopric of revenue' by clandestine marriages, and the expression can hardly be exaggerated if it be true, as was asserted in Parliament, that he had married on an average 6,000 couples every year. He himself stated that he had married many thousands, the great majority of whom had not known each other more than a week, and many only a day or half a day. Young and inexperienced heirs fresh from college, or even from school, were thus continually entrapped. A passing frolic, the excitement of drink, an almost momentary passion, the deception or intimidation of a few unprincipled confederates, were often sufficient to drive or inveigle them into sudden marriages, which blasted all the prospects of their lives. In some cases, when men slept off a drunken fit, they heard to their astonishment that, during its

continuance, they had gone through the ceremony. When a fleet came in and the sailors flocked on shore to spend their pay in drink and among prostitutes, they were speedily beleaguered, and 200 or 300 marriages constantly took place within a week. Among the more noted instances of clandestine marriages we find that of the Duke of Hamilton with Miss Gunning, that of the Duke of Kingston with Miss Chudleigh, that of Henry Fox with the daughter of the Duke of Richmond, that of the poet Churchill, who at the age of seventeen entered into a marriage which contributed largely to the unhappiness of his life. The state of the law seemed, indeed, ingeniously calculated to promote both the misery and the immorality of the people, for while there was every facility for contracting the most inconsiderate marriages, divorce, except by a special Act of Parliament, was absolutely unattainable. It is not surprising that contracts so lightly entered into should have been as lightly violated. Desertion, conjugal infidelity, bigamy, fictitious marriages celebrated by sham priests, were the natural and frequent consequences of the system. In many cases in the Fleet registers names were suppressed or falsified, and marriages fraudulently antedated, and many households, after years of peace, were convulsed by some alleged pre-contract or clandestine tie. It was proved before Parliament that on one occasion there had been 2,954 Fleet marriages in four months, and it appeared from the memorandum-books of Fleet parsons that one of them made 57*l.* in marriage fees in a single month, that another had married 173 couples in a single day.

The evil was of considerable standing, and some attempts had been made to remedy it. By a law of William III. any clergyman celebrating a marriage without licence was subject to a fine of 100*l.*,¹ but this penalty was not renewed at each violation of the Act, and the offender was able by a writ of error to obtain a delay of about a year and a half, during which time he carried on his profession without molestation, made at least 400*l.* or 500*l.*, and then frequently absconded. No penalty whatever attached to the public-house keeper, who hired the clergyman, and in whose house the ceremony was performed. Another Act, passed in 1712, after reciting the loss the revenue

¹ 6 & 7 William III. c. 6; 7 & 8 William III. c. xxxv.

experienced from these practices, raised the penalty incurred by the priest to imprisonment, but this also it was found possible to evade. To meet the evil it was necessary to re-model the whole marriage law. The first step in this direction was taken by Lord Bath, who, when attending a Scotch trial, was struck by the hardship of a case in which a man, after a marriage of thirty years, was claimed by another woman on the ground of a pre-contract; but the preparation of a measure on the subject soon passed into the hands of the Chancellor, Lord Hardwicke, who succeeded, in 1753, in carrying it successfully through Parliament. His Act provided that, with the exception of Jewish and Quaker marriages, no marriage should be valid in England which was not celebrated by a priest in orders, and according to the Anglican liturgy, that the ceremony could not be performed unless the banns had been published for three successive Sundays in the parish church, or unless a licence had been procured, and that these licences in the cases of minors should be conditional upon the consent of the parents or guardians. The special licence by which alone the marriage could be celebrated in any other place than the parish church, could only be issued by the Archbishop, and cost a considerable sum. All marriages which did not conform to these provisions were null, and all who celebrated them were liable to transportation.¹

This measure is extremely important, as introducing into English legislation a principle which has even now by no means attained its full recognition, but which is evidently destined to become one day supreme. According to the theological theory which was adopted by the law of England, and was long absolute in Christendom, the Church alone has a right to determine what constitutes the validity of a marriage, and when that marriage is once consummated it is absolutely indissoluble, and possesses a mystical sanctity altogether irrespective of its influence upon society. In opposition to this view there has grown up in the last century a conviction that it is not the business of the State to enforce morals, and especially any particular theological conceptions of duty, that its sole end should be to increase the temporal happiness of the people, and that the re-

¹ 26 George II. c. 33.

strictions it imposes on individual liberty can only be justified, and should be strictly limited, by this end. According to this view the ecclesiastical and the legal conceptions of marriage are entirely distinct. Marriage should be regarded by the legislator merely as a civil contract of extreme importance to the maintenance of the young, the disposition of property, and the stability of society; and it is the right and the duty of the State, with a sole view to the interests of society, to determine on what conditions it may be celebrated, annulled, or repeated.

In some respects these two views coincide, while in others they conflict. Every statesman will admit that the purity and stability of the marriage state are social ends of great importance, and that a religious sanction contributes to secure them. At the same time the legislator will, in some respects, be more severe, and in others more indulgent than the divine. Considering marriage as a contract involving momentous civil consequences, he may insist that it should be entered into publicly, formally, and deliberately, may lay down in the interests of society certain restrictive conditions, and may absolutely refuse, when those conditions are not complied with, to recognise its existence, or to punish those who violate or repeat it. On the other hand, in all questions relating to marriages of consanguinity or to divorce, State interference with the liberty of individuals can only be justified on utilitarian grounds. If, for example, the question be that of marriage with a deceased wife's sister, a legislator imbued with this spirit will consider it wholly irrelevant to discuss whether such marriages were or were not forbidden in the Levitical code, whether the Levitical code is binding upon a Christian, whether ecclesiastical tradition favours or condemns them. The sole question for him to decide is whether they produce such a clear preponderance of social evils as would justify him in restricting in this respect the natural liberty of the subject. If they do not, they should be permitted, and those who regard them as theologically wrong should refrain from contracting them. A similar principle applies to the difficult question of divorce. At first sight nothing can appear more monstrous than that when two persons have voluntarily entered into a contract with the single purpose of promoting their mutual happiness, when

they find by experience that the effect of that contract is not happiness but misery, and when they are both of them anxious to dissolve it, the law—whose sole legitimate object is the happiness of the people—should interpose to prevent it. The presumption against such an interference with individual liberty must always be very weighty, and there are many considerations which tend to strengthen it. Of all forms of wretchedness, that resulting from an unhappy marriage is perhaps the most difficult to anticipate, for it may result from a turn of disposition or an infirmity of temper which is only revealed by the most intimate knowledge. In all ages and countries a vast proportion of these life-long contracts have either been negotiated by the relations of the contracting parties, with only their nominal consent, or have been entered into at an age when there can be little knowledge of life or character, when the judgment is still unformed, or under the influence of a passion which is proverbially fitted to distort it. It is also a well recognised fact that, as Swift says, the art of ‘making nets’ is very different from the art of ‘making cages,’ that many of the qualities peculiarly fitted to attract men into marriage are also peculiarly unfitted to secure the happiness of a home. It may be added that while the chances of unhappiness in this contract are so many, that unhappiness may easily rise to an amount of moral misery no other condition can produce, for it extends to and embitters the minutest details of daily life, pervades every sphere and depresses every aim. In many cases marriage involves to the weaker party a tyranny so brutal, galling, incessant, and at the same time absolutely hopeless, that it forms the nearest earthly type of eternal damnation. In such cases it would be much more reasonable to speak of the sacrament of divorce than of the sacrament of marriage, and it were hard to say what benefit issues from the contract, unless it be that of relieving death of half its terror by depriving life of all its charm. Thousands of couples who, if freed from the effects of one great mistake, possess all the elements of usefulness and enjoyment, are thus condemned by law to the total sacrifice of the happiness of their lives. Nor are the moral effects less disastrous. No condition can be more fitted to break down and degrade the moral character than that I have described. No

condition can present stronger temptations. A moralist may very reasonably doubt whether even open profligacy is more debasing than a legitimate union, in which hatred has taken the place of love, and the unspoken day-dream of each partner is to witness the burial of the other.

It is added that even if the law imposed no restrictions on divorce, perpetual monogamous attachments would always be the most common, for the simple reason that they are those which are most conducive to the happiness of men. They have in their support one of the strongest of all human sentiments—the cohesion of custom. In no other case is this cohesion so powerful, for in no other is the relation so close or so constant. Putting aside the idle cant of satirical writers, every candid observer will admit that the death of a husband or a wife is usually, without exception, the greatest calamity that can befall the survivor. With such a voluntary cohesion severance would be very rare unless there were some strong reason to overcome it, and when so strong a reason exists it would probably be advisable. The birth of children, which makes the stability of the family peculiarly necessary, contributes in itself to secure it, for every child joins its parents by a new bond. Nature has abundantly provided for the stability of the marriage state when it promotes happiness. Why should the law prevent its dissolution when it produces pain?

The answer is that these arguments underrate the violence of a passion which is, perhaps, the most dangerous and unruly in human nature, and at the same time neglect to make sufficient allowance for the inequality of the sexes. In the marriage contract the woman is the weaker; she is usually the poorer; her happiness is far more absolutely bound up with her domestic life than the happiness of a man. Her vigour passes before that of her husband. If cast out at a mature age from the domestic circle her whole life is broken, and the very probability of such a fate is sufficient to embitter it. If divorce could always be effected without delay, difficulty, expense, or blame; if the law provided no protection for the weaker partner against those violent passions which may be conceived by one sex in mature age, and which are rarely inspired by the other except in youth, it is easy to predict what would be the result. The



tie of custom would in innumerable cases be snapped by the impulse of passion. Very many would never pass that painful novitiate, when tastes and habits have not yet assimilated, which is now so often the preface to many years of uninterrupted happiness. In many cases the mere decline of physical charms would lead to a severance of the bond. The appetite for change would grow with the means of gratifying it, and thus affections would be weakened, habits would be unsettled, and insecurity and misery would be widely spread. Nor would the evil stop here. The stability of domestic life is of vital importance to the position, the education, and the moral culture of the young, and to the maintenance among all classes of those steady and settled habits that are most valuable to the community.

It is not necessary in this place to pursue this subject into detail, or to discuss the exact amount of restriction which in these cases can be judiciously imposed. It is plain that the marriage tie is not one of those which the legislator can deal with on the principle of unlimited freedom of contract. It is also, I think, plain that the complete ascendancy in law of the secular view of marriage must sooner or later lead to a greater extension of the liberty of divorce than in England, at least, is admitted. The condemnation of either partner for any of the graver or more degrading forms of criminal offence, and even habits of inveterate and systematic drunkenness, might very reasonably be made legal causes. The question whether the desire of the two contracting parties, who have discovered that the contract into which they had entered is prejudicial to their happiness, should be regarded as a sufficient ground is a much more difficult one. It is clear, however, that a legislator who accorded such latitude would be perfectly justified in imposing upon both parties such a period of probation or delay as would meet the cases of fickleness or sudden passion, and on the stronger party such special burdens as would to some extent equalise the balance of interest. But his judgment on this matter should be formed solely by an estimate of consequences. He must strike the balance between opposing evils, and his point of view is thus wholly different from that of the theologian who starts with the belief that divorce is in itself necessarily sacrilegious. This is a matter for the conscience and judgment of individuals, but not for the cog-

nisance of law. In the Marriage Act of Lord Hardwicke the question of divorce was not directly raised, but the modern legal doctrine of marriage was fully established by the clause which treated matrimonial contracts as absolute nullities, though they were celebrated with a regular religious ceremony, if certain legal requirements were wanting. The dissolution of religious marriages for temporal reasons was, indeed, not altogether new in British law. In the Regency Bill, which was passed on the death of the Prince of Wales in 1751, there was a clause annulling any marriage contracted by the young heir to the throne before the expiration of his minority without the consent of the Regent, or of the major part of the Council; and a similar principle was involved in the Irish law annulling marriages between Protestants and Catholics, celebrated by priests or degraded clergymen. The Marriage Act of 1753, however, gave this principle a much greater extension. It was justly noticed as a striking illustration of the decline of dogmatic theology in England that a bill involving so important a principle should have passed without serious difficulty through the House of Lords, and should have been assented to by the whole bench of bishops.¹

In the House of Commons, however, the Marriage bill was fiercely assailed. Henry Fox, who had himself a very natural predilection for the old system, though a member of the Government, met it with the most determined and acrimonious opposition, and he found a considerable body of supporters. Their arguments will now appear to most men very inconclusive. Much was said on such topics as the natural right of all men to be married as they pleased, the immorality that would ensue from any measure which rendered marriages difficult, the tendency of the new Bill to increase the despotic power of parents, and the advantages of the old system in assisting younger sons in marrying heiresses, and thus dispersing fortunes which under the law of primogeniture had been unduly accumulated.² Such arguments could have no real weight in the

¹ Walpole's *Memoirs of George II.* i. pp. 146, 342.

² It is curious to observe what nonsense Horace Walpole talked about this Bill, not in a party speech, but in a grave history. He says that

it 'seemed to annex as sacred privileges to birth as could be devised in the proudest, poorest little Italian principality,' that it was 'the bane of society, the golden grate that separates the nobility from the plebeians,'

face of the glaring and scandalous evils of Fleet marriages, and the law as remodelled by Lord Hardwicke continued in force until the present century. It is evident, however, that the monopoly which the Anglican clergy possessed of celebrating legal marriages could not be accepted by other sects as a final settlement of the question, and as the principle of religious equality became more fully recognised in English politics, a serious and at last successful agitation arose against the Act. There were also some legal flaws in it which somewhat qualified the admiration with which it was regarded by lawyers.¹ Such as it was, however, it was effectual in suppressing a great scandal and a great evil which had taken deep root in the habits of the nation. With large classes of the community the easy process of Fleet marriages was very popular. On the day before the new law came into force no less than 300 were celebrated, and a bold attempt was made by a clergyman named Wilkinson to perpetuate the system at the Savoy. He claimed, by virtue of some old privileges attaching to that quarter, to be extra-parochial, and to have the right of issuing licences himself, and he is said to have actually celebrated as many as 1,400 clandestine marriages after the Marriage Act had passed. By the instrumentality of Garrick, one of whose company had been married in this manner in 1756, a Savoy licence passed into the hands of the Government, and the trial and transportation of Wilkinson and his curate put an end to clandestine marriages in England. Those who desired them, however, found a refuge in Scotland, the Isle of Man, and Guernsey; and in 1760 there were always vessels ready at Southampton to carry fugitive lovers to the latter island.²

The measures I have enumerated, though very important, were for the most part remedies applied to some great and crying evils which had at last become intolerable to the community. Of the active reforming and philanthropic spirit which became so con-

that 'from beginning to end of the Bill one only view had predominated, that of pride and of aristocracy.'—*Memoirs of George II.* i. 336-348, 358.

¹ See Lord Campbell's severe judgment of it. *Lives of the Chancellors*, vi. 262.

² See J. Southerden Burns' very curious *Hist. of Fleet Marriages*; the copious extracts from the Fleet registers in Knight's *Hist. of London*; Pennant's *London*; Smollett's *Hist. of Parli. Hist.*; and Walpole's *Memoirs of George II.*

spicuous in the reign of George III. we find scarcely any traces. Something of this spirit may be detected in the creation of the great religious societies, and in part of the legislation of William. Something of it appeared, though in a more exclusively ecclesiastical form, during the clerical reaction under Anne, but during the ascendancy of Walpole and the Pelhams it almost wholly died away. The Methodist movement was as yet in its purely religious stage; the Court and Government initiated nothing, and the number of private reformers was very small. The scheme of Berkeley for founding a Christian university in Bermuda for the civilisation and conversion of America was one of the few examples. This most extraordinary man, who united the rarest and most various intellectual gifts with a grace and purity of character, and an enthusiasm of benevolence, that fascinated all about him, succeeded for a time in communicating something of his own spirit to some of the most selfish of politicians. The story is well known how his irresistible eloquence turned the ridicule of the Scriblerus Club into a brief but genuine outburst of enthusiasm; how he raised by subscription a considerable sum for carrying out his scheme, Walpole himself contributing 200*l.*; how his success in canvassing the Members of Parliament was so great that the Bill for endowing the university passed in 1726 with only two dissentient voices. Walpole was astonished at the success, having, as he said, 'taken it for granted the very preamble of the Bill would have secured its rejection,' but although he promised 20,000*l.* he never paid it, and in 1731 Berkeley, receiving a private intimation that it was hopeless expecting it, was obliged to abandon the enterprise, and returned from Rhode Island to Ireland.

A more successful reformer was James Oglethorpe, a very remarkable man, whose long life of 96 years was crowded with picturesque incidents and with the most various and active benevolence. Having served as a young man under Prince Eugene, he entered Parliament in 1722, and sat there for thirty-three years. Though a man of indomitable energy, and of some practical and organising talent, he had no forensic ability, and he was both too hot-tempered, too impulsive, and too magnanimous to take a high rank among the adroit and intriguing

politicians of his time. He would probably have remained an undistinguished Member of Parliament if it had not happened that among his acquaintances was a gentleman named Castell, who, having fallen from a considerable position into hopeless debt, had been imprisoned in the Fleet, and being unable to pay the accustomed fees to the warder, had been confined in a house where the small-pox was raging, and had perished by the disease. This incident directed the attention of Oglethorpe to the management of the prisons. For many years it had been known that debtors in England were subject to frightful privations, and a book had been published as early as 1691 enumerating their wrongs,¹ but no steps had been taken to redress them. Oglethorpe, however, succeeded in 1729 in obtaining a Parliamentary inquiry into the condition of the Fleet and the Marshalsea, which was afterwards extended to that of the other jails, and the results were so horrible that they produced a universal cry of indignation. It appeared that the wardenship of the Fleet was regularly put up for sale, that it had been bought from the great Lord Clarendon by John Huggins for 5,000*l.*, that it had been sold by Huggins to Bambridge for the same sum in 1728, and that these men were accustomed, in addition to the large regular emoluments of the office, to exact heavy fees from the prisoners, and to avenge themselves upon those who were unable or unwilling to pay them, by the utmost excesses of brutality. In the Fleet, when Bambridge was governor, such prisoners were continually left manacled for long periods in a dungeon, almost unendurable from its stench and its want of ventilation, situated above a common sewer, and in which the bodies of those who died in the prison were deposited to await the coroner's inquest. One brave soldier had been falsely accused of theft, acquitted by the jury, and then seized and imprisoned as a debtor by the jailer on account of the jail-fees that were incurred during his detention. Cases were proved of debtors who, being unable to pay their fees, were locked up, like Castell, with prisoners suffering from small-pox, and thus rapidly destroyed; of others who were reduced almost to skeletons by

¹ See on this subject Muralt's *Letters on the English* (Eng. trans. 1726), p. 69. In 1711 the Irish Convocation ordered a special form of

prayer 'for imprisoned debtors' to be inserted in the Irish Prayer-book. Mant's *Hist. of the Irish Church*, ii. p. 233.

insufficient food, of sick women who were left without beds, without attendance, and without proper nourishment, till they died of neglect; of men who were tortured by the thumbscrew, or who lingered in slow agony under irons of intolerable weight. One poor Portuguese had been left for two months in this condition. Another prisoner had lost all memory and all use of his limbs from the sufferings he underwent. Great numbers perished through want of the most ordinary care. It appears, indeed, to have been the deliberate intention of the governor to put an end to some of his prisoners, either because they were unable to pay fees, or because they had for some reason incurred his resentment, or in order that he might obtain the small remnants of their property. In Newgate, and in some of the provincial prisons in England, almost equal atrocities were discovered. In Dublin—where inquiries were instituted with commendable promptitude by the Irish Parliament—it was found that a tax was systematically laid upon each prisoner to provide strong drink for the jail, that the worst criminals were mingled with the debtors, and that a tyranny not less brutal than that of the Fleet, was exercised by the jailer. One wretched man, crippled by a broken leg, was left for two months in a bed to which the water frequently rose, and which rotted away beneath him.¹ In most large prisons the jail fever, produced by squalor, overcrowding, bad drainage, insufficient nourishment, and insufficient exercise, made fearful ravages, and sometimes, by a righteous retribution, it spread from these centres through the rest of the community. This evil was already noticed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The 'Black Assize' at Oxford, in 1577, was long remembered, when the Chief Baron, the Sheriff, and about 300 men died within forty hours. Bacon described the jail fever as 'the most pernicious infection next to the plague, . . . whereof we have had in our time experience twice or thrice, when both the judges that sat upon the jail, and numbers of those who attended the business, or were present, sickened and

¹ Howell's *State Trials*, xvii. *Parl. Hist.* viii. 708-753. Nichol's *Life of Hogarth*, p. 19. *Historical Register*, 1729. Wright's *Memoirs of Oglethorpe*. Andrew's *Eighteenth Century*, pp. 294-298. Mr. Froude (*English in Ireland*, i. 591-592) has

enumerated many of the atrocities in the Dublin prison. He has *not* mentioned that the inquiry which revealed them was a consequence of the discovery of similar atrocities in the principal prisons of England.

died.' In 1730 Chief Baron Pengelly, Serjeant Shippen, and many others, were killed by jail fever when attending the Dorsetshire Assizes, and the High Sheriff of Somersetshire perished through the same cause. In the Scotch rebellion no less than 200 men in a single regiment were infected by some deserters. The army and navy, indeed, through the operation of the press-gang, which seized numbers just released from prison, was peculiarly exposed to the contagion, and it was said by a good judge, that the mortality produced by the jail fever was greater than that produced by all other causes combined. In 1750 the disease raged to such an extent in Newgate that at the Old Bailey Assizes two judges, the Lord Mayor, an alderman, and many of inferior rank were its victims. From that time sweet-smelling herbs were always placed in the prisoner's dock to counteract the contagion.¹

Something was done by new prison regulations, and by the removal and prosecution of some of the worst offenders, to remedy the evil; but still the condition of the prisons continued till a much later period a disgrace to English civilisation. The miseries of the imprisoned debtor were commemorated in the poetry of Thomson, and by the pencil of Hogarth, and they furnished the subject of some of the most pathetic pages of Fielding and Smollett. As late as 1741 it was announced that two prisoners had died of extreme want in the Marshalsea in Dublin, and that several others were reduced to the verge of starvation.² In 1759 Dr. Johnson computed the number of imprisoned debtors at not less than 20,000,³ and asserted that one of four died every year from the treatment they underwent.

