Critical and Historical Essays Volume 1

by Thomas Babington Macaulay

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CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL ESSAYS

VOLUME 1

by THOMAS BABBINGTON MACAULAY

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EDITOR’S NOTE

By

AJ Grieve

A French student of English letters (M. Paul Oursel) has written the following lines:

"Depuis deux siecles les Essais forment une branche importante de la litterature anglaise; pour designer un ecrivain de cette classe, nos voisons emploient un mot qui n’a pas d’equivalent en francais; ils disent: un essayist. Qu’est-ce qu’un essayist? L’essayist se distingue du moraliste, de l’historien, du critique litteraire, du biographe, de l’ecrivain politique; et pourtant il emprunte quelque trait a chacun d’eux; il ressemble tour a tour a l’un ou a l’autre; il est aussi philosophe, il est satirique, humoriste a ses heures; il reunit en sa personne des qualities multiples; il offre dans ses ecrits un specimen de tous les genres. On voit qu’il n’est pas facile de definir l’essayist; mais l’exemple suppleera a la definition. On connaitra exactement le sens du mot quand on aura etudie l’ecrivain qui, d’apres le jugement de ces compatriotes, est l’essayist par excellence, ou, comme on disait dans les anciens cours de litterature, le Prince des essayists."

Macaulay is indeed the prince of essayists, and his reign is unchallenged. "I still think--says Professor Saintsbury (Corrected Impressions, p. 89 f.)--that on any subject which Macaulay has touched, his survey is unsurpassable for giving a first bird’s-eye view, and for creating interest in the matter. . . . And he certainly has not his equal anywhere for covering his subject in the pointing-stick fashion. You need not--you had much better not--pin your faith on his details, but his Pisgah sights are admirable. Hole after hole has been picked in the "Clive" and the "Hastings," the "Johnson" and the "Addison," the "Frederick" and the "Horace Walpole," yet every one of these papers contains sketches, summaries, precis, which have not been made obsolete or valueless by all the work of correction in detail."

Two other appreciations from among the mass of critical literature that has accumulated round Macaulay’s work may be fitly cited, This from Mr. Frederic Harrison:-

"How many men has Macaulay succeeded in reaching, to whom all other history and criticism is a sealed book, or a book in an unknown tongue! If he were a sciolist or a wrongheaded fanatic, this would be a serious evil. But, as he is substantially right

in his judgments, brimful of saying common-sense and generous feeling, and profoundly well read in his own periods and his favourite literature, Macaulay has conferred most memorable services on the readers of English throughout the world. He stands between philosophic historians and the public very much as journals and periodicals stand between the masses and great libraries. Macaulay is a glorified journalist and reviewer, who brings the matured results of scholars to the man in the street in a form that he can remember and enjoy, when he could not make use of a merely learned book. He performs the office of the ballad-maker or story-teller in an age before books were known or were common. And it is largely due to his influence that the best journals and periodicals of our day are written in a style so clear, so direct, so resonant."

And this from Mr. Cotter Morison

"Macaulay did for the historical essay what Haydn did for the sonata, and Watt for the steam engine; he found it rudimentary and unimportant, and left it complete and a thing of power. . . . To take a bright period or personage of history, to frame it in a firm outline, to conceive it at once in article-size, and then to fill in this limited canvas with sparkling anecdote, telling bits of colour, and facts, all fused together by a real genius for narrative, was the sort of genre-painting which Macaulay applied to history. . . . And to this day his essays remain the best of their class, not only in England, but in Europe. . . . The best would adorn any literature, and even the less successful have a picturesque animation, and convey an impression of power that will not easily be matched. And, again, we need to bear in mind that they were the productions of a writer immersed in business, written in his scanty moments of leisure, when most men would have rested or sought recreation. Macaulay himself was most modest in his estimate of their value. . . . It was the public that insisted on their re-issue, and few would be bold enough to deny that the public was right."

It is to Mr. Morison that the plan followed in the present edition of the Essays is due. In his monograph on Macaulay (English Men of Letters series) he devotes a chapter to the Essays and "with the object of giving as much unity as possible to a subject necessarily wanting it," classifies the Essays into four groups, (1)English history, (2)Foreign history, (3)Controversial, (4)Critical and Miscellaneous. The articles in the first group are equal in bulk to those of the three other groups put together, and are contained in the first volume of this issue. They form a fairly complete survey of English history from the time of Elizabeth to the later years of the reign of George III, and are fitly introduced by the Essay on Hallam’s History, which forms a kind of summary or microcosm of the whole period.

The scheme might be made still more complete by including certain

articles (and especially the exquisite biographies contributed by Macaulay to the Encyclopaedia Britannica) which are published in the volume of "Miscellaneous Writings and Speeches." Exigencies of space have, however, compelled the limitation of the present edition to the "Essays" usually so-called. These have also been reprinted in the chronological arrangement ordinarily followed (see below) in The Temple Classics (5 vols. 1900), where an exhaustive bibliography, etc., has been appended to each Essay.

Chief dates in the life of Thomas Babington Macaulay, afterwards Baron Macaulay:--

1800 (Oct. 25). Birth at Rothley Temple, Leicestershire.
1818-1825. Life at Cambridge (Fellow of Trinity, 1824).
1825. Essay on Milton contributed to Edinburgh Review.
1826. Joined the Northern Circuit.
1830 @M.P. for Calne (gift of the Marquis of Lansdowne).
1833. M.P. for Leeds.
1834-38. Legal Adviser to the Supreme Council of India. Work at the Indian Penal Code.
1839. M.P. for Edinburgh, and Secretary at War In Melbourne's Cabinet.
1842. Lays of Ancient Rome.
1843. Collected edition of the Essays.
1847. Rejected at the Election of M.P. for Edinburgh.
1848. England from the Accession of James II. vols. i. and ii.
1852. M.P. for Edinburgh; serious illness.
1855. History of England, vols. iii. and iv.
1857. Raised to the peerage.
1859 (Dec. 28). Death at Holly Lodge, Kensington. (Buried in Westminster Abbey, 9th January 1860.)

The following are the works of Thomas Babington Macaulay:

Pompeii (Prize poem), 1819; Evening (prize poem), 1821; Lays of Ancient Rome (1842); Ivry and the Armada (Quarterly Magazine), added to Edition of 1848; Critical and Historical Essays (Edinburgh Review), 1843.

The Essays originally appeared as follows:

Milton, August 1825; Machiavelli, March 1827; Hallam's "Constitutional History," September 1828; Southey's "Colloquies," January 1830; R. Montgomery's Poems, April 1830; Civil Disabilities of Jews, January 1831; Byron, June 1831; Croker's "Boswell," September 1831; Pilgrim's Progress, December 1831; Hampden, December 1831; Burleigh, April 1832; War of Succession in Spain, January 1833; Horace Walpole, October 1833; Lord Chatham, January 1834; Mackintosh's "History of Revolution," July 1835; Bacon, July 1837; Sir William Temple, October 1838; "Gladstone on Church and State," April 1839; Clive, January 1840; Ranke's "History of the Popes," October 1840; Comic Dramatists,

January 1841; Lord Holland, July 1841; Warren Hastings, October 1841; Frederick the Great, April 1842; Madame D'Arblay, January 1843; Addison, July 1843; Lord Chatham (2nd Art.), October 1844.

History of England, vols. i. and ii., 1848; vols. iii. and iv., 1855; vol. v., Ed. Lady Trevelyan, 1861; Ed. 8 vols., 1858-62 (Life by Dean Milman); Ed. 4 vols., People's Edition, with Life by Dean Milman, 1863-4; Inaugural Address (Glasgow), 1849; Speeches corrected by himself, 1854 (unauthorized version, 1853, by Vizetelly); Miscellaneous Writings, 2 vols. 1860 (Ed. T. F. Ellis). These include poems, lives (Encyclo. Britt. 8th ed.), and contributions to Quarterly Magazine, and the following from Edinburgh Review:

Dryden, January 1828; History, May 1828; Mill on Government, March 1829; Westminster Reviewer's Defence of Mill, June 1829; Utilitarian Theory of Government, October 1829; Sadler's "Law of Population," July 1830; Sadler's "Refutation Refuted," January 1831 Mirabeau, July 1832; Barere, April 1844.

Complete Works (Ed. Lady Trevelyan), 8 vols., 1866.

BOOKS OF REFERENCE

Sir G.0. Trevelyan: The Life and Letters Of Lord Macaulay (2 vols. 8vo., 1876, 2nd ed. with additions, 1877, subsequent editions 1878 and 1881).

J. Cotter Morison: Macaulay [English Men of Letters], (1882).

Mark Pattison: Art. "Macaulay" in Encyclopaedia Britannica.

Leslie Stephen: Hours in a Library [new ed. 1892], ii. 243-376. Art. "Macaulay" in Dictionary of National Biography.

Frederic Harrison: Macaulay's Place in Literature (1894). Studies in Early Victorian Literature, chap. iii. (1895).

G. Saintsbury: Corrected Impressions, chaps. ix. x. (189,5). A History of Nineteenth Century Literature, pp. 224-232 (1896).

P. Oursel: Les Essais de Lord Macaulay (1882).

D.H. Macgregor: Lord Macaulay (1901).

Sir R.C. Jebb: Macaulay (1900).

F.C. Montague. Macaulay's Essays (3 vols. 1901).

A. J. G. August 1907.

HALLAM
(September 1828)

The Constitutional History of England, from the Accession of Henry VII. to the Death of George II. By HENRY HALLAM. In 2 vols. 1827

History, at least in its state of ideal perfection, is a compound of poetry and philosophy. It impresses general truths on the mind by a vivid representation of particular characters and incidents. But, in fact, the two hostile elements of which it consists have never been known to form a perfect amalgamation; and at length, in our own time, they have been completely and professedly separated. Good histories, in the proper sense of the word, we have not. But we have good historical romances, and good historical essays. The imagination and the reason, if we may use a legal metaphor, have made partition of a province of literature of which they were formerly seized per my et per tout; and now they hold their respective portions in severalty, instead of holding the whole in common.

To make the past present, to bring the distant near, to place us in the society of a great man or on the eminence which overlooks the field of a mighty battle, to invest with the reality of human flesh and blood beings whom we are too much inclined to consider as personified qualities in an allegory, to call up our ancestors before us with all their peculiarities of language, manners, and garb, to show us over their houses, to seat us at their tables, to rummage their old-fashioned ward-robes, to explain the uses of their ponderous furniture, these parts of the duty which properly belongs to the historian have been appropriated by the historical novelist. On the other hand, to extract the philosophy of history, to direct on judgment of events and men, to trace the connection of cause and effects, and to draw from the occurrences of former time general lessons of moral and political wisdom, has become the business of a distinct class of writers.

Of the two kinds of composition into which history has been thus divided, the one may be compared to a map, the other to a painted landscape. The picture, though it places the country before us, does not enable us to ascertain with accuracy the dimensions, the distances, and the angles. The map is not a work of imitative art. It presents no scene to the imagination; but it gives us exact information as to the bearings of the various points, and is a more useful companion to the traveller or the general than the painted landscape could be, though it were the grandest that ever Rosa peopled with outlaws, or the sweetest over which Claude ever poured the mellow effulgence of a setting sun.

It is remarkable that the practice of separating the two

ingredients of which history is composed has become prevalent on the Continent as well as in this country. Italy has already produced a historical novel, of high merit and of still higher promise. In France, the practice has been carried to a length somewhat whimsical. M. Sismondi publishes a grave and stately history of the Merovingian Kings, very valuable, and a little tedious. He then sends forth as a companion to it a novel, in which he attempts to give a lively representation of characters and manners. This course, as it seems to us, has all the disadvantages of a division of labour, and none of its advantages. We understand the expediency of keeping the functions of cook and coachman distinct. The dinner will be better dressed, and the horses better managed. But where the two situations are united, as in the Maitre Jacques of Moliere, we do not see that the matter is much mended by the solemn form with which the pluralist passes from one of his employments to the other.

We manage these things better in England. Sir Walter Scott gives us a novel; Mr. Hallam a critical and argumentative history. Both are occupied with the same matter. But the former looks at it with the eye of a sculptor. His intention is to give an express and lively image of its external form. The latter is an anatomist. His task is to dissect the subject to its inmost recesses, and to lay bare before us all the springs of motion and all the causes of decay.

Mr. Hallam is, on the whole, far better qualified than any other writer of our time for the office which he has undertaken. He has great industry and great acuteness. His knowledge is extensive, various, and profound. His mind is equally distinguished by the amplitude of its grasp, and by the delicacy of its tact. His speculations have none of that vagueness which is the common fault of political philosophy. On the contrary, they are strikingly practical, and teach us not only the general rule, but the mode of applying it to solve particular cases. In this respect they often remind us of the Discourses of Machiavelli.

The style is sometimes open to the charge of harshness. We have also here and there remarked a little of that unpleasant trick, which Gibbon brought into fashion, the trick, we mean, of telling a story by implication and allusion. Mr. Hallam however, has an excuse which Gibbon had not. His work is designed for readers who are already acquainted with the ordinary books on English history, and who can therefore unriddle these little enigmas without difficulty. The manner of the book is, on the whole, not unworthy of the matter. The language, even where most faulty, is weighty and massive, and indicates strong sense in every line. It often rises to an eloquence, not florid or impassioned, but high, grave, and sober; such as would become a state paper, or a judgment delivered by a great magistrate, a Somers or a D’Aguesseau.

In this respect the character of Mr. Hallam’s mind corresponds

strikingly with that of his style. His work is eminently judicial. Its whole spirit is that of the bench, not that of the bar. He sums up with a calm, steady impartiality, turning neither to the right nor to the left, glossing over nothing, exaggerating nothing, while the advocates on both sides are alternately biting their lips to hear their conflicting misstatements and sophisms exposed. On a general survey, we do not scruple to pronounce the Constitutional History the most impartial book that we ever read. We think it the more incumbent on us to bear this testimony strongly at first setting out, because, in the course of our remarks, we shall think it right to dwell principally on those parts of it from which we dissent.

There is one peculiarity about Mr. Hallam which, while it adds to the value of his writings, will, we fear, take away something from their popularity. He is less of a worshipper than any historian whom we can call to mind. Every political sect has its esoteric and its exoteric school, its abstract doctrines for the initiated, its visible symbols, its imposing forms, its mythological fables for the vulgar. It assists the devotion of those who are unable to raise themselves to the contemplation of pure truth by all the devices of Pagan or Papal superstition. It has its altars and its deified heroes, its relics and pilgrimages, its canonized martyrs and confessors, its festivals and its legendary miracles. Our pious ancestors, we are told, deserted the High Altar of Canterbury, to lay all their oblations on the shrine of St. Thomas. In the same manner the great and comfortable doctrines of the Tory creed, those particularly which relate to restrictions on worship and on trade, are adored by squires and rectors in Pitt Clubs, under the name of a minister who was as bad a representative of the system which has been christened after him as Becket of the spirit of the Gospel. On the other hand, the cause for which Hampden bled on the field and Sidney on the scaffold is enthusiastically toasted by many an honest radical who would be puzzled to explain the difference between Ship-money and the Habeas Corpus Act. It may be added that, as in religion, so in politics, few even of those who are enlightened enough to comprehend the meaning latent under the emblems of their faith can resist the contagion of the popular superstition. Often, when they flatter themselves that they are merely feigning a compliance with the prejudices of the vulgar, they are themselves under the influence of those very prejudices. It probably was not altogether on grounds of expediency that Socrates taught his followers to honour the gods whom the state honoured, and bequeathed a cock to Esculapius with his dying breath. So there is often a portion of willing credulity and enthusiasm in the veneration which the most discerning men pay to their political idols. From the very nature of man it must be so. The faculty by which we inseparably associate ideas which have often been presented to us in conjunction is not under the absolute control of the will. It may be quickened into morbid activity. It may be reasoned into sluggishness. But in a certain degree it will always exist. The almost absolute mastery which

Mr. Hallam has obtained over feelings of this class is perfectly astonishing to us, and will, we believe, be not only astonishing but offensive to many of his readers. It must particularly disgust those people who, in their speculations on politics, are not reasoners but fanciers; whose opinions, even when sincere, are not produced, according to the ordinary law of intellectual births, by induction or inference, but are equivocally generated by the heat of fervid tempers out of the overflowing of tumid imaginations. A man of this class is always in extremes. He cannot be a friend to liberty without calling for a community of goods, or a friend to order without taking under his protection the foulest excesses of tyranny. His admiration oscillates between the most worthless of rebels and the most worthless of oppressors, between Marten, the disgrace of the High Court of justice, and Laud, the disgrace of the Star-Chamber. He can forgive anything but temperance and impartiality. He has a certain sympathy with the violence of his opponents, as well as with that of his associates. In every furious partisan he sees either his present self or his former self, the pensioner that is, or the Jacobin that has been. But he is unable to comprehend a writer who, steadily attached to principles, is indifferent about names and badges, and who judges of characters with equable severity, not altogether untinctured with cynicism, but free from the slightest touch of passion, party spirit, or caprice.

We should probably like Mr. Hallam's book more if, instead of pointing out with strict fidelity the bright points and the dark spots of both parties, he had exerted himself to whitewash the one and to blacken the other. But we should certainly prize it far less. Eulogy and invective may be had for the asking. But for cold rigid justice, the one weight and the one measure, we know not where else we can look.

No portion of our annals has been more perplexed and misrepresented by writers of different parties than the history of the Reformation. In this labyrinth of falsehood and sophistry, the guidance of Mr. Hallam is peculiarly valuable. It is impossible not to admire the even-handed justice with which he deals out castigation to right and left on the rival persecutors.

It is vehemently maintained by some writers of the present day that Elizabeth persecuted neither Papists nor Puritans as such, and that the severe measures which she occasionally adopted were dictated, not by religious intolerance, but by political necessity. Even the excellent account of those times which Mr. Hallam has given has not altogether imposed silence on the authors of this fallacy. The title of the Queen, they say, was annulled by the Pope; her throne was given to another; her subjects were incited to rebellion; her life was menaced; every Catholic was bound in conscience to be a traitor; it was therefore against traitors, not against Catholics, that the penal laws were enacted.

In order that our readers may be fully competent to appreciate the merits of this defence, we will state, as concisely as possible, the substance of some of these laws.

As soon as Elizabeth ascended the throne, and before the least hostility to her government had been shown by the Catholic population, an act passed prohibiting the celebration of the rites of the Romish Church on pain of forfeiture for the first offence, of a year's imprisonment for the second, and of perpetual imprisonment for the third.

A law was next made in 1562, enacting, that all who had ever graduated at the Universities or received holy orders, all lawyers, and all magistrates, should take the oath of supremacy when tendered to them, on pain of forfeiture and imprisonment during the royal pleasure. After the lapse of three mouths, the oath might again be tendered to them; and if it were again refused, the recusant was guilty of high treason. A prospective law, however severe, framed to exclude Catholics from the liberal professions, would have been mercy itself compared with this odious act. It is a retrospective statute; it is a retrospective penal statute; it is a retrospective penal statute against a large class. We will not positively affirm that a law of this description must always, and under all circumstances, be unjustifiable. But the presumption against it is most violent; nor do we remember any crisis either in our own history, or in the history of any other country, which would have rendered such a provision necessary. In the present case, what circumstances called for extraordinary rigour? There might be disaffection among the Catholics. The prohibition of their worship would naturally produce it. But it is from their situation, not from their conduct, from the wrongs which they had suffered, not from those which they had committed, that the existence of discontent among them must be inferred. There were libels, no doubt, and prophecies, and rumours and suspicions, strange grounds for a law inflicting capital penalties, ex post facto, on a large body of men.

Eight years later, the bull of Pius deposing Elizabeth produced a third law. This law, to which alone, as we conceive, the defence now under our consideration can apply, provides that, if any Catholic shall convert a Protestant to the Romish Church, they shall both suffer death as for high treason.

We believe that we might safely content ourselves with stating the fact, and leaving it to the judgment of every plain Englishman. Recent controversies have, however, given so much importance to this subject, that we will offer a few remarks on it.

In the first place, the arguments which are urged in favour of Elizabeth apply with much greater force to the case of her sister Mary. The Catholics did not, at the time of Elizabeth's

accession, rise in arms to seat a Pretender on her throne. But before Mary had given, or could give, provocation, the most distinguished Protestants attempted to set aside her rights in favour of the Lady Jane. That attempt, and the subsequent insurrection of Wyatt, furnished at least as good a plea for the burning of Protestants, as the conspiracies against Elizabeth furnish for the hanging and embowelling of Papists.

The fact is that both pleas are worthless alike. If such arguments are to pass current, it will be easy to prove that there was never such a thing as religious persecution since the creation. For there never was a religious persecution in which some odious crime was not, justly or unjustly, said to be obviously deducible from the doctrines of the persecuted party. We might say, that the Caesars did not persecute the Christians; that they only punished men who were charged, rightly or wrongly, with burning Rome, and with committing the foulest abominations in secret assemblies; and that the refusal to throw frankincense on the altar of Jupiter was not the crime, but only evidence of the crime. We might say, that the massacre of St. Bartholomew was intended to extirpate, not a religious sect, but a political party. For, beyond all doubt, the proceedings of the Huguenots, from the conspiracy of Amboise to the battle of Moncontour, had given much more trouble to the French monarchy than the Catholics have ever given to the English monarchy since the Reformation; and that too with much less excuse.

The true distinction is perfectly obvious. To punish a man because he has committed a crime, or because he is believed, though unjustly, to have committed a crime, is not persecution. To punish a man, because we infer from the nature of some doctrine which he holds, or from the conduct of other persons who hold the same doctrines with him, that he will commit a crime is persecution, and is, in every case, foolish and wicked.

When Elizabeth put Ballard and Babington to death, she was not persecuting. Nor should we have accused her government of persecution for passing any law, however severe, against overt acts of sedition. But to argue that, because a man is a Catholic, he must think it right to murder a heretical sovereign, and that because he thinks it right, he will attempt to do it, and then, to found on this conclusion a law for punishing him as if he had done it, is plain persecution.

If, indeed, all men reasoned in the same manner on the same data, and always did what they thought it their duty to do, this mode of dispensing punishment might be extremely judicious. But as people who agree about premises often disagree about conclusions, and as no man in the world acts up to his own standard of right, there are two enormous gaps in the logic by which alone penalties for opinions can be defended. The doctrine of reprobation, in the judgment of many very able men, follows by syllogistic necessity from the doctrine of election. Others conceive that the

Antinomian heresy directly follows from the doctrine of reprobation; and it is very generally thought that licentiousness and cruelty of the worst description are likely to be the fruits, as they often have been the fruits, of Antinomian opinions. This chain of reasoning, we think, is as perfect in all its parts as that which makes out a Papist to be necessarily a traitor. Yet it would be rather a strong measure to hang all the Calvinists, on the ground that if they were spared, they would infallibly commit all the atrocities of Matthias and Knipperdoling. For, reason the matter as we may, experience shows us that a man may believe in election without believing in reprobation, that he may believe in reprobation without being an Antinomian, and that he may be an Antinomian without being a bad citizen. Man, in short, is so inconsistent a creature that it is impossible to reason from his belief to his conduct, or from one part of his belief to another.

We do not believe that every Englishman who was reconciled to the Catholic Church would, as a necessary consequence, have thought himself justified in deposing or assassinating Elizabeth. It is not sufficient to say that the convert must have acknowledged the authority of the Pope, and that the Pope had issued a bull against the Queen. We know through what strange loopholes the human mind contrives to escape, when it wishes to avoid a disagreeable inference from an admitted proposition. We know how long the Jansenists contrived to believe the Pope infallible in matters of doctrine, and at the same time to believe doctrines which he pronounced to be heretical. Let it pass, however, that every Catholic in the kingdom thought that Elizabeth might be lawfully murdered. Still the old maxim, that what is the business of everybody is the business of nobody, is particularly likely to hold good in a case in which a cruel death is the almost inevitable consequence of making any attempt.

Of the ten thousand clergymen of the Church of England, there is scarcely one who would not say that a man who should leave his country and friends to preach the Gospel among savages, and who should, after labouring indefatigably without any hope of reward, terminate his life by martyrdom, would deserve the warmest admiration. Yet we can doubt whether ten of the ten thousand ever thought of going on such an expedition. Why should we suppose that conscientious motives, feeble as they are constantly found to be in a good cause, should be omnipotent for evil? Doubtless there was many a jolly Popish priest in the old manor-houses of the northern counties, who would have admitted, in theory, the deposing power of the Pope, but who would not have been ambitious to be stretched on the rack, even though it were to be used, according to the benevolent proviso of Lord Burleigh, "as charitably as such a thing can be," or to be hanged, drawn, and quartered, even though, by that rare indulgence which the Queen, of her special grace, certain knowledge, and mere motion, sometimes extended to very mitigated cases, he were allowed a fair time to choke before the hangman began to grabble in his entrails.

But the laws passed against the Puritans had not even the wretched excuse which we have been considering. In this case, the cruelty was equal, the danger, infinitely less. In fact, the danger was created solely by the cruelty. But it is superfluous to press the argument. By no artifice of ingenuity can the stigma of persecution, the worst blemish of the English Church, be effaced or patched over. Her doctrines, we well know, do not tend to intolerance. She admits the possibility of salvation out of her own pale. But this circumstance, in itself honourable to her, aggravates the sin and the shame of those who persecuted in her name. Dominic and De Montfort did not, at least, murder and torture for differences of opinion which they considered as trifling. It was to stop an infection which, as they believed, hurried to certain perdition every soul which it seized, that they employed their fire and steel. The measures of the English government with respect to the Papists and Puritans sprang from a widely different principle. If those who deny that the founders of the Church were guilty of religious persecution mean only that the founders of the Church were not influenced by any religious motive, we perfectly agree with them. Neither the penal code of Elizabeth, nor the more hateful system by which Charles the Second attempted to force Episcopacy on the Scotch, had an origin so noble. The cause is to be sought in some circumstances which attended the Reformation in England, circumstances of which the effects long continued to be felt, and may in some degree be traced even at the present day.

In Germany, in France, in Switzerland, and in Scotland, the contest against the Papal power was essentially a religious contest. In all those countries, indeed, the cause of the Reformation, like every other great cause, attracted to itself many supporters influenced by no conscientious principle, many who quitted the Established Church only because they thought her in danger, many who were weary of her restraints, and many who were greedy for her spoils. But it was not by these adherents that the separation was there conducted. They were welcome auxiliaries; their support was too often purchased by unworthy compliances; but, however exalted in rank or power, they were not the leaders in the enterprise. Men of a widely different description, men who redeemed great infirmities and errors by sincerity, disinterestedness, energy and courage, men who, with many of the vices of revolutionary chiefs and of polemic divines, united some of the highest qualities of apostles, were the real directors. They might be violent in innovation and scurrilous in controversy. They might sometimes act with inexcusable severity towards opponents, and sometimes connive disreputably at the vices of powerful allies. But fear was not in them, nor hypocrisy, nor avarice, nor any petty selfishness. Their one great object was the demolition of the idols and the purification of the sanctuary. If they were too indulgent to the failings of eminent men from whose patronage they expected advantage to the church, they never flinched before persecuting tyrants and

hostile armies. For that theological system to which they sacrificed the lives of others without scruple, they were ready to throw away their own lives without fear. Such were the authors of the great schism on the Continent and in the northern part of this island. The Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse, the Prince of Conde and the King of Navarre, the Earl of Moray and the Earl of Morton, might espouse the Protestant opinions, or might pretend to espouse them; but it was from Luther, from Calvin, from Knox, that the Reformation took its character.

England has no such names to show; not that she wanted men of sincere piety, of deep learning, of steady and adventurous courage. But these were thrown into the background. Elsewhere men of this character were the principals. Here they acted a secondary part. Elsewhere worldliness was the tool of zeal. Here zeal was the tool of worldliness. A King, whose character may be best described by saying that he was despotism itself personified, unprincipled ministers, a rapacious aristocracy, a servile Parliament, such were the instruments by which England was delivered from the yoke of Rome. The work which had been begun by Henry, the murderer of his wives, was continued by Somerset, the murderer of his brother, and completed by Elizabeth, the murderer of her guest. Sprung from brutal passion, nurtured by selfish policy, the Reformation in England displayed little of what had, in other countries, distinguished it; unflinching and unsparing devotion, boldness of speech, and singleness of eye. These were indeed to be found; but it was in the lower ranks of the party which opposed the authority of Rome, in such men as Hooper, Latimer, Rogers, and Taylor. Of those who had any important share in bringing the Reformation about, Ridley was perhaps the only person who did not consider it as a mere political job. Even Ridley did not play a very prominent part. Among the statesmen and prelates who principally gave the tone to the religious changes, there is one, and one only, whose conduct partiality itself can attribute to any other than interested motives. It is not strange, therefore, that his character should have been the subject of fierce controversy. We need not say that we speak of Cranmer.

Mr. Hallam has been severely censured for saying with his usual placid severity, that, "if we weigh the character of this prelate in an equal balance, he will appear far indeed removed from the turpitude imputed to him, by his enemies; yet not entitled to any extraordinary veneration." We will venture to expand the sense of Mr. Hallam, and to comment on it thus:--If we consider Cranmer merely as a statesman, he will not appear a much worse man than Wolsey, Gardiner, Cromwell, or Somerset. But, when an attempt is made to set him up as a saint, it is scarcely possible for any man of sense who knows the history of the times to preserve his gravity. If the memory of the archbishop had been left to find its own place, he would have soon been lost among the crowd which is mingled

"A quel cattivo coro
Degli angeli, che non furon ribelli,
Ne fur fedeli a Dio, per se foro."

And the only notice which it would have been necessary to take of his name would have been

"Non ragioniam di lui; ma guarda, e passa."

But, since his admirers challenge for him a place in the noble army of martyrs, his claims require fuller discussion.

The origin of his greatness, common enough in the scandalous chronicles of courts, seems strangely out of place in a hagiology. Cranmer rose into favour by serving Henry in the disgraceful affair of his first divorce. He promoted the marriage of Anne Boleyn with the King. On a frivolous pretence he pronounced that marriage null and void. On a pretence, if possible still more frivolous, he dissolved the ties which bound the shameless tyrant to Anne of Cleves. He attached himself to Cromwell while the fortunes of Cromwell flourished. He voted for cutting off Cromwell's head without a trial, when the tide of royal favour turned. He conformed backwards and forwards as the King changed his mind. He assisted, while Henry lived, in condemning to the flames those who denied the doctrine of transubstantiation. He found out, as soon as Henry was dead, that the doctrine was false. He was, however, not at a loss for people to burn. The authority of his station and of his grey hairs was employed to overcome the disgust with which an intelligent and virtuous child regarded persecution. Intolerance is always bad. But the sanguinary intolerance of a man who thus wavered in his creed excites a loathing, to which it is difficult to give vent without calling foul names. Equally false to political and to religious obligations, the primate was first the tool of Somerset, and then the tool of Northumberland. When the Protector wished to put his own brother to death, without even the semblance of a trial, he found a ready instrument in Cranmer. In spite of the canon law, which forbade a churchman to take any part in matters of blood, the archbishop signed the warrant for the atrocious sentence. When Somerset had been in his turn destroyed, his destroyer received the support of Cranmer in a wicked attempt to change the course of the succession.

The apology made for him by his admirers only renders his conduct more contemptible. He complied, it is said, against his better judgment, because he could not resist the entreaties of Edward. A holy prelate of sixty, one would think, might be better employed by the bedside of a dying child, than in committing crimes at the request of the young disciple. If Cranmer had shown half as much firmness when Edward requested him to commit treason as he had before shown when Edward requested him not to commit murder, he might have saved the country from one of the greatest misfortunes

that it ever underwent. He became, from whatever motive, the accomplice of the worthless Dudley. The virtuous scruples of another young and amiable mind were to be overcome. As Edward had been forced into persecution, Jane was to be seduced into treason. No transaction in our annals is more unjustifiable than this. If a hereditary title were to be respected, Mary possessed it. If a parliamentary title were preferable, Mary possessed that also. If the interest of the Protestant religion required a departure from the ordinary rule of succession, that interest would have been best served by raising Elizabeth to the throne. If the foreign relations of the kingdom were considered, still stronger reasons might be found for preferring Elizabeth to Jane. There was great doubt whether Jane or the Queen of Scotland had the better claim; and that doubt would, in all probability, have produced a war both with Scotland and with France, if the project of Northumberland had not been blasted in its infancy. That Elizabeth had a better claim than the Queen of Scotland was indisputable. To the part which Cranmer, and unfortunately some better men than Cranmer, took in this most reprehensible scheme, much of the severity with which the Protestants were afterwards treated must in fairness be ascribed.

The plot failed; Popery triumphed; and Cranmer recanted. Most people look on his recantation as a single blemish on an honourable life, the frailty of an unguarded moment. But, in fact, his recantation was in strict accordance with the system on which he had constantly acted. It was part of a regular habit. It was not the first recantation that he had made; and, in all probability, if it had answered its purpose, it would not have been the last. We do not blame him for not choosing to be burned alive. It is no very severe reproach to any person that he does not possess heroic fortitude. But surely a man who liked the fire so little should have had some sympathy for others. A persecutor who inflicts nothing which he is not ready to endure deserves some respect. But when a man who loves his doctrines more than the lives of his neighbours, loves his own little finger better than his doctrines, a very simple argument a fortiori will enable us to estimate the amount of his benevolence.

But his martyrdom, it is said, redeemed everything. It is extraordinary that so much ignorance should exist on this subject. The fact is that, if a martyr be a man who chooses to die rather than to renounce his opinions, Cranmer was no more a martyr than Dr. Dodd. He died solely because he could not help it. He never retracted his recantation till he found he had made it in vain. The Queen was fully resolved that, Catholic or Protestant, he should burn. Then he spoke out, as people generally speak out when they are at the point of death and have nothing to hope or to fear on earth. If Mary had suffered him to live, we suspect that he would have heard mass and received absolution, like a good Catholic, till the accession of Elizabeth, and that he would then have purchased, by another apostasy, the power of burning men better and braver than himself.

We do not mean, however, to represent him as a monster of wickedness. He was not wantonly cruel or treacherous. He was merely a supple, timid, interested courtier, in times of frequent and violent change. That which has always been represented as his distinguishing virtue, the facility with which he forgave his enemies, belongs to the character. Slaves of his class are never vindictive, and never grateful. A present interest effaces past services and past injuries from their minds together. Their only object is self-preservation; and for this they conciliate those who wrong them, just as they abandon those who serve them. Before we extol a man for his forgiving temper, we should inquire whether he is above revenge, or below it.

Somerset had as little principle as his coadjutor. Of Henry, an orthodox Catholic, except that he chose to be his own Pope, and of Elizabeth, who certainly had no objection to the theology of Rome, we need say nothing. These four persons were the great authors of the English Reformation. Three of them had a direct interest in the extension of the royal prerogative. The fourth was the ready tool of any who could frighten him. It is not difficult to see from what motives, and on what plan, such persons would be inclined to remodel the Church. The scheme was merely to transfer the full cup of sorceries from the Babylonian enchantress to other hands, spilling as little as possible by the way. The Catholic doctrines and rites were to be retained in the Church of England. But the King was to exercise the control which had formerly belonged to the Roman Pontiff. In this Henry for a time succeeded. The extraordinary force of his character, the fortunate situation in which he stood with respect to foreign powers, and the vast resources which the suppression of the monasteries placed at his disposal, enabled him to oppress both the religious factions equally. He punished with impartial severity those who renounced the doctrines of Rome, and those who acknowledged her jurisdiction. The basis, however, on which he attempted to establish his power was too narrow to be durable. It would have been impossible even for him long to persecute both persuasions. Even under his reign there had been insurrections on the part of the Catholics, and signs of a spirit which was likely soon to produce insurrection on the part of the Protestants. It was plainly necessary, therefore, that the Crown should form an alliance with one or with the other side. To recognise the Papal supremacy, would have been to abandon the whole design. Reluctantly and sullenly the government at last joined the Protestants. In forming this junction, its object was to procure as much aid as possible for its selfish undertaking, and to make the smallest possible concessions to the spirit of religious innovation.

From this compromise the Church of England sprang. In many respects, indeed, it has been well for her that, in an age of exuberant zeal, her principal founders were mere politicians. To this circumstance she owes her moderate articles, her decent

ceremonies, her noble and pathetic liturgy. Her worship is not disfigured by mummery. Yet she has preserved, in a far greater degree than any of her Protestant sisters, that art of striking the senses and filling the imagination in which the Catholic Church so eminently excels. But, on the other hand, she continued to be, for more than a hundred and fifty years, the servile handmaid of monarchy, the steady enemy of public liberty. The divine right of kings, and the duty of passively obeying all their commands, were her favourite tenets. She held those tenets firmly through times of oppression, persecution, and licentiousness; while law was trampled down; while judgment was perverted; while the people were eaten as though they were bread. Once, and but once, for a moment, and but for a moment, when her own dignity and property were touched, she forgot to practise the submission which she had taught.

Elizabeth clearly discerned the advantages which were to be derived from a close connection between the monarchy and the priesthood. At the time of her accession, indeed, she evidently meditated a partial reconciliation with Rome; and, throughout her whole life, she leaned strongly to some of the most obnoxious parts of the Catholic system. But her imperious temper, her keen sagacity, and her peculiar situation, soon led her to attach herself completely to a church which was all her own. On the same principle on which she joined it, she attempted to drive all her people within its pale by persecution. She supported it by severe penal laws, not because she thought conformity to its discipline necessary to salvation; but because it was the fastness which arbitrary power was making strong for itself, because she expected a more profound obedience from those who saw in her both their civil and their ecclesiastical chief than from those who, like the Papists, ascribed spiritual authority to the Pope, or from those who, like some of the Puritans, ascribed it only to Heaven. To dissent from her establishment was to dissent from an institution founded with an express view to the maintenance and extension of the royal prerogative.

This great Queen and her successors, by considering conformity and loyalty as identical at length made them so. With respect to the Catholics, indeed, the rigour of persecution abated after her death. James soon found that they were unable to injure him, and that the animosity which the Puritan party felt towards them drove them of necessity to take refuge under his throne. During the subsequent conflict, their fault was anything but disloyalty. On the other hand, James hated the Puritans with more than the hatred of Elizabeth. Her aversion to them was political; his was personal. The sect had plagued him in Scotland, where he was weak; and he was determined to be even with them in England, where he was powerful. Persecution gradually changed a sect into a faction. That there was anything in the religious opinions of the Puritans which rendered them hostile to monarchy has never been proved to our satisfaction. After our civil contests, it became the fashion to say that Presbyterianism was connected with

Republicanism; just as it has been the fashion to say, since the time of the French Revolution, that Infidelity is connected with Republicanism. It is perfectly true that a church constituted on the Calvinistic model will not strengthen the hands of the sovereign so much as a hierarchy which consists of several ranks, differing in dignity and emolument, and of which all the members are constantly looking to the Government for promotion. But experience has clearly shown that a Calvinistic church, like every other church, is disaffected when it is persecuted, quiet when it is tolerated, and actively loyal when it is favoured and cherished. Scotland has had a Presbyterian establishment during a century and a half. Yet her General Assembly has not, during that period, given half so much trouble to the government as the Convocation of the Church of England gave during the thirty years which followed the Revolution. That James and Charles should have been mistaken in this point is not surprising. But we are astonished, we must confess, that men of our own time, men who have before them the proof of what toleration can effect, men who may see with their own eyes that the Presbyterians are no such monsters when government is wise enough to let them alone, should defend the persecutions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as indispensable to the safety of the church and the throne.

How persecution protects churches and thrones was soon made manifest. A systematic political opposition, vehement, daring, and inflexible, sprang from a schism about trifles, altogether unconnected with the real interests of religion or of the state. Before the close of the reign of Elizabeth this opposition began to show itself. It broke forth on the question of the monopolies. Even the imperial Lioness was compelled to abandon her prey, and slowly and fiercely to recede before the assailants. The spirit of liberty grew with the growing wealth and intelligence of the people. The feeble struggles and insults of James irritated instead of suppressing it; and the events which immediately followed the accession of his son portended a contest of no common severity, between a king resolved to be absolute, and a people resolved to be free.

The famous proceedings of the third Parliament of Charles, and the tyrannical measures which followed its dissolution, are extremely well described by Mr. Hallam. No writer, we think, has shown, in so clear and satisfactory a manner, that the Government then entertained a fixed purpose of destroying the old parliamentary constitution of England, or at least of reducing it to a mere shadow. We hasten, however, to a part of his work which, though it abounds in valuable information and in remarks well deserving to be attentively considered, and though it is, like the rest, evidently written in a spirit of perfect impartiality, appears to us, in many points, objectionable.

We pass to the year 1640. The fate of the short Parliament held in that year clearly indicated the views of the king. That a

Parliament so moderate in feeling should have met after so many years of oppression is truly wonderful. Hyde extols its loyal and conciliatory spirit. Its conduct, we are told, made the excellent Falkland in love with the very name of Parliament. We think, indeed, with Oliver St. John, that its moderation was carried too far, and that the times required sharper and more decided councils. It was fortunate, however, that the king had another opportunity of showing that hatred of the liberties of his subjects which was the ruling principle of all his conduct. The sole crime of the Commons was that, meeting after a long intermission of parliaments, and after a long series of cruelties and illegal imposts, they seemed inclined to examine grievances before they would vote supplies. For this insolence they were dissolved almost as soon as they met.

Defeat, universal agitation, financial embarrassments, disorganisation in every part of the government, compelled Charles again to convene the Houses before the close of the same year. Their meeting was one of the great eras in the history of the civilised world. Whatever of political freedom exists either in Europe or in America has sprung, directly or indirectly, from those institutions which they secured and reformed. We never turn to the annals of those times without feeling increased admiration of the patriotism, the energy, the decision, the consummate wisdom, which marked the measures of that great Parliament, from the day on which it met to the commencement of civil hostilities.

The impeachment of Strafford was the first, and perhaps the greatest blow. The whole conduct of that celebrated man proved that he had formed a deliberate scheme to subvert the fundamental laws of England. Those parts of his correspondence which have been brought to light since his death, place the matter beyond a doubt. One of his admirers has, indeed, offered to show "that the passages which Mr. Hallam has invidiously extracted from the correspondence between Laud and Strafford, as proving their design to introduce a thorough tyranny, refer not to any such design, but to a thorough reform in the affairs of state, and the thorough maintenance of just authority." We will recommend two or three of these passages to the especial notice of our readers.

All who know anything of those times, know that the conduct of Hampden in the affair of the ship-money met with the warm approbation of every respectable Royalist in England. It drew forth the ardent eulogies of the champions of the prerogative and even of the Crown lawyers themselves. Clarendon allows Hampden’s demeanour through the whole proceeding to have been such, that even those who watched for an occasion against the defender of the people, were compelled to acknowledge themselves unable to find any fault in him. That he was right in the point of law is now universally admitted. Even had it been otherwise, he had a fair case. Five of the judges, servile as our Courts then were, pronounced in his favour. The majority against him was the smallest possible. In no country retaining the slightest vestige

of constitutional liberty can a modest and decent appeal to the laws be treated as a crime. Strafford, however, recommends that, for taking the sense of a legal tribunal on a legal question, Hampden should be punished, and punished severely, "whipt," says the insolent apostate, "whipt into his senses. If the rod," he adds, "be so used that it smarts not, I am the more sorry." This is the maintenance of just authority.

In civilised nations, the most arbitrary governments have generally suffered justice to have a free course in private suits. Stratford wished to make every cause in every court subject to the royal prerogative. He complained that in Ireland he was not permitted to meddle in cases between party and party. "I know very well," says he, "that the common lawyers will be passionately against it, who are wont to put such a prejudice upon all other professions, as if none were to be trusted, or capable to administer justice, but themselves: yet how well this suits with monarchy, when they monopolise all to be governed by their year-books, you in England have a costly example." We are really curious to know by what arguments it is to be proved, that the power of interfering in the law-suits of individuals is part of the just authority of the executive government.

It is not strange that a man so careless of the common civil rights, which even despots have generally respected, should treat with scorn the limitations which the constitution imposes on the royal prerogative. We might quote pages: but we will content ourselves with a single specimen: "The debts of the Crown being taken off, you may govern as you please: and most resolute I am that may be done without borrowing any help forth of the King’s lodgings."

Such was the theory of that thorough reform in the state which Strafford meditated. His whole practice, from the day on which he sold himself to the court, was in strict conformity to his theory. For his accomplices various excuses may be urged; ignorance, imbecility, religious bigotry. But Wentworth had no such plea. His intellect was capacious. His early prepossessions were on the side of popular rights. He knew the whole beauty and value of the system which he attempted to deface. He was the first of the Rats, the first of those statesmen whose patriotism has been only the coquetry of political prostitution, and whose profligacy has taught governments to adopt the old maxim of the slave-market, that it is cheaper to buy than to breed, to import defenders from an Opposition than to rear them in a Ministry. He was the first Englishman to whom a peerage was a sacrament of infamy, a baptism into the communion of corruption. As he was the earliest of the hateful list, so was he also by far the greatest; eloquent, sagacious, adventurous, intrepid, ready of invention, immutable of purpose, in every talent which exalts or destroys nations pre-eminent, the lost Archangel, the Satan of the apostasy. The title for which, at the time of his desertion, he exchanged a name honourably distinguished in the cause of the

people, reminds us of the appellation which, from the moment of the first treason, fixed itself on the fallen Son of the Morning,

"Satan;--so call him now--His former name
Is heard no more in heaven."

The defection of Strafford from the popular party contributed mainly to draw on him the hatred of his contemporaries. It has since made him an object of peculiar interest to those whose lives have been spent, like his, in proving that there is no malice like the malice of a renegade; Nothing can be more natural or becoming than that one turncoat should eulogize another.

Many enemies of public liberty have been distinguished by their private virtues. But Strafford was the same throughout. As was the statesman, such was the kinsman and such the lover. His conduct towards Lord Mountmorris is recorded by Clarendon. For a word which can scarcely be called rash, which could not have been made the subject of an ordinary civil action, the Lord Lieutenant dragged a man of high rank, married to a relative of that saint about whom he whimpered to the peers, before a tribunal of slaves. Sentence of death was passed. Everything but death was inflicted. Yet the treatment which Lord Ely experienced was still more scandalous. That nobleman was thrown into prison, in order to compel him to settle his estate in a manner agreeable to his daughter-in-law, whom, as there is every reason to believe, Strafford had debauched. These stories do not rest on vague report. The historians most partial to the minister admit their truth, and censure them in terms which, though too lenient for the occasion, axe still severe. These facts are alone sufficient to justify the appellation with which Pym branded him "the wicked Earl."

In spite of all Strafford’s vices, in spite of all his dangerous projects, he was certainly entitled to the benefit of the law; but of the law in all its rigour; of the law according to the utmost strictness of the letter, which killeth. He was not to be torn in pieces by a mob, or stabbed in the back by an assassin. He was not to have punishment meted out to him from his own iniquitous measure. But if justice, in the whole range of its wide armoury, contained one weapon which could pierce him, that weapon his pursuers were bound, before God and man, to employ.

"If he may
Find mercy in the law, ’tis his: if none,
Let him not seek’t of us."

Such was the language which the Commons might justly use.

Did then the articles against Strafford strictly amount to high treason? Many people, who know neither what the articles were, nor what high treason is, will answer in the negative, simply because the accused person, speaking for his life, took that

ground of defence. The journals of the Lords show that the judges were consulted. They answered, with one accord, that the articles on which the earl was convicted amounted to high treason. This judicial opinion, even if we suppose it to have been erroneous, goes far to justify the Parliament. The judgment pronounced in the Exchequer Chamber has always been urged by the apologists of Charles in defence of his conduct respecting ship-money. Yet on that occasion there was but a bare majority in favour of the party at whose pleasure all the magistrates composing the tribunal were removable. The decision in the case of Strafford was unanimous; as far as we can judge, it was unbiassed; and, though there may be room for hesitation, we think, on the whole, that it was reasonable. "It may be remarked," says Mr. Hallam, "that the fifteenth article of the impeachment, charging Strafford with raising money by his own authority, and quartering troops on the people of Ireland, in order to compel their obedience to his unlawful requisitions, upon which, and upon one other article, not upon the whole matter, the Peers voted him guilty, does, at least, approach very nearly, if we may not say more, to a substantive treason within the statute of Edward the Third, as a levying of war against the King." This most sound and just exposition has provoked a very ridiculous reply. "It should seem to be an Irish construction this," says, an assailant of Mr. Hallam, "which makes the raising money for the King’s service, with his knowledge, and by his approbation, to come under the head of levying war on the King, and therefore to be high treason." Now, people who undertake to write on points of constitutional law should know, what every attorney’s clerk and every forward schoolboy on an upper form knows, that, by a fundamental maxim of our polity, the King can do no wrong; that every court is bound to suppose his conduct and his sentiments to be, on every occasion, such as they ought to be; and that no evidence can be received for the purpose of setting aside this loyal and salutary presumption. The Lords therefore, were bound to take it for granted that the King considered arms which were unlawfully directed against his people as directed against his own throne.

The remarks of Mr. Hallam on the bill of attainder, though, as usual, weighty and acute, do not perfectly satisfy us. He defends the principle, but objects to the severity of the punishment. That, on great emergencies, the State may justifiably pass a retrospective act against an offender, we have no doubt whatever. We are acquainted with only one argument on the other side, which has in it enough of reason to bear an answer. Warning, it is said, is the end of punishment. But a punishment inflicted, not by a general rule, but by an arbitrary discretion, cannot serve the purpose of a warning. It is therefore useless; and useless pain ought not to be inflicted. This sophism has found its way into several books on penal legislation. It admits however of a very simple refutation. In the first place, punishments ex post facto are not altogether useless even as warnings. They are warnings to a particular class which stand in great need of

warnings to favourites and ministers. They remind persons of this description that there maybe a day of reckoning for those who ruin and enslave their country in all forms of the law. But this is not all. Warning is, in ordinary cases, the principal end of punishment; but it is not the only end. To remove the offender, to preserve society from those dangers which are to be apprehended from his incorrigible depravity, is often one of the ends. In the case of such a knave as Wild, or such a ruffian as Thurtell, it is a very important end. In the case of a powerful and wicked statesman, it is infinitely more important; so important, as alone to justify the utmost severity, even though it were certain that his fate would not deter others from imitating his example. At present, indeed, we should think it extremely pernicious to take such a course, even with a worse minister than Strafford, if a worse could exist; for, at present, Parliament has only to withhold its support from a Cabinet to produce an immediate change of hands. The case was widely different in the reign of Charles the First. That Prince had governed during eleven years without any Parliament; and, even when Parliament was sitting, had supported Buckingham against its most violent remonstrances.

Mr. Hallam is of opinion that a bill of pains and penalties ought to have been passed; but he draws a distinction less just, we think, than his distinctions usually are. His opinion, so far as we can collect it, is this, that there are almost insurmountable objections to retrospective laws for capital punishment, but that, where the punishment stops short of death, the objections are comparatively trifling. Now the practice of taking the severity of the penalty into consideration, when the question is about the mode of procedure and the rules of evidence, is no doubt sufficiently common. We often see a man convicted of a simple larceny on evidence on which he would not be convicted of a burglary. It sometimes happens that a jury, when there is strong suspicion, but not absolute demonstration, that an act, unquestionably amounting to murder, was committed by the prisoner before them, will find him guilty of manslaughter. But this is surely very irrational. The rules of evidence no more depend on the magnitude of the interests at stake than the rules of arithmetic. We might as well say that we have a greater chance of throwing a size when we are playing for a penny than when we are playing for a thousand pounds, as that a form of trial which is sufficient for the purposes of justice, in a matter affecting liberty and property, is insufficient in a matter affecting life. Nay, if a mode of proceeding be too lax for capital cases, it is, a fortiori, too lax for all others; for in capital cases, the principles of human nature will always afford considerable security. No judge is so cruel as he who indemnifies himself for scrupulosity in cases of blood, by licence in affairs of smaller importance. The difference in tale on the one side far more than makes up for the difference in weight on the other.

If there be any universal objection to retrospective punishment,

there is no more to be said. But such is not the opinion of Mr. Hallam. He approves of the mode of proceeding. He thinks that a punishment, not previously affixed by law to the offences of Strafford, should have been inflicted; that Strafford should have been, by act of Parliament, degraded from his rank, and condemned to perpetual banishment. Our difficulty would have been at the first step, and there only. Indeed we can scarcely conceive that any case which does not call for capital punishment can call for punishment by a retrospective act. We can scarcely conceive a man so wicked and so dangerous that the whole course of law must be disturbed in order to reach him, yet not so wicked as to deserve the severest sentence, nor so dangerous as to require the last and surest custody, that of the grave. If we had thought that Strafford might be safely suffered to live in France, we should have thought it better that he should continue to live in England, than that he should be exiled by a special act. As to degradation, it was not the Earl, but the general and the statesman, whom the people had to fear. Essex said, on that occasion, with more truth than elegance, "Stone dead hath no fellow." And often during the civil wars the Parliament had reason to rejoice that an irreversible law and an impassable barrier protected them from the valour and capacity of Wentworth.

It is remarkable that neither Hyde nor Falkland voted against the bill of attainder. There is, indeed, reason to believe that Falkland spoke in favour of it. In one respect, as Mr. Hallam has observed, the proceeding was honourably distinguished from others of the same kind. An act was passed to relieve the children of Strafford from the forfeiture and corruption of blood which were the legal consequences of the sentence. The Crown had never shown equal generosity in a case of treason. The liberal conduct of the Commons has been fully and most appropriately repaid. The House of Wentworth has since that time been as much distinguished by public spirit as by power and splendour, and may at the present moment boast of members with whom Say and Hampden would have been proud to act.

It is somewhat curious that the admirers of Strafford should also be, without a single exception, the admirers of Charles; for, whatever we may think of the conduct of the Parliament towards the unhappy favourite, there can be no doubt that the treatment which he received from his master was disgraceful. Faithless alike to his people and to his tools, the King did not scruple to play the part of the cowardly approver, who hangs his accomplice. It is good that there should be such men as Charles in every league of villainy. It is for such men that the offer of pardon and reward which appears after a murder is intended. They are indemnified, remunerated and despised. The very magistrate who avails himself of their assistance looks on them as more contemptible than the criminal whom they betray. Was Strafford innocent? Was he a meritorious servant of the Crown? If so, what shall we think of the Prince, who having solemnly promised him that not a hair of his head should be hurt, and possessing an

unquestioned constitutional right to save him, gave him up to the vengeance of his enemies? There were some points which we know that Charles would not concede, and for which he was willing to risk the chances of the civil war. Ought not a King, who will make a stand for anything, to make a stand for the innocent blood? Was Strafford guilty? Even on this supposition, it is difficult not to feel disdain for the partner of his guilt, the tempter turned punisher. If, indeed, from that time forth, the conduct of Charles had been blameless, it might have been said that his eyes were at last opened to the errors of his former conduct, and that, in sacrificing to the wishes of his Parliament a minister whose crime had been a devotion too zealous to the interests of his prerogative, he gave a painful and deeply humiliating proof of the sincerity of his repentance. We may describe the King's behaviour on this occasion in terms resembling those which Hume has employed when speaking of the conduct of Churchill at the Revolution. It required ever after the most rigid justice and sincerity in the dealings of Charles with his people to vindicate his conduct towards his friend. His subsequent dealings with his people, however, clearly showed, that it was not from any respect for the Constitution, or from any sense of the deep criminality of the plans in which Strafford and himself had been engaged, that he gave up his minister to the axe. It became evident that he had abandoned a servant who, deeply guilty as to all others, was guiltless to him alone, solely in order to gain time for maturing other schemes of tyranny, and purchasing the aid of the other Wentworths. He, who would not avail himself of the power which the laws gave him to save an adherent to whom his honour was pledged, soon showed that he did not scruple to break every law and forfeit every pledge, in order to work the ruin of his opponents.

"Put not your trust in princes!" was the expression of the fallen minister, when he heard that Charles had consented to his death. The whole history of the times is a sermon on that bitter text. The defence of the Long Parliament is comprised in the dying words of its victim.

The early measures of that Parliament Mr. Hallam in general approves. But he considers the proceedings which took place after the recess in the summer of 1641 as mischievous and violent. He thinks that, from that time, the demands of the Houses were not warranted by any imminent danger to the Constitution and that in the war which ensued they were clearly the aggressors. As this is one of the most interesting questions in our history, we will venture to state, at some length, the reasons which have led us to form an opinion on it contrary to that of a writer whose judgment we so highly respect.

We will premise that we think worse of King Charles the First than even Mr. Hallam appears to do. The fixed hatred of liberty which was the principle of the King's public conduct the unscrupulousness with which he adopted any means which might

enable him to attain his ends, the readiness with which he gave promises, the impudence with which he broke them, the cruel indifference with which he threw away his useless or damaged tools, made him, at least till his character was fully exposed, and his power shaken to its foundations, a more dangerous enemy to the Constitution than a man of far greater talents and resolution might have been. Such princes may still be seen, the scandals of the southern thrones of Europe, princes false alike to the accomplices who have served them and to the opponents who have spared them, princes who, in the hour of danger, concede everything, swear everything, hold out their cheeks to every smiter, give up to punishment every instrument of their tyranny, and await with meek and smiling implacability the blessed day of perjury and revenge.