The exposure of the abuses in the English prisons by no means exhausted the philanthropic energies of Oglethorpe. Like Berkeley, his imagination was directed towards the West, and he conceived the idea of founding a colony in which poor debtors on attaining their freedom might find a refuge. A charter was obtained in 1732. Private subscriptions flowed largely in, and with the consent of Berkeley the proceeds of the sale of

¹ *Howard on Prisons*, Introduction, Lawrence's *Life of Fielding*, pp. 296-297.

² *Dublin Gazette*, March 17-21, 1740-41.

³ *Idler*, No. 38. Johnson afterwards, in reprinting the *Idler*, admitted that he had found reasons to question the accuracy of this calculation.

some lands, which Parliament had voted for the Bermuda scheme, were appropriated to the new enterprise. Early in 1733 the colony of Georgia was founded, and Oglethorpe for many years was its governor. Besides giving a refuge to needy classes from England the colony was intended to exercise a civilising and missionary influence upon the surrounding Indians; and in its charter Oglethorpe inserted a most memorable clause, absolutely prohibiting the introduction of slaves. Georgia became a centre of the Moravian sect, the scene of the early labours of the Wesleys, and afterwards of Whitefield, and the asylum of many of the poor Protestants who had been driven, on account of their religion, from the bishopric of Salzburg. The administration of Oglethorpe was marred by some faults of temper and of tact, but it was on the whole able, energetic, and fortunate. When hostilities broke out with Spain he conducted the war with brilliant courage and success, and he succeeded in materially diminishing the atrocities which had hitherto accompanied Indian warfare. He became a general and served in the Jacobite rebellion of 1745, but was repulsed with some loss at the village of Clifton; and though acquitted by a court of inquiry, his conduct during this campaign threw a certain shadow over his military reputation. He succeeded, in 1749, in carrying through Parliament a Bill exempting the Moravians in England from the necessity of violating their religious sentiments by taking oaths or bearing arms. He was one of the first men who recognised the rising genius of Johnson; and in his old age he was the intimate friend of Johnson, Goldsmith, and Burke. His singularly varied and useful life terminated in 1785.¹

With these exceptions, probably the only considerable trace of warm and disinterested philanthropy in the sphere of politics during the period I am describing was the vote of 100,000*l.* in 1755 for the relief of the distressed Portuguese, after the great earthquake at Lisbon. In no respect does the legislation of this period present a more striking contrast to that of the

¹ Wright's *Life of Oglethorpe*. See, too, the many allusions to him in Boswell's *Johnson*. H. Walpole always depreciates Oglethorpe. Pope has devoted a well-known couplet to him.

One driven by strong benevolence of soul
 Shall fly like Oglethorpe from pole to pole,
Imitation of Horace, Ep. ii.

See, too, Wesley's *Journal* and Tyerman's *Life of Wesley*.

nineteenth century than in the almost complete absence of attempts to alleviate the social condition of the poorer classes, or to soften the more repulsive features of English life. The public press had not yet undertaken that minute and searching investigation into abuses, which is the most useful of all its functions; and the general level of humanity in the community was little, if at all, higher than in the preceding generation. The graphic and terrible picture which is given in 'Roderick Random' of the hardships endured by the common sailors on board a man-of-war, was derived from the actual experience of the author, when serving in 1741 as surgeon's mate in the expedition against Carthagera¹; and those who read it will hardly wonder that it was found impossible in time of war to man the royal navy without having constant recourse to the press-gang.² The condition of the army was little better. It appears from a memorial drawn up in 1707 that the garrison of Portsmouth was reduced by death or desertion to half its former number in less than a year and a half, through sickness, want of firing, and bad barracks, and the few new barracks that were erected were built with the most scandalous parsimony, and crowded to the most frightful excess.³ The African slave-trade was still an important branch of British enterprise. A few isolated voices, as we shall hereafter see, had been raised against it, but they had as yet made no sensible impression on the public mind, and no less a statesman than the elder Pitt made its development a main object of his policy. The penal code was not only atrociously sanguinary and continually aggravated by the addition of new offences; it was also executed in a manner peculiarly fitted to brutalise the people. In some respects, it is

¹ That it is not exaggerated is abundantly shown by Lind's *Essay on the Health of Seamen*, which was first published in 1757. This author says (ch. i.), 'I have known 1,000 men confined together in a guardship, some hundreds of whom had neither a bed nor so much as a change of linen. I have seen many of them brought into hospital in the same clothes and shirts they had on when pressed several months before.'

² Pelham, in 1749, endeavoured to abolish impressment by maintaining

a reserve of 3,000 seamen, who were to receive a pension in time of peace, and to be called into active service in time of war; but the Bill was violently opposed and eventually dropped (Coxe's *Life of Pelham*, ii. 66-70). A somewhat similar measure, but on a larger scale, had actually passed under William, but it was repealed in the ninth year of Anne (Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, ii. 683).

³ Clode's *Military Forces of the Crown*, i. 222.

true, it may be compared favourably with the criminal procedures of the Continent. English law knew nothing of torture or of arbitrary imprisonment, or of the barbarous punishment of the wheel, and no English executions were quite so horrible as those which took place in the Cevennes in the early years of the eighteenth century, or as the prolonged and hideous agonies which Damiens endured for several hours, in 1757. But this is about all that can be said. Executions in England till very lately have been a favourite public spectacle—it may almost be said a public amusement—and in the last century everything seemed done to make the people familiar with their most frightful aspects. A ghastly row of heads of the rebels of 1745 mouldered along the top of Temple Bar. Gallows were erected in every important quarter of the city, and on many of them corpses were left rotting in chains. When Blackstone wrote, there were no less than 160 offences in England punishable with death, and it was a very ordinary occurrence for ten or twelve culprits to be hung on a single occasion, for forty or fifty to be condemned at a single assize. In 1732 no less than seventy persons received sentence of death at the Old Bailey,¹ and in the same year we find no less than eighteen persons hung in one day in the not very considerable town of Cork.² Often the criminals staggered intoxicated to the gallows, and some of the most noted were exhibited for money by the turnkeys before their execution. No less than 200*l.* are said to have been made in this manner in a few days when Sheppard was prisoner in Newgate.³ Dr. Dodd, the unhappy clergyman who was executed for forgery, was exhibited for two hours in the press-room at a shilling a-head before he was led to the gallows.⁴

‘The executions of criminals,’ wrote a Swiss traveller in the beginning of the eighteenth century, ‘return every six weeks regularly with the sessions. The criminals pass through

¹ Andrews’ *Eighteenth Century*, p. 271.

² *Dublin Weekly Journal*, April 22, 1732. See, too, Madden’s *Hist. of Periodical Literature in Ireland*, i. 258; and for an almost equally striking instance in 1787 at Worcester,

Robert’s *Social Hist. of the Southern Counties*, p. 152.

³ Harris’s *Life of Hardwicke*, i. p. 158.

⁴ *Public Ledger*, quoted by Andrews, p. 281.

the streets in carts, dressed in their best clothes, with white gloves and nosegays, if it be the season. Those that die merrily or that don't at least show any great fear of death, are said to die like gentlemen; and to merit this encomium most of them die like beasts, without any concern, or like fools, having no other view than to divert the crowd. . . . Though there is something very melancholy in this, yet a man cannot well forbear laughing to see these rogues set themselves off as heroes by an affectation of despising death. . . . The frequent executions, the great numbers that suffer together, and the applauses of the crowd, may contribute something to it, and the brandy which they swallow before their setting out helps to stun them.¹ Women who were found guilty of murdering their husbands, or of the other offences comprised under the terms high or petit treason, were publicly burnt, by a law which was not abolished till 1790.² A stake ten or eleven feet high was planted in the ground. An iron ring was fastened near the top, and from it the culprit was hung while the faggots were kindled under her feet. The law enjoined that she should be burnt alive, but in practice the sentence was usually mitigated, and she was strangled before the fire touched her body. A horrible case, however, occurred in 1726 at the execution of a murderess named Katherine Hayes. The fire scorching the hands of the executioner, he slackened the rope before he strangled her, and though fresh faggots were hastily piled up, a considerable time elapsed before her agonies were terminated.³ The law which condemned a man guilty of high treason to be cut down when half hung, to be disembowelled, and to have his bowels burnt before his face, was still executed in ghastly detail.⁴ The law which condemned a prisoner who refused to plead on a capital charge to be laid naked on his

¹ Muralt's *Letters on the English Nation* (English trans. 1726), pp. 42-44.

² 'In treasons of every kind the punishment of women is the same, and different from that of men. For as the natural modesty of the sex forbids the exposing and publicly mangling their bodies, their sentence (which is to the full as terrible to the sense as the other) is, to be drawn

to the gallows and there to be burnt alive.'—*Blackstone*, iv. ch. 6.

³ Andrews, p. 279. See too, her life, in *The Lives of Eminent Criminals executed between 1720 and 1735*.

⁴ See Andrews' *Eighteenth Century*, p. 281. Eight persons guilty of holding commissions in the army of the Pretender, were executed in 1746 on Kennington Common. *The State Trials* (xviii. 351) give the following descrip-

back in a dark room, while weights of stone or iron were placed on his breast till he was slowly pressed to death, was enforced in England in 1721 and in 1735, and in Ireland as late as 1740. A criminal was sentenced in England to the same fate in 1741, but he at last consented to plead; and the law was not repealed till 1771.¹ The punishment of the pillory, which was very common, seemed specially adapted to encourage the brutality of the populace, and there are several instances of culprits who perished from the usage they underwent. Men, and even women, were still whipped publicly at the tail of a cart through the streets, and the flogging of women in England was only abolished in 1820.²

On the whole, however, the institutions and manners of the country were steadily assuming their modern aspect. From the ministry of Walpole the House of Commons had become indisputably the most powerful body in the State. Then it was that the post of First Lord of the Treasury came to be universally recognised as the head of the Government. Then it was that the forms of parliamentary procedure were in many respects definitely fixed. In 1730 the absurd practice of drawing up the written pleadings in the law courts in Latin was abolished,

tion of the execution of Mr. Townley, who was one of them. 'After he had hung six minutes he was cut down, and, having life in him as he lay upon the block to be quartered, the executioner gave him several blows on his breast, which not having the effect required, he immediately cut his throat; after which he took his head off; then ripped him open and took out his bowels and heart and threw them into the fire, which consumed them; then he slashed his four quarters and put them with the head into a coffin.'

¹ Andrews, pp. 285-286. The last case is from the *Universal Spectator*, Sept. 1741. 'On Tuesday, was sentenced to death at the Old Bailey, Henry Cook, shoemaker, of Stratford, for robbing Mr. Zachary on the highway. On Cook's refusing to plead there was a new press made and fixed in the proper place in the press-yard, there having been no person pressed since the famous Spiggott, the highwayman, about twenty years ago. Burnworth, alias Frazier, was pressed

at Kingston, in Surrey, about sixteen years ago.'—The Irish case was at Kilkenny. Madden, *Periodical Literature*, i. p. 274.

² See the very large collection of passages from old newspapers and magazines, illustrating the penal system in England, in Andrews' *Eighteenth Century*, and in that great repository of curious information *Notes and Queries*. See, too, Knight's *London*, Cowper's *Hist. of the Road*, and Madden's *Hist. of Periodical Literature in Ireland*. For cases of criminals being killed by the ill-usage they underwent in the pillory, see Prior's *Life of Burke*, i. 367; Nichol's *Memoirs of Hogarth*, pp. 190-191. Johnson wrote a very humane and sensible protest against the multiplication of capital offences, *Rambler*, No. 114, and Fielding in his *Causes of the Increase of Robbers* advocated private executions. The public whipping of women in England was abolished in 1817, the private whipping only in 1820.

in spite of the strenuous opposition of the Chief Justice Lord Raymond.¹ The last impeachment of a Prime Minister was that of Walpole; the last battle fought on British soil was in the rebellion of 1745. The last traces of the old exemptions from the dominion of the law were removed by the abolition of hereditary jurisdictions in Scotland, and of the right of sanctuary in London; and the most conspicuous sign of the insular spirit of the nation disappeared when England consented to adopt the same calendar as the most civilised nations on the Continent.

It was at this time, also, that the modern military system was firmly established. An aversion to a standing army in time of peace had long been one of the strongest of English sentiments, and it was one in which both the great parties of the State cordially concurred. The Tories were never weary of dilating upon the military despotism of Cromwell, which had left an indelible impression on the mind of the nation, while the army of 30,000 men which James had maintained without the consent of Parliament furnished one of the gravest Whig charges against that sovereign. Of all the measures that accompanied the Restoration, none had been more popular than the disbandment of the army of Cromwell; but soon after, a conflict began between the Crown and the Legislature, which continually recurred with aggravated severity up to the time of the Revolution. The last two Stuart sovereigns aimed at the maintenance, in time of peace, of a considerable military force altogether subject to their control. They governed it by articles of war. They assumed, or claimed as part of their prerogative, a power unknown to the law, of administering justice, and inflicting punishments on their soldiers by courts-martial; and James, in defiance of the Test Act, had bestowed numerous military commands upon Catholics. The steady policy of Parliament, on the other hand, was to develop the militia, which it was assumed could never become inimical to the liberties of England; to insist upon the disbandment, in time of peace, of the whole army, except, perhaps, a body-guard for the King and garrisons for the forts; and to maintain the exclusion of Catholics from commands, and the principle that punishments

¹ Campbell's *Lives of the Chancellors*, vi. 119-120.

in time of peace could only be inflicted by order of the civil magistrate. The great part which this conflict had in preparing the Revolution is well known; and an article of the Bill of Rights expressly provided that, without the consent of Parliament, the raising or keeping of a standing army within the kingdom was illegal. It soon, however, became evident to all sagacious observers that a considerable army was indispensable if England were ever to engage in a land war with Continental nations. The French army, which under Henry IV. consisted of 14,000 men, amounted, after the Peace of Nimegue, to no less than 140,000;¹ and before the close of his reign Lewis XIV. is said to have had as many as 360,000 men at one time under arms. The Emperor Charles VI. employed 170,000 soldiers in the war of 1733. The Prussian army, on the accession of Frederick the Great, consisted of 76,000 men; and every petty German ruler was augmenting his forces. The genius of Parma, Turenne, Condé, and Vauban transformed the art of war, and every improvement made a hastily levied militia more helpless before a disciplined army. Vauban and Cohorn may almost be said to have created the art of attacking and defending fortresses. Mining acquired a prominence in warfare, and was conducted with a skill formerly utterly unknown. Transportable copper pontoons for crossing rivers were invented by the French in 1672. The invention of the fixed bayonet has been attributed both to Mackay and to Vauban; and the Prussian infantry attained a perfection in manœuvring and a rapidity in firing which made every battalion a walking battery, and was speedily copied in the rest of Europe.²

All these changes, by giving a new perfection to the art of war, made it evident that the time had arrived when a considerable permanent body of highly trained soldiers was necessary for the security of the State; and that necessity in England was still more felt on account of the perpetual fear of a Jacobite insurrection. But a permanent army could not exist unless adequate means were provided for preserving its discipline, especially at a time when the dispositions of the troops were

¹ Heeren.

² Frederick II., *Mémoires de mon Temps*. See, too, for other military

statistics, Ranke's *Hist. of Prussia*, i. 420-421. Lord Hervey's *Memoirs*, i. 86.



doubtful or divided. The declaration of 800 soldiers at Ipswich in favour of James in 1689 produced the first Mutiny Act, which was enacted for six months, and which enabled courts-martial to punish mutiny and desertion by death.¹ The press-gang soon came into use, and it was much employed in time of war as a kind of irregular police; suspected criminals, or notorious bad characters, against whom no definite charge could be proved, being in this manner draughted in great numbers into the army. An Act of Anne gave justices of the peace express power to levy as soldiers such able-bodied men in their districts as had 'no lawful calling or employment, or visible means for their maintenance or livelihood.'²

There are few more curious pages in English history than the slow and gradual change of public opinion on the subject of standing armies. For more than half a century the battle continued with almost unabated violence, and a century had elapsed before it altogether subsided. The Mutiny Act was regarded as a purely temporary contrivance, but it was soon felt by most experienced men that it was impossible to govern the army if military insubordination or desertion were treated as mere breaches of contract, and were punishable only by the civil courts. The Mutiny Act was accordingly re-enacted, sometimes for six months, more frequently for a year, but it was long before it was recognised as permanently necessary. In the reigns of William and Anne there were several periods—one of them lasting for more than two years—in which it was not in force, and its invariable enactment dates only from George I. Its opponents dwelt upon the danger of severing by a special code of laws the members of the army from their fellow citizens, and of tampering with the great constitutional principle that the civil magistrate in time of peace should have sole jurisdiction for the suppression of crime; and they urged that to permit the sovereign, of his own authority, to establish articles of war, and erect courts-martial for enforcing them, was to vest a sole legislative power in the Crown. On these grounds Windham and Shippen, at the head of the Tory party, strenuously opposed the Mutiny Act. Walpole took the same course, when he was in opposition to Stanhope, and his saying that 'he who gives the power

¹ Macaulay's *Hist.*

² 3 & 4 Anne, ch. 11.

of blood gives blood' was continually quoted by its opponents. In 1717 the power of inflicting capital punishment by sentence of court-martial on deserters and mutineers was only carried by 247 to 229,¹ and most of the extensions which the Act underwent were fiercely contested. The Act of 1689 provided only for the punishment of mutiny and desertion, without exempting any officer or soldier from the ordinary processes of law, and its operation was restricted to the regular army and to England. The scope of the Act was gradually extended to Jersey and Guernsey, to Ireland, and at length to the whole dominion of the Crown. The Mutiny Act of 1713, which was the first passed in time of peace, gave courts-martial no power to award a capital sentence, and this incapacity continued till the rebellion of 1715. Under George I. the Crown for the first time obtained an express and formal authority to constitute, under royal sign manual, articles of war for the government of the army, and to enforce their penalties by courts-martial. The articles of war of 1717 made provision for the trial of ordinary civil offences by courts martial, and the Mutiny Act declared that acquittal or conviction should be a bar to all further indictment for the same offence. In 1728, however, a question arose whether the articles of war which emanated from the sovereign alone, could create capital offences unknown to the law, and the Attorney-General advised the Government that while the power of inflicting other penalties by those articles was unrestricted, no sentence extending to life or limb could be imposed by court-martial except for offences enumerated in, and made so punishable by, the Mutiny Act; and a clause to this effect has been inserted in every Mutiny Act since 1748. In 1748, too, an oath of secrecy was first imposed upon the members of courts-martial forbidding them to divulge the sentence till approved, or the votes of any member unless required by Parliament. The position of half-pay officers was long and vehemently discussed. It was contended by the Government that they were subject to the Mutiny Act, but the opinions of the judges were divided on the question. A special clause making them liable was inserted in the Act of 1747, but it was withdrawn in 1749, and in 1785 their exemption was decided. In 1754 the operation of the Mutiny Act was extended

¹ See the remarkable account of the debate in *Tindal*.

to the troops of the East India Company serving in India, and to the king's troops serving in North America, as well as to local troops serving with them. In 1756 the militia, when called out for active service, were brought under its provisions; and in 1788, in spite of the strong opposition of Fox and Sheridan, the corps of sappers and miners was included in the same category.¹

The extreme distrust with which this department of legislation was regarded is shown by the strong opposition that was aroused over almost all the questions I have enumerated. The first volume of the Commentaries of Blackstone was published as late as 1765, and it is remarkable that even at this date that great lawyer spoke with the strongest apprehension of the dangers to liberty arising from the Mutiny Act. He maintained that the condition of the army was that of absolute servitude; and he argued that every free and prudent nation should endeavour to prevent the introduction of slavery into the midst of it; that if it has unhappily been introduced, arms should at least never be placed in the hands of the slaves, and that no policy could be more suicidal than to deprive of the liberties of the constitution the very men who are at the last resort entrusted with their defence.² But whatever plausibility there may be in such reasoning, it will now hardly be disputed that a body of many thousands of armed men, whose prompt and unreasoning obedience is of the utmost moment to the State, cannot be permanently governed by the mild and tardy processes of law which are applicable to civilians. Military insubordination is so grave and, at the same time, so contagious a disease, that it requires the promptest and most decisive remedies to prevent it from leading to anarchy. By retaining a strict control over the pay and over the numbers of the soldiers, by limiting each Mutiny Act to a single year, and by entrusting its carriage through the House to a civil minister, who is responsible for its provisions, Parliament has very effectually guarded against abuses; and the army, since the days of the Commonwealth, has never been inimical to the liberties of England.

¹ See, for the origin of the Mutiny Act, Macaulay's *Hist. of England*, ch. xi., and for its subsequent history,

Clode's *Military Forces of the Crown*, vol. i.

² Blackstone, book i. ch. 13.

The jealousy that was felt about the Mutiny Act extended to other parts of military administration. After the Peace of Ryswick, Parliament insisted on reducing the forces to 10,000 men, or about a third part of what William considered necessary for the security of the State; and during the greater part of the first two Hanoverian reigns there was an annual conflict about the number of the forces. In 1717 Walpole himself, being at this time in Opposition, was prominent in urging their reduction from 16,000 to 12,000 men. During his own administration the army in time of peace was usually about 17,000 men. The terror which was produced by the Scotch invasion of 1745, the frequent alarms of a French invasion, the popularity of the wars of the elder Pitt, and the great extension of the empire resulting from his conquests, gradually led to increased armaments; nor was the growth of the regular army seriously checked by the organisation, between 1757 and 1763, of a national militia. In the early years of the eighteenth century the number of soldiers in Parliament was much complained of, and some unsuccessful efforts were made to diminish it.¹ Walpole desired to avail himself of the military as of other forms of patronage for the purpose of gratifying his supporters and thus securing his parliamentary majority; but George II., to his great credit, steadily refused to allow the army to be dragged into the vortex of corruption,² though he consented to deprive the

¹ In 1741 some members of the House of Lords drew up a very remarkable protest on this subject. After complaining of the increase of the army, and of the formation of new corps, they say: 'We apprehend that this method of augmentation by new corps may be attended with consequences fatal in time to our Constitution, by increasing the number of commissions which may be disposed of with regard to parliamentary influence only... Our distrust of the motives of this augmentation which creates at once 370 officers... ought to be the greater so near the election of a new parliament... and we cannot forget that an augmentation of 8,040 men was likewise made the very year of the election of the present Parliament... The number of officers in Parliament has gradually increased, and though

we think the gentlemen of the army as little liable to undue influence as any other body of men, yet we think it would be very imprudent to trust the very fundamentals of our Constitution, the independency of Parliaments, to the uncertain effects of ministerial favour or resentment.'—Rogers's *Protests of the Lords*, ii. 1-6.