We will pass by the instances of oppression and falsehood which disgraced the early part of the reign of Charles. We will leave out of the question the whole history of his third Parliament, the price which he exacted for assenting to the Petition of Right, the perfidy with which he violated his engagements, the death of Eliot, the barbarous punishments inflicted by the Star-Chamber, the ship-money, and all the measures now universally condemned, which disgraced his administration from 1630 to 1640. We will admit that it might be the duty of the Parliament after punishing the most guilty of his creatures, after abolishing the inquisitorial tribunals which had been the instruments of his tyranny, after reversing the unjust sentences of his victims to pause in its course. The concessions which had been made were great, the evil of civil war obvious, the advantages even of victory doubtful. The former errors of the King might be imputed to youth, to the pressure of circumstances, to the influence of evil counsel, to the undefined state of the law. We firmly believe that if, even at this eleventh hour, Charles had acted fairly towards his people, if he had even acted fairly towards his own partisans, the House of Commons would have given him a fair chance of retrieving the public confidence. Such was the opinion of Clarendon. He distinctly states that the fury of opposition had abated, that a reaction had begun to take place, that the majority of those who had taken part against the King were desirous of an honourable and complete reconciliation and that the more violent or, as it soon appeared, the more judicious members of the popular party were fast declining in credit. The Remonstrance had been carried with great difficulty. The uncompromising antagonists of the court such as Cromwell, had begun to talk of selling their estates and leaving England. The event soon showed that they were the only men who really understood how much inhumanity and fraud lay hid under the constitutional language and gracious demeanour of the King.

The attempt to seize the five members was undoubtedly the real cause of the war. From that moment, the loyal confidence with which most of the popular party were beginning to regard the King was turned into hatred and incurable suspicion. From that moment,

the Parliament was compelled to surround itself with defensive arms. From that moment, the city assumed the appearance of a garrison. From that moment, in the phrase of Clarendon, the carriage of Hampden became fiercer, that he drew the sword and threw away the scabbard. For, from that moment, it must have been evident to every impartial observer, that, in the midst of professions, oaths, and smiles, the tyrant was constantly looking forward to an absolute sway, and to a bloody revenge.

The advocates of Charles have very dexterously contrived to conceal from their readers the real nature of this transaction. By making concessions apparently candid and ample, they elude the great accusation. They allow that the measure was weak and even frantic, an absurd caprice of Lord Digby, absurdly adopted by the King. And thus they save their client from the full penalty of his transgression, by entering a plea of guilty to the minor offence. To us his conduct appears at this day as at the time it appeared to the Parliament and the city. We think it by no means so foolish as it pleases his friends to represent it, and far more wicked.

In the first place, the transaction was illegal from beginning to end. The impeachment was illegal. The process was illegal. The service was illegal. If Charles wished to prosecute the five members for treason, a bill against them should have been sent to a grand jury. That a commoner cannot be tried for high treason by the Lords at the suit of the Crown, is part of the very alphabet of our law. That no man can be arrested by the King in person is equally clear. This was an established maxim of our jurisprudence even in the time of Edward the Fourth. "A subject," said Chief Justice Markham to that Prince, "may arrest for treason: the King cannot; for, if the arrest be illegal, the party has no remedy against the King."

The time at which Charles took his step also deserves consideration. We have already said that the ardour which the Parliament had displayed at the time of its first meeting had considerably abated, that the leading opponents of the court were desponding, and that their followers were in general inclined to milder and more temperate measures than those which had hitherto been pursued. In every country, and in none more than in England, there is a disposition to take the part of those who are unmercifully run down, and who seem destitute of all means of defence. Every man who has observed the ebb and flow of public feeling in our own time will easily recall examples to illustrate this remark. An English statesman ought to pay assiduous worship to Nemesis, to be most apprehensive of ruin when he is at the height of power and popularity, and to dread his enemy most when most completely prostrated. The fate of the Coalition Ministry in 1784 is perhaps the strongest instance in our history of the operation of this principle. A few weeks turned the ablest and most extended Ministry that ever existed into a feeble Opposition, and raised a King who was talking of retiring to

Hanover to a height of power which none of his predecessors had enjoyed since the Revolution. A crisis of this description was evidently approaching in 1642. At such a crisis, a Prince of a really honest and generous nature, who had erred, who had seen his error, who had regretted the lost affections of his people, who rejoiced in the dawning hope of regaining them, would be peculiarly careful to take no step which could give occasion of offence, even to the unreasonable. On the other hand, a tyrant, whose whole life was a lie, who hated the Constitution the more because he had been compelled to feign respect for it, and to whom his own honour and the love of his people were as nothing, would select such a crisis for some appalling violation of the law, for some stroke which might remove the chiefs of an Opposition, and intimidate the herd. This Charles attempted. He missed his blow; but so narrowly, that it would have been mere madness in those at whom it was aimed to trust him again.

It deserves to be remarked that the King had, a short time before, promised the most respectable Royalists in the House of Commons, Falkland, Colepepper, and Hyde, that he would take no measure in which that House was concerned, without consulting them. On this occasion he did not consult them. His conduct astonished them more than any other members of the Assembly. Clarendon says that they were deeply hurt by this want of confidence, and the more hurt, because, if they had been consulted, they would have done their utmost to dissuade Charles from so improper a proceeding. Did it never occur to Clarendon, will it not at least occur to men less partial, that there was good reason for this? When the danger to the throne seemed imminent, the King was ready to put himself for a time into the hands of those who, though they disapproved of his past conduct, thought that the remedies had now become worse than the distempers. But we believe that in his heart he regarded both the parties in the Parliament with feelings of aversion which differed only in the degree of their intensity, and that the awful warning which he proposed to give, by immolating the principal supporters of the Remonstrance, was partly intended for the instruction of those who had concurred in censuring the ship-money and in abolishing the Star-Chamber.

The Commons informed the King that their members should be forthcoming to answer any charge legally brought against them. The Lords refused to assume the unconstitutional office with which he attempted to invest them. And what was then his conduct? He went, attended by hundreds of armed men, to seize the objects of his hatred in the House itself. The party opposed to him more than insinuated that his purpose was of the most atrocious kind. We will not condemn him merely on their suspicions. We will not hold him answerable for the sanguinary expressions of the loose brawlers who composed his train. We will judge of his act by itself alone. And we say, without hesitation, that it is impossible to acquit him of having meditated violence, and violence which might probably end in blood. He knew that the

legality of his proceedings was denied. He must have known that some of the accused members were men not likely to submit peaceably to an illegal arrest. There was every reason to expect that he would find them in their places, that they would refuse to obey his summons, and that the House would support them in their refusal. What course would then have been left to him? Unless we suppose that he went on this expedition for the sole purpose of making himself ridiculous, we must believe that he would have had recourse to force. There would have been a scuffle; and it might not, under such circumstances, have been in his power, even if it had been in his inclination, to prevent a scuffle from ending in a massacre. Fortunately for his fame, unfortunately perhaps for what he prized far more, the interests of his hatred and his ambition, the affair ended differently. The birds, as he said, were flown, and his plan was disconcerted. Posterity is not extreme to mark abortive crimes; and thus the King's advocates have found it easy to represent a step, which, but for a trivial accident, might have filled England with mourning and dismay, as a mere error of judgment, wild and foolish, but perfectly innocent. Such was not, however, at the time, the opinion of any party. The most zealous Royalists were so much disgusted and ashamed that they suspended their opposition to the popular party, and, silently at least, concurred in measures of precaution so strong as almost to amount to resistance.

From that day, whatever of confidence and loyal attachment had survived the misrule of seventeen years was, in the great body of the people, extinguished, and extinguished for ever. As soon as the outrage had failed, the hypocrisy recommenced. Down to the very eve of this flagitious attempt Charles had been talking of his respect for the privileges of Parliament and the liberties of his people. He began again in the same style on the morrow; but it was too late. To trust him now would have been, not moderation, but insanity. What common security would suffice against a Prince who was evidently watching his season with that cold and patient hatred which, in the long-run, tires out every other passion?

It is certainly from no admiration of Charles that Mr. Hallam disapproves of the conduct of the Houses in resorting to arms. But he thinks that any attempt on the part of that Prince to establish a despotism would have been as strongly opposed by his adherents as by his enemies, and that therefore the Constitution might be considered as out of danger, or, at least that it had more to apprehend from the war than from the King. On this subject Mr. Hallam dilates at length, and with conspicuous ability. We will offer a few considerations which lead us to incline to a different opinion.

The Constitution of England was only one of a large family. In all the monarchies of Western Europe, during the middle ages, there existed restraints on the royal authority, fundamental

laws, and representative assemblies. In the fifteenth century, the government of Castile seems to have been as free as that of our own country. That of Arragon was beyond all question more so. In France, the sovereign was more absolute. Yet even in France, the States-General alone could constitutionally impose taxes; and, at the very time when the authority of those assemblies was beginning to languish, the Parliament of Paris received such an accession of strength as enabled it, in some measure, to perform the functions of a legislative assembly. Sweden and Denmark had constitutions of a similar description.

Let us overleap two or three hundred years, and contemplate Europe at the commencement of the eighteenth century. Every free constitution, save one, had gone down. That of England had weathered the danger, and was riding in full security. In Denmark and Sweden, the kings had availed themselves of the disputes which raged between the nobles and the commons, to unite all the powers of government in their own hands. In France the institution of the States was only mentioned by lawyers as a part of the ancient theory of their government. It slept a deep sleep, destined to be broken by a tremendous waking. No person remembered the sittings of the three orders, or expected ever to see them renewed. Louis the Fourteenth had imposed on his parliament a patient silence of sixty years. His grandson, after the War of the Spanish Succession, assimilated the constitution of Arragon to that of Castile, and extinguished the last feeble remains of liberty in the Peninsula. In England, on the other hand, the Parliament was infinitely more powerful than it had ever been. Not only was its legislative authority fully established; but its right to interfere, by advice almost equivalent to command, in every department of the executive government, was recognised. The appointment of ministers, the relations with foreign powers, the conduct of a war or a negotiation, depended less on the pleasure of the Prince than on that of the two Houses.

What then made us to differ? Why was it that, in that epidemic malady of constitutions, ours escaped the destroying influence; or rather that, at the very crisis of the disease, a favourable turn took place in England, and in England alone? It was not surely without a cause that so many kindred systems of government, having flourished together so long, languished and expired at almost the same time.

It is the fashion to say that the progress of civilisation is favourable to liberty. The maxim, though in some sense true, must be limited by many qualifications and exceptions. Wherever a poor and rude nation, in which the form of government is a limited monarchy, receives a great accession of wealth and knowledge, it is in imminent danger of falling under arbitrary power.

In such a state of society as that which existed all over Europe during the middle ages, very slight checks sufficed to keep the

sovereign in order. His means of corruption and intimidation were very scanty. He had little money, little patronage, no military establishment. His armies resembled juries. They were drawn out of the mass of the people: they soon returned to it again: and the character which was habitual prevailed over that which was occasional. A campaign of forty days was too short, the discipline of a national militia too lax, to efface from their minds the feelings of civil life. As they carried to the camp the sentiments and interests of the farm and the shop, so they carried back to the farm and the shop the military accomplishments which they had acquired in the camp. At home the soldier learned how to value his rights, abroad how to defend them.

Such a military force as this was a far stronger restraint on the regal power than any legislative assembly. The army, now the most formidable instrument of the executive power, was then the most formidable check on that power. Resistance to an established, government, in modern times so difficult and perilous an enterprise, was in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the simplest and easiest matter in the world. Indeed, it was far too simple and easy. An insurrection was got up then almost as easily as a petition is got up now. In a popular cause, or even in an unpopular cause favoured by a few great nobles, a force of ten thousand armed men was raised in a week. If the King were, like our Edward the Second and Richard the Second, generally odious, he could not procure a single bow or halbert. He fell at once and without an effort. In such times a sovereign like Louis the Fifteenth or the Emperor Paul would have been pulled down before his misgovernment had lasted for a month. We find that all the fame and influence of our Edward the Third could not save his Madame de Pompadour from the effects of the public hatred.

Hume and many other writers have hastily concluded, that, in the fifteenth century, the English Parliament was altogether servile, because it recognised, without opposition, every successful usurper. That it was not servile its conduct on many occasions of inferior importance is sufficient to prove. But surely it was not strange that the majority of the nobles, and of the deputies chosen by the commons, should approve of revolutions which the nobles and commons had effected. The Parliament did not blindly follow the event of war, but participated in those changes of public sentiment on which the event of war depended. The legal check was secondary and auxiliary to that which the nation held in its own hands.

There have always been monarchies in Asia, in which the royal authority has been tempered by fundamental laws, though no legislative body exists to watch over them. The guarantee is the opinion of a community of which every individual is a soldier. Thus, the king of Cabul, as Mr. Elphinstone informs us, cannot augment the land revenue, or interfere with the jurisdiction of the ordinary tribunals.

In the European kingdoms of this description there were representative assemblies. But it was not necessary that those assemblies should meet very frequently, that they should interfere with all the operations of the executive government, that they should watch with jealousy, and resent with prompt indignation, every violation of the laws which the sovereign might commit. They were so strong that they might safely be careless. He was so feeble that he might safely be suffered to encroach. If he ventured too far, chastisement and ruin were at hand. In fact, the people generally suffered more from his weakness than from his authority. The tyranny of wealthy and powerful subjects was the characteristic evil of the times. The royal prerogatives were not even sufficient for the defence of property and the maintenance of police.

The progress of civilisation introduced a great change. War became a science, and, as a necessary consequence, a trade. The great body of the people grew every day more reluctant to undergo the inconveniences of military service, and better able to pay others for undergoing them. A new class of men, therefore, dependent on the Crown alone, natural enemies of those popular rights which are to them as the dew to the fleece of Gideon, slaves among freemen, freemen among slaves, grew into importance. That physical force which in the dark ages had belonged to the nobles and the commons, and had, far more than any charter, or any assembly, been the safeguard of their privileges, was transferred entire to the King. Monarchy gained in two ways. The sovereign was strengthened, the subjects weakened. The great mass of the population, destitute of all military discipline and organisation, ceased to exercise any influence by force on political transactions. There have, indeed, during the last hundred and fifty years, been many popular insurrections in Europe: but all have failed except those in which the regular army has been induced to join the disaffected.

Those legal checks which, while the sovereign remained dependent on his subjects, had been adequate to the purpose for which they were designed, were now found wanting. The dikes which had been sufficient while the waters were low were not high enough to keep out the springtide. The deluge passed over them and, according to the exquisite illustration of Butler, the formal boundaries, which had excluded it, now held it in. The old constitutions fared like the old shields and coats of mail. They were the defences of a rude age; and they did well enough against the weapons of a rude age. But new and more formidable means of destruction were invented. The ancient panoply became useless; and it was thrown aside, to rust in lumber-rooms, or exhibited only as part of an idle pageant.

Thus absolute monarchy was established on the Continent. England escaped; but she escaped very narrowly. Happily our insular situation, and the pacific policy of James, rendered standing

armies unnecessary here, till they had been for some time kept up in the neighbouring kingdoms. Our public men, had therefore an opportunity of watching the effects produced by this momentous change on governments which bore a close analogy to that established in England. Everywhere they saw the power of the monarch increasing, the resistance of assemblies which were no longer supported by a national force gradually becoming more and more feeble, and at length altogether ceasing. The friends and the enemies of liberty perceived with equal clearness the causes of this general decay. It is the favourite theme of Strafford. He advises the King to procure from the judges a recognition of his right to raise an army at his pleasure. "This place well fortified," says he, "for ever vindicates the monarchy at home from under the conditions and restraints of subjects." We firmly believe that he was in the right. Nay; we believe that, even if no deliberate scheme, of arbitrary government had been formed, by the sovereign and his ministers, there was great reason to apprehend a natural extinction of the Constitution. If, for example, Charles had played the part of Gustavus Adolphus, if he had carried on a popular war for the defence of the Protestant cause in Germany, if he had gratified the national pride by a series of victories, if he had formed an army of forty or fifty thousand devoted soldiers, we do not see what chance the nation would have had of escaping from despotism. The judges would have given as strong a decision in favour of camp-money as they gave in favour of ship-money. If they had been scrupulous, it would have made little difference. An individual who resisted would have been treated as Charles treated Eliot, and as Strafford wished to treat Hampden. The Parliament might have been summoned once in twenty years, to congratulate a King on his accession, or to give solemnity to some great measure of state. Such had been the fate of legislative assemblies as powerful, as much respected, as high-spirited, as the English Lords and Commons.

The two Houses, surrounded by the ruins of so many free constitutions overthrown or sapped by the new military system, were required to intrust the command of an army and the conduct of the Irish war to a King who had proposed to himself the destruction of liberty as the great end of his policy. We are decidedly of opinion that it would have been fatal to comply. Many of those who took the side of the King on this question would have cursed their own loyalty, if they had seen him return from war; at the head of twenty thousand troops, accustomed to carriage and free quarters in Ireland.

We think with Mr. Hallam that many of the Royalist nobility and gentry were true friends to the Constitution, and that, but for the solemn protestations by which the King bound himself to govern according to the law for the future, they never would have joined his standard. But surely they underrated the public danger. Falkland is commonly selected as the most respectable specimen of this class. He was indeed a man of great talents and of great virtues but, we apprehend, infinitely too fastidious for

public life. He did not perceive that, in such times as those on which his lot had fallen, the duty of a statesman is to choose the better cause and to stand by it, in spite of those excesses by which every cause, however good in itself, will be disgraced. The present evil always seemed to him the worst. He was always going backward and forward; but it should be remembered to his honour that it was always from the stronger to the weaker side that he deserted. While Charles was oppressing the people, Falkland was a resolute champion of liberty. He attacked Strafford. He even concurred in strong measures against Episcopacy. But the violence of his party annoyed him, and drove him to the other party, to be equally annoyed there. Dreading the success of the cause which he had espoused, disgusted by the courtiers of Oxford, as he had been disgusted by the patriots of Westminster, yet bound by honour not to abandon the cause, for which he was in arms, he pined away, neglected his person, went about moaning for peace, and at last rushed desperately on death, as the best refuge in such miserable times. If he had lived through the scenes that followed, we have little doubt that he would have condemned himself to share the exile and beggary of the royal family; that he would then have returned to oppose all their measures; that he would have been sent to the Tower by the Commons as a stifler of the Popish Plot, and by the King as an accomplice in the Rye-House Plot; and that, if he had escaped being hanged, first by Scroggs, and then by Jeffreys, he would, after manfully opposing James the Second through years of tyranny, have been seized with a fit of compassion, at the very moment of the Revolution, have voted for a regency, and died a non-juror.

We do not dispute that the royal party contained many excellent men and excellent citizens. But this we say, that they did not discern those times. The peculiar glory of the Houses of Parliament is that, in the great plague and mortality of constitutions, they took their stand between the living and the dead. At the very crisis of our destiny, at the very moment when the fate which had passed on every other nation was about to pass on England, they arrested the danger.

Those who conceive that the parliamentary leaders were desirous merely to maintain the old constitution, and those who represent them as conspiring to subvert it, are equally in error. The old constitution, as we have attempted to show, could not be maintained. The progress of time, the increase of wealth, the diffusion of knowledge, the great change in the European system of war, rendered it impossible that any of the monarchies of the middle ages should continue to exist on the old footing. The prerogative of the crown was constantly advancing. If the privileges of the people were to remain absolutely stationary, they would relatively retrograde. The monarchical and democratical parts of the government were placed in a situation not unlike that of the two brothers in the Fairy Queen, one of whom saw the soil of his inheritance daily, washed away by the

tide and joined to that of his rival. The portions had at first been fairly meted out. By a natural and constant transfer, the one had been extended; the other had dwindled to nothing. A new partition, or a compensation, was necessary to restore the original equality.

It was now, therefore, absolutely necessary to violate the formal part of the constitution, in order to preserve its spirit. This might have been done, as it was done at the Revolution, by expelling the reigning family, and calling to the throne princes who, relying solely on an elective title, would find it necessary to respect the privileges and follow the advice of the assemblies to which they owed everything, to pass every bill which the Legislature strongly pressed upon them, and to fill the offices of state with men in whom the Legislature confided. But, as the two Houses did not choose to change the dynasty, it was necessary that they should do directly what at the Revolution was done indirectly. Nothing is more usual than to hear it said that, if the Houses had contented themselves with making such a reform in the government under Charles as was afterwards made under William, they would have had the highest claim to national gratitude; and that in their violence they overshot the mark. But how was it possible to make such a settlement under Charles? Charles was not, like William and the princes of the Hanoverian line, bound by community of interests and dangers to the Parliament. It was therefore necessary that he should be bound by treaty and statute.

Mr. Hallam reprobates, in language which has a little surprised us, the nineteen propositions into which the Parliament digested its scheme. Is it possible to doubt that, if James the Second had remained in the island, and had been suffered, as he probably would in that case have been suffered, to keep his crown, conditions to the full as hard would have been imposed on him? On the other hand, we fully admit that, if the Long Parliament had pronounced the departure of Charles from London an abdication, and had called Essex or Northumberland to the throne, the new prince might have safely been suffered to reign without such restrictions. His situation would have been a sufficient guarantee.

In the nineteen propositions we see very little to blame except the articles against the Catholics. These, however, were in the spirit of that age; and to some sturdy churchmen in our own, they may seem to palliate even the good which the Long Parliament effected. The regulation with respect to new creations of Peers is the only other article about which we entertain any doubt. One of the propositions is that the judges shall hold their offices during good behaviour. To this surely no exception will be taken. The right of directing the education and marriage of the princes was most properly claimed by the Parliament, on the same ground on which, after the Revolution, it was enacted, that no king, on pain of forfeiting, his throne, should espouse a Papist. Unless

we condemn the statesmen of the Revolution, who conceived that England could not safely be governed by a sovereign married to a Catholic queen, we can scarcely condemn the Long Parliament because, having a sovereign so situated, they thought it necessary to place him under strict restraints. The influence of Henrietta Maria had already been deeply felt in political affairs. In the regulation of her family, in the education and marriage of her children, it was still more likely to be felt; There might be another Catholic queen; possibly a Catholic king. Little, as we are disposed to join in the vulgar clamour on this subject, we think that such an event ought to be, if possible, averted; and this could only be done, if Charles was to be left on the throne, by placing his domestic arrangements under the control of Parliament.

A veto on the appointment of ministers was demanded. But this veto Parliament has virtually possessed ever since the Revolution. It is no doubt very far better that this power of the Legislature should be exercised as it is now exercised, when any great occasion calls for interference, than that at every change the Commons should have to signify their approbation or disapprobation in form. But, unless a new family had been placed on the throne, we do not see how this power could have been exercised as it is now exercised. We again repeat that no restraints which could be imposed on the princes who reigned after the Revolution could have added to the security, which their title afforded. They were compelled to court their parliaments. But from Charles nothing was to be expected which was not set down in the bond.

It was not stipulated that the King should give up his negative on acts of Parliament. But the Commons, had certainly shown a strong disposition to exact this security also. "Such a doctrine," says Mr. Hallam, "was in this country as repugnant to the whole history of our laws, as it was incompatible with the subsistence of the monarchy in anything more than a nominal preeminence." Now this article has been as completely carried into elect by the Revolution as if it had been formally inserted in the Bill of Rights and the Act of Settlement. We are surprised, we confess, that Mr. Hallam should attach so much importance to a prerogative which has not been exercised for a hundred and thirty years, which probably will never be exercised again, and which can scarcely, in any conceivable case, be exercised for a salutary purpose.

But the great security, the security without which every other would have been insufficient, was the power of the sword. This both parties thoroughly understood. The Parliament insisted on having the command of the militia and the direction of the Irish war. "By God, not for an hour!" exclaimed the King. "Keep the militia," said the Queen, after the defeat of the royal party. "Keep the militia; that will bring back everything." That, by the old constitution, no military authority was lodged in the

Parliament, Mr. Hallam has clearly shown. That it is a species of authority which ought, not to be permanently lodged in large and divided assemblies, must, we think in fairness be conceded. Opposition, publicity, long discussion, frequent compromise; these are the characteristics of the proceedings of such assemblies. Unity, secrecy, decision, are the qualities which military arrangements require. There were, therefore, serious objections to the proposition of the Houses on this subject. But, on the other hand, to trust such a King, at such a crisis, with the very weapon which, in hands less dangerous, had destroyed so many free constitutions, would have been the extreme of rashness. The jealousy with which the oligarchy of Venice and the States of Holland regarded their generals and armies induced them perpetually to interfere in matters of which they were incompetent to judge. This policy secured them against military usurpation, but placed them, under great disadvantages in war. The uncontrolled power which the King of France exercised over his troops enabled him to conquer his enemies, but enabled him also to oppress his people. Was there any intermediate course? None, we confess altogether free from objection. But on the whole, we conceive that the best measure would have been that which the Parliament over and over proposed, namely, that for a limited time the power of the sword should be left to the two Houses, and that it should revert to the Crown when the constitution should be firmly established, and when the new securities of freedom should be so far strengthened by prescription that it would be difficult to employ even a standing army for the purpose of subverting them.

Mr. Hallam thinks that the dispute might easily have been compromised, by enacting that, the King should have no power to keep a standing army on foot without the consent of Parliament. He reasons as if the question had been merely theoretical, and as if at that time no army had been wanted. "The kingdom," he says, "might have well dispensed, in that age, with any military organisation" Now, we think that Mr. Hallam overlooks the most important circumstance in the whole case. Ireland was actually in rebellion; and a great expedition would obviously be necessary to reduce that kingdom to obedience. The Houses had therefore to consider, not at abstract question of law, but an urgent practical question, directly involving the safety of the state. They had to consider the expediency of immediately giving a great army to a King who was, at least, as desirous to put down the Parliament of England as to conquer the insurgents of Ireland.

Of course we do not mean to defend all the measures of the Houses. Far from it. There never was a perfect man. It would, therefore, be the height of absurdity to expect a perfect party or a perfect assembly. For large bodies are far more likely to err than individuals. The passions are inflamed by sympathy; the fear of punishment and the sense of shame are diminished by partition. Every day we see men do for their faction what they would die rather than do for themselves.

Scarcely any private quarrel ever happens, in which the right and wrong are so exquisitely divided that all the right lies on one side, and all the wrong on the other. But here was a schism which separated a great nation into two parties. Of these parties, each was composed of many smaller parties. Each contained many members, who differed far less from their moderate opponents than from their violent allies. Each reckoned among its supporters many who were determined in their choice by some accident of birth, of connection, or of local situation. Each of them attracted to itself in multitudes those fierce and turbid spirits, to whom the clouds and whirlwinds of the political hurricane are the atmosphere of life. A party, like a camp, has its sutlers and camp-followers, as well as its soldiers. In its progress it collects round it a vast retinue, composed of people who thrive by its custom or are amused by its display, who may be sometimes reckoned, in an ostentatious enumeration, as forming a part of it, but who give no aid to its operations, and take but a languid interest in its success, who relax its discipline and dishonour its flag by their irregularities, and who, after a disaster, are perfectly ready to cut the throats and rifle the baggage of their companions.

Thus it is in every great division; and thus it was in our civil war. On both sides there was, undoubtedly, enough of crime and enough of error to disgust any man who did not reflect that the whole history of the species is made up of little except crimes and errors. Misanthropy is not the temper which qualifies a man to act in great affairs, or to judge of them.

"Of the Parliament," says Mr. Hallam, "it may be said I think, with not greater severity than truth, that scarce two or three public acts of justice, humanity, or generosity, and very few of political wisdom or courage, are recorded of them, from their quarrel with the King, to their expulsion by Cromwell." Those who may agree with us in the opinion which we have expressed as to the original demands of the Parliament will scarcely concur in this strong censure. The propositions which the Houses made at Oxford, at Uxbridge, and at Newcastle, were in strict accordance with these demands. In the darkest period of the war, they showed no disposition to concede any vital principle. In the fulness of their success, they showed no disposition to encroach beyond these limits. In this respect we cannot but think that they showed justice and generosity, as well as political wisdom and courage.

The Parliament was certainly far from faultless. We fully agree with Mr. Hallam in reprobating their treatment of Laud. For the individual, indeed, we entertain a more unmitigated contempt than, for any other character in our history. The fondness with which a portion of the church regards his memory, can be compared only to that perversity of affection which sometimes leads a mother to select the monster or the idiot of the family as the

object of her especial favour, Mr. Hallam has incidentally observed, that, in the correspondence of Laud with Strafford, there are no indications of a sense of duty towards God or man. The admirers of the Archbishop have, in consequence, inflicted upon the public a crowd of extracts designed to prove the contrary. Now, in all those passages, we see nothing, which a prelate as wicked as Pope Alexander or Cardinal Dubois might not have written. Those passages indicate no sense of duty to God or man, but simply a strong interest in the prosperity and dignity of the order to which the writer belonged; an interest which, when kept within certain limits, does not deserve censure, but which can never be considered as a virtue. Laud is anxious to accommodate satisfactorily the disputes in the University of Dublin. He regrets to hear that a church is used as a stable, and that the benefices of Ireland are very poor. He is desirous that, however small a congregation may be, service should be regularly performed. He expresses a wish that the judges of the court before which questions of tithe are generally brought should be selected with a view to the interest of the clergy. All this may be very proper; and it may be very proper that an alderman should stand up for the tolls of his borough, and an East India director for the charter of his Company. But it is ridiculous to say that these things indicate piety and benevolence. No primate, though he were the most abandoned of mankind, could wish to see the body, with the influence of which his own influence was identical, degraded in the public estimation by internal dissensions, by the ruinous state of its edifices, and by the slovenly performance of its rites. We willingly acknowledge that the particular letters in question have very little harm in them; a compliment which cannot often be paid either to the writings or to the actions of Laud.

Bad as the Archbishop was, however, he was not a traitor within the statute. Nor was he by any means so formidable as to be a proper subject for a retrospective ordinance of the legislature. His mind had not expansion enough to comprehend a great scheme, good or bad. His oppressive acts were not, like those of the Earl of Strafford, parts of an extensive system. They were the luxuries in which a mean and irritable disposition indulges itself from day to day, the excesses natural to a little mind in a great place. The severest punishment which the two Houses could have inflicted on him would have been to set him at liberty and send him to Oxford. There he might have stayed, tortured by his own diabolical temper, hungering for Puritans to pillory and mangle, plaguing the Cavaliers, for want of somebody else to plague with his peevishness and absurdity, performing grimaces and antics in the cathedral, continuing that incomparable diary, which we never see without forgetting the vices of his heart In the imbecility of his intellect minuting down his dreams, counting the drops of blood which fell from his nose, watching the direction of the salt, and listening for the note of the screech-owls. Contemptuous mercy was the only vengeance which it became the Parliament to take on such a ridiculous old bigot.

The Houses, it must be acknowledged, committed great errors in the conduct of the war, or rather one great error, which brought their affairs into a condition requiring the most perilous expedients. The parliamentary leaders of what may be called the first generation, Essex, Manchester, Northumberland, Hollis, even Pym, all the most eminent men in short, Hampden excepted, were inclined to half measures. They dreaded a decisive victory almost as much as a decisive overthrow. They wished to bring the King into a situation which might render it necessary for him to grant their just and wise demands, but not to subvert the constitution or to change the dynasty. They were afraid of serving the purposes of those fierce and determined enemies of monarchy, who now began to show themselves in the lower ranks of the party. The war was, therefore, conducted in a languid and inefficient manner. A resolute leader might have brought it to a close in a month. At the end of three campaigns, however, the event was still dubious; and that it had not been decidedly unfavourable to the cause of liberty was principally owing to the skill and energy which the more violent roundheads had displayed in subordinate situations. The conduct of Fairfax and Cromwell at Marston had, exhibited a remarkable contrast to that of Essex at Edgehill, and to that of Waller at Lansdowne.

If there be any truth established by the universal experience of nations, it is this; that to carry the spirit of peace into war is weak and cruel policy. The time for negotiation is the time for deliberation and delay. But when an extreme case calls for that remedy which is in its own nature most violent, and which, in such cases, is a remedy only because it is violent, it is idle to think of mitigating and diluting. Languid war can do nothing which negotiation or submission will not do better: and to act on any other principle is, not to save blood and money, but to squander them.

This the parliamentary leaders found. The third year of hostilities was drawing to a close; and they had not conquered the King. They had not obtained even those advantages which they had expected from a policy obviously erroneous in a military point of view. They had wished to husband their resources. They now found that in enterprises like theirs, parsimony is the worst profusion. They had hoped to effect a reconciliation. The event taught them that the best way to conciliate is to bring the work of destruction to a speedy termination. By their moderation many lives and much property had been wasted. The angry passions which, if the contest had been short, would have died away almost as soon as they appeared, had fixed themselves in the form of deep and lasting hatred. A military caste had grown up. Those who had been induced to take up arms by the patriotic feelings of citizens had begun to entertain the professional feelings of soldiers. Above all, the leaders of the party had forfeited its confidence, If they had, by their valour and abilities, gained a complete victory, their influence might have been sufficient to

prevent their associates from abusing it. It was now necessary to choose more resolute and uncompromising commanders. Unhappily the illustrious man who alone united in himself all the talents and virtues which the crisis required, who alone could have saved his country from the present dangers without plunging her into others, who alone could have united all the friends of liberty in obedience to his commanding genius and his venerable name, was no more. Something might still be done. The Houses might still avert that worst of all evils, the triumphant return of an imperious and unprincipled master. They might still preserve London from all the horrors of rapine, massacre, and lust. But their hopes of a victory as spotless as their cause, of a reconciliation which might knit together the hearts of all honest Englishmen for the defence of the public good, of durable tranquillity, of temperate freedom, were buried in the grave of Hampden.

The self-denying ordinance was passed, and the army was remodelled. These measures were undoubtedly full of danger. But all that was left to the Parliament was to take the less of two dangers. And we think that, even if they could have accurately foreseen all that followed, their decision ought to have been the same. Under any circumstances, we should have preferred Cromwell to Charles. But there could be no comparison between Cromwell and Charles victorious, Charles restored, Charles enabled to feed fat all the hungry grudges of his smiling rancour and his cringing pride. The next visit of his Majesty to his faithful Commons would have been more serious than that with which he last honoured them; more serious than that which their own General paid them some years after. The King would scarce have been content with praying that the Lord would deliver him from Vane, or with pulling Marten by the cloak. If, by fatal mismanagement, nothing was left to England but a choice of tyrants, the last tyrant whom she should have chosen was Charles.

From the apprehension of this worst evil the Houses were soon delivered by their new leaders. The armies of Charles were everywhere routed, his fastnesses stormed, his party humbled and subjugated. The King himself fell into the hands of the Parliament; and both the King and the Parliament soon fell into the hands of the army. The fate of both the captives was the same. Both were treated alternately with respect and with insult. At length the natural life of one, and the political life of the other, were terminated by violence; and the power for which both had struggled was united in a single hand. Men naturally sympathise with the calamities of individuals; but they are inclined to look on a fallen party with contempt rather than with pity. Thus misfortune turned the greatest of Parliaments into the despised Rump, and the worst of Kings into the Blessed Martyr.

Mr. Hallam decidedly condemns the execution of Charles; and in all that he says on that subject we heartily agree. We fully concur with him in thinking that a great social schism, such as the civil war, is not to be confounded with an ordinary treason,

and that the vanquished ought to be treated according to the rules, not of municipal, but of international law. In this case the distinction is of the less importance, because both international and municipal law were in favour of Charles. He was a prisoner of war by the former, a King by the latter. By neither was he a traitor. If he had been successful, and had put his leading opponents to death, he would have deserved severe censure; and this without reference to the justice or injustice of his cause. Yet the opponents of Charles, it must be admitted, were technically guilty of treason. He might have sent them to the scaffold without violating any established principle of jurisprudence. He would not have been compelled to overturn the whole constitution in order to reach them. Here his own case differed widely from theirs. Not only was his condemnation in itself a measure which only the strongest necessity could vindicate; but it could not be procured without taking several previous steps, every one of which would have required the strongest necessity to vindicate it. It could not be procured without dissolving the Government by military force, without establishing precedents of the most dangerous description, without creating difficulties which the next ten years were spent in removing, without pulling down institutions which it soon became necessary to reconstruct, and setting up others which almost every man was soon impatient to destroy. It was necessary to strike the House of Lords out of the constitution, to exclude members of the House of Commons by force, to make a new crime, a new tribunal, a new mode of procedure. The whole legislative and judicial systems were trampled down for the purpose of taking a single head. Not only those parts of the constitution which the republicans were desirous to destroy, but those which they wished to retain and exalt, were deeply injured by these transactions. High Courts of justice began to usurp the functions of juries. The remaining delegates of the people were soon driven from their seats by the same military violence which had enabled them to exclude their colleagues.

If Charles had been the last of his line, there would have been an intelligible reason for putting him to death. But the blow which terminated his life at once transferred the allegiance of every Royalist to an heir, and an heir who was at liberty. To kill the individual was, under such circumstances, not to destroy, but to release the King.

We detest the character of Charles; but a man ought not to be removed by a law ex post facto, even constitutionally procured, merely because he is detestable. He must also be very dangerous. We can scarcely conceive that any danger which a state can apprehend from any individual could justify the violent, measures which were necessary to procure a sentence against Charles. But in fact the danger amounted to nothing. There was indeed, danger from the attachment of a large party to his office. But this danger his execution only increased. His personal influence was little indeed. He had lost the confidence of every party.

Churchmen, Catholics, Presbyterians, Independents, his enemies, his friends, his tools, English, Scotch, Irish, all divisions and subdivisions of his people had been deceived by him. His most attached councillors turned away with shame and anguish from his false and hollow policy, plot intertwined with plot, mine sprung beneath mine, agents disowned, promises evaded, one pledge given in private, another in public. "Oh, Mr. Secretary," says Clarendon, in a letter to Nicholas, "those stratagems have given me more sad hours than all the misfortunes in war which have befallen the King, and look like the effects of God’s anger towards us."

The abilities of Charles were not formidable. His taste in the fine arts was indeed exquisite; and few modern sovereigns have written or spoken better. But he was not fit for active life. In negotiation he was always trying to dupe others, and duping only himself. As a soldier, he was feeble, dilatory, and miserably wanting, not in personal courage, but in the presence of mind which his station required. His delay at Gloucester saved the parliamentary party from destruction. At Naseby, in the very crisis of his fortune, his want of self-possession spread a fatal panic through his army. The story which Clarendon tells of that affair reminds us of the excuses by which Bessus and Bobadil explain their cudgellings. A Scotch nobleman, it seems, begged the King not to run upon his death, took hold of his bridle, and turned his horse round. No man who had much value for his life would have tried to perform the same friendly office on that day for Oliver Cromwell.

One thing, and one alone, could make Charles dangerous--a violent death. His tyranny could not break the high spirit of the English people. His arms could not conquer, his arts could not deceive them; but his humiliation and his execution melted them into a generous compassion. Men who die on a scaffold for political offences almost always die well. The eyes of thousands are fixed upon them. Enemies and admirers are watching their demeanour. Every tone of voice, every change of colour, is to go down to posterity. Escape is impossible. Supplication is vain. In such a situation pride and despair have often been known to nerve the weakest minds with fortitude adequate to the occasion. Charles died patiently and bravely; not more patiently or bravely, indeed, than many other victims of political rage; not more patiently or bravely than his own judges, who were not only killed, but tortured; or than Vane, who had always been considered as a timid man. However, the king’s conduct during his trial and at his execution made a prodigious impression. His subjects began to love his memory as heartily as they had hated his person; and posterity has estimated his character from his death rather than from his life.

To represent Charles as a martyr in the cause of Episcopacy is absurd. Those who put him to death cared as little for the Assembly of Divines, as for the Convocation, and would, in all

probability, only have hated him the more if he had agreed to set up the Presbyterian discipline. Indeed, in spite of the opinion of Mr. Hallam, we are inclined to think that the attachment of Charles to the Church of England was altogether political. Human nature is, we admit, so capricious that there may be a single, sensitive point, in a conscience which everywhere else is callous. A man without truth or humanity may have some strange scruples about a trifle. There was one devout warrior in the royal camp whose piety bore a great resemblance to that which is ascribed to the King. We mean Colonel Turner. That gallant Cavalier was hanged, after the Restoration, for a flagitious burglary. At the gallows he told the crowd that his mind received great consolation from one reflection: he had always taken off his hat when he went into a church. The character of Charles would scarcely rise in our estimation, if we believed that he was pricked in conscience after the manner of this worthy loyalist, and that while violating all the first rules of Christian morality, he was sincerely scrupulous about church-government. But we acquit him of such weakness. In 1641 he deliberately confirmed the Scotch Declaration which stated that the government of the church by archbishops and bishops was contrary to the word of God. In 1645, he appears to have offered to set up Popery in Ireland. That a King who had established the Presbyterian religion in one kingdom, and who was willing to establish the Catholic religion in another, should have insurmountable scruples about the ecclesiastical constitution of the third, is altogether incredible. He himself says in his letters that he looks on Episcopacy as a stronger support of monarchical power than even the army. From causes which we have already considered, the Established Church had been, since the Reformation, the great bulwark of the prerogative. Charles wished, therefore, to preserve it. He thought himself necessary both to the Parliament and to the army. He did not foresee, till too late, that by paltering with the Presbyterians, he should put both them and himself into the power of a fiercer and more daring party. If he had foreseen it, we suspect that the royal blood which still cries to Heaven every thirtieth of January, for judgments only to be averted by salt-fish and egg-sauce, would never have been shed. One who had swallowed the Scotch Declaration would scarcely strain at the Covenant.

The death of Charles and the strong measures which led to it raised Cromwell to a height of power fatal to the infant Commonwealth. No men occupy so splendid a place in history as those who have founded monarchies on the ruins of republican institutions. Their glory, if not of the purest, is assuredly of the most seductive and dazzling kind. In nations broken to the curb, in nations long accustomed to be transferred from one tyrant to another, a man without eminent qualities may easily gain supreme power. The defection of a troop of guards, a conspiracy of eunuchs, a popular tumult, might place an indolent senator or a brutal soldier on the throne of the Roman world. Similar revolutions have often occurred in the despotic states of

Asia. But a community which has heard the voice of truth and experienced the pleasures of liberty, in which the merits of statesmen and of systems are freely canvassed, in which obedience is paid, not to persons, but to laws, in which magistrates are regarded, not as the lords, but as the servants of the public, in which the excitement of a party is a necessary of life, in which political warfare is reduced to a system of tactics; such a community is not easily reduced to servitude. Beasts of burden may easily be managed by a new master. But will the wild ass submit to the bonds? Will the unicorn serve and abide by the crib? Will leviathan hold out his nostrils to the book? The mythological conqueror of the East, whose enchantments reduced wild beasts to the tameness of domestic cattle, and who harnessed lions and tigers to his chariot, is but an imperfect type of those extraordinary minds which have thrown a spell on the fierce spirits of nations unaccustomed to control, and have compelled raging factions to obey their reins and swell their triumph. The enterprise, be it good or bad, is one which requires a truly great man. It demands courage, activity, energy, wisdom, firmness, conspicuous virtues, or vices so splendid and alluring as to resemble virtues.

Those who have succeeded in this arduous undertaking form a very small and a very remarkable class. Parents of tyranny, heirs of freedom, kings among citizens, citizens among kings, they unite in themselves the characteristics of the system which springs from them, and those of the system from which they have sprung. Their reigns shine with a double light, the last and dearest rays of departing freedom mingled with the first and brightest glories of empire in its dawn. The high qualities of such a prince lend to despotism itself a charm drawn from the liberty under which they were formed, and which they have destroyed. He resembles an European who settles within the Tropics, and carries thither the strength and the energetic habits acquired in regions more propitious to the constitution. He differs as widely from princes nursed in the purple of imperial cradles, as the companions of Gama from their dwarfish and imbecile progeny, which, born in a climate unfavourable to its growth and beauty, degenerates more and more, at every descent, from the qualities of the original conquerors.

In this class three men stand pre-eminent, Caesar, Cromwell, and Bonaparte. The highest place in this remarkable triumvirate belongs undoubtedly to Caesar. He united the talents of Bonaparte to those of Cromwell; and he possessed also, what neither Cromwell nor Bonaparte possessed, learning, taste, wit, eloquence, the sentiments and the manners of an accomplished gentleman.

Between Cromwell and Napoleon Mr. Hallam has instituted a parallel, scarcely less ingenious than that which Burke has drawn between Richard Coeur de Lion and Charles the Twelfth of Sweden. In this parallel, however, and indeed throughout his work, we

think that he hardly gives Cromwell fair measure. "Cromwell," says he, "far unlike his antitype, never showed any signs of a legislative mind, or any desire to place his renown on that noblest basis, the amelioration of social institutions." The difference in this respect, we conceive, was not in the character of the men, but in the character of the revolutions by means of which they rose to power. The civil war in England had been undertaken to defend and restore; the republicans of France set themselves to destroy. In England, the principles of the common law had never been disturbed, and most even of its forms had been held sacred. In France, the law and its ministers had been swept away together. In France, therefore, legislation necessarily became the first business of the first settled government which rose on the ruins of the old system. The admirers of Inigo Jones have always maintained that his works are inferior to those of Sir Christopher Wren, only because the great fire of London gave Wren such a field for the display of his powers as no architect in the history of the world ever possessed. Similar allowance must be made for Cromwell. If he erected little that was new, it was because there had been no general devastation to clear a space for him. As it was, he reformed the representative system in a most judicious manner. He rendered the administration of justice uniform throughout the island. We will quote a passage from his speech to the Parliament in September 1656, which contains, we think, simple and rude as the diction is, stronger indications of a legislative mind, than are to be found in the whole range of orations delivered on such occasions before or since.

"There is one general grievance in the nation. It is the law. I think, I may say it, I have as eminent judges in this land as have been had, or that the nation has had for these many years. Truly, I could be particular as to the executive part, to the administration; but that would trouble you. But the truth of it is, there are wicked and abominable laws that will be in your power to alter. To hang a man for sixpence, threepence, I know not what,--to hang for a trifle, and pardon murder, is in the ministration of the law through the ill framing of it. I have known in my experience abominable murders quitted; and to see men lose their lives for petty matters! This is a thing that God will reckon for; and I wish it may not lie upon this nation a day longer than you have an opportunity to give a remedy; and I hope I shall cheerfully join with you in it."

Mr. Hallam truly says that, though it is impossible to rank Cromwell with Napoleon as a general, "yet his exploits were as much above the level of his contemporaries, and more the effects of an original uneducated capacity." Bonaparte was trained in the best military schools; the army which he led to Italy was one of the finest that ever existed. Cromwell passed his youth and the prime of his manhood in a civil situation. He never looked on war till he was more than forty years old. He had first to form himself, and then to form his troops. Out of raw levies he

created an army, the bravest and the best disciplined, the most orderly in peace, and the most terrible in war, that Europe had seen. He called this body into existence. He led it to conquest. He never fought a battle without gaining it. He never gained a battle without annihilating the force opposed to him. Yet his victories were not the highest glory of his military system. The respect which his troops paid to property, their attachment to the laws and religion of their country, their submission to the civil power, their temperance, their intelligence, their industry, are without parallel. It was after the Restoration that the spirit which their great leader had infused into them was most signally displayed. At the command of the established government, an established government which had no means of enforcing obedience, fifty thousand soldiers whose backs no enemy had ever seen, either in domestic or in continental war, laid down their arms, and retired into the mass of the people, thenceforward to be distinguished only by superior diligence, sobriety, and regularity in the pursuits, of peace, from the other members of the community which they had saved.

In the general spirit and character of his administration, we think Cromwell far superior to Napoleon. "In the civil government," says Mr. Hallam, "there can be no adequate parallel between one who had sucked only the dregs of a besotted fanaticism, and one to whom the stores of reason and philosophy were open." These expressions, it seems to us, convey the highest eulogium on our great countryman. Reason and philosophy did not teach the conqueror of Europe to command his passions, or to pursue, as a first object, the happiness of his people. They did not prevent him from risking his fame and his power in a frantic contest against the principles of human nature and the laws of the physical world, against the rage of the winter and the liberty of the sea. They did not exempt him from the influence of that most pernicious of superstitions, a presumptuous fatalism. They did not preserve hint from the inebriation of prosperity, or restrain him from indecent querulousness in adversity. On the other hand, the fanaticism of Cromwell never urged him on impracticable undertakings, or confused his perception of the public good. Our countryman, inferior to Bonaparte in invention, was far superior to him in wisdom. The French Emperor is among conquerors what Voltaire is among writers, a miraculous child. His splendid genius was frequently clouded by fits of humour as absurdly perverse as those of the pet of the nursery, who quarrels with his food, and dashes his playthings to pieces. Cromwell was emphatically a man. He possessed, in an eminent degree, that masculine and full-grown robustness of mind, that equally diffused intellectual health, which, if our national partiality does not mislead us, has peculiarly characterised the great men of England. Never was any ruler so conspicuously born for sovereignty. The cup which has intoxicated almost all others, sobered him. His spirit, restless from its own buoyancy in a lower sphere, reposed in majestic placidity as soon as it had reached the level congenial to it. He

had nothing in common with that large class of men who distinguish themselves in subordinate posts, and whose incapacity becomes obvious as soon as the public voice summons them to take the lead. Rapidly as his fortunes grew, his mind expanded more rapidly still. Insignificant as a private citizen, he was a great general; he was a still greater prince. Napoleon had a theatrical manner, in which the coarseness of a revolutionary guard-room was blended with the ceremony of the old Court of Versailles. Cromwell, by the confession even of his enemies, exhibited in his demeanour the simple and natural nobleness of a man neither ashamed of his origin nor vain of his elevation, of a man who had found his proper place in society, and who felt secure that he was competent to fill it. Easy, even to familiarity, where his own dignity was concerned, he was punctilious only for his country. His own character he left to take care of itself; he left it to be defended by his victories in war, and his reforms in peace. But he was a jealous and implacable guardian of the public honour. He suffered a crazy Quaker to insult him in the gallery of Whitehall, and revenged himself only by liberating him and giving him a dinner. But he was prepared to risk the chances of war to avenge the blood of a private Englishman.

No sovereign ever carried to the throne so large a portion of the best qualities of the middling orders, so strong a sympathy with the feelings and interests of his people. He was sometimes driven to arbitrary measures; but he had a high, stout, honest, English heart. Hence it was that he loved to surround his throne with such men as Hale and Blake. Hence it was that he allowed so large a share of political liberty to his subjects, and that, even when an opposition dangerous to his power and to his person almost compelled him to govern by the sword, he was still anxious to leave a germ from which, at a more favourable season, free institutions might spring. We firmly believe that, if his first Parliament had not commenced its debates by disputing his title, his government would have been as mild at home as it was energetic and able abroad. He was a soldier; he had risen by war. Had his ambition been of an impure or selfish kind, it would have been easy for him to plunge his country into continental hostilities on a large scale, and to dazzle the restless factions which he ruled, by the splendour of his victories. Some of his enemies have sneeringly remarked, that in the successes obtained under his administration he had no personal share; as if a man who had raised himself from obscurity to empire solely by his military talents could have any unworthy reason for shrinking from military enterprise. This reproach is his highest glory. In the success of the English navy he could have no selfish interest. Its triumphs added nothing to his fame; its increase added nothing to his means of overawing his enemies; its great leader was not his friend. Yet he took a peculiar pleasure in encouraging that noble service which, of all the instruments employed by an English government, is the most impotent for mischief, and the most powerful for good. His administration was glorious, but with no vulgar glory. It was not one of those

periods of overstrained and convulsive exertion which necessarily produce debility and languor. Its energy was natural, healthful, temperate. He placed England at the head of the Protestant interest, and in the first rank of Christian powers. He taught every nation to value her friendship and to dread her enmity. But he did not squander her resources in a vain attempt to invest her with that supremacy which no power, in the modern system of Europe, can safely affect, or can long retain.

This noble and sober wisdom had its reward. If he did not carry the banners of the Commonwealth in triumph to distant capitals, if he did not adorn Whitehall with the spoils of the Stadthouse and the Louvre, if he did not portion out Flanders and Germany into principalities for his kinsmen and his generals, he did not, on the other hand, see his country overrun by the armies of nations which his ambition had provoked. He did not drag out the last years of his life an exile and a prisoner, in an unhealthy climate and under an ungenerous gaoler, raging with the impotent desire of vengeance, and brooding over visions of departed glory. He went down to his grave in the fulness of power and fame; and he left to his son an authority which any man of ordinary firmness and prudence would have retained.

But for the weakness of that foolish Ishbosheth, the opinions which we have been expressing would, we believe, now have formed the orthodox creed of good Englishmen. We might now be writing under the government of his Highness Oliver the Fifth or Richard the Fourth, Protector, by the grace of God, of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and the dominions thereto belonging. The form of the great founder of the dynasty, on horseback, as when he led the charge at Naseby or on foot, as when he took the mace from the table of the Commons, would adorn our squares and over look our public offices from Charing Cross; and sermons in his praise would be duly preached on his lucky day, the third of September, by court-chaplains, guiltless of the abomination of the surplice.

But, though his memory has not been taken under the patronage of any party, though every device has been used to blacken it, though to praise him would long have been a punishable crime, truth and merit at last prevail. Cowards who had trembled at the very sound of his name, tools of office, who, like Downing, had been proud of the honour of lacqueying his coach, might insult him in loyal speeches and addresses. Venal poets might transfer to the king the same eulogies little the worse for wear, which they had bestowed on the Protector. A fickle multitude might crowd to shout and scoff round the gibbeted remains of the greatest Prince and Soldier of the age. But when the Dutch cannon startled an effeminate tyrant in his own palace, when the conquests which had been won by the armies of Cromwell were sold to pamper the harlots of Charles, when Englishmen were sent to fight under foreign banners, against the independence of Europe and the Protestant religion, many honest hearts swelled in secret

at the thought of one who had never suffered his country to be ill-used by any but himself. It must indeed have been difficult for any Englishman to see the salaried viceroy of France, at the most important crisis of his fate, sauntering through his haram, yawning and talking nonsense over a despatch, or beslobbering his brother and his courtiers in a fit of maudlin affection, without a respectful and tender remembrance of him before whose genius the young pride of Louis and the veteran craft of Mazarine had stood rebuked, who had humbled Spain on the land and Holland on the sea, and whose imperial voice had arrested the sails of the Libyan pirates and the persecuting fires of Rome. Even to the present day his character, though constantly attacked, and scarcely ever defended, is popular with the great body of our countrymen.

The most blameable act of his life was the execution of Charles. We have already strongly condemned that proceeding; but we by no means consider it as one which attaches any peculiar stigma of infamy to the names of those who participated in it. It was an unjust and injudicious display of violent party spirit; but it was not a cruel or perfidious measure. It had all those features which distinguish the errors of magnanimous and intrepid spirits from base and malignant crimes.

From the moment that Cromwell is dead and buried, we go on in almost perfect harmony with Mr. Hallam to the end of his book. The times which followed the Restoration peculiarly require that unsparing impartiality which is his most distinguishing virtue. No part of our history, during the last three centuries, presents a spectacle of such general dreariness. The whole breed of our statesmen seems to have degenerated; and their moral and intellectual littleness strikes us with the more disgust, because we see it placed in immediate contrast with the high and majestic qualities of the race which they succeeded. In the great civil war, even the bad cause had been rendered respectable and amiable by the purity and elevation of mind which many of its friends displayed. Under Charles the Second, the best and noblest of ends was disgraced by means the most cruel and sordid. The rage of faction succeeded to the love of liberty. Loyalty died away into servility. We look in vain among the leading politicians of either side for steadiness of principle, or even for that vulgar fidelity to party which, in our time, it is esteemed infamous to violate. The inconsistency, perfidy, and baseness, which the leaders constantly practised, which their followers defended, and which the great body of the people regarded, as it seems, with little disapprobation, appear in the present age almost incredible. In the age of Charles the First, they would, we believe, have excited as much astonishment.

Man, however, is always the same. And when so marked a difference appears between two generations, it is certain that the solution may be found in their respective circumstances. The principal statesmen of the reign of Charles the Second were trained during

the civil war and the revolutions which followed it. Such a period is eminently favourable to the growth of quick and active talents. It forms a class of men, shrewd, vigilant, inventive; of men whose dexterity triumphs over the most perplexing combinations of circumstances, whose presaging instinct no sign of the times can elude. But it is an unpropitious season for the firm and masculine virtues. The statesman who enters on his career at such a time, can form no permanent connections, can make no accurate observations on the higher parts of political science. Before he can attach himself to a party, it is scattered. Before he can study the nature of a government, it is overturned. The oath of abjuration comes close on the oath of allegiance. The association which was subscribed yesterday is burned by the hangman to-day. In the midst of the constant eddy and change, self-preservation becomes the first object of the adventurer. It is a task too hard for the strongest head to keep itself from becoming giddy in the eternal whirl. Public spirit is out of the question. A laxity of principle, without which no public man can be eminent or even safe, becomes too common to be scandalous; and the whole nation looks coolly on instances of apostasy which would startle the foulest turncoat of more settled times.

The history of France since the Revolution affords some striking illustrations of these remarks. The same man was a servant of the Republic, of Bonaparte, of Lewis the Eighteenth, of Bonaparte again after his return from Elba, of Lewis again after his return from Ghent. Yet all these manifold treasons by no means seemed to destroy his influence, or even to fix any peculiar stain of infamy on his character. We, to be sure, did not know what to make of him; but his countrymen did not seem to be shocked; and in truth they had little right to be shocked: for there was scarcely one Frenchman distinguished in the state or in the army, who had not, according to the best of his talents and opportunities, emulated the example. It was natural, too, that this should be the case. The rapidity and violence with which change followed change in the affairs of France towards the close of the last century had taken away the reproach of inconsistency, unfixed the principles of public men, and produced in many minds a general scepticism and indifference about principles of government.