² Walpole himself complained to Lord Hervey, 'How many people there are I could bind to me by getting things done in the army you may imagine, and that I never can get any one thing done in it you perhaps will not believe; but it is as true as that there is an army, that I never ask for the smallest commission by which a Member of Parliament may be immediately or collaterally obliged, that the King's answer is not—"I won't do that; you want always to

Duke of Bolton and Lord Cobham of their regiments on account of their votes against the excise scheme. A Bill was at this time introduced to prevent any officer above the rank of colonel from being thus deprived, except by a court-martial or an address from one House of Parliament. Considering the great power of the ministry in both Houses, it is not surprising that this measure should have been defeated by large majorities, but it is a very remarkable fact that it should have been extremely unpopular. The manner in which Walpole exercised his power was very scandalous. The desire to restrict the corrupt influence of the Government was very strong, and the excise scheme was generally detested; but so deep and so lively after the lapse of more than seventy years was the hatred of military government which the despotism of Cromwell had planted in the nation that it was sufficient to overpower all other considerations. It was contended that the measure of the Opposition, by relaxing the authority of the civil power over the military system and by aggrandising that of the courts-martial, would increase the independence and the strength of standing armies, and in consequence the dangers of a stratocracy; and it is a curious and well-attested fact that it very seriously impaired the popularity of the party who proposed it.¹

The last sign that may be noticed of the unpopularity of a standing army was the extreme reluctance of Parliament to provide barracks adequate for its accommodation. In Ireland, it is true, which was governed like a conquered country, a different policy was pursued, and a large grant for their erection was made as early as William III.,² while in Scotland they

have me disoblige all my old soldiers, you understand nothing of troops. I will order my army as I think fit; for your scoundrels in the House of Commons you may do as you please; you know I never interfere nor pretend to know anything of them, but this province I will keep to myself."—Lord Hervey's *Memoirs*, ii. 381, 382. This is not the least of the many unrecognised services of George II. to the country.

¹ Lord Hervey's *Memoirs*, i. 282–284. Coxe's *Walpole*, i. 409. *Parl. Hist.* ix. 291. William had positively refused to remove Sir G. Rooke from

the Admiralty on account of his votes in the House of Commons. Wilson's *Life of Defoe*, i. 469.

² Clode. Chesterfield appears to have contemplated a considerable multiplication of barracks. As his biographer somewhat strangely says: 'If his Lordship had returned to Ireland he would have ordered new barracks to be built in those parts of the kingdom which are not amenable to the laws of the country. By this provision he wished to make the inhabitants know that there is a God, a king, and a government.'—Maty's *Life of Chesterfield*, p. 271.

chiefly date from the rebellion of 1715, but in England the barrack accommodation till a much later period was miserably insufficient.¹ Even at the time when the army had acquired very considerable dimensions the majority of the troops were still billeted out in publichouses, kept under canvas during the most inclement portions of the year, or stowed away in barns that were purchased for the purpose. Pulteney contended that the very fact that a standing army in quarters is more burdensome than a standing army in barracks is a reason for opposing the erection of the latter, lest the people should grow accustomed to the yoke.² 'The people of this kingdom,' said General Wade in 1740, 'have been taught to associate the ideas of barracks and slavery, like darkness and the devil.'³ Blackstone, in 1765, strongly maintained that the soldiers should live 'intermixed with the people,' and that 'no separate camp, no barracks, no inland fortress, should be allowed.'⁴ It was about this time, however, that the popular jealousy of the army began first perceptibly to decline. In 1760 Lord Bath published a pamphlet which is in more than one respect very remarkable, but which is especially interesting for the evidence it furnishes of this change. He complained bitterly that the country had become strangely tolerant of a far larger peace establishment than had once been regarded as compatible with the security of the Constitution; that the members of the great families were beginning to enlist in large numbers in the army, not only in time of war, but also as a permanent profession in time of peace; and that the erection of barracks, which twenty years before would have ruined any minister who proposed it, was now accepted without serious protest, or even with popular applause.⁵ Still the old feeling of distrust was not wholly

¹ Clode's *Military Forces*, i. 221-226. A writer who visited Scotland about 1722, speaking of Berwick-on-Tweed, says: 'King George, since his accession to the throne, to ease the inhabitants of this town from quartering of soldiers, hath built a fine barrack here consisting of a square spacious court of freestone. . . . These are the first barracks erected in Great Britain, and it would be a vast ease to the inhabitants in most great towns if they had them every-

where; but English liberty will never consent to what will seem a nest for a standing army.'—Macky's *Journey through Scotland* (1723), pp. 24-25.

² *Parl. Hist.* xi. 1448.

³ *Ibid.* 1442.

⁴ Book i. ch. 13.

⁵ 'What I lament is to see the sentiments of the nation so amazingly reconciled to the prospect of having a far more numerous body of regular troops kept up after the peace than any true lover of his country in former

extinct. The scheme of fortification proposed by the younger Pitt, in 1786, was rejected on the ground that it would render necessary and would provide accommodation for a larger standing army;¹ and in 1792, when a barrack department was instituted for the purpose of erecting barracks throughout the country, a considerable opposition was shown to the scheme. Fox and Grey, as the representatives of the Whigs, vehemently denounced it in the beginning of 1793, maintaining, like Pelham, Pulteney, and Blackstone, that the erection of barracks was menacing and unconstitutional, and that the dangers of a standing army could only be averted if the soldiers were closely mixed with the populace.²

times thought could be allowed without endangering the Constitution. Nay, so unaccountably fond are we become of the military plan, that the erection of barracks, which twenty years ago would have ruined any minister who should have ventured to propose it, may be proposed safely by our own ministers now-a-days, and upon trial be found to be a favourite measure with our patriots and with the public in general. . . . What I lament, as the greatest misfortune that can threaten

the public liberty, is to see the eagerness with which our nobility, born to be the guardians of the Constitution against prerogative, solicit the badge of military subjection, not merely to serve their country in times of danger, which would be commendable, but in expectation of being continued soldiers when tranquillity shall be restored.'—*Letter to Two Great Men* (Newcastle and Pitt), p. 35.

¹ Clode.

² *Parl. Hist.* xxx. 474–496.

CHAPTER IV.

I SHALL conclude this volume with a brief sketch of the leading intellectual and social changes of the period we have been examining which have not fallen within the scope of the preceding narrative. In the higher forms of intellect if we omit the best works of Pope and Swift, who belong chiefly to the reign of Anne, the reigns of George I. and George II. were, on the whole, not prolific, but the influence of the press was great and growing, though periodical writing was far less brilliant than in the preceding period. Among other writers, Fielding, Lyttleton, and Chesterfield occasionally contributed to it. The 'Craftsman' especially, though now utterly neglected, is said to have once attained a circulation of 10,000, was believed to have eclipsed the 'Spectator,' and undoubtedly contributed largely to the downfall of Walpole. Though set up by Bolingbroke and Pulteney, it was edited by an obscure and disreputable writer named Amhurst, who devoted nearly twenty years to the service of the faction, but who was utterly neglected by them in the compromise of 1742. He died of a broken heart, and owed his grave to the charity of a bookseller. We have already seen the large sum which Walpole, though in general wholly indifferent to literary merit, bestowed upon the Government press, and its writers were also occasionally rewarded by Government patronage. Thus Trenchard, the author of 'Cato's Letters,' obtained the post of 'commissioner of wine-licences' from Walpole; and Concannon, another ministerial writer, was made Attorney-General of Jamaica by Newcastle. In 1724 there were three daily and five weekly papers printed in London, as well as ten which appeared three times a week.¹ The number steadily increased, and a provincial press gradually

¹ Andrew's *Hist. of British Journalism*, i. p. 129.

grew up. The first trace of newspapers outside London is in the time of the Commonwealth, when the contending armies carried with them printing presses for the purpose of issuing reports of their proceedings; but the first regular provincial papers appear to have been created in the last decade of the seventeenth century, and by the middle of the eighteenth century almost every important provincial town had its local organ. Political caricatures, which were probably Italian in their origin,¹ came into fashion in England during the South Sea panic. Caricatures on cards, which were for a time exceedingly popular, were invented by George Townshend, in 1756.² As the century advanced the political importance of the press became very apparent. 'Newspapers,' said a writer in the 'Gentleman's Magazine' of 1731, 'are of late so multiplied as to render it impossible, unless a man makes it his business, to consult them all. . . . Upon calculating the number of newspapers it is found that (besides divers written accounts) no less than 200 half-sheets per month are thrown from the press, only in London, and about as many printed elsewhere in the three kingdoms; . . . so that they are become the chief channels of amusement and intelligence.'³ 'The people of Great Britain,' said Mr. Danvers in 1738, 'are governed by a power that never was heard of as a supreme authority in any age or country before. . . . It is the government of the press. The stuff which our weekly newspapers are filled with, is received with greater reverence than Acts of Parliament, and the sentiments of one of these scribblers have more weight with the multitude than the opinion of the best politician in the kingdom.'⁴ 'No species of literary men,' wrote Dr. Johnson in 1758, 'has lately been so much multiplied as the writers of news. Not many years ago the nation was content with one Gazette, but now we have not only in the

¹ In the recently published autobiography of Lord Shelburne there is a curious anecdote on the subject of caricatures. 'He [Lord Melcombe] told me that coming home through Brussels, he was presented to Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, after her disgrace. She said to him, 'Young man, you come from Italy; they tell me of a new invention there called caricature drawing. Can you find me

somebody that will make me a caricature of Lady Masham, describing her covered with running sores and ulcers, that I may send it to the Queen to give her a right idea of her new favourite?' (p. 122).

² Walpole's *Memoirs of George II.* ii. 228.

³ Advertisement to the first number of the *Gentleman's Magazine*.

⁴ *Parl. Hist.* x. 448.

metropolis, papers of every morning and every evening, but almost every large town has its weekly historian.¹ One of the consequences of the complete subjection of literary men to the booksellers was the creation of magazines, which afforded a more certain and rapid remuneration than books, and gave many writers a scanty and precarious subsistence. The 'Gentleman's Magazine' appeared in 1731. It was speedily followed by its rival, the 'London Magazine;' and in 1750 there were eight periodicals of this kind. In the middle of the eighteenth century also, literary reviews began in England. In 1752 there were three—the 'Literary,' the 'Critical,' and the 'Monthly.' Under George II. an additional tax of $\frac{1}{2}d.$ had been imposed on newspapers, and an additional duty of a shilling on advertisements; but the demand for this form of literature was so great that these impositions do not appear to have seriously checked it.² The essay writers had made it their great object as much as possible to popularise and diffuse knowledge, and to bring down every question to a level with the capacities of the idlest reader; and without any great change in education, any display of extraordinary genius, or any real enthusiasm for knowledge, the circle of intelligence was slowly enlarged. The progress was probably even greater among women than among men. Swift, in one of his latest letters, noticed the great improvement which had taken place during his lifetime in the education and in the writing of ladies;³ and it is to this period that some of the best female correspondence in our literature belongs.

The prevailing coarseness, however, of fashionable life and sentiment was but little mitigated. The writings of Swift, Defoe, Fielding, Coventry, and Smollett are sufficient to illustrate the great difference which in this respect separated the first half of the eighteenth century from our own day, and unlike Anne, the first two Hanoverian sovereigns did nothing to improve the prevailing tone. Each king lived

¹ *The Idler*, No. 30.

² See, on the History of Newspapers, Chalmers' *Life of Ruddiman*. Nichols' *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century*, vol. iv. Hunt's *Fourth Estate*. Andrews' *Hist. of*

British Journalism. Madden's *Hist. of Irish Periodical Literature*. Wright's *England under the House of Hanover*.

³ Mrs. Delany's *Correspondence*, i. 551.

publicly with mistresses, and the immorality of their Courts was accompanied by nothing of that refinement or grace which has often cast a softening veil over much deeper and more general corruption. On this subject the vivid and undoubtedly authentic picture of the Court of George II. which is furnished by Lord Hervey enables us to speak with much confidence. Few figures in the history of the time are more worthy of study than that shrewd and coarse-minded Queen, who by such infinite adroitness, and by such amazing condescensions, succeeded in obtaining insensibly a complete command over the mind of her husband, and a powerful influence over the politics of England. Living herself a life of unsullied virtue, discharging under circumstances of peculiar difficulty the duties of a wife with the most exemplary patience and diligence, exercising her great influence in Church and State with singular wisdom, patriotism, and benevolence, she passed through life jesting on the vices of her husband and of his ministers with the coarseness of a trooper, receiving from her husband the earliest and fullest accounts of every new love affair in which he was engaged, and prepared to welcome each new mistress, provided only she could herself keep the first place in his judgment and in his confidence. The character of their relation remained unbroken to the end. No stranger death scene was ever painted than that of Caroline,¹ nor can we easily find a more striking illustration of the inconsistencies of human nature than that a woman so coarse and cynical in her judgments of others should have herself died a victim of an excessive and misplaced delicacy.² The

¹ The Queen had always wished the King to marry again. 'She had often said so when he was present and when he was not present, and when she was in health, and gave it now, as her advice to him when she was dying; upon which his sobs began to rise, and his tears to fall with double vehemence. Whilst in the midst of this passion, wiping his eyes and sobbing between every word, with much ado he got out this answer: "Non, j'aurai des maîtresses." To which the Queen made no other reply than: "Ah, mon Dieu! cela

n'empêche pas." I know this episode will hardly be credited, but it is literally true.' — Lord Hervey's *Memoirs*, ii. 513-514.

² She had for fourteen years suffered from a rupture which she could not bring herself to reveal except to her husband. When on her death-bed, and suffering extreme agony, she still concealed it from her doctors, and it was contrary to her ardent wish that the King, too late to save her, told them of her complaint. Lord Hervey, ii. 505-506.

works of Richardson, which appeared between 1740 and 1753, and which at once attained an extraordinary popularity, probably contributed something to refine the tone of society, but the improvement was not very perceptible till the reign of George III. Sir Walter Scott, in a well-known anecdote, has illustrated very happily the change that had taken place. He tells us that a grand-aunt of his own assured him that the novels of Aphra Behn were as current upon the toilet table in her youth as the novels of Miss Edgeworth in her old age, and he has described very vividly the astonishment of his old relative when, curiosity leading her, after a long interval of years, to turn over the forgotten pages she had delighted in when young, she found that, sitting alone at the age of eighty, she was unable to read without shame a book, which sixty years before she had heard read out for amusement in large circles consisting of the best society in London.¹

In one respect during the first half of the eighteenth century there was a marked deterioration. The passion for gambling, which had been very prevalent since the Restoration, appears to have attained its climax under the first two Georges. It had been very considerably stimulated by the madness of speculation which infected all classes during the South Sea mania. That desire to make rapid fortunes, that contempt for the slow and steady gains of industry which has in our own day so often produced the wildest combinations of recklessness and credulity, was never more apparent. Scheme after scheme of the most fantastic description rose, and glittered, and burst. Companies for 'Fishing up Wrecks on the Irish Coast,' for 'Insurance against Losses by Servants,' for 'Making Salt Water Fresh,' for 'Extracting Silver from Lead,' for 'Transmuting Quicksilver into Malleable and Fine Metal,' for 'Importing Jackasses from Spain,' for 'Trading in Human Hair,' for 'A Wheel for Perpetual Motion,' as well as many others, attracted crowds of eager subscribers. One projector announced a Company 'for an undertaking which shall in due time be revealed,' each subscriber to pay at once two guineas, and afterwards to receive a share of a hundred, with a disclosure of the object. In a

¹ Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, v. 136-137.

single morning he received 2,000 guineas, with which he immediately decamped.¹

It was natural that this passion for speculation should have stimulated the taste for gambling in private life. It had long been inveterate among the upper classes, and it soon rose to an unprecedented height. The chief, or, at least, the most prominent, centre was White's chocolate-house. Swift tells us that Lord Oxford never passed it without bestowing on it a curse as 'the bane of the English nobility'; and it continued during the greater part of the century to be the scene of the wildest and most extravagant gambling. It was, however, only the most prominent among many similar establishments which sprang up around Charing Cross, Leicester Fields, and Golden Square. The Duke of Devonshire lost an estate at a game of basset. The fine intellect of Chesterfield was thoroughly enslaved by the vice. At Bath, which was then the centre of English fashion, it reigned supreme; and the physicians even recommended it to their patients as a form of distraction. In the green-rooms of the theatres, as Mrs. Bellamy assures us, thousands were often lost and won in a single night. Among fashionable ladies the passion was quite as strong as among men, and the professor of whist and quadrille became a regular attendant at their levees. Miss Pelham, the daughter of the prime minister, was one of the most notorious gamblers of her time, and Lady Cowper speaks in her 'Diary' of sittings at Court at which the lowest stake was 200 guineas. The public lotteries contributed very powerfully to diffuse the taste for gambling among all classes. They had begun in England in the seventeenth century; and though more than once forbidden, they enabled the Government to raise money with so little unpopularity that they were again resorted to. 'I cannot forbear telling you,' wrote Addison to an Irish friend in 1711, 'that last week I drew a prize of 1,000*l.* in the lottery.'² Fielding wrote a satire on the passion for lotteries prevalent in his time. The discovery of some gross frauds in their management contributed to throw them into discredit, and Pelham is said to have ex-

¹ Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, vol. iii.

² Addison to Jos. Dawson. (Dec.

18, 1711) Departmental Correspondence. Irish State Paper Office.

pressed some disapproval of them, but they were not finally suppressed in England till 1823. Westminster Bridge, which was begun in 1736, was built chiefly from the produce of lotteries. Another instance of their employment is deserving of special remembrance, for it is connected with the origin of one of the most valuable of London institutions. In 1753 lotteries were established to purchase the Sloane collection and the Harleian manuscripts, which were combined with the Cottonian collection, and deposited in Montague House under the name of the British Museum.¹

Concerning the amusements and social life of the upper classes I shall content myself with making a few somewhat miscellaneous observations. The subject is a very large one, and it would require volumes to exhaust it; but it is, I think, possible to select from the mass of details a few facts which are not without a real historic importance, as indicating the tendencies of taste, and thus throwing some light on the moral history of the nation. It was said that the Revolution brought four tastes into England, two of which were chiefly due to Mary, and two to her husband. To Mary was due a passion for coloured East Indian calicoes, which speedily spread through all classes of the community, and also a passion for rare and eccentric porcelain, which continued for some generations to be a favourite topic with the satirists. William, on his side, set the fashion of picture-collecting and gave a great impulse to gardening.² This latter taste, which forms one of the healthiest elements in English country life, attained its height in the first half of the eighteenth century, and it took a form which was entirely new. In the reign of Charles II. the parks of Greenwich and St. James had been laid out by the great French gardener Le Nôtre, and the taste which he made general in Europe reigned in its most exaggerated form in England. It appeared to be a main object to compel nature to recede as far as possible, to repress every irregularity, to make the human hand apparent in every shrub, and to convert gardening into an anomalous form of sculpture. The trees were

¹ Macpherson, iii. 300. Beckmann's *Hist. of Inventions*, ii. pp. 423-429. The passion for gambling in England appears in all the correspondence and

other light literature of the time.

² Defoe's *Tour through Great Britain*, i. 121-124.

habitually carved into cones, or pyramids, or globes, into smooth, even walls, or into fantastic groups of men and animals. The flower-beds were laid out symmetrically in architectural figures. Long, straight, and formal alleys, a perfect uniformity of design, and a constant recurrence of similar forms, were essential to a well-arranged garden. The passion for gardening, however, at this time took some root in England, and the writings of Evelyn did much to extend it. William introduced the fashion of masses of clipped yews forming the avenue or shading the approaches of the house, and of imposing iron gates. Sir William Temple, in his essay 'On the Garden of Epicurus,' accurately reflected the prevailing taste. But early in the eighteenth century two great gardeners—Bridgeman, who died in 1737, and Kent, who died in 1748—originated a new form of landscape-gardening which speedily acquired an almost universal popularity. They utterly discarded all vegetable sculpture and all symmetry of design, gave free scope to the wild, luxuriant and irregular beauties of nature, and made it their aim to reproduce, as far as possible, in a small compass its variety and its freedom. The essay in which Bacon had urged that one part of a garden should be made an imitation of unrestricted nature, the description of Paradise in Milton, and the description of the garden of Armida in Tasso, were cited as foreshadowing the change, and at a later period the poetry of Thomson undoubtedly contributed to sustain it. Addison and Pope laid out their gardens on the new plan, and defended it with their pens,¹ and the latter is said to have greatly assisted Kent by his advice. Spence and Horace Walpole were enthusiastic disciples.² The new system was made the subject of a graceful poem by Mason, and of an ingenious essay by Shenstone, and in 1770 appeared Whately's 'Observations on Modern Gardening,' which was the first considerable standard work in England upon the subject. The gardens of the Prince of Wales at Carlton House were imitated from that of Pope at Twickenham.³ Kensington Gardens

¹ See Addison's papers in the *Spectator*, No. 414, 477, and Pope's very curious paper in the *Guardian*, No. 173. See, too, Pope's *Moral Essays*, Ep. 4.

² Spence's *Anecdotes*, xxxi. Wal-

pole on *Modern Gardens*. See, too, his *Life of Kent*. See also, on the spread of the taste, Angeloni's *Letters on the English Nation*, ii. 266-274.

³ Walpole on *Modern Gardening*.

were laid out by Kent on the new plan, as well as the gardens of Claremont and Esher, those of Lord Burlington at Chiswick, and those of Lord Cobham at Stowe.

The example was speedily followed, and often exaggerated,¹ in every part of England, and the revolution of taste was accompanied by a great increase in the love of gardening. In the beginning of the century there were probably not more than 1,000 species of exotics in England, but before its close more than 5,000 new kinds were introduced. When Miller published the first edition of his 'Dictionary of Gardening' in 1724, only twelve species of evergreens were grown in the island, and the number of the plants cultivated in England is said to have more than doubled between 1731 and 1768.² Very many were introduced from Madeira, and the West Indies, which had been explored by Sir Hans Sloane, and from the American colonies, which had been explored by several independent investigators; and the taste for botany was still more diffused by the long controversies that followed the publication in 1735 of the great discovery of Linnæus about the sexual nature of plants.³ Landscape-gardening is said to have been introduced into Ireland by Dr. Delany, the friend of Swift, and into Scotland by Lord Kames,⁴ but both countries remained in this respect far behind England. At Edinburgh a botanical garden appears to have existed as early as 1680.⁵ In Ireland a florists' club was established by some Huguenot refugees in the reign of George I., but it met with no encouragement and speedily expired.⁶ An Englishman named Threlkeld, who was settled in Dublin, published in 1727 'A Synopsis of Irish Plants;' and another work entitled 'Botanologia Universalis Hibernica, or a general Irish Herbal,' was published in 1735 by a writer named Keogh.⁷ In England the love for gardens and for botany continually extended, and it forms one of the most remarkable features in the history of national tastes during the first half of the eighteenth century.

¹ See on these exaggerations, *The World*, Nos. 6, 15. The taste was carried so far that dead trees were sometimes planted, and every straight walk condemned.

² Loudon's *Encyclopædia of Gardening*, pp. 276, 277.

³ Miller's *Retrospect of the Eigh-*

teenth Century, i. pp. 163-188.

⁴ Loudon's *Encyclopædia*, pp. 269, 273.

⁵ Pulteney's *Progress of Botany in England*, ii. 4.

⁶ Loudon's *Encyclopædia*, p. 282.

⁷ Pulteney's *Progress of Botany in England*, ii. 197-201.

The poet Gray, in a letter written in 1763, observes that 'our skill in gardening or laying out grounds is the only taste we can call our own, the only proof of original talent in matters of pleasure.' In architecture, it is true, England had produced one or two respectable and one really great name; and the fire of London had given Wren a noble field for the display of his genius, but in other departments of art there was an almost absolute blank. Few questions in history are more perplexing, and perhaps insoluble, than the causes which govern the great manifestations of æsthetic genius. Germany, which up to the time of the Reformation was in this respect peculiarly prolific—Germany which is now pre-eminently the land of artistic criticism, and which stands in the first rank of artistic production—can scarcely be said to have produced a single painter of real genius during the long period that elapsed between the death of Holbein and the dawn of the nineteenth century. France, the richest, the most cultivated, the most luxurious nation on the Continent, in spite of a munificent royal patronage of art, was during the same period but little more successful. Many very considerable artists, no doubt, arose; but yet the nation which appears beyond all others to possess the gift of grace and delicacy of touch, which has created the Gobelins tapestry and the Sèvres china, and has governed through a long succession of generations the taste of Europe, could boast of no painter except Claude Lorraine, who had taken absolutely a foremost place; and its art was far inferior to that which grew up in more than one small Italian province, among the canals of Holland, or in the old cities of Flanders. But of all the great civilised nations, England in this respect ranked the last. Dobson, indeed, who had been brought forward by the patronage of Vandyck, and who died at the early age of thirty-six, showed some real talent for portrait-painting, and Oliver, Hilliard, and Cooper some skill in miniature; but still, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, not a single English painter or sculptor had taken a permanent place in European art, and the number of painters, even of third or fourth rate excellence, was very small. The principal, and, indeed, the most congenial, employment of the British artist appears to have been the production

of the gaudy sign-boards which nearly every shopkeeper was then accustomed to hang out before his door.¹

This complete barrenness of British art is in many ways remarkable. No real deficiency of imagination can be attributed to a nation which has produced the noblest poetic literature in Christendom; and something had been done to stimulate artistic taste. Henry VIII., Elizabeth, and above all, Charles I., had warmly patronised art, and the latter was one of the two greatest collectors of his time. He purchased the cartoons of Raphael and the whole collection of the Duke of Mantua, which was then the most valuable in Europe. He drew over to England both Rubens and Vandyck, and his competition with Philip IV. of Spain was so keen that it is said to have tripled the ordinary price of the works of the great artists.² In the early years of the eighteenth century the English were already famous for their assiduity in haunting the galleries in Italy,³ and for their zeal in collecting pictures; and their aristocracy possessed ample wealth to enable them to gratify their desires. Catholicism is, no doubt, more favourable to art than Protestantism; but if the change of religion had in some degree impaired the appreciation of Italian or Spanish art, the English were at least in intimate connection with Holland, where a noble school existed which was essentially the creation of Protestantism. A few Italian and a long succession of Dutch and Flemish artists visited England. It possessed, indeed, an admirable school of painting, but it was a school which was represented almost exclusively by foreigners, by Holbein, Rubens, Vandyck, Lely, and Kneller. Foreign writers were accustomed to attribute the utter absence of native talent in art to the aspect of physical nature, and especially to the turbid and depressing gloom of a northern sky; but the explanation will hardly appear sufficient to those who remember that Rembrandt, Van der Helst, Potter, Gerard Dow, Cuyp, and many other artists of consummate power, grew up beneath a sky that is scarcely brighter than that of England, and in a country much less eminently endowed with natural beauty.

¹ *Spectator*, No. 28.

² Du Bos, *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture*, tom. ii. p.

152 (1733). Walpole's *Anecdotes of Painting*, ch. ix.

³ *Ibid.*

I do not pretend to explain fully this deficiency, but several partial solutions may be given. Puritanism was exceedingly inimical to art, and the Parliament in 1645 ordered that the pictures in the royal collection containing representations of the Second Person of the Trinity, or of the Virgin Mary, should be burnt, and that all the other pictures collected by Charles should be sold. Fortunately this very characteristic edict was not fully complied with. Cromwell succeeded in saving the cartoons of Raphael and other less important pictures for England and the world; but a great portion of the art treasures of the King were dispersed. Many of his finest pictures found their way to the Escorial, and a ply which was exceedingly hostile to art was given to a large part of the English people. In order that the artistic capacities of a nation should be largely developed, it is necessary that the great body of the people should come in frequent contact with artistic works, and that there should be institutions securing the means of artistic education. Both of these conditions were wanting in England. In ancient Greece and in modern Florence all classes of the community had the opportunity of becoming familiar with the noblest works of the chisel or of the pencil; their taste was thus gradually educated, and any artistic genius that was latent among them was awakened. But in England by far the greater number of works of art were in private hands, while Sabbatarian prejudices and the division of classes produced by an aristocratic tone of manners, effectually excluded the great mass of the people from the small number of paintings that were in public institutions. Annual exhibitions were as yet unknown.¹ The country habits of the English nobility turned their tastes chiefly in the direction of field-sports and other outdoor pursuits, and art never occupied the same prominence in their lives as it did in those of the Cardinals of Rome, or of the rich merchants of Florence, Venice, and Amsterdam. The same predilection for a country life induced most of those who were real

¹ According to Pye, the first public exhibition of British Works of Art was about 1740, when Hogarth presented a portrait to the Foundling Hospital, and other artists followed his example. In 1759 a meeting of artists resolved

to establish an annual exhibition, and in the following year they, for the first time, carried their intention into effect.—Pye's *Patronage of British Art*, p. 286.

collectors to accumulate their treasures in their country-houses, where they were seen only by a few private friends, and were utterly without influence on the nation at large. In the middle of the eighteenth century, England was already very rich in private collections,¹ but the proportion of Englishmen who had ever looked at a good picture or a good statue was very small. Nor were there any means of artistic education. At Paris the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture was established as early as 1648, and in 1665 Colbert founded that admirable institution, the French Academy at Rome, for the purpose of providing young artists with the best possible instruction. In England nothing of the kind existed, and in the beginning of the eighteenth century a poor student of art could find no assistance except by private patronage. The first two Georges were absolutely indifferent to art, and although a fashion of collecting pictures had spread very widely among the English aristocracy, their patronage was neither generous nor intelligent. It was observed that portrait-painting, which touched another sentiment besides love of pure art, was the only form that was really encouraged. Painter after painter, distinguished in other branches, came over to England, but they invariably found that they could succeed only by devoting themselves to the one department which appealed directly to the vanity of their patrons.² ‘Painters of history,’ said Kneller, ‘make the dead live, but do not begin to live themselves till they are dead. I paint the

¹ A list of the chief collections in England in 1766 is given in Pye’s *Patronage of British Art*, pp. 145–146, and catalogues of the chief pictures contained in them will be found in a book called *The English Connoisseur: an account of whatever is curious in painting and sculpture in the palaces and seats of the nobility and gentry of England* (1766).

² ‘No painter, however excellent, can succeed among the English, that is not engaged in painting portraits. Canaletti, whose works they admired whilst he resided at Venice, at his coming to London had not in a whole year the employment of three months. Watteau, whose pictures are sold at such great prices at present, painted never a picture but two which he

gave to Dr. Mead, during the time he resided here. At the same time, Vanloo, who came hither with the reputation of painting portraits very well, was obliged to keep three or four subaltern painters for drapery and other parts.’—Angeloni’s *Letters on the English* (2nd ed. 1756), vol. i. p. 97. So, too, Amiconi, a Venetian historical painter, came to England in 1729, and tried for a time to maintain a position by his own form of art, ‘but,’ says Horace Walpole, ‘as portraiture is the one thing necessary to a painter in this country, he was obliged to betake himself to that employment much against his inclination.’—*Anecdotes of Painting*. See, too, Dallaway’s *Progress of the Arts in England*, pp. 455–461.

living and they make me live.' Hogarth described portrait-painting as 'the only flourishing branch of the high tree of British art.' Barry complained that 'the difficulty of subsisting by any other species of art . . . and the love of ease and affluence had so operated upon our youth that the country had been filled with this species of artist.' The Dutch portrait-painter Vanloo, who came to London in 1737, was so popular that, as a nearly contemporary writer tells us, 'for several weeks after his arrival, the train of carriages at his door was like that at the door of a theatre. He had some hundreds of portraits begun, and was obliged to give as many as five sittings in a day. Large bribes were given by many to the man who kept the register of his engagements, in order to accelerate their sittings, and when that was not done, it was often necessary to wait six weeks.' Vanloo remained in England only four years, but is said to have accumulated in that time considerable wealth.¹ On the other hand, it is very remarkable that, in the next generation, Wilson, the first great English landscape-painter, and Barry, the first historical painter of real talent, were both of them unable to earn even a small competence, and both of them died in extreme poverty. Vertue, who died in 1756, carried the art of engraving to considerable perfection, and was followed by Boydell and a few other native engravers. Kneller, and afterwards Thornhill, made some attempts in the first quarter of the century to maintain a private academy in England for artistic instruction, but they appear to have met with little encouragement, and the reign of George I. is on the whole one of the darkest periods in the history of English art. Early in the next reign, however, a painter of great and original genius emerged from obscurity, who, in a low form of art, attained a high, and almost a supreme, perfection. William Hogarth was born in London, of obscure parents, in 1698. His early years were chiefly passed in engraving arms, shop bills, and plates for books. He then painted portraits, some of them of singular beauty, and occasionally furnished designs for tapestry. In 1730 he secretly married the daughter of Sir James Thornhill, the fashionable artist of the day, and in 1731 he completed his 'Harlot's

¹ Rouquet, *L'État des Arts en Angleterre*, pp. 59-60.

Progress,' which proved to all good judges that, for the first time, a really great native painter had arisen in England. Had his genius been of a higher order, he would probably have been less successful. He had little charm of colouring or sense of beauty, and no power of idealising nature; but the intense realism, the admirable homeliness and truth of his pictures of English life, and the excellent morals they invariably conveyed, appealed to all classes, while their deep and various meaning, and the sombre imagination he sometimes threw over his conceptions,¹ raised them far above the level of the mere grotesque. The popularity of his designs was such that they were immensely imitated, and it was found necessary to pass an Act of Parliament, in 1735, vesting an exclusive right in designers and engravers, and restraining the multiplying of copies of works without the consent of the artist.² In the same reign sculpture in England was largely pursued by Rysbrack, a native of Antwerp, and by Roubiliac, a native of Lyons.

The taste for music was more widely diffused than that for painting; but although it made rapid progress in the first half of the eighteenth century, this was in no degree due to native talent. A distinguished French critic³ has noticed, as one of the most striking of the many differences between the two great branches of the Teutonic race, that, among all modern civilised nations, the Germans are probably the most eminent, and the English the most deficient, in musical talent. Up to the close of the seventeenth century, however, this distinction did not exist, and England might fairly claim a very respectable rank among musical nations. No feature in the poetry of Shakespeare or Milton is more remarkable than the exquisite and delicate appreciation of music they continually evince, and the musical dramas known under the name of masques, which were so popular from the time of Ben Jonson to the time of the Rebellion, kept up a general taste for the art. Henry Lawes, who composed the music for 'Comus,' as well as edited the poem, and to whom Milton has paid a beautiful compliment,⁴

¹ See *e.g.* that noble sketch—the last he ever drew—called 'Finis.'

² 8 Geo. ii. c. 13. Nichols' *Memoirs of Hogarth*, p. 37.

³ Renan.

⁴ 'But first I must put off
These my sky-robcs, spun out of Iris' woof,
And take the weeds and likeness of a swain

was conspicuous as a composer. Blow, in the last years of the seventeenth century, contributed much to church music; but the really great name in English music was Henry Purcell, who was born in 1658, and died in 1697, and who, in the opinion of many competent judges, deserves to rank among the very greatest composers who had up to that date arisen in Europe. In the early years of the eighteenth century, however, music was purely an exotic. The capital fact of this period was the introduction and great popularity of the Italian opera. Operas on the Italian model first appeared in England in 1705. They were at first sung in English, and by English performers; but soon after, some Italian castrati having come over, the principal characters in the dialogue sang in Italian, while the subordinate characters answered in English. After two or three years, this absurdity passed away, and the operas became wholly Italian. In 1710 the illustrious Handel first came to England, and 'Rinaldo,' his earliest opera, appeared in 1711. Bononcini, who at one time rivalled his popularity as a composer, followed a few years later. An Academy for Music was founded in 1720, and several Italian singers of the highest merit were brought over, at salaries which were then unparalleled in Europe. The two great female singers Cuzzoni and La Faustina obtained each 2,000 guineas a-year, Farinelli 1,500 guineas and a benefit, Senesino 1,400 guineas. The rivalry between Cuzzoni and La Faustina, and the rivalry between Handel and Bononcini, divided society into factions almost like those of the Byzantine empire; and the conflicting claims of the two composers were celebrated in a well-known epigram, which has been commonly attributed to Swift, but which was in reality written by Byrom.¹ The author little imagined

That to the service of this house belongs,
 Who with his soft pipe and smooth-dittied song
 Well knows to still the wild winds when they roar,
 And hush the waving woods.'

Comus.

Lawes taught music in the house of Lord Bridgewater, where *Comus* was first represented.

¹ Some say that Signor Bononcini
 Compared to Handel is a ninny;
 Others aver that to him Handel
 Is scarcely fit to hold a candle.
 Strange that such difference should be
 'Twixt tweedledum and tweedledee.

that one of the composers, whom he treated with such contempt, was, in his own, and that no ignoble, sphere, among the master intellects of mankind.¹

The difficulties against which the new entertainment had to struggle were very great. Addison opposed it bitterly in the 'Spectator.' The partisans of the regular drama denounced it as an absurd and mischievous novelty. It had to encounter the strong popular prejudice against foreigners and Papists. It was weakened by perpetual quarrels of composers and singers, and it was supported chiefly by the small and capricious circle of fashionable society. In 1717 the Italian theatre was closed for want of support, but it revived in 1720 under the auspices of Handel. The extraordinary success of the 'Beggars' Opera,' which appeared in 1728, for a time threw it completely in the shade. The music of Handel was deserted, and the Italian theatre again closed. It reopened in the following year under the joint direction of Handel and of Heidegger, a Swiss, famous for his ugliness, his impudence, and his skill in organising public amusements; and it continued to flourish until a quarrel broke out between Handel and the singer Senesino. The great nobles, who were the chief supporters of the opera, took the side of the singer, set up, in 1733, a rival theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, attracted to it Heidegger and most of the best singers, made it their special object to ruin Handel, and succeeded in so governing the course of fashion that his theatre was almost deserted. The King, it is true, steadily supported him, and Queen Caroline, with the tact she usually showed in discovering the highest talent in the country, threw her whole enthusiasm into his cause; but the Prince of Wales, who was in violent opposition to his father, took the opposite side, and the Court could not save the great musician from ruin. 'The King and Queen,' says Lord Hervey, 'sat freezing constantly at his empty Haymarket opera, whilst the Prince, with the chief of the nobility, went as constantly to that of Lincoln's Inn Fields.'² Handel struggled

¹ Burney's *Hist. of Music*. Schölicher's *Life of Handel*. Byrom's *Remains*, vol. i. pt. i. p. 150.

² Lord Hervey's *Memoirs*, i. 314. The Princess Royal was equally enthusiastic. The King said, with good-nature and good sense, 'He did not think setting oneself at the head

of a faction of fiddlers a very honourable employment for people of quality, or the ruin of one poor fellow [Handel] so generous or so good-natured a scheme as to do much honour to the undertakers, whether they succeeded or not.'

for some time vainly against the stream ; all the savings he had amassed were lost, and his career was for a time ended by bankruptcy in 1737.

The effect, however, was only to make him turn more exclusively to that nobler and loftier form of music in which he had no rival. Like the great blind poet of Puritanism, whom in more than one respect he resembled, he was indeed one of those whose lips the Seraphim had touched and purified with the hallowed fire from the altar ; and it was only when interpreting the highest religious emotions that his transcendent genius was fully felt. If it be true that music is in modern art what painting was in the Renaissance and what sculpture was in antiquity, the name of Handel can be placed little below those of Raphael and of Phidias, and it is to his sacred music that his pre-eminence is mainly due. To recall sacred music from the neglect into which it had fallen in England had long been his desire. In 1713 he had composed a grand 'Te Deum' and 'Jubilate' in celebration of the Peace of Utrecht. From 1718 to 1721 he had been organist to the chapel of the Duke of Chandos. He introduced for the first time organ concerts into England ; and, in addition to many beautiful anthems, he composed his oratorio of 'Esther' for the Duke of Chandos's chapel. Oratorios had been invented in the middle of the sixteenth century by St. Philip Neri in order to counteract the attractions of the theatre, but they had hitherto been absolutely unknown in England. 'Esther' was brought upon the public stage for the first time in 1732. It was followed in 1733 by 'Deborah' and by 'Athalie,' in 1738 by 'Israel in Egypt,' in 1740 by 'Saul.' The earliest of these great compositions were received with considerable applause, but the last two were almost utterly neglected. The musical education of the public was not sufficient to appreciate them ; the leaders of fashion who professed to regulate taste in matters of art steadily and vindictively derided them ; and the King and Queen incurred no small ridicule for their persistent admiration of Handel. A story is told of Chesterfield leaving the empty theatre in which an oratorio was being sung before the King, and giving as his reason that he did not desire to intrude on the privacy of his sovereign. Horace Walpole, who assumed the language of a great critic in matters of art, but whose cold

heart and feebly fastidious taste were usually incapable of appreciating any high form of excellence, sneered at Handel, as he afterwards sneered at Garrick; and it came to be looked upon in fashionable circles as one of the signs of good taste to ridicule his music.¹ Some ladies of position actually engaged a famous mimic and comic singer to set up a puppet-show in the hope of drawing away the people from Handel,² and with the same view they specially selected the days on which an oratorio was performed, for their card parties or concerts.³

There was, of course, a certain party in his favour. Arbuthnot, who was himself an excellent musician, steadily supported him. Pope, though perfectly insensible to the charm of music, resting on the opinion of Arbuthnot, took the same side. A statue of Handel by Roubiliac was erected in Vauxhall in 1738, but of the general depreciation and condemnation of his music there can be no doubt. The death of Queen Caroline, in 1737, deprived him of his warmest patron, and he composed an anthem for her funeral, which Dr. Burney regarded as the most perfect of all his works. After the bankruptcy of his theatre, and the almost total failure of his two last oratorios, he felt it necessary to bend before the storm, and he resolved for a time to fly where his works 'would be out of the reach of enmity and prejudice.' He had already composed the music for the greatest of all his works, but he would not risk its production in London, and he adopted the resolution of bringing it out for the first time in Dublin.⁴

¹ Fielding has noticed this in a characteristic passage. 'It was Mr. Western's custom every afternoon, as soon as he was drunk, to hear his daughter play on the harpsichord; for he was a great lover of music, and, perhaps, had he lived in town, might have passed as a connoisseur, for he always excepted against the finest compositions of Mr. Handel; he never relished any music but what was light and airy; and, indeed, his most favourite tunes were "Old Sir Simon, the King," "St. George he was for England," "Bobbing Joan," and some others.'—*Tom Jones*.

² See Smollett's poem called

³ But soon, ah soon, rebellion will commence
If music meanly borrow aid from sense:

'Advice,' and the accompanying note.

Again shall Handel raise his laurelled brow,
Again shall harmony with rapture glow!
The spells dissolve, the combination breaks,
And Punch, no longer Frasi's rival, squeaks.
Lo, Russel falls a sacrifice to whim,
And starts amazed in Newgate from his dream.
Line 183.

Russel was a famous mimic and singer set up by certain ladies of quality to oppose Handel. When the current of fashion changed he sank into debt, and was confined in Newgate, where he lost his reason. A small subscription was with difficulty raised among his patronesses to procure his admission into Bedlam.

⁴ Schölcher.