No Englishman who has studied attentively the reign of Charles the Second, will think himself entitled to indulge in any feelings of national superiority over the Dictionnaire des Girouttes. Shaftesbury was surely a far less respectable man than Talleyrand; and it would be injustice even to Fouche to compare him with Lauderdale. Nothing, indeed, can more clearly show how low the standard of political morality had fallen in this country than the fortunes of the two British statesmen whom we have named. The government wanted a ruffian to carry on the most atrocious system of misgovernment with which any nation was ever cursed, to extirpate Presbyterianism by fire and sword, by the

drowning of women, by the frightful torture of the boot. And they found him among the chiefs of the rebellion and the subscribers of the Covenant. The opposition looked for a chief to head them in the most desperate attacks ever made, under the forms of the Constitution, on any English administration; and they selected the minister who had the deepest share in the worst acts of the Court, the soul of the Cabal, the counsellor who had shut up the Exchequer and urged on the Dutch war. The whole political drama was of the same cast. No unity of plan, no decent propriety of character and costume, could be found in that wild and monstrous harlequinade. The whole was made up of extravagant transformations and burlesque contrasts; Atheists turned Puritans; Puritans turned Atheists; republicans defending the divine right of kings; prostitute courtiers clamouring for the liberties of the people; judges inflaming the rage of mobs; patriots pocketing bribes from foreign powers; a Popish prince torturing Presbyterians into Episcopacy in one part of the island; Presbyterians cutting off the heads of Popish noblemen and gentlemen in the other. Public opinion has its natural flux and reflux. After a violent burst, there is commonly a reaction. But vicissitudes so extraordinary as those which marked the reign of Charles the Second can only be explained by supposing an utter want of principle in the political world. On neither side was there fidelity enough to face a reverse. Those honourable retreats from power which, in later days, parties have often made, with loss, but still in good order, in firm union, with unbroken spirit and formidable means of annoyance, were utterly unknown. As soon as a check took place a total rout followed: arms and colours were thrown away. The vanquished troops, like the Italian mercenaries of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, enlisted on the very field of battle, in the service of the conquerors. In a nation proud of its sturdy justice and plain good sense, no party could be found to take a firm middle stand between the worst of oppositions and the worst of courts. When on charges as wild as Mother Goose’s tales, on the testimony of wretches who proclaimed themselves to be spies and traitors, and whom everybody now believes to have been also liars and murderers, the offal of gaols and brothels, the leavings of the hangman’s whip and shears, Catholics guilty of nothing but their religion were led like sheep to the Protestant shambles, where were the loyal Tory gentry and the passively obedient clergy? And where, when the time of retribution came, when laws were strained and juries packed to destroy the leaders of the Whigs, when charters were invaded, when Jeffreys and Kirke were making Somersetshire what Lauderdale and Graham had made Scotland, where were the ten thousand brisk boys of Shaftesbury, the members of ignoramus juries, the wearers of the Polish medal? All-powerful to destroy others, unable to save themselves, the members of the two parties oppressed and were oppressed, murdered and were murdered, in their turn. No lucid interval occurred between the frantic paroxysms of two contradictory illusions.

To the frequent changes of the government during the twenty years which had preceded the Restoration, this unsteadiness is in a great measure to be attributed. Other causes had also been at work. Even if the country had been governed by the house of Cromwell or by the remains of the Long Parliament, the extreme austerity of the Puritans would necessarily have produced a revulsion. Towards the close of the Protectorate many signs indicated that a time of licence was at hand. But the restoration of Charles the Second rendered the change wonderfully rapid and violent. Profligacy became a test of orthodoxy, and loyalty a qualification for rank and office. A deep and general taint infected the morals of the most influential classes, and spread itself through every province of letters. Poetry inflamed the passions; philosophy undermined the principles; divinity itself, inculcating an abject reverence for the Court, gave additional effect to the licentious example of the Court. We look in vain for those qualities which lend a charm to the errors of high and ardent natures, for the generosity, the tenderness, the chivalrous delicacy, which ennoble appetites into passions, and impart to vice itself a portion of the majesty of virtue. The excesses of that age remind us of the humours of a gang of footpads, revelling with their favourite beauties at a flash-house. In the fashionable libertinism there is a hard, cold ferocity, an impudence, a lowness, a dirtiness, which can be paralleled only among the heroes and heroines of that filthy and heartless literature which encouraged it. One nobleman of great abilities wanders about as a Merry-Andrew. Another harangues the mob stark naked from a window. A third lays an ambush to cudgel a man who has offended him. A knot of gentlemen of high rank and influence combine to push their fortunes at Court by circulating stories intended to ruin an innocent girl, stones which had no foundation, and which, if they had been true, would never have passed the lips of a man of honour. A dead child is found in the palace, the offspring of some maid of honour by some courtier, or perhaps by Charles himself. The whole flight of pandars and buffoons pounce upon it, and carry it in triumph to the royal laboratory, where his Majesty, after a brutal jest, dissects it for the amusement of the assembly, and probably of its father among the rest. The favourite Duchess stamps about Whitehall, cursing and swearing. The ministers employ their time at the council-board in making mouths at each other and taking off each other’s gestures for the amusement of the King. The Peers at a conference begin to pommel each other and to tear collars and periwigs. A speaker in the House of Commons gives offence to the Court. He is waylaid by a gang of bullies, and his nose is cut to the bone. This ignominious dissoluteness, or rather, if we may venture to designate it by the only proper word, blackguardism of feeling and manners, could not but spread from private to public life. The cynical sneers, and epicurean sophistry, which had driven honour and virtue from one part of the character, extended their influence over every other. The second generation of the statesmen of this reign were worthy pupils of the schools in which they had been trained, of the gaming-table of Grammont, and

the tiring-room of Nell. In no other age could such a trifler as Buckingham have exercised any political influence. In no other age could the path to power and glory have been thrown open to the manifold infamies of Churchill.

The history of Churchill shows, more clearly perhaps than that of any other individual, the malignity and extent of the corruption which had eaten into the heart of the public morality. An English gentleman of good family attaches himself to a Prince who has seduced his sister, and accepts rank and wealth as the price of her shame and his own. He then repays by ingratitude the benefits which he has purchased by ignominy, betrays his patron in a manner which the best cause cannot excuse, and commits an act, not only of private treachery, but of distinct military desertion. To his conduct at the crisis of the fate of James, no service in modern times has, as far as we remember, furnished any parallel. The conduct of Ney, scandalous enough no doubt, is the very fastidiousness of honour in comparison of it. The perfidy of Arnold approaches it most nearly. In our age and country no talents, no services, no party attachments, could bear any man up under such mountains of infamy. Yet, even before Churchill had performed those great actions which in some degree redeem his character with posterity, the load lay very lightly on him. He had others in abundance to keep him in countenance. Godolphin, Orford, Danby, the trimmer Halifax, the renegade Sunderland, were all men of the same class.

Where such was the political morality of the noble and the wealthy, it may easily be conceived that those professions which, even in the best times, are peculiarly liable to corruption, were in a frightful state. Such a bench and such a bar England has never seen. Jones, Scroggs, Jeffreys, North, Wright, Sawyer, Williams, are to this day the spots and blemishes of our legal chronicles. Differing in constitution and in situation, whether blustering or cringing, whether persecuting Protestant or Catholics, they were equally unprincipled and inhuman. The part which the Church played was not equally atrocious; but it must have been exquisitely diverting to a scoffer. Never were principles so loudly professed, and so shamelessly abandoned. The Royal prerogative had been magnified to the skies in theological works. The doctrine of passive obedience had been preached from innumerable pulpits. The University of Oxford had sentenced the works of the most moderate constitutionalists to the flames. The accession of a Catholic King, the frightful cruelties committed in the west of England, never shook the steady loyalty of the clergy. But did they serve the King for nought? He laid his hand on them, and they cursed him to his face. He touched the revenue of a college and the liberty of some prelates; and the whole profession set up a yell worthy of Hugh Peters himself. Oxford sent her plate to an invader with more alacrity than she had shown when Charles the First requested it. Nothing was said about the wickedness of resistance till resistance had done its work, till the anointed vicegerent of Heaven had been driven away, and

till it had become plain that he would never be restored, or would be restored at least under strict limitations. The clergy went back, it must be owned, to their old theory, as soon as they found that it would do them no harm.

It is principally to the general baseness and profligacy of the times that Clarendon is indebted for his high reputation. He was, in every respect, a man unfit for his age, at once too good for it and too bad for it. He seemed to be one of the ministers of Elizabeth, transplanted at once to a state of society widely different from that in which the abilities of such ministers had been serviceable. In the sixteenth century, the Royal prerogative had scarcely been called in question. A Minister who held it high was in no danger, so long as he used it well. That attachment to the Crown, that extreme jealousy of popular encroachments, that love, half religious half political, for the Church, which, from the beginning of the second session of the Long Parliament, showed itself in Clarendon, and which his sufferings, his long residence in France, and his high station in the government, served to strengthen, would a hundred years earlier, have secured to him the favour of his sovereign without rendering him odious to the people. His probity, his correctness in private life, his decency of deportment, and his general ability, would not have misbecome a colleague of Walsingham and Burleigh. But, in the times on which he was cast, his errors and his virtues were alike out of place. He imprisoned men without trial. He was accused of raising unlawful contributions on the people for the support of the army. The abolition of the act which ensured the frequent holding of Parliaments was one of his favourite objects. He seems to have meditated the revival of the Star-Chamber and the High Commission Court. His zeal for the prerogative made him unpopular; but it could not secure to him the favour of a master far more desirous of ease and pleasure than of power. Charles would rather have lived in exile and privacy, with abundance of money, a crowd of mimics to amuse him, and a score of mistresses, than have purchased the absolute dominion of the world by the privations and exertions to which Clarendon was constantly urging him. A councillor who was always bringing him papers and giving him advice, and who stoutly refused to compliment Lady Castlemaine and to carry messages to Mistress Stewart, soon became more hateful to him than ever Cromwell had been. Thus, considered by the people as an oppressor, by the Court as a censor, the Minister fell from his high office with a ruin more violent and destructive than could ever have been his fate, if he had either respected the principles of the Constitution or flattered the vices of the King.

Mr. Hallam has formed, we think, a most correct estimate of the character and administration of Clarendon. But he scarcely makes a sufficient allowance for the wear and tear which honesty almost necessarily sustains in the friction of political life, and which, in times so rough as those through which Clarendon passed, must be very considerable. When these are fairly estimated, we

think that his integrity may be allowed to pass muster. A high-minded man he certainly was not, either in public or in private affairs. His own account of his conduct in the affair of his daughter is the most extraordinary passage in autobiography. We except nothing even in the Confessions of Rousseau. Several writers have taken a perverted and absurd pride in representing themselves as detestable; but no other ever laboured hard to make himself despicable and ridiculous. In one important particular Clarendon showed as little regard to the honour of his country as he had shown to that of his family. He accepted a subsidy from France for the relief of Portugal. But this method of obtaining money was afterwards practised to a much greater extent and for objects much less respectable, both by the Court and by the Opposition.

These pecuniary transactions are commonly considered as the most disgraceful part of the history of those times: and they were no doubt highly reprehensible. Yet, in justice to the Whigs and to Charles himself, we must admit that they were not so shameful or atrocious as at the present day they appear. The effect of violent animosities between parties has always been an indifference to the general welfare and honour of the State. A politician, where factions run high, is interested not for the whole people, but for his own section of it. The rest are, in his view, strangers, enemies, or rather pirates. The strongest aversion which he can feel to any foreign power is the ardour of friendship, when compared with the loathing which he entertains towards those domestic foes with whom he is cooped up in a narrow space, with whom he lives in a constant interchange of petty injuries and insults, and from whom, in the day of their success, he has to expect severities far beyond any that a conqueror from a distant country would inflict. Thus, in Greece, it was a point of honour for a man to cleave to his party against his country. No aristocratical citizen of Samos or Corcyra would have hesitated to call in the aid of Lacedaemon. The multitude, on the contrary, looked everywhere to Athens. In the Italian states of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, from the same cause, no man was so much a Pisan or a Florentine as a Ghibeline or a Guelf. It may be doubted whether there was a single individual who would have scrupled to raise his party from a state of depression, by opening the gates of his native city to a French or an Arragonese force. The Reformation, dividing almost every European country into two parts, produced similar effects. The Catholic was too strong for the Englishman, the Huguenot for the Frenchman. The Protestant statesmen of Scotland and France called in the aid of Elizabeth; and the Papists of the League brought a Spanish army into the very heart of France. The commotions to which the French Revolution gave rise were followed by the same consequences. The Republicans in every part of Europe were eager to see the armies of the National Convention and the Directory appear among them, and exalted in defeats which distressed and humbled those whom they considered as their worst enemies, their own rulers. The princes and nobles of France, on the other hand,

did their utmost to bring foreign invaders to Paris. A very short time has elapsed since the Apostolical party in Spain invoked, too successfully, the support of strangers.

The great contest which raged in England during the seventeenth century extinguished, not indeed in the body of the people, but in those classes which were most actively engaged in politics, almost all national feelings. Charles the Second and many of his courtiers had passed a large part of their lives in banishment, living on the bounty of foreign treasuries, soliciting foreign aid to re-establish monarchy in their native country. The King's own brother had fought in Flanders, under the banners of Spain, against the English armies. The oppressed Cavaliers in England constantly looked to the Louvre and the Escurial for deliverance and revenge. Clarendon censures the continental governments with great bitterness for not interfering in our internal dissensions. It is not strange, therefore, that, amidst the furious contests which followed the Restoration, the violence of party feeling should produce effects which would probably have attended it even in an age less distinguished by laxity of principle and indelicacy of sentiment. It was not till a natural death had terminated the paralytic old age of the Jacobite party that the evil was completely at an end. The Whigs long looked to Holland, the High Tories to France. The former concluded the Barrier Treaty; the latter entreated the Court of Versailles to send an expedition to England. Many men, who, however erroneous their political notions might be, were unquestionably honourable in private life, accepted money without scruple from the foreign powers favourable to the Pretender.

Never was there less of national feeling among the higher orders than during the reign of Charles the Second. That Prince, on the one side, thought it better to be the deputy of an absolute king than the King of a free people. Algernon Sydney, on the other hand, would gladly have aided France in all her ambitious schemes, and have seen England reduced to the condition of a province, in the wild hope that a foreign despot would assist him to establish his darling republic. The King took the money of France to assist him in the enterprise which he meditated against the liberty of his subjects, with as little scruple as Frederic of Prussia or Alexander of Russia accepted our subsidies in time of war. The leaders of the Opposition no more thought themselves disgraced by the presents of Lewis, than a gentleman of our own time thinks himself disgraced by the liberality of powerful and wealthy members of his party who pay his election bill. The money which the King received from France had been largely employed to corrupt members of Parliament. The enemies of the court might think it fair, or even absolutely necessary, to encounter bribery with bribery. Thus they took the French gratuities, the needy among them for their own use, the rich probably for the general purposes of the party, without any scruple. If we compare their conduct not with that of English statesmen in our own time, but with that of persons in those foreign countries which are now

situated as England then was, we shall probably see reason to abate something of the severity of censure with which it has been the fashion to visit those proceedings. Yet when every allowance is made, the transaction is sufficiently offensive. It is satisfactory to find that Lord Russell stands free from any imputation of personal participation in the spoil. An age so miserably poor in all the moral qualities which render public characters respectable can ill spare the credit which it derives from a man, not indeed conspicuous for talents or knowledge, but honest even in his errors, respectable in every relation of life, rationally pious, steadily and placidly brave.

The great improvement which took place in our breed of public men is principally to be ascribed to the Revolution. Yet that memorable event, in a great measure, took its character from the very vices which it was the means of reforming. It was assuredly a happy revolution, and a useful revolution; but it was not, what it has often been called, a glorious revolution. William, and William alone, derived glory from it. The transaction was, in almost every part, discreditable to England. That a tyrant who had violated the fundamental laws of the country, who had attacked the rights of its greatest corporations, who had begun to persecute the established religion of the state, who had never respected the law either in his superstition or in his revenge, could not be pulled down without the aid of a foreign army, is a circumstance not very grateful to our national pride. Yet this is the least degrading part of the story. The shameless insincerity of the great and noble, the warm assurances of general support which James received, down to the moment of general desertion, indicate a meanness of spirit and a looseness of morality most disgraceful to the age. That the enterprise succeeded, at least that it succeeded without bloodshed or commotion, was principally owing to an act of ungrateful perfidy, such as no soldier had ever before committed, and to those monstrous fictions respecting the birth of the Prince of Wales which persons of the highest rank were not ashamed to circulate. In all the proceedings of the convention, in the conference particularly, we see that littleness of mind which is the chief characteristic of the times. The resolutions on which the two Houses at last agreed were as bad as any resolutions for so excellent a purpose could be. Their feeble and contradictory language was evidently intended to save the credit of the Tories, who were ashamed to name what they were not ashamed to do. Through the whole transaction no commanding talents were displayed by any Englishman; no extraordinary risks were run; no sacrifices were made for the deliverance of the nation, except the sacrifice which Churchill made of honour, and Anne of natural affection.

It was in some sense fortunate, as we have already said, for the Church of England, that the Reformation in this country was effected by men who cared little about religion. And, in the same manner, it was fortunate for our civil government that the Revolution was in a great measure effected by men who cared

little about their political principles. At such a crisis, splendid talents and strong passions might have done more harm than good. There was far greater reason to fear that too much would be attempted, and that violent movements would produce an equally violent reaction, than that too little would be done in the way of change. But narrowness of intellect, and flexibility of principle, though they may be serviceable, can never be respectable.

If in the Revolution itself, there was little that can properly be called glorious, there was still less in the events which followed. In a church which had as one man declared the doctrine of resistance unchristian, only four hundred persons refused to take the oath of allegiance to a government founded on resistance. In the preceding generation, both the Episcopal and the Presbyterian clergy, rather than concede points of conscience not more important, had resigned their livings by thousands.

The churchmen, at the time of the Revolution, justified their conduct by all those profligate sophisms which are called Jesuitical, and which are commonly reckoned among the peculiar sins of Popery, but which, in fact, are everywhere the anodynes employed by minds rather subtle than strong, to quiet those internal twinges which they cannot but feel and which they will not obey. As the oath taken by the clergy was in the teeth of their principles, so was their conduct in the teeth of their oath. Their constant machinations against the Government to which they had sworn fidelity brought a reproach on their order and on Christianity itself. A distinguished prelate has not scrupled to say that the rapid increase of infidelity at that time was principally produced by the disgust which the faithless conduct of his brethren excited in men not sufficiently candid or judicious to discern the beauties of the system amidst the vices of its ministers.

But the reproach was not confined to the Church. In every political party in the Cabinet itself, duplicity and perfidy abounded. The very men whom William loaded with benefits and in whom he reposed most confidence, with his seals of office in their hands, kept up a correspondence with the exiled family. Orford, Leeds, and Shrewsbury were guilty of this odious treachery. Even Devonshire is not altogether free from suspicion. It may well be conceived that, at such a time, such a nature as that of Marlborough would riot in the very luxury of baseness. His former treason, thoroughly furnished with all that makes infamy exquisite, placed him under the disadvantage which attends every artist from the time that he produces a masterpiece. Yet his second great stroke may excite wonder, even in those who appreciate all the merit of the first. Lest his admirers should be able to say that at the time of the Revolution he had betrayed his King from any other than selfish motives, he proceeded to betray his country. He sent intelligence to the French Court of a secret expedition intended to attack Brest. The consequence was

that the expedition failed, and that eight hundred British soldiers lost their lives from the abandoned villainy of a British general. Yet this man has been canonized by so many eminent writers that to speak of him as he deserves may seem scarcely decent.

The reign of William the Third, as Mr. Hallam happily says, was the Nadir of the national prosperity. It was also the Nadir of the national character. It was the time when the rank harvest of vices sown during thirty years of licentiousness and confusion was gathered in; but it was also the seed-time of great virtues.

The press was emancipated from the censorship soon after the Revolution; and the Government immediately fell under the censorship of the press. Statesmen had a scrutiny to endure which was every day becoming more and more severe. The extreme violence of opinions abated. The Whigs learned moderation in office; the Tories learned the principles of liberty in opposition. The parties almost constantly approximated, often met, sometimes, crossed each other. There were occasional bursts of violence; but, from the time of the Revolution, those bursts were constantly becoming less and less terrible. The severity with which the Tories, at the close of the reign of Anne, treated some of those who had directed the public affairs during the war of the Grand Alliance, and the retaliatory measures of the Whigs, after the accession of the House of Hanover, cannot be justified; but they were by no means in the style of the infuriated parties, whose alternate murders had disgraced our history towards the close of the reign of Charles the Second. At the fall of Walpole far greater moderation was displayed. And from that time it has been the practice, a practice not strictly according to the theory of our Constitution, but still most salutary, to consider the loss of office, and the public disapprobation, as punishments sufficient for errors in the administration not imputable to personal corruption. Nothing, we believe, has contributed more than this lenity to raise the character of public men. Ambition is of itself a game sufficiently hazardous and sufficiently deep to inflame the passions without adding property, life, and liberty to the stake. Where the play runs so desperately high as in the seventeenth century, honour is at an end. Statesmen instead of being, as they should be, at once mild and steady, are at once ferocious and inconsistent. The axe is for ever before their eyes. A popular outcry sometimes unnerves them, and sometimes makes them desperate; it drives them to unworthy compliances, or to measures of vengeance as cruel as those which they have reason to expect. A Minister in our times need not fear either to be firm or to be merciful. Our old policy in this respect was as absurd as that of the king in the Eastern tale who proclaimed that any physician who pleased might come to court and prescribe for his diseases, but that if the remedies failed the adventurer should lose his head. It is easy to conceive how many able men would refuse to undertake the cure on such conditions; how much the sense of extreme danger would confuse the

perceptions, and cloud the intellect of the practitioner, at the very crisis which most called for self-possession, and how strong his temptation would be, if he found that he had committed a blunder, to escape the consequences of it by poisoning his patient.

But in fact it would have been impossible, since the Revolution, to punish any Minister for the general course of his policy, with the slightest semblance of justice; for since that time no Minister has been able to pursue any general course of policy without the approbation of the Parliament. The most important effects of that great change were, as Mr. Hallam has most truly said, and most ably shown, those which it indirectly produced. Thenceforward it became the interest of the executive government to protect those very doctrines which an executive government is in general inclined to persecute. The sovereign, the ministers, the courtiers, at last even the universities and the clergy, were changed into advocates of the right of resistance. In the theory of the Whigs, in the situation of the Tories, in the common interest of all public men, the Parliamentary constitution of the country found perfect security. The power of the House of Commons, in particular, has been steadily on the increase. Since supplies have been granted for short terms and appropriated to particular services, the approbation of that House has been as necessary in practice to the executive administration as it has always been in theory to taxes and to laws.

Mr. Hallam appears to have begun with the reign of Henry the Seventh, as the period at which what is called modern history, in contradistinction to the history of the middle ages, is generally supposed to commence. He has stopped at the accession of George the Third, "from unwillingness" as he says, "to excite the prejudices of modern politics, especially those connected with personal character." These two eras, we think, deserved the distinction on other grounds. Our remote posterity, when looking back on our history in that comprehensive manner in which remote posterity alone can, without much danger of error, look back on it, will probably observe those points with peculiar interest. They are, if we mistake not, the beginning and the end of an entire and separate chapter in our annals. The period which lies between them is a perfect cycle, a great year of the public mind.

In the reign of Henry the Seventh, all the political differences which had agitated England since the Norman conquest seemed to be set at rest. The long and fierce struggle between the Crown and the Barons had terminated. The grievances which had produced the rebellions of Tyler and Cade had disappeared. Villanage was scarcely known. The two royal houses, whose conflicting claims had long convulsed the kingdom, were at length united. The claimants whose pretensions, just or unjust, had disturbed the new settlement, were overthrown. In religion there was no open dissent, and probably very little secret heresy. The old subjects of contention, in short, had vanished; those which were to

succeed had not yet appeared.

Soon, however, new principles were announced; principles which were destined to keep England during two centuries and a half in a state of commotion. The Reformation divided the people into two great parties. The Protestants were victorious. They again subdivided themselves. Political factions were engrafted on theological sects. The mutual animosities of the two parties gradually emerged into the light of public life. First came conflicts in Parliament; then civil war; then revolutions upon revolutions, each attended by its appurtenance of proscriptions, and persecutions, and tests; each followed by severe measures on the part of the conquerors; each exciting a deadly and festering hatred in the conquered. During the reign of George the Second, things were evidently tending to repose. At the close of that reign, the nation had completed the great revolution which commenced in the early part of the sixteenth century, and was again at rest, The fury of sects had died away. The Catholics themselves practically enjoyed toleration; and more than toleration they did not yet venture even to desire. Jacobitism was a mere name. Nobody was left to fight for that wretched cause, and very few to drink for it. The Constitution, purchased so dearly, was on every side extolled and worshipped. Even those distinctions of party which must almost always be found in a free state could scarcely be traced. The two great bodies which, from the time of the Revolution, had been gradually tending to approximation, were now united in emulous support of that splendid Administration which smote to the dust both the branches of the House of Bourbon. The great battle for our ecclesiastical and civil polity had been fought and won. The wounds had been healed. The victors and the vanquished were rejoicing together. Every person acquainted with the political writers of the last generation will recollect the terms in which they generally speak of that time. It was a glimpse of a golden age of union and glory, a short interval of rest, which had been preceded by centuries of agitation, and which centuries of agitation were destined to follow.

How soon faction again began to ferment is well known. The Letters of Junius, in Burke’s Thoughts on the Cause of the Discontents, and in many other writings of less merit, the violent dissensions which speedily convulsed the country are imputed to the system of favouritism which George the Third introduced, to the influence of Bute, or to the profligacy of those who called themselves the King’s friends. With all deference to the eminent writers to whom we have referred, we way venture to say that they lived too near the events of which they treated to judge correctly. The schism which was then appearing in the nation, and which has been from that time almost constantly widening, had little in common with those schisms which had divided it during the reigns of the Tudors and the Stuarts. The symptoms of popular feeling, indeed, will always be in a great measure the same; but the principle which excited that

feeling was here new. The support which was given to Wilkes, the clamour for reform during the American war, the disaffected conduct of large classes of people at the time of the French Revolution, no more resembled the opposition which had been offered to the government of Charles the Second, than that opposition resembled the contest between the Roses.

In the political as in the natural body, a sensation is often referred to a part widely different from that in which it really resides. A man whose leg is cut off fancies that he feels a pain in his toe. And in the same manner the people, in the earlier part of the late reign, sincerely attributed their discontent to grievances which had been effectually lopped off. They imagined that the prerogative was too strong for the Constitution, that the principles of the Revolution were abandoned, that the system of the Stuarts was restored. Every impartial man must now acknowledge that these charges were groundless. The conduct of the Government with respect to the Middlesex election would have been contemplated with delight by the first generation of Whigs. They would have thought it a splendid triumph of the cause of liberty that the King and the Lords should resign to the lower House a portion of the legislative power, and allow it to incapacitate without their consent. This, indeed, Mr. Burke clearly perceived. "When the House of Commons," says he, "in an endeavour to obtain new advantages at the expense of the other orders of the state, for the benefit of the commons at large, have pursued strong measures, if it were not just, it was at least natural, that the constituents should connive at all their proceedings; because we ourselves were ultimately to profit. But when this submission is urged to us in a contest between the representatives and ourselves, and where nothing can be put into their scale which is not taken from ours, they fancy us to be children when they tell us that they are our representatives, our own flesh and blood, and that all the stripes they give us are for our good." These sentences contain, in fact, the whole explanation of the mystery. The conflict of the seventeenth century was maintained by the Parliament against the Crown. The conflict which commenced in the middle of the eighteenth century, which still remains undecided, and in which our children and grandchildren will probably be called to act or to suffer, is between a large portion of the people on the one side, and the Crown and the Parliament united on the other.

The privileges of the House of Commons, those privileges which, in 1642, all London rose in arms to defend, which the people considered as synonymous with their own liberties, and in comparison of which they took no account of the most precious and sacred principles of English jurisprudence, have now become nearly as odious as the rigours of martial law. That power of committing which the people anciently loved to see the House of Commons exercise, is now, at least when employed against libellers, the most unpopular power in the Constitution. If the Commons were to suffer the Lords to amend money-bills, we do not

believe that the people would care one straw about the matter. If they were to suffer the Lords even to originate money-bills, we doubt whether such a surrender of their constitutional rights would excite half so much dissatisfaction as the exclusion of strangers from a single important discussion. The gallery in which the reporters sit has become a fourth estate of the realm. The publication of the debates, a practice which seemed to the most liberal statesmen of the old school full of danger to the great safeguards of public liberty, is now regarded by many persons as a safeguard tantamount, and more than tantamount, to all the rest together.

Burke, in a speech on parliamentary reform which is the more remarkable because it was delivered long before the French Revolution, has described, in striking language, the change in public feeling of which we speak. "It suggests melancholy reflections," says he, "in consequence of the strange course we have long held, that we are now no longer quarrelling about the character, or about the conduct of men, or the tenor of measures; but we are grown out of humour with the English Constitution itself; this is become the object of the animosity of Englishmen. This constitution in former days used to be the envy of the world; it was the pattern for politicians; the theme of the eloquent; the meditation of the philosopher in every part of the world. As to Englishmen, it was their pride, their consolation. By it they lived, and for it they were ready to die. Its defects, if it had any, were partly covered by partiality, and partly borne by prudence. Now all its excellencies are forgot, its faults are forcibly dragged into day, exaggerated by every artifice of misrepresentation. It is despised and rejected of men; and every device and invention of ingenuity or idleness is set up in opposition, or in preference to it." We neither adopt nor condemn the language of reprobation which the great orator here employs. We call him only as a witness to the fact. That the revolution of public feeling which he described was then in progress is indisputable; and it is equally indisputable, we think, that it is in progress still.

To investigate and classify the causes of so great a change would require far more thought, and far more space, than we at present have to bestow. But some of them are obvious. During the contest which the Parliament carried on against the Stuarts, it had only to cheek and complain. It has since had to govern. As an attacking body, it could select its points of attack, and it naturally chose those on which it was likely to receive public support. As a ruling body, it has neither the same liberty of choice, nor the same motives to gratify the people. With the power of an executive government, it has drawn to itself some of the vices, and all the unpopularity of an executive government. On the House of Commons above all, possessed as it is of the public purse, and consequently of the public sword, the nation throws all the blame of an ill-conducted war, of a blundering negotiation, of a disgraceful treaty, of an embarrassing

commercial crisis. The delays of the Court of Chancery, the misconduct of a judge at Van Diemen's Land, any thing, in short, which in any part of the administration any person feels as a grievance, is attributed to the tyranny, or at least to the negligence, of that all-powerful body. Private individuals pester it with their wrongs and claims. A merchant appeals to it from the Courts of Rio Janeiro or St. Petersburg. A historical painter complains to it that his department of art finds no encouragement. Anciently the Parliament resembled a member of opposition, from whom no places are expected, who is not expected to confer favours and propose measures, but merely to watch and censure, and who may, therefore, unless he is grossly injudicious, be popular with the great body of the community. The Parliament now resembles the same person put into office, surrounded by petitioners whom twenty times his patronage would not satisfy, stunned with complaints, buried in memorials, compelled by the duties of his station to bring forward measures similar to those which he was formerly accustomed to observe and to check, and perpetually encountered by objections similar to those which it was formerly his business to raise.

Perhaps it may be laid down as a general rule that a legislative assembly, not constituted on democratical principles, cannot be popular long after it ceases to be weak. Its zeal for what the people, rightly or wrongly, conceive to be their interests, its sympathy with their mutable and violent passions, are merely the effects of the particular circumstances in which it is placed. As long as it depends for existence on the public favour, it will employ all the means in its power to conciliate that favour. While this is the case, defects in its constitution are of little consequence. But, as the close union of such a body with the nation is the effect of an identity of interests not essential but accidental, it is in some measure dissolved from the time at which the danger which produced it ceases to exist.

Hence, before the Revolution, the question of Parliamentary reform was of very little importance. The friends of liberty had no very ardent wish for reform. The strongest Tories saw no objections to it. It is remarkable that Clarendon loudly applauds the changes which Cromwell introduced, changes far stronger than the Whigs of the present day would in general approve. There is no reason to think, however, that the reform effected by Cromwell made any great difference in the conduct of the Parliament. Indeed, if the House of Commons had, during the reign of Charles the Second, been elected by universal suffrage, or if all the seats had been put up to sale, as in the French Parliaments, it would, we suspect, have acted very much as it did. We know how strongly the Parliament of Paris exerted itself in favour of the people on many important occasions; and the reason is evident. Though it did not emanate from the people, its whole consequence depended on the support of the people.

From the time of the Revolution the House of Commons has been

gradually becoming what it now is, a great council of state, containing many members chosen freely by the people, and many others anxious to acquire the favour of the people; but, on the whole, aristocratical in its temper and interest. It is very far from being an illiberal and stupid oligarchy; but it is equally far from being an express image of the general feeling. It is influenced by the opinion of the people, and influenced powerfully, but slowly and circuitously. Instead of outrunning the public mind, as before the Revolution it frequently did, it now follows with slow steps and at a wide distance. It is therefore necessarily unpopular; and the more so because the good which it produces is much less evident to common perception than the evil which it inflicts. It bears the blame of all the mischief which is done, or supposed to be done, by its authority or by its connivance. It doe not get the credit, on the other hand, of having prevented those innumerable abuses which do not exist solely because the House of Commons exists.

A large part of the nation is certainly desirous of a reform in the representative system. How large that part may be, and how strong its desires on the subject may be, it is difficult to say. It is only at intervals that the clamour on the subject is loud and vehement. But it seems to us that, during the remissions, the feeling gathers strength, and that every successive burst is more violent than that which preceded it. The public attention may be for a time diverted to the Catholic claims or the Mercantile code but it is probable that at no very distant period, perhaps in the lifetime of the present generation, all other questions will merge in that which is, in a certain degree, connected with them all.

Already we seem to ourselves to perceive the signs of unquiet times the vague presentiment of something great and strange which pervades the community, the restless and turbid hopes of those who have everything to gain, the dimly hinted forebodings of those who have everything to lose. Many indications might be mentioned, in themselves indeed as insignificant as straws; but even the direction of a straw, to borrow the illustration of Bacon, will show from what quarter the storm in setting in.

A great statesman might, by judicious and timely reformations by reconciling the two great branches of the natural aristocracy, the capitalists and the landowners, and by so widening the base of the government as to interest in its defence the whole of the middle class that brave, honest, and sound-hearted class, which is as anxious for the maintenance of order and the security of property, as it is hostile to corruption and oppression, succeed in averting a struggle to which no rational friend of liberty or of law can look forward without great apprehensions. There are those who will be contented with nothing but demolition; and there are those who shrink from all repair. There are innovators who long for a President and a National Convention; and there are bigots who, while cities larger and richer

than the capitals of many great kingdoms are calling out for representatives to watch over their interests, select some hackneyed jobber in boroughs, some peer of the narrowest and smallest mind, as the fittest depository of a forfeited franchise. Between these extremes there lies a more excellent way. Time is bringing round another crisis analogous to that which occurred in the seventeenth century. We stand in a situation similar to that in which our ancestors stood under the reign of James the First. It will soon again be necessary to reform that we may preserve, to save the fundamental principles of the Constitution by alterations in the subordinate parts. It will then be possible, as it was possible two hundred years ago, to protect vested rights, to secure every useful institution, every institution endeared by antiquity and noble associations, and, at the same time, to introduce into the system improvements harmonizing with the original plan. It remains to be seen whether two hundred years have made us wiser.

We know of no great revolution which might not have been prevented by compromise early and graciously made. Firmness is a great virtue in public affairs; but it has its proper sphere. Conspiracies and insurrections in which small minorities are engaged, the outbreakings of popular violence unconnected with any extensive project or any durable principle, are best repressed by vigour and decision. To shrink from them is to make them formidable. But no wise ruler will confound the pervading taint with the slight local irritation. No wise ruler will treat the deeply seated discontents of a great party, as he treats the fury of a mob which destroys mills and power-looms. The neglect of this distinction has been fatal even to governments strong in the power of the sword. The present time is indeed a time of peace and order. But it is at such a time that fools are most thoughtless and wise men most thoughtful. That the discontents which have agitated the country during the late and the present reign, and which, though not always noisy, are never wholly dormant, will again break forth with aggravated symptoms, is almost as certain as that the tides and seasons will follow their appointed course. But in all movements of the human mind which tend to great revolutions there is a crisis at which moderate concession may amend, conciliate, and preserve. Happy will it be for England if, at that crisis her interests be confided to men for whom history has not recorded the long series of human crimes and follies in vain.

BURLEIGH AND HIS TIMES
(April 1832)

Memoirs of the Life and Administration of the Right Honourable William Cecil Lord Burghley, Secretary of State in the Reign of King Edward the Sixth, and Lord High Treasurer, of England in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth. Containing an historical View of the

Times in which he lived, and of the many eminent and illustrious Persons with whom he was connected; with Extracts from his Private and Official Correspondence and other Papers, now first published from the Originals. By the Reverend EDWARD NARES, D.D., Regius Professor of Modern History in the University of Oxford. 3 vols. 4to. London: 1828, 1832.

THE work of Dr. Nares has filled us with astonishment similar to that which Captain Lemuel Gulliver felt when first he landed in Brobdingnag, and saw corn as high as the oaks in the New Forest, thimbles as large as buckets, and wrens of the bulk of turkeys. The whole book, and every component part of it, is on a gigantic scale. The title is as long as an ordinary preface: the prefatory matter would furnish out an ordinary book; and the book contains as much reading as an ordinary library. We cannot sum up the merits of the stupendous mass of paper which lies before us better than by saying that it consists of about two thousand closely printed quarto pages, that it occupies fifteen hundred inches cubic measure, and that it weighs sixty pounds avoirdupois. Such a book might, before the deluge, have been considered as light reading by Hilpa and Shallum. But unhappily the life of man is now three-score years and ten; and we cannot but think it somewhat unfair in Dr. Nares to demand from us so large a portion of so short an existence.

Compared with the labour of reading through these volumes, all other labour, the labour of thieves on the treadmill, of children in factories, of negroes in sugar plantations, is an agreeable recreation. There was, it is said, a criminal in Italy, who was suffered to make his choice between Guicciardini and the galleys. He chose the history. But the war of Pisa was too much for him. He changed his mind, and went to the oar. Guicciardini, though certainly not the most amusing of writers, is a Herodotus or a Froissart, when compared with Dr. Nares, It is not merely in bulk, but in specific gravity also, that these memoirs exceed all other human compositions. On every subject which the Professor discusses, he produces three times as many pages as another man; and one of his pages is as tedious as another man’s three. His book is swelled to its vast dimensions by endless repetitions, by episodes which have nothing to do with the main action, by quotations from books which are in every circulating library, and by reflections which, when they happen to be just, are so obvious that they must necessarily occur to the mind of every reader. He employs more words in expounding and defending a truism than any other writer would employ in supporting a paradox. Of the rules of historical perspective, he has not the faintest notion. There is neither foreground nor background in his delineation. The wars of Charles the Fifth in Germany are detailed at almost as much length as in Robertson’s life of that prince. The troubles of Scotland are related as fully as in M’Crie’s Life of John Knox. It would be most unjust to deny that Dr. Nares is a man of great industry and research; but he is so utterly incompetent to, arrange the materials which he has collected that he might as

well have left them in their original repositories.

Neither the facts which Dr. Nares has discovered, nor the arguments which he urges, will, we apprehend, materially alter the opinion generally entertained by judicious readers of history concerning his hero. Lord Burleigh can hardly be called a great man. He was not one of those whose genius and energy change the fate of empires. He was by nature and habit one of those who follow, not one of those who lead. Nothing that is recorded, either of his words or of his actions, indicates intellectual or moral elevation. But his talents, though not brilliant, were of an eminently useful kind; and his principles, though not inflexible, were not more relaxed than those of his associates and competitors. He had a cool temper, a sound judgement, great powers of application, and a constant eye to the main chance. In his youth he was, it seems, fond of practical jokes. Yet even out of these he contrived to extract some pecuniary profit. When he was studying the law at Gray's Inn, he lost all his furniture and books at the gaming table to one of his friends. He accordingly bored a hole in the wall which separated his chambers from those of his associate, and at midnight bellowed through this passage threats of damnation and calls to repentance in the ears of the victorious gambler, who lay sweating with fear all night, and refunded his winnings on his knees next day. "Many other the like merry jest," says his old biographer, "I have heard him tell, too long to be here noted." To the last, Burleigh was somewhat jocose; and some of his sportive sayings have been recorded by Bacon. They show much more shrewdness than generosity, and are, indeed, neatly expressed reasons for exacting money rigorously, and for keeping it carefully. It must, however, be acknowledged that he was rigorous and careful for the public advantage as well as for his own. To extol his moral character as Dr. Nares has extolled it is absurd. It would be equally absurd to represent him as a corrupt, rapacious, and bad-hearted man. He paid great attention to the interests of the state, and great attention also to the interest of his own family. He never deserted his friends till it was very inconvenient to stand by them, was an excellent Protestant, when it was not very advantageous to be a Papist, recommended a tolerant policy to his mistress as strongly as he could recommend it without hazarding her favour, never put to the rack any person from whom it did not seem probable that useful information might be derived, and was so moderate in his desires that he left only three hundred distinct landed estates, though he might, as his honest servant assures us, have left much more, "if he would have taken money out of the Exchequer for his own use, as many Treasurers have done."

Burleigh, like the old Marquess of Winchester, who preceded him in the custody of the White Staff, was of the willow, and not of the oak. He first rose into notice by defending the supremacy of Henry the Eighth. He was subsequently favoured and promoted by the Duke of Somerset. He not only contrived to escape unhurt when his patron fell, but became an important member of the

administration of Northumberland. Dr. Nares assures us over and over again that there could have been nothing base in Cecil's conduct on this occasion; for, says he, Cecil continued to stand well with Cranmer. This, we confess, hardly satisfies us. We are much of the mind of Falstaff's tailor. We must have better assurance for Sir John than Bardolph's. We like not the security.

Through the whole course of that miserable intrigue which was carried on round the dying bed of Edward the Sixth, Cecil so bemeaned himself as to avoid, first, the displeasure of Northumberland, and afterwards the displeasure of Mary. He was prudently unwilling to put his hand to the instrument which changed the course of the succession. But the furious Dudley was master of the palace. Cecil, therefore, according to his own account, excused himself from signing as a party, but consented to sign as a witness. It is not easy to describe his dexterous conduct at this most perplexing crisis in language more appropriate than that which is employed by old Fuller. "His hand wrote it as secretary of state," says that quaint writer; "but his heart consented not thereto. Yea, he openly opposed it; though at last yielding to the greatness of Northumberland, in an age when it was present drowning not to swim with the stream. But as the philosopher tells us, that though the planets be whirled about daily from east to west, by the motion of the primum mobile, yet have they also a contrary proper motion of their own from west to east, which they slowly, though surely, move, at their leisure; so Cecil had secret counter-endeavours against the strain of the court herein, and privately advanced his rightful intentions, against the foresaid duke's ambition."

This was undoubtedly the most perilous conjuncture of Cecil's life. Wherever there was a safe course, he was safe. But here every course was full of danger. His situation rendered it impossible for him to be neutral. If he acted on either side, if he refused to act at all, he ran a fearful risk. He saw all the difficulties of his position. He sent his money and plate out of London, made over his estates to his son, and carried arms about his person. His best arms, however, were his sagacity and his self-command. The plot in which he had been an unwilling accomplice ended, as it was natural that so odious and absurd a plot should end, in the ruin of its contrivers. In the meantime, Cecil quietly extricated himself and, having been successively patronised by Henry, by Somerset, and by Northumberland, continued to flourish under the protection of Mary.

He had no aspirations after the crown of martyrdom. He confessed himself, therefore, with great decorum, heard mass in Wimbledon Church at Easter, and, for the better ordering of his spiritual concerns, took a priest into his house. Dr. Nares, whose simplicity passes that of any casuist with whom we are acquainted, vindicates his hero by assuring us that this was not superstition, but pure unmixed hypocrisy. "That he did in some manner conform, we shall not be able, in the face of existing

documents, to deny; while we feel in our own minds abundantly satisfied, that, during this very trying reign, he never abandoned the prospect of another revolution in favour of Protestantism." In another place, the Doctor tells us, that Cecil went to mass "with no idolatrous intention." Nobody, we believe, ever accused him of idolatrous intentions. The very ground of the charge against him is that he had no idolatrous intentions. We never should have blamed him if he had really gone to Wimbledon Church, with the feelings of a good Catholic, to worship the host. Dr. Nares speaks in several places with just severity of the sophistry of the Jesuits, and with just admiration of the incomparable letters of Pascal. It is somewhat strange, therefore, that he should adopt, to the full extent, the jesuitical doctrine of the direction of intentions.

We do not blame Cecil for not choosing to be burned. The deep stain upon his memory is that, for differences of opinion for which he would risk nothing himself, he, in the day of his power, took away without scruple the lives of others. One of the excuses suggested in these Memoirs for his conforming, during the reign of Mary to the Church of Rome, is that he may have been of the same mind with those German Protestants who were called Adiaphorists, and who considered the popish rites as matters indifferent. Melanchthon was one of these moderate persons, and "appears," says Dr. Nares, "to have gone greater lengths than any imputed to Lord Burleigh." We should have thought this not only an excuse, but a complete vindication, if Cecil had been an Adiaphorist for the benefit of others as well as for his own. If the popish rites were matters of so little moment that a good Protestant might lawfully practise them for his safety, how could it be just or humane that a Papist should be hanged, drawn, and quartered, for practising them from a sense of duty? Unhappily these non-essentials soon became matters of life and death just at the very time at which Cecil attained the highest point of power and favour, an Act of Parliament was passed by which the penalties of high treason were denounced against persons who should do in sincerity what he had done from cowardice.

Early in the reign of Mary, Cecil was employed in a mission scarcely consistent with the character of a zealous Protestant. He was sent to escort the Papal Legate, Cardinal Pole, from Brussels to London. That great body of moderate persons who cared more for the quiet of the realm than for the controverted points which were in issue between the Churches seem to have placed their chief hope in the wisdom and humanity of the gentle Cardinal. Cecil, it is clear, cultivated the friendship of Pole with great assiduity, and received great advantage from the Legate’s protection.

But the best protection of Cecil, during the gloomy and disastrous reign of Mary, was that which he derived from his own prudence and from his own temper, a prudence which could never be lulled into carelessness, a temper which could never be irritated

into rashness. The Papists could find no occasion against him. Yet he did not lose the esteem even of those sterner Protestants who had preferred exile to recantation. He attached himself to the persecuted heiress of the throne, and entitled himself to her gratitude and confidence. Yet he continued to receive marks of favour from the Queen. In the House of Commons, he put himself at the head of the party opposed to the Court. Yet, so guarded was his language that, even when some of those who acted with him were imprisoned by the Privy Council, he escaped with impunity.

At length Mary died: Elizabeth succeeded; and Cecil rose at once to greatness. He was sworn in Privy-councillor and Secretary of State to the new sovereign before he left her prison of Hatfield; and he continued to serve her during forty years, without intermission, in the highest employments. His abilities were precisely those which keep men long in power. He belonged to the class of the Walpoles, the Pelhams, and the Liverpools, not to that of the St. Johns, the Carterets, the Chathams, and the Cannings. If he had been a man of original genius and of an enterprising spirit, it would have been scarcely possible for him to keep his power or even his head. There was not room in one government for an Elizabeth and a Richelieu. What the haughty daughter of Henry needed, was a moderate, cautious, flexible minister, skilled in the details of business, competent to advise, but not aspiring to command. And such a minister she found in Burleigh. No arts could shake the confidence which she reposed in her old and trusty servant. The courtly graces of Leicester, the brilliant talents and accomplishments of Essex, touched the fancy, perhaps the heart, of the woman; but no rival could deprive the Treasurer of the place which he possessed in the favour of the Queen. She sometimes chid him sharply; but he was the man whom she delighted to honour. For Burleigh, she forgot her usual parsimony both of wealth and of dignities. For Burleigh, she relaxed that severe etiquette to which she was unreasonably attached. Every other person to whom she addressed her speech, or on whom the glance of her eagle eye fell, instantly sank on his knee. For Burleigh alone, a chair was set in her presence; and there the old minister, by birth only a plain Lincolnshire esquire, took his ease, while the haughty heirs of the Fitzalans and the De Veres humbled themselves to the dust around him. At length, having, survived all his early coadjutors and rivals, he died full of years and honours. His royal mistress visited him on his deathbed, and cheered him with assurances of her affection and esteem; and his power passed, with little diminution, to a son who inherited his abilities, and whose mind had been formed by his counsels.

The life of Burleigh was commensurate with one of the most important periods in the history of the world. It exactly measures the time during which the House of Austria held decided superiority and aspired to universal dominion. In the year in which Burleigh was born, Charles the Fifth obtained the imperial crown. In the year in which Burleigh died, the vast designs which

had, during near a century, kept Europe in constant agitation, were buried in the same grave with the proud and sullen Philip.

The life of Burleigh was commensurate also with the period during which a great moral revolution was effected, a revolution the consequences of which were felt, not only in the cabinets of princes, but at half the firesides in Christendom. He was born when the great religious schism was just commencing. He lived to see that schism complete, and to see a line of demarcation, which, since his death, has been very little altered, strongly drawn between Protestant and Catholic Europe.

The only event of modern times which can be properly compared with the Reformation is the French Revolution, or, to speak more accurately, that great revolution of political feeling which took place in almost every part of the civilised world during the eighteenth century, and which obtained in France its most terrible and signal triumph. Each of these memorable events may be described as a rising up of the human reason against a Caste. The one was a struggle of the laity against the clergy for intellectual liberty; the other was a struggle of the people against princes and nobles for political liberty. In both cases, the spirit of innovation was at first encouraged by the class to which it was likely to be most prejudicial. It was under the patronage of Frederic, of Catherine, of Joseph, and of the grandees of France, that the philosophy which afterwards threatened all the thrones and aristocracies of Europe with destruction first became formidable. The ardour with which men betook themselves to liberal studies, at the close of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth century, was zealously encouraged by the heads of that very church to which liberal studies were destined to be fatal. In both cases, when the explosion came, it came with a violence which appalled and disgusted many of those who had previously been distinguished by the freedom of their opinions. The violence of the democratic party in France made Burke a Tory and Alfieri a courtier. The violence of the chiefs of the German schism made Erasmus a defender of abuses, and turned the author of Utopia into a persecutor. In both cases, the convulsion which had overthrown deeply seated errors, shook all the principles on which society rests to their very foundations. The minds of men were unsettled. It seemed for a time that all order and morality were about to perish with the prejudices with which they had been long and intimately associated. Frightful cruelties were committed. Immense masses of property were confiscated. Every part of Europe swarmed with exiles. In moody and turbulent spirits zeal soured into malignity, or foamed into madness. From the political agitation of the eighteenth century sprang the Jacobins. From the religious agitation of the sixteenth century sprang the Anabaptists. The partisans of Robespierre robbed and murdered in the name of fraternity and equality. The followers of Kniperdoling robbed and murdered in the name of Christian liberty. The feeling of patriotism was in many parts of Europe,

almost wholly extinguished. All the old maxims of foreign policy were changed. Physical boundaries were superseded by moral boundaries. Nations made war on each other with new arms, with arms which no fortifications, however strong by nature or, by art, could resist, with arms before which rivers parted like the Jordan, and ramparts fell down like the walls of Jericho. The great masters of fleets and armies were often reduced to confess, like Milton's warlike angel, how hard they found it

"--To exclude
Spiritual substance with corporeal bar."

Europe was divided, as Greece had been divided during the period concerning which Thucydides wrote. The conflict was not, as it is in ordinary times, between state and state, but between two omnipresent factions, each of which was in some places dominant and in other places oppressed, but which, openly or covertly, carried on their strife in the bosom of every society. No man asked whether another belonged to the same country with himself, but whether he belonged to the same sect. Party-spirit seemed to justify and consecrate acts which, in any other times, would have been considered as the foulest of treasons. The French emigrant saw nothing disgraceful in bringing Austrian and Prussian hussars to Paris. The Irish or Italian democrat saw no impropriety in serving the French Directory against his own native government. So, in the sixteenth century, the fury of theological factions suspended all national animosities and jealousies. The Spaniards were invited into France by the League; the English were invited into France by the Huguenots.

We by no means intend to underrate or to palliate the crimes and excesses which, during the last generation, were produced by the spirit of democracy. But, when we hear men zealous for the Protestant religion, constantly represent the French Revolution as radically and essentially evil on account of those crimes and excesses, we cannot but remember that the deliverance of our ancestors from the house of their spiritual bondage was effected "by plagues and by signs, by wonders and by war." We cannot but remember that, as in the case of the French Revolution, so also in the case of the Reformation, those who rose up against tyranny were themselves deeply tainted with the vices which tyranny engenders. We cannot but remember that libels scarcely less scandalous than those of Hebert, mummeries scarcely less absurd than those of Clootz, and crimes scarcely less atrocious than those of Marat, disgrace the early history of Protestantism. The Reformation is an event long past. That volcano has spent its rage. The wide waste produced by its outbreak is forgotten. The landmarks which were swept away have been replaced. The ruined edifices have been repaired. The lava has covered with a rich incrustation the fields which it once devastated, and, after having turned a beautiful and fruitful garden into a desert, has again turned the desert into a still more beautiful and fruitful garden. The second great eruption is not yet over. The marks of

its ravages are still all around us. The ashes are still hot beneath our feet. In some directions the deluge of fire still continues to spread. Yet experience surely entitles us to believe that this explosion, like that which preceded it, will fertilise the soil which it has devastated. Already, in those parts which have suffered most severely, rich cultivation and secure dwellings have begun to appear amidst the waste. The more we read of the history of past ages, the more we observe the signs of our own times, the more do we feel our hearts filled and swelled up by a good hope for the future destinies of the human race.

The history of the Reformation in England is full of strange problems. The most prominent and extraordinary phaenomenon which it presents to us is the gigantic strength of the government contrasted with the feebleness of the religious parties. During the twelve or thirteen years which followed the death of Henry the Eighth, the religion of the state was thrice changed. Protestantism was established by Edward; the Catholic Church was restored by Mary; Protestantism was again established by Elizabeth. The faith of the nation seemed to depend on the personal inclinations of the sovereign. Nor was this all. An established church was then, as a matter of course, a persecuting church. Edward persecuted Catholics. Mary persecuted Protestants. Elizabeth persecuted Catholics again. The father of those three sovereigns had enjoyed the pleasure of persecuting both sects at once, and had sent to death, on the same hurdle, the heretic who denied the real presence, and the traitor who denied the royal supremacy. There was nothing in England like that fierce and bloody opposition which, in France, each of the religious factions in its turn offered to the government. We had neither a Coligny nor a Mayenne, neither a Moncontour nor an Ivry. No English city braved sword and famine for the reformed doctrines with the spirit of Rochelle, or for the Catholic doctrines with the spirit of Paris. Neither sect in England formed a League. Neither sect extorted a recantation from the sovereign. Neither sect could obtain from an adverse sovereign even a toleration. The English Protestants, after several years of domination, sank down with scarcely a struggle under the tyranny of Mary. The Catholics, after having regained and abused their old ascendency submitted patiently to the severe rule of Elizabeth. Neither Protestants nor Catholics engaged in any great and well-organized scheme of resistance. A few wild and tumultuous risings, suppressed as soon as they appeared, a few dark conspiracies in which only a small number of desperate men engaged, such were the utmost efforts made by these two parties to assert the most sacred of human rights, attacked by the most odious tyranny.

The explanation of these circumstances which has generally been given is very simple but by no means satisfactory. The power of the crown, it is said, was then at its height, and was in fact despotic. This solution, we own, seems to us to be no solution at all. It has long been the fashion, a fashion introduced by Mr.

Hume, to describe the English monarchy in the sixteenth century as an absolute monarchy. And such undoubtedly it appears to a superficial observer. Elizabeth, it is true, often spoke to her parliaments in language as haughty and imperious as that which the Great Turk would use to his divan. She punished with great severity members of the House of Commons who, in her opinion, carried the freedom of debate too far. She assumed the power of legislating by means of proclamations. She imprisoned her subjects without bringing them to a legal trial. Torture was often employed, in defiance of the laws of England, for the purpose of extorting confessions from those who were shut up in her dungeons. The authority of the Star-Chamber and of the Ecclesiastical Commission was at its highest point. Severe restraints were imposed on political and religious discussion. The number of presses was at one time limited. No man could print without a licence; and every work had to undergo the scrutiny of the Primate, or the Bishop of London. Persons whose writings were displeasing to the Court, were cruelly mutilated, like Stubbs, or put to death, like Penry. Nonconformity was severely punished. The Queen prescribed the exact rule of religious faith and discipline; and whoever departed from that rule, either to the right or to the left, was in danger of severe penalties.