The visit of Handel to Ireland in the December of 1741 has lately been investigated in all its details,¹ and it forms a pleasing episode in the Irish history of the eighteenth century. It appears that music had for some time been passionately cultivated in the Irish capital, that a flourishing society had been formed for practising it, and that the music of Handel was already in great favour. It was customary to give frequent concerts for the benefit of Dublin charities, and one of these charities was at this time attracting great attention. The revelation of the frightful abuses in the debtors' prisons in Ireland had made a deep impression, and a society was formed for ameliorating the condition of the inmates, compounding with their creditors and releasing as many as possible from prison. In the year 1739 no less than 188 had been freed from a condition of extreme misery, and the charity still continued. It was for the benefit of this and of two older charities² that the 'Messiah' of Handel was first produced, in Dublin, in April 1742. In the interval that had elapsed since his arrival in Ireland its composer had abundant evidence that the animosity which had pursued him so bitterly in England had not crossed the Channel. In a remarkable letter dated December 29, written to his friend Charles Jennens,³ who had selected the passages of Scripture for the 'Messiah,' Handel describes the success of a series of concerts which he had begun: 'The nobility did me the honour to make amongst themselves a subscription for six nights, which did fill a room of 600 persons, so that I needed not sell one single ticket at the door; and, without vanity, the performance was received with a general approbation. . . . I cannot sufficiently express

Strong in new arms, lo! giant Handel stands
Like bold Briareus, with a hundred hands;
To stir, to rouse, to shake the soul, he comes;
And Jove's own thunders follow Mars's drums,
Arrest him, Empress, or you sleep no more.
She heard, and drove him to the Hibernian shore.

Dunciad, bk. iv.

¹ See a very curious and interesting little book, called *An Account of the Visit of Handel to Dublin*, by Horatio Townsend (Dublin, 1852). Since this book was published, a little additional light has been thrown on the stay of Handel in Ireland, by the publication of the letters of Mrs. Delany, who was then living near

Dublin, and who was a friend and ardent admirer of Handel. See, too, Burney's *Hist. of Music*, iv. 661-662.

² Mercer's Hospital and the Charitable Infirmary.

³ He was a Leicestershire country gentleman—a Nonjuror. Townsend, p. 81.

the kind treatment I receive here, but the politeness of this generous nation cannot be unknown to you, so I let you judge of the satisfaction I enjoy, passing my time with honour, profit, and pleasure.' A new series of concerts was performed with equal success, and on April 8, 1742, the 'Messiah' was rehearsed, and on the 13th it was for the first time publicly performed. The choirs of St. Patrick's Cathedral and of Christ's Church were enlisted for the occasion. Mrs. Cibber and Mrs. Avolio sang the chief parts. The Viceroy, the Archbishop of Dublin, the leading Fellows of Trinity College, and most of the other dignitaries in Church and State, were present, and the success was overwhelming and immediate. The crowds who thronged the Music Hall were so great that an advertisement was issued begging the ladies for the occasion to discard their hoops, and no discordant voice appears to have broken the unanimity of applause. Handel, whose sensitive nature had been embittered by long neglect and hostility, has recorded in touching terms the completeness of his triumph. He remained in Ireland till the following August, a welcome guest in every circle; and he is said to have expressed his surprise and admiration at the beauty of those national melodies which were then unknown out of Ireland, but which the poetry of Moore has, in our own century, carried over the world.

On his return to London, however, he found the hostility against him but little diminished. The 'Messiah,' when first produced in London, if it did not absolutely fail, was but coldly received, and it is shameful and melancholy to relate that in 1745 Handel was for a second time reduced to bankruptcy. The first really unequivocal success he obtained in England for many years was his 'Judas Maccabæus,' which was composed in 1746, and brought out in the following year. It was dedicated to the Duke of Cumberland, and was intended to commemorate his victory at Culloden, and this fact, as well as the enthusiastic support of the London Jews, who welcomed it as a glorification of a great Jewish hero, contributed largely to its success. From this time the current of fashion suddenly changed. When the 'Messiah' was again produced at Covent Garden in 1750 it was received with general enthusiasm, and the 'Te Deum' on the occasion of the victory of Dettingen, and the long series of

oratorios which Handel brought out in the closing years of his life, were scarcely less successful. In 1751 he became completely blind, but he still continued to compose music and to play publicly upon the organ. Among other pieces he performed his own 'Samson,' and while the choir sang to the pathetic strains of Handel those noble lines in which Milton represented the Jewish hero lamenting the darkness that encompassed him, a thrill of sympathetic emotion passed through the crowded audience as they looked upon the old blind musician, who sat before them at the organ.¹ The popularity of his later days restored his fortunes, and he acquired considerable wealth.² He died on Good Friday in 1759, after a residence in England of forty-nine years, and he obtained the well-won honour of a tomb in Westminster Abbey.³

The great impulse given by Handel to sacred music, and the naturalisation of the opera in England, are the two capital events in English musical history during the first half of the eighteenth century. Apart from these musical performances the love for dramatic entertainments appears to have greatly increased, though the theatre never altogether recovered the blow it had received during the Puritan ascendancy. So much has been said of the necessary effect of theatrical amusements in demoralising nations that it is worthy of special notice that there were ten or eleven theatres open in London in the reign of Elizabeth, and a still greater number in the reign of her successor,⁴ whereas in the incomparably more profligate reign of Charles II. there were only two. Even these proved too many, and in spite of the attraction of actresses, who were then for the first time permitted upon the stage, and of the great histrionic powers of Hart and of Betterton, it was found necessary to unite the companies in 1684.⁵ The profligacy of the theatre during the generation that followed the Restoration can hardly be exaggerated, and it continued with little abatement during two reigns. The character of the plays was such that few ladies of

¹ Mrs. Delany's *Correspondence*, iii. 177.

² *Ibid.* iii. 549-550. He left 20,000*l.*

³ Schölicher's *Life of Handel*. Burney and Hawkins's *Histories of*

Music.

⁴ Compare Collier's *Annals of the Stage*, i. 343. Chalmers' *Account of the Early English Stage*.

⁵ Cibber's *Apology*, ch. iv.

respectability and position ventured to appear at the first representation of a new comedy, and those whose curiosity triumphed over their delicacy usually came masked—a custom which at this time became very common, and which naturally led to grave abuses.¹ By the time of the Revolution, however, the movement of dissipation had somewhat spent its force, and the appearance in 1698 of Collier's well-known 'Short View of the Stage,' had a sensible and an immediate effect. Though the author was a vehement Nonjuror, William expressed warm approbation of his work, and a Royal order was issued to restrain the abuses of the stage. The Master of the Revels, who then licensed plays, began to exercise his function with some severity, and a favourable change passed over public opinion. In the reign of Anne the reformation was much aided by the prohibition of masks in the theatre.² But although a certain improvement was effected, much still remained to be done. Great scandal was caused by a prologue, written by Garth, and spoken at the opening of the Haymarket theatre in 1705, which congratulated the world that the stage was beginning to take the place of the Church.³ The two Houses of Convocation, in a representation to the Queen in 1711, dwelt strongly on the immorality of the drama.⁴ Swift placed its degraded condition among the foremost causes of the corruption of the age,⁵ and it

¹ 'While our authors took these extraordinary liberties with their wit, I remember the ladies were then observed to be decently afraid of venturing barefaced to a new comedy till they had been assured they might do it without the risque of insult to their modesty; or if their curiosity were too strong for their patience, they took care at least to save appearances,

and rarely came upon the first days of acting but in masks (then daily worn, and admitted in the pit, side boxes, and gallery).' Cibber's *Apology*, ch. viii. So Pope:—

The fair sat panting at a courtier's play,
And not a mask went unimproved away.
Essay on Criticism, pt. ii.

² See Davies' *Life of Garrick*, ii. 355 (ed. 1780).

³ In the good days of ghostly ignorance,
How did cathedrals rise and zeal advance!
The merry monks said orisons at ease,
Large were their meals, and light their penances.
Pardons for sins were purchased with estates,
And none but rogues in rags died reprobates.
But now that pious pageantry's no more
And stages thrive as churches did before.

See the *Harleian Miscellany*, ii. 21.

⁴ *Harleian Miscellany*, ii. 21.

⁵ See some admirable remarks on the subject in his *Project for the Advancement of Religion*, written in

1709. He says: 'It is worth observing the distributive justice of the authors, which is constantly applied to the punishment of virtue and the reward

is remarkable that although English play-writers borrowed very largely from the French, the English stage was far inferior to that of France in decorum, modesty, and morality. In this respect at least there was no disposition to imitate French manners, and we may, indeed, trace among English writers no small jealousy of the dramatic supremacy of France. Dryden continually expressed it, and Shadwell displayed it in a strain of grotesque insolence. Among his plays was one called 'The Miser,' based upon one of the most perfect of the matchless comedies of Molière. Not content with degrading this noble play by the addition of coarse, obscene, and insipid jests which French taste would never have tolerated, Shadwell prefixed to it a preface in which he gives us with amusing candour his own estimate of the comparative merits of Molière and of himself. 'The foundation of this play,' he said, 'I took from one of Molière's, called "L'Avare," but having too few persons and too little action for an English theatre, I added to both so much that I may call more than half this play my own; and I think I may say without vanity that Molière's part of it has not suffered in my hands; nor did I ever know a French comedy made use of by the worst of our poets that was not bettered by them. 'Tis not barrenness of wit or invention that makes us borrow from the French, but laziness, and this was the occasion of my making use of "L'Avare."¹

Shadwell was a poor poet, but he was for a long time a popular dramatist, and he was sufficiently conspicuous to be appointed poet laureate by William in the place of Dryden. The preface I have cited, coming from such a pen, throws a curious light upon the national taste. Addison and Steele, who contributed in so many ways to turn the stream of fashion in the direction of morality, did something at least, to in-

of vice; directly opposite to the rules of their best criticks, as well as to the practice of dramattick poets in all other ages and countries. . . . I do not remember that our English poets ever suffered a criminal amour to succeed upon the stage until the reign of Charles II. Ever since that time the alderman is made a cuckold, the deluded virgin is debauched, and adultery and fornication are supposed

to be committed behind the scenes as part of the action.'

¹ So, too, in the Prologue of the play—

French plays in which true wit's as rarely found
As mines of silver are in English ground.

* * * * *
For our good-natured nation thinks it fit
To count French toys good wares, French non-
sense wit.

roduce French decorum into the English drama. Both of them wrote plays, which though of no great merit, had their hour of noisy popularity, and were at least scrupulously moral. 'I never heard of any plays,' said Parson Adams, in one of the novels of Fielding, 'fit for a Christian to read but "Cato" and the "Conscious Lovers," and I must own in the latter there are some things almost solemn enough for a sermon.'¹ The example, however, was not very generally followed, and some of the comedies of Fielding in point of coarseness are little if at all superior to those of Wycherley. Dr. Herring, who was afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, when Court chaplain and preacher at Lincoln's Inn, denounced the 'Beggars' Opera' of Gay with great asperity from the pulpit;² and Sir John Bernard, in 1735, brought the condition of the theatre before the House of Commons, complaining bitterly that there were now six theatres in London, and that they were sources of great corruption. In the course of the debate one of his chief supporters observed 'that it was no less surprising than shameful to see so great a change for the worse in the temper and inclinations of the British nation, who were now so extravagantly addicted to lewd and idle diversions that the number of playhouses in London was double that of Paris . . . that it was astonishing to all Europe that Italian eunuchs and signoras should have set salaries equal to those of the Lords of the Treasury and Judges of England.'³ On this occasion nothing effectual was done, but soon after the theatre took a new form which was well calculated to alarm politicians. Fielding, following an example which had been set by Gay, made it the vehicle of political satire, and in his 'Pasquin' and his 'Historical Register' he ridiculed Walpole and the corruption at elections. Another play, called 'The Golden Rump,' submitted to the director of Lincoln's Inn Theatre and handed over by him to the minister, was said to

¹ Joseph Andrews, book iii. ch. 11. Hallam says, 'Steele's *Conscious Lovers* is the first comedy [after the Restoration] which can be called moral.' *Hist. of Literature*, iv. p. 284. Hazlitt complains of the too didactic character of the plays of Steele, and says, 'The comedies of Steele were

the first that were written expressly with a view not to imitate the manners but to reform the morals of the age.'—*Lectures on the Comic Writers*, p. 341.

² Swift's *Correspondence*, ii. 243. *Intelligencer*, No. III.

³ *Parl. Hist.* ix. 948.

have contained a bitter satire against the King and the reigning family. Walpole, relying on these, carried through Parliament in 1737 his Licensing Act, diminishing the number of playhouses, and at the same time authorising the Lord Chamberlain to prohibit any dramatic representation, and providing that no new play or addition to an old play could be acted if he had not first inspected it. The power of the Lord Chamberlain over the theatre was not a new thing, and it had very recently been exercised for the suppression of the sequel to the 'Beggars' Opera' by Gay; but it had hitherto been undefined or very rarely employed, and the institution of an authorised and systematic censorship was opposed by Pulteney, and denounced with especial vehemence by Chesterfield, as the beginning of a crusade against the liberty of the press. Among the plays that were proscribed under the new system were the 'Gustavus Vasa' of Brooke, and the 'Eleanora' of Thomson; the rising fashion of political comedies was crushed, but in general the licensing power was employed with much moderation and simply in the interests of morality.¹

By far the greatest dramatic success during the first half of the eighteenth century was the 'Beggars' Opera' of Gay. It, for a time, as we have seen, ruined the Italian opera; and in one of the notes to the 'Dunciad' we have a curious picture of the enthusiasm it excited. It was acted in London without interruption for sixty-three days, and was received with equal applause in the following season. It was played fifty times in both Bristol and Bath. It spread rapidly through all the great towns of the kingdom, penetrated to Scotland and Wales, and was brilliantly successful in Ireland. Its favourite songs appeared on ladies' fans and on drawing-room screens, and a hitherto obscure actress, by playing its principal part, became one of the most conspicuous and popular personages in the country. In general the prevailing taste in dramatic literature during the greater part of this period was very low. The great change which had passed over the

¹ A very full history of Walpole's measure is given in Coxe's *Life*, ch. xlvii. It was ostensibly an Act to amend a law passed under Anne which treated players who acted without

licence as vagrants or vagabonds. See, too, Maty's *Life of Chesterfield*, Lawrence's *Life of Fielding*, *Parl. Debates*.

social position of authors was peculiarly prejudicial to the drama, which consists in a great degree of sketches of the manners of society,¹ and there was little or no demand for plays of a high order. Slight and coarse comedies, or gaudy spectacles with rope dancers and ballets, appear to have been in the greatest favour, and in more serious pieces the love of butchering, so characteristic of the English stage, was long a standing reproach among foreign critics.² Masquerades were at this time extremely popular, and they had a considerable influence over theatrical taste. Heidegger organised them on a magnificent scale, and they were warmly patronised by the King, who was extremely angry with Bishop Gibson for denouncing them. In one celebrated masquerade the King was present in disguise, while the well-known maid of honour, Miss Chudleigh, scandalised all decent persons by appearing almost naked as Iphigenia.³ In 1755, after the earthquake of Lisbon, they were for a short time suppressed, lest they should call down a similar judgment upon London.⁴ The English form of pantomime, which is nearly related to this type of amusement, and which, after more than 150 years retains its popularity, was invented by Rich in 1717.⁵ For a few years after the Restoration the acting of Hart and Betterton in some degree supported Shakespeare upon the stage, but a change had taken place in the taste and in the manners of the nation, which made his plays appear barbarous or insipid. Even Dryden, who defended him, only ventured with some timidity to pronounce him to be equal, if not superior to Ben Jonson;⁶ and the depreciating or contemptuous language which Pepys employed about nearly every Shakespearian play⁷ that he witnessed probably reflected very fairly

¹ As Horace Walpole said: 'Why are there so few genteel comedies but because most comedies are written by men not of that sphere? Etheridge, Congreve, Vanbrugh, and Cibber wrote genteel comedy because they lived in the best company; and Mrs. Oldfield played it so well because she not only followed but often set the fashion.'—*To the Countess of Ossory*, June 14, 1787.

² *Tatler*, No. 134. *Spectator*, No. 44.

³ Walpole's *Letters to Mann*. May, 1749.

⁴ Walpole's *Mem. of George II.*, iii. p. 98. Bedford ascribed the great storm of 1703 to the iniquities of the stage.—*Bedford on the Stage*, p. 26.

⁵ Davies' *Life of Garrick*, i. 92–93. Cibber's *Apology*, ch. xv.

⁶ Dryden's *Essay on Dramatic Poetry*.

⁷ He calls *Midsummer Night's Dream* 'the most insipid, ridiculous play' he ever saw; the *Taming of the Shrew* 'a silly play'; *Othello* (which he appears at first to have liked), 'a mean thing'; *Henry VIII.* 'a simple thing made up of many patches,'

the sentiments of the average playgoer. Many of the greatest plays were soon completely banished from the stage, and the few which retained any popularity were re-written, printed under other names, or at least largely altered, reduced to a French standard of correctness, or enlivened with music and dancing. Thus 'Romeo and Juliet' was superseded by the 'Caius Marius' of Otway, 'Measure for Measure' by the 'Law against Lovers' of Davenant, the 'Merry Wives of Windsor' by Dennis's 'Comical Gallant,' 'Richard II.' by Tate's 'Sicilian Tyrant,' 'Cymbeline' by Dufey's 'Injured Princess,' 'The Merchant of Venice' by Lord Lansdowne's 'Jew of Venice.' 'Macbeth' was re-cast by Davenant, 'Richard III.' by Cibber, 'The Tempest' by both Davenant and Shadwell, 'Coriolanus' by Dennis, and 'King Lear' by Tate.¹

The revolution of taste which gradually reinstated in his ascendancy the greatest writer of England, and perhaps of the world, and made his ideas and language familiar to the upper and middle classes of the nation, is certainly not less worthy of commemoration than any of the military or political incidents of the time. Its effect in educating the English mind can hardly be overrated, and its moral influence was very great. It was partly literary and partly dramatic. The first critical edition of Shakespeare was that of Rowe, which was published in 1709; and, before half the century had passed, it was followed by those of Pope, Theobald, Sir Thomas Hanmer, and Warburton. Dr. Johnson has noticed as a proof of the paucity of readers in the seventeenth century 'that the nation had been satisfied from 1623 to 1664, that is, forty-one years, with only two editions of Shakespeare, which probably did not together make 1,000 copies.'² By the middle of the eighteenth century, however, there had been thirteen editions, and of these, nine had appeared within the last forty years.³ It is obvious from this fact that the interest in Shakespeare was steadily increasing, and that the critical study of his plays was becoming

with nothing good in it 'besides the shows and processions.' *Macbeth* he acknowledged was 'a pretty good play.'

¹ Malone's *Historical Account of the English Stage*.

² *Life of Milton*.

³ Knight's *Studies of Shakespeare*, p. 141. See, too, Miller's *Retrospect of the Eighteenth Century*, iii. 48-49, 296-297.

an important department of English literature ; and he slowly reappeared in his unaltered form upon the stage. The merit of this revival has often been ascribed almost exclusively to Garrick, but in truth it had begun before, and was a natural reflection of the movement in literature. Six or seven years before the appearance of Garrick, some ladies of rank formed a 'Shakespearian Club' for the purpose of supporting by their presence or encouragement the best plays of Shakespeare.¹ Soon after revivals became both frequent and successful. In 1737 'King John' was revived at Covent Garden for the first time since the downfall of the stage. In 1738 the second part of 'Henry IV.,' 'Henry V.,' and the first part of 'Henry VI.,' no one of which had been acted for forty or fifty years, were brought upon the stage. In 1740 'As You Like It' was reproduced after an eclipse of forty years, and had a considerable run. In February 1741 the 'Merchant of Venice' was produced in its original form for the first time after one hundred years, and Macklin excited the most enthusiastic applause by his representation of Shylock, who in Lord Lansdowne's version of the play had been reduced to insignificant proportions.² In the same year the 'Winter's Tale' was revived after one hundred years, and 'All's Well that Ends Well' for the first time since the death of Shakespeare ; and a monument of the great poet was erected in Westminster Abbey, paid for by the proceeds of special representations at the two great theatres.³ In the October of this year Garrick appeared for the first time on the London stage in the character of Richard III.⁴

The effects of the talent of a great actor are necessarily so extremely evanescent that it is impossible to compare with much confidence the merits of those who have long passed away. When, however, we consider the extraordinary versatility of the acting of Garrick, and the extraordinary impression which during a long series of years it made upon the most cultivated,

¹ Davies' *Life of Garrick*, ii. p. 224.

² See an interesting account of this great triumph in Kirkman's *Life of Macklin*, ii. 253-265.

³ *Mrs. Delany's Life*, ii. 139. Pope wrote—

After one hundred and thirty years' nap
 Enter Shakespeare with a loud clap.

⁴ Malone's *Historical Account of the English Stage*, 292-294. The interval that had elapsed since the former acting of each of these plays is given by Malone on the authority of the advertisements, which may not always have been absolutely correct.

as well as upon the most illiterate, it will appear probable that he has never been surpassed in his art—it is certain that he had never been equalled in England since the death of Betterton.¹ The grandson of one of those refugees who had been expelled from France upon the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, he is another of the many instances of the benefits which England has indirectly derived from the intolerance of her neighbours; and in two respects his appearance on the stage has a real importance in the history of the English mind. He was before all things a Shakespearian actor, and he did more than any other single man to extend the popularity and increase the reputation of the great dramatist. He usually gave seventeen or eighteen plays of Shakespeare in a year.² He brought out their beauties with all the skill of a consummate artist, and he at the same time produced a revolution in the art of acting very similar to that which Kent had effected in the art of gardening. A habit of slow, monotonous declamation, of unnatural pomp, and of a total disregard for historic truth in theatrical costume, had become general on the English stage, and the various and rapid intonations of Garrick, the careful and constant study of nature and of history which he displayed both in his acting and his accessories, had all the effect of novelty.³ It is worthy of notice that a similar change both in

¹ The impression Betterton made in his day seems to have been not at all less than that made by Garrick. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, and Steele took occasion of his funeral to devote an admirable paper in the *Tatler* to his acting. See, too, Cibber's *Apology*. Cibber pronounced him as supreme among actors as Shakespeare among poets. A few other particulars relating to him will be found in Galt's *Lives of the Players*. Pope thought Betterton the greatest actor, but said that some old people spoke of Hart as his superior. Betterton died in 1710. Spence's *Anecdotes*.