Such was this government. Yet we know that it was loved by the great body of those who lived under it. We know that, during the fierce contests of the seventeenth century, both the hostile parties spoke of the time of Elizabeth as of a golden age. That great Queen has now been lying two hundred and thirty years in Henry the Seventh's chapel. Yet her memory is still dear to the hearts of a free people.

The truth seems to be that the government of the Tudors was, with a few occasional deviations, a popular government, under the forms of despotism. At first sight, it may seem that the prerogatives of Elizabeth were not less ample than those of Lewis the Fourteenth, and her parliaments were as obsequious as his parliaments, that her warrant had as much authority as his lettre de cachet. The extravagance with which her courtiers eulogized her personal and mental charms went beyond the adulation of Boileau and Moliere. Lewis would have blushed to receive from those who composed the gorgeous circles of Marli and Versailles such outward marks of servitude as the haughty Britoness exacted of all who approached her. But the authority of Lewis rested on the support of his army. The authority of Elizabeth rested solely on the support of her people. Those who say that her power was absolute do not sufficiently consider in what her power consisted. Her power consisted in the willing obedience of her subjects, in their attachment to her person and to her office, in their respect for the old line from which she sprang, in their sense of the general security which they enjoyed under her government. These were the means, and the only means, which she had at her command for carrying her decrees into execution, for resisting foreign enemies, and for crushing

domestic treason. There was not a ward in the city, there was not a hundred in any shire in England, which could not have overpowered the handful of armed men who composed her household. If a hostile sovereign threatened invasion, if an ambitious noble raised the standard of revolt, she could have recourse only to the trainbands of her capital and the array of her counties, to the citizens and yeomen of England, commanded by the merchants and esquires of England.

Thus, when intelligence arrived of the vast preparations which Philip was making for the subjugation of the realm, the first person to whom the government thought of applying for assistance was the Lord Mayor of London. They sent to ask him what force the city would engage to furnish for the defence of the kingdom against the Spaniards. The Mayor and Common Council, in return desired to know what force the Queen's Highness wished them to furnish. The answer was, fifteen ships, and five thousand men. The Londoners deliberated on the matter, and, two days after, "humbly intreated the council, in sign of their perfect love and loyalty to prince and country, to accept ten thousand men, and thirty ships amply furnished."

People who could give such signs as these of their loyalty were by no means to be misgoverned with impunity. The English in the sixteenth century were, beyond all doubt, a free people. They had not, indeed, the outward show of freedom; but they had the reality. They had not as good a constitution as we have; but they had that without which the best constitution is as useless as the king's proclamation against vice and immorality, that which, without any constitution, keeps rulers in awe, force, and the spirit to use it. Parliaments, it is true, were rarely held, and were not very respectfully treated. The great charter was often violated. But the people had a security against gross and systematic misgovernment, far stronger than all the parchment that was ever marked with the sign-manual, and than all the wax that was ever pressed by the great seal.

It is a common error in politics to confound means with ends. Constitutions, charters, petitions of right, declarations of right, representative assemblies, electoral colleges, are not good government; nor do they, even when most elaborately constructed, necessarily produce good government. Laws exist in vain for those who have not the courage and the means to defend them. Electors meet in vain where want makes them the slaves of the landlord, or where superstition makes them the slaves of the priest. Representative assemblies sit in vain unless they have at their command, in the last resort the physical power which is necessary to make their deliberations free, and their votes effectual.

The Irish are better represented in parliament than the Scotch, who indeed are not represented at all. But are the Irish better governed than the Scotch? Surely not. This circumstance has of

late been used as an argument against reform. It proves nothing against reform. It proves only this, that laws have no magical, no supernatural, virtue; that laws do not act like Aladdin's lamp or Prince Ahmed's apple; that priestcraft, that ignorance, that the rage of contending factions, may make good institutions useless; that intelligence, sobriety, industry, moral freedom, firm union, may supply in a great measure the defects of the worst representative system. A people whose education and habits are such that, in every quarter of the world they rise above the mass of those with whom they mix, as surely as oil rises to the top of water, a people of such temper and self-government that the wildest popular excesses recorded in their history partake of the gravity of judicial proceedings, and of the solemnity of religious rites, a people whose national pride and mutual attachment have passed into a proverb, a people whose high and fierce spirit, so forcibly described in the haughty motto which encircles their thistle, preserved their independence, during a struggle of centuries, from the encroachments of wealthier and more powerful neighbours, such a people cannot be long oppressed. Any government, however constituted, must respect their wishes and tremble at their discontents. It is indeed most desirable that such a people should exercise a direct influence on the conduct of affairs, and should make their wishes known through constitutional organs. But some influence, direct or indirect, they will assuredly possess. Some organ, constitutional or unconstitutional, they will assuredly find. They will be better governed under a good constitution than under a bad constitution. But they will be better governed under the worst constitution than some other nations under the best. In any general classification of constitutions, the constitution of Scotland must be reckoned as one of the worst, perhaps as the worst, in Christian Europe. Yet the Scotch are not ill governed. And the reason is simply that they will not bear to be ill governed.

In some of the Oriental monarchies, in Afghanistan for example, though there exists nothing which an European publicist would call a Constitution, the sovereign generally governs in conformity with certain rules established for the public benefit; and the sanction of those rules is, that every Afghan approves them, and that every Afghan is a soldier.

The monarchy of England in the sixteenth century was a monarchy of this kind. It is called an absolute monarchy, because little respect was paid by the Tudors to those institutions which we have been accustomed to consider as the sole checks on the power of the sovereign. A modern Englishman can hardly understand how the people can have had any real security for good government under kings who levied benevolences, and chid the House of Commons as they would have chid a pack of dogs. People do not sufficiently consider that, though the legal cheeks were feeble, the natural checks were strong. There was one great and effectual limitation on the royal authority, the knowledge that, if the patience of the nation were severely tried, the nation would put

forth its strength, and that its strength would be found irresistible. If a large body of Englishmen became thoroughly discontented, instead of presenting requisitions, holding large meetings, passing resolutions, signing petitions, forming associations and unions, they rose up; they took their halberds and their bows; and, if the sovereign was not sufficiently popular to find among his subjects other halberds and other bows to oppose to the rebels, nothing remained for him but a repetition of the horrible scenes of Berkeley and Pomfret, He had no regular army which could, by its superior arms and its superior skill, overawe or vanquish the sturdy Commons of his realm, abounding in the native hardihood of Englishmen, and trained in the simple discipline of the militia.

It has been said that the Tudors were as absolute as the Caesars. Never was parallel so unfortunate. The government of the Tudors was the direct opposite to the government of Augustus and his successors. The Caesars ruled despotically, by means of a great standing army, under the decent forms of a republican constitution. They called themselves citizens. They mixed unceremoniously with other citizens. In theory they were only the elective magistrates of a free commonwealth. Instead of arrogating to themselves despotic power, they acknowledged allegiance to the senate. They were merely the lieutenants of that venerable body. They mixed in debate. They even appeared as advocates before the courts of law. Yet they could safely indulge in the wildest freaks of cruelty and rapacity, while their legions remained faithful. Our Tudors, on the other hand, under the titles and forms of monarchical supremacy, were essentially popular magistrates. They had no means of protecting themselves against the public hatred; and they were therefore compelled to court the public favour. To enjoy all the state and all the personal indulgences of absolute power, to be, adored with Oriental prostrations, to dispose at will of the liberty and even of the life of ministers and courtiers, this nation granted to the Tudors. But the condition on which they were suffered to be the tyrants of Whitehall was that they should be the mild and paternal sovereigns of England. They were under the same restraints with regard to their people under which a military despot is placed with regard to his army. They would have found it as dangerous to grind their subjects with cruel taxation as Nero would have found it to leave his praetorians unpaid. Those who immediately surrounded the royal person, and engaged in the hazardous game of ambition, were exposed to the most fearful dangers. Buckingham, Cromwell, Surrey, Seymour of Sudeley, Somerset, Northumberland, Suffolk, Norfolk, Essex, perished on the scaffold. But in general the country gentleman hunted and the merchant traded in peace. Even Henry, as cruel as Domitian, but far more politic, contrived, while reeking with the blood of the Lamiae, to be a favourite with the cobblers.

The Tudors committed very tyrannical acts. But in their ordinary dealings with the people they were not, and could not safely be,

tyrants. Some excesses were easily pardoned. For the nation was proud of the high and fiery blood of its magnificent princes, and saw in many proceedings which a lawyer would even then have condemned, the outbreak of the same noble spirit which so manfully hurled foul scorn at Parma and at Spain. But to this endurance there was a limit. If the government ventured to adopt measures which the people really felt to be oppressive, it was soon compelled to change its course. When Henry the Eighth attempted to raise a forced loan of unusual amount by proceedings of unusual rigour, the opposition which he encountered was such as appalled even his stubborn and imperious spirit. The people, we are told, said that, if they were treated thus, "then were it worse than the taxes Of France; and England should be bond, and not free." The county of Suffolk rose in arms. The king prudently yielded to an opposition which, if he had persisted, would, in all probability, have taken the form of a general rebellion. Towards the close of the reign of Elizabeth, the people felt themselves aggrieved by the monopolies. The Queen, proud and courageous as she was, shrank from a contest with the nation, and, with admirable sagacity, conceded all that her subjects had demanded, while it was yet in her power to concede with dignity and grace.

It cannot be imagined that a people who had in their own hands the means of checking their princes would suffer any prince to impose upon them a religion generally detested. It is absurd to suppose that, if the nation had been decidedly attached to the Protestant faith, Mary could have re-established the Papal supremacy. It is equally absurd to suppose that, if the nation had been zealous for the ancient religion, Elizabeth could have restored the Protestant Church. The truth is, that the people were not disposed to engage in a struggle either for the new or for the old doctrines. Abundance of spirit was shown when it seemed likely that Mary would resume her father’s grants of church property, or that she would sacrifice the interests of England to the husband whom she regarded with unmerited tenderness. That queen found that it would be madness to attempt the restoration of the abbey lands. She found that her subjects would never suffer her to make her hereditary kingdom a fief of Castile. On these points she encountered a steady resistance, and was compelled to give way. If she was able to establish the Catholic worship and to persecute those who would not conform to it, it was evidently because the people cared far less for the Protestant religion than for the rights of property and for the independence of the English crown. In plain words, they did not think the difference between the hostile sects worth a struggle. There was undoubtedly a zealous Protestant party and a zealous Catholic party. But both these parties were, we believe, very small. We doubt, whether both together made up, at the time of Mary’s death, the twentieth part of the nation. The remaining nineteen twentieths halted between the two opinions, and were not disposed to risk a revolution in the government, for the purpose of giving to either of the extreme factions an advantage over the

other.

We possess no data which will enable us to compare with exactness the force of the two sects. Mr. Butler asserts that, even at the accession of James the First, a majority of the population of England were Catholics. This is pure assertion; and is not only unsupported by evidence, but, we think, completely disproved by the strongest evidence. Dr. Lingard is of opinion that the Catholics were one-half of the nation in the middle of the reign of Elizabeth. Rushton says that, when Elizabeth came to the throne, the Catholics were two-thirds of the nation, and the Protestants only one-third. The most judicious and impartial of English historians, Mr. Hallam, is, on the contrary, of opinion, that two-thirds were Protestants and only one-third Catholics. To us, we must confess, it seems, incredible that, if the Protestants were really two to one, they should have borne the government of Mary, or that, if the Catholics were really two to one, they should have borne the government of Elizabeth. We are at a loss to conceive how a sovereign who has no standing army, and whose power rests solely on the loyalty of his subjects, can continue for years to persecute a religion to which the majority of his subjects are sincerely attached. In fact, the Protestants did rise up against one sister, and the Catholics against the other. Those risings clearly showed how small and feeble both the parties were. Both in the one case and in the other the nation ranged itself on the side of the government, and the insurgents were speedily put down and punished. The Kentish gentlemen who took up arms for the reformed doctrines against Mary, and the great Northern Earls who displayed the banner of the Five Wounds against Elizabeth, were alike considered by the great body of their countrymen as wicked disturbers of the public peace.

The account which Cardinal Bentivoglio gave of the state of religion in England well deserves consideration. The zealous Catholics he reckoned at one-thirtieth part of the nation. The people who would without the least scruple become Catholics, if the Catholic religion were established, he estimated at four-fifths of the nation. We believe this account to have been very near the truth. We believe that people, whose minds were made up on either side, who were inclined to make any sacrifice or run any risk for either religion, were very few. Each side had a few enterprising champions, and a few stout-hearted martyrs; but the nation, undetermined in its opinions and feelings, resigned itself implicitly to the guidance of the government, and lent to the sovereign for the time being an equally ready aid against either of the extreme parties.

We are very far from saying that the English of that generation were irreligious. They held firmly those doctrines which are common to the Catholic and to the Protestant theology. But they had no fixed opinion as to the matters in dispute between the churches. They were in a situation resembling that of those Borderers whom Sir Walter Scott has described with so much

spirit,

"Who sought the beeves that made their broth
In England and in Scotland both."

And who

"Nine times outlawed had been
By England’s king and Scotland’s queen."

They were sometimes Protestants, sometimes Catholics; sometimes half Protestants half Catholics.

The English had not, for ages, been bigoted Papists. In the fourteenth century, the first and perhaps the greatest of the reformers, John Wicliffe, had stirred the public mind to its inmost depths. During the same century, a scandalous schism in the Catholic Church had diminished, in many parts of Europe, the reverence in which the Roman pontiffs were held. It is clear that, a hundred years before the time of Luther, a great party in this kingdom was eager for a change at least as extensive as that which was subsequently effected by Henry the Eighth. The House of Commons, in the reign of Henry the Fourth, proposed a confiscation of ecclesiastical property, more sweeping and violent even than that which took place under the administration of Thomas Cromwell; and, though defeated in this attempt, they succeeded in depriving the clerical order of some of its most oppressive privileges. The splendid conquests of Henry the Fifth turned the attention of the nation from domestic reform. The Council of Constance removed some of the grossest of those scandals which had deprived the Church of the public respect. The authority of that venerable synod propped up the sinking authority of the Popedom. A considerable reaction took place. It cannot, however, be doubted, that there was still some concealed Lollardism in England; or that many who did not absolutely dissent from any doctrine held by the Church of Rome were jealous of the wealth and power enjoyed by her ministers. At the very beginning of the reign of Henry the Eighth, a struggle took place between the clergy and the courts of law, in which the courts of law remained victorious. One of the bishops, on that occasion, declared that the common people entertained the strongest prejudices against his order, and that a clergyman had no chance of fair play before a lay tribunal. The London juries, he said, entertained such a spite to the Church that, if Abel were a priest, they would find him guilty of the murder of Cain. This was said a few months before the time when Martin Luther began to preach at Wittenburg against indulgences.

As the Reformation did not find the English bigoted Papists, so neither was it conducted in such a manner as to make them zealous Protestants. It was not under the direction of men like that fiery Saxon who swore that he would go to Worms, though he had to face as many devils as there were tiles on the houses, or like

that brave Switzer who was struck down while praying in front of the ranks of Zurich. No preacher of religion had the same power here which Calvin had at Geneva and Knox in Scotland. The government put itself early at the head of the movement, and thus acquired power to regulate, and occasionally to arrest, the movement.

To many persons it appears extraordinary that Henry the Eighth should have been able to maintain himself so long in an intermediate position between the Catholic and Protestant parties. Most extraordinary it would indeed be, if we were to suppose that the nation consisted of none but decided Catholics and decided Protestants. The fact is that the great mass of the people was neither Catholic nor Protestant, but was, like its sovereign, midway between the two sects. Henry, in that very part of his conduct which has been represented as most capricious and inconsistent, was probably following a policy far more pleasing to the majority of his subjects than a policy like that of Edward, or a policy like that of Mary, would have been. Down even to the very close of the reign of Elizabeth, the people were in a state somewhat resembling that in which, as Machiavelli says, the inhabitants of the Roman empire were, during the transition from heathenism to Christianity; "sendo la maggior parte di loro incerti a quale Dio dovessero ricorrere." They were generally, we think, favourable to the royal supremacy. They disliked the policy of the Court of Rome. Their spirit rose against the interference of a foreign priest with their national concerns. The bull which pronounced sentence of deposition against Elizabeth, the plots which were formed against her life, the usurpation of her titles by the Queen of Scotland, the hostility of Philip, excited their strongest indignation. The cruelties of Bonner were remembered with disgust. Some parts of the new system, the use of the English language, for example, in public worship, and the communion in both kinds, were undoubtedly popular. On the other hand, the early lessons of the nurse and the priest were not forgotten. The ancient ceremonies were long remembered with affectionate reverence. A large portion of the ancient theology lingered to the last in the minds which had been imbued with it in childhood.

The best proof that the religion of the people was of this mixed kind is furnished by the Drama of that age. No man would bring unpopular opinions prominently forward in a play intended for representation. And we may safely conclude, that feelings and opinions which pervade the whole Dramatic Literature of a generation, are feelings and opinions of which the men of that generation generally partook.

The greatest and most popular dramatists of the Elizabethan age treat religious subjects in a very remarkable manner. They speak respectfully of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. But they speak neither like Catholics nor like Protestants, but like persons who are wavering between the two systems, or who have

made a system for themselves out of parts selected from both. They seem to hold some of the Romish rites and doctrines in high respect. They treat the vow of celibacy, for example, so tempting, and, in later times, so common a subject for ribaldry, with mysterious reverence. Almost every member of a religious order whom they introduce is a holy and venerable man. We remember in their plays nothing resembling the coarse ridicule with which the Catholic religion and its ministers were assailed, two generations later, by dramatists who wished to please the multitude. We remember no Friar Dominic, no Father Foigard, among the characters drawn by those great poets. The scene at the close of the Knight of Malta might have been written by a fervent Catholic. Massinger shows a great fondness for ecclesiastics of the Romish Church, and has even gone so far as to bring a virtuous and interesting Jesuit on the stage. Ford, in that fine play which it is painful to read and scarcely decent to name, assigns a highly creditable part to the Friar. The partiality of Shakspeare for Friars is well known. In Hamlet, the Ghost complains that he died without extreme unction, and, in defiance of the article which condemns the doctrine of purgatory, declares that he is

"Confined to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes, done in his days of nature,
Are burnt and purged away."

These lines, we suspect, would have raised a tremendous storm In the theatre at any time during the reign of Charles the Second. They were clearly not written by a zealous Protestant, or for zealous Protestants. Yet the author of King John and Henry the Eighth was surely no friend to papal supremacy.

There is, we think, only one solution of the phaenomena which we find in the history and in the drama of that age. The religion of the English was a mixed religion, like that of the Samaritan settlers, described in the second book of Kings, who "feared the Lord, and served their graven images"; like that of the Judaizing Christians who blended the ceremonies and doctrines of the synagogue with those of the church; like that of the Mexican Indians, who, during many generations after the subjugation of their race, continued to unite with the rites learned from their conquerors the worship of the grotesque idols which had been adored by Montezuma and Guatemozin.

These feelings were not confined to the populace. Elizabeth herself was by no means exempt from them. A crucifix, with wax-lights burning round it, stood in her private chapel. She always spoke with disgust and anger of the marriage of priests. "I was in horror," says Archbishop Parker, "to hear such words to come from her mild nature and Christian learned conscience, as she spake concerning God’s holy ordinance and institution of matrimony." Burleigh prevailed on her to connive at the marriages of churchmen. But she would only connive; and the children sprung

from such marriages were illegitimate till the accession of James the First.

That which is, as we have said, the great stain on the character of Burleigh is also the great stain on the character of Elizabeth. Being herself an Adiaphorist, having no scruple about conforming to the Romish Church when conformity was necessary to her own safety, retaining to the last moment of her life a fondness for much of the doctrine and much of the ceremonial of that church, yet she subjected that church to a persecution even more odious than the persecution with which her sister had harassed the Protestants. We say more odious. For Mary had at least the plea of fanaticism. She did nothing for her religion which she was not prepared to suffer for it. She had held it firmly under persecution. She fully believed it to be essential to salvation. If she burned the bodies of her subjects, it was in order to rescue their souls. Elizabeth had no such pretext. In opinion, she was little more than half a Protestant. She had professed, when it suited her, to be wholly a Catholic. There is an excuse, a wretched excuse, for the massacres of Piedmont and the Autos da fe of Spain. But what can be said in defence of a ruler who is at once indifferent and intolerant?

If the great Queen, whose memory is still held in just veneration by Englishmen, had possessed sufficient virtue and sufficient enlargement of mind to adopt those principles which More, wiser in speculation than in action, had avowed in the preceding generation, and by which the excellent L'Hospital regulated his conduct in her own time, how different would be the colour of the whole history of the last two hundred and fifty years! She had the happiest opportunity ever vouchsafed to any sovereign of establishing perfect freedom of conscience throughout her dominions, without danger to her government, without scandal to any large party among her subjects. The nation, as it was clearly ready to profess either religion, would, beyond all doubt, have been ready to tolerate both. Unhappily for her own glory and for the public peace, she adopted a policy from the effects of which the empire is still suffering. The yoke of the Established Church was pressed down on the people till they would bear it no longer. Then a reaction came. Another reaction followed. To the tyranny of the establishment succeeded the tumultuous conflict of sects, infuriated by manifold wrongs, and drunk with unwonted freedom. To the conflict of sects succeeded again the cruel domination of one persecuting church. At length oppression put off its most horrible form, and took a milder aspect. The penal laws which had been framed for the protection of the established church were abolished. But exclusions and disabilities still remained. These exclusions and disabilities, after having generated the most fearful discontents, after having rendered all government in one part of the kingdom impossible, after having brought the state to the very brink of ruin, have, in our times, been removed, but, though removed have left behind them a rankling which may last for many years. It is melancholy to think with what case

Elizabeth might have united all conflicting sects under the shelter of the same impartial laws and the same paternal throne, and thus have placed the nation in the same situation, as far as the rights of conscience are concerned, in which we at last stand, after all the heart-burnings, the persecutions, the conspiracies, the seditions, the revolutions, the judicial murders, the civil wars, of ten generations.

This is the dark side of her character. Yet she surely was a great woman. Of all the sovereigns who exercised a power which was seemingly absolute, but which in fact depended for support on the love and confidence of their subjects, she was by far the most illustrious. It has often been alleged as an excuse for the misgovernment of her successors that they only followed her example, that precedents might be found in the transactions of her reign for persecuting the Puritans, for levying money without the sanction of the House of Commons, for confining men without bringing them to trial, for interfering with the liberty of parliamentary debate. All this may be true. But it is no good plea for her successors; and for this plain reason, that they were her successors. She governed one generation, they governed another; and between the two generations there was almost as little in common as between the people of two different countries. It was not by looking at the particular measures which Elizabeth had adopted, but by looking at the great general principles of her government, that those who followed her were likely to learn the art of managing untractable subjects. If, instead of searching the records of her reign for precedents which might seem to vindicate the mutilation of Prynne and the imprisonment of Eliot, the Stuarts had attempted to discover the fundamental rules which guided her conduct in all her dealings with her people, they would have perceived that their policy was then most unlike to hers, when to a superficial observer it would have seemed most to resemble hers. Firm, haughty, sometimes unjust and cruel, in her proceedings towards individuals or towards small parties, she avoided with care, or retracted with speed, every measure which seemed likely to alienate the great mass of the people. She gained more honour and more love by the manner in which she repaired her errors than she would have gained by never committing errors. If such a man as Charles the First had been in her place when the whole nation was crying out against the monopolies, he would have refused all redress. He would have dissolved the Parliament, and imprisoned the most popular members. He would have called another Parliament. He would have given some vague and delusive promises of relief in return for subsidies. When entreated to fulfil his promises, he would have again dissolved the Parliament, and again imprisoned his leading opponents. The country would have become more agitated than before. The next House of Commons would have been more unmanageable than that which preceded it. The tyrant would have agreed to all that the nation demanded. He would have solemnly ratified an act abolishing monopolies for ever. He would have received a large supply in return for this concession; and

within half a year new patents, more oppressive than those which had been cancelled, would have been issued by scores. Such was the policy which brought the heir of a long line of kings, in early youth the darling of his countrymen, to a prison and a scaffold.

Elizabeth, before the House of Commons could address her, took out of their mouths the words which they were about to utter in the name of the nation. Her promises went beyond their desires. Her performance followed close upon her promise. She did not treat the nation as an adverse party, as a party which had an interest opposed to hers, as a party to which she was to grant as few advantages as possible, and from which she was to extort as much money as possible. Her benefits were given, not sold; and, when once given, they were never withdrawn. She gave them too with a frankness, an effusion of heart, a princely dignity, a motherly tenderness, which enhanced their value. They were received by the sturdy country gentlemen who had come up to Westminster full of resentment, with tears of joy, and shouts of "God save the Queen." Charles the First gave up half the prerogatives of his crown to the Commons; and the Commons sent him in return the Grand Remonstrance.

We had intended to say something concerning that illustrious group of which Elizabeth is the central figure, that group which the last of the bards saw in vision from the top of Snowdon, encircling the Virgin Queen,

"Many a baron bold,
And gorgeous dames and statesmen old
In bearded majesty."

We had intended to say something concerning the dexterous Walsingham, the impetuous Oxford, the graceful Sackville, the all-accomplished Sydney; concerning Essex, the ornament of the court and of the camp, the model of chivalry, the munificent patron of genius, whom great virtues, great courage, great talents, the favour of his sovereign, the love of his countrymen, all that seemed to ensure a happy and glorious life, led to an early and an ignominious death, concerning Raleigh, the soldier, the sailor, the scholar, the courtier, the orator, the poet, the historian, the philosopher, whom we picture to ourselves, sometimes reviewing the Queen’s guard, sometimes giving chase to a Spanish galleon, then answering the chiefs of the country party in the House of Commons, then again murmuring one of his sweet love-songs too near the ears of her Highness’s maids of honour, and soon after poring over the Talmud, or collating Polybius with Livy. We had intended also to say something concerning the literature of that splendid period, and especially concerning those two incomparable men, the Prince of Poets, and the Prince of Philosophers, who have made the Elizabethan age a more glorious and important era in the history of the human mind than the age of Pericles, of Augustus, or of Leo. But subjects so vast

require a space far larger than we can at present afford. We therefore stop here, fearing that, if we proceed, our article may swell to a bulk exceeding that of all other reviews, as much as Dr. Nares's book exceeds the bulk of all other histories.

JOHN HAMPDEN

(December 1831)

Some Memorials of John Hampden, his Party, and his Times. By LORD NUGENT. Two vols. 8vo. London: 1831.

We have read this book with great pleasure, though not exactly with that kind of pleasure which we had expected. We had hoped that Lord Nugent would have been able to collect, from family papers and local traditions, much new and interesting information respecting the life and character of the renowned leader of the Long Parliament, the first of those great English commoners whose plain addition of Mister has, to our ears, a more majestic sound than the proudest of the feudal titles. In this hope we have been disappointed; but assuredly not from any want of zeal or diligence on the part of the noble biographer. Even at Hampden, there are, it seems, no important papers relating to the most illustrious proprietor of that ancient domain. The most valuable memorials of him which still exist, belong to the family of his friend Sir John Eliot. Lord Eliot has furnished the portrait which is engraved for this work, together with some very interesting letters. The portrait is undoubtedly an original, and probably the only original now in existence. The intellectual forehead, the mild penetration of the eye, and the inflexible resolution expressed by the lines of the mouth, sufficiently guarantee the likeness. We shall probably make some extracts from the letters. They contain almost all the new information that Lord Nugent has been able to procure respecting the private pursuits of the great man whose memory he worships with an enthusiastic, but not extravagant veneration.

The public life of Hampden is surrounded by no obscurity. His history, more particularly from the year 1640 to his death, is the history of England. These Memoirs must be considered as Memoirs of the history of England; and, as such, they well deserve to be attentively perused. They contain some curious facts which, to us at least, are new, much spirited narrative, many judicious remarks, and much eloquent declamation.

We are not sure that even the want of information respecting the private character of Hampden is not in itself a circumstance as strikingly characteristic as any which the most minute chronicler, O'Meara, Mrs. Thrale, or Boswell himself, ever recorded concerning their heroes. The celebrated Puritan leader is an almost solitary instance of a great man who neither sought nor shunned greatness, who found glory only because glory lay in

the plain path of duty. During more than forty years he was known to his country neighbours as a gentleman of cultivated mind, of high principles, of polished address, happy in his family, and active in the discharge of local duties; and to political men as an honest, industrious, and sensible member of Parliament, not eager to display his talents, stanch to his party and attentive to the interests of his constituents. A great and terrible crisis came. A direct attack was made by an arbitrary government on a sacred right of Englishmen, on a right which was the chief security for all their other rights. The nation looked round for a defender. Calmly and unostentatiously the plain Buckinghamshire Esquire placed himself at the head of his countrymen, and right before the face and across the path of tyranny. The times grew darker and more troubled. Public service, perilous, arduous, delicate, was required, and to every service the intellect and the courage of this wonderful man were found fully equal. He became a debater of the first order, a most dexterous manager of the House of Commons, a negotiator, a soldier. He governed a fierce and turbulent assembly, abounding in able men, as easily as he had governed his family. He showed himself as competent to direct a campaign as to conduct the business of the petty sessions. We can scarcely express the admiration which we feel for a mind so great, and, at the same time, so healthful and so well proportioned, so willingly contracting itself to the humblest duties, so easily expanding itself to the highest, so contented in repose, so powerful in action. Almost every part of this virtuous and blameless life which is not hidden from us in modest privacy is a precious and splendid portion of our national history. Had the private conduct of Hampden afforded the slightest pretence for censure, he would have been assailed by the same blind malevolence which, in defiance of the clearest proofs, still continues to call Sir John Eliot an assassin. Had there been even any weak part in the character of Hampden, had his manners been in any respect open to ridicule, we may be sure that no mercy would have been shown to him by the writers of Charles's faction. Those writers have carefully preserved every little circumstance which could tend to make their opponents odious or contemptible. They have made themselves merry with the cant of injudicious zealots. They have told us that Pym broke down in speech, that Ireton had his nose pulled by Hollis, that the Earl of Northumberland cudgelled Henry Martin, that St. John's manners were sullen, that Vane had an ugly face, that Cromwell had a red nose. But neither the artful Clarendon nor the scurrilous Denham could venture to throw the slightest imputation on the morals or the manners of Hampden. What was the opinion entertained respecting him by the best men of his time we learn from Baxter. That eminent person, eminent not only for his piety and his fervid devotional eloquence, but for his moderation, his knowledge of political affairs, and his skill in judging of characters, declared in the Saint's Rest, that one of the pleasures which he hoped to enjoy in heaven was the society of Hampden. In the editions printed after the Restoration, the name of Hampden was omitted. "But I must tell the reader," says

Baxter, "that I did blot it out, not as changing my opinion of the person. . . . Mr. John Hampden was one that friends and enemies acknowledged to be most eminent for prudence, piety, and peaceable counsels, having the most universal praise of any gentleman that I remember of that age. I remember a moderate, prudent, aged gentleman, far from him, but acquainted with him, whom I have heard saying, that if he might choose what person he would be then in the world, he would be John Hampden." We cannot but regret that we have not fuller memorials of a man who, after passing through the most severe temptations by which human virtue can be tried, after acting a most conspicuous part in a revolution and a civil war, could yet deserve such praise as this from such authority. Yet the want of memorials is surely the best proof that hatred itself could find no blemish on his memory.

The story of his early life is soon told. He was the head of a family which had been settled in Buckinghamshire before the Conquest. Part of the estate which he inherited had been bestowed by Edward the Confessor on Baldwyn de Hampden, whose name seems to indicate that he was one of the Norman favourites of the last Saxon king. During the contest between the houses of York and Lancaster, the Hampdens adhered to the party of the Red Rose, and were, consequently, persecuted by Edward the Fourth, and favoured by Henry the Seventh. Under the Tudors, the family was great and flourishing. Griffith Hampden, high sheriff of Buckinghamshire, entertained Elizabeth with great magnificence at his seat. His son, William Hampden, sate in the Parliament which that Queen summoned in the year 1593. William married Elizabeth Cromwell, aunt of the celebrated man who afterwards governed the British islands with more than regal power; and from this marriage sprang John Hampden.

He was born in 1594. In 1597 his father died, and left him heir to a very large estate. After passing some years at the grammar school of Thame, young Hampden was sent, at fifteen, to Magdalen College, in the University of Oxford. At nineteen, he was admitted a student of the Inner Temple, where he made himself master of the principles of the English law. In 1619 he married Elizabeth Symeon, a lady to whom he appears to have been fondly attached. In the following year he was returned to parliament by a borough which has in our time obtained a miserable celebrity, the borough of Grampound.

Of his private life during his early years little is known beyond what Clarendon has told us. "In his entrance into the world," says that great historian, "he indulged himself in all the licence in sports, and exercises, and company, which were used by men of the most jolly conversation." A remarkable change, however, passed on his character. "On a sudden," says Clarendon, "from a life of great pleasure and licence, he retired to extraordinary sobriety and strictness, to a more reserved and melancholy society." It is probable that this change took place when Hampden was about twenty-five years old. At that age he was

united to a woman whom he loved and esteemed. At that age he entered into political life. A mind so happily constituted as his would naturally, under such circumstances, relinquish the pleasures of dissipation for domestic enjoyments and public duties.

His enemies have allowed that he was a man in whom virtue showed itself in its mildest and least austere form. With the morals of a Puritan, he had the manners of an accomplished courtier. Even after the change in his habits, "he preserved," says Clarendon, "his own natural cheerfulness and vivacity, and, above all, a flowing courtesy to all men." These qualities distinguished him from most of the members of his sect and his party, and, in the great crisis in which he afterwards took a principal part, were of scarcely less service to the country than his keen sagacity and his dauntless courage.

In January 1621, Hampden took his seat in the House of Commons. His mother was exceedingly desirous that her son should obtain a peerage. His family, his possessions, and his personal accomplishments were such as would, in any age, have justified him in pretending to that honour. But in the reign of James the First there was one short cut to the House of Lords. It was but to ask, to pay, and to have. The sale of titles was carried on as openly as the sale of boroughs in our times. Hampden turned away with contempt from the degrading honours with which his family desired to see him invested, and attached himself to the party which was in opposition to the court.

It was about this time, as Lord Nugent has justly remarked, that parliamentary opposition began to take a regular form. From a very early age, the English had enjoyed a far larger share of liberty than had fallen to the lot of any neighbouring people. How it chanced that a country conquered and enslaved by invaders, a country of which the soil had been portioned out among foreign adventurers and of which the laws were written in a foreign tongue, a country given over to that worst tyranny, the tyranny of caste over caste, should have become the seat of civil liberty, the object of the admiration and envy of surrounding states, is one of the most obscure problems in the philosophy of history. But the fact is certain. Within a century and a half after the Norman conquest, the Great Charter was conceded. Within two centuries after the Conquest, the first House of Commons met. Froissart tells us, what indeed his whole narrative sufficiently proves, that of all the nations of the fourteenth century, the English were the least disposed to endure oppression. "C’est le plus perilleux peuple qui soit au monde, et plus outrageux et orgueilleux." The good canon probably did not perceive that all the prosperity and internal peace which this dangerous people enjoyed were the fruits of the spirit which he designates as proud and outrageous. He has, however, borne ample testimony to the effect, though he was not sagacious enough to trace it to its cause. "En le royaume d’Angleterre," says he, "toutes gens,

laboureurs et marchands, ont appris de vivre en paix, et a mener leurs marchandises paisiblement, et les laboureurs labourer." In the fifteenth century, though England was convulsed by the struggle between the two branches of the royal family, the physical and moral condition of the people continued to improve. Villenage almost wholly disappeared. The calamities of war were little felt, except by those who bore arms. The oppressions of the government were little felt, except by the aristocracy. The institutions of the country when compared with the institutions of the neighbouring kingdoms, seem to have been not undeserving of the praises of Fortescue. The government of Edward the Fourth, though we call it cruel and arbitrary, was humane and liberal when compared with that of Lewis the Eleventh, or that of Charles the Bold. Comines, who had lived amidst the wealthy cities of Flanders, and who had visited Florence and Venice, had never seen a people so well governed as the English. "Or selon mon advis," says he, "entre toutes les seigneuries du monde, dont j'ay connoissance, ou la chose publique est mieulx traitee, et ou regne moins de violence sur le peuple, et ou il n'y a nuls edifices abbatus ny demolis pour guerre, c'est Angleterre; et tombe le sort et le malheur sur ceulx qui font la guerre."

About the close of the fifteenth and the commencement of the sixteenth century, a great portion of the influence which the aristocracy had possessed passed to the crown. No English king has ever enjoyed such absolute power as Henry the Eighth. But while the royal prerogatives were acquiring strength at the expense of the nobility, two great revolutions took place, distined to be the parents of many revolutions, the invention of Printing, and the reformation of the Church.

The immediate effect of the Reformation in England was by no means favourable to political liberty. The authority which had been exercised by the Popes was transferred almost entire to the King. Two formidable powers which had often served to check each other were united in a single despot. If the system on which the founders of the Church of England acted could have been permanent, the Reformation would have been, in a political sense, the greatest curse that ever fell on our country. But that system carried within it the seeds of its own death. It was possible to transfer the name of Head of the Church from Clement to Henry; but it was impossible to transfer to the new establishment the veneration which the old establishment had inspired. Mankind had not broken one yoke in pieces only in order to put on another. The supremacy of the Bishop of Rome had been for ages considered as a fundamental principle of Christianity. It had for it everything that could make a prejudice deep and strong, venerable antiquity, high authority, general consent. It had been taught in the first lessons of the nurse. It was taken for granted in all the exhortations of the priest. To remove it was to break innumerable associations, and to give a great and perilous shock to the principles. Yet this prejudice, strong as it was, could not stand in the great day of the deliverance of the human

reason. And it was not to be expected that the public mind, just after freeing itself by an unexampled effort, from a bondage which it had endured for ages, would patiently submit to a tyranny which could plead no ancient title. Rome had at least prescription on its side. But Protestant intolerance, despotism in an upstart sect, infallibility claimed by guides who acknowledged that they had passed the greater part of their lives in error, restraints imposed on the liberty of private judgment at the pleasure of rulers who could vindicate their own proceedings only by asserting the liberty of private judgment, these things could not long be borne. Those who had pulled down the crucifix could not long continue to persecute for the surplice. It required no great sagacity to perceive the inconsistency and dishonesty of men who, dissenting from almost all Christendom, would suffer none to dissent from themselves, who demanded freedom of conscience, yet refused to grant it, who execrated persecution, yet persecuted, who urged reason against the authority of one opponent, and authority against the reasons of another. Bonner acted at least in accordance with his own principles. Cranmer could vindicate himself from the charge of being a heretic only by arguments which made him out to be a murderer.

Thus the system on which the English Princes acted with respect to ecclesiastical affairs for some time after the Reformation was a system too obviously unreasonable to be lasting. The public mind moved while the government moved, but would not stop where the government stopped. The same impulse which had carried millions away from the Church of Rome continued to carry them forward in the same direction. As Catholics had become Protestants, Protestants became Puritans; and the Tudors and Stuarts were as unable to avert the latter change as the Popes had been to avert the former. The dissenting party increased and became strong under every kind of discouragement and oppression. They were a sect. The government persecuted them; and they became an opposition. The old constitution of England furnished to them the means of resisting the sovereign without breaking the law. They were the majority of the House of Commons. They had the power of giving or withholding supplies; and, by a judicious exercise of this power, they might hope to take from the Church its usurped authority over the consciences of men, and from the Crown some part of the vast prerogative which it had recently acquired at the expense of the nobles and of the Pope.

The faint beginnings of this memorable contest may be discerned early in the reign of Elizabeth. The conduct of her last Parliament made it clear that one of those great revolutions which policy may guide but cannot stop was in progress. It was on the question of monopolies that the House of Commons gained its first great victory over the throne. The conduct of the extraordinary woman who then governed England is an admirable study for politicians who live in unquiet times. It shows how thoroughly she understood the people whom she ruled, and the

crisis in which she was called to act. What she held she held firmly. What she gave she gave graciously. She saw that it was necessary to make a concession to the nation; and she made it not grudgingly, not tardily, not as a matter of bargain and sale, not, in a word, as Charles the First would have made it, but promptly and cordially. Before a bill could be framed or an address presented, she applied a remedy to the evil of which the nation complained. She expressed in the warmest terms her gratitude to her faithful Commons for detecting abuses which interested persons had concealed from her. If her successors had inherited her wisdom with her crown, Charles the First might have died of old age, and James the Second would never have seen St. Germains.

She died; and the kingdom passed to one who was, in his own opinion, the greatest master of king-craft that ever lived, but who was, in truth, one of those kings whom God seems to send for the express purpose of hastening revolutions. Of all the enemies of liberty whom Britain has produced, he was at once the most harmless and the most provoking. His office resembled that of the man who, in a Spanish bull-fight, goads the torpid savage to fury, by shaking a red rag in the air, and by now and then throwing a dart, sharp enough to sting, but too small to injure. The policy of wise tyrants has always been to cover their violent acts with popular forms. James was always obtruding his despotic theories on his subjects without the slightest necessity. His foolish talk exasperated them infinitely more than forced loans or benevolences would have done. Yet, in practice, no king ever held his prerogatives less tenaciously. He neither gave way gracefully to the advancing spirit of liberty nor took vigorous measures to stop it, but retreated before it with ludicrous haste, blustering and insulting as he retreated. The English people had been governed during near a hundred and fifty years by Princes who, whatever might be their frailties or their vices, had all possessed great force of character, and who, whether beloved or hated, had always been feared. Now, at length, for the first time since the day when the sceptre of Henry the Fourth dropped from the hand of his lethargic grandson, England had a king whom she despised.

The follies and vices of the man increased the contempt which was produced by the feeble policy of the sovereign. The indecorous gallantries of the Court, the habits of gross intoxication in which even the ladies indulged, were alone sufficient to disgust a people whose manners were beginning to be strongly tinctured with austerity. But these were trifles. Crimes of the most frightful kind had been discovered; others were suspected. The strange story of the Gowries was not forgotten. The ignominious fondness of the King for his minions, the perjuries, the sorceries, the poisonings, which his chief favourites had planned within the walls of his palace, the pardon which, in direct violation of his duty and of his word, he had granted to the mysterious threats of a murderer, made him an

object of loathing to many of his subjects. What opinion grave and moral persons residing at a distance from the Court entertained respecting him, we learn from Mrs. Hutchinson's Memoirs. England was no place, the seventeenth century no time, for Sporus and Locusta.

This was not all. The most ridiculous weaknesses seemed to meet in the wretched Solomon of Whitehall, pedantry, buffoonery, garrulity, low curiosity, the most contemptible personal cowardice. Nature and education had done their best to produce a finished specimen of all that a king ought not to be. His awkward figure, his rolling eye, his rickety walk, his nervous tremblings, his slobbering mouth, his broad Scotch accent, were imperfections which might have been found in the best and greatest man. Their effect, however, was to make James and his office objects of contempt, and to dissolve those associations which had been created by the noble bearing of preceding monarchs, and which were in themselves no inconsiderable fence to royalty.

The sovereign whom James most resembled was, we think, Claudius Caesar. Both had the same feeble vacillating temper, the same childishness, the same coarseness, the same poltroonery. Both were men of learning; bath wrote and spoke, not, indeed, well, but still in a manner in which it seems almost incredible that men so foolish should have written or spoken.

The follies and indecencies of James are well described in the words which Suetonius uses respecting Claudius: "Multa talia, etiam privatis deformia, nedum principi, neque infacundo, neque indocto, immo etiam pertinaciter liberalibus studiis dedito." The description given by Suetonius of the manner in which the Roman prince transacted business exactly suits the Briton. "In cognoscendo ac decernendo mira varietate animi fuit, modo circumspectus et sagax, modo inconsultus ac praeceps, nonnunquam frivolus amentique similis." Claudius was ruled successively by two bad women: James successively by two bad men. Even the description of the person of Claudius, which we find in the ancient memoirs, might, in many points, serve for that of James. "Ceterum et ingredientem destituebant poplites minus firmi, et remisse quid vel serio, agentem multa dehonestabant, risus indecens, ira turpior, spumante rictu, praeterea linguae titubantia."

The Parliament which James had called soon after his accession had been refractory. His second Parliament, called in the spring of 1614, had been more refractory still. It had been dissolved after a session of two months; and during six years the King had governed without having recourse to the legislature. During those six years, melancholy and disgraceful events, at home and abroad, had followed one another in rapid succession; the divorce of Lady Essex, the murder of Overbury, the elevation of Villiers, the pardon of Somerset, the disgrace of Coke, the execution of

Raleigh, the battle of Prague, the invasion of the Palatinate by Spinola, the ignominious flight of the son-in-law of the English king, the depression of the Protestant interest all over the Continent. All the extraordinary modes by which James could venture to raise money had been tried. His necessities were greater than ever; and he was compelled to summon the Parliament in which Hampden first appeared as a public man.

This Parliament lasted about twelve months. During that time it visited with deserved punishment several of those who, during the preceding six years, had enriched themselves by peculation and monopoly. Mitchell, one of the grasping patentees who had purchased of the favourite the power of robbing the nation, was fined and imprisoned for life. Mompesson, the original, it is said, of Massinger's Overreach, was outlawed and deprived of his ill-gotten wealth. Even Sir Edward Villiers, the brother of Buckingham, found it convenient to leave England. A greater name is to be added to the ignominious list. By this Parliament was brought to justice that illustrious philosopher whose memory genius has half redeemed from the infamy due to servility, to ingratitude, and to corruption.

After redressing internal grievances, the Commons proceeded to take into consideration the state of Europe. The King flew into a rage with them for meddling with such matters, and, with characteristic judgment, drew them into a controversy about the origin of their House and of its privileges. When he found that he could not convince them, he dissolved them in a passion, and sent some of the leaders of the Opposition to ruminate on his logic in prison.

During the time which elapsed between this dissolution and the meeting of the next Parliament, took place the celebrated negotiation respecting the Infanta. The would-be despot was unmercifully browbeaten. The would-be Solomon was ridiculously over-reached. Steenie, in spite of the begging and sobbing of his dear dad and gossip, carried off baby Charles in triumph to Madrid. The sweet lads, as James called them, came back safe, but without their errand. The great master of king-craft, in looking for a Spanish match, had found a Spanish war. In February 1624, a Parliament met, during the whole sitting of which, James was a mere puppet in the hands of his baby, and of his poor slave and dog. The Commons were disposed to support the King in the vigorous policy which his favourite urged him to adopt. But they were not disposed to place any confidence in their feeble sovereign and his dissolute courtiers, or to relax in their efforts to remove public grievances. They therefore lodged the money which they voted for the war in the hands of Parliamentary Commissioners. They impeached the treasurer, Lord Middlesex, for corruption, and they passed a bill by which patents of monopoly were declared illegal.

Hampden did not, during the reign of James, take any prominent

part in public affairs. It is certain, however, that he paid great attention to the details of Parliamentary business, and to the local interests of his own country. It was in a great measure owing to his exertions that Wendover and some other boroughs on which the popular party could depend recovered the elective franchise, in spite of the opposition of the Court.

The health of the King had for some time been declining. On the twenty-seventh of March 1625, he expired. Under his weak rule, the spirit of liberty had grown strong, and had become equal to a great contest. The contest was brought on by the policy of his successor. Charles bore no resemblance to his father. He was not a driveller, or a pedant, or a buffoon, or a coward. It would be absurd to deny that he was a scholar and a gentleman, a man of exquisite tastes in the fine arts, a man of strict morals in private life. His talents for business were respectable; his demeanour was kingly. But he was false, imperious, obstinate, narrow-minded, ignorant of the temper of his people, unobservant of the signs of his times. The whole principle of his government was resistance to public opinion; nor did he make any real concession to that opinion till it mattered not whether he resisted or conceded, till the nation, which had long ceased to love him or to trust him, had at last ceased to fear him.

His first Parliament met in June 1625. Hampden sat in it as burgess for Wendover. The King wished for money. The Commons wished for the redress of grievances. The war, however, could not be carried on without funds. The plan of the Opposition was, it should seem, to dole out supplies by small sums, in order to prevent a speedy dissolution. They gave the King two subsidies only, and proceeded to complain that his ships had been employed against the Huguenots in France, and to petition in behalf of the Puritans who were persecuted in England. The King dissolved them, and raised money by Letters under his Privy Seal. The supply fell far short of what he needed; and, in the spring of 1626, he called together another Parliament. In this Parliament Hampden again sat for Wendover.

The Commons resolved to grant a very liberal supply, but to defer the final passing of the act for that purpose till the grievances of the nation should be redressed. The struggle which followed far exceeded in violence any that had yet taken place. The Commons impeached Buckingham. The King threw the managers of the impeachment into prison. The Commons denied the right of the King to levy tonnage and poundage without their consent. The King dissolved them. They put forth a remonstrance. The King circulated a declaration vindicating his measures, and committed some of the most distinguished members of the Opposition to close custody. Money was raised by a forced loan, which was apportioned among the people according to the rate at which they had been respectively assessed to the last subsidy. On this occasion it was, that Hampden made his first stand for the fundamental principle of the English constitution. He positively refused to

lend a farthing. He was required to give his reasons. He answered, "that he could be content to lend as well as others, but feared to draw upon himself that curse in Magna Charta which should be read twice a year against those who infringe it." For this spirited answer, the Privy Council committed him close prisoner to the Gate House. After some time, he was again brought up; but he persisted in his refusal, and was sent to a place of confinement in Hampshire.

The government went on, oppressing at home, and blundering in all its measures abroad. A war was foolishly undertaken against France, and more foolishly conducted. Buckingham led an expedition against Rhe, and failed ignominiously. In the mean time soldiers were billeted on the people. Crimes of which ordinary justice should have taken cognisance were punished by martial law. Near eighty gentlemen were imprisoned for refusing to contribute to the forced loan. The lower people who showed any signs of insubordination were pressed into the fleet, or compelled to serve in the army. Money, however, came in slowly; and the King was compelled to summon another Parliament. In the hope of conciliating his subjects, he set at liberty the persons who had been imprisoned for refusing to comply with his unlawful demands. Hampden regained his freedom, and was immediately re-elected burgess for Wendover.

Early in 1628 the Parliament met. During its first session, the Commons prevailed on the King, after many delays and much equivocation, to give, in return for five subsidies, his full and solemn assent to that celebrated instrument, the second great charter of the liberties of England, known by the name of the Petition of Right. By agreeing to this act, the King bound himself to raise no taxes without the consent of Parliament, to imprison no man except by legal process, to billet no more soldiers on the people, and to leave the cognisance of offences to the ordinary tribunals.

In the summer, this memorable Parliament was prorogued. It met again in January 1629. Buckingham was no more. That weak, violent, and dissolute adventurer, who, with no talents or acquirements but those of a mere courtier, had, in a great crisis of foreign and domestic politics, ventured on the part of prime minister, had fallen, during the recess of Parliament, by the hand of an assassin. Both before and after his death the war had been feebly and unsuccessfully conducted. The King had continued, in direct violation of the Petition of Right, to raise tonnage and poundage without the consent of Parliament. The troops had again been billeted on the people; and it was clear to the Commons that the five subsidies which they had given as the price of the national liberties had been given in vain.

They met accordingly in no complying humour. They took into their most serious consideration the measures of the government concerning tonnage and poundage. They summoned the officers of

the custom-house to their bar. They interrogated the barons of the exchequer. They committed one of the sheriffs of London. Sir John Eliot, a distinguished member of the Opposition, and an intimate friend of Hampden, proposed a resolution condemning the unconstitutional imposition. The Speaker said that the King had commanded him to put no such question to the vote. This decision produced the most violent burst of feeling ever seen within the walls of Parliament. Hayman remonstrated vehemently against the disgraceful language which had been heard from the chair. Eliot dashed the paper which contained his resolution on the floor of the House. Valentine and Hollis held the Speaker down in his seat by main force, and read the motion amidst the loudest shouts. The door was locked. The key was laid on the table. Black Rod knocked for admittance in vain. After passing several strong resolutions, the House adjourned. On the day appointed for its meeting it was dissolved by the King, and several of its most eminent members, among whom were Hollis and Sir John Eliot, were committed to prison.

Though Hampden had as yet taken little part in the debates of the House, he had been a member of many very important committees, and had read and written much concerning the law of Parliament. A manuscript volume of Parliamentary cases, which is still in existence, contains many extracts from his notes.

He now retired to the duties and pleasures of a rural life. During the eleven years which followed the dissolution of the Parliament of 1628, he resided at his seat in one of the most beautiful parts of the county of Buckingham. The house, which has since his time been greatly altered, and which is now, we believe, almost entirely neglected, was an old English mansion, built in the days of the Plantagenets and the Tudors. It stood on the brow of a hill which overlooks a narrow valley. The extensive woods which surround it were pierced by long avenues. One of those avenues the grandfather of the great statesman had cut for the approach of Elizabeth; and the opening which is still visible for many miles, retains the name of the Queen’s Gap. In this delightful retreat, Hampden passed several years, performing with great activity all the duties of a landed gentleman and a magistrate, and amusing himself with books and with field sports.

He was not in his retirement unmindful of his persecuted friends. In particular, he kept up a close correspondence with Sir John Eliot, who was confined in the Tower. Lord Nugent has published several of the Letters. We may perhaps be fanciful; but it seems to us that every one of them is an admirable illustration of some part of the character of Hampden which Clarendon has drawn.

Part of the correspondence relates to the two sons of Sir John Eliot. These young men were wild and unsteady; and their father, who was now separated from them, was naturally anxious about their conduct. He at length resolved to send one of them to France, and the other to serve a campaign in the Low Countries.

The letter which we subjoin shows that Hampden, though rigorous towards himself, was not uncharitable towards others, and that his puritanism was perfectly compatible with the sentiments and the tastes of an accomplished gentleman. It also illustrates admirably what has been said of him by Clarendon: "He was of that rare affability and temper in debate, and of that seeming humility and submission of judgment, as if he brought no opinion of his own with him, but a desire of information and instruction. Yet he had so subtle a way of interrogating, and, under cover of doubts, insinuating his objections, that he infused his own opinions into those from whom he pretended to learn and receive them."

The letter runs thus: "I am so perfectly acquainted with your clear insight into the dispositions of men, and ability to fit them with courses suitable, that, had you bestowed sons of mine as you have done your own, my judgment durst hardly have called it into question, especially when, in laying the design, you have prevented the objections to be made against it. For if Mr. Richard Eliot will, in the intermissions of action, add study to practice, and adorn that lively spirit with flowers of contemplation, he will raise our expectations of another Sir Edward Vere, that had this character--all summer in the field, all winter in his study--in whose fall fame makes this kingdom a greater loser; and, having taken this resolution from counsel with the highest wisdom, as I doubt not you have, I hope and pray that the same power will crown it with a blessing answerable to our wish. The way you take with my other friend shows you to be none of the Bishop of Exeter's converts; [Hall, Bishop of Exeter, had written strongly, both in verse and in prose, against the fashion of sending young men of quality to travel.] of whose mind neither am I superstitiously. But had my opinion been asked, I should, as vulgar conceits use me to do, have showed my power rather to raise objections than to answer them. A temper between France and Oxford might have taken away his scruples, with more advantage to his years. . . . For although he be one of those that, if his age were looked for in no other book but that of the mind, would be found no ward if you should die tomorrow, yet it is a great hazard, methinks, to see so sweet a disposition guarded with no more, amongst a people whereof many make it their religion to be superstitious in impiety, and their behaviour to be affected in all manners. But God, who only knoweth the periods of life and opportunities to come, hath designed him, I hope, for his own service betime, and stirred up your providence to husband him so early for great affairs. Then shall he be sure to find Him in France that Abraham did in Shechem and Joseph in Egypt, under whose wing alone is perfect safety."

Sir John Eliot employed himself, during his imprisonment, in writing a treatise on government, which he transmitted to his friend. Hampden's criticisms are strikingly characteristic. They are written with all that "flowing courtesy" which is ascribed to him by Clarendon. The objections are insinuated with so much

delicacy that they could scarcely gall the most irritable author. We see too how highly Hampden valued in the writings of others that conciseness which was one of the most striking peculiarities of his own eloquence. Sir John Eliot's style was, it seems, too diffuse, and it is impossible not to admire the skill with which this is suggested. "The piece," says Hampden, "is as complete an image of the pattern as can be drawn by lines, a lively character of a large mind, the subject, method, and expression, excellent and homogeneal, and, to say truth, sweetheart, somewhat exceeding my commendations. My words cannot render them to the life. Yet, to show my ingenuity rather than wit, would not a less model have given a full representation of that subject, not by diminution but by contraction of parts? I desire to learn. I dare not say. The variations upon each particular seem many; all, I confess, excellent. The fountain was full, the channel narrow; that may be the cause; or that the author resembled Virgil, who made more verses by many than he intended to write. To extract a just number, had I seen all his, I could easily have bid him make fewer; but if he had bade me tell him which he should have spared, I had been posed."

This is evidently the writing not only of a man of good sense and natural good taste, but of a man of literary habits. Of the studies of Hampden little is known. But as it was at one time in contemplation to give him the charge of the education of the Prince of Wales, it cannot be doubted that his acquirements were considerable. Davila, it is said, was one of his favourite writers. The moderation of Davila's opinions and the perspicuity and manliness of his style could not but recommend him to so judicious a reader. It is not improbable that the parallel between France and England, the Huguenots and the Puritans, had struck the mind of Hampden, and that he already found within himself powers not unequal to the lofty part of Coligni.

While he was engaged in these pursuits, a heavy domestic calamity fell on him. His wife, who had borne him nine children, died in the summer of 1634. She lies in the parish church of Hampden, close to the manor-house. The tender and energetic language of her epitaph still attests the bitterness of her husband's sorrow, and the consolation which he found in a hope full of immortality.

In the meantime, the aspect of public affairs grew darker and darker. The health of Eliot had sunk under an unlawful imprisonment of several years. The brave sufferer refused to purchase liberty, though liberty would to him have been life, by recognising the authority which had confined him. In consequence of the representations of his physicians, the severity of restraint was somewhat relaxed. But it was in vain. He languished and expired a martyr to that good cause for which his friend Hampden was destined to meet a more brilliant, but not a more honourable death.

All the promises of the king were violated without scruple or

shame. The Petition of Right to which he had, in consideration of moneys duly numbered, given a solemn assent, was set at nought. Taxes were raised by the royal authority. Patents of monopoly were granted. The old usages of feudal times were made pretexts for harassing the people with exactions unknown during many years. The Puritans were persecuted with cruelty worthy of the Holy Office. They were forced to fly from the country. They were imprisoned. They were whipped. Their ears were cut off. Their noses were slit. Their cheeks were branded with red-hot iron. But the cruelty of the oppressor could not tire out the fortitude of the victims. The mutilated defenders of liberty again defied the vengeance of the Star-Chamber, came back with undiminished resolution to the place of their glorious infamy, and manfully presented the stumps of their ears to be grubbed out by the hangman's knife. The hardy sect grew up and flourished in spite of everything that seemed likely to stunt it, struck its roots deep into a barren soil, and spread its branches wide to an inclement sky. The multitude thronged round Prynne in the pillory with more respect than they paid to Mainwaring in the pulpit, and treasured up the rags which the blood of Burton had soaked, with a veneration such as mitres and surplices had ceased to inspire.

For the misgovernment of this disastrous period Charles himself is principally responsible. After the death of Buckingham, he seems to have been his own prime minister. He had, however, two counsellors who seconded him, or went beyond him, in intolerance and lawless violence, the one a superstitious driveller, as honest as a vile temper would suffer him to be, the other a man of great valour and capacity, but licentious, faithless, corrupt, and cruel.

Never were faces more strikingly characteristic of the individuals to whom they belonged, than those of Laud and Strafford, as they still remain portrayed by the most skilful hand of that age. The mean forehead, the pinched features, the peering eyes, of the prelate, suit admirably with his disposition. They mark him out as a lower kind of Saint Dominic, differing from the fierce and gloomy enthusiast who founded the Inquisition, as we might imagine the familiar imp of a spiteful witch to differ from an archangel of darkness. When we read His Grace's judgments, when we read the report which he drew up, setting forth that he had sent some separatists to prison, and imploring the royal aid against others, we feel a movement of indignation. We turn to his Diary, and we are at once as cool as contempt can make us. There we learn how his picture fell down, and how fearful he was lest the fall should be an omen; how he dreamed that the Duke of Buckingham came to bed to him, that King James walked past him, that he saw Thomas Flaxney in green garments, and the Bishop of Worcester with his shoulders wrapped in linen. In the early part of 1627, the sleep of this great ornament of the church seems to have been much disturbed. On the fifth of January, he saw a merry old man with a wrinkled countenance, named Grove, lying on the ground. On the fourteenth

of the same memorable month, he saw the Bishop of Lincoln jump on a horse and ride away. A day or two after this he dreamed that he gave the King drink in a silver cup, and that the King refused it, and called for glass. Then he dreamed that he had turned Papist; of all his dreams the only one, we suspect, which came through the gate of horn. But of these visions our favourite is that which, as he has recorded, he enjoyed on the night of Friday, the ninth of February 1627. "I dreamed," says he, "that I had the scurvy: and that forthwith all my teeth became loose. There was one in especial in my lower jaw, which I could scarcely keep in with my finger till I had called for help." Here was a man to have the superintendence of the opinions of a great nation!

But Wentworth,--who ever names him without thinking of those harsh dark features, ennobled by their expression into more than the majesty of an antique Jupiter; of that brow, that eye, that cheek, that lip, wherein, as in a chronicle, are written the events of many stormy and disastrous years, high enterprise accomplished, frightful dangers braved, power unsparingly exercised, suffering unshrinkingly borne; of that fixed look, so full of severity, of mournful anxiety, of deep thought, of dauntless resolution, which seems at once to forebode and to defy a terrible fate, as it lowers on us from the living canvas of Vandyke? Even at this day the haughty earl overawes posterity as he overawed his contemporaries, and excites the same interest when arraigned before the tribunal of history which he excited at the bar of the House of Lords. In spite of ourselves, we sometimes feel towards his memory a certain relenting similar to that relenting which his defence, as Sir John Denham tells us, produced in Westminster Hall.

This great, brave, bad man entered the House of Commons at the same time with Hampden, and took the same side with Hampden. Both were among the richest and most powerful commoners in the kingdom. Both were equally distinguished by force of character and by personal courage. Hampden had more judgment and sagacity than Wentworth. But no orator of that time equalled Wentworth in force and brilliancy of expression. In 1626 both these eminent men were committed to prison by the King, Wentworth, who was among the leaders of the Opposition, on account of his parliamentary conduct, Hampden, who had not as yet taken a prominent part in debate, for refusing to pay taxes illegally imposed.

Here their path separated. After the death of Buckingham, the King attempted to seduce some of the chiefs of the Opposition from their party; and Wentworth was among those who yielded to the seduction. He abandoned his associates, and hated them ever after with the deadly hatred of a renegade. High titles and great employments were heaped upon him. He became Earl of Strafford, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, President of the Council of the North; and he employed all his power for the purpose of crushing

those liberties of which he had been the most distinguished champion. His counsels respecting public affairs were fierce and arbitrary. His correspondence with Laud abundantly proves that government without parliaments, government by the sword, was his favourite scheme. He was angry even that the course of justice between man and man should be unrestrained by the royal prerogative. He grudged to the courts of King's Bench and Common Pleas even that measure of liberty which the most absolute of the Bourbons allowed to the Parliaments of France. In Ireland, where he stood in place of the King, his practice was in strict accordance with his theory. He set up the authority of the executive government over that of the courts of law. He permitted no person to leave the island without his licence. He established vast monopolies for his own private benefit. He imposed taxes arbitrarily. He levied them by military force. Some of his acts are described even by the partial Clarendon as powerful acts, acts which marked a nature excessively imperious, acts which caused dislike and terror in sober and dispassionate persons, high acts of oppression. Upon a most frivolous charge, he obtained a capital sentence from a court-martial against a man of high rank who had given him offence. He debauched the daughter-in-law of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, and then commanded that nobleman to settle his estate according to the wishes of the lady. The Chancellor refused. The Lord Lieutenant turned him out of office and threw him into prison. When the violent acts of the Long Parliament are blamed, let it not be forgotten from what a tyranny they rescued the nation.

Among the humbler tools of Charles were Chief-Justice Finch and Noy the Attorney-General. Noy had, like Wentworth, supported the cause of liberty in Parliament, and had, like Wentworth, abandoned that cause for the sake of office. He devised, in conjunction with Finch, a scheme of exaction which made the alienation of the people from the throne complete. A writ was issued by the King, commanding the city of London to equip and man ships of war for his service. Similar writs were sent to the towns along the coast. These measures, though they were direct violations of the Petition of Right, had at least some show of precedent in their favour. But, after a time, the government took a step for which no precedent could be pleaded, and sent writs of ship-money to the inland counties. This was a stretch of power on which Elizabeth herself had not ventured, even at a time when all laws might with propriety have been made to bend to that highest law, the safety of the state. The inland counties had not been required to furnish ships, or money in the room of ships, even when the Armada was approaching our shores. It seemed intolerable that a prince who, by assenting to the Petition of Right, had relinquished the power of levying ship-money even in the out-ports, should be the first to levy it on parts of the kingdom where it had been unknown under the most absolute of his predecessors.

Clarendon distinctly admits that this tax was intended, not only

for the support of the navy, but "for a spring and magazine that should have no bottom, and for an everlasting supply of all occasions." The nation well understood this; and from one end of England to the other the public mind was strongly excited.

Buckinghamshire was assessed at a ship of four hundred and fifty tons, or a sum of four thousand five hundred pounds. The share of the tax which fell to Hampden was very small; so small, indeed, that the sheriff was blamed for setting so wealthy a man at so low a rate. But, though the sum demanded was a trifle, the principle involved was fearfully important. Hampden, after consulting the most eminent constitutional lawyers of the time, refused to pay the few shillings at which he was assessed, and determined to incur all the certain expense, and the probable danger, of bringing to a solemn hearing, this great controversy between the people and the Crown. "Till this time," says Clarendon, "he was rather of reputation in his own country than of public discourse or fame in the kingdom; but then he grew the argument of all tongues, every man inquiring who and what he was that durst, at his own charge, support the liberty and prosperity of the kingdom."

Towards the close of the year 1636 this great cause came on in the Exchequer Chamber before all the judges of England. The leading counsel against the writ was the celebrated Oliver St. John, a man whose temper was melancholy, whose manners were reserved, and who was as yet little known in Westminster Hall, but whose great talents had not escaped the penetrating eye of Hampden. The Attorney-General and Solicitor-General appeared for the Crown.

The arguments of the counsel occupied many days; and the Exchequer Chamber took a considerable time for deliberation. The opinion of the bench was divided. So clearly was the law in favour of Hampden that, though the judges held their situations only during the royal pleasure, the majority against him was the least possible. Five of the twelve pronounced in his favour. The remaining seven gave their voices for the writ.

The only effect of this decision was to make the public indignation stronger and deeper. "The judgment," says Clarendon, "proved of more advantage and credit to the gentleman condemned than to the King’s service." The courage which Hampden had shown on this occasion, as the same historian tells us, "raised his reputation to a great height generally throughout the kingdom." Even courtiers and crown-lawyers spoke respectfully of him. "His carriage," says Clarendon, "throughout that agitation, was with that rare temper and modesty, that they who watched him narrowly to find some advantage against his person, to make him less resolute in his cause, were compelled to give him a just testimony." But his demeanour, though it impressed Lord Falkland with the deepest respect, though it drew forth the praises of Solicitor-General Herbert, only kindled into a fiercer flame the

ever-burning hatred of Strafford. That minister in his letters to Laud murmured against the lenity with which Hampden was treated. "In good faith," he wrote, "were such men rightly served, they should be whipped into their right wits." Again he says, "I still wish Mr. Hampden, and others to his likeness, were well whipped into their right senses. And if the rod be so used that it smart not, I am the more sorry."

The person of Hampden was now scarcely safe. His prudence and moderation had hitherto disappointed those who would gladly have had a pretence for sending him to the prison of Eliot. But he knew that the eye of a tyrant was on him. In the year 1637 misgovernment had reached its height. Eight years had passed without a Parliament. The decision of the Exchequer Chamber had placed at the disposal of the Crown the whole property of the English people. About the time at which that decision was pronounced, Prynne, Bastwick, and Burton were mutilated by the sentence of the Star-Chamber, and sent to rot in remote dungeons. The estate and the person of every man who had opposed the court were at its mercy.

Hampden determined to leave England. Beyond the Atlantic Ocean a few of the persecuted Puritans had formed, in the wilderness of Connecticut, a settlement which has since become a prosperous commonwealth, and which, in spite of the lapse of time and of the change of government, still retains something of the character given to it by its first founders. Lord Saye and Lord Brooke were the original projectors of this scheme of emigration. Hampden had been early consulted respecting it. He was now, it appears, desirous to withdraw himself beyond the reach of oppressors who, as he probably suspected, and as we know, were bent on punishing his manful resistance to their tyranny. He was accompanied by his kinsman Oliver Cromwell, over whom he possessed great influence, and in whom he alone had discovered, under an exterior appearance of coarseness and extravagance, those great and commanding talents which were afterwards the admiration and the dread of Europe.

The cousins took their passage in a vessel which lay in the Thames, and which was bound for North America. They were actually on board, when an order of council appeared, by which the ship was prohibited from sailing. Seven other ships, filled with emigrants, were stopped at the same time.

Hampden and Cromwell remained; and with them remained the Evil Genius of the House of Stuart. The tide of public affairs was even now on the turn. The King had resolved to change the ecclesiastical constitution of Scotland, and to introduce into the public worship of that kingdom ceremonies which the great body of the Scots regarded as Popish. This absurd attempt produced, first discontents, then riots, and at length open rebellion. A provisional government was established at Edinburgh, and its authority was obeyed throughout the kingdom. This

government raised an army, appointed a general, and summoned an assembly of the Kirk. The famous instrument called the Covenant was put forth at this time, and was eagerly subscribed by the people.

The beginnings of this formidable insurrection were strangely neglected by the King and his advisers. But towards the close of the year 1638 the danger became pressing. An army was raised; and early in the following spring Charles marched northward at the head of a force sufficient, as it seemed, to reduce the Covenanters to submission.

But Charles acted at this conjuncture as he acted at every important conjuncture throughout his life. After oppressing, threatening, and blustering, he hesitated and failed. He was bold in the wrong place, and timid in the wrong place. He would have shown his wisdom by being afraid before the liturgy was read in St. Giles's church. He put off his fear till he had reached the Scottish border with his troops. Then, after a feeble campaign, he concluded a treaty with the insurgents, and withdrew his army. But the terms of the pacification were not observed. Each party charged the other with foul play. The Scots refused to disarm. The King found great difficulty in re-assembling his forces. His late expedition had drained his treasury. The revenues of the next year had been anticipated. At another time, he might have attempted to make up the deficiency by illegal expedients; but such a course would clearly have been dangerous when part of the island was in rebellion. It was necessary to call a Parliament. After eleven years of suffering, the voice of the nation was to be heard once more.

In April 1640, the Parliament met; and the King had another chance of conciliating his people. The new House of Commons was, beyond all comparison, the least refractory House of Commons that had been known for many years. Indeed, we have never been able to understand how, after so long a period of misgovernment, the representatives of the nation should have shown so moderate and so loyal a disposition. Clarendon speaks with admiration of their dutiful temper. "The House, generally," says he, "was exceedingly disposed to please the King, and to do him service." "It could never be hoped," he observes elsewhere, "that more sober or dispassionate men would ever meet together in that place, or fewer who brought ill purposes with them."

In this Parliament Hampden took his seat as member for Buckinghamshire, and thenceforward, till the day of his death, gave himself up, with scarcely any intermission, to public affairs. He took lodgings in Gray's Inn Lane, near the house occupied by Pym, with whom he lived in habits of the closest intimacy. He was now decidedly the most popular man in England. The Opposition looked to him as their leader, and the servants of the King treated him with marked respect.

Charles requested the Parliament to vote an immediate supply, and pledged his word that, if they would gratify him in this request, he would afterwards give them time to represent their grievances to him. The grievances under which the nation suffered were so serious, and the royal word had been so shamefully violated, that the Commons could hardly be expected to comply with this request. During the first week of the session, the minutes of the proceedings against Hampden were laid on the table by Oliver St. John, and a committee reported that the case was matter of grievance. The King sent a message to the Commons, offering, if they would vote him twelve subsidies, to give up the prerogative of ship-money. Many years before, he had received five subsidies in consideration of his assent to the Petition of Right. By assenting to that petition, he had given up the right of levying ship-money, if he ever possessed it. How he had observed the promises made to his third Parliament, all England knew; and it was not strange that the Commons should be somewhat unwilling to buy from him, over and over again, their own ancient and undoubted inheritance.

His message, however, was not unfavourably received. The Commons were ready to give a large supply; but they were not disposed to give it in exchange for a prerogative of which they altogether denied the existence. If they acceded to the proposal of the King, they recognised the legality of the writs of ship-money.

Hampden, who was a greater master of parliamentary tactics than any man of his time, saw that this was the prevailing feeling, and availed himself of it with great dexterity. He moved that the question should be put, "Whether the House would consent to the proposition made by the King, as contained in the message." Hyde interfered, and proposed that the question should be divided; that the sense of the House should be taken merely on the point whether there should be a supply or no supply; and that the manner and the amount should be left for subsequent consideration.

The majority of the House was for granting a supply, but against granting it in the manner proposed by the King. If the House had divided on Hampden’s question, the court would have sustained a defeat; if on Hyde’s, the court would have gained an apparent victory. Some members called for Hyde’s motion, others, for Hampden’s. In the midst of the uproar, the secretary of state, Sir Harry Vane, rose and stated that the supply would not be accepted unless it were voted according to the tenor of the message. Vane was supported by Herbert, the Solicitor-General. Hyde’s motion was therefore no further pressed, and the debate on the general question was adjourned till the next day.

On the next day the King came down to the House of Lords, and dissolved the Parliament with an angry speech. His conduct on this occasion has never been defended by any of his apologists. Clarendon condemns it severely. "No man," says he, "could imagine

what offence the Commons had given." The offence which they had given is plain. They had, indeed, behaved most temperately and most respectfully. But they had shown a disposition to redress wrongs and to vindicate the laws; and this was enough to make them hateful to a king whom no law could bind, and whose whole government was one system of wrong.

The nation received the intelligence of the dissolution with sorrow and indignation, The only persons to whom this event gave pleasure were those few discerning men who thought that the maladies of the state were beyond the reach of gentle remedies. Oliver St. John's joy was too great for concealment. It lighted up his dark and melancholy features, and made him, for the first time, indiscreetly communicative. He told Hyde that things must be worse before they could be better, and that the dissolved Parliament would never have done all that was necessary. St. John, we think, was in the right. No good could then have been done by any Parliament which did not fully understand that no confidence could safely be placed in the King, and that, while he enjoyed more than the shadow of power, the nation would never enjoy more than the shadow of liberty.

As soon as Charles had dismissed the Parliament, he threw several members of the House of Commons into prison. Ship-money was exacted more rigorously than ever; and the Mayor and Sheriffs of London were prosecuted before the Star-Chamber for slackness in levying it. Wentworth, it is said, observed, with characteristic insolence and cruelty, that things would never go right till the Aldermen were hanged. Large sums were raised by force on those counties in which the troops were quartered. All the wretched shifts of a beggared exchequer were tried. Forced loans were raised. Great quantities of goods were bought on long credit and sold for ready money. A scheme for debasing the currency was under consideration. At length, in August, the King again marched northward.

The Scots advanced into England to meet him. It is by no means improbable that this bold step was taken by the advice of Hampden, and of those with whom he acted; and this has been made matter of grave accusation against the English Opposition. It is said that to call in the aid of foreigners in a domestic quarrel is the worst of treasons, and that the Puritan leaders, by taking this course, showed that they were regardless of the honour and independence of the nation, and anxious only for the success of their own faction. We are utterly unable to see any distinction between the case of the Scotch invasion in 1640, and the case of the Dutch invasion in 1688; or rather, we see distinctions which are to the advantage of Hampden and his friends. We believe Charles to have been a worse and more dangerous king than his son. The Dutch were strangers to us, the Scots a kindred people speaking the same language, subjects of the same prince, not aliens in the eye of the law. If, indeed, it had been possible that a Scotch army or a Dutch army could have enslaved England, those who

persuaded Leslie to cross the Tweed, and those who signed the invitation to the Prince of Orange, would have been traitors to their country. But such a result was out of the question. All that either a Scotch or a Dutch invasion could do was to give the public feeling of England an opportunity to show itself. Both expeditions would have ended in complete and ludicrous discomfiture, had Charles and James been supported by their soldiers and their people. In neither case, therefore, was the independence of England endangered; in both cases her liberties were preserved.

The second campaign of Charles against the Scots was short and ignominious. His soldiers, as soon as they saw the enemy, ran away as English soldiers have never run either before or since. It can scarcely be doubted that their flight was the effect, not of cowardice, but of disaffection. The four northern counties of England were occupied by the Scotch army and the King retired to York.

The game of tyranny was now up. Charles had risked and lost his last stake. It is not easy to retrace the mortifications and humiliations which the tyrant now had to endure, without a feeling of vindictive pleasure. His army was mutinous; his treasury was empty; his people clamoured for a Parliament; addresses and petitions against the government were presented. Strafford was for shooting the petitioners by martial law; but the King could not trust the soldiers. A great council of Peers was called at York; but the King could not trust even the Peers. He struggled, evaded, hesitated, tried every shift, rather than again face the representatives of his injured people. At length no shift was left. He made a truce with the Scots, and summoned a Parliament.

The leaders of the popular party had, after the late dissolution, remained in London for the purpose of organizing a scheme of opposition to the Court. They now exerted themselves to the utmost. Hampden, in particular, rode from county to county, exhorting the electors to give their votes to men worthy of their confidence. The great majority of the returns was on the side of the Opposition. Hampden was himself chosen member both for Wendover and Buckinghamshire. He made his election to serve for the county.

On the third of November 1640, a day to be long remembered, met that great Parliament, destined to every extreme of fortune, to empire and to servitude, to glory and to contempt; at one time the sovereign of its sovereign, at another time the servant of its servants. From the first day of meeting the attendance was great; and the aspect of the members was that of men not disposed to do the work negligently. The dissolution of the late Parliament had convinced most of them that half measures would no longer suffice. Clarendon tells us, that "the same men who, six months before, were observed to be of very moderate tempers, and

to wish that gentle remedies might be applied, talked now in another dialect both of kings and persons; and said that they must now be of another temper than they were the last Parliament." The debt of vengeance was swollen by all the usury which had been accumulating during many years; and payment was made to the full.

This memorable crisis called forth parliamentary abilities such as England had never before seen. Among the most distinguished members of the House of Commons were Falkland, Hyde, Digby, young Harry Vane, Oliver St. John, Denzil Hollis, Nathaniel Fiennes. But two men exercised a paramount influence over the legislature and the country, Pym and Hampden; and by the universal consent of friends and enemies, the first place belonged to Hampden.

On occasions which required set speeches Pym generally took the lead. Hampden very seldom rose till late in a debate. His speaking was of that kind which has, in every age, been held in the highest estimation by English Parliaments, ready, weighty, perspicuous, condensed. His perception of the feelings of the House was exquisite, his temper unalterably placid, his manner eminently courteous and gentlemanlike. "Even with those," says Clarendon, "who were able to preserve themselves from his infusions, and who discerned those opinions to be fixed in him with which they could not comply, he always left the character of an ingenious and conscientious person." His talents for business were as remarkable as his talents for debate. "He was," says Clarendon, "of an industry and vigilance not to be tired out or wearied by the most laborious, and of parts not to be imposed upon by the most subtle and sharp." Yet it was rather to his moral than to his intellectual qualities that he was indebted for the vast influence which he possessed. "When this parliament began"--we again quote Clarendon--"the eyes of all men were fixed upon him, as their patriae pater, and the pilot that must steer the vessel through the tempests and rocks which threatened it. And I am persuaded his power and interest at that time were greater to do good or hurt than any man’s in the kingdom, or than any man of his rank hath had in any time; for his reputation of honesty was universal, and his affections seemed so publicly guided, that no corrupt or private ends could bias them. . . . He was indeed a very wise man, and of great parts, and possessed with the most absolute spirit of popularity, and the most absolute faculties to govern the people, of any man I ever knew."

It is sufficient to recapitulate shortly the acts of the Long Parliament during its first session. Strafford and Laud were impeached and imprisoned. Strafford was afterwards attainted by Bill, and executed. Lord Keeper Finch fled to Holland, Secretary Windebank to France. All those whom the King had, during the last twelve years, employed for the oppression of his people, from the servile judges who had pronounced in favour of the crown against Hampden, down to the sheriffs who had distrained for ship-money, and the custom-house officers who had levied tonnage and

poundage, were summoned to answer for their conduct. The Star-Chamber, the High Commission Court, the Council of York, were abolished. Those unfortunate victims of Laud who, after undergoing ignominious exposure and cruel manglings, had been sent to languish in distant prisons, were set at liberty, and conducted through London in triumphant procession. The King was compelled to give the judges patents for life or during good behaviour. He was deprived of those oppressive powers which were the last relics of the old feudal tenures. The Forest Courts and the Stannary Courts were reformed. It was provided that the Parliament then sitting should not be prorogued or dissolved without its own consent, and that a Parliament should be held at least once every three years.

Many of these measures Lord Clarendon allows to have been most salutary; and few persons will, in our times, deny that, in the laws passed during this session, the good greatly preponderated over the evil. The abolition of those three hateful courts, the Northern Council, the Star-Chamber, and the High Commission, would alone entitle the Long Parliament to the lasting gratitude of Englishmen.

The proceeding against Strafford undoubtedly seems hard to people living in our days. It would probably have seemed merciful and moderate to people living in the sixteenth century. It is curious to compare the trial of Charles's minister with the trial, if it can be so called, of Lord Seymour of Sudeley, in the blessed reign of Edward the Sixth. None of the great reformers of our Church doubted the propriety of passing an act of Parliament for cutting off Lord Seymour's head without a legal conviction. The pious Cranmer voted for that act; the pious Latimer preached for it; the pious Edward returned thanks for it; and all the pious Lords of the council together exhorted their victim to what they were pleased facetiously to call "the quiet and patient suffering of justice."

But it is not necessary to defend the proceedings against Strafford by any such comparison. They are justified, in our opinion, by that which alone justifies capital punishment or any punishment, by that which alone justifies war, by the public danger. That there is a certain amount of public danger which will justify a legislature in sentencing a man to death by retrospective law, few people, we suppose, will deny. Few people, for example, will deny that the French Convention was perfectly justified in placing Robespierre, St. Just, and Couthon under the ban of the law, without a trial. This proceeding differed from the proceeding against Strafford only in being much more rapid and violent. Strafford was fully heard. Robespierre was not suffered to defend himself. Was there, then, in the case of Strafford, a danger sufficient to justify an act of attainder? We believe that there was. We believe that the contest in which the Parliament was engaged against the King was a contest for the security of our property, for the liberty of our persons, for

everything which makes us to differ from the subjects of Don Miguel. We believe that the cause of the Commons was such as justified them in resisting the King, in raising an army, in sending thousands of brave men to kill and to be killed. An act of attainder is surely not more a departure from the ordinary course of law than a civil war. An act of attainder produces much less suffering than a civil war. We are, therefore, unable to discover on what principle it can be maintained that a cause which justifies a civil war will not justify an act of attainder.

Many specious arguments have been urged against the retrospective law by which Strafford was condemned to death. But all these arguments proceed on the supposition that the crisis was an ordinary crisis. The attainder was, in truth, a revolutionary measure. It was part of a system of resistance which oppression had rendered necessary. It is as unjust to judge of the conduct pursued by the Long Parliament towards Strafford on ordinary principles, as it would have been to indict Fairfax for murder because he cut down a cornet at Naseby. From the day on which the Houses met, there was a war waged by them against the King, a war for all that they held dear, a war carried on at first by means of parliamentary forms, at last by physical force; and, as in the second stage of that war, so in the first, they were entitled to do many things which, in quiet times, would have been culpable.

We must not omit to mention that those who were afterwards the most distinguished ornaments of the King's party supported the bill of attainder. It is almost certain that Hyde voted for it. It is quite certain that Falkland both voted and spoke for it. The opinion of Hampden, as far as it can be collected from a very obscure note of one of his speeches, seems to have been that the proceeding by Bill was unnecessary, and that it would be a better course to obtain judgment on the impeachment.

During this year the Court opened a negotiation with the leaders of the Opposition. The Earl of Bedford was invited to form an administration on popular principles. St. John was made solicitor-general. Hollis was to have been secretary of state, and Pym chancellor of the exchequer. The post of tutor to the Prince of Wales was designed for Hampden. The death of the Earl of Bedford prevented this arrangement from being carried into effect; and it may be doubted whether, even if that nobleman's life had been prolonged, Charles would ever have consented to surround himself with counsellors whom he could not but hate and fear.

Lord Clarendon admits that the conduct of Hampden during this year was mild and temperate, that he seemed disposed rather to soothe than to excite the public mind, and that, when violent and unreasonable motions were made by his followers, he generally left the House before the division, lest he should seem to give countenance to their extravagance. His temper was moderate. He sincerely loved peace. He felt also great fear lest too

precipitate a movement should produce a reaction. The events which took place early in the next session clearly showed that this fear was not unfounded.

During the autumn the Parliament adjourned for a few weeks. Before the recess, Hampden was despatched to Scotland by the House of Commons, nominally as a commissioner, to obtain security for a debt which the Scots had contracted during the last invasion; but in truth that he might keep watch over the King, who had now repaired to Edinburgh, for the purpose of finally adjusting the points of difference which remained between him and his northern subjects. It was the business of Hampden to dissuade the Covenanters from making their peace with the Court, at the expense of the popular party in England.

While the King was in Scotland, the Irish rebellion broke out. The suddenness and violence of this terrible explosion excited a strange suspicion in the public mind. The Queen was a professed Papist. The King and the Archbishop of Canterbury had not indeed been reconciled to the See of Rome; but they had, while acting towards the Puritan party with the utmost rigour, and speaking of that party with the utmost contempt, shown great tenderness and respect towards the Catholic religion and its professors. In spite of the wishes of successive Parliaments, the Protestant separatists had been cruelly persecuted. And at the same time, in spite of the wishes of those very Parliaments, laws which were in force against the Papists, and which, unjustifiable as they were, suited the temper of that age, had not been carried into execution. The Protestant nonconformists had not yet learned toleration in the school of suffering. They reprobated the partial lenity which the government showed towards idolaters; and, with some show of reason, ascribed to bad motives conduct which, in such a king as Charles, and such a prelate as Laud, could not possibly be ascribed to humanity or to liberality of sentiment. The violent Arminianism of the Archbishop, his childish attachment to ceremonies, his superstitious veneration for altars, vestments, and painted windows, his bigoted zeal for the constitution and the privileges of his order, his known opinions respecting the celibacy of the clergy, had excited great disgust throughout that large party which was every day becoming more and more hostile to Rome, and more and more inclined to the doctrines and the discipline of Geneva. It was believed by many that the Irish rebellion had been secretly encouraged by the Court; and, when the Parliament met again in November, after a short recess, the Puritans were more intractable than ever.

But that which Hampden had feared had come to pass. A reaction had taken place. A large body of moderate and well-meaning men, who had heartily concurred in the strong measures adopted before the recess, were inclined to pause. Their opinion was that, during many years the country had been grievously misgoverned, and that a great reform had been necessary; but that a great reform had been made, that the grievances of the nation had been

fully redressed, that sufficient vengeance had been exacted for the past, that sufficient security had been provided for the future, and that it would, therefore, be both ungrateful and unwise to make any further attacks on the royal prerogative. In support of this opinion many plausible arguments have been used. But to all these arguments there is one short answer. The King could not be trusted.

At the head of those who may be called the Constitutional Royalists were Falkland, Hyde, and Culpeper. All these eminent men had, during the former year, been in very decided opposition to the Court. In some of those very proceedings with which their admirers reproach Hampden, they had taken a more decided part than Hampden. They had all been concerned in the impeachment of Strafford. They had all, there is reason to believe, voted for the Bill of Attainder. Certainly none of them voted against it. They had all agreed to the act which made the consent of the Parliament necessary to a dissolution or prorogation. Hyde had been among the most active of those who attacked the Council of York. Falkland had voted for the exclusion of the bishops from the Upper House. They were now inclined to halt in the path of reform, perhaps to retrace a few of their steps.

A direct collision soon took place between the two parties into which the House of Commons, lately at almost perfect unity with itself, was now divided. The opponents of the government moved that celebrated address to the King which is known by the name of the Grand Remonstrance. In this address all the oppressive acts of the preceding fifteen years were set forth with great energy of language; and, in conclusion, the King was entreated to employ no ministers in whom the Parliament could not confide.

The debate on the Remonstrance was long and stormy. It commenced at nine in the morning of the twenty-first of November, and lasted till after midnight. The division showed that a great change had taken place in the temper of the House. Though many members had retired from exhaustion, three hundred voted and the Remonstrance was carried by a majority of only nine. A violent debate followed, on the question whether the minority should be allowed to protest against this decision. The excitement was so great that several members were on the point of proceeding to personal violence. "We had sheathed our swords in each other’s bowels," says an eye-witness, "had not the sagacity and great calmness of Mr. Hampden, by a short speech, prevented it." The House did not rise till two in the morning.

The situation of the Puritan leaders was now difficult and full of peril. The small majority which they still had might soon become a minority. Out of doors, their supporters in the higher and middle classes were beginning to fall off. There was a growing opinion that the King had been hardly used. The English are always inclined to side with a weak party which is in the wrong, rather than with a strong party which is in the right.

This may be seen in all contests, from contests of boxers to contests of faction. Thus it was that a violent reaction took place in favour of Charles the Second against the Whigs in 1681. Thus it was that an equally violent reaction took place in favour of George the Third against the coalition in 1784. A similar action was beginning to take place during the second year of the Long Parliament. Some members of the Opposition "had resumed" says Clarendon, "their old resolution of leaving the kingdom." Oliver Cromwell openly declared that he and many others would have emigrated if they had been left in a minority on the question of the Remonstrance.

Charles had now a last chance of regaining the affection of his people. If he could have resolved to give his confidence to the leaders of the moderate party in the House of Commons, and to regulate his proceedings by their advice, he might have been, not, indeed, as he had been, a despot, but the powerful and respected king of a free people. The nation might have enjoyed liberty and repose under a government with Falkland at its head, checked by a constitutional Opposition under the conduct of Hampden. It was not necessary that, in order to accomplish this happy end, the King should sacrifice any part of his lawful prerogative, or submit to any conditions inconsistent with his dignity. It was necessary only that he should abstain from treachery, from violence, from gross breaches of the law. This was all that the nation was then disposed to require of him. And even this was too much.

For a short time he seemed inclined to take a wise and temperate course. He resolved to make Falkland secretary of state, and Culpeper chancellor of the exchequer. He declared his intention of conferring in a short time some important office on Hyde. He assured these three persons that he would do nothing relating to the House of Commons without their joint advice, and that he would communicate all his designs to them in the most unreserved manner. This resolution, had he adhered to it, would have averted many years of blood and mourning. But "in very few days," says Clarendon, "he did fatally swerve from it."

On the third of January 1642, without giving the slightest hint of his intention to those advisers whom he had solemnly promised to consult, he sent down the attorney-general to impeach Lord Kimbolton, Hampden, Pym, Hollis, and two other members of the House of Commons, at the bar of the Lords, on a charge of High Treason. It is difficult to find in the whole history of England such an instance of tyranny, perfidy, and folly. The most precious and ancient rights of the subject were violated by this act. The only way in which Hampden and Pym could legally be tried for treason at the suit of the King, was by a petty jury on a bill found by a grand jury. The attorney-general had no right to impeach them. The House of Lords had no right to try them.

The Commons refused to surrender their members. The Peers showed

no inclination to usurp the unconstitutional jurisdiction which the King attempted to force on them. A contest began, in which violence and weakness were on the one side, law and resolution on the other. Charles sent an officer to seal up the lodgings and trunks of the accused members. The Commons sent their sergeant to break the seals. The tyrant resolved to follow up one outrage by another. In making the charge, he had struck at the institution of juries. In executing the arrest, he struck at the privileges of Parliament. He resolved to go to the House in person with an armed force, and there to seize the leaders of the Opposition, while engaged in the discharge of their parliamentary duties.

What was his purpose? Is it possible to believe that he had no definite purpose, that he took the most important step of his whole reign without having for one moment considered what might be its effects? Is it possible to believe that he went merely for the purpose of making himself a laughing-stock, that he intended, if he had found the accused members, and if they had refused, as it was their right and duty to refuse, the submission which he illegally demanded, to leave the House without bringing them away? If we reject both these suppositions, we must believe, and we certainly do believe, that he went fully determined to carry his unlawful design into effect by violence, and, if necessary, to shed the blood of the chiefs of the Opposition on the very floor of the Parliament House.

Lady Carlisle conveyed intelligence of the design to Pym. The five members had time to withdraw before the arrival of Charles. They left the House as he was entering New Palace Yard. He was accompanied by about two hundred halberdiers of his guard, and by many gentlemen of the Court armed with swords. He walked up Westminster Hall. At the southern end of the Hall his attendants divided to the right and left and formed a lane to the door of the House of Commons. He knocked, entered, darted a look towards the place which Pym usually occupied, and, seeing it empty, walked up to the table. The Speaker fell on his knee. The members rose and uncovered their heads in profound silence, and the King took his seat in the chair. He looked round the House. But the five members were nowhere to be seen. He interrogated the Speaker. The Speaker answered, that he was merely the organ of the House, and had neither eyes to see, nor tongue to speak, but according to their direction. The King muttered a few feeble sentences about his respect for the laws of the realm, and the privileges of Parliament, and retired. As he passed along the benches, several resolute voices called out audibly "Privilege!" He returned to Whitehall with his company of bravoes, who, while he was in the House, had been impatiently waiting in the lobby for the word, cocking their pistols, and crying, "Fall on." That night he put forth a proclamation, directing that the ports should be stopped, and that no person should, at his peril, venture to harbour the accused members.

Hampden and his friends had taken refuge in Coleman Street. The

city of London was indeed the fastness of public liberty, and was, in those times, a place of at least as much importance as Paris during the French Revolution. The city, properly so called, now consists in a great measure of immense warehouses and counting-houses, which are frequented by traders and their clerks during the day, and left in almost total solitude during the night. It was then closely inhabited by three hundred thousand persons, to whom it was not merely a place of business, but a place of constant residence. The great capital had as complete a civil and military organization as if it had been an independent republic. Each citizen had his company; and the companies, which now seem to exist only for the sake of epicures and of antiquaries, were then formidable brotherhoods, the members of which were almost as closely bound together as the members of a Highland clan. How strong these artificial ties were, the numerous and valuable legacies anciently bequeathed by citizens to their corporations abundantly prove. The municipal offices were filled by the most opulent and respectable merchants of the kingdom. The pomp of the magistracy of the capital was inferior only to that which surrounded the person of the sovereign. The Londoners loved their city with that patriotic love which is found only in small communities, like those of ancient Greece, or like those which arose in Italy during the middle ages. The numbers, the intelligence, the wealth of the citizens, the democratical form of their local government, and their vicinity to the Court and to the Parliament, made them one of the most formidable bodies in the kingdom. Even as soldiers they were not to be despised. In an age in which war is a profession, there is something ludicrous in the idea of battalions composed of apprentices and shopkeepers, and officered by aldermen. But in the early part of the seventeenth century, there was no standing army in the island; and the militia of the metropolis was not inferior in training to the militia of other places. A city which could furnish many thousands of armed men, abounding in natural courage, and not absolutely untinctured with military discipline, was a formidable auxiliary in times of internal dissension. On several occasions during the civil war, the trainbands of London distinguished themselves highly; and at the battle of Newbury, in particular, they repelled the fiery onset of Rupert, and saved the army of the Parliament from destruction.

The people of this great city had long been thoroughly devoted to the national cause. Many of them had signed a protestation in which they declared their resolution to defend the privileges of Parliament. Their enthusiasm had, indeed, of late begun to cool. But the impeachment of the five members, and the insult offered to the House of Commons, inflamed them to fury. Their houses, their purses, their pikes, were at the command of the representatives of the nation. London was in arms all night. The next day the shops were closed; the streets were filled with immense crowds; the multitude pressed round the King’s coach, and insulted him with opprobrious cries. The House of Commons, in the meantime, appointed a committee to sit in the city, for the

purpose of inquiring into the circumstances of the late outrage.

The members of the committee were welcomed by a deputation of the common council, Merchant Taylors' Hall, Goldsmiths' Hall, and Grocers' Hall, were fitted up for their sittings. A guard of respectable citizens, duly relieved twice a day, was posted at their doors. The sheriffs were charged to watch over the safety of the accused members, and to escort them to and from the committee with every mark of honour.

A violent and sudden revulsion of feeling, both in the House and out of it, was the effect of the late proceedings of the King. The Opposition regained in a few hours all the ascendency which it had lost. The constitutional royalists were filled with shame and sorrow. They saw that they had been cruelly deceived by Charles. They saw that they were, unjustly, but not unreasonably, suspected by the nation. Clarendon distinctly says that they perfectly detested the counsels by which the King had been guided, and were so much displeased and dejected at the unfair manner in which he had treated them that they were inclined to retire from his service. During the debates on the breach of privilege, they preserved a melancholy silence. To this day, the advocates of Charles take care to say as little as they can about his visit to the House of Commons, and, when they cannot avoid mention of it, attribute to infatuation an act which, on any other supposition, they must admit to have been a frightful crime.

The Commons, in a few days, openly defied the King, and ordered the accused members to attend in their places at Westminster and to resume their parliamentary duties. The citizens resolved to bring back the champions of liberty in triumph before the windows of Whitehall. Vast preparations were made both by land and water for this great festival.

The King had remained in his palace, humbled, dismayed, and bewildered, "feeling," says Clarendon, "the trouble and agony which usually attend generous and magnanimous minds upon their having committed errors"; feeling, we should say, the despicable repentance which attends the man who, having attempted to commit a crime, finds that he has only committed a folly. The populace hooted and shouted all day before the gates of the royal residence. The tyrant could not bear to see the triumph of those whom he had destined to the gallows and the quartering-block. On the day preceding that which was fixed for their return, he fled, with a few attendants, from that palace which he was never to see again till he was led through it to the scaffold.

On the eleventh of January, the Thames was covered with boats, and its shores with the gazing multitude. Armed vessels decorated with streamers, were ranged in two lines from London Bridge to Westminster Hall. The members returned upon the river in a ship manned by sailors who had volunteered their services. The

trainbands of the city, under the command of the sheriffs, marched along the Strand, attended by a vast crowd of spectators, to guard the avenues to the House of Commons; and thus, with shouts, and loud discharges of ordnance, the accused patriots were brought back by the people whom they had served, and for whom they had suffered. The restored members, as soon as they had entered the House, expressed, in the warmest terms, their gratitude to the citizens of London. The sheriffs were warmly thanked by the Speaker in the name of the Commons; and orders were given that a guard selected from the trainbands of the city, should attend daily to watch over the safety of the Parliament.

The excitement had not been confined to London. When intelligence of the danger to which Hampden was exposed reached Buckinghamshire, it excited the alarm and indignation of the people. Four thousand freeholders of that county, each of them wearing in his hat a copy of the protestation in favour of the Privileges of Parliament, rode up to London to defend the person of their beloved representative. They came in a body to assure Parliament of their full resolution to defend its privileges. Their petition was couched in the strongest terms. "In respect," said they, "of that latter attempt upon the honourable House of Commons, we are now come to offer our service to that end, and resolved, in their just defence, to live and die."

A great struggle was clearly at hand. Hampden had returned to Westminster much changed. His influence had hitherto been exerted rather to restrain than to animate the zeal of his party. But the treachery, the contempt of law, the thirst for blood, which the King had now shown, left no hope of a peaceable adjustment. It was clear that Charles must be either a puppet or a tyrant, that no obligation of law or of honour could bind him, and that the only way to make him harmless was to make him powerless.

The attack which the King had made on the five members was not merely irregular in manner. Even if the charges had been preferred legally, if the Grand Jury of Middlesex had found a true bill, if the accused persons had been arrested under a proper warrant and at a proper time and place, there would still have been in the proceeding enough of perfidy and injustice to vindicate the strongest measures which the Opposition could take. To impeach Pym and Hampden was to impeach the House of Commons. It was notoriously on account of what they had done as members of that House that they were selected as objects of vengeance; and in what they had done as members of that House the majority had concurred. Most of the charges brought against them were common between them and the Parliament. They were accused, indeed, and it may be with reason, of encouraging the Scotch army to invade England. In doing this, they had committed what was, in strictness of law, a high offence, the same offence which Devonshire and Shrewsbury committed in 1688. But the King had promised pardon and oblivion to those who had been the principals in the Scotch insurrection. Did it then consist with his honour

to punish the accessaries? He had bestowed marks of his favour on the leading Covenanters. He had given the great seal of Scotland to one chief of the rebels, a marquisate to another, an earldom to Leslie, who had brought the Presbyterian army across the Tweed. On what principle was Hampden to be attainted for advising what Leslie was ennobled for doing? In a court of law, of course, no Englishman could plead an amnesty granted to the Scots. But, though not an illegal, it was surely an inconsistent and a most unkingly course, after pardoning and promoting the heads of the rebellion in one kingdom, to hang, draw, and quarter their accomplices in another.

The proceedings of the King against the five members, or rather against that Parliament which had concurred in almost all the acts of the five members, was the cause of the civil war. It was plain that either Charles or the House of Commons must be stripped of all real power in the state. The best course which the Commons could have taken would perhaps have been to depose the King, as their ancestors had deposed Edward the Second and Richard the Second, and as their children afterwards deposed James. Had they done this, had they placed on the throne a prince whose character and whose situation would have been a pledge for his good conduct, they might safely have left to that prince all the old constitutional prerogatives of the Crown, the command of the armies of the state, the power of making peers, the power of appointing ministers, a veto on bills passed by the two Houses. Such prince, reigning by their choice, would have been under the necessity of acting in conformity with their wishes. But the public mind was not ripe for such a measure. There was no Duke of Lancaster, no Prince of Orange, no great and eminent person, near in blood to the throne, yet attached to the cause of the people. Charles was then to remain King; and it was therefore necessary that he should be king only in name. A William the Third, or a George the First, whose title to the crown was identical with the title of the people to their liberty, might safely be trusted with extensive powers. But new freedom could not exist in safety under the old tyrant. Since he was not to be deprived of the name of king, the only course which was left was to make him a mere trustee, nominally seised of prerogatives of which others had the use, a Grand Lama, a Roi Faineant, a phantom resembling those Dagoberts and Childeberts who wore the badges of royalty, while Ebroin and Charles Martel held the real sovereignty of the state.

The conditions which the Parliament propounded were hard, but, we are sure, not harder than those which even the Tories, in the Convention of 1689, would have imposed on James, if it had been resolved that James should continue to be king. The chief condition was that the command of the militia and the conduct of the war in Ireland should be left to the Parliament. On this point was that great issue joined, whereof the two parties put themselves on God and on the sword.

We think, not only that the Commons were justified in demanding

for themselves the power to dispose of the military force, but that it would have been absolute insanity in them to leave that force at the disposal of the King. From the very beginning of his reign, it had evidently been his object to govern by an army. His third Parliament had complained, in the Petition of Right, of his fondness for martial law, and of the vexatious manner in which he billeted his soldiers on the people. The wish nearest the heart of Strafford was, as his letters prove, that the revenue might be brought into such a state as would enable the King to keep a standing military establishment. In 1640 Charles had supported an army in the northern counties by lawless exactions. In 1641 he had engaged in an intrigue, the object of which was to bring that army to London for the purpose of overawing the Parliament. His late conduct had proved that, if he were suffered to retain even a small body-guard of his own creatures near his person, the Commons would be in danger of outrage, perhaps of massacre. The Houses were still deliberating under the protection of the militia of London. Could the command of the whole armed force of the realm have been, under these circumstances, safely confided to the King? Would it not have been frenzy in the Parliament to raise and pay an army of fifteen or twenty thousand men for the Irish war, and to give to Charles the absolute control of this army, and the power of selecting, promoting, and dismissing officers at his pleasure? Was it not probable that this army might become, what it is the nature of armies to become, what so many armies formed under much more favourable circumstances have become, what the army of the Roman republic became, what the army of the French republic became, an instrument of despotism? Was it not probable that the soldiers might forget that they were also citizens, and might be ready to serve their general against their country? Was it not certain that, on the very first day on which Charles could venture to revoke his concessions, and to punish his opponents, he would establish an arbitrary government, and exact a bloody revenge?

Our own times furnish a parallel case. Suppose that a revolution should take place in Spain, that the Constitution of Cadiz should be reestablished, that the Cortes should meet again, that the Spanish Prynnes and Burtons, who are now wandering in rags round Leicester Square, should be restored to their country. Ferdinand the Seventh would, in that case, of course repeat all the oaths and promises which he made in 1820, and broke in 1823. But would it not be madness in the Cortes, even if they were to leave him the name of King, to leave him more than the name? Would not all Europe scoff at them, if they were to permit him to assemble a large army for an expedition to America, to model that army at his pleasure, to put it under the command of officers chosen by himself? Should we not say that every member of the Constitutional party who might concur in such a measure would most richly deserve the fate which he would probably meet, the fate of Riego and of the Empecinado? We are not disposed to pay compliments to Ferdinand; nor do we conceive that we pay him any compliment, when we say that, of all sovereigns in history, he

seems to us most to resemble, in some very important points, King Charles the First. Like Charles, he is pious after a certain fashion; like Charles, he has made large concessions to his people after a certain fashion. It is well for him that he has had to deal with men who bore very little resemblance to the English Puritans.

The Commons would have the power of the sword; the King would not part with it; and nothing remained but to try the chances of war. Charles still had a strong party in the country. His august office, his dignified manners, his solemn protestations that he would for the time to come respect the liberties of his subjects, pity for fallen greatness, fear of violent innovation, secured to him many adherents. He had with him the Church, the Universities, a majority of the nobles and of the old landed gentry. The austerity of the Puritan manners drove most of the gay and dissolute youth of that age to the royal standard. Many good, brave, and moderate men, who disliked his former conduct, and who entertained doubts touching his present sincerity, espoused his cause unwillingly and with many painful misgivings, because, though they dreaded his tyranny much, they dreaded democratic violence more.

On the other side was the great body of the middle orders of England, the merchants, the shopkeepers, the yeomanry, headed by a very large and formidable minority of the peerage and of the landed gentry. The Earl of Essex, a man of respectable abilities, and of some military experience, was appointed to the command of the parliamentary army.

Hampden spared neither his fortune nor his person in the cause. He subscribed two thousand pounds to the public service. He took a colonel’s commission in the army, and went into Buckinghamshire to raise a regiment of infantry. His neighbours eagerly enlisted under his command. His men were known by their green uniform, and by their standard, which bore on one side the watchword of the Parliament, "God with us," and on the other the device of Hampden, "Vestigia nulla retrorsum." This motto well described the line of conduct which he pursued. No member of his party had been so temperate, while there remained a hope that legal and peaceable measures might save the country. No member of his party showed so much energy and vigour when it became necessary to appeal to arms. He made himself thoroughly master of his military duty, and "performed it," to use the words of Clarendon, "upon all occasions most punctually." The regiment which he had raised and trained was considered as one of the best in the service of the Parliament. He exposed his person in every action with an intrepidity which made him conspicuous even among thousands of brave men. "He was," says Clarendon, "of a personal courage equal to his best parts; so that he was an enemy not to be wished wherever he might have been made a friend, and as much to be apprehended where he was so, as any man could deserve to be." Though his military career was short, and his military situation

subordinate, he fully proved that he possessed the talents of a great general, as well as those of a great statesman.

We shall not attempt to give a history of the war. Lord Nugent's account of the military operations is very animating and striking. Our abstract would be dull, and probably unintelligible. There was, in fact, for some time no great and connected system of operations on either side. The war of the two parties was like the war of Arimanes and Oromasdes, neither of whom, according to the Eastern theologians, has any exclusive domain, who are equally omnipresent, who equally pervade all space, who carry on their eternal strife within every particle of matter. There was a petty war in almost every county. A town furnished troops to the Parliament while the manor-house of the neighbouring peer was garrisoned for the King. The combatants were rarely disposed to march far from their own homes. It was reserved for Fairfax and Cromwell to terminate this desultory warfare, by moving one overwhelming force successively against all the scattered fragments of the royal party.

It is a remarkable circumstance that the officers who had studied tactics in what were considered as the best schools, under Vere in the Netherlands, and under Gustavus Adolphus in Germany, displayed far less skill than those commanders who had been bred to peaceful employments, and who never saw even a skirmish till the civil war broke out. An unlearned person might hence be inclined to suspect that the military art is no very profound mystery, that its principles are the principles of plain good sense, and that a quick eye, a cool head, and a stout heart, will do more to make a general than all the diagrams of Jomini. This, however, is certain, that Hampden showed himself a far better officer than Essex, and Cromwell than Leslie.

The military errors of Essex were probably in some degree produced by political timidity. He was honestly, but not warmly, attached to the cause of the Parliament; and next to a great defeat he dreaded a great victory. Hampden, on the other hand, was for vigorous and decisive measures. When he drew the sword, as Clarendon has well said, he threw away the scabbard. He had shown that he knew better than any public man of his time how to value and how to practise moderation. But he knew that the essence of war is violence, and that moderation in war is imbecility. On several occasions, particularly during the operations in the neighbourhood of Brentford, he remonstrated earnestly with Essex. Wherever he commanded separately, the boldness and rapidity of his movements presented a striking contrast to the sluggishness of his superior.

In the Parliament he possessed boundless influence. His employments towards the close of 1642 have been described by Denham in some lines which, though intended to be sarcastic, convey in truth the highest eulogy. Hampden is described in this satire as perpetually passing and repassing between the military

station at Windsor and the House of Commons at Westminster, as overawing the general, and as giving law to that Parliament which knew no other law. It was at this time that he organized that celebrated association of counties to which his party was principally indebted for its victory over the King.

In the early part of 1643, the shires lying in the neighbourhood of London, which were devoted to the cause of the Parliament, were incessantly annoyed by Rupert and his cavalry. Essex had extended his lines so far that almost every point was vulnerable. The young prince, who, though not a great general, was an active and enterprising partisan, frequently surprised posts, burned villages, swept away cattle, and was again at Oxford before a force sufficient to encounter him could be assembled.

The languid proceedings of Essex were loudly condemned by the troops. All the ardent and daring spirits in the parliamentary party were eager to have Hampden at their head. Had his life been prolonged, there is every reason to believe that the supreme command would have been intrusted to him. But it was decreed that, at this conjuncture, England should lose the only man who united perfect disinterestedness to eminent talents, the only man who, being capable of gaining the victory for her, was incapable of abusing that victory when gained.

In the evening of the seventeenth of June, Rupert darted out of Oxford with his cavalry on a predatory expedition. At three in the morning of the following day, he attacked and dispersed a few parliamentary soldiers who lay at Postcombe. He then flew to Chinnor, burned the village, killed or took all the troops who were quartered there, and prepared to hurry back with his booty and his prisoners to Oxford.

Hampden had, on the preceding day, strongly represented to Essex the danger to which this part of the line was exposed. As soon as he received intelligence of Rupert’s incursion, he sent off a horseman with a message to the General. The cavaliers, he said, could return only by Chiselhampton Bridge. A force ought to be instantly despatched in that direction for the purpose of intercepting them. In the meantime, he resolved to set out with all the cavalry that he could muster, for the purpose of impeding the march of the enemy till Essex could take measures for cutting off their retreat. A considerable body of horse and dragoons volunteered to follow him. He was not their commander. He did not even belong to their branch of the service. But "he was," says Lord Clarendon, "second to none but the General himself in the observance and application of all men." On the field of Chalgrove he came up with Rupert. A fierce skirmish ensued. In the first charge Hampden was struck in the shoulder by two bullets, which broke the bone, and lodged in his body. The troops of the Parliament lost heart and gave way. Rupert, after pursuing them for a short time, hastened to cross the bridge, and made his retreat unmolested to Oxford.

Hampden, with his head drooping, and his hands leaning on his horse’s neck, moved feebly out of the battle. The mansion which had been inhabited by his father-in-law, and from which in his youth he had carried home his bride Elizabeth, was in sight. There still remains an affecting tradition that he looked for a moment towards that beloved house, and made an effort to go thither to die. But the enemy lay in that direction. He turned his horse towards Thame, where he arrived almost fainting with agony. The surgeons dressed his wounds. But there was no hope. The pain which he suffered was most excruciating. But he endured it with admirable firmness and resignation. His first care was for his country. He wrote from his bed several letters to London concerning public affairs, and sent a last pressing message to the head-quarters, recommending that the dispersed forces should be concentrated. When his public duties were performed, he calmly prepared himself to die. He was attended by a clergyman of the Church of England, with whom he had lived in habits of intimacy, and by the chaplain of the Buckinghamshire Greencoats, Dr. Spurton, whom Baxter describes as a famous and excellent divine.

A short time before Hampden’s death the sacrament was administered to him. He declared that though he disliked the government of the Church of England, he yet agreed with that Church as to all essential matters of doctrine. His intellect remained unclouded. When all was nearly over, he lay murmuring faint prayers for himself, and for the cause in which, he died. "Lord Jesus," he exclaimed in the moment of the last agony, "receive my soul. O Lord, save my country. O Lord, be merciful to--." In that broken ejaculation passed away his noble and fearless spirit.

He was buried in the parish church of Hampden. His soldiers, bareheaded, with reversed arms and muffled drums and colours, escorted his body to the grave, singing, as they marched, that lofty and melancholy psalm in which the fragility of human life is contrasted with the immutability of Him to whom a thousand years are as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.

The news of Hampden’s death produced as great a consternation in his party, according to Clarendon, as if their whole army had been cut off. The journals of the time amply prove that the Parliament and all its friends were filled with grief and dismay. Lord Nugent has quoted a remarkable passage from the next Weekly Intelligencer. "The loss of Colonel Hampden goeth near the heart of every man that loves the good of his king and country, and makes some conceive little content to be at the army now that he is gone. The memory of this deceased colonel is such, that in no age to come but it will more and more be had in honour and esteem; a man so religious, and of that prudence, judgment, temper, valour, and integrity, that he hath left few his like behind."