² Davies' *Life of Garrick*, i. 114.

³ See the preliminary dissertation to Foote's *Works*, i. pp. lii., liii. Macklin, who had quarrelled with Garrick and who cordially detested him, described his acting as 'all bustle.' Macklin's *Memoirs*, i. 248. Fielding's

witty description is well known. 'He the best player!' cries Partridge, with a contemptuous sneer, 'why, I could act as well as he myself. I am sure if I had seen a ghost I should have looked in the very same manner and done just as he did. And then, to be sure, in that scene, as you called it, between him and his mother, when you told me he acted so fine, why, Lord help me! any man—that is, any good man—that has such a mother would have done exactly the same. I know you are only joking with me, but indeed, Madam, though I was never at a play in London, yet I have seen acting before in the country; and, the King for my money! he speaks all his words distinctly, half as loud again as the other. Anybody may see he is an actor.'—*Tom Jones*. See, too, *The World*, No. 6.

gardening and in acting took place in France a generation later, and was in a great degree due to the love of nature and the revolt against conventional forms, resulting from the writings of Rousseau. Garrick, like all innovators, had to encounter at first much opposition. Pope and Fielding were warmly in his favour, but the poet Gray declared himself 'stiff in opposition.' Horace Walpole professed himself unable to see the merit of the new performer. Cibber, who had been brought up in the school of Betterton, was equally contemptuous, and the leading actors took the same side. Macklin always spoke of him with the greatest bitterness. Quin, who had for some time held the foremost rank in tragedy, and whose ready wit made him a specially formidable opponent, said, 'If the young fellow is right, I and the rest of the players have been all wrong;' and he added, 'Garrick is a new religion—Whitefield was followed for a time—but they will all come to church again.' Garrick answered in a happy epigram to the effect 'that it was not heresy but reformation.' In two or three characters Quin is said to have equalled him. The Othello of Garrick was a comparative failure, which was attributed to the dark colouring that concealed the wonderful play of his features,¹ and Barry, owing to his rare personal advantages, was, in the opinion of many, superior as Romeo,² but on the whole the supremacy of Garrick was in a few months indisputable, and it continued unshaken during his whole career. At the same time his excellent character, his brilliant qualities, both as a writer and a talker, and the very considerable fortune that he speedily amassed, gave him a social position which had, probably, been attained by no previous actor. The calling of an actor had been degraded by ecclesiastical tradition, as well as by the gross immorality of the theatre of the Restoration. For some time, however, it had been steadily rising,³ and Garrick, while elevating incalculably the standard of theatrical taste, contributed also not a little to free his profession from the discredit under which it laboured. From the time of his first appearance upon the stage till the close of the careers of Kemble, of the elder Kean, and of Miss O'Neil, the

¹ Nichols' *Life of Hogarth*, pp. 191, 192.

² Mrs. Montagu's *Letters*, iii. 107.

³ Some particulars of the increase

of actors' salaries will be found in Kirkman's *Life of Macklin*, i. 435. Davies' *Life of Garrick*, ii. 239-242.

English stage was never without some actors who might rank with the greatest on the Continent.

The old Puritanical and ecclesiastical hatred of the theatre had abated, but it was still occasionally shown. In Scotland it completely triumphed, and the attempts of Allan Ramsay and a few others to promote dramatic taste were almost completely abortive.¹ In England, Collier not only censured the gross indecency and immorality of the stage with just severity, but he also contended that it was profane to employ any form of words which was ultimately derived from the Bible, even though it had long since passed into general usage, to use the word 'martyr' in any but its religious sense, to reflect, however slightly, on any priest, not only of a Christian but even of a Pagan creed. In 1719 Arthur Bedford, a chaplain to the Duke of Bedford, published a most curious work 'Against the horrid Blasphemies and Impieties which are still used in English Playhouses . . . showing their plain tendency to overthrow all piety, and advance the interest and honour of the devil in the world; from almost 7,000 instances taken out of the plays of the present century.' He analysed with extraordinary minuteness the whole dramatic literature of the time, and declares that it offended against no less than 1,400 texts of the Bible. He accuses the playwrights, among other things, of restoring the Pagan worship by invoking or giving Divine titles to Cupid, Jupiter, Venus, Pluto, and Diana; of indirectly encouraging witchcraft or magic, 'for by bewitching, magick, and enchanting, they only signify something which is most pleasant and desirable;' of encouraging it directly and in the most blasphemous manner by such plays as 'Macbeth' or the 'Tempest.'² Like Collier, he finds it very criminal to place an immoral sentiment in the mouth of

¹ Burton's *Hist. of Scotland from the Revolution*, ii. 561. James I., before he ascended the English throne, had come into violent collision with the Puritan ministers, because he tried to procure actors toleration in Scotland.—Collier's *Annals of the Stage*, i. pp. 344-6.

² See the long and curious criticism on Macbeth. Two passages may be cited as specimens of this

singular book. 'When God was pleased to vindicate His own honour, and show that He would not be thus affronted, by sending a most dreadful storm. . . yet, so great was the obstinacy of the stage under such signal judgments, that we are told the actors did in a few days after entertain again their audience with the ridiculous plays of the *Tempest* and *Macbeth*, and that at the mention

an immoral character, or a Pagan sentiment in the mouth of a Pagan speaker; and he was able to discover blasphemy even in the 'Cato' of Addison.¹ About thirty years later, William Law published his well-known treatise 'On the Absolute Unlawfulness of the Stage,' in which he maintained that 'the business of players is the most wicked and detestable profession in the world'; 'that the playhouse, not only when some very profane play is on the stage, but in its daily, common entertainments, is as certainly the house of the devil as the church is the house of God;' and that in going to the theatre 'you are as certainly going to the devil's triumph as if you were going to those old sports where people committed murder and offered Christians to be devoured by wild beasts.' In 1769, during the Shakespeare Jubilee, when Garrick was acting at Stratford-on-Avon, the populace of that town are said to have regarded him as a magician, and to have attributed to the vengeance of Heaven the heavy rains that fell during the festival.² But, on the whole, the religious prejudice against the theatre in the first sixty years of the eighteenth century was probably much less strong than it afterwards became, through the influence of the Methodists and the Evangelicals. The strength which it at last acquired among large classes is much to be regretted. It has prevented an amusement which has added largely to the sum of human happiness, and which exercises a very considerable educational influence, from spread-

of the chimneys being blown down the audience were pleased to clap at an unusual length . . . as if they would outbrave the judgment, throw Providence out of the chair, place the devil in His stead, and provoke God once more to plead His own cause by sending a greater calamity' (p. 26). 'In another play . . . the high-priest sings—

By the spirit in this wand,
 Which the silver moon commands,
 By the powerful God of Night,
 By the love of Amphitrite.

(By the mystery of Thy holy incarnation (which was to destroy the works of the devil); by Thy holy nativity and circumcision; by Thy baptism, fasting, and temptation; by Thine agony and bloody sweat;

by Thy cross and passion; by Thy precious death and burial; by Thy glorious resurrection and ascension; and by the coming of the Holy Ghost, Good Lord, deliver us from such impieties as these!')' (p. 16).

¹ 'Our blessed Saviour . . . hath these words: "This is life eternal, that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Upon the stage, an actor, finding that his mistress loves him, saith—

This, this is life indeed! Life worth preserving!
 Such life as Juba never felt till now!

And a little after—

My joy! My best beloved! My only wish!' (p. 244.)

² Davies' *Life of Garrick*, ii. 226-227.

ing anywhere except in the greatest centres of population. It has multiplied proportionately amusements of a far more frivolous and purely unintellectual character, and it has withdrawn from the audiences in the theatre the very classes whose presence would be the best guarantee of the habitual morality of the entertainment.

The decline of one other class of amusements must be briefly noticed, for it forms a curious page in the history of national manners. Up to the time of the Rebellion the baiting of animals, and especially of bulls and bears, was a favourite pastime with every class. Henry VIII., Mary, Elizabeth, and James I. had all encouraged it; but under Elizabeth the growing taste for theatrical representations had begun gradually to displace it, and to give a new ply and tone to the manners of the rich. All forms of amusement naturally fell into desuetude during the Civil War. All of them were suppressed during the Commonwealth, and it was probably some Puritan divines who first maintained in England the doctrine that it was criminal to make the combative or ferocious instincts of animals subservient to our pleasures.¹ Motives of humanity had, however, in general little or nothing to say to the Puritanical proscription of these amusements, which, as Macaulay truly said, were condemned not because they gave pain to the animal, but because they gave pleasure to the spectators.² When, however, they revived at the Restoration, the change of tastes that had taken place became apparent. The bear-garden was as popular as ever with the poor, but the upper classes had begun to desert it. In 1675 we find a Court exhibition before the Spanish Ambassador, and in 1681 the Ambassador of Morocco and the Duke of Albemarle witnessed a similar spectacle; but such entertainments were now becoming rare. Pepys and Evelyn speak of them as 'rude and nasty pleasures,' 'butcherly sports, or rather barbarous cruelties';³ and, although even in the last years of the seventeenth century we find a writer on

¹ See a very curious collection of Puritan denunciations of cock-fighting, on the ground that 'the antipathy and cruelty that one beast showeth to another is the fruit of our rebellion against God,' in the

Harleian Miscellany, vi. 125-127.

² See Macaulay's account, *Hist.* ch. 2, and the famous bear-baiting scene in *Hudibras*.

³ Pepys' *Diary*, Aug. 14, 1666. Evelyn's *Diary*, June 16, 1670.

this subject asserting that bullbaiting 'is a sport the English much delight in, and not only the baser sort but the greatest lords and ladies,'¹ it is clear that the stream of fashion had decidedly turned. In the beginning of the eighteenth century the essay-writers who exercised so great an influence on the minor morals of society, steadily discountenanced these amusements; and we may at this period find several slight, but clear traces of a warmer regard for the sufferings of the lower animals. Steele speaks of the bear-garden as a place 'where reason and good manners had no right to enter,' and both he and Pope wrote in the strongest terms against cruelty to animals, and especially against the English passion for brutal amusements.²

The practice of vivisection, which is at all times liable to grave abuse, and which, before the introduction of anæsthetics, was often inexpressibly horrible, appears to have been very common.³ Bacon had recommended inquirers to turn their attention in this direction; and the great discovery, partly through its means, of the circulation of the blood, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, had brought it into fashion; but Pope spoke of it with extreme detestation,⁴ and Johnson, several years later, dwelt with just indignation upon the useless barbarities of which some medical students were guilty.⁵ The

¹ John Houghton's 'Collections for the Improvement of Agriculture' (1694), quoted in Malcolm's *Anecdotes of London*, iii. 57. As late as 1749, Chetwood, in his *History of the Stage*, says, 'Bull-baiting, boxing, bear-gardens, and prize fighting will draw to them all ranks of people from the peer to the pedlar' (p. 60). They had, however, at this time quite passed out of the category of recognised fashionable amusements.

² *Spectator*, No. 141. *Tatler*, No. 134. *Guardian*, No. 61 (by Pope). See, too, the *World*, No. 190.

³ See, on the vivisection of dogs, Coventry's *Pompey the Little*, part iii. ch. xi. The author adds: 'A dog might have been the emblematic animal of Æsculapius or Apollo with as much propriety as he was of Mercury; for, no creatures, I believe, have been of more eminent service to the healing tribe than dogs. Incredible is the

number of these animals which have been sacrificed at the shrines of physic and surgery. Lectures of anatomy subsist by their destruction. Ward (says Pope) tried his drops on puppies and the poor; and in general, all new medicines and experiments of a doubtful nature are sure to be made in the first place on the bodies of those unfortunate animals.' Swift, in one of his *Drapier's Letters*, compares the threats and complaints of Wood 'to the last howls of a dog dissected alive, as I hope he hath sufficiently been.'—Letter 4.

⁴ Spence's *Anecdotes*, sec. viii.

⁵ 'Among the inferior professors of medical knowledge is a race of wretches, whose lives are only varied by varieties of cruelty; whose favourite amusement is to nail dogs to tables and open them alive; to try how long life may be continued in various degrees of mutilation or with

poems of Gay are animated by a remarkable feeling of compassion for animals,¹ and the Duke of Montague is said to have established a home for them, and to have exerted his influence as a great landlord warmly in their favour.²

At the same time the change was only in a small section of the community. Bear-baiting, when it ceased to be an amusement of the rich, speedily declined because of the scarcity of the animals, but bull-baiting through the whole of the eighteenth century was a popular English amusement. In Queen Anne's time it was performed in London at Hockley Hole, regularly twice a week,³ and there was no provincial town to which it did not extend. It was regarded on the Continent as peculiarly English. The tenacity of the English bull-dog, which would sometimes suffer itself to be cut to pieces rather than relax its hold, was a favourite subject of national boasting, while French writers pointed to the marked difference in this respect between the French and English taste as a conclusive proof of the higher civilisation of their own nation.⁴ Among those who at a late period patronised or defended bull-baiting were Windham and Parr; and even Canning and Peel opposed the measure for its abolition by law. At Stamford and at Tutbury a maddened bull was, from a very early period, annually hunted through the streets. Among the entertainments advertised in London in 1729 and 1730, we find 'a mad bull to be dressed up with fire-

the excision or laceration of the vital parts; to examine whether burning irons are felt more acutely by the bone or tendon and whether the more lasting agonies are produced by poison

forced into the mouth or injected into the veins.'—*The Idler* (No. 17), 1758.

¹ See especially his poem on field sports.

² Spence's *Anecdotes*, Supplement.

³ Experienced men, inured to city ways,
Need not the calendar to count their days.
When through the town, with slow and solemn air,
Led by the nostril, walks the muzzled bear,
Behind him moves, majestically dull,
The pride of Hockley Hole, the surly bull.
Learn hence the periods of the week to name,
Monday and Thursday are the days of game.

Gay's *Trivia*.

⁴ *Tatler*, No. 134. *Guardian*, No. 61. 'The bear-garden,' says Lord Kames, 'which is one of the chief entertainments of the English, is held in abhorrence by the French and other polite nations.'—*Essays on*

Morality (1st ed.), p. 7. Hogarth introduced into his picture of a cock-fight, a Frenchman turning away with an expression of unqualified disgust.

works and turned loose in the game place, a dog to be dressed up with fireworks over him, a bear to be let loose at the same time, and a cat to be tied to the bull's tail, a mad bull dressed up with fireworks to be baited.¹ Such amusements were mingled with prize-fighting, boxing matches between women, or combats with quarter-staffs or broadswords. Ducking ponds, in which ducks were hunted by dogs, were favourite popular resorts around London, especially those in St. George's Fields, the present site of Bethlehem Hospital. Sometimes the amusement was varied, and an owl was tied to the back of the duck, which dived in terror till one or both birds were killed. The very barbarous amusement of cock-throwing, which was at least as old as Chaucer, and in which Sir T. More when a young man had been especially expert, is said to have been peculiarly English.² It consisted of tying a cock to a stake as a mark for sticks, which were thrown at it from a distance till it was killed; and it was ascribed to the English antipathy to the French, who were symbolised by that bird.³ The old Greek game of cock-fighting was also extremely popular in England. It was a favourite game of schoolboys, who, from the time of Henry II. till the latter part of the eighteenth century, were accustomed almost universally to practise it on Shrove Tuesday; and in many schools in Scotland the runaway cocks were claimed by the masters as their perquisites. A curious account is preserved of the parish of Applecross in Ross-shire, written about 1790, in which among the different sources of the schoolmaster's income we find 'cock-fight dues, which are equal to one quarter's payment for each scholar.'⁴ Henry VIII. built a cock-pit at Whitehall; and James I. was accustomed to divert himself with cock-fighting twice a week. In the eighteenth century it appears to have rather increased than diminished, and being the occasion of great gambling it

¹ Andrews' *Eighteenth Century*, p. 60. Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes*, p. 259.

² There is, however, a picture representing a Dutch fair, in the gallery at the Hague, where a goose is represented undergoing a similar fate.

³ See, on these sports, Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes of the English*

People. Collier's *Hist. of the Drama*. Andrews' *Eighteenth Century*. Chambers's *Book of Days*, Hone's *Every-day Book*, Milson's *Travels in England*, Muralt's *Letters on England*. One famous bear, called Sacherson, is immortalised by Shakespeare, *Merry Wives of Windsor*, act 1, scene 1.

⁴ Chambers's *Domestic Annals of Scotland*, iii. 269.

retained its place among very fashionable amusements; nor does it appear to have been generally regarded as more inhuman than hunting, coursing, or shooting. It was introduced into Scotland at the close of the seventeenth or the beginning of the eighteenth century by a fencing master named Machrie, who seems to have been looked upon as a benefactor to Scotland for having started a new, cheap, and innocent amusement. He wrote, in 1705, 'An Essay on the Innocent and Royal Recreation and Art of Cocking,' in which he expressed his hope that 'in cock-war village may be engaged against village, city against city, kingdom against kingdom, nay, the father against the son, until all the wars of Europe, wherein so much innocent Christian blood is spilt, be turned into the innocent pastime of cocking.'¹ The fiercest and most powerful cocks were frequently brought over from Germany; and the Welsh main, which was the most sanguinary form of the amusement, appears to have been exclusively English, and of modern origin. In this game as many as sixteen cocks were sometimes matched against each other at each side, and they fought till all on one side were killed. The victors were then divided and fought, and the process was repeated till but a single cock remained. County engaged county in cocking matches, and the church bells are said to have been sometimes rung in honour of the victor in the Welsh main.²

The passion for inland watering-places was at its height. Bath, under the long rule of Beau Nash, fully maintained its old ascendancy, and is said to have been annually visited by more than 8,000 families. Anstey, in one of the most brilliant satirical poems of the eighteenth century, painted, with inimitable skill, its follies and its tastes; and the arbitrary but not unskilful sway and self-important manners, of its great master of the ceremonies, were widely celebrated in verse and

¹ Chambers's *Domestic Annals of Scotland*, 267-8.

² Roberts's *Social Hist. of the Southern Counties*, p. 421. The history of cock-fighting and cock-throwing has been fully examined in a dissertation by Pegge, in the *Archæologia*, vol. iii.; in Beckmann's *Hist. of Inventions*, vol. ii.; and in Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes*. See, too, Mac-

ky's *Tour through England*, vol. i. p. 137; Heath's account of the Scilly Islands, *Pinkerton's Voyages*, ii. 756. Wesley tells a story of a gentleman whom he reproved for swearing, and who was at last so mollified that he said 'he would come to hear him, only he was afraid he should say something against fighting of cocks.'—Wesley's *Journal*, March 1743.

prose. Among the commands which he issued there is one which is well worthy of a passing notice. Between 1720 and 1730 it was observed that young men of fashion in London had begun in their morning walks to lay aside their swords, which were hitherto looked upon as the indispensable signs of a gentleman, and to carry walking-sticks instead. Beau Nash made a great step in the same direction by absolutely prohibiting swords within his dominions, and this was, perhaps, the beginning of a change of fashion which appears to have been general about 1780, and which has a real historical importance as reflecting and sustaining the pacific habits that were growing in society.¹ In addition to Bath, Tunbridge Wells, Epsom, Buxton, and the more modest Islington retained their popularity, and a new rival was rising into note. The mineral springs of Cheltenham were discovered about 1730, and in 1738 a regular Spa was built. But soon after the middle of the century a great and sudden change took place. Up to this time there is scarcely a record of sea-bathing in England, but in 1750 Dr. Richard Russell published in Latin his treatise 'On glandular consumption, and the use of sea-water in diseases of the glands.' It was translated in 1753. The new remedy acquired an extraordinary popularity, and it produced a great, permanent, and on the whole very beneficial change in the national tastes. In a few years obscure fishing-villages along the coast began to assume the dimensions of stately watering-places, and before the century had closed Cowper described, in indignant lines, the common enthusiasm with which all ages and classes rushed for health or pleasure to the sea.²

¹ See a curious passage from 'The Universal Spectator,' of 1730, quoted in the *Pictorial Hist. of England*, iv. 805. *Beau Nash's Life*, by Doran. Doran's article on Beau Nash, in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Townsend's

Hist. of the House of Commons, ii. p. 412-416. The evils resulting from the prevailing fashion of wearing swords, had been noticed in the beginning of the century in a treatise on the subject by a writer named Povey.

² Your prudent grandmamas, ye modern belles,
 Content with Bristol, Bath, and Tunbridge Wells,
 When health required it, would consent to roam,
 Else more attached to pleasures found at home ;
 But now alike, gay widow, virgin, wife,
 Ingenious to diversify dull life,
 In coaches, chaises, caravans, and hoys,
 Fly to the coast for daily, nightly joys,
 And all, impatient of dry land, agree
 With one consent to rush into the sea.

There was not, I think, any other change in the history of manners during the first sixty years of the eighteenth century, so considerable as to call for extended notice in a work like the present. The refinements of civilisation advanced by slow and almost insensible degrees into country life as the improvements of roads increased the facilities of locomotion, and as the growth of provincial towns and of a provincial press multiplied the centres of intellectual and political activity. In these respects, however, the latter half of the century was a far more memorable period than the former half; and the history of roads, which I have not yet noticed, will be more conveniently considered in a future chapter. The manners and tastes of the country gentry were often to the last degree coarse and illiterate, but the large amount of public business that in England has always been thrown upon the class, maintained among them no contemptible level of practical intelligence; and some circulation of intellectual life was secured by the cathedral towns, the inland watering-places, and the periodical migrations of the richer members to London or Bath. The yeomanry class, also, as long as they existed in considerable numbers, maintained a spirit of independence in country life which extended even to the meanest ploughman, and had some influence both in stimulating the faculties, and restraining the despotism of the country magistrates.¹ Whatever may have been the defects of the English country gentry, agriculture under their direction had certainly attained a much higher perfection than in France,² and though narrow-minded and intensely prejudiced, they formed an upright, energetic, and patriotic element in English public life. The well-known pictures of Sir Roger de Coverley and of Squire Western exhibit in strong lights their merits and their faults, and the contrast between rural and metropolitan manners was long one of the favourite subjects of the essayists. That contrast, however, was rapidly diminishing. In the first half of the eighteenth century, the habit of making annual visits to London or to a watering-place very greatly increased, and it

¹ Defoe has noticed this independence in lines more remarkable for their meaning than for their form.