He had indeed left none his like behind him. There still remained, indeed, in his party, many acute intellects, many eloquent tongues, many brave and honest hearts. There still remained a rugged and clownish soldier, half fanatic, half buffoon, whose talents, discerned as yet only by one penetrating eye, were equal to all the highest duties of the soldier and the prince. But in Hampden, and in Hampden alone, were united all the qualities which, at such a crisis, were necessary to save the state, the valour and energy of Cromwell, the discernment and eloquence of Vane, the humanity and moderation of Manchester, the stern integrity of Hale, the ardent public spirit of Sydney. Others might possess the qualities which were necessary to save the popular party in the crisis of danger; he alone had both the power and the inclination to restrain its excesses in the hour of triumph. Others could conquer; he alone could reconcile. A heart as bold as his brought up the cuirassiers who turned the tide of battle on Marston Moor. As skilful an eye as his watched the Scotch army descending from the heights over Dunbar. But it was when to the sullen tyranny of Laud and Charles had succeeded the fierce conflict of sects and factions, ambitious of ascendency and burning for revenge, it was when the vices and ignorance which the old tyranny had generated threatened the new freedom with destruction, that England missed the sobriety, the self-command, the perfect soundness of judgment, the perfect rectitude of intention, to which the history of revolutions furnishes no parallel, or furnishes a parallel in Washington alone.

MILTON
(August 1825)

Joannis Miltoni, Angli, de Doctrina Christiana libri duo posthumi. A Treatise on Christian Doctrine, compiled from the Holy Scriptures alone. By JOHN MILTON, translated from the Original by Charles R. Sumner, M.A., etc., etc. 1825.

Towards the close of the year 1823, Mr. Lemon, deputy keeper of the state papers, in the course of his researches among the presses of his office, met with a large Latin manuscript. With it were found corrected copies of the foreign despatches written by Milton while he filled the office of Secretary, and several papers relating to the Popish Trials and the Rye-house Plot. The whole was wrapped up in an envelope, superscribed To Mr. Skinner, Merchant. On examination, the large manuscript proved to be the long-lost Essay on the Doctrines of Christianity, which, according to Wood and Toland, Milton finished after the Restoration, and deposited with Cyriac Skinner. Skinner, it is well known, held the same political opinions with his illustrious friend. It is therefore probable, as Mr. Lemon conjectures, that he may have fallen under the suspicions of the Government during that persecution of the Whigs which followed the dissolution of the Oxford parliament, and that, in consequence of a general

seizure of his papers, this work may have been brought to the office in which it has been found. But whatever the adventures of the manuscript may have been, no doubt can exist that it is a genuine relic of the great poet.

Mr. Sumner who was commanded by his Majesty to edit and translate the treatise, has acquitted himself of his task in a manner honourable to his talents and to his character. His version is not indeed very easy or elegant; but it is entitled to the praise of clearness and fidelity. His notes abound with interesting quotations, and have the rare merit of really elucidating the text. The preface is evidently the work of a sensible and candid man, firm in his own religious opinions, and tolerant towards those of others.

The book itself will not add much to the fame of Milton. It is, like all his Latin works, well written, though not exactly in the style of the prize essays of Oxford and Cambridge. There is no elaborate imitation of classical antiquity, no scrupulous purity, none of the ceremonial cleanness which characterises the diction of our academical Pharisees. The author does not attempt to polish and brighten his composition into the Ciceronian gloss and brilliancy. He does not in short sacrifice sense and spirit to pedantic refinements. The nature of his subject compelled him to use many words

"That would have made Quintilian stare and gasp."

But he writes with as much ease and freedom as if Latin were his mother tongue; and, where he is least happy, his failure seems to arise from the carelessness of a native, not from the ignorance of a foreigner. We may apply to him what Denham with great felicity says of Cowley: "He wears the garb, but not the clothes of the ancients."

Throughout the volume are discernible the traces of a powerful and independent mind, emancipated from the influence of authority, and devoted to the search of truth. Milton professes to form his system from the Bible alone; and his digest of scriptural texts is certainly among the best that have appeared. But he is not always so happy in his inferences as in his citations.

Some of the heterodox doctrines which he avows seemed to have excited considerable amazement, particularly his Arianism, and his theory on the subject of polygamy. Yet we can scarcely conceive that any person could have read the Paradise Lost without suspecting him of the former; nor do we think that any reader, acquainted with the history of his life, ought to be much startled at the latter. The opinions which he has expressed respecting the nature of the Deity, the eternity of matter, and the observation of the Sabbath, might, we think, have caused more just surprise.

But we will not go into the discussion of these points. The book, were it far more orthodox or far more heretical than it is, would not much edify or corrupt the present generation. The men of our time are not to be converted or perverted by quartos. A few more days, and this essay will follow the Defensio Populi to the dust and silence of the upper shelf. The name of its author, and the remarkable circumstances attending its publication, will secure to it a certain degree of attention. For a month or two it will occupy a few minutes of chat in every drawing-room, and a few columns in every magazine; and it will then, to borrow the elegant language of the play-bills, be withdrawn to make room for the forthcoming novelties.

We wish, however, to avail ourselves of the interest, transient as it may be, which this work has excited. The dexterous Capuchins never choose to preach on the life and miracles of a saint, until they have awakened the devotional feelings of their auditors by exhibiting some relic of him, a thread of his garment, a lock of his hair, or a drop of his blood. On the same principle, we intend to take advantage of the late interesting discovery, and, while this memorial of a great and good man is still in the hands of all, to say something of his moral and intellectual qualities. Nor, we are convinced, will the severest of our readers blame us if, on an occasion like the present, we turn for a short time from the topics of the day, to commemorate, in all love and reverence, the genius and virtues of John Milton, the poet, the statesman, the philosopher, the glory of English literature, the champion and the martyr of English liberty.

It is by his poetry that Milton is best known; and it is of his poetry that we wish first to speak. By the general suffrage of the civilised world, his place has been assigned among the greatest masters of the art. His detractors, however, though outvoted, have not been silenced. There are many critics, and some of great name, who contrive in the same breath to extol the poems and to decry the poet. The works they acknowledge, considered in themselves, may be classed among the noblest productions of the human mind. But they will not allow the author to rank with those great men who, born in the infancy of civilisation, supplied, by their own powers, the want of instruction, and, though destitute of models themselves, bequeathed to posterity models which defy imitation. Milton, it is said, inherited what his predecessors created; he lived in an enlightened age; he received a finished education, and we must therefore, if we would form a just estimate of his powers, make large deductions in consideration of these advantages.

We venture to say, on the contrary, paradoxical as the remark may appear, that no poet has ever had to struggle with more unfavourable circumstances than Milton. He doubted, as he has himself owned, whether he had not been born "an age too late." For this notion Johnson has thought fit to make him the butt of

much clumsy ridicule. The poet, we believe, understood the nature of his art better than the critic. He knew that his poetical genius derived no advantage from the civilisation which surrounded him, or from the learning which he had acquired; and he looked back with something like regret to the ruder age of simple words and vivid impressions.

We think that, as civilisation advances, poetry almost necessarily declines. Therefore, though we fervently admire those great works of imagination which have appeared in dark ages, we do not admire them the more because they have appeared in dark ages. On the contrary, we hold that the most wonderful and splendid proof of genius is a great poem produced in a civilised age. We cannot understand why those who believe in that most orthodox article of literary faith, that the earliest poets are generally the best, should wonder at the rule as if it were the exception. Surely the uniformity of the phaenomenon indicates a corresponding uniformity in the cause.

The fact is, that common observers reason from the progress of the experimental sciences to that of imitative arts. The improvement of the former is gradual and slow. Ages are spent in collecting materials, ages more in separating and combining them. Even when a system has been formed, there is still something to add, to alter, or to reject. Every generation enjoys the use of a vast hoard bequeathed to it by antiquity, and transmits that hoard, augmented by fresh acquisitions, to future ages. In these pursuits, therefore, the first speculators lie under great disadvantages, and, even when they fail, are entitled to praise. Their pupils, with far inferior intellectual powers, speedily surpass them in actual attainments. Every girl who has read Mrs. Marcet's little dialogues on Political Economy could teach Montague or Walpole many lessons in finance. Any intelligent man may now, by resolutely applying himself for a few years to mathematics, learn more than the great Newton knew after half a century of study and meditation.

But it is not thus with music, with painting, or with sculpture. Still less is it thus with poetry. The progress of refinement rarely supplies these arts with better objects of imitation. It may indeed improve the instruments which are necessary to the mechanical operations of the musician, the sculptor, and the painter. But language, the machine of the poet, is best fitted for his purpose in its rudest state. Nations, like individuals, first perceive, and then abstract. They advance from particular images to general terms. Hence the vocabulary of an enlightened society is philosophical, that of a half-civilised people is poetical.

This change in the language of men is partly the cause and partly the effect of a corresponding change in the nature of their intellectual operations, of a change by which science gains and poetry loses. Generalisation is necessary to the advancement of

knowledge; but particularity is indispensable to the creations of the imagination. In proportion as men know more and think more, they look less at individuals and more at classes. They therefore make better theories and worse poems. They give us vague phrases instead of images, and personified qualities instead of men. They may be better able to analyse human nature than their predecessors. But analysis is not the business of the poet. His office is to portray, not to dissect. He may believe in a moral sense, like Shaftesbury; he may refer all human actions to self-interest, like Helvetius; or he may never think about the matter at all. His creed on such subjects will no more influence his poetry, properly so called, than the notions which a painter may have conceived respecting the lacrymal glands, or the circulation of the blood will affect the tears of his Niobe, or the blushes of his Aurora. If Shakespeare had written a book on the motives of human actions, it is by no means certain that it would have been a good one. It is extremely improbable that it would have contained half so much able reasoning on the subject as is to be found in the Fable of the Bees. But could Mandeville have created an Iago? Well as he knew how to resolve characters into their elements, would he have been able to combine those elements in such a manner as to make up a man, a real, living, individual man?

Perhaps no person can be a poet, or can even enjoy poetry, without a certain unsoundness of mind, if anything which gives so much pleasure ought to be called unsoundness. By poetry we mean not all writing in verse, nor even all good writing in verse. Our definition excludes many metrical compositions which, on other grounds, deserve the highest praise. By poetry we mean the art of employing words in such a manner as to produce an illusion on the imagination, the art of doing by means of words what the painter does by means of colours. Thus the greatest of poets has described it, in lines universally admired for the vigour and felicity of their diction, and still more valuable on account of the just notion which they convey of the art in which he excelled:

"As the imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet’s pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name."

These are the fruits of the "fine frenzy" which he ascribes to the poet--a fine frenzy doubtless, but still a frenzy. Truth, indeed, is essential to poetry; but it is the truth of madness. The reasonings are just; but the premises are false. After the first suppositions have been made, everything ought to be consistent; but those first suppositions require a degree of credulity which almost amounts to a partial and temporary derangement of the intellect. Hence of all people children are the most imaginative. They abandon themselves without reserve to every illusion. Every image which is strongly presented to their

mental eye produces on them the effect of reality. No man, whatever his sensibility may be, is ever affected by Hamlet or Lear, as a little girl is affected by the story of poor Red Riding-hood. She knows that it is all false, that wolves cannot speak, that there are no wolves in England. Yet in spite of her knowledge she believes; she weeps; she trembles; she dares not go into a dark room lest she should feel the teeth of the monster at her throat. Such is the despotism of the imagination over uncultivated minds.

In a rude state of society men are children with a greater variety of ideas. It is therefore in such a state of society that we may expect to find the poetical temperament in its highest perfection. In an enlightened age there will be much intelligence, much science, much philosophy, abundance of just classification and subtle analysis, abundance of wit and eloquence, abundance of verses, and even of good ones; but little poetry. Men will judge and compare; but they will not create. They will talk about the old poets, and comment on them, and to a certain degree enjoy them. But they will scarcely be able to conceive the effect which poetry produced on their ruder ancestors, the agony, the ecstasy, the plenitude of belief. The Greek Rhapsodists, according to Plato, could scarce recite Homer without falling into convulsions. The Mohawk hardly feels the scalping knife while he shouts his death-song. The power which the ancient bards of Wales and Germany exercised over their auditors seems to modern readers almost miraculous. Such feelings are very rare in a civilised community, and most rare among those who participate most in its improvements. They linger longest amongst the peasantry.

Poetry produces an illusion on the eye of the mind, as a magic lantern produces an illusion on the eye of the body. And, as the magic lantern acts best in a dark room, poetry effects its purpose most completely in a dark age. As the light of knowledge breaks in upon its exhibitions, as the outlines of certainty become more and more definite, and the shades of probability more and more distinct, the hues and lineaments of the phantoms which the poet calls up grow fainter and fainter. We cannot unite the incompatible advantages of reality and deception, the clear discernment of truth and the exquisite enjoyment of fiction.

He who, in an enlightened and literary society, aspires to be a great poet must first become a little child, he must take to pieces the whole web of his mind. He must unlearn much of that knowledge which has perhaps constituted hitherto his chief title to superiority. His very talents will be a hindrance to him. His difficulties will be proportioned to his proficiency in the pursuits which are fashionable among his contemporaries; and that proficiency will in general be proportioned to the vigour and activity of his mind. And it is well if, after all his sacrifices and exertions, his works do not resemble a lisping man or a modern ruin. We have seen in our own time great talents, intense

labour, and long meditation, employed in this struggle against the spirit of the age, and employed, we will not say absolutely in vain, but with dubious success and feeble applause.

If these reasonings be just, no poet has ever triumphed over greater difficulties than Milton. He received a learned education: he was a profound and elegant classical scholar: he had studied all the mysteries of Rabbinical literature: he was intimately acquainted with every language of modern Europe, from which either pleasure or information was then to be derived. He was perhaps the only great poet of later times who has been distinguished by the excellence of his Latin verse. The genius of Petrarch was scarcely of the first order; and his poems in the ancient language, though much praised by those who have never read them, are wretched compositions. Cowley, with all his admirable wit and ingenuity, had little imagination: nor indeed do we think his classical diction comparable to that of Milton. The authority of Johnson is against us on this point. But Johnson had studied the bad writers of the middle ages till he had become utterly insensible to the Augustan elegance, and was as ill qualified to judge between two Latin styles as a habitual drunkard to set up for a wine-taster.

Versification in a dead language is an exotic, a far-fetched, costly, sickly, imitation of that which elsewhere may be found in healthful and spontaneous perfection. The soils on which this rarity flourishes are in general as ill suited to the production of vigorous native poetry as the flower-pots of a hot-house to the growth of oaks. That the author of the Paradise Lost should have written the Epistle to Manso was truly wonderful. Never before were such marked originality and such exquisite, mimicry found together. Indeed in all the Latin poems of Milton the artificial manner indispensable to such works is admirably preserved, while, at the same time, his genius gives to them a peculiar charm, an air of nobleness and freedom, which distinguishes them from all other writings of the same class. They remind us of the amusements of those angelic warriors who composed the cohort of Gabriel:

"About him exercised heroic games
The unarmed youth of heaven. But o’er their heads
Celestial armoury, shields, helms, and spears
Hang high, with diamond flaming, and with gold."

We cannot look upon the sportive exercises for which the genius of Milton ungirds itself, without catching a glimpse of the gorgeous and terrible panoply which it is accustomed to wear. The strength of his imagination triumphed over every obstacle. So intense and ardent was the fire of his mind, that it not only was not suffocated beneath the weight of fuel, but penetrated the whole superincumbent mass with its own heat and radiance.

It is not our intention to attempt anything like a complete

examination of the poetry of Milton. The public has long been agreed as to the merit of the most remarkable passages, the incomparable harmony of the numbers, and the excellence of that style, which no rival has been able to equal, and no parodist to degrade, which displays in their highest perfection the idiomatic powers of the English tongue, and to which every ancient and every modern language has contributed something of grace, of energy, or of music. In the vast field of criticism on which we are entering, innumerable reapers have already put their sickles. Yet the harvest is so abundant that the negligent search of a straggling gleaner may be rewarded with a sheaf.

The most striking characteristic of the poetry of Milton is the extreme remoteness of the associations by means of which it acts on the reader. Its effect is produced, not so much by what it expresses, as by what it suggests; not so much by the ideas which it directly conveys, as by other ideas which are connected with them. He electrifies the mind through conductors. The most unimaginative man must understand the Iliad. Homer gives him no choice, and requires from him no exertion, but takes the whole upon himself, and sets the images in so clear a light, that it is impossible to be blind to them. The works of Milton cannot be comprehended or enjoyed, unless the mind of the reader co-operate with that of the writer. He does not paint a finished picture, or play for a mere passive listener. He sketches, and leaves others to fill up the outline. He strikes the keynote, and expects his hearer to make out the melody.

We often hear of the magical influence of poetry. The expression in general means nothing: but, applied to the writings of Milton, it is most appropriate. His poetry acts like an incantation. Its merit lies less in its obvious meaning than in its occult power. There would seem, at first sight, to be no more in his words than in other words. But they are words of enchantment. No sooner are they pronounced, than the past is present and the distant near. New forms of beauty start at once into existence, and all the burial-places of the memory give up their dead. Change the structure of the sentence; substitute one synonym for another, and the whole effect is destroyed. The spell loses its power: and he who should then hope to conjure with it would find himself as much mistaken as Cassim in the Arabian tale, when he stood crying, "Open Wheat," "Open Barley," to the door which obeyed no sound but "Open Sesame." The miserable failure of Dryden in his attempt to translate into his own diction some parts of the Paradise Lost, is a remarkable instance of this.

In support of these observations we may remark, that scarcely any passages in the poems of Milton are more generally known or more frequently repeated than those which are little more than muster-rolls of names. They are not always more appropriate or more melodious than other names. Every one of them is the first link in a long chain of associated ideas. Like the dwelling-place of our infancy revisited in manhood, like the song of our country

heard in a strange land, they produce upon us an effect wholly independent of their intrinsic value. One transports us back to a remote period of history. Another places us among the novel scenes avid manners of a distant region. A third evokes all the dear classical recollections of childhood, the schoolroom, the dog-eared Virgil, the holiday, and the prize. A fourth brings before us the splendid phantoms of chivalrous romance, the trophied lists, the embroidered housings, the quaint devices, the haunted forests, the enchanted gardens, the achievements of enamoured knights, and the smiles of rescued princesses.

In none of the works of Milton is his peculiar manner more happily displayed than in the Allegro and the Penseroso. It is impossible to conceive that the mechanism of language can be brought to a more exquisite degree of perfection. These poems differ from others, as attar of roses differs from ordinary rose water, the close packed essence from the thin diluted mixture. They are indeed not so much poems, as collections of hints, from each of which the reader is to make out a poem for himself. Every epithet is a text for a stanza.

The Comus and the Samson Agonistes are works which, though of very different merit, offer some marked points of resemblance. Both are lyric poems in the form of plays. There are perhaps no two kinds of composition so essentially dissimilar as the drama and the ode. The business of the dramatist is to keep himself out of sight, and to let nothing appear but his characters. As soon as he attracts notice to his personal feelings, the illusion is broken. The effect is as unpleasant as that which is produced on the stage by the voice of a prompter or the entrance of a scene-shifter. Hence it was, that the tragedies of Byron were his least successful performances. They resemble those pasteboard pictures invented by the friend of children, Mr. Newbery, in which a single moveable head goes round twenty different bodies, so that the same face looks out upon us successively, from the uniform of a hussar, the furs of a judge, and the rags of a beggar. In all the characters, patriots and tyrants, haters and lovers, the frown and sneer of Harold were discernible in an instant. But this species of egotism, though fatal to the drama, is the inspiration of the ode. It is the part of the lyric poet to abandon himself, without reserve, to his own emotions.

Between these hostile elements many great men have endeavoured to effect an amalgamation, but never with complete success. The Greek Drama, on the model of which the Samson was written, sprang from the Ode. The dialogue was ingrafted on the chorus, and naturally partook of its character. The genius of the greatest of the Athenian dramatists cooperated with the circumstances under which tragedy made its first appearance. Aeschylus was, head and heart, a lyric poet. In his time, the Greeks had far more intercourse with the East than in the days of Homer; and they had not yet acquired that immense superiority in war, in science, and in the arts, which, in the following generation, led them to

treat the Asiatics with contempt. From the narrative of Herodotus it should seem that they still looked up, with the veneration of disciples, to Egypt and Assyria. At this period, accordingly, it was natural that the literature of Greece should be tinctured with the Oriental style. And that style, we think, is discernible in the works of Pindar and Aeschylus. The latter often reminds us of the Hebrew writers. The book of Job, indeed, in conduct and diction, bears a considerable resemblance to some of his dramas. Considered as plays, his works are absurd; considered as choruses, they are above all praise. If, for instance, we examine the address of Clytemnestra to Agamemnon on his return, or the description of the seven Argive chiefs, by the principles of dramatic writing, we shall instantly condemn them as monstrous. But if we forget the characters, and think only of the poetry, we shall admit that it has never been surpassed in energy and magnificence. Sophocles made the Greek Drama as dramatic as was consistent with its original form. His portraits of men have a sort of similarity; but it is the similarity not of a painting, but of a bas-relief. It suggests a resemblance; but it does not produce an illusion. Euripides attempted to carry the reform further. But it was a task far beyond his powers, perhaps beyond any powers. Instead of correcting what was bad, he destroyed what was excellent. He substituted crutches for stilts, bad sermons for good odes.

Milton, it is well known, admired Euripides highly, much more highly than, in our opinion, Euripides deserved. Indeed the caresses which this partiality leads our countryman to bestow on "sad Electra’s poet," sometimes remind us of the beautiful Queen of Fairy-land kissing the long ears of Bottom. At all events, there can be no doubt that this veneration for the Athenian, whether just or not, was injurious to the Samson Agonistes. Had Milton taken Aeschylus for his model, he would have given himself up to the lyric inspiration, and poured out profusely all the treasures of his mind, without bestowing a thought on those dramatic proprieties which the nature of the work rendered it impossible to preserve. In the attempt to reconcile things in their own nature inconsistent he has failed, as every one else must have failed. We cannot identify ourselves with the characters, as in a good play. We cannot identify ourselves with the poet, as in a good ode. The conflicting ingredients, like an acid and an alkali mixed, neutralise each other. We are by no means insensible to the merits of this celebrated piece, to the severe dignity of the style, the graceful and pathetic solemnity of the opening speech, or the wild and barbaric melody which gives so striking an effect to the choral passages. But we think it, we confess, the least successful effort of the genius of Milton.

The Comus is framed on the model of the Italian Masque, as the Samson is framed on the model of the Greek Tragedy. It is certainly the noblest performance of the kind which exists in any language. It is as far superior to the Faithful Shepherdess as

the Faithful Shepherdess is to the Aminta, or the Aminta to the Pastor Fido. It was well for Milton that he had here no Euripides to mislead him. He understood and loved the literature of modern Italy. But he did not feel for it the same veneration which he entertained for the remains of Athenian and Roman poetry, consecrated by so many lofty and endearing recollections. The faults, moreover, of his Italian predecessors were of a kind to which his mind had a deadly antipathy. He could stoop to a plain style, sometimes even to a bald style; but false brilliancy was his utter aversion. His muse had no objection to a russet attire; but she turned with disgust from the finery of Guarini, as tawdry and as paltry as the rags of a chimney-sweeper on May-day. Whatever ornaments she wears are of massive gold, not only dazzling to the sight, but capable of standing the severest test of the crucible.

Milton attended in the Comus to the distinction which he afterwards neglected in the Samson. He made his Masque what it ought to be, essentially lyrical, and dramatic only in semblance. He has not attempted a fruitless struggle against a defect inherent in the nature of that species of composition; and he has therefore succeeded, wherever success was not impossible. The speeches must be read as majestic soliloquies; and he who so reads them will be enraptured with their eloquence, their sublimity, and their music. The interruptions of the dialogue, however, impose a constraint upon the writer, and break the illusion of the reader. The finest passages are those which are lyric in form as well as in spirit. "I should much commend," says the excellent Sir Henry Wotton in a letter to Milton, "the tragical part if the lyrical did not ravish me with a certain Dorique delicacy in your songs and odes, whereunto, I must plainly confess to, you, I have seen yet nothing parallel in our language." The criticism was just. It is when Milton escapes from the shackles of the dialogue, when he is discharged from the labour of uniting two incongruous styles, when he is at liberty to indulge his choral raptures without reserve, that he rises even above himself. Then, like his own good Genius bursting from the earthly form and weeds of Thyrsis, he stands forth in celestial freedom and beauty; he seems to cry exultingly,

"Now my task is smoothly done,
I can fly or I can run,"

to skim the earth, to soar above the clouds, to bathe in the Elysian dew of the rainbow, and to inhale the balmy smells of nard and cassia, which the musky winds of the zephyr scatter through the cedared alleys of the Hesperides.

There are several of the minor poems of Milton on which we would willingly make a few remarks. Still more willingly would we enter into a detailed examination of that admirable poem, the Paradise Regained, which, strangely enough, is scarcely ever mentioned except as an instance of the blindness of the parental affection

which men of letters bear towards the offspring of their intellects. That Milton was mistaken in preferring this work, excellent as it is, to the Paradise Lost, we readily admit. But we are sure that the superiority of the Paradise Lost to the Paradise Regained is not more decided, than the superiority of the Paradise Regained to every poem which has since made its appearance. Our limits, however, prevent us from discussing the point at length. We hasten on to that extraordinary production which the general suffrage of critics has placed in the highest class of human compositions.

The only poem of modern times which can be compared with the Paradise Lost is the Divine Comedy. The subject of Milton, in some points, resembled that of Dante; but he has treated it in a widely different manner. We cannot, we think, better illustrate our opinion respecting our own great poet, than by contrasting him with the father of Tuscan literature.

The poetry of Milton differs from that of Dante, as the hieroglyphics of Egypt differed from the picture-writing of Mexico. The images which Dante employs speak for themselves; they stand simply for what they are. Those of Milton have a signification which is often discernible only to the initiated. Their value depends less on what they directly represent than on what they remotely suggest. However strange, however grotesque, may be the appearance which Dante undertakes to describe, he never shrinks from describing it. He gives us the shape, the colour, the sound, the smell, the taste; he counts the numbers; he measures the size. His similes are the illustrations of a traveller. Unlike those of other poets, and especially of Milton, they are introduced in a plain, business-like manner; not for the sake of any beauty in the objects from which they are drawn; not for the sake of any ornament which they may impart to the poem; but simply in order to make the meaning of the writer as clear to the reader as it is to himself. The ruins of the precipice which led from the sixth to the seventh circle of hell were like those of the rock which fell into the Adige on the south of Trent. The cataract of Phlegethon was like that of Aqua Cheta at the monastery of St. Benedict. The place where the heretics were confined in burning tombs resembled the vast cemetery of Arles.

Now let us compare with the exact details of Dante the dim intimations of Milton. We will cite a few examples. The English poet has never thought of taking the measure of Satan. He gives us merely a vague idea of vast bulk. In one passage the fiend lies stretched out huge in length, floating many a rood, equal in size to the earth-born enemies of Jove, or to the sea-monster which the mariner mistakes for an island. When he addresses himself to battle against the guardian angels, he stands like Teneriffe or Atlas: his stature reaches the sky. Contrast with these descriptions the lines in which Dante has described the gigantic spectre of Nimrod. "His face seemed to me as long and as broad as the ball of St. Peter’s at Rome, and his other limbs

were in proportion; so that the bank, which concealed him from the waist downwards, nevertheless showed so much of him, that three tall Germans would in vain have attempted to reach to his hair." We are sensible that we do no justice to the admirable style of the Florentine poet. But Mr. Cary's translation is not at hand; and our version, however rude, is sufficient to illustrate our meaning.

Once more, compare the lazar-house in the eleventh book of the Paradise Lost with the last ward of Malebolge in Dante. Milton avoids the loathsome details, and takes refuge in indistinct but solemn and tremendous imagery. Despair hurrying from couch to couch to mock the wretches with his attendance, Death shaking his dart over them, but, in spite of supplications, delaying to strike. What says Dante? "There was such a moan there as there would be if all the sick who, between July and September, are in the hospitals of Valdichiana, and of the Tuscan swamps, and of Sardinia, were in one pit together; and such a stench was issuing forth as is wont to issue from decayed limbs."

We will not take upon ourselves the invidious office of settling precedency between two such writers, Each in his own department is incomparable; and each, we may remark, has wisely, or fortunately, taken a subject adapted to exhibit his peculiar talent to the greatest advantage. The Divine Comedy is a personal narrative. Dante is the eye-witness and ear-witness of that which he relates. He is the very man who has heard the tormented spirits crying out for the second death, who has read the dusky characters on the portal within which there is no hope, who has hidden his face from the terrors of the Gorgon, who has fled from the hooks and the seething pitch of Barbariccia and Draghignazzo. His own hands have grasped the shaggy sides of Lucifer. His own feet have climbed the mountain of expiation. His own brow has been marked by the purifying angel. The reader would throw aside such a tale in incredulous disgust, unless it were told with the strongest air of veracity, with a sobriety even in its horrors, with the greatest precision and multiplicity in its details. The narrative of Milton in this respect differs from that of Dante, as the adventures of Amadis differ from those of Gulliver. The author of Amadis would have made his book ridiculous if he had introduced those minute particulars which give such a charm to the work of Swift, the nautical observations, the affected delicacy about names, the official documents transcribed at full length, and all the unmeaning gossip and scandal of the court, springing out of nothing, and tending to nothing. We are not shocked at being told that a man who lived, nobody knows when, saw many very strange sights, and we can easily abandon ourselves to the illusion of the romance. But when Lemuel Gulliver, surgeon, resident at Rotherhithe, tells us of pygmies and giants, flying islands, and philosophising horses, nothing but such circumstantial touches could produce for a single moment a deception on the imagination.

Of all the poets who have introduced into their works the agency of supernatural beings, Milton has succeeded best. Here Dante decidedly yields to him: and as this is a point on which many rash and ill-considered judgments have been pronounced, we feel inclined to dwell on it a little longer. The most fatal error which a poet can possibly commit in the management of his machinery, is that of attempting to philosophise too much. Milton has been often censured for ascribing to spirits many functions of which spirits must be incapable. But these objections, though sanctioned by eminent names, originate, we venture to say, in profound ignorance of the art of poetry.

What is spirit? What are our own minds, the portion of spirit with which we are best acquainted? We observe certain phaenomena. We cannot explain them into material causes. We therefore infer that there exists something which is not material. But of this something we have no idea. We can define it only by negatives. We can reason about it only by symbols. We use the word; but we have no image of the thing; and the business of poetry is with images, and not with words. The poet uses words indeed; but they are merely the instruments of his art, not its objects. They are the materials which he is to dispose in such a manner as to present a picture to the mental eye. And if they are not so disposed, they are no more entitled to be called poetry than a bale of canvas and a box of colours to be called a painting.

Logicians may reason about abstractions. But the great mass of men must have images. The strong tendency of the multitude in all ages and nations to idolatry can be explained on no other principle. The first inhabitants of Greece, there is reason to believe, worshipped one invisible Deity. But the necessity of having something more definite to adore produced, in a few centuries, the innumerable crowd of Gods and Goddesses. In like manner the ancient Persians thought it impious to exhibit the Creator under a human form. Yet even these transferred to the Sun the worship which, in speculation, they considered due only to the Supreme Mind. The history of the Jews is the record of a continued struggle between pure Theism, supported by the most terrible sanctions, and the strangely fascinating desire of having some visible and tangible object of adoration. Perhaps none of the secondary causes which Gibbon has assigned for the rapidity with which Christianity spread over the world, while Judaism scarcely ever acquired a proselyte, operated more powerfully than this feeling. God, the uncreated, the incomprehensible, the invisible, attracted few worshippers. A philosopher might admire so noble a conception; but the crowd turned away in disgust from words which presented no image to their minds. It was before Deity embodied in a human form, walking among men, partaking of their infirmities, leaning on their bosoms, weeping over their graves, slumbering in the manger, bleeding on the cross, that the prejudices of the Synagogue, and the doubts of the Academy, and the pride of the Portico, and the fasces of the Lictor, and the swords of thirty

legions, were humbled in the dust. Soon after Christianity had achieved its triumph, the principle which had assisted it began to corrupt it. It became a new Paganism. Patron saints assumed the offices of household gods. St. George took the place of Mars. St. Elmo consoled the mariner for the loss of Castor and Pollux. The Virgin Mother and Cecilia succeeded to Venus and the Muses. The fascination of sex and loveliness was again joined to that of celestial dignity; and the homage of chivalry was blended with that of religion. Reformers have often made a stand against these feelings; but never with more than apparent and partial success. The men who demolished the images in cathedrals have not always been able to demolish those which were enshrined in their minds. It would not be difficult to show that in politics the same rule holds good. Doctrines, we are afraid, must generally be embodied before they can excite a strong public feeling. The multitude is more easily interested for the most unmeaning badge, or the most insignificant name, than for the most important principle.

From these considerations, we infer that no poet, who should affect that metaphysical accuracy for the want of which Milton has been blamed, would escape a disgraceful failure. Still, however, there was another extreme which, though far less dangerous, was also to be avoided. The imaginations of men are in a great measure under the control of their opinions. The most exquisite art of poetical colouring can produce no illusion, when it is employed to represent that which is at once perceived to be incongruous and absurd. Milton wrote in an age of philosophers and theologians. It was necessary, therefore, for him to abstain from giving such a shock to their understanding as might break the charm which it was his object to throw over their imaginations. This is the real explanation of the indistinctness and inconsistency with which he has often been reproached. Dr. Johnson acknowledges that it was absolutely necessary that the spirit should be clothed with material forms. "But," says he, "the poet should have secured the consistency of his system by keeping immateriality out of sight, and seducing the reader to drop it from his thoughts." This is easily said; but what if Milton could not seduce his readers to drop immateriality from their thoughts? What if the contrary opinion had taken so full a possession of the minds of men as to leave no room even for the half belief which poetry requires? Such we suspect to have been the case. It was impossible for the poet to adopt altogether the material or the immaterial system. He therefore took his stand on the debatable ground. He left the whole in ambiguity. He has doubtless, by so doing, laid himself open to the charge of inconsistency. But, though philosophically in the wrong, we cannot but believe that he was poetically in the right. This task, which almost any other writer would have found impracticable, was easy to him. The peculiar art which he possessed of communicating his meaning circuitously through a long succession of associated ideas, and of intimating more than he expressed, enabled him to disguise those incongruities which he could not avoid.

Poetry which relates to the beings of another world ought to be at once mysterious and picturesque. That of Milton is so. That of Dante is picturesque indeed beyond any that ever was written. Its effect approaches to that produced by the pencil or the chisel. But it is picturesque to the exclusion of all mystery. This is a fault on the right side, a fault inseparable from the plan of Dante's poem, which, as we have already observed, rendered the utmost accuracy of description necessary. Still it is a fault. The supernatural agents excite an interest; but it is not the interest which is proper to supernatural agents. We feel that we could talk to the ghosts and daemons, without any emotion of unearthly awe. We could, like Don Juan, ask them to supper, and eat heartily in their company. Dante's angels are good men with wings. His devils are spiteful ugly executioners. His dead men are merely living men in strange situations. The scene which passes between the poet and Farinata is justly celebrated. Still, Farinata in the burning tomb is exactly what Farinata would have been at an auto da fe. Nothing can be more touching than the first interview of Dante and Beatrice. Yet what is it, but a lovely woman chiding, with sweet austere composure, the lover for whose affection she is grateful, but whose vices she reprobates? The feelings which give the passage its charm would suit the streets of Florence as well as the summit of the Mount of Purgatory.

The spirits of Milton are unlike those of almost all other writers. His fiends, in particular, are wonderful creations. They are not metaphysical abstractions. They are not wicked men. They are not ugly beasts. They have no horns, no tails, none of the fee-faw-fum of Tasso and Klopstock. They have just enough, in common with human nature to be intelligible to human beings. Their characters are, like their forms, marked by a certain dim resemblance to those of men, but exaggerated to gigantic dimensions, and veiled in mysterious gloom.

Perhaps the gods and daemons of Aeschylus may best bear a comparison with the angels and devils of Milton. The style of the Athenian had, as we have remarked, something of the Oriental character; and the same peculiarity may be traced in his mythology. It has nothing of the amenity and elegance which we generally find in the superstitions of Greece. All is rugged, barbaric, and colossal. The legends of Aeschylus seem to harmonise less with the fragrant groves and graceful porticoes in which his countrymen paid their vows to the God of Light and Goddess of Desire, than with those huge and grotesque labyrinths of eternal granite in which Egypt enshrined her mystic Osiris, or in which Hindustan still bows down to her seven-headed idols. His favourite gods are those of the elder generation, the sons of heaven and earth, compared with whom Jupiter himself was a stripling and an upstart, the gigantic Titans, and the inexorable Furies. Foremost among his creations of this class stands Prometheus, half fiend, half redeemer, the friend of man,

the sullen and implacable enemy of Heaven. Prometheus bears undoubtedly a considerable resemblance to the Satan of Milton. In both we find the same impatience of control, the same ferocity, the same unconquerable pride. In both characters also are mingled, though in very different proportions, some kind and generous feelings. Prometheus, however, is hardly superhuman enough. He talks too much of his chains and his uneasy posture: he is rather too much depressed and agitated. His resolution seems to depend on the knowledge which he possesses that he holds the fate of his torturer in his hands, and that the hour of his release will surely come. But Satan is a creature of another sphere. The might of his intellectual nature is victorious over the extremity of pain. Amidst agonies which cannot be conceived without horror, he deliberates, resolves, and even exults. Against the sword of Michael, against the thunder of Jehovah, against the flaming lake, and the marl burning with solid fire, against the prospect of an eternity of unintermitted misery, his spirit bears up unbroken, resting on its own innate energies, requiring no support from anything external, nor even from hope itself.

To return for a moment to the parallel which we have been attempting to draw between Milton and Dante, we would add that the poetry of these great men has in a considerable degree taken its character from their moral qualities. They are not egotists. They rarely obtrude their idiosyncrasies on their readers. They have nothing in common with those modern beggars for fame, who extort a pittance from the compassion of the inexperienced by exposing the nakedness and sores of their minds. Yet it would be difficult to name two writers whose works have been more completely, though undesignedly, coloured by their personal feelings.

The character of Milton was peculiarly distinguished by loftiness of spirit, that of Dante by intensity of feeling. In every line of the Divine Comedy we discern the asperity which is produced by pride struggling with misery. There is perhaps no work in the world so deeply and uniformly sorrowful. The melancholy of Dante was no fantastic caprice. It was not, as far as at this distance of time can be judged, the effect of external circumstances. It was from within. Neither love nor glory, neither the conflicts of earth nor the hope of heaven could dispel it. It turned every consolation and every pleasure into its own nature. It resembled that noxious Sardinian soil of which the intense bitterness is said to have been perceptible even in its honey. His mind was, in the noble language of the Hebrew poet, "a land of darkness, as darkness itself, and where the light was as darkness." The gloom of his character discolours all the passions of men, and all the face of nature, and tinges with its own livid hue the flowers of Paradise and the glories of the eternal throne. All the portraits of him are singularly characteristic. No person can look on the features, noble even to ruggedness, the dark furrows of the cheek, the haggard and woeful stare of the eye, the sullen and

contemptuous curve of the lip, and doubt that they belong to a man too proud and too sensitive to be happy.

Milton was, like Dante, a statesman and a lover; and, like Dante, he had been unfortunate in ambition and in love. He had survived his health and his sight, the comforts of his home, and the prosperity of his party. Of the great men by whom he had been distinguished at his entrance into life, some had been taken away from the evil to come; some had carried into foreign climates their unconquerable hatred of oppression; some were pining in dungeons; and some had poured forth their blood on scaffolds. Venal and licentious scribblers, with just sufficient talent to clothe the thoughts of a pandar in the style of a bellman, were now the favourite writers of the Sovereign and of the public. It was a loathsome herd, which could be compared to nothing so fitly as to the rabble of Comus, grotesque monsters, half bestial, half human, dropping with wine, bloated with gluttony, and reeling in obscene dances. Amidst these that fair Muse was placed, like the chaste lady of the Masque, lofty, spotless, and serene, to be chattered at, and pointed at, and grinned at, by the whole rout of Satyrs and Goblins. If ever despondency and asperity could be excused in any man, they might have been excused in Milton. But the strength of his mind overcame every calamity. Neither blindness, nor gout, nor age, nor penury, nor domestic afflictions, nor political disappointments, nor abuse, nor proscription, nor neglect, had power to disturb his sedate and majestic patience. His spirits do not seem to have been high, but they were singularly equable. His temper was serious, perhaps stern; but it was a temper which no sufferings could render sullen or fretful. Such as it was when, on the eve of great events, he returned from his travels, in the prime of health and manly beauty, loaded with literary distinctions, and glowing with patriotic hopes, such it continued to be when, after having experienced every calamity which is in incident to our nature, old, poor, sightless and disgraced, he retired to his hovel to die.

Hence it was that, though he wrote the Paradise Lost at a time of life when images of beauty and tenderness are in general beginning to fade, even from those minds in which they have not been effaced by anxiety and disappointment, he adorned it with all that is most lovely and delightful in the physical and in the moral world. Neither Theocritus nor Ariosto had a finer or a more healthful sense of the pleasantness of external objects, or loved better to luxuriate amidst sunbeams and flowers, the songs of nightingales, the juice of summer fruits, and the coolness of shady fountains. His conception of love unites all the voluptuousness of the Oriental haram, and all the gallantry of the chivalric tournament, with all the pure and quiet affection of an English fireside. His poetry reminds us of the miracles of Alpine scenery. Nooks and dells, beautiful as fairyland, are embosomed in its most rugged and gigantic elevations. The roses and myrtles bloom unchilled on the verge of the avalanche.

Traces, indeed, of the peculiar character of Milton may be found in all his works; but it is most strongly displayed in the Sonnets. Those remarkable poems have been undervalued by critics who have not understood their nature. They have no epigrammatic point. There is none of the ingenuity of Filicaja in the thought, none of the hard and brilliant enamel of Petrarch in the style. They are simple but majestic records of the feelings of the poet; as little tricked out for the public eye as his diary would have been. A victory, an unexpected attack upon the city, a momentary fit of depression or exultation, a jest thrown out against one of his books, a dream which for a short time restored to him that beautiful face over which the grave had closed for ever, led him to musings, which without effort shaped themselves into verse. The unity of sentiment and severity of style which characterise these little pieces remind us of the Greek Anthology, or perhaps still more of the Collects of the English Liturgy. The noble poem on the Massacres of Piedmont is strictly a collect in verse.

The Sonnets are more or less striking, according as the occasions which gave birth to them are more or less interesting. But they are, almost without exception, dignified by a sobriety and greatness of mind to which we know not where to look for a parallel. It would, indeed, be scarcely safe to draw any decided inferences as to the character of a writer from passages directly egotistical. But the qualities which we have ascribed to Milton, though perhaps most strongly marked in those parts of his works which treat of his personal feelings, are distinguishable in every page, and impart to all his writings, prose and poetry, English, Latin, and Italian, a strong family likeness.

His public conduct was such as was to be expected from a man of a spirit so high and of an intellect so powerful. He lived at one of the most memorable eras in the history of mankind, at the very crisis of the great conflict between Oromasdes and Arimanes, liberty and despotism, reason and prejudice. That great battle was fought for no single generation, for no single land. The destinies of the human race were staked on the same cast with the freedom of the English people. Then were first proclaimed those mighty principles which have since worked their way into the depths of the American forests, which have roused Greece from the slavery and degradation of two thousand years, and which, from one end of Europe to the other, have kindled an unquenchable fire in the hearts of the oppressed, and loosed the knees of the oppressors with an unwonted fear.

Of those principles, then struggling for their infant existence, Milton was the most devoted and eloquent literary champion. We need not say how much we admire his public conduct. But we cannot disguise from ourselves that a large portion of his countrymen still think it unjustifiable. The civil war, indeed, has been more discussed, and is less understood, than any event in English history. The friends of liberty laboured under the

disadvantage of which the lion in the fable complained so bitterly. Though they were the conquerors, their enemies were the painters. As a body, the Roundheads had done their utmost to decry and ruin literature; and literature was even with them, as, in the long-run, it always is with its enemies. The best book on their side of the question is the charming narrative of Mrs. Hutchinson. May's History of the Parliament is good; but it breaks off at the most interesting crisis of the struggle. The performance of Ludlow is foolish and violent; and most of the later writers who have espoused the same cause, Oldmixon for instance, and Catherine Macaulay, have, to say the least, been more distinguished by zeal than either by candour or by skill. On the other side are the most authoritative and the most popular historical works in our language, that of Clarendon, and that of Hume. The former is not only ably written and full of valuable information, but has also an air of dignity and sincerity which makes even the prejudices and errors with which it abounds respectable. Hume, from whose fascinating narrative the great mass of the reading public are still contented to take their opinions, hated religion so much that he hated liberty for having been allied with religion, and has pleaded the cause of tyranny with the dexterity of an advocate, while affecting the impartiality of a judge.

The public conduct of Milton must be approved or condemned according as the resistance of the people to Charles the First shall appear to be justifiable or criminal. We shall therefore make no apology for dedicating a few pages to the discussion of that interesting and most important question. We shall not argue it on general grounds. We shall not recur to those primary principles from which the claim of any government to the obedience of its subjects is to be deduced. We are entitled to that vantage ground; but we will relinquish it. We are, on this point, so confident of superiority, that we are not unwilling to imitate the ostentatious generosity of those ancient knights, who vowed to joust without helmet or shield against all enemies, and to give their antagonists the advantage of sun and wind. We will take the naked constitutional question. We confidently affirm, that every reason which can be urged in favour of the Revolution of 1688 may be urged with at least equal force in favour of what is called the Great Rebellion.

In one respect, only, we think, can the warmest admirers of Charles venture to say that he was a better sovereign than his son. He was not, in name and profession, a Papist; we say in name and profession, because both Charles himself and his creature Laud, while they abjured the innocent badges of Popery, retained all its worst vices, a complete subjection of reason to authority, a weak preference of form to substance, a childish passion for mummeries, an idolatrous veneration for the priestly character, and, above all, a merciless intolerance. This, however, we waive. We will concede that Charles was a good Protestant; but we say that his Protestantism does not make the

slightest distinction between his case and that of James.

The principles of the Revolution have often been grossly misrepresented, and never more than in the course of the present year. There is a certain class of men, who, while they profess to hold in reverence the great names and great actions of former times, never look at them for any other purpose than in order to find in them some excuse for existing abuses. In every venerable precedent they pass by what is essential, and take only what is accidental: they keep out of sight what is beneficial, and hold up to public imitation all that is defective. If, in any part of any great example, there be any thing unsound, these flesh-flies detect it with an unerring instinct, and dart upon it with a ravenous delight. If some good end has been attained in spite of them, they feel, with their prototype, that

"Their labour must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil."

To the blessings which England has derived from the Revolution these people are utterly insensible. The expulsion of a tyrant, the solemn recognition of popular rights, liberty, security, toleration, all go for nothing with them. One sect there was, which, from unfortunate temporary causes, it was thought necessary to keep under close restraint. One part of the empire there was so unhappily circumstanced, that at that time its misery was necessary to our happiness, and its slavery to our freedom. These are the parts of the Revolution which the politicians of whom we speak love to contemplate, and which seem to them not indeed to vindicate, but in some degree to palliate, the good which it has produced. Talk to them of Naples, of Spain, or of South America. They stand forth zealots for the doctrine of Divine Right which has now come back to us, like a thief from transportation, under the alias of Legitimacy. But mention the miseries of Ireland. Then William is a hero. Then Somers and Shrewsbury are great men. Then the Revolution is a glorious era. The very same persons, who, in this country never omit an opportunity of reviving every wretched Jacobite slander respecting the Whigs of that period, have no sooner crossed St. George’s Channel, than they begin to fill their bumpers to the glorious and immortal memory. They may truly boast that they look not at men, but at measures. So that evil be done, they care not who does it; the arbitrary Charles, or the liberal William, Ferdinand the Catholic, or Frederic the Protestant. On such occasions their deadliest opponents may reckon upon their candid construction. The bold assertions of these people have of late impressed a large portion of the public with an opinion that James the Second was expelled simply because he was a Catholic, and that the Revolution was essentially a Protestant Revolution.

But this certainly was not the case; nor can any person who has acquired more knowledge of the history of those times than is to be found in Goldsmith’s Abridgement believe that, if James had

held his own religious opinions without wishing to make proselytes, or if, wishing even to make proselytes, he had contented himself with exerting only his constitutional influence for that purpose, the Prince of Orange would ever have been invited over. Our ancestors, we suppose, knew their own meaning; and, if we may believe them, their hostility was primarily not to popery, but to tyranny. They did not drive out a tyrant because he was a Catholic; but they excluded Catholics from the crown, because they thought them likely to be tyrants. The ground on which they, in their famous resolution, declared the throne vacant, was this, "that James had broken the fundamental laws of the kingdom." Every man, therefore, who approves of the Revolution of 1688 must hold that the breach of fundamental laws on the part of the sovereign justifies resistance. The question, then, is this. Had Charles the First broken the fundamental laws of England?

No person can answer in the negative, unless he refuses credit, not merely to all the accusations brought against Charles by his opponents, but to the narratives of the warmest Royalists, and to the confessions of the King himself. If there be any truth in any historian of any party, who has related the events of that reign, the conduct of Charles, from his accession to the meeting of the Long Parliament, had been a continued course of oppression and treachery. Let those who applaud the Revolution and condemn the Rebellion, mention one act of James the Second to which a parallel is not to be found in the history of his father. Let them lay their fingers on a single article in the Declaration of Right, presented by the two Houses to William and Mary, which Charles is not acknowledged to have violated. He had, according to the testimony of his own friends, usurped the functions of the legislature, raised taxes without the consent of parliament, and quartered troops on the people in the most illegal and vexatious manner. Not a single session of parliament had passed without some unconstitutional attack on the freedom of debate; the right of petition was grossly violated; arbitrary judgments, exorbitant fines, and unwarranted imprisonments were grievances of daily occurrence. If these things do not justify resistance, the Revolution was treason; if they do, the Great Rebellion was laudable.

But it is said, why not adopt milder measures? Why, after the King had consented to so many reforms, and renounced so many oppressive prerogatives, did the Parliament continue to rise in their demands at the risk of provoking a civil war? The ship-money had been given up. The Star-Chamber had been abolished. Provision had been made for the frequent convocation and secure deliberation of parliaments. Why not pursue an end confessedly good by peaceable and regular means? We recur again to the analogy of the Revolution. Why was James driven from the throne? Why was he not retained upon conditions? He too had offered to call a free parliament and to submit to its decision all the matters in dispute. Yet we are in the habit of praising our

forefathers, who preferred a revolution, a disputed succession, a dynasty of strangers, twenty years of foreign and intestine war, a standing army, and a national debt, to the rule, however restricted, of a tried and proved tyrant. The Long Parliament acted on the same principle, and is entitled to the same praise. They could not trust the King. He had no doubt passed salutary laws; but what assurance was there that he would not break them? He had renounced oppressive prerogatives but where was the security that he would not resume them? The nation had to deal with a man whom no tie could bind, a man who made and broke promises with equal facility, a man whose honour had been a hundred times pawned, and never redeemed.

Here, indeed, the Long Parliament stands on still stronger ground than the Convention of 1688. No action of James can be compared to the conduct of Charles with respect to the Petition of Right. The Lords and Commons present him with a bill in which the constitutional limits of his power are marked out. He hesitates; he evades; at last he bargains to give his assent for five subsidies. The bill receives his solemn assent; the subsidies are voted; but no sooner is the tyrant relieved, than he returns at once to all the arbitrary measures which he had bound himself to abandon, and violates all the clauses of the very Act which he had been paid to pass.

For more than ten years the people had seen the rights which were theirs by a double claim, by immemorial inheritance and by recent purchase, infringed by the perfidious king who had recognised them. At length circumstances compelled Charles to summon another parliament: another chance was given to our fathers: were they to throw it away as they had thrown away the former? Were they again to be cozened by le Roi le veut? Were they again to advance their money on pledges which had been forfeited over and over again? Were they to lay a second Petition of Right at the foot of the throne, to grant another lavish aid in exchange for another unmeaning ceremony, and then to take their departure, till, after ten years more of fraud and oppression, their prince should again require a supply, and again repay it with a perjury? They were compelled to choose whether they would trust a tyrant or conquer him. We think that they chose wisely and nobly.

The advocates of Charles, like the advocates of other malefactors against whom overwhelming evidence is produced, generally decline all controversy about the facts, and content themselves with calling testimony to character. He had so many private virtues! And had James the Second no private virtues? Was Oliver Cromwell, his bitterest enemies themselves being judges, destitute of private virtues? And what, after all, are the virtues ascribed to Charles? A religious zeal, not more sincere than that of his son, and fully as weak and narrow-minded, and a few of the ordinary household decencies which half the tombstones in England claim for those who lie beneath them. A good father! A good husband! Ample apologies indeed for fifteen years of persecution, tyranny,

and falsehood!

We charge him with having broken his coronation oath; and we are told that he kept his marriage vow! We accuse him of having given up his people to the merciless inflictions of the most hot-headed and hard-hearted of prelates; and the defence is, that he took his little son on his knee and kissed him! We censure him for having violated the articles of the Petition of Right, after having, for good and valuable consideration, promised to observe them; and we are informed that he was accustomed to hear prayers at six o'clock in the morning! It is to such considerations as these, together with his Vandyck dress, his handsome face, and his peaked beard, that he owes, we verily believe, most of his popularity with the present generation.

For ourselves, we own that we do not understand the common phrase, a good man, but a bad king. We can as easily conceive a good man and an unnatural father, or a good man and a treacherous friend. We cannot, in estimating the character of an individual, leave out of our consideration his conduct in the most important of all human relations; and if in that relation we find him to have been selfish, cruel, and deceitful, we shall take the liberty to call him a bad man, in spite of all his temperance at table, and all his regularity at chapel.

We cannot refrain from adding a few words respecting a topic on which the defenders of Charles are fond of dwelling. If, they say, he governed his people ill, he at least governed them after the example of his predecessors. If he violated their privileges, it was because those privileges had not been accurately defined. No act of oppression has ever been imputed to him which has not a parallel in the annals of the Tudors. This point Hume has laboured, with an art which is as discreditable in a historical work as it would be admirable in a forensic address. The answer is short, clear, and decisive. Charles had assented to the Petition of Right. He had renounced the oppressive powers said to have been exercised by his predecessors, and he had renounced them for money. He was not entitled to set up his antiquated claims against his own recent release.

These arguments are so obvious, that it may seem superfluous to dwell upon them. But those who have observed how much the events of that time are misrepresented and misunderstood will not blame us for stating the case simply. It is a case of which the simplest statement is the strongest.

The enemies of the Parliament, indeed, rarely choose to take issue on the great points of the question. They content themselves with exposing some of the crimes and follies to which public commotions necessarily give birth. They bewail the unmerited fate of Strafford. They execrate the lawless violence of the army. They laugh at the Scriptural names of the preachers. Major-generals fleecing their districts; soldiers revelling on

the spoils of a ruined peasantry; upstarts, enriched by the public plunder, taking possession of the hospitable firesides and hereditary trees of the old gentry; boys smashing the beautiful windows of cathedrals; Quakers riding naked through the market-place; Fifth-monarchy-men shouting for King Jesus; agitators lecturing from the tops of tubs on the fate of Agag;-- all these, they tell us, were the offspring of the Great Rebellion.

Be it so. We are not careful to answer in this matter. These charges, were they infinitely more important, would not alter our opinion of an event which alone has made us to differ from the slaves who crouch beneath despotic sceptres. Many evils, no doubt, were produced by the civil war. They were the price of our liberty. Has the acquisition been worth the sacrifice? It is the nature of the Devil of tyranny to tear and rend the body which he leaves. Are the miseries of continued possession less horrible than the struggles of the tremendous exorcism?

If it were possible that a people brought up under an intolerant and arbitrary system could subvert that system without acts of cruelty and folly, half the objections to despotic power would be removed. We should, in that case, be compelled to acknowledge that it at least produces no pernicious effects on the intellectual and moral character of a nation. We deplore the outrages which accompany revolutions. But the more violent the outrages, the more assured we feel that a revolution was necessary. The violence of those outrages will always be proportioned to the ferocity and ignorance of the people; and the ferocity and ignorance of the people will be proportioned to the oppression and degradation under which they have been accustomed to live. Thus it was in our civil war. The heads of the church and state reaped only that which they had sown. The Government had prohibited free discussion: it had done its best to keep the people unacquainted with their duties and their rights. The retribution was just and natural. If our rulers suffered from popular ignorance, it was because they had themselves taken away the key of knowledge. If they were assailed with blind fury, it was because they had exacted an equally blind submission.

It is the character of such revolutions that we always see the worst of them at first. Till men have been some time free, they know not how to use their freedom. The natives of wine countries are generally sober. In climates where wine is a rarity intemperance abounds. A newly liberated people may be compared to a northern army encamped on the Rhine or the Xeres. It is said that, when soldiers in such a situation first find themselves able to indulge without restraint in such a rare and expensive luxury, nothing is to be seen but intoxication. Soon, however, plenty teaches discretion; and, after wine has been for a few months their daily fare, they become more temperate than they had ever been in their own country. In the same manner, the final and permanent fruits of liberty are wisdom, moderation, and mercy.

Its immediate effects are often atrocious crimes, conflicting errors, scepticism on points the most clear, dogmatism on points the most mysterious. It is just at this crisis that its enemies love to exhibit it. They pull down the scaffolding from the half-finished edifice. They point to the flying dust, the falling bricks, the comfortless rooms, the frightful irregularity of the whole appearance; and then ask in scorn where the promised splendour and comfort is to be found. If such miserable sophisms were to prevail, there would never be a good house or a good government in the world.

Ariosto tells a pretty story of a fairy, who, by some mysterious law of her nature, was condemned to appear at certain seasons in the form of a foul and poisonous snake. Those who injured her during the period of her disguise were for ever excluded from participation in the blessings which she bestowed. But to those who, in spite of her loathsome aspect, pitied and protected her, she afterwards revealed herself in the beautiful and celestial form which was natural to her, accompanied their steps, granted all their wishes, filled their houses with wealth, made them happy in love and victorious in war. Such a spirit is Liberty. At times she takes the form of a hateful reptile. She grovels, she hisses, she stings. But woe to those who in disgust shall venture to crush her! And happy are those who, having dared to receive her in her degraded and frightful shape, shall at length be rewarded by her in the time of her beauty and her glory!

There is only one cure for the evils which newly acquired freedom produces; and that cure is freedom. When a prisoner first leaves his cell he cannot bear the light of day: he is unable to discriminate colours, or recognise faces. But the remedy is, not to remand him into his dungeon, but to accustom him to the rays of the sun. The blaze of truth and liberty may at first dazzle and bewilder nations which have become half blind in the house of bondage. But let them gaze on, and they will soon be able to bear it. In a few years men learn to reason. The extreme violence of opinion subsides. Hostile theories correct each other. The scattered elements of truth cease to contend, and begin to coalesce. And at length a system of justice and order is educed out of the chaos.

Many politicians of our time are in the habit of laying it down as a self-evident proposition, that no people ought to be free till they are fit to use their freedom. The maxim is worthy of the fool in the old story who resolved not to go into the water till he had learnt to swim. If men are to wait for liberty till they become wise and good in slavery, they may indeed wait for ever.

Therefore it is that we decidedly approve of the conduct of Milton and the other wise and good men who, in spite of much that was ridiculous and hateful in the conduct of their associates, stood firmly by the cause of Public Liberty. We are not aware

that the poet has been charged with personal participation in any of the blameable excesses of that time, The favourite topic of his enemies is the line of conduct which he pursued with regard to the execution of the King. Of that celebrated proceeding we by no means approve. Still we must say, in justice to the many eminent persons who concurred in it, and in justice more particularly to the eminent person who defended it, that nothing can be more absurd than the imputations which, for the last hundred and sixty years, it has been the fashion to cast upon the Regicides. We have, throughout, abstained from appealing to first principles. We will not appeal to them now. We recur again to the parallel case of the Revolution. What essential distinction can be drawn between the execution of the father and the deposition of the son? What constitutional maxim is there which applies to the former and not to the latter? The King can do no wrong. If so, James was as innocent as Charles could have been. The minister only ought to be responsible for the acts of the Sovereign. If so, why not impeach Jeffreys and retain James? The person of a king is sacred. Was the person of James considered sacred at the Boyne? To discharge cannon against an army in which a king is known to be posted is to approach pretty near to regicide. Charles, too, it should always be remembered, was put to death by men who had been exasperated by the hostilities of several years, and who had never been bound to him by any other tie than that which was common to them with all their fellow-citizens. Those who drove James from his throne, who seduced his army, who alienated his friends, who first imprisoned him in his palace, and then turned him out of it, who broke in upon his very slumbers by imperious messages, who pursued him with fire and sword from one part of the empire to another, who hanged, drew, and quartered his adherents, and attainted his innocent heir, were his nephew and his two daughters. When we reflect on all these things, we are at a loss to conceive how the same persons who, on the fifth of November, thank God for wonderfully conducting his servant William, and for making all opposition fall before him until he became our King and Governor, can, on the thirtieth of January, contrive to be afraid that the blood of the Royal Martyr may be visited on themselves and their children.

We disapprove, we repeat, of the execution of Charles; not because the constitution exempts the King from responsibility, for we know that all such maxims, however excellent, have their exceptions; nor because we feel any peculiar interest in his character, for we think that his sentence describes him with perfect justice as "a tyrant, a traitor, a murderer, and a public enemy"; but because we are convinced that the measure was most injurious to the cause of freedom. He whom it removed was a captive and a hostage: his heir, to whom the allegiance of every Royalist was instantly transferred, was at large. The Presbyterians could never have been perfectly reconciled to the father, they had no such rooted enmity to the son. The great body of the people, also, contemplated that proceeding with feelings which, however unreasonable, no government could safely venture

to outrage.

But though we think the conduct of the Regicides blameable, that of Milton appears to us in a very different light. The deed was done. It could not be undone. The evil was incurred; and the object was to render it as small as possible. We censure the chiefs of the army for not yielding to the popular opinion; but we cannot censure Milton for wishing to change that opinion. The very feeling which would have restrained us from committing the act would have led us, after it had been committed, to defend it against the ravings of servility and superstition. For the sake of public liberty, we wish that the thing had not been done, while the people disapproved of it. But, for the sake of public liberty, we should also have wished the people to approve of it when it was done. If anything more were wanting to the justification of Milton, the book of Salmasius would furnish it. That miserable performance is now with justice considered only as a beacon to word-catchers, who wish to become statesmen. The celebrity of the man who refuted it, the "Aeneae magni dextra," gives it all its fame with the present generation. In that age the state of things was different. It was not then fully understood how vast an interval separates the mere classical scholar from the political philosopher. Nor can it be doubted that a treatise which, bearing the name of so eminent a critic, attacked the fundamental principles of all free governments, must, if suffered to remain unanswered, have produced a most pernicious effect on the public mind.

We wish to add a few words relative to another subject, on which the enemies of Milton delight to dwell, his conduct during the administration of the Protector. That an enthusiastic votary of liberty should accept office under a military usurper seems, no doubt, at first sight, extraordinary. But all the circumstances in which the country was then placed were extraordinary. The ambition of Oliver was of no vulgar kind. He never seems to have coveted despotic power. He at first fought sincerely and manfully for the Parliament, and never deserted it, till it had deserted its duty. If he dissolved it by force, it was not till he found that the few members who remained after so many deaths, secessions, and expulsions, were desirous to appropriate to themselves a power which they held only in trust, and to inflict upon England the curse of a Venetian oligarchy. But even when thus placed by violence at the head of affairs, he did not assume unlimited power. He gave the country a constitution far more perfect than any which had at that time been known in the world. He reformed the representative system in a manner which has extorted praise even from Lord Clarendon. For himself he demanded indeed the first place in the commonwealth; but with powers scarcely so great as those of a Dutch stadtholder, or an American president. He gave the parliament a voice in the appointment of ministers, and left to it the whole legislative authority, not even reserving to himself a veto on its enactments; and he did not require that the chief magistracy should be hereditary in his

family. Thus far, we think, if the circumstances of the time and the opportunities which he had of aggrandising himself be fairly considered, he will not lose by comparison with Washington or Bolivar. Had his moderation been met by corresponding moderation, there is no reason to think that he would have overstepped the line which he had traced for himself. But when he found that his parliaments questioned the authority under which they met, and that he was in danger of being deprived of the restricted power which was absolutely necessary to his personal safety, then, it must be acknowledged, he adopted a more arbitrary policy.

Yet, though we believe that the intentions of Cromwell were at first honest, though we believe that he was driven from the noble course which he had marked out for himself by the almost irresistible force of circumstances, though we admire, in common with all men of all parties, the ability and energy of his splendid administration, we are not pleading for arbitrary and lawless power, even in his hands. We know that a good constitution is infinitely better than the best despot. But we suspect, that at the time of which we speak, the violence of religious and political enmities rendered a stable and happy settlement next to impossible. The choice lay, not between Cromwell and liberty, but between Cromwell and the Stuarts. That Milton chose well, no man can doubt who fairly compares the events of the Protectorate with those of the thirty years which succeeded it, the darkest and most disgraceful in the English annals. Cromwell was evidently laying, though in an irregular manner, the foundations of an admirable system. Never before had religious liberty and the freedom of discussion been enjoyed in a greater degree. Never had the national honour been better upheld abroad, or the seat of justice better filled at home. And it was rarely that any opposition which stopped short of open rebellion provoked the resentment of the liberal and magnanimous usurper. The institutions which he had established, as set down in the Instrument of Government, and the Humble Petition and Advice, were excellent. His practice, it is true, too often departed from the theory of these institutions. But, had he lived a few years longer, it is probable that his institutions would have survived him, and that his arbitrary practice would have died with him. His power had not been consecrated by ancient prejudices. It was upheld only by his great personal qualities. Little, therefore, was to be dreaded from a second protector, unless he were also a second Oliver Cromwell. The events which followed his decease are the most complete vindication of those who exerted themselves to uphold his authority. His death dissolved the whole frame of society. The army rose against the Parliament, the different corps of the army against each other. Sect raved against sect. Party plotted against party, The Presbyterians, in their eagerness to be revenged on the Independents, sacrificed their own liberty, and deserted all their old principles. Without casting one glance on the past, or requiring one stipulation for the future, they threw down their freedom at the feet of the most frivolous and heartless of tyrants.

Then came those days, never to be recalled without a blush, the days of servitude without loyalty and sensuality without love, of dwarfish talents and gigantic vices, the paradise of cold hearts and narrow minds, the golden age of the coward, the bigot, and the slave. The King cringed to his rival that he might trample on his people, sank into a viceroy of France, and pocketed, with complacent infamy, her degrading insults, and her more degrading gold. The caresses of harlots, and the jests of buffoons, regulated the policy of the State. The Government had just ability enough to deceive, and just religion enough to persecute. The principles of liberty were the scoff of every grinning courtier, and the Anathema Maranatha of every fawning dean. In every high place, worship was paid to Charles and James, Belial and Moloch; and England propitiated those obscene and cruel idols with the blood of her best and bravest children. Crime succeeded to crime, and disgrace to disgrace, till the race accursed of God and man was a second time driven forth, to wander on the face of the earth, and to be a by-word and a shaking of the head to the nations.

Most of the remarks which we have hitherto made on the public character of Milton, apply to him only as one of a large body. We shall proceed to notice some of the peculiarities which distinguished him from his contemporaries. And, for that purpose, it is necessary to take a short survey of the parties into which the political world was at that time divided. We must premise, that our observations are intended to apply only to those who adhered, from a sincere preference, to one or to the other side. In days of public commotion, every faction, like an Oriental army, is attended by a crowd of camp-followers, an useless and heartless rabble, who prowl round its line of march in the hope of picking up something under its protection, but desert it in the day of battle, and often join to exterminate it after a defeat. England, at the time of which we are treating, abounded with fickle and selfish politicians, who transferred their support to every government as it rose, who kissed the hand of the King in 1640, and spat in his face in 1649, who shouted with equal glee when Cromwell was inaugurated in Westminster Hall, and when he was dug up to be hanged at Tyburn, who dined on calves' heads or stuck-up oak-branches, as circumstances altered, without the slightest shame or repugnance. These we leave out of the account. We take our estimate of parties from those who really deserved to be called partisans.

We would speak first of the Puritans, the most remarkable body of men, perhaps, which the world has ever produced. The odious and ridiculous parts of their character lie on the surface. He that runs may read them; nor have there been wanting attentive and malicious observers to point them out. For many years after the Restoration, they were the theme of unmeasured invective and derision. They were exposed to the utmost licentiousness of the press and of the stage, at the time when the press and the stage

were most licentious. They were not men of letters; they were, as a body, unpopular; they could not defend themselves; and the public would not take them under its protection. They were therefore abandoned, without reserve, to the tender mercies of the satirists and dramatists. The ostentatious simplicity of their dress, their sour aspect, their nasal twang, their stiff posture, their long graces, their Hebrew names, the Scriptural phrases which they introduced on every occasion, their contempt of human learning, their detestation of polite amusements, were indeed fair game for the laughers. But it is not from the laughers alone that the philosophy of history is to be learnt. And he who approaches this subject should carefully guard against the influence of that potent ridicule which has already misled so many excellent writers.

"Ecco il fonte del riso, ed ecco il rio
Che mortali perigli in so contiene:
Hor qui tener a fren nostro desio,
Ed esser cauti molto a noi conviene."

Those who roused the people to resistance, who directed their measures through a long series of eventful years, who formed, out of the most unpromising materials, the finest army that Europe had ever seen, who trampled down King, Church, and Aristocracy, who, in the short intervals of domestic sedition and rebellion, made the name of England terrible to every nation on the face of the earth, were no vulgar fanatics. Most of their absurdities were mere external badges, like the signs of freemasonry, or the dresses of friars. We regret that these badges were not more attractive. We regret that a body to whose courage and talents mankind has owed inestimable obligations had not the lofty elegance which distinguished some of the adherents of Charles the First, or the easy good-breeding for which the court of Charles the Second was celebrated. But, if we must make our choice, we shall, like Bassanio in the play, turn from the specious caskets which contain only the Death’s head and the Fool’s head, and fix on the plain leaden chest which conceals the treasure.

The Puritans were men whose minds had derived a peculiar character from the daily contemplation of superior beings and eternal interests. Not content with acknowledging, in general terms, an overruling Providence, they habitually ascribed every event to the will of the Great Being, for whose power nothing was too vast, for whose inspection nothing was too minute. To know him, to serve him, to enjoy him, was with them the great end of existence. They rejected with contempt the ceremonious homage which other sects substituted for the pure worship of the soul. Instead of catching occasional glimpses of the Deity through an obscuring veil, they aspired to gaze full on his intolerable brightness, and to commune with him face to face. Hence originated their contempt for terrestrial distinctions. The difference between the greatest and the meanest of mankind seemed to vanish, when compared with the boundless interval which

separated the whole race from him on whom their own eyes were constantly fixed. They recognised no title to superiority but his favour; and, confident of that favour, they despised all the accomplishments and all the dignities of the world. If they were unacquainted with the works of philosophers and poets, they were deeply read in the oracles of God. If their names were not found in the registers of heralds, they were recorded in the Book of Life. If their steps were not accompanied by a splendid train of menials, legions of ministering angels had charge over them. Their palaces were houses not made with hands; their diadems crowns of glory which should never fade away. On the rich and the eloquent, on nobles and priests, they looked down with contempt: for they esteemed themselves rich in a more precious treasure, and eloquent in a more sublime language, nobles by the right of an earlier creation, and priests by the imposition of a mightier hand. The very meanest of them was a being to whose fate a mysterious and terrible importance belonged, on whose slightest action the spirits of light and darkness looked with anxious interest, who had been destined, before heaven and earth were created, to enjoy a felicity which should continue when heaven and earth should have passed away. Events which shortsighted politicians ascribed to earthly causes, had been ordained on his account. For his sake empires had risen, and flourished, and decayed. For his sake the Almighty had proclaimed his will by the pen of the evangelist, and the harp of the prophet. He had been wrested by no common deliverer from the grasp of no common foe. He had been ransomed by the sweat of no vulgar agony, by the blood of no earthly sacrifice. It was for him that the sun had been darkened, that the rocks had been rent, that the dead had risen, that all nature had shuddered at the sufferings of her expiring God.

Thus the Puritan was made up of two different men, the one all self-abasement, penitence, gratitude, passion; the other proud, calm, inflexible, sagacious. He prostrated himself in the dust before his Maker: but he set his foot on the neck of his king. In his devotional retirement, he prayed with convulsions, and groans, and tears. He was half-maddened by glorious or terrible illusions. He heard the lyres of angels or the tempting whispers of fiends. He caught a gleam of the Beatific Vision, or woke screaming from dreams of everlasting fire. Like Vane, he thought himself intrusted with the sceptre of the millennial year. Like Fleetwood, he cried in the bitterness of his soul that God had hid his face from him. But when he took his seat in the council, or girt on his sword for war, these tempestuous workings of the soul had left no perceptible trace behind them. People who saw nothing of the godly but their uncouth visages, and heard nothing from them but their groans and their whining hymns, might laugh at them. But those had little reason to laugh who encountered them in the hall of debate or in the field of battle. These fanatics brought to civil and military affairs a coolness of judgment and an immutability of purpose which some writers have thought inconsistent with their religious zeal, but which were in

fact the necessary effects of it. The intensity of their feelings on one subject made them tranquil on every other. One overpowering sentiment had subjected to itself pity and hatred, ambition and fear. Death had lost its terrors and pleasure its charms. They had their smiles and their tears, their raptures and their sorrows, but not for the things of this world. Enthusiasm had made them Stoics, had cleared their minds from every vulgar passion and prejudice, and raised them above the influence of danger and of corruption. It sometimes might lead them to pursue unwise ends, but never to choose unwise means. They went through the world, like Sir Artegal's iron man Talus with his flail, crushing and trampling down oppressors, mingling with human beings, but having neither part nor lot in human infirmities, insensible to fatigue, to pleasure, and to pain, not to be pierced by any weapon, not to be withstood by any barrier.

Such we believe to have been the character of the Puritans. We perceive the absurdity of their manners. We dislike the sullen gloom of their domestic habits. We acknowledge that the tone of their minds was often injured by straining after things too high for mortal reach: and we know that, in spite of their hatred of Popery, they too often fell into the worst vices of that bad system, intolerance and extravagant austerity, that they had their anchorites and their crusades, their Dunstans and their De Montforts, their Dominics and their Escobars. Yet, when all circumstances are taken into consideration, we do not hesitate to pronounce them a brave, a wise, an honest, and an useful body.

The Puritans espoused the cause of civil liberty mainly because it was the cause of religion. There was another party, by no means numerous, but distinguished by learning and ability, which acted with them on very different principles. We speak of those whom Cromwell was accustomed to call the Heathens, men who were, in the phraseology of that time, doubting Thomases or careless Gallios with regard to religious subjects, but passionate worshippers of freedom. Heated by the study of ancient literature, they set up their country as their idol, and proposed to themselves the heroes of Plutarch as their examples. They seem to have borne some resemblance to the Brissotines of the French Revolution. But it is not very easy to draw the line of distinction between them and their devout associates, whose tone and manner they sometimes found it convenient to affect, and sometimes, it is probable, imperceptibly adopted.

We now come to the Royalists. We shall attempt to speak of them, as we have spoken of their antagonists, with perfect candour. We shall not charge upon a whole party the profligacy and baseness of the horseboys, gamblers and bravoes, whom the hope of licence and plunder attracted from all the dens of Whitefriars to the standard of Charles, and who disgraced their associates by excesses which, under the stricter discipline of the Parliamentary armies, were never tolerated. We will select a more favourable specimen. Thinking as we do that the cause of the King

was the cause of bigotry and tyranny, we yet cannot refrain from looking with complacency on the character of the honest old Cavaliers. We feel a national pride in comparing them with the instruments which the despots of other countries are compelled to employ, with the mutes who throng their ante-chambers, and the Janissaries who mount guard at their gates. Our royalist countrymen were not heartless dangling courtiers, bowing at every step, and simpering at every word. They were not mere machines for destruction dressed up in uniforms, caned into skill, intoxicated into valour, defending without love, destroying without hatred. There was a freedom in their subserviency, a nobleness in their very degradation. The sentiment of individual independence was strong within them. They were indeed misled, but by no base or selfish motive. Compassion and romantic honour, the prejudices of childhood, and the venerable names of history, threw over them a spell potent as that of Duessa; and, like the Red-Cross Knight, they thought that they were doing battle for an injured beauty, while they defended a false and loathsome sorceress. In truth they scarcely entered at all into the merits of the political question. It was not for a treacherous king or an intolerant church that they fought, but for the old banner which had waved in so many battles over the heads of their fathers, and for the altars at which they had received the hands of their brides. Though nothing could be more erroneous than their political opinions, they possessed, in a far greater degree than their adversaries, those qualities which are the grace of private life. With many of the vices of the Round Table, they had also many of its virtues, courtesy, generosity, veracity, tenderness, and respect for women. They had far more both of profound and of polite learning than the Puritans. Their manners were more engaging, their tempers more amiable, their tastes more elegant, and their households more cheerful.

Milton did not strictly belong to any of the classes which we have described. He was not a Puritan. He was not a freethinker. He was not a Royalist. In his character the noblest qualities of every party were combined in harmonious union. From the Parliament and from the Court, from the conventicle and from the Gothic cloister, from the gloomy and sepulchral circles of the Roundheads, and from the Christmas revel of the hospitable Cavalier, his nature selected and drew to itself whatever was great and good, while it rejected all the base and pernicious ingredients by which those finer elements were defiled. Like the Puritans, he lived

"As ever in his great taskmaster’s eye."

Like them, he kept his mind continually fixed on an Almighty judge and an eternal reward. And hence he acquired their contempt of external circumstances, their fortitude, their tranquillity, their inflexible resolution. But not the coolest sceptic or the most profane scoffer was more perfectly free from the contagion of their frantic delusions, their savage manners, their ludicrous

jargon, their scorn of science, and their aversion to pleasure. Hating tyranny with a perfect hatred, he had nevertheless all the estimable and ornamental qualities which were almost entirely monopolised by the party of the tyrant. There was none who had a stronger sense of the value of literature, a finer relish for every elegant amusement, or a more chivalrous delicacy of honour and love. Though his opinions were democratic, his tastes and his associations were such as harmonise best with monarchy and aristocracy. He was under the influence of all the feelings by which the gallant Cavaliers were misled. But of those feelings he was the master and not the slave. Like the hero of Homer, he enjoyed all the pleasures of fascination; but he was not fascinated. He listened to the song of the Syrens; yet he glided by without being seduced to their fatal shore. He tasted the cup of Circe; but he bore about him a sure antidote against the effects of its bewitching sweetness. The illusions which captivated his imagination never impaired his reasoning powers. The statesman was proof against the splendour, the solemnity, and the romance which enchanted the poet. Any person who will contrast the sentiments expressed in his treatises on Prelacy with the exquisite lines on ecclesiastical architecture and music in the Penseroso, which was published about the same time, will understand our meaning. This is an inconsistency which, more than anything else, raises his character in our estimation, because it shows how many private tastes and feelings he sacrificed, in order to do what he considered his duty to mankind. It is the very struggle of the noble Othello. His heart relents; but his hand is firm. He does nought in hate, but all in honour. He kisses the beautiful deceiver before he destroys her.

That from which the public character of Milton derives its great and peculiar splendour, still remains to be mentioned. If he exerted himself to overthrow a forsworn king and a persecuting hierarchy, he exerted himself in conjunction with others. But the glory of the battle which he fought for the species of freedom which is the most valuable, and which was then the least understood, the freedom of the human mind, is all his own. Thousands and tens of thousands among his contemporaries raised their voices against Ship-money and the Star-Chamber. But there were few indeed who discerned the more fearful evils of moral and intellectual slavery, and the benefits which would result from the liberty of the press and the unfettered exercise of private judgment. These were the objects which Milton justly conceived to be the most important. He was desirous that the people should think for themselves as well as tax themselves, and should be emancipated from the dominion of prejudice as well as from that of Charles. He knew that those who, with the best intentions, overlooked these schemes of reform, and contented themselves with pulling down the King and imprisoning the malignants, acted like the heedless brothers in his own poem, who in their eagerness to disperse the train of the sorcerer, neglected the means of liberating the captive. They thought only of conquering when they should have thought of disenchanting.

"Oh, ye mistook! Ye should have snatch'd his wand
And bound him fast. Without the rod reversed,
And backward mutters of dissevering power,
We cannot free the lady that sits here
Bound in strong fetters fix'd and motionless."

To reverse the rod, to spell the charm backward, to break the ties which bound a stupefied people to the seat of enchantment, was the noble aim of Milton. To this all his public conduct was directed. For this he joined the Presbyterians; for this he forsook them. He fought their perilous battle; but he turned away with disdain from their insolent triumph. He saw that they, like those whom they had vanquished, were hostile to the liberty of thought. He therefore joined the Independents, and called upon Cromwell to break the secular chain, and to save free conscience from the paw of the Presbyterian wolf. With a view to the same great object, he attacked the licensing system, in that sublime treatise which every statesman should wear as a sign upon his hand and as frontlets between his eyes. His attacks were, in general, directed less against particular abuses than against those deeply-seated errors on which almost all abuses are founded, the servile worship of eminent men and the irrational dread of innovation.

That he might shake the foundations of these debasing sentiments more effectually, he always selected for himself the boldest literary services. He never came up in the rear, when the outworks had been carried and the breach entered. He pressed into the forlorn hope. At the beginning of the changes, he wrote with incomparable energy and eloquence against the bishops. But, when his opinion seemed likely to prevail, he passed on to other subjects, and abandoned prelacy to the crowd of writers who now hastened to insult a falling party. There is no more hazardous enterprise than that of bearing the torch of truth into those dark and infected recesses in which no light has ever shone. But it was the choice and the pleasure of Milton to penetrate the noisome vapours, and to brave the terrible explosion. Those who most disapprove of his opinions must respect the hardihood with which he maintained them. He, in general, left to others the credit of expounding and defending the popular parts of his religious and political creed. He took his own stand upon those which the great body of his countrymen reprobated as criminal, or derided as paradoxical. He stood up for divorce and regicide. He attacked the prevailing systems of education. His radiant and beneficent career resembled that of the god of light and fertility.

"Nitor in adversum; nec me, qui caetera, vincit
Impetus, et rapido contrarius evehor orbi."

It is to be regretted that the prose writings of Milton should, in our time, be so little read. As compositions, they deserve the

attention of every man who wishes to become acquainted with the full power of the English language. They abound with passages compared with which the finest declamations of Burke sink into insignificance. They are a perfect field of cloth-of-gold. The style is stiff with gorgeous embroidery. Not even in the earlier books of the Paradise Lost has the great poet ever risen higher than in those parts of his controversial works in which his feelings, excited by conflict, find a vent in bursts of devotional and lyric rapture. It is, to borrow his own majestic language, "a sevenfold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies."

We had intended to look more closely at these performances, to analyse the peculiarities of the diction, to dwell at some length on the sublime wisdom of the Areopagitica and the nervous rhetoric of the Iconoclast, and to point out some of those magnificent passages which occur in the Treatise of Reformation, and the Animadversions on the Remonstrant. But the length to which our remarks have already extended renders this impossible.

We must conclude. And yet we can scarcely tear ourselves away from the subject. The days immediately following the publication of this relic of Milton appear to be peculiarly set apart, and consecrated to his memory. And we shall scarcely be censured if, on this his festival, we be found lingering near his shrine, how worthless soever may be the offering which we bring to it. While this book lies on our table, we seem to be contemporaries of the writer. We are transported a hundred and fifty years back. We can almost fancy that we are visiting him in his small lodging; that we see him sitting at the old organ beneath the faded green hangings; that we can catch the quick twinkle of his eyes, rolling in vain to find the day; that we are reading in the lines of his noble countenance the proud and mournful history of his glory and his affliction. We image to ourselves the breathless silence in which we should listen to his slightest word, the passionate veneration with which we should kneel to kiss his hand and weep upon it, the earnestness with which we should endeavour to console him, if indeed such a spirit could need consolation, for the neglect of an age unworthy of his talents and his virtues, the eagerness with which we should contest with his daughters, or with his Quaker friend Elwood, the privilege of reading Homer to him, or of taking down the immortal accents which flowed from his lips.

These are perhaps foolish feelings. Yet we cannot be ashamed of them; nor shall we be sorry if what we have written shall in any degree excite them in other minds. We are not much in the habit of idolising either the living or the dead. And we think that there is no more certain indication of a weak and ill-regulated intellect than that propensity which, for want of a better name, we will venture to christen Boswellism. But there are a few characters which have stood the closest scrutiny and the severest tests, which have been tried in the furnace and have proved pure,

which have been weighed in the balance and have not been found wanting, which have been declared sterling by the general consent of mankind, and which are visibly stamped with the image and superscription of the Most High. These great men we trust that we know how to prize; and of these was Milton. The sight of his books, the sound of his name, are pleasant to us. His thoughts resemble those celestial fruits and flowers which the Virgin Martyr of Massinger sent down from the gardens of Paradise to the earth, and which were distinguished from the productions of other soils, not only by superior bloom and sweetness, but by miraculous efficacy to invigorate and to heal. They are powerful, not only to delight, but to elevate and purify. Nor do we envy the man who can study either the life or the writings of the great poet and patriot, without aspiring to emulate, not indeed the sublime works with which his genius has enriched our literature, but the zeal with which he laboured for the public good, the fortitude with which he endured every private calamity, the lofty disdain with which he looked down on temptations and dangers, the deadly hatred which he bore to bigots and tyrants, and the faith which he so sternly kept with his country and with his fame.

SIR WILLIAM TEMPLE
(October 1838)

Memoirs of the Life, Works, and Correspondence of Sir William Temple. By the Right Hon. THOMAS PEREGRINE COURTENAY. Two vols. 8vo. London: 1836.

Mr. Courtenay has long been well known to politicians as an industrious and useful official man, and as an upright and consistent member of Parliament. He has been one of the most moderate, and, at the same time, one of the least pliant members of the Conservative party. His conduct has, indeed, on some questions been so Whiggish, that both those who applauded and those who condemned it have questioned his claim to be considered as a Tory. But his Toryism, such as it is, he has held fast through all changes of fortune and fashion; and he has at last retired from public life, leaving behind him, to the best of our belief, no personal enemy, and carrying with him the respect and goodwill of many who strongly dissent from his opinions.

This book, the fruit of Mr. Courtenay's leisure, is introduced by a preface in which he informs us that the assistance furnished to him from various quarters "has taught him the superiority of literature to politics for developing the kindlier feelings, and conducing to an agreeable life." We are truly glad that Mr. Courtenay is so well satisfied with his new employment, and we heartily congratulate him on having been driven by events to make an exchange which, advantageous as it is, few people make while they can avoid it. He has little reason, in our opinion, to envy any of those who are still engaged in a pursuit from which, at

most, they can only expect that, by relinquishing liberal studies and social pleasures, by passing nights without sleep and summers without one glimpse of the beauty of nature, they may attain that laborious, that invidious, that closely watched slavery which is mocked with the name of power.

The volumes before us are fairly entitled to the praise of diligence, care, good sense, and impartiality; and these qualities are sufficient to make a book valuable, but not quite sufficient to make it readable. Mr. Courtenay has not sufficiently studied the arts of selection and compression. The information with which he furnishes us, must still, we apprehend, be considered as so much raw material. To manufacturers it will be highly useful; but it is not yet in such a form that it can be enjoyed by the idle consumer. To drop metaphor, we are afraid that this work will be less acceptable to those who read for the sake of reading, than to those who read in order to write.

We cannot help adding, though we are extremely unwilling to quarrel with Mr. Courtenay about politics, that the book would not be at all the worse if it contained fewer snarls against the Whigs of the present day. Not only are these passages out of place in a historical work, but some of them are intrinsically such that they would become the editor of a third-rate party newspaper better than a gentleman of Mr. Courtenay's talents and knowledge. For example, we are told that, "it is a remarkable circumstance, familiar to those who are acquainted with history, but suppressed by the new Whigs, that the liberal politicians of the seventeenth century and the greater part of the eighteenth, never extended their liberality to the native Irish, or the professors of the ancient religion." What schoolboy of fourteen is ignorant of this remarkable circumstance? What Whig, new or old, was ever such an idiot as to think that it could be suppressed? Really we might as well say that it is a remarkable circumstance, familiar to people well read in history, but carefully suppressed by the Clergy of the Established Church, that in the fifteenth century England was in communion with Rome. We are tempted to make some remarks on another passage, which seems to be the peroration of a speech intended to have been spoken against the Reform Bill: but we forbear.

We doubt whether it will be found that the memory of Sir William Temple owes much to Mr. Courtenay's researches. Temple is one of those men whom the world has agreed to praise highly without knowing much about them, and who are therefore more likely to lose than to gain by a close examination. Yet he is not without fair pretensions to the most honourable place among the statesmen of his time. A few of them equalled or surpassed him in talents; but they were men of no good repute for honesty. A few may be named whose patriotism was purer, nobler, and more disinterested than his; but they were of no eminent ability. Morally, he was above Shaftesbury; intellectually, he was above Russell.

To say of a man that he occupied a high position in times of misgovernment, of corruption, of civil and religious faction, that nevertheless he contracted no great stain and bore no part in any great crime, that he won the esteem of a profligate Court and of a turbulent people, without being guilty of any disgraceful subserviency to either, seems to be very high praise; and all this may with truth be said of Temple.

Yet Temple is not a man to our taste. A temper not naturally good, but under strict command; a constant regard to decorum; a rare caution in playing that mixed game of skill and hazard, human life; a disposition to be content with small and certain winnings rather than to go on doubling the stake; these seem to us to be the most remarkable features of his character. This sort of moderation, when united, as in him it was, with very considerable abilities, is, under ordinary circumstances, scarcely to be distinguished from the highest and purest integrity, and yet may be perfectly compatible with laxity of principle, with coldness of heart, and with the most intense selfishness. Temple, we fear, had not sufficient warmth and elevation of sentiment to deserve the name of a virtuous man. He did not betray or oppress his country: nay, he rendered considerable services to her; but he risked nothing for her. No temptation which either the King or the Opposition could hold out ever induced him to come forward as the supporter either of arbitrary or of factious measures. But he was most careful not to give offence by strenuously opposing such measures. He never put himself prominently before the public eye, except at conjunctures when he was almost certain to gain, and could not possibly lose, at conjunctures when the interest of the State, the views of the Court, and the passions of the multitude, all appeared for an instant to coincide. By judiciously availing himself of several of these rare moments, he succeeded in establishing a high character for wisdom and patriotism. When the favourable crisis was passed, he never risked the reputation which he had won. He avoided the great offices of State with a caution almost pusillanimous, and confined himself to quiet and secluded departments of public business, in which he could enjoy moderate but certain advantages without incurring envy. If the circumstances of the country became such that it was impossible to take any part in politics without some danger, he retired to his library and his orchard, and, while the nation groaned under oppression, or resounded with tumult and with the din of civil arms, amused himself by writing memoirs and tying up apricots. His political career bore some resemblance to the military career of Lewis the Fourteenth. Lewis, lest his royal dignity should be compromised by failure, never repaired to a siege, till it had been reported to him by the most skilful officers in his service, that nothing could prevent the fall of the place. When this was ascertained, the monarch, in his helmet and cuirass, appeared among the tents, held councils of war, dictated the capitulation, received the keys, and then returned to Versailles to hear his flatterers repeat that Turenne had been beaten at Mariendal, that

Conde had been forced to raise the siege of Arras, and that the only warrior whose glory had never been obscured by a single check was Lewis the Great. Yet Conde and Turenne will always be considered as captains of a very different order from the invincible Lewis; and we must own that many statesmen who have committed great faults, appear to us to be deserving of more esteem than the faultless Temple. For in truth his faultlessness is chiefly to be ascribed to his extreme dread of all responsibility, to his determination rather to leave his country in a scrape than to run any chance of being in a scrape himself. He seems to have been averse from danger; and it must be admitted that the dangers to which a public man was exposed, in those days of conflicting tyranny and sedition, were of a most serious kind. He could not bear discomfort, bodily or mental. His lamentations, when in the course of his diplomatic journeys he was put a little out of his way, and forced, in the vulgar phrase, to rough it, are quite amusing. He talks of riding a day or two on a bad Westphalian road, of sleeping on straw for one night, of travelling in winter when the snow lay on the ground, as if he had gone on an expedition to the North Pole or to the source of the Nile. This kind of valetudinarian effeminacy, this habit of coddling himself, appears in all parts of his conduct. He loved fame, but not with the love of an exalted and generous mind. He loved it as an end, not at all as a means; as a personal luxury, not at all as an instrument of advantage to others. He scraped it together and treasured it up with a timid and niggardly thrift; and never employed the hoard in any enterprise, however virtuous and useful, in which there was hazard of losing one particle. No wonder if such a person did little or nothing which deserves positive blame. But much more than this may justly be demanded of a man possessed of such abilities, and placed in such a situation. Had Temple been brought before Dante’s infernal tribunal, he would not have been condemned to the deeper recesses of the abyss. He would not have been boiled with Dundee in the crimson pool of Bulicame, or hurled with Danby into the seething pitch of Malebolge, or congealed with Churchill in the eternal ice of Giudecca; but he would perhaps have been placed in the dark vestibule next to the shade of that inglorious pontiff

"Che fece per viltate il gran rifiuto."

Of course a man is not bound to be a politician any more than he is bound to be a soldier; and there are perfectly honourable ways of quitting both politics and the military profession. But neither in the one way of life, nor in the other, is any man entitled to take all the sweet and leave all the sour. A man who belongs to the army only in time of peace, who appears at reviews in Hyde Park, escorts the Sovereign with the utmost valour and fidelity to and from the House of Lords, and retires as soon as he thinks it likely that he may be ordered on an expedition, is justly thought to have disgraced himself. Some portion of the censure due to, such a holiday-soldier may justly fall on the mere holiday-politician, who flinches from his duties as soon as

those duties become difficult and disagreeable, that is to say, as soon as it becomes peculiarly important that he should resolutely perform them.

But though we are far indeed from considering Temple as a perfect statesman, though we place him below many statesmen who have committed very great errors, we cannot deny that, when compared with his contemporaries, he makes a highly respectable appearance. The reaction which followed the victory of the popular party over Charles the First, had produced a hurtful effect on the national character; and this effect was most discernible in the classes and in the places which had been most strongly excited by the recent revolution. The deterioration was greater in London than in the country, and was greatest of all in the courtly and official circles. Almost all that remained of what had been good and noble in the Cavaliers and Roundheads of 1642, was now to be found in the middling orders. The principles and feelings which prompted the Grand Remonstrance were still strong among the sturdy yeomen, and the decent God-fearing merchants. The spirit of Derby and Capel still glowed in many sequestered manor-houses; but among those political leaders who, at the time of the Restoration, were still young or in the vigour of manhood, there was neither a Southampton nor a Vane, neither a Falkland nor a Hampden. The pure, fervent, and constant loyalty which, in the preceding reign, had remained unshaken on fields of disastrous battle, in foreign garrets and cellars, and at the bar of the High Court of justice, was scarcely to be found among the rising courtiers. As little, or still less, could the new chiefs of parties lay claim to the great qualities of the statesmen who had stood at the head of the Long Parliament. Hampden, Pym, Vane, Cromwell, are discriminated from the ablest politicians of the succeeding generation, by all the strong lineaments which distinguish the men who produce revolutions from the men whom revolutions produce. The leader in a great change, the man who stirs up a reposing community, and overthrows a deeply-rooted system, may be a very depraved man; but he can scarcely be destitute of some moral qualities, which extort even from enemies a reluctant admiration, fixedness of purpose, intensity of will, enthusiasm, which is not the less fierce or persevering because it is sometimes disguised under the semblance of composure, and which bears down before it the force of circumstances and the opposition of reluctant minds. These qualities, variously combined with all sorts of virtues and vices, may be found, we think, in most of the authors of great civil and religious movements, in Caesar, in Mahomet, in Hildebrand, in Dominic, in Luther, in Robespierre; and these qualities were found, in no scanty measure, among the chiefs of the party which opposed Charles the First. The character of the men whose minds are formed in the midst of the confusion which follows a great revolution is generally very different. Heat, the natural philosophers tell us, produces rarefaction of the air; and rarefaction of the air produces cold. So zeal makes revolutions; and revolutions make men zealous for nothing. The

politicians of whom we speak, whatever may be their natural capacity or courage, are almost always characterised by a peculiar levity, a peculiar inconstancy, an easy, apathetic way of looking at the most solemn questions, a willingness to leave the direction of their course to fortune and popular opinion, a notion that one public cause is nearly as good as another, and a firm conviction that it is much better to be the hireling of the worst cause than to be a martyr to the best.

This was most strikingly the case with the English statesmen of the generation which followed the Restoration. They had neither the enthusiasm of the Cavalier nor the enthusiasm of the Republican. They had been early emancipated from the dominion of old usages and feelings; yet they had not acquired a strong passion for innovation. Accustomed to see old establishments shaking, falling, lying in ruins all around them, accustomed to live under a succession of constitutions of which the average duration was about a twelvemonth, they had no religious reverence for prescription, nothing of that frame of mind which naturally springs from the habitual contemplation of immemorial antiquity and immovable stability. Accustomed, on the other hand, to see change after change welcomed with eager hope and ending in disappointment, to see shame and confusion of face follow the extravagant hopes and predictions of rash and fanatical innovators, they had learned to look on professions of public spirit, and on schemes of reform, with distrust and contempt. They sometimes talked the language of devoted subjects, sometimes that of ardent lovers of their country. But their secret creed seems to have been, that loyalty was one great delusion and patriotism another. If they really entertained any predilection for the monarchical or for the popular part of the constitution, for episcopacy or for presbyterianism, that predilection was feeble and languid, and instead of overcoming, as in the times of their fathers, the dread of exile, confiscation, and death, was rarely of power to resist the slightest impulse of selfish ambition or of selfish fear. Such was the texture of the presbyterianism of Lauderdale, and of the speculative republicanism of Halifax. The sense of political honour seemed to be extinct. With the great mass of mankind, the test of integrity in a public man is consistency. This test, though very defective, is perhaps the best that any, except very acute or very near observers, are capable of applying; and does undoubtedly enable the people to form an estimate of the characters of the great, which on the whole approximates to correctness. But during the latter part of the seventeenth century, inconsistency had necessarily ceased to be a disgrace; and a man was no more taunted with it, than he is taunted with being black at Timbuctoo. Nobody was ashamed of avowing what was common between him and the whole nation. In the short space of about seven years, the supreme power had been held by the Long Parliament, by a Council of Officers, by Barebones' Parliament, by a Council of Officers again, by a Protector according to the Instrument of Government, by a Protector according to the Humble Petition and

Advice, by the Long Parliament again, by a third Council of Officers, by the Long Parliament a third time, by the Convention, and by the King. In such times, consistency is so inconvenient to a man who affects it, and to all who are connected with him, that it ceases to be regarded as a virtue, and is considered as impracticable obstinacy and idle scrupulosity. Indeed, in such times, a good citizen may be bound in duty to serve a succession of Governments. Blake did so in one profession, and Hale in another; and the conduct of both has been approved by posterity. But it is clear that when inconsistency with respect to the most important public questions has ceased to be a reproach, inconsistency with respect to questions of minor importance is not likely to be regarded as dishonourable. In a country in which many very honest people had, within the space of a few months, supported the government of the Protector, that of the Rump, and that of the King, a man was not likely to be ashamed of abandoning his party for a place, or of voting for a bill which he had opposed.

The public men of the times which followed the Restoration were by no means deficient in courage or ability; and some kinds of talent appear to have been developed amongst them to a remarkable, we might almost say, to a morbid and unnatural degree. Neither Theramenes in ancient, nor Talleyrand in modern times, had a finer perception of all the peculiarities of character, and of all the indications of coming change, than some of our countrymen in that age. Their power of reading things of high import, in signs which to others were invisible or unintelligible, resembled magic. But the curse of Reuben was upon them all: "Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel."

This character is susceptible of innumerable modifications, according to the innumerable varieties of intellect and temper in which it may be found. Men of unquiet minds and violent ambition followed a fearfully eccentric course, darted wildly from one extreme to another, served and betrayed all parties in turn, showed their unblushing foreheads alternately in the van of the most corrupt administrations and of the most factious oppositions, were privy to the most guilty mysteries, first of the Cabal, and then of the Rye-House Plot, abjured their religion to win their sovereign’s favour while they were secretly planning his overthrow, shrived themselves to Jesuits, with letters in cypher from the Prince of Orange in their pockets, corresponded with the Hague whilst in office under James, and began to correspond with St. Germain’s as soon as they had kissed hands for office under William. But Temple was not one of these. He was not destitute of ambition. But his was not one of those souls in which unsatisfied ambition anticipates the tortures of hell, gnaws like the worm which dieth not, and burns like the fire which is not quenched. His principle was to make sure of safety and comfort, and to let greatness come if it would. It came: he enjoyed it: and, in the very first moment in which it could no longer be enjoyed without danger and vexation, he contentedly let

it go. He was not exempt, we think, from the prevailing political immorality. His mind took the contagion, but took it ad modum recipientis, in a form so mild that an undiscerning judge might doubt whether it were indeed the same fierce pestilence that was raging all around. The malady partook of the constitutional languor of the patient. The general corruption, mitigated by his calm and unadventurous temperament, showed itself in omissions and desertions, not in positive crimes; and his inactivity, though sometimes timorous and selfish, becomes respectable when compared with the malevolent and perfidious restlessness of Shaftesbury and Sunderland.

Temple sprang from a family which, though ancient and honourable, had, before his time, been scarcely mentioned in our history, but which, long after his death, produced so many eminent men, and formed such distinguished alliances, that it exercised, in a regular and constitutional manner, an influence in the state scarcely inferior to that which, in widely different times, and by widely different arts, the house of Neville attained in England, and that of Douglas in Scotland. During the latter years of George the Second, and through the whole reign of George the Third, members of that widely spread and powerful connection were almost constantly at the head either of the Government or of the Opposition. There were times when the cousinhood, as it was once nicknamed, would of itself have furnished almost all the materials necessary for the construction of an efficient Cabinet. Within the space of fifty years, three First Lords of the Treasury, three Secretaries of State, two Keepers of the Privy Seal, and four First Lords of the Admiralty were appointed from among the sons and grandsons of the Countess Temple.

So splendid have been the fortunes of the main stock of the Temple family, continued by female succession. William Temple, the first of the line who attained to any great historical eminence, was of a younger branch. His father, Sir John Temple, was Master of the Rolls in Ireland, and distinguished himself among the Privy Councillors of that kingdom by the zeal with which, at the commencement of the struggle between the Crown and the Long Parliament, he supported the popular cause. He was arrested by order of the Duke of Ormond, but regained his liberty by an exchange, repaired to England, and there sate in the House of Commons as burgess for Chichester. He attached himself to the Presbyterian party, and was one of those moderate members who, at the close of the year 1648, voted for treating with Charles on the basis to which that Prince had himself agreed, and who were, in consequence, turned out of the House, with small ceremony, by Colonel Pride. Sir John seems, however, to have made his peace with the victorious Independents; for, in 1653, he resumed his office in Ireland.

Sir John Temple was married to a sister of the celebrated Henry Hammond, a learned and pious divine, who took the side of the King with very conspicuous zeal during the Civil War, and was

deprived of his preferment in the church after the victory of the Parliament. On account of the loss which Hammond sustained on this occasion, he has the honour of being designated, in the cant of that new brood of Oxonian sectaries who unite the worst parts of the Jesuit to the worst parts of the Orangeman, as Hammond, Presbyter, Doctor, and Confessor.

William Temple, Sir John's eldest son, was born in London in the year 1628. He received his early education under his maternal uncle, was subsequently sent to school at Bishop-Stortford, and, at seventeen, began to reside at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, where the celebrated Cudworth was his tutor. The times were not favourable to study. The Civil War disturbed even the quiet cloisters and bowling-greens of Cambridge, produced violent revolutions in the government and discipline of the colleges, and unsettled the minds of the students. Temple forgot at Emmanuel all the little Greek which he had brought from Bishop-Stortford, and never retrieved the loss; a circumstance which would hardly be worth noticing but for the almost incredible fact that, fifty years later, he was so absurd as to set up his own authority against that of Bentley on questions of Greek history and philology. He made no proficiency either in the old philosophy which still lingered in the schools of Cambridge, or in the new philosophy of which Lord Bacon was the founder. But to the end of his life he continued to speak of the former with ignorant admiration, and of the latter with equally ignorant contempt.

After residing at Cambridge two years, he departed without taking a degree, and set out upon his travels. He seems to have been then a lively, agreeable young man of fashion, not by any means deeply read, but versed in all the superficial accomplishments of a gentleman, and acceptable in all polite societies. In politics he professed himself a Royalist. His opinions on religious subjects seem to have been such as might be expected from a young man of quick parts, who had received a rambling education, who had not thought deeply, who had been disgusted by the morose austerity of the Puritans, and who, surrounded from childhood by the hubbub of conflicting sects, might easily learn to feel an impartial contempt for them all.

On his road to France he fell in with the son and daughter of Sir Peter Osborne. Sir Peter held Guernsey for the King, and the young people were, like their father, warm for the royal cause. At an inn where they stopped in the Isle of Wight, the brother amused himself with inscribing on the windows his opinion of the ruling powers. For this instance of malignancy the whole party were arrested, and brought before the governor. The sister, trusting to the tenderness which, even in those troubled times, scarcely any gentleman of any party ever failed to show where a woman was concerned, took the crime on herself, and was immediately set at liberty with her fellow-travellers.

This incident, as was natural, made a deep impression on Temple.

He was only twenty. Dorothy Osborne was twenty-one. She is said to have been handsome; and there remains abundant proof that she possessed an ample share of the dexterity, the vivacity, and the tenderness of her sex. Temple soon became, in the phrase of that time, her servant, and she returned his regard. But difficulties, as great as ever expanded a novel to the fifth volume, opposed their wishes. When the courtship commenced, the father of the hero was sitting in the Long Parliament; the father of the heroine was commanding in Guernsey for King Charles. Even when the war ended, and Sir Peter Osborne returned to his seat at Chicksands, the prospects of the lovers were scarcely less gloomy. Sir John Temple had a more advantageous alliance in view for his son. Dorothy Osborne was in the meantime besieged by as many suitors as were drawn to Belmont by the fame of Portia. The most distinguished on the list was Henry Cromwell. Destitute of the capacity, the energy, the magnanimity of his illustrious father, destitute also of the meek and placid virtues of his elder brother, this young man was perhaps a more formidable rival in love than either of them would have been. Mrs. Hutchinson, speaking the sentiments of the grave and aged, describes him as an "insolent foole," and a "debauched ungodly cavalier." These expressions probably mean that he was one who, among young and dissipated people, would pass for a fine gentleman. Dorothy was fond of dogs of larger and more formidable breed than those which lie on modern hearth-rugs; and Henry Cromwell promised that the highest functionaries at Dublin should be set to work to procure her a fine Irish greyhound. She seems to have felt his attentions as very flattering, though his father was then only Lord-General, and not yet Protector. Love, however, triumphed over ambition, and the young lady appears never to have regretted her decision; though, in a letter written just at the time when all England was ringing with the news of the violent dissolution of the Long Parliament, she could not refrain from reminding Temple, with pardonable vanity, "how great she might have been, if she had been so wise as to have taken hold of the offer of H. C."

Nor was it only the influence of rivals that Temple had to dread. The relations of his mistress regarded him with personal dislike, and spoke of him as an unprincipled adventurer, without honour or religion, ready to render service to any party for the sake of preferment. This is, indeed, a very distorted view of Temple’s character. Yet a character, even in the most distorted view taken of it by the most angry and prejudiced minds, generally retains something of its outline. No caricaturist ever represented Mr. Pitt as a Falstaff, or Mr. Fox as a skeleton; nor did any libeller ever impute parsimony to Sheridan, or profusion to Marlborough. It must be allowed that the turn of mind which the eulogists of Temple have dignified with the appellation of philosophical indifference, and which, however becoming it may be in an old and experienced statesman, has a somewhat ungraceful appearance in youth, might easily appear shocking to a family who were ready to fight or to suffer martyrdom for their exiled King and their persecuted church. The poor girl was exceedingly hurt

and irritated by these imputations on her lover, defended him warmly behind his back, and addressed to himself some very tender and anxious admonitions, mingled with assurances of her confidence in his honour and virtue. On one occasion she was most highly provoked by the way in which one of her brothers spoke of Temple. "We talked ourselves weary," she says; "he renounced me, and I defied him."

Near seven years did this arduous wooing continue. We are not accurately informed respecting Temple's movements during that time. But he seems to have led a rambling life, sometimes on the Continent, sometimes in Ireland, sometimes in London. He made himself master of the French and Spanish languages, and amused himself by writing essays and romances, an employment which at least served the purpose of forming his style. The specimen which Mr. Courtenay has preserved of these early compositions is by no means contemptible: indeed, there is one passage on Like and Dislike which could have been produced only by a mind habituated carefully to reflect on its own operations, and which reminds us of the best things in Montaigne.

Temple appears to have kept up a very active correspondence with his mistress. His letters are lost, but hers have been preserved; and many of them appear in these volumes. Mr. Courtenay expresses some doubt whether his readers will think him justified in inserting so large a number of these epistles. We only wish that there were twice as many. Very little indeed of the diplomatic correspondence of that generation is so well worth reading. There is a vile phrase of which bad historians are exceedingly fond, "the dignity of history." One writer is in possession of some anecdotes which would illustrate most strikingly the operation of the Mississippi scheme on the manners and morals of the Parisians. But he suppresses those anecdotes, because they are too low for the dignity of history. Another is strongly tempted to mention some facts indicating the horrible state of the prisons of England two hundred years ago. But he hardly thinks that the sufferings of a dozen felons, pigging together on bare bricks in a hole fifteen feet square, would form a subject suited to the dignity of history. Another, from respect for the dignity of history, publishes an account of the reign of George the Second, without ever mentioning Whitefield's preaching in Moorfields. How should a writer, who can talk about senates, and congresses of sovereigns, and pragmatic sanctions, and ravelines, and counterscarps, and battles where ten thousand men are killed, and six thousand men with fifty stand of colours and eighty guns taken, stoop to the Stock Exchange, to Newgate, to the theatre, to the tabernacle?

Tragedy has its dignity as well as history; and how much the tragic art has owed to that dignity any man may judge who will compare the majestic Alexandrines in which the Seigneur Oreste and Madame Andromaque utter their complaints, with the chattering of the fool in Lear and of the nurse in Romeo and Juliet.

That a historian should not record trifles, that he should confine himself to what is important, is perfectly true. But many writers seem never to have considered on what the historical importance of an event depends. They seem not to be aware that the importance of a fact, when that fact is considered with reference to its immediate effects, and the importance of the same fact, when that fact is considered as part of the materials for the construction of a science, are two very different things. The quantity of good or evil which a transaction produces is by no means necessarily proportioned to the quantity of light which that transaction affords, as to the way in which good or evil may hereafter be produced. The poisoning of an emperor is in one sense a far more serious matter than the poisoning of a rat. But the poisoning of a rat may be an era in chemistry; and an emperor may be poisoned by such ordinary means, and with such ordinary symptoms, that no scientific journal would notice the occurrence. An action for a hundred thousand pounds is in one sense a more momentous affair than an action for fifty pounds. But it by no means follows that the learned gentlemen who report the proceedings of the courts of law ought to give a fuller account of an action for a hundred thousand pounds, than of an action for fifty pounds. For a cause in which a large sum is at stake may be important only to the particular plaintiff and the particular defendant. A cause, on the other hand, in which a small sum is at stake, may establish some great principle interesting to half the families in the kingdom. The case is exactly the same with that class of subjects of which historians treat. To an Athenian, in the time of the Peloponnesian war, the result of the battle of Delium was far more important than the fate of the comedy of The Knights. But to us the fact that the comedy of The Knights was brought on the Athenian stage with success is far more important than the fact that the Athenian phalanx gave way at Delium. Neither the one event nor the other has now any intrinsic importance. We are in no danger of being speared by the Thebans. We are not quizzed in The Knights. To us the importance of both events consists in the value of the general truth which is to be learned from them. What general truth do we learn from the accounts which have come down to us of the battle of Delium? Very little more than this, that when two armies fight, it is not improbable that one of them will be very soundly beaten, a truth which it would not, we apprehend, be difficult to establish, even if all memory of the battle of Delium were lost among men. But a man who becomes acquainted with the comedy of The Knights, and with the history of that comedy, at once feels his mind enlarged. Society is presented to him under a new aspect. He may have read and travelled much. He may have visited all the countries of Europe, and the civilised nations of the East. He may have observed the manners of many barbarous races. But here is something altogether different from everything which he has seen, either among polished men or among savages. Here is a community politically, intellectually, and morally unlike any other community of which he has the means of forming an opinion. This

is the really precious part of history, the corn which some threshers carefully sever from the chaff, for the purpose of gathering the chaff into the garner, and flinging the corn into the fire.

Thinking thus, we are glad to learn so much, and would willingly learn more, about the loves of Sir William and his mistress. In the seventeenth century, to be sure, Lewis the Fourteenth was a much more important person than Temple's sweetheart. But death and time equalise all things. Neither the great King, nor the beauty of Bedfordshire, neither the gorgeous paradise of Marli nor Mistress Osborne's favourite walk "in the common that lay hard by the house, where a great many young wenches used to keep sheep and cows and sit in the shade singing of ballads," is anything to us. Lewis and Dorothy are alike dust. A cotton-mill stands on the ruins of Marli; and the Osbornes have ceased to dwell under the ancient roof of Chicksands. But of that information for the sake of which alone it is worth while to study remote events, we find so much in the love letters which Mr. Courtenay has published, that we would gladly purchase equally interesting billets with ten times their weight in state-papers taken at random. To us surely it is as useful to know how the young ladies of England employed themselves a hundred and eighty years ago, how far their minds were cultivated, what were their favourite studies, what degree of liberty was allowed to them, what use they made of that liberty, what accomplishments they most valued in men, and what proofs of tenderness delicacy permitted them to give to favoured suitors, as to know all about the seizure of Franche Comte and the treaty of Nimeguen. The mutual relations of the two sexes seem to us to be at least as important as the mutual relations of any two governments in the world; and a series of letters written by a virtuous, amiable, and sensible girl, and intended for the eye of her lover alone, can scarcely fail to throw some light on the relations of the sexes; whereas it is perfectly possible, as all who have made any historical researches can attest, to read bale after bale of despatches and protocols, without catching one glimpse of light about the relations of governments.