The meanest English plowman studies law,
 And keeps thereby the magistrates in awe.

Will boldly tell them what they ought to do,
 And sometimes punish their omissions too.
True-born Englishman.

² See the comparison in Arthur Young's *Tour in France*.

contributed at once to soften the manners of the richer and to accelerate the disappearance of the poorer members of the class. A scale and rivalry of luxury passed into country life which made the position of the small landlord completely untenable. At the beginning of the century there still existed in England numerous landowners with estates of 200*l.* or 300*l.* a year. The descendants in many cases of the ancient yeomen, they ranked socially with the gentry. They possessed to the full extent the pride and prejudices, and discharged very efficiently many of the duties of the class; but they lived exclusively in the country, their whole lives were occupied with country business or country sports, their travels rarely or never extended beyond the nearest county town, and in tastes, in knowledge, and in language they scarcely differed from the tenant-farmer. From the early years of the eighteenth century this class began rapidly to diminish, and before the close of the century it was almost extinct.¹ Though still vehement Tories, full of zeal for the Church and of hatred of Dissenters and foreigners, the Jacobitism of the country gentry had subsided during the reign of George II., and they gave the Pretender no assistance in 1745. Their chief vice was hard-drinking.² Their favourite occupations were field sports. These amusements, though they somewhat changed their character, do not appear to have at all diminished during the first half of the eighteenth century, and it was in this period that Gay, and especially Somers-

¹ This change is well noticed in a very able book published in 1772. The author says: 'An income of 200*l.* or 300*l.* a year in the last age was reckoned a decent hereditary patrimony, or a good establishment for life; but now . . . all country gentlemen give in to so many local expenses, and reckon themselves so much on a par, that a small estate is but another word for starving; of course, few are to be found, but they are bought up by greater neighbours or become mere farmers.'—*Letters on England*, p. 229. In Grose's *Olio*, published in 1792, there is a very graphic description of the mode of living of 'the little independent country gentleman of 300*l.* per annum,' 'a character,' the author says, 'now worn out and gone.'

² Mrs. Montagu, in one of her

letters from Yorkshire to a friend in London, writes: 'We have not been troubled with any visitors since Mr. Montagu went away; and could you see how awkward, how absurd, how uncouth are the generality of people in this country, you would look upon this as no small piece of good fortune. For the most part they are drunken and vicious, and worse than hypocrites—profligates. I am very happy that drinking is not within our walls. We have not had one person disordered with liquor since we came down, though most of the poor ladies in the neighbourhood have had more hogs in their drawing-room than ever they had in their hog sty.'—Doran's *Life of Mrs. Montagu*, p. 36.



ville, published the most considerable sporting poems in the language. Hawking, which had been extremely popular in the beginning of the seventeenth century, and which was a favourite sport of Charles II., almost disappeared in the beginning of the eighteenth century. Stag-hunting declined with the spread of agriculture, but hare-hunting held its ground, and fox-hunting greatly increased. Cricket, which would occupy a distinguished place in any modern picture of English manners, had apparently but just arisen. The earliest notice of it, discovered by an antiquary who has devoted much research to the history of amusements, is in one of D'Urfey's songs, written in the beginning of the century.¹ It was mentioned as one of the amusements of Londoners by Strype in his edition of Stow's 'Survey' published in 1720, and towards the close of the century it greatly increased.

There had been loud complaints ever since the Revolution, both in the country and in the towns, of the rapid rise of the poor-rates, but it seems to have been due, much less to any growth of real poverty than to improvident administration and to the dissipated habits that were generated by the poor-laws. Although the controversy on the subject of these laws did not come to a climax till long after the period we are now considering, the great moral and economical evils resulting from them were clearly seen by the most acute thinkers. Among others, Locke, in a report which he drew up in 1697, anticipating something of the later reasoning of Malthus, pointed out forcibly the danger to the country from the great increase of able-bodied pauperism, and attributed it mainly, if not exclusively, to 'the relaxation of discipline and the corruption of manners.' The annual rates in the last thirty years of the seventeenth century were variously estimated at from 600,000*l.* to 840,000*l.* They rose before the end of the reign of Anne to at least a million. They again sank for a time after an Act, which was carried in 1723, for founding workhouses and imposing a more severe discipline on paupers, but they soon regained their ascending movement and continued steadily to increase during the remainder of the century. Popular education and the rapid growth of manufacturing wages had not yet produced that high type of capacity and

¹ Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes*, p. 106.

knowledge which is now found among the skilled artisans of the great towns, but the broad lines of the English industrial character were clearly discernible. Probably no workman in Europe could equal the Englishman in physical strength, in sustained power and energy of work, and few, if any, could surpass him in thoroughness and fidelity in the performance of his task and in general rectitude and honesty of character. On the other hand, he was far inferior to most Continental workmen in those branches of labour which depended on taste and on delicacy of touch, and most industries of this kind passed into the hands of refugees. His requirements were much greater than those of the Continental workman. In habits of providence and of economy he ranked extremely low in the industrial scale; his relaxations usually took the form of drunkenness or brutal sports, and he was rather peculiarly addicted to riot and violence. An attempt to estimate with any precision the position of the different classes engaged in agriculture or manufacturing industry is very difficult, not only on account of the paucity of evidence we possess, but also on account of the many different and fluctuating elements that have to be considered. The prosperity of a class is a relative term, and we must judge it not only by comparing the condition of the same class in different countries and in different times, but also by comparing it with that of the other sections of society. The value of money has greatly changed,¹ but the change has not been uniform; it has been counteracted by other influences; it applies much more to some articles of consumption than to others, and therefore affects very unequally the different classes in the community. Thus the price of wheat in the seventy years that followed the Revolution was not very materially different from what it now is, and during the first half of the eighteenth century it, on the

¹ It is worthy of notice that the complaints of the increasing price of living in the first half of the eighteenth century, were, among the upper classes, little less loud than those we hear in the present day. Thus the author of *Faction Detected by the Evidence of Facts*, which was published in 1743, speaking of the royal income at different periods of English history, says, 'King William and

Queen Anne had but 700,000*l.* per annum, but neither had any family to provide for, and both lived in times when that income would have supported a greater expense than a million would now do; for the truth of which I appeal to the experience of every private family, and to the known advance of price in all commodities and articles of expense whatsoever' (p. 137).

whole, slightly declined. At the time of the Revolution it was a little under 41s. a quarter. During the ten years ending in 1705 it was about 43s., in the ten ending in 1715 it was about 44s.; in the twenty ending in 1735 about 35s.; in the ten ending in 1745 about 32s.; and in the ten ending in 1755 about 33s. The price of meat, on the other hand, was far less than at present. The average price of mutton throughout England from 1706 to 1730 is stated to have been $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ a pound. From 1730 to 1760 it had risen to $3d.$ a pound. The price of beef, from 1740 to 1760, is said to have been $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ a pound. Pork, veal, and lamb, as well as beer, were proportionately cheap.¹ We must remember, too, in estimating the condition of British labourers, that besides their wages they had the advantage of an immense extent of common land. Nearly every village had still around it a large space of unenclosed and uncultivated ground on which the cows, sheep, and geese of the poor found an ample pasture.

The different parts of England differed widely in prosperity, the counties surrounding London, and generally the southern half of the island, being by far the most flourishing, while the northern parts, and especially the counties bordering on Scotland, were the most poor. There can be no doubt that in the former, at least, the condition of the English labourer was much more prosperous than that which was general in the same class on the Continent. Gregory King, in his very valuable estimate of 'the state and condition of England' in 1696, has calculated that, out of a population of about 5,500,000, about 2,700,000 ate meat daily, and that, of the remaining 2,800,000, 1,540,000 ate meat at least twice a week, while 240,000 were either sick persons or infants under thirteen months old. There remained 1,020,000 persons 'who receive alms, and consequently eat not flesh above once a week.' It would appear from this estimate that the whole population eat meat at least once a week and all healthy adults, who were not paupers, more than once;² while the

¹ These and many other statistics on the subject, are collected in Knight's *Pictorial Hist. of England*, iv. p. 700. Eden's *Hist. of the Working Classes*, iii. append. i. Thornton's *Over-Population*, p. 202.

² The immense proportion the paupers bore to the rest of the population will strike the reader, but Macaulay, in his famous third chapter, greatly exaggerated its significance as indicating the amount of real



gigantic consumption of beer, to which I have already referred, makes it almost certain that this was the common beverage of all classes. The same writer makes a curious attempt to estimate the average incomes of families in the different classes of society in 1688. That of the temporal lords he places at 2,800*l.* That of baronets, at 880*l.*; that of esquires and of other gentlemen respectively at 450*l.* and 280*l.*; that of shopkeepers and tradesmen at 45*l.*; that of artisans and handicrafts at 40*l.*; that of labouring people and out-servants at 15*l.*; that of common soldiers at 14*l.*; that of cottagers and paupers at 6*l.* 10*s.* The average annual incomes of all classes he reckoned at 32*l.* a family, or 7*l.* 18*s.* a head. In France he calculated that the average annual income was 6*l.* a head, and in Holland 8*l.* 1*s.* 4*d.* From a careful comparison of the food of the different nations he calculated that the English annually spent on food, on an average, 3*l.* 16*s.* 5*d.* a head; the French, 2*l.* 16*s.* 2*d.*; the Dutch, 2*l.* 16*s.* 5*d.*¹

Such estimates can, of course, only be accepted with much reservation; but they are the judgments of a very acute contemporary observer, and they are, no doubt, sufficiently accu-

misery in the community. The relief was out-door relief; there appears to have been no general feeling of shame about accepting it, and it was distributed with a most mischievous profusion. Richard Dunning, in a tract published in 1698, asserts that the parish pay was in fact three times as much as a common labourer, having to maintain a wife and three children, can afford to expend upon himself, and that 'persons once receiving parish pay presently become idle, alleging that the parish is bound to maintain them, and that in case they should work, it would only favour a parish from whom, they say, they shall have no thanks.' He assures us that 'such as are maintained by the parish pay, seldom drink any other than the strongest ale-house beer, which, at the rate they buy it, costs 50s. or 3*l*. a hogshead; that they seldom eat any bread save what is made of the finest wheat flour.' At this time there is reason to believe that wheat bread was almost unused among the labouring poor. The formation of work-

houses in 1723 was of some advantage, but the diet of their inmates was most imprudently and indeed absurdly liberal. See Thornton's *Over-Population*, pp. 205-207. Knight's *Pictorial History*, iv. p. 844. Macaulay's picture of the condition of the poor should be compared with the admirable chapter on the same subject in Mr. Thornton's *Over-Population*. See, too, his *Labour*, pp. 11-12. The annual expenditure in poor rates is said to have trebled between the close of the reign of Anne and the year 1750 (Macpherson, *Hist. of Commerce*, iii. p. 560); yet nearly all the evidence we possess seems to show that the prosperity of the country had during that period been steadily increasing.

This curious work is printed in full at the end of the later editions of Chalmers's *Estimate*. Macaulay, as will be seen, has much overcharged his picture of the wretchedness of the poor when he states, on the authority of King, that 'hundreds of thousands of families scarcely knew the taste of meat.'

rate to enable us to form a fair general conception of the relative proportions. In 1704 an abortive attempt which was made to extend the system of poor-law relief produced the 'Giving Alms no Charity,' one of the most admirable of the many excellent tracts of Defoe. No man then living was a shrewder or more practical observer, and he has collected many facts which throw a vivid light on the condition of the labouring poor. He states that although in Yorkshire, and generally in the bishopric of Durham, a labourer's weekly wages might be only 4s., yet in Kent and in several of the southern and western counties agricultural weekly wages were 7s., 9s., and even 10s. He mentions the case of a tilemaker, to whom he had for several years paid from 16s. to 20s. a week, and states that journeymen weavers could earn from 15s. to 20s. a week. The pauperism of the country he ascribes not to any want of employment, but almost wholly to habits of vagrancy, drunkenness, and extravagance. 'I affirm,' he says, 'of my own knowledge, that when I wanted a man for labouring work, and offered 9s. per week to strolling fellows at my door, they have frequently told me to my face that they could get more a-begging.' 'Good husbandry,' he adds, 'is no English virtue . . . it neither loves, nor is beloved by, an Englishman. The English get estates and the Dutch save them; and this observation I have made between foreigners and Englishmen—that where an Englishman earns his 20s. a week, and but just lives, as we call it, a Dutchman grows rich, and leaves his children in very good condition. Where an English labouring man, with his 9s. a week, lives wretchedly and poor, a Dutchman, with that wages, will live tolerably well. . . . We are the most lazy, diligent nation in the world. There is nothing more frequent than for an Englishman to work till he has got his pockets full of money, and then go and be idle, or perhaps drunk, till it is all gone, and perhaps himself in debt; and ask him, in his cups, what he intends, he'll tell you honestly he will drink as long as it lasts, and then go to work for more. I make no difficulty to promise, on a short summons, to produce above a thousand families in England, within my particular knowledge, who go in rags, and their children wanting bread, whose fathers can earn their 15s. to 25s. a week, but will not work. . . . The reason why so many pretend to want work is that, as they can

live so well on the pretence of wanting work, they would be mad to have it and work in earnest.' He maintains that wages in England were higher than in any other country in Europe, that hands and not employment were wanting, and that the condition of the labour market was clearly shown by the impossibility of obtaining a sufficient number of recruits for the army, without resorting to the press-gang. When, a few years later, the commercial treaty between France and England was discussed, one of the strongest arguments of its opponents was the danger of French competition, on account of the much greater cheapness of French labour. 'The French,' said one of the writers in the 'British Merchant,' 'did always outdo us in the price of labour; their common people live upon roots, cabbage, and other herbage; four of their large provinces subsist entirely upon chestnuts, and the best of them eat bread made of barley, millet, Turkey and black corn . . . they generally drink nothing but water, and at best a sort of liquor they call *beuverage* (which is water passed through the husks of grapes after the wine is drawn off); they save a great deal upon that account, for it is well known that our people spend half of their money in drink.'¹

As far as we are able to judge from the few scattered facts that are preserved, the position of the poor seems on the whole to have steadily improved in the long pacific period during the reigns of George I. and George II. It was at this time that wheat bread began to supersede, among the labouring classes, bread made of rye, barley, or oats, and the rate of wages slightly advanced without any corresponding, or at least equivalent, rise in the price of the articles of first necessity. When Arthur Young investigated the agricultural condition of the southern counties in 1768, he found that the average weekly rate of agricultural wages for the whole year round, was 10s. 9d. within 20 miles of London; 7s. 8d. at a distance of from 20 to 60 miles from London; 6s. 4d. at from 60 to 110 miles

¹ *British Merchant*, i. 6, 7. 'I think nothing so terrible,' wrote Lady M. Montagu, when travelling through France in 1718, 'as objects of misery, except one had the God-like attribute of being capable to redress them; and all the country villages of France show nothing else.

When the post-horses are changed, the whole town comes out to beg, with such miserable starved faces and thin tattered clothes, they need no other eloquence to persuade one of the wretchedness of their condition.' —Lady M. W. Montagu's *Works* (Lord Wharncliffe's edition), ii. p. 89.

from London; 6s. 3d. at from 110 to 170 miles. The highest wages were in the eastern counties, the lowest in the western counties, and especially in Gloucestershire and Wiltshire. In some parts of these he found that the agricultural wages were not higher than 4s. 6d. in winter and 6s. in summer. In the north of England, which he described in 1770, he found that agricultural wages, for the whole year, ranged from 4s. 11d. to 9s. 9d., the average being 7s. 1d. Within 300 miles to the north of London, the average rate in different districts varied only from 6s. 9d. to 7s. 2d.; but beyond that distance it fell to 5s. 8d. Twenty years later, the same admirable observer, after a detailed examination of the comparative condition of the labouring classes in England and France, pronounced agricultural wages in the latter country to be 76 per cent. lower than in England, and he has left a most emphatic testimony to the enormous superiority in well-being of the English labourer.¹

One change, however, was taking place which was, on the whole, to his disadvantage. It was inevitable that with the progress of agriculture the vast tracts of common land scattered over England should be reclaimed and enclosed, and it was almost equally inevitable that the permanent advantage derived from them should be reaped by the surrounding landlords. Clauses were, it is true, inserted in most Enclosure Bills providing compensation for those who had common rights; and the mere increase of the net produce of the soil had some effect in raising the price of labour; but the main and enduring benefits of the enclosures necessarily remained with those in whose properties the common land was incorporated, and by whose capital it was fructified. After a few generations the right of free pasture, which the English peasant had formerly enjoyed, had passed away, while the compensation he had received was long since dissipated. The great movement for enclosing common land belongs chiefly to the reign of George III., but it had begun on a large scale under his predecessor. Only two Enclosure Acts had been passed under Anne, and only

¹ Arthur Young's *Southern Tour*, pp. 321-324. *Northern Tour*, iv. pp. 293-297. *Tour in France*. See, too, Eden's *Hist. of the Poor*, Thornton's

Over-Population and Labour, Knight's *Pictorial Hist. of England*, vol. iv., Taine's *Ancien Régime*.

sixteen under George I. Under George II. there were no less than 226, and more than 318,000 acres were enclosed.¹

Though the population of London was little more than a seventh of what it now is, the magnitude of the city relatively to the other towns of the kingdom was much greater than at present. Under the Tudors and the Stuarts many attempts had been made to check its growth by proclamations forbidding the erection of new houses, or the entertaining of additional inmates, and peremptorily enjoining the country gentry to return to their homes in order 'to perform the duties of their several charges . . . to be a comfort unto their neighbours . . . to renew and revive hospitality in their respective counties.' Many proclamations of this kind had been issued during the first half of the seventeenth century, but the last occasion in which the royal prerogative was exercised to prevent the extension of London beyond its ancient limits appears to have been in 1674.² From that time its progress was unimpeded, and Davenant in 1685 combated the prevalent notion that it was an evil.³ The cities of London and Westminster, which had originally been far apart, were fully joined in the early years of the seventeenth century, partly, it is said, through the great number of Scotch who came to London on the accession of James I., and settled chiefly along the Strand.⁴ The quarter now occupied by St. James's Square, Pall Mall, St. James's Street, and Arlington Street, was pasture land till about 1680. Evelyn, writing in 1684, stated that London had nearly doubled in his own recollection;⁵ but in the beginning of the eighteenth century Hackney, Newington, Marylebone, Islington, Chelsea, and Kensington were still rural villages, far removed from the metropolis. Marylebone, which was probably the nearest, was separated from it by a full mile of fields. The growth of London in the first half of the eighteenth century appears to have been chiefly in the direction of Deptford, Hackney, and Bloomsbury. It spread also on the southern bank of the

¹ McCulloch's *Statistical Account of the British Empire*, i. 550.

² Eden's *Hist. of the Poor*, i. 136-137. Craik's *Hist. of Commerce*, ii. 114. See, too, on the alarm felt at the increase of London. *Parl. Hist.*

iv. 660, 676, 679, 742, 743.

³ *Essay upon Ways and Means*.

⁴ Howell's *Londinopolis* (1657), p. 346.

⁵ Evelyn's *Diary*, June 12, 1684.

Thames after the building of Westminster Bridge in 1736, and especially in the quarter of the rich, which was extending steadily towards the west. Horace Walpole mentions that when, in the reign of Charles II., Lord Burlington built his great house in Piccadilly, he was asked why he placed it so far out of town, and he answered, because he was determined to have no building beyond him. In little more than half a century Burlington House was so enclosed with new streets that it was in the heart of the west end of London.¹ In the reign of Queen Anne, the most fashionable quarters were Bloomsbury Square, Lincoln's Inn Fields, Soho Square, and Queen's Square, Westminster. In the reign of George II. they included Leicester Fields, Golden Square, and Charing Cross. Pall Mall, till the middle of the century, was a fashionable promenade. Among other amusements, smock-racing by women was kept up there till 1733.²

The great nobles whose houses once fringed the Strand generally moved westward. Cavendish, Hanover, and Grosvenor Squares, as well as New Bond Street, the upper part of Piccadilly, the greater part of Oxford Street, and many contiguous streets were built in the first half of the eighteenth century; but Portman Square was not erected till about 1764, nor Berkeley Square till 1798. On the present site of Curzon Street and of the adjoining streets, May fair, with one short interruption, was annually celebrated till 1756. It lasted for six weeks, and did much to demoralise the neighbourhood, which was also greatly injured by the crowds of ruffians who passed through that quarter to witness the frequent executions at Tyburn. In 1748 we find Chesterfield, whose house stood near the border of May fair, complaining bitterly that the neighbouring district was full of thieves and murderers.³ It appears from a map of London, published in 1733,⁴ that there then were no houses to the north of Oxford Street, except the new quarter of Cavendish Square which formed a small promontory bounded by Marylebone Street on the north and by Oxford Street on the south, and extending from Vere Street on the west to near the site which

¹ *Anecdotes of Painting.*

² Andrews's *Eighteenth Century*,

p. 62.

³ Doran's *Life and Letters of Mrs. Montagu*, pp. 274-275.

⁴ Seymour's *Survey of London*.

is now occupied by Portland Road. Moving on eastward the northern frontier line of London touched Montague House, now the British Museum. It then gradually ascended, passed a few lanes to the north of Clerkenwell Green, and finally reached Hoxton, which was connected by some scattered houses with the metropolis. To the east, London stretched far into Whitechapel Street, Ratcliffe Highway, and Wapping, which, however, were divided from one another by large open spaces. To the west the new quarter of Grosvenor Square extended close to Hyde Park, and there were also a few houses clustered about Hyde Park Corner, but most of the space between Grosvenor Square and what is now called Piccadilly¹ was open ground. Along the Westminster bank of the river the town reached as far as the Horseferry opposite Lambeth. London Bridge was still the only bridge across the Thames, and the only considerable quarter on the southern side of the river was in its neighbourhood. Except a few scattered villages, open fields extended over all the ground which is now occupied by the crowded thoroughfares of Belgravia, Chelsea, and Kensington, and by the many square miles of houses which stretch along the north of London from St. John's Wood to Hackney.

No less than eight parishes were added between the Revolution and the death of George II.,² and many signs indicate the rapid extension of the town. The number of hackney coaches authorised in London, which was only 200 in 1652, was 800 in 1715,³ and the number of sedan chairs was raised from 200 in 1694 to 400 in 1726.⁴ A traveller noticed, about 1724, that while in Paris, Brussels, Rome, and Vienna, coaches could only be hired by the day, or at least by the hour, in London they stood at the corner of every street.⁵ The old water-supply being found inadequate for the wants of the new western quarter, a company was founded in 1722, and a reservoir formed in Hyde Park.⁶ Above all, in 1711 a most important step was taken in the interests of civilisation by the full organisation of a London

¹ The street was then only called Piccadilly to Devonshire House. The continuation was called Portugal Street, and near Hyde Park, the Exeter Road.

² Craik's *Hist. of Commerce*, ii. 215.

³ Macpherson, ii. 449; iii. 14.

⁴ Ibid. ii. 655; iii. 134.

⁵ Macky's *Journey through England*, i. 168. Muralt's *Letters on the English*, p. 84.

⁶ Macpherson, iii. 121.

penny post.¹ Great progress was made, as we have already seen, in the first half of the eighteenth century in lighting the streets and protecting the passengers, but very little was done to embellish the city. The pavement was scandalously inferior to that of the great towns of the Continent, while the projecting gutters from the roofs of the houses made the streets almost impassable in the rain, and it was not until the first years of George III. that these evils were remedied by law.² Architectural taste during the ascendancy of Vanbrugh was extremely low, and it is worthy of note that the badness of the bricks employed in building, which has been represented as a peculiar characteristic of the workmanship of the present generation, was already a matter of frequent complaint.³

The London season extended from October to May, leaving four months during which the theatres were closed and all forms of dissipation suspended.⁴ In the middle of the eighteenth century London was still unable to boast of any public gallery of ancient pictures or of any exhibition of the works of modern artists. The British Museum was not yet formed. Zoological Gardens were still unknown, and there was nothing of that variety of collections which is so conspicuous a feature of the present century. At the Tower, it is true, there had for centuries been a collection of wild animals, which many generations of country visitors regarded as so pre-eminent among the sights of London that it has even left its trace upon the language. The lions of the Tower are the origin of that

¹ Compare Macpherson, ii. 608; iii. 13. The penny post was first instituted in 1682 as a private enterprise by an upholsterer named Murray, who assigned it to one Dockwra, and Government ultimately adopted it. Its first mention in the Statute Book is in 1711.

² Pugh's *Life of Hanway*, pp. 127-139. See too the description of the state of the streets in Gay's *Trivia*. Macpherson's *Hist. of Commerce*, iii. 360, 477.

³ Macaulay has noticed (c. iii.), on the authority of Duke Cosmo, the badness of the bricks of the city which was destroyed by the fire. Muralt, in the very beginning of the eighteenth century (p. 76), declares that Lon-

don houses seldom last more than forty or fifty years, and sometimes drop before the end of that term. The author of the *Letters Concerning the Present State of England* (1772), says: 'The material of all common edifices, viz. bricks, are most insufferably bad, to a degree that destroys the beauty of half the buildings about town, making them seem of dirt and mud rather than brick. . . . A law might surely be enacted against using or making such detestable materials, by having all bricks undergo a survey or examination before sale, that are made in London' (p. 241).

⁴ *Rambler*, No. 124.

application of the term 'lion' to any conspicuous spectacle or personage, which has long since become universal. A much larger proportion of amusements than at present were carried on in the open air. Besides the popular gatherings of May fair, Bartholomew fair, and Southwark fair, there were the public gardens of Vauxhall and of Ranelagh, which occupy so prominent a place in the pictures of fashionable life by Fielding, Walpole, Goldsmith, Lady W. Montagu, and Miss Burney, and also the less famous entertainments of Marylebone Gardens, and of Cuper's Gardens on the Lambeth side of the Thames. Vauxhall dated from the middle of the seventeenth century, but Ranelagh Gardens, which occupied part of the present site of the gardens of Chelsea Hospital, were only opened in 1742. Coffee-houses, though apparently less conspicuous centres of news, politics, and fashion than they had been under Anne, were still very numerous. At the present day every traveller is struck with the almost complete absence in London of this element of Continental life, but in the early years of the eighteenth century coffee-houses were probably more prominent in London than in any other city in Europe. A writer who described the metropolis in 1708, not much more than fifty years after the first coffee-house had been established in England, estimated the number of these institutions at nearly 3,000.¹

The fashionable hours were becoming steadily later. Colley Cibber, in describing the popularity of Kynaston, a favourite actor of female parts under Charles II., mentions that ladies of quality were accustomed to take him with them in their coaches to Hyde Park in his theatrical habit after the play, which they could then do, as the play began at four o'clock.² 'The landmarks of our fathers,' wrote Steele in 1710, 'are removed, and planted further up in the day . . . in my own memory the dinner hour has crept by degrees from twelve o'clock to three. Where it will fix nobody knows.'³ In the reign of George II. the most fashionable dinner hour appears to have been four. The habits of all classes were becoming less simple. Defoe

¹ Hatton's *New View of London*, i. p. 30. Many particulars relating to these coffee-houses will be found in Timbs's *Club Life in London*.

² Cibber's *Apology*, ch. 5.

³ *Tatler*, No. 263. In the country the old hours seem to have gone on. Pope, in his *Epistle to Mrs. Blount*, on

noticed that within the memory of men still living the apprentices of shopkeepers and warehousemen habitually served the families of their masters at table, and discharged other menial functions which in the reign of George I. they would have indignantly spurned.¹ The merchants who had hitherto lived in the city near their counting-houses, began, early in the eighteenth century, to migrate to other quarters, though they at first seldom went further than Hatton Garden.² Domestic service was extremely disorganised. Almost all the complaints on this subject, which in our own day we hear upon every side and which are often cited as conclusive proofs of the degeneracy of the English people, were quite as loud and as emphatic a hundred and fifty years ago as at present. It was said that while no servants in Europe were so highly paid or so well fed as the English, none were so insolent, exacting, or nomadic, that the tie of affection between master and servant was completely broken, that on the smallest provocation or at the hope of the smallest increase of wages, or still more of vales, the servant threw up his place, and that no other single cause contributed so largely to the discomfort of families. Servants had their clubs, and their societies for maintaining each other when out of place, and they copied only too faithfully the follies and the vices of their masters. There were bitter complaints of how they wore their masters' clothes and assumed their masters' names, how there were in liveries 'beaux, fops, and coxcombs, in as high perfection as among people that kept equipages,' how near the entrance of the law-courts and the Parliament, a host of servants kept up 'such riotous clamour and licentious confusion' that 'one would think there were no such thing as rule or distinction among us.'³ In the theatres especially they were a constant source of disturbance. It was

her leaving town for the country,
 says—

She went to plain work and to purling brooks,
 Old-fashioned halls, dull aunts, and croaking
 rooks.

* * * * *
 To pass her time twixt reading and bohea,
 To muse, and spill her solitary tea,
 Or o'er cold coffee trifle with the spoon,
 Count the slow clock, and dine exact at noon.

¹ *Behaviour of the Servants of England*, p. 12.

² See Lawrence's *Life of Fielding*, p. 66.

³ *Spectator*, No. 88. *World*, No. 157. Angeloni's *Letters on the English*, ii. 38-42. Defoe's *Behaviour of the Servants of England*. Fielding's *Old Men Taught Wisdom*. *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1731, pp. 249-250. Gonzales, a Portuguese traveller who visited England in 1730, writes: 'As to the common and menial ser-

the custom of the upper classes to send their footmen before them to keep their places during the first acts of the play, and they afterwards usually retired to the upper gallery, to which they claimed the right of free admission. Their constant disorder led to their expulsion from Drury Lane theatre in 1737, which they resented by a furious riot. The presence of the Prince and Princess of Wales was unable to allay the storm, and order was not restored till twenty-five or twenty-six persons had been seriously injured.¹

This state of things was the natural consequence of luxurious and ostentatious habits, acting upon a national character by no means peculiarly adapted to domestic service. There were, however, also several special causes at work, which made the condition of domestic service a great national evil. The most conspicuous were the custom of placing servants on board wages, which was very prevalent in the beginning of the century, and which encouraged them to frequent clubs and taverns; the constant attendance of servants upon their mistresses in the great scenes of fashionable dissipation; the law which communicated to the servants of peers and Members of Parliament the immunity from arrest for debt enjoyed by their masters; and, above all, the system of vales, which made servants in a great degree independent of their masters. This system had been carried in England to an extent unparalleled in Europe; and the great prominence given to it in the literature of the early half of the eighteenth century shows how widespread and demoralising it had become. When dining with his nearest relation a gentleman was expected to pay the servants who attended him, and no one of small fortune could accept many invitations from a great nobleman, on account of the large sums which had to be distributed among the numerous domestics.

vants [of London] they have great wages, are well kept and clothed, but are notwithstanding the plague of almost every house in town. They form themselves into societies, or rather confederacies, contributing to the maintenance of each other when out of place, and if any of them cannot manage the family where they are entertained as they please, immediately they give notice they will

be gone. There is no speaking to them; they are above correction. . . . It is become a common saying, "If my servant ben't a thief, if he be but honest, I can bear with other things," and, indeed, it is very rare to meet in London with an honest servant."—Pinkerton's *Travels*, ii. 95.

¹ Lawrence's *Life of Fielding*, pp. 63-64. Mrs. Delany's *Life and Correspondence*, i. 398-399.

No feature of English life seemed more revolting or astonishing to foreigners than an English entertainment where the guests, often under the eyes of the host, passed from the drawing-room through a double row of footmen, each one of them expecting and receiving his fee. It was said that a foreign minister, dining on a great occasion with a nobleman of the highest rank, usually expended in this way as much as ten guineas, that a sum of two or three guineas was a common expenditure in great houses, and that a poor clergyman, invited to dine with his bishop, not unfrequently spent in vales to the servants, at a single dinner, more than would have fed his family for a week. Dr. King tells a story of a poor nobleman who in Queen Anne's time was an intimate friend of the Duke of Ormond, and who regularly received a guinea with every invitation, for distribution among the servants of his host. The effect of this system in weakening the authority of masters, and in demoralising servants, was universally recognised, and soon after the middle of the century a great movement arose to abolish it, the servants being compensated by a higher rate of wages. The movement began among the gentry of Scotland. The grand jury of Northumberland and the grand jury of Wiltshire followed the example, pledging themselves to discourage the system of vales, but many years still elapsed before it was finally eradicated.¹

Of the sanitary condition of the city it is extremely difficult to speak with confidence. There is reason to believe that cleanliness and good ventilation had greatly increased,² and in at least one respect a marked improvement of the national health had recently taken place. The plague of London was not a single

¹ *Eight Letters to his Grace the Duke of — on the Custom of Vail-giving in England* [by Hanway, the Persian traveller] (London, 1760). King's *Anecdotes of his Own Time*, pp. 51-52. Reresby's *Memoirs*, p. 377. Angeloni's *Letters on the English*, ii. pp. 38-42. *World*, No. 60. *Connoisseur*, No. 70. Dodsley's *High Life below Stairs*. Roberts's *Social Hist. of the Southern Counties*, pp. 32-34.

² 'Many of its streets have been widened, made straight, raised, paved with easy descents to carry off the water; besides wells in most public

yards, and pipes for conveying plenty of fresh water to keep them clean and sweet; many late stately edifices, large clean courts, lofty rooms, large sash-lights, &c., and many excellent conveniences both by land and water, for supplying the city with fresh provisions at moderate prices . . . must contribute not a little to make the city more healthy.'—Short's *Comparative Hist. of the Increase and Decrease of Mankind in England and Abroad* (1767), p. 20. See, too, Macpherson's *Annals of Commerce*, iii. 321.

or isolated outburst. It had been chronic in London during the whole of the seventeenth century, and though greatly diminished had not been extirpated by the fire. By the beginning of the eighteenth century it completely disappeared, and it was noticed that from this time the deaths from colic and dysentery decreased with an extraordinary rapidity. In each successive decennial period in the first half of the eighteenth century the annual average of deaths from this source was much less than in the preceding one, and the average in the last decennial period is said to have been little more than a tenth of what it had been in the first one.¹ The statistics, however, both of disease and of population, were so fluctuating and so uncertain that it is rash to base much upon them. It appears, however, evident that the mortality of the towns as compared with the country, and the mortality of infants as compared with adults, were considerably greater than at present,² and also that the population of London in the second quarter of the century, if it did not, as was often said, absolutely decrease, at least advanced much less rapidly than in the first quarter. The great spread of gin-drinking was followed both by a serious diminution in the number of births, and by a great increase in the number of deaths, and was, no doubt, regarded, with justice, as the chief enemy of the public health.³ Medical science had been some-

¹ Heberden's *Observations on the Increase and Decrease of Different Diseases* (1801). This eminent authority, having given many statistics on the subject, concludes: 'The cause of so great an alteration in the health of the people of England (for it is not confined to the metropolis) I have no hesitation in attributing to the improvements which have gradually taken place, not only in London but in all the great towns, and in the manner of living throughout the kingdom; particularly in respect to cleanliness and ventilation' (p. 35).

² See the article on Vital Statistics, in McCulloch's *Statistical Account of the British Empire*, and Short's *Comparative History*. According to Short, 'the cities and great towns in the kingdom may be deemed as so many slaughterhouses of the people of the nation' (p. 22).

³ Dr. Short says the passion for spirituous liquors 'began to diffuse its pernicious effects in 1724, at the very time when the city began to be more fruitful and healthy than it had been since the Restoration. How powerfully this poison wrought let us now see. From 1704 to 1724 were born 336,514, buried 474,125. Let us allow fourteen years for this dire bane to spread, operate, and become epidemic; then from 1738 to 1758 were born 296,831, buried 486,171. Here we have two shocking effects of this bewitching liquor. First, here is a greater barrenness, a decrease or want of 40,000 of ordinary births which the last vicennary produced, instead of an increase, as we had in other vicennaries. Secondly, an increase of 12,000 burials, though there was so great a defect of births.'—Short's *Comparative History*, p. 21.

what improved, but the practice of lowering the constitution by excessive bleedings was so general that it may be questioned whether on the whole it did not kill more than it cured. The great progress of botany had, as was natural, some effect upon it. A garden of medical plants was created at Chelsea by the Company of Apothecaries as early as 1673, and it was greatly improved in the early years of the eighteenth century, chiefly by the instrumentality of Sir Hans Sloane. This very remarkable man was almost equally distinguished as a physician and as a botanist, and among other services to medicine he greatly extended the use of Peruvian bark.¹ A still more important fact in the history of English medicine was the increased study of anatomy. The popular prejudice against dissection which had for centuries paralysed and almost prevented this study still ran so high in England that in spite of the number of capital punishments, it was only with great difficulty the civil power could accommodate surgeons with proper subjects, and all publicity was studiously avoided. No English artist, unless he desired to hold up to abhorrence the persons whose portraits he drew, would have painted such a subject as the famous study of anatomy by Rembrandt. With such a state of feeling it is not surprising that the English medical school, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, should have been far inferior to that which gathered round the chair of Boerhaave at Leyden. In the reign of Queen Anne, however, a French refugee surgeon, named Bussière, began for the first time to give public lectures on anatomy in England, and the example was speedily followed by two anatomists of great ability.² Cheselden commenced, in 1711, a series of lectures on anatomy, which continued for twenty years. The first Monro opened a similar course at Edinburgh in 1719, and a school of medicine arose in that city which in the latter part of the century had no superior in Europe. The passion for anatomy was shown in the illegal efforts made to obtain bodies for dissection; and Shenstone in one of his

¹ Pulteney, *Progress of Botany in England*, ii. 85, 99-103.

² Nichols' *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century*, iv. 618. Miller's *Retrospect of the Eighteenth*

Century, ii. 10. Charles II. had given the Royal Society the privilege of taking bodies of malefactors for anatomical purposes. Hatton's *New View of London*, ii. 665.

elegies, complains bitterly of the frequent violation of the tomb.¹

In the first half of the eighteenth century also the first serious attempt was made to restrain the small-pox, which had long been one of the greatest scourges of Europe. Inoculation, as is well known, was introduced into England from Turkey by Lady Mary Montagu, and by Dr. Maitland, the physician of the Embassy, and the son of the former, afterwards the famous traveller, was the first English subject who was inoculated. On her return to England in 1722, Lady Mary Montagu laboured earnestly to propagate the system, and the Princess of Wales, afterwards Queen Caroline, whose mind was always open to new ideas and who exhibited no small courage in carrying them out, at once perceived the importance of the discovery. She obtained permission to have the experiment tried on five criminals who had been condemned to death, and who were pardoned on condition of undergoing it. In four cases it was perfectly successful, and the remaining criminal confessed that she had had the disease when a child.

The physicians, however, at first generally discouraged the practice. Popular feeling was vehemently roused against it, and some theologians denounced it as tempting Providence by artificially superinducing disease, endeavouring to counteract a Divine visitation, and imitating the action of the devil, who caused boils to break out upon the body of Job. Sir Hans Sloane, however, fully recognised the value of inoculation, and the Princess of Wales had two of her children inoculated in the very beginning of the movement. This act exposed her to no little obloquy, but it had some effect in encouraging the practice, and the adhesion of Madox, the Bishop of Worcester, was useful in counteracting the theological prejudice it had aroused. Still for some years it advanced very slowly. Only 845 persons were inoculated in England in the eight years that followed its introduction, and it seemed likely altogether to die out when news arrived that some of the planters in the West Indies had made use of it for their slaves with complete success. From this time the tide turned. In 1746 a small-pox hospital was founded in London for the purpose of inoculation, and in 1754 the

¹ Elegy xxii.

College of Physicians pronounced in its favour. It had, however, long to struggle against a violent prejudice in the country, and as late as 1765 only 6,000 persons had been inoculated in Scotland.

This prejudice was less unreasonable than has been supposed. Though some patients died from inoculation, its efficacy in securing those who underwent the operation from one of the most deadly of diseases was unquestionable. It was, however, only very partially practised, and as its object was to produce in the patient the disease in a mitigated form, it had the effect of greatly multiplying centres of infection, and thus propagating the very evil it was intended to arrest. To those who were wise enough to avail themselves of it, it was a great blessing ; but to the poor and the ignorant, who repudiated it, it was a scourge, and for some years after it was widely introduced, the deaths from small-pox were found rapidly to increase. If inoculation can be regarded as a national benefit it was chiefly because it led the way to the great discovery of Jenner.¹

It was in this respect somewhat characteristic of the period in which it arose. One of the most remarkable features of the first sixty years of the eighteenth century is the great number of new powers or influences that were then called into action of which the full significance was only perceived long afterwards. It was in this period that Russia began to intervene actively in Western politics, and Prussia to emerge from the crowd of obscure German States into a position of commanding eminence. It was in this period that the first steps were taken in many works which were destined in succeeding generations to exercise the widest and most abiding influence on human affairs. It was then that the English Deists promulgated doctrines which led the way to the great movement of European scepticism, that Diderot founded the French Encyclopedia, that Voltaire began his crusade against the dominant religion of

¹ Lady M. W. Montagu's *Works* (Lord Wharncliffe's ed.), i. pp. xxii. 55-60, 391-393. Baron's *Life of Jenner*, vol. i. 230-233. *Gentleman's Magazine*, xxvii. 409. Haygarth on *Casual Small-pox* (1793), vol. i. p. 31. Nichols' *Literary Anecdotes of the*

Eighteenth Century, iv. 625. Nichols' *Literary Illustrations*, i. 277-280. Voltaire's *Lettres sur les Anglois*, let. xi. Heberden's *Observations on the Increase and Decrease of Disease*, p. 36.

Christendom; that a few obscure Quakers began the long struggle for the abolition of slavery; that Wesley sowed the first seeds of religious revival in England. Without any great or salient revolutions the aspect of Europe was slowly changing, and before the middle of the century had arrived both the balance of power and the lines of division and antagonism were profoundly modified. Industrial interests and the commercial spirit had acquired a new preponderance in politics, and theological influence had at least proportionately declined. The fear of Mohammedan aggression, which was one great source of theological passions in Christendom, had now passed away. The power of the Turks was broken by the war which ended in the Peace of Carlowitz, and eighteen years later by the victories of Eugene, and although they waged a successful war with Austria in 1739, their triumph was much more due to the disorganisation of their opponents than to their own strength. Among Christian sects the frontier lines were now clearly traced. In Germany, as we have seen, the political position of Protestantism at the time of the Revolution appeared very precarious, and a new danger arose when the Sovereign of Saxony bartered his faith for the crown of Poland. But this danger had wholly passed. The elevation of Hanover into an Electorate and of Prussia into a kingdom, the additional strength acquired by Hanover through its connection with England, and the rapid development of the greatness of Prussia, would have secured German Protestantism from danger even if the zeal of the Catholic States had not greatly abated. The only religious war of the period broke out in Switzerland in 1712, and it ended in the complete triumph of the Protestant cantons, and the spirit of fanaticism and of persecution had everywhere declined. Two Protestant States, however, which had played a great and noble part in the history of the seventeenth century had sunk gradually into comparative insignificance. Sweden never recovered the effects of its disastrous war with Russia. Holland, through causes that were partly political and partly economical, had ceased to exercise any great influence beyond its borders. France exhibited some decline of energy and ambition, and a marked decline of administrative and military ability; and some



of the elements of decomposition might be already detected which led to the convulsions of the Revolution. In England the Protestant succession and Parliamentary institutions were firmly established, and the position of the country in Europe was on the whole sustained.

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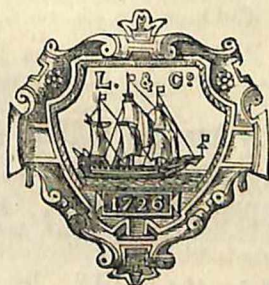
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