Mr. Courtenay proclaims that he is one of Dorothy Osborne's devoted servants, and expresses a hope that the publication of her letters will add to the number. We must declare ourselves his rivals. She really seems to have been a very charming young woman, modest, generous, affectionate, intelligent, and sprightly; a royalist, as was to be expected from her connections, without any of that political asperity which is as unwomanly as a long beard; religious, and occasionally gliding into a very pretty and endearing sort of preaching, yet not too good to partake of such diversions as London afforded under the melancholy rule of the Puritans, or to giggle a little at a ridiculous sermon from a divine who was thought to be one of the great lights of the Assembly at Westminster; with a little turn of coquetry, which was yet perfectly compatible with warm and

disinterested attachment, and a little turn for satire, which yet seldom passed the bounds of good-nature. She loved reading; but her studies were not those of Queen Elizabeth and Lady Jane Grey. She read the verses of Cowley and Lord Broghill, French Memoirs recommended by her lover, and the Travels of Fernando Mendez Pinto. But her favourite books were those ponderous French romances which modern readers know chiefly from the pleasant satire of Charlotte Lennox. She could not, however, help laughing at the vile English into which they were translated. Her own style is very agreeable; nor are her letters at all the worse for some passages in which raillery and tenderness are mixed in a very engaging namby-pamby.

When at last the constancy of the lovers had triumphed over all the obstacles which kinsmen and rivals could oppose to their union, a yet more serious calamity befell them. Poor Mistress Osborne fell ill of the small-pox, and, though she escaped with life, lost all her beauty. To this most severe trial the affection and honour of the lovers of that age was not unfrequently subjected. Our readers probably remember what Mrs. Hutchinson tells of herself. The lofty Cornelia-like spirit of the aged matron seems to melt into a long-forgotten softness when she relates how her beloved Colonel "married her as soon as she was able to quit the chamber, when the priest and all that saw her were affrighted to look on her. But God," she adds, with a not ungraceful vanity, "recompensed his justice and constancy, by restoring her as well as before." Temple showed on this occasion the same justice and constancy which did so much honour to Colonel Hutchinson. The date of the marriage is not exactly known. But Mr. Courtenay supposes it to have taken place about the end of the year 1654. From this time we lose sight of Dorothy, and are reduced to form our opinion of the terms on which she and her husband were from very slight indications which may easily mislead us.

Temple soon went to Ireland, and resided with his father, partly at Dublin, partly in the county of Carlow. Ireland was probably then a more agreeable residence for the higher classes, as compared with England, than it has ever been before or since. In no part of the empire were the superiority of Cromwell’s abilities and the force of his character so signally displayed. He had not the power, and probably had not the inclination, to govern that island in the best way. The rebellion of the aboriginal race had excited in England a strong religious and national aversion to them; nor is there any reason to believe that the Protector was so far beyond his age as to be free from the prevailing sentiment. He had vanquished them; he knew that they were in his power; and he regarded them as a band of malefactors and idolaters, who were mercifully treated if they were not smitten with the edge of the sword. On those who resisted he had made war as the Hebrews made war on the Canaanites. Drogheda was as Jericho; and Wexford as Ai. To the remains of the old population the conqueror granted a peace, such

as that which Israel granted to the Gibeonites. He made them hewers of wood and drawers of water. But, good or bad, he could not be otherwise than great. Under favourable circumstances, Ireland would have found in him a most just and beneficent ruler. She found in him a tyrant; not a small teasing tyrant, such as those who have so long been her curse and her shame, but one of those awful tyrants who, at long intervals, seem to be sent on earth, like avenging angels, with some high commission of destruction and renovation. He was no man of half measures, of mean affronts and ungracious concessions. His Protestant ascendency was not an ascendency of ribands, and fiddles, and statues, and processions. He would never have dreamed of abolishing the penal code and withholding from Catholics the elective franchise, of giving them the elective franchise and excluding them from Parliament, of admitting them to Parliament, and refusing to them a full and equal participation in all the blessings of society and government. The thing most alien from his clear intellect and his commanding spirit was petty persecution. He knew how to tolerate; and he knew how to destroy. His administration in Ireland was an administration on what are now called Orange principles, followed out most ably, most steadily, most undauntedly, most unrelentingly, to every extreme consequence to which those principles lead; and it would, if continued, inevitably have produced the effect which he contemplated, an entire decomposition and reconstruction of society. He had a great and definite object in view, to make Ireland thoroughly English, to make Ireland another Yorkshire or Norfolk. Thinly peopled as Ireland then was, this end was not unattainable; and there is every reason to believe that, if his policy had been followed during fifty years, this end would have been attained. Instead of an emigration, such as we now see from Ireland to England, there was, under his government, a constant and large emigration from England to Ireland. This tide of population ran almost as strongly as that which now runs from Massachusetts and Connecticut to the states behind the Ohio. The native race was driven back before the advancing van of the Anglo-Saxon population, as the American Indians or the tribes of Southern Africa are now driven back before the white settlers. Those fearful phaenomena which have almost invariably attended the planting of civilised colonies in uncivilised countries, and which had been known to the nations of Europe only by distant and questionable rumour, were now publicly exhibited in their sight. The words "extirpation," "eradication," were often in the mouths of the English back-settlers of Leinster and Munster, cruel words, yet, in their cruelty, containing more mercy than much softer expressions which have since been sanctioned by universities and cheered by Parliaments. For it is in truth more merciful to extirpate a hundred thousand human beings at once and to fill the void with a well-governed population, than to misgovern millions through a long succession of generations. We can much more easily pardon tremendous severities inflicted for a great object, than an endless series of paltry vexations and oppressions inflicted for no rational object at all.

Ireland was fast becoming English. Civilisation and wealth were making rapid progress in almost every part of the island. The effects of that iron despotism are described to us by a hostile witness in very remarkable language. "Which is more wonderful," says Lord Clarendon, "all this was done and settled within little more than two years, to that degree of perfection that there were many buildings raised for beauty as well as use, orderly and regular plantations of trees, and fences and inclosures raised throughout the kingdom, purchases made by one from another at very valuable rates, and jointures made upon marriages, and all other conveyances and settlements executed, as in a kingdom at peace within itself, and where no doubt could be made of the validity of titles."

All Temple's feelings about Irish questions were those of a colonist and a member of the dominant caste. He troubled himself as little about the welfare of the remains of the old Celtic population, as an English farmer on the Swan River troubles himself about the New Hollanders, or a Dutch boor at the Cape about the Caffres. The years which he passed in Ireland, while the Cromwellian system was in full operation, he always described as "years of great satisfaction." Farming, gardening, county business, and studies rather entertaining than profound, occupied his time. In politics he took no part, and many years later he attributed this inaction to his love of the ancient constitution, which, he said, "would not suffer him to enter into public affairs till the way was plain for the King's happy restoration." It does not appear, indeed, that any offer of employment was made to him. If he really did refuse any preferment, we may, without much breach of charity, attribute the refusal rather to the caution which, during his whole life, prevented him from running any risk, than to the fervour of his loyalty.

In 1660 he made his first appearance in public life. He sat in the convention which, in the midst of the general confusion that preceded the Restoration, was summoned by the chiefs of the army of Ireland to meet in Dublin. After the King's return an Irish parliament was regularly convoked, in which Temple represented the county of Carlow. The details of his conduct in this situation are not known to us. But we are told in general terms, and can easily believe, that he showed great moderation, and great aptitude for business. It is probable that he also distinguished himself in debate; for many years afterwards he remarked that "his friends in Ireland used to think that, if he had any talent at all, it lay in that way."

In May, 1663, the Irish parliament was prorogued, and Temple repaired to England with his wife. His income amounted to about five hundred pounds a-year, a sum which was then sufficient for the wants of a family mixing in fashionable circles, He passed two years in London, where he seems to have led that easy, lounging life which was best suited to his temper.

He was not, however, unmindful of his interest. He had brought with him letters of introduction from the Duke of Ormond, then Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, to Clarendon, and to Henry Bennet, Lord Arlington, who was Secretary of State. Clarendon was at the head of affairs. But his power was visibly declining, and was certain to decline more and more every day. An observer much less discerning than Temple might easily perceive that the Chancellor was a man who belonged to a by-gone world, a representative of a past age, of obsolete modes of thinking, of unfashionable vices, and of more unfashionable virtues. His long exile had made him a stranger in the country of his birth. His mind, heated by conflict and by personal suffering, was far more set against popular and tolerant courses than it had been at the time of the breaking out of the civil war. He pined for the decorous tyranny of the old Whitehall; for the days of that sainted king who deprived his people of their money and their ears, but let their wives and daughters alone; and could scarcely reconcile himself to a court with a seraglio and without a Star-Chamber. By taking this course he made himself every day more odious, both to the sovereign, who loved pleasure much more than prerogative, and to the people, who dreaded royal prerogatives much more than royal pleasures; and thus he was at last more detested by the Court than any chief of the Opposition, and more detested by the Parliament than any pandar of the Court.

Temple, whose great maxim was to offend no party, was not likely to cling to the falling fortunes of a minister the study of whose life was to offend all parties. Arlington, whose influence was gradually rising as that of Clarendon diminished, was the most useful patron to whom a young adventurer could attach himself. This statesman, without virtue, wisdom, or strength of mind, had raised himself to greatness by superficial qualities, and was the mere creature of the time, the circumstances, and the company. The dignified reserve of manners which he had acquired during a residence in Spain provoked the ridicule of those who considered the usages of the French court as the only standard of good breeding, but served to impress the crowd with a favourable opinion of his sagacity and gravity. In situations where the solemnity of the Escurial would have been out of place, he threw it aside without difficulty, and conversed with great humour and vivacity. While the multitude were talking of "Bennet's grave looks," ["Bennet's grave looks were a pretence" is a line in one of the best political poems of that age,] his mirth made his presence always welcome in the royal closet. While Buckingham, in the antechamber, was mimicking the pompous Castilian strut of the Secretary, for the diversion of Mistress Stuart, this stately Don was ridiculing Clarendon's sober counsels to the King within, till his Majesty cried with laughter, and the Chancellor with vexation. There perhaps never was a man whose outward demeanour made such different impressions on different people. Count Hamilton, for example, describes him as a stupid formalist, who had been made secretary solely on account of his mysterious and

important looks. Clarendon, on the other hand, represents him as a man whose "best faculty was raillery," and who was "for his pleasant and agreeable humour acceptable unto the King." The truth seems to be that, destitute as Bennet was of all the higher qualifications of a minister, he had a wonderful talent for becoming, in outward semblance, all things to all men. He had two aspects, a busy and serious one for the public, whom he wished to awe into respect, and a gay one for Charles, who thought that the greatest service which could be rendered to a prince was to amuse him. Yet both these were masks which he laid aside when they had served their turn. Long after, when he had retired to his deer-park and fish-ponds in Suffolk, and had no motive to act the part either of the hidalgo or of the buffoon, Evelyn, who was neither an unpractised nor an undiscerning judge, conversed much with him, and pronounced him to be a man of singularly polished manners and of great colloquial powers.

Clarendon, proud and imperious by nature, soured by age and disease, and relying on his great talents and services, sought out no new allies. He seems to have taken a sort of morose pleasure in slighting and provoking all the rising talent of the kingdom. His connections were almost entirely confined to the small circle, every day becoming smaller, of old cavaliers who had been friends of his youth or companions of his exile. Arlington, on the other hand, beat up everywhere for recruits. No man had a greater personal following, and no man exerted himself more to serve his adherents. It was a kind of habit with him to push up his dependants to his own level, and then to complain bitterly of their ingratitude because they did not choose to be his dependants any longer. It was thus that he quarrelled with two successive Treasurers, Gifford and Danby. To Arlington Temple attached himself, and was not sparing of warm professions of affection, or even, we grieve to say, of gross and almost profane adulation. In no long time he obtained his reward.

England was in a very different situation with respect to foreign powers from that which she had occupied during the splendid administration of the Protector. She was engaged in war with the United Provinces, then governed with almost regal power by the Grand Pensionary, John de Witt; and though no war had ever cost the kingdom so much, none had ever been more feebly and meanly conducted. France had espoused the interests of the States-General. Denmark seemed likely to take the same side. Spain, indignant at the close political and matrimonial alliance which Charles had formed with the House of Braganza, was not disposed to lend him any assistance. The great plague of London had suspended trade, had scattered the ministers and nobles, had paralysed every department of the public service, and had increased the gloomy discontent which misgovernment had begun to excite throughout the nation. One continental ally England possessed, the Bishop of Munster, a restless and ambitious prelate, bred a soldier, and still a soldier in all his tastes and passions. He hated the Dutch for interfering in the affairs

of his see, and declared himself willing to risk his little dominions for the chance of revenge. He sent, accordingly, a strange kind of ambassador to London, a Benedictine monk, who spoke bad English, and looked, says Lord Clarendon, "like a carter." This person brought a letter from the Bishop, offering to make an attack by land on the Dutch territory. The English ministers eagerly caught at the proposal, and promised a subsidy of 500,000 rix-dollars to their new ally. It was determined to send an English agent to Munster; and Arlington, to whose department the business belonged, fixed on Temple for this post.

Temple accepted the commission, and acquitted himself to the satisfaction of his employers, though the whole plan ended in nothing, and the Bishop, finding that France had joined Holland, made haste, after pocketing an instalment of his subsidy, to conclude a separate peace. Temple, at a later period, looked back with no great satisfaction to this part of his life; and excused himself for undertaking a negotiation from which little good could result, by saying that he was then young and very new to business. In truth, he could hardly have been placed in a situation where the eminent diplomatic talents which he possessed could have appeared to less advantage. He was ignorant of the German language, and did not easily accommodate himself to the manners of the people. He could not bear much wine; and none but a hard drinker had any chance of success in Westphalian society. Under all these disadvantages, however, he gave so much satisfaction that he was created a Baronet, and appointed resident at the vice-regal court of Brussels.

Brussels suited Temple far better than the palaces of the boar-hunting and wine-bibbing princes of Germany. He now occupied one of the most important posts of observation in which a diplomatist could be stationed. He was placed in the territory of a great neutral power, between the territories of two great powers which were at war with England. From this excellent school he soon came forth the most accomplished negotiator of his age.

In the meantime the government of Charles had suffered a succession of humiliating disasters. The extravagance of the court had dissipated all the means which Parliament had supplied for the purpose of carrying on offensive hostilities.

It was determined to wage only a defensive war; and even for defensive war the vast resources of England, managed by triflers and public robbers, were found insufficient. The Dutch insulted the British coasts, sailed up the Thames, took Sheerness, and carried their ravages to Chatham. The blaze of the ships burning in the river was seen at London: it was rumoured that a foreign army had landed at Gravesend; and military men seriously proposed to abandon the Tower. To such a depth of infamy had a bad administration reduced that proud and victorious country, which a few years before had dictated its pleasure to Mazarine, to the States-General, and to the Vatican. Humbled by the events

of the war, and dreading the just anger of Parliament, the English Ministry hastened to huddle up a peace with France and Holland at Breda.

But a new scheme was about to open. It had already been for some time apparent to discerning observers, that England and Holland were threatened by a common danger, much more formidable than any which they had reason to apprehend from each other. The old enemy of their independence and of their religion was no longer to be dreaded. The sceptre had passed away from Spain. That mighty empire, on which the sun never set, which had crushed the liberties of Italy and Germany, which had occupied Paris with its armies, and covered the British seas with its sails, was at the mercy of every spoiler; and Europe observed with dismay the rapid growth of a new and more formidable power. Men looked to Spain and saw only weakness disguised and increased by pride, dominions of vast bulk and little strength, tempting, unwieldy, and defenceless, an empty treasury, a sullen and torpid nation, a child on the throne, factions in the council, ministers who served only themselves, and soldiers who were terrible only to their countrymen. Men looked to France, and saw a large and compact territory, a rich soil, a central situation, a bold, alert, and ingenious people, large revenues, numerous and well-disciplined troops, an active and ambitious prince, in the flower of his age, surrounded by generals of unrivalled skill. The projects of Lewis could be counteracted only by ability, vigour, and union on the part of his neighbours. Ability and vigour had hitherto been found in the councils of Holland alone, and of union there was no appearance in Europe. The question of Portuguese independence separated England from Spain. Old grudges, recent hostilities, maritime pretensions, commercial competition separated England as widely from the United Provinces.

The great object of Lewis, from the beginning to the end of his reign, was the acquisition of those large and valuable provinces of the Spanish monarchy, which lay contiguous to the eastern frontier of France. Already, before the conclusion of the treaty of Breda, he had invaded those provinces. He now pushed on his conquest with scarcely any resistance. Fortress after fortress was taken. Brussels itself was in danger; and Temple thought it wise to send his wife and children to England. But his sister, Lady Giffard, who had been some time his inmate, and who seems to have been a more important personage in his family than his wife, still remained with him.

De Witt saw the progress of the French arms with painful anxiety. But it was not in the power of Holland alone to save Flanders; and the difficulty of forming an extensive coalition for that purpose appeared almost insuperable. Lewis, indeed, affected moderation. He declared himself willing to agree to a compromise with Spain. But these offers were undoubtedly mere professions, intended to quiet the apprehensions of the neighbouring powers;

and, as his position became every day more and more advantageous, it was to be expected that he would rise in his demands.

Such was the state of affairs when Temple obtained from the English Ministry permission to make a tour in Holland incognito. In company with Lady Giffard he arrived at the Hague.

He was not charged with any public commission, but he availed himself of this opportunity of introducing himself to De Witt. "My only business, sir," he said, "is to see the things which are most considerable in your country, and I should execute my design very imperfectly if I went away without seeing you." De Witt, who from report had formed a high opinion of Temple, was pleased by the compliment, and replied with a frankness and cordiality which at once led to intimacy. The two statesmen talked calmly over the causes which had estranged England from Holland, congratulated each other on the peace, and then began to discuss the new dangers which menaced Europe. Temple, who had no authority to say any thing on behalf of the English Government, expressed himself very guardedly. De Witt, who was himself the Dutch Government, had no reason to be reserved. He openly declared that his wish was to see a general coalition formed for the preservation of Flanders. His simplicity and openness amazed Temple, who had been accustomed to the affected solemnity of his patron, the Secretary, and to the eternal doublings and evasions which passed for great feats of statesmanship among the Spanish politicians at Brussels. "Whoever," he wrote to Arlington, "deals with M. de Witt must go the same plain way that he pretends to in his negotiations, without refining or colouring or offering shadow for substance." Temple was scarcely less struck by the modest dwelling and frugal table of the first citizen of the richest state in the world. While Clarendon was amazing London with a dwelling more sumptuous than the palace of his master, while Arlington was lavishing his ill-gotten wealth on the decoys and orange-gardens and interminable conservatories of Euston, the great statesman who had frustrated all their plans of conquest, and the roar of whose guns they had heard with terror even in the galleries of Whitehall, kept only a single servant, walked about the streets in the plainest garb, and never used a coach except for visits of ceremony.

Temple sent a full account of his interview with De Witt to Arlington, who, in consequence of the fall of the Chancellor, now shared with the Duke of Buckingham the principal direction of affairs. Arlington showed no disposition to meet the advances of the Dutch minister. Indeed, as was amply proved a few years later, both he and his masters were perfectly willing to purchase the means of misgoverning England by giving up, not only Flanders, but the whole Continent to France. Temple, who distinctly saw that a moment had arrived at which it was possible to reconcile his country with Holland, to reconcile Charles with the Parliament, to bridle the power of Lewis, to efface the shame of the late ignominious war, to restore England to the same place

in Europe which she had occupied under Cromwell, became more and more urgent in his representations. Arlington's replies were for some time couched in cold and ambiguous terms. But the events which followed the meeting of Parliament, in the autumn of 1667, appear to have produced an entire change in his views. The discontent of the nation was deep and general. The administration was attacked in all its parts. The King and the ministers laboured, not unsuccessfully, to throw on Clarendon the blame of past miscarriages; but though the Commons were resolved that the late Chancellor should be the first victim, it was by no means clear that he would be the last. The Secretary was personally attacked with great bitterness in the course of the debates. One of the resolutions of the Lower House against Clarendon was in truth a censure of the foreign policy of the Government, as too favourable to France. To these events chiefly we are inclined to attribute the change which at this crisis took place in the measures of England. The Ministry seem to have felt that, if they wished to derive any advantage from Clarendon's downfall, it was necessary for them to abandon what was supposed to be Clarendon's system, and by some splendid and popular measure to win the confidence of the nation. Accordingly, in December 1667, Temple received a despatch containing instructions of the highest importance. The plan which he had so strongly recommended was approved; and he was directed to visit De Witt as speedily as possible, and to ascertain whether the States were willing to enter into an offensive and defensive league with England against the projects of France. Temple, accompanied by his sister, instantly set out for the Hague, and laid the propositions of the English Government before the Grand Pensionary. The Dutch statesman answered with characteristic straightforwardness, that he was fully ready to agree to a defensive confederacy, but that it was the fundamental principle of the foreign policy of the States to make no offensive alliance under any circumstances whatever. With this answer Temple hastened from the Hague to London, had an audience of the King, related what had passed between himself and De Witt, exerted himself to remove the unfavourable opinion which had been conceived of the Grand Pensionary at the English Court, and had the satisfaction of succeeding in all his objects. On the evening of the first of January, 1668, a council was held, at which Charles declared his resolution to unite with the Dutch on their own terms. Temple and his indefatigable sister immediately sailed again for the Hague, and, after weathering a violent storm in which they were very nearly lost, arrived in safety at the place of their destination.

On this occasion, as on every other, the dealings between Temple and De Witt were singularly fair and open. When they met, Temple began by recapitulating what had passed at their last interview. De Witt, who was as little given to lying with his face as with his tongue, marked his assent by his looks while the recapitulation proceeded, and, when it was concluded, answered that Temple's memory was perfectly correct, and thanked him for proceeding in so exact and sincere a manner. Temple then informed

the Grand Pensionary that the King of England had determined to close with the proposal of a defensive alliance. De Witt had not expected so speedy a resolution, and his countenance indicated surprise as well as pleasure. But he did not retract; and it was speedily arranged that England and Holland should unite for the purpose of compelling Lewis to abide by the compromise which he had formerly offered. The next object of the two statesmen was to induce another government to become a party to their league. The victories of Gustavus and Torstenson, and the political talents of Oxenstiern, had obtained for Sweden a consideration in Europe, disproportioned to her real power: the princes of Northern Germany stood in great awe of her; and De Witt and Temple agreed that if she could be induced to accede to the league, "it would be too strong a bar for France to venture on." Temple went that same evening to Count Dona, the Swedish Minister at the Hague, took a seat in the most unceremonious manner, and, with that air of frankness and goodwill by which he often succeeded in rendering his diplomatic overtures acceptable, explained the scheme which was in agitation. Dona was greatly pleased and flattered. He had not powers which would authorise him to conclude a treaty of such importance. But he strongly advised Temple and De Witt to do their part without delay, and seemed confident that Sweden would accede. The ordinary course of public business in Holland was too slow for the present emergency; and De Witt appeared to have some scruples about breaking through the established forms. But the urgency and dexterity of Temple prevailed. The States-General took the responsibility of executing the treaty with a celerity unprecedented in the annals of the federation, and indeed inconsistent with its fundamental laws. The state of public feeling was, however, such in all the provinces, that this irregularity was not merely pardoned but applauded. When the instrument had been formally signed, the Dutch Commissioners embraced the English Plenipotentiary with the warmest expressions of kindness and confidence. "At Breda," exclaimed Temple, "we embraced as friends, here as brothers."

This memorable negotiation occupied only five days. De Witt complimented Temple in high terms on having effected in so short a time what must, under other management, have been the work of months; and Temple, in his despatches, spoke in equally high terms of De Witt. "I must add these words, to do M. de Witt right, that I found him as plain, as direct and square in the course of this business as any man could be, though often stiff in points where he thought any advantage could accrue to his country; and have all the reason in the world to be satisfied with him; and for his industry, no man had ever more I am sure. For these five days at least, neither of us spent any idle hours, neither day nor night."

Sweden willingly acceded to the league, which is known in history by the name of the Triple Alliance; and, after some signs of ill-humour on the part of France, a general pacification was the result.

The Triple Alliance may be viewed in two lights; as a measure of foreign policy, and as a measure of domestic policy; and under both aspects it seems to us deserving of all the praise which has been bestowed upon it.

Dr. Lingard, who is undoubtedly a very able and well-informed writer, but whose great fundamental rule of judging seems to be that the popular opinion on a historical question cannot possibly be correct, speaks very slightingly of this celebrated treaty; and Mr. Courtenay, who by no means regards Temple with that profound veneration which is generally found in biographers, has conceded, in our opinion, far too much to Dr. Lingard.

The reasoning of Dr. Lingard is simply this. The Triple Alliance only compelled Lewis to make peace on the terms on which, before the alliance was formed, he had offered to make peace. How can it then be said that this alliance arrested his career, and preserved Europe from his ambition? Now, this reasoning is evidently of no force at all, except on the supposition that Lewis would have held himself bound by his former offers, if the alliance had not been formed; and, if Dr. Lingard thinks this is a reasonable supposition, we should be disposed to say to him, in the words of that, great politician, Mrs. Western: "Indeed, brother, you would make a fine plenipo to negotiate with the French. They would soon persuade you that they take towns out of mere defensive principles." Our own impression is that Lewis made his offer only in order to avert some such measure as the Triple Alliance, and adhered to his offer only in consequence of that alliance. He had refused to consent to an armistice. He had made all his arrangements for a winter campaign. In the very week in which Temple and the States concluded their agreement at the Hague, Franche Comte was attacked by the French armies, and in three weeks the whole province was conquered. This prey Lewis was compelled to disgorge. And what compelled him? Did the object seem to him small or contemptible? On the contrary, the annexation of Franche Comte to his kingdom was one of the favourite projects of his life. Was he withheld by regard for his word? Did he, who never in any other transaction of his reign showed the smallest respect for the most solemn obligations of public faith, who violated the Treaty of the Pyrenees, who violated the Treaty of Aix, who violated the Treaty of Nimeguen, who violated the Partition Treaty, who violated the Treaty of Utrecht, feel himself restrained by his word on this single occasion? Can any person who is acquainted with his character and with his whole policy doubt that, if the neighbouring powers would have looked quietly on, he would instantly have risen in his demands? How then stands the case? He wished to keep Franche Comte It was not from regard to his word that he ceded Franche Comte. Why then did he cede Franche Comte? We answer, as all Europe answered at the time, from fear of the Triple Alliance.

But grant that Lewis was not really stopped in his progress by

this famous league; still it is certain that the world then, and long after, believed that he was so stopped, and that this was the prevailing impression in France as well as in other countries. Temple, therefore, at the very least, succeeded in raising the credit of his country, and in lowering the credit of a rival power. Here there is no room for controversy. No grubbing among old state-papers will ever bring to light any document which will shake these facts; that Europe believed the ambition of France to have been curbed by the three powers; that England, a few months before the last among the nations, forced to abandon her own seas, unable to defend the mouths of her own rivers, regained almost as high a place in the estimation of her neighbours as she had held in the times of Elizabeth and Oliver; and that all this change of opinion was produced in five days by wise and resolute counsels, without the firing of a single gun. That the Triple Alliance effected this will hardly be disputed; and therefore, even if it effected nothing else, it must still be regarded as a masterpiece of diplomacy.

Considered as a measure of domestic policy, this treaty seems to be equally deserving of approbation. It did much to allay discontents, to reconcile the sovereign with a people who had, under his wretched administration, become ashamed of him and of themselves. It was a kind of pledge for internal good government. The foreign relations of the kingdom had at that time the closest connection with our domestic policy. From the Restoration to the accession of the House of Hanover, Holland and France were to England what the right-hand horseman and the left-hand horseman in Burger's fine ballad were to the Wildgraf, the good and the evil counsellor, the angel of light and the angel of darkness. The ascendency of France was as inseparably connected with the prevalence of tyranny in domestic affairs. The ascendency of Holland was as inseparably connected with the prevalence of political liberty and of mutual toleration among Protestant sects. How fatal and degrading an influence Lewis was destined to exercise on the British counsels, how great a deliverance our country was destined to owe to the States, could not be foreseen when the Triple Alliance was concluded. Yet even then all discerning men considered it as a good omen for the English constitution and the reformed religion, that the Government had attached itself to Holland, and had assumed a firm and somewhat hostile attitude towards France. The fame of this measure was the greater, because it stood so entirely alone. It was the single eminently good act performed by the Government during the interval between the Restoration and the Revolution. ["The only good public thing that bath been done since the King came into England."--PEPYS'S Diary, February 14, 1667-8.] Every person who had the smallest part in it, and some who had no part in it at all, battled for a share of the credit. The most parsimonious republicans were ready to grant money for the purpose of carrying into effect the provisions of this popular alliance; and the great Tory poet of that age, in his finest satires, repeatedly spoke with reverence of the "triple bond."

This negotiation raised the fame of Temple both at home and abroad to a great height, to such a height, indeed, as seems to have excited the jealousy of his friend Arlington. While London and Amsterdam resounded with acclamations of joy, the Secretary, in very cold official language, communicated to his friend the approbation of the King; and, lavish as the Government was of titles and of money, its ablest servant was neither ennobled nor enriched.

Temple's next mission was to Aix-la-Chapelle, where a general congress met for the purpose of perfecting the work of the Triple Alliance. On his road he received abundant proofs of the estimation in which he was held. Salutes were fired from the walls of the towns through which lie passed; the population poured forth into the streets to see him; and the magistrates entertained him with speeches and banquets. After the close of the negotiations at Aix he was appointed Ambassador at the Hague. But in both these missions he experienced much vexation from the rigid, and, indeed, unjust parsimony of the Government. Profuse to many unworthy applicants, the Ministers were niggardly to him alone. They secretly disliked his politics; and they seem to have indemnified themselves for the humiliation of adopting his measures, by cutting down his salary and delaying the settlement of his outfit.

At the Hague he was received with cordiality by De Witt, and with the most signal marks of respect by the States-General. His situation was in one point extremely delicate, The Prince of Orange, the hereditary chief of the faction opposed to the administration of De Witt, was the nephew of Charles. To preserve the confidence of the ruling party, without showing any want of respect to so near a relation of his own master, was no easy task, But Temple acquitted himself so well that he appears to have been in great favour, both with the Grand Pensionary and with the Prince.

In the main, the years which he spent at the Hague seem, in spite of some pecuniary difficulties occasioned by the ill-will of the English Ministers, to have passed very agreeably. He enjoyed the highest personal consideration. He was surrounded by objects interesting in the highest degree to a man of his observant turn of mind. He had no wearing labour, no heavy responsibility; and, if he had no opportunity of adding to his high reputation, he ran no risk of impairing it.

But evil times were at hand. Though Charles had for a moment deviated into a wise and dignified policy, his heart had always been with France; and France employed every means of seduction to lure him back. His impatience of control, his greediness for money, his passion for beauty, his family affections, all his tastes, all his feelings, were practised on with the utmost dexterity. His interior Cabinet was now composed of men such as

that generation, and that generation alone, produced; of men at whose audacious profligacy the renegades and jobbers of our own time look with the same sort of admiring despair with which our sculptors contemplate the Theseus, and our painters the Cartoons. To be a real, hearty, deadly enemy of the liberties and religion of the nation was, in that dark conclave, an honourable distinction, a distinction which belonged only to the daring and impetuous Clifford. His associates were men to whom all creeds and all constitutions were alike; who were equally ready to profess the faith of Geneva, of Lambeth, and of Rome; who were equally ready to be tools of power without any sense of loyalty, and stirrers of sedition without any zeal for freedom.

It was hardly possible even for a man so penetrating as De Witt to foresee to what depths of wickedness and infamy this execrable administration would descend. Yet, many signs of the great woe which was coming on Europe, the visit of the Duchess of Orleans to her brother, the unexplained mission of Buckingham to Paris, the sudden occupation of Lorraine by the French, made the Grand Pensionary uneasy, and his alarm increased when he learned that Temple had received orders to repair instantly to London. De Witt earnestly pressed for an explanation. Temple very sincerely replied that he hoped that the English Ministers would adhere to the principles of the Triple Alliance. "I can answer," he said, "only for myself. But that I can do. If a new system is to be adopted, I will never have any part in it. I have told the King so; and I will make my words good. If I return you will know more: and if I do not return you will guess more." De Witt smiled, and answered that he would hope the best, and would do all in his power to prevent others from forming unfavourable surmises.

In October 1670, Temple reached London; and all his worst suspicions were immediately more than confirmed. He repaired to the Secretary's house, and was kept an hour and a half waiting in the ante-chamber, whilst Lord Ashley was closeted with Arlington. When at length the doors were thrown open, Arlington was dry and cold, asked trifling questions about the voyage, and then, in order to escape from the necessity of discussing business, called in his daughter, an engaging little girl of three years old, who was long after described by poets "as dressed in all the bloom of smiling nature," and whom Evelyn, one of the witnesses of her inauspicious marriage, mournfully designated as "the sweetest, hopefullest, most beautiful, child, and most virtuous too." Any particular conversation was impossible: and Temple, who with all his constitutional or philosophical indifference, was sufficiently sensitive on the side of vanity, felt this treatment keenly. The next day he offered himself to the notice of the King, who was snuffing up the morning air and feeding his ducks in the Mall. Charles was civil, but, like Arlington, carefully avoided all conversation on politics. Temple found that all his most respectable friends were entirely excluded from the secrets of the inner council, and were awaiting in anxiety and dread for

what those mysterious deliberations might produce. At length he obtained a glimpse of light. The bold spirit and fierce passions of Clifford made him the most unfit of all men to be the keeper of a momentous secret. He told Temple, with great vehemence, that the States had behaved basely, that De Witt was a rogue and a rascal, that it was below the King of England, or any other king, to have anything to do with such wretches; that this ought to be made known to all the world, and that it was the duty of the Minister of the Hague to declare it publicly. Temple commanded his temper as well as he could, and replied calmly and firmly, that he should make no such declaration, and that, if he were called upon to give his opinion of the States and their Ministers, he would say exactly what he thought.

He now saw clearly that the tempest was gathering fast, that the great alliance which he had formed and over which he had watched with parental care was about to be dissolved, that times were at hand when it would be necessary for him, if he continued in public life, either to take part decidedly against the Court, or to forfeit the high reputation which he enjoyed at home and abroad. He began to make preparations for retiring altogether from business. He enlarged a little garden which he had purchased at Sheen, and laid out some money in ornamenting his house there. He was still nominally ambassador to Holland; and the English Ministers continued during some months to flatter the States with the hope that he would speedily return. At length, in June 1671, the designs of the Cabal were ripe. The infamous treaty with France had been ratified. The season of deception was past, and that of insolence and violence had arrived. Temple received his formal dismission, kissed the King’s hand, was repaid for his services with some of those vague compliments and promises which cost so little to the cold heart, the easy temper, and the ready tongue of Charles, and quietly withdrew to his little nest, as he called it, at Sheen.

There he amused himself with gardening, which he practised so successfully that the fame of his fruit-trees soon spread far and wide. But letters were his chief solace. He had, as we have mentioned, been from his youth in the habit of diverting himself with composition. The clear and agreeable language of his despatches had early attracted the notice of his employers; and, before the peace of Breda, he had, at the request of Arlington, published a pamphlet on the war, of which nothing is now known, except that it had some vogue at the time, and that Charles, not a contemptible judge, pronounced it to be very well written. Temple had also, a short time before he began to reside at the Hague, written a treatise on the state of Ireland, in which he showed all the feelings of a Cromwellian. He had gradually formed a style singularly lucid and melodious, superficially deformed, indeed, by Gallicisms and Hispanicisms, picked up in travel or in negotiation, but at the bottom pure English, which generally flowed along with careless simplicity, but occasionally rose even into Ciceronian magnificence. The length of his sentences has

often been remarked. But in truth this length is only apparent. A critic who considers as one sentence everything that lies between two full stops will undoubtedly call Temple's sentences long. But a critic who examines them carefully will find that they are not swollen by parenthetical matter, that their structure is scarcely ever intricate, that they are formed merely by accumulation, and that, by the simple process of now and then leaving out a conjunction, and now and then substituting a full stop for a semicolon, they might, without any alteration in the order of the words, be broken up into very short periods with no sacrifice except that of euphony. The long sentences of Hooker and Clarendon, on the contrary, are really long sentences, and cannot be turned into short ones, without being entirely taken to pieces.

The best known of the works which Temple composed during his first retreat from official business are an Essay on Government, which seems to us exceedingly childish, and an Account of the United Provinces, which we value as a masterpiece in its kind. Whoever compares these two treatises will probably agree with us in thinking that Temple was not a very deep or accurate reasoner, but was an excellent observer, that he had no call to philosophical speculation, but that he was qualified to excel as a writer of Memoirs and Travels.

While Temple was engaged in these pursuits, the great storm which had long been brooding over Europe burst with such fury as for a moment seemed to threaten ruin to all free governments and all Protestant churches. France and England, without seeking for any decent pretext, declared war against Holland. The immense armies of Lewis poured across the Rhine, and invaded the territory of the United Provinces. The Dutch seemed to be paralysed by terror. Great towns opened their gates to straggling parties. Regiments flung down their arms without seeing an enemy. Guelderland, Overyssel, Utrecht were overrun by the conquerors. The fires of the French camp were seen from the walls of Amsterdam. In the first madness of despair the devoted people turned their rage against the most illustrious of their fellow-citizens. De Ruyter was saved with difficulty from assassins. De Witt was torn to pieces by an infuriated rabble. No hope was left to the Commonwealth, save in the dauntless, the ardent, the indefatigable, the unconquerable spirit which glowed under the frigid demeanour of the young Prince of Orange.

That great man rose at once to the full dignity of his part, and approved himself a worthy descendant of the line of heroes who had vindicated the liberties of Europe against the house of Austria. Nothing could shake his fidelity to his country, not his close connection with the royal family of England, not the most earnest solicitations, not the most tempting offers. The spirit of the nation, that spirit which had maintained the great conflict against the gigantic power of Philip, revived in all its strength. Counsels, such as are inspired by a generous

despair, and are almost always followed by a speedy dawn of hope, were gravely concerted by the statesmen of Holland. To open their dykes, to man their ships, to leave their country, with all its miracles of art and industry, its cities, its canals, its villas, its pastures, and its tulip gardens, buried under the waves of the German ocean, to bear to a distant climate their Calvinistic faith and their old Batavian liberties, to fix, perhaps with happier auspices, the new Stadthouse of their Commonwealth, under other stars, and amidst a strange vegetation, in the Spice Islands of the Eastern seas; such were the plans which they had the spirit to form; and it is seldom that men who have the spirit to form such plans are reduced to the necessity of executing them.

The Allies had, during a short period, obtained success beyond their hopes. This was their auspicious moment. They neglected to improve it. It passed away; and it returned no more. The Prince of Orange arrested the progress of the French armies. Lewis returned to be amused and flattered at Versailles. The country was under water. The winter approached. The weather became stormy. The fleets of the combined kings could no longer keep the sea. The republic had obtained a respite; and the circumstances were such that a respite was, in a military view, important, in a political view almost decisive.

The alliance against Holland, formidable as it was, was yet of such a nature that it could not succeed at all, unless it succeeded at once. The English Ministers could not carry on the war without money. They could legally obtain money only from the Parliament and they were most unwilling to call the Parliament together. The measures which Charles had adopted at home were even more unpopular than his foreign policy. He had bound himself by a treaty with Lewis to re-establish the Catholic religion in England; and, in pursuance of this design, he had entered on the same path which his brother afterwards trod with greater obstinacy to a more fatal end. The King had annulled, by his own sole authority, the laws against Catholics and other dissenters. The matter of the Declaration of Indulgence exasperated one-half of his subjects, and the manner the other half. Liberal men would have rejoiced to see a toleration granted, at least to all Protestant sects. Many High Churchmen had no objection to the King’s dispensing power. But a tolerant act done in an unconstitutional way excited the opposition of all who were zealous either for the Church or for the privileges of the people, that is to say, of ninety-nine Englishmen out of a hundred. The Ministers were, therefore, most unwilling to meet the Houses. Lawless and desperate as their counsels were, the boldest of them had too much value for his neck to think of resorting to benevolences, privy-seals, ship-money, or any of the other unlawful modes of extortion which had been familiar to the preceding age. The audacious fraud of shutting up the Exchequer furnished them with about twelve hundred thousand pounds, a sum which, even in better hands than theirs, would not have sufficed

for the war-charges of a single year. And this was a step which could never be repeated, a step which, like most breaches of public faith, was speedily found to have caused pecuniary difficulties greater than those which it removed. All the money that could be raised was gone; Holland was not conquered; and the King had no resource but in a Parliament.

Had a general election taken place at this crisis, it is probable that the country would have sent up representatives as resolutely hostile to the Court as those who met in November 1640; that the whole domestic and foreign policy of the Government would have been instantly changed; and that the members of the Cabal would have expiated their crimes on Tower Hill. But the House of Commons was still the same which had been elected twelve years before, in the midst of the transports of joy, repentance, and loyalty which followed the Restoration; and no pains had been spared to attach it to the Court by places, pensions, and bribes. To the great mass of the people it was scarcely less odious than the Cabinet itself. Yet, though it did not immediately proceed to those strong measures which a new House would in all probability have adopted, it was sullen and unmanageable, and undid, slowly indeed, and by degrees, but most effectually, all that the Ministers had done. In one session it annihilated their system of internal government. In a second session it gave a death-blow to their foreign policy.

The dispensing power was the first object of attack. The Commons would not expressly approve the war; but neither did they as yet expressly condemn it; and they were even willing to grant the King a supply for the purpose of continuing hostilities, on condition that he would redress internal grievances, among which the Declaration of Indulgence held the foremost place.

Shaftesbury, who was Chancellor, saw that the game was up, that he had got all that was to be got by siding with despotism and Popery, and that it was high time to think of being a demagogue and a good Protestant. The Lord Treasurer Clifford was marked out by his boldness, by his openness, by his zeal for the Catholic religion, by something which, compared with the villainy of his colleagues, might almost be called honesty, to be the scapegoat of the whole conspiracy. The King came in person to the House of Peers for the purpose of requesting their Lordships to mediate between him and the Commons touching the Declaration of Indulgence. He remained in the House while his speech was taken into consideration; a common practice with him; for the debates amused his sated mind, and were sometimes, he used to say, as good as a comedy. A more sudden turn his Majesty had certainly never seen in any comedy of intrigue, either at his own play-house, or at the Duke's, than that which this memorable debate produced. The Lord Treasurer spoke with characteristic ardour and intrepidity in defence of the Declaration. When he sat down, the Lord Chancellor rose from the woolsack, and, to the amazement of the King and of the House, attacked Clifford, attacked the

Declaration for which he had himself spoken in Council, gave up the whole policy of the Cabinet, and declared himself on the side of the House of Commons. Even that age had not witnessed so portentous a display of impudence.

The King, by the advice of the French Court, which cared much more about the war on the Continent than about the conversion of the English heretics, determined to save his foreign policy at the expense of his plans in favour of the Catholic church. He obtained a supply; and in return for this concession he cancelled the Declaration of Indulgence, and made a formal renunciation of the dispensing power before he prorogued the Houses.

But it was no more in his power to go on with the war than to maintain his arbitrary system at home. His Ministry, betrayed within, and fiercely assailed from without, went rapidly to pieces. Clifford threw down the white staff, and retired to the woods of Ugbrook, vowing, with bitter tears, that he would never again see that turbulent city, and that perfidious Court. Shaftesbury was ordered to deliver up the Great Seal, and instantly carried over his front of brass and his tongue of poison to the ranks of the Opposition. The remaining members of the Cabal had neither the capacity of the late Chancellor, nor the courage and enthusiasm of the late Treasurer. They were not only unable to carry on their former projects, but began to tremble for their own lands and heads. The Parliament, as soon as it again met, began to murmur against the alliance with France and the war with Holland; and the murmur gradually swelled into a fierce and terrible clamour. Strong resolutions were adopted against Lauderdale and Buckingham. Articles of impeachment were exhibited against Arlington. The Triple Alliance was mentioned with reverence in every debate; and the eyes of all men were turned towards the quiet orchard, where the author of that great league was amusing himself with reading and gardening.

Temple was ordered to attend the King, and was charged with the office of negotiating a separate peace with Holland. The Spanish Ambassador to the Court of London had been empowered by the States-General to treat in their name. With him Temple came to a speedy agreement; and in three days a treaty was concluded.

The highest honours of the State were now within Temple’s reach. After the retirement of Clifford, the white staff had been delivered to Thomas Osborne, soon after created Earl of Danby, who was related to Lady Temple, and had, many years earlier, travelled and played tennis with Sir William. Danby was an interested and dishonest man, but by no means destitute of abilities or of judgment. He was, indeed, a far better adviser than any in whom Charles had hitherto reposed confidence. Clarendon was a man of another generation, and did not in the least understand the society which he had to govern. The members of the Cabal were ministers of a foreign power, and enemies of the Established Church; and had in consequence raised against

themselves and their master an irresistible storm of national and religious hatred. Danby wished to strengthen and extend the prerogative; but he had the sense to see that this could be done only by a complete change of system. He knew the English people and the House of Commons; and he knew that the course which Charles had recently taken, if obstinately pursued, might well end before the windows of the Banqueting-House. He saw that the true policy of the Crown was to ally itself, not with the feeble, the hated, the downtrodden Catholics, but with the powerful, the wealthy, the popular, the dominant Church of England; to trust for aid not to a foreign Prince whose name was hateful to the British nation, and whose succours could be obtained only on terms of vassalage, but to the old Cavalier party, to the landed gentry, the clergy, and the universities. By rallying round the throne the whole strength of the Royalists and High Churchmen, and by using without stint all the resources of corruption, he flattered himself that he could manage the Parliament. That he failed is to be attributed less to himself than to his master. Of the disgraceful dealings which were still kept up with the French Court, Danby deserved little or none of the blame, though he suffered the whole punishment.

Danby, with great parliamentary talents, had paid little attention to European politics, and wished for the help of some person on whom he could rely in the foreign department. A plan was accordingly arranged for making Temple Secretary of State. Arlington was the only member of the Cabal who still held office in England. The temper of the House of Commons made it necessary to remove him, or rather to require him to sell out; for at that time the great offices of State were bought and sold as commissions in the army now are. Temple was informed that he should have the Seals if he would pay Arlington six thousand pounds. The transaction had nothing in it discreditable, according to the notions of that age, and the investment would have been a good one; for we imagine that at that time the gains which a Secretary of State might make, without doing any thing considered as improper, were very considerable. Temple’s friends offered to lend him the money; but lie was fully determined not to take a post of so much responsibility in times so agitated, and under a Prince on whom so little reliance could be placed, and accepted the embassy to the Hague, leaving Arlington to find another purchaser.

Before Temple left England he had a long audience of the King, to whom he spoke with great severity of the measures adopted by the late Ministry. The King owned that things had turned out ill. "But," said he, "if I had been well served, I might have made a good business of it." Temple was alarmed at this language, and inferred from it that the system of the Cabal had not been abandoned, but only suspended. He therefore thought it his duty to go, as he expresses it, "to the bottom of the matter." He strongly represented to the King the impossibility of establishing either absolute government, or the Catholic religion

in England; and concluded by repeating an observation which he had heard at Brussels from M. Gourville, a very intelligent Frenchman well known to Charles: "A king of England," said Gourville, "who is willing to be the man of his people, is the greatest king in the world, but if he wishes to be more, by heaven he is nothing at all!" The King betrayed some symptoms of impatience during this lecture; but at last he laid his hand kindly on Temple's shoulder, and said, "You are right, and so is Gourville; and I will be the man of my people."

With this assurance Temple repaired to the Hague in July 1674. Holland was now secure, and France was surrounded on every side by enemies. Spain and the Empire were in arms for the purpose of compelling Lewis to abandon all that he had acquired since the treaty of the Pyrenees. A congress for the purpose of putting an end to the war was opened at Nimeguen under the mediation of England in 1675; and to that congress Temple was deputed. The work of conciliation however, went on very slowly. The belligerent powers were still sanguine, and the mediating power was unsteady and insincere.

In the meantime the Opposition in England became more and more formidable, and seemed fully determined to force the King into a war with France. Charles was desirous of making some appointments which might strengthen the administration and conciliate the confidence of the public. No man was more esteemed by the nation than Temple; yet he had never been concerned in any opposition to any government. In July 1677, he was sent for from Nimeguen. Charles received him with caresses, earnestly pressed him to accept the seals of Secretary of State, and promised to bear half the charge of buying out the present holder. Temple was charmed by the kindness and politeness of the King's manner, and by the liveliness of his Majesty's conversation; but his prudence was not to be so laid asleep. He calmly and steadily excused himself. The King affected to treat his excuses as mere jest, and gaily said, "Go; get you gone to Sheen. We shall have no good of you till you have been there; and when you have rested yourself, come up again." Temple withdrew and stayed two days at his villa, but returned to town in the same mind; and the King was forced to consent at least to a delay.

But while Temple thus carefully shunned the responsibility of bearing a part in the general direction of affairs, he gave a signal proof of that never-failing sagacity which enabled him to find out ways of distinguishing himself without risk. He had a principal share in bringing about an event which was at the time hailed with general satisfaction, and which subsequently produced consequences of the highest importance. This was the marriage of the Prince of Orange and the Lady Mary.

In the following year Temple returned to the Hague; and thence he was ordered, in the close of 1678, to repair to Nimeguen, for the purpose of signing the hollow and unsatisfactory treaty by which

the distractions of Europe were for a short time suspended. He grumbled much at being required to affix his name to bad articles which he had not framed, and still more at having to travel in very cold weather. After all, a difficulty of etiquette prevented him from signing, and he returned to the Hague. Scarcely had he arrived there when he received intelligence that the King, whose embarrassments were now far greater than ever, was fully resolved immediately to appoint him Secretary of State. He a third time declined that high post, and began to make preparations for a journey to Italy; thinking, doubtless, that he should spend his time much more pleasantly among pictures and ruins than in such a whirlpool of political and religious frenzy as was then raging in London.

But the King was in extreme necessity, and was no longer to be so easily put off. Temple received positive orders to repair instantly to England. He obeyed, and found the country in a state even more fearful than that which he had pictured to himself.

Those are terrible conjunctures, when the discontents of a nation, not light and capricious discontents, but discontents which have been steadily increasing during a long series of years, have attained their full maturity. The discerning few predict the approach of these conjunctures, but predict in vain. To the many, the evil season comes as a total eclipse of the sun at noon comes to a people of savages. Society which, but a short time before, was in a state of perfect repose, is on a sudden agitated with the most fearful convulsions, and seems to be on the verge of dissolution; and the rulers who, till the mischief was beyond the reach of all ordinary remedies, had never bestowed one thought on its existence, stand bewildered and panic-stricken, without hope or resource, in the midst of the confusion. One such conjuncture this generation has seen. God grant that we may never see another! At such a conjuncture it was that Temple landed on English ground in the beginning of 1679.

The Parliament had obtained a glimpse of the King’s dealings with France; and their anger had been unjustly directed against Danby, whose conduct as to that matter had been, on the whole, deserving rather of praise than of censure. The Popish plot, the murder of Godfrey, the infamous inventions of Oates, the discovery of Colman’s letters, had excited the nation to madness. All the disaffection which had been generated by eighteen years of misgovernment had come to the birth together. At this moment the King had been advised to dissolve that Parliament which had been elected just after his restoration, and which, though its composition had since that time been greatly altered, was still far more deeply imbued with the old cavalier spirit than any that had preceded, or that was likely to follow it. The general election had commenced, and was proceeding with a degree of excitement never before known. The tide ran furiously against the Court. It was clear that a majority of the new House of Commons would be, to use a word which came into fashion a few months

later, decided Whigs. Charles had found it necessary to yield to the violence of the public feeling. The Duke of York was on the point of retiring to Holland. "I never," says Temple, who had seen the abolition of monarchy, the dissolution of the Long Parliament, the fall of the Protectorate, the declaration of Monk against the Rump, "I never saw greater disturbance in men's minds."

The King now with the utmost urgency besought Temple to take the seals. The pecuniary part of the arrangement no longer presented any difficulty; and Sir William was not quite so decided in his refusal as he had formerly been. He took three days to consider the posture of affairs, and to examine his own feelings; and he came to the conclusion that "the scene was unfit for such an actor as he knew himself to be." Yet he felt that, by refusing help to the King at such a crisis, he might give much offence and incur much censure. He shaped his course with his usual dexterity. He affected to be very desirous of a seat in Parliament; yet he contrived to be an unsuccessful candidate; and, when all the writs were returned, he represented that it would be useless for him to take the seals till he could procure admittance to the House of Commons; and in this manner he succeeded in avoiding the greatness which others desired to thrust upon him.

The Parliament met; and the violence of its proceedings surpassed all expectation. The Long Parliament itself, with much greater provocation, had at its commencement been less violent. The Treasurer was instantly driven from office, impeached, sent to the Tower. Sharp and vehement votes were passed on the subject of the Popish Plot. The Commons were prepared to go much further, to wrest from the King his prerogative of mercy in cases of high political crimes, and to alter the succession to the Crown. Charles was thoroughly perplexed and dismayed. Temple saw him almost daily and thought him impressed with a deep sense of his errors, and of the miserable state into which they had brought him. Their conferences became longer and more confidential; and Temple began to flatter himself with the hope that he might be able to reconcile parties at home as he had reconciled hostile States abroad; that he might be able to suggest a plan which should allay all heats, efface the memory of all past grievances, secure the nation from misgovernment, and protect the Crown against the encroachments of Parliament.

Temple's plan was that the existing Privy Council, which consisted of fifty members, should be dissolved, that there should no longer be a small interior council, like that which is now designated as the Cabinet, that a new Privy Council of thirty members should be appointed, and that the King should pledge himself to govern by the constant advice of this body, to suffer all his affairs of every kind to be freely debated there, and not to reserve any part of the public business for a secret committee.

Fifteen of the members of this new council were to be great officers of State. The other fifteen were to be independent noblemen and gentlemen of the greatest weight in the country. In appointing them particular regard was to be had to the amount of their property. The whole annual income of the counsellors was estimated at £300,000. The annual income of all the members of the House of Commons was not supposed to exceed £400,000 The appointment of wealthy counsellors Temple describes as "a chief regard, necessary to this constitution."

This plan was the subject of frequent conversation between the King and Temple. After a month passed in discussions to which no third person appears to have been privy, Charles declared himself satisfied of the expediency of the proposed measure, and resolved to carry it into effect.

It is much to be regretted that Temple has left us no account of these conferences. Historians have, therefore, been left to form their own conjectures as to the object of this very extraordinary plan, "this Constitution," as Temple himself calls it. And we cannot say that any explanation which has yet been given seems to us quite satisfactory. Indeed, almost all the writers whom we have consulted appear to consider the change as merely a change of administration, and so considering it, they generally applaud it. Mr. Courtenay, who has evidently examined this subject with more attention than has often been bestowed upon it, seems to think Temple’s scheme very strange, unintelligible, and absurd. It is with very great diffidence that we offer our own solution of what we have always thought one of the great riddles of English history. We are strongly inclined to suspect that the appointment of the new Privy Council was really a much more remarkable event than has generally been supposed, and that what Temple had in view was to effect, under colour of a change of administration, a permanent change in the Constitution.

The plan, considered merely as a plan for the formation of a Cabinet, is so obviously inconvenient, that we cannot easily believe this to have been Temple’s chief object. The number of the new Council alone would be a most serious objection. The largest Cabinets of modern times have not, we believe, consisted of more than fifteen members. Even this number has generally been thought too large. The Marquess Wellesley, whose judgment on a question of executive administration is entitled to as much respect as that of any statesman that England ever produced, expressed, during the ministerial negotiations of the year 1812, his conviction that even thirteen was an inconveniently large number. But in a Cabinet of thirty members what chance could there be of finding unity, secrecy, expedition, any of the qualities which such a body ought to possess? If, indeed, the members of such a Cabinet were closely bound together by interest, if they all had a deep stake in the permanence of the Administration, if the majority were dependent on a small number

of leading men, the thirty might perhaps act as a smaller number would act, though more slowly, more awkwardly, and with more risk of improper disclosures. But the Council which Temple proposed was so framed that if, instead of thirty members, it had contained only ten, it would still have been the most unwieldy and discordant Cabinet that ever sat. One half of the members were to be persons holding no office, persons who had no motive to compromise their opinions, or to take any share of the responsibility of an unpopular measure, persons, therefore, who might be expected as often as there might be a crisis requiring the most cordial co-operation, to draw off from the rest, and to throw every difficulty in the way of the public business. The circumstance that they were men of enormous private wealth only made the matter worse. The House of Commons is a checking body; and therefore it is desirable that it should, to a great extent, consist of men of independent fortune, who receive nothing and expect nothing from the Government. But with executive boards the case is quite different. Their business is not to check, but to act. The very same things, therefore, which are the virtues of Parliaments may be vices in Cabinets. We can hardly conceive a greater curse to the country than an Administration, the members of which should be as perfectly independent of each other, and as little under the necessity of making mutual concessions, as the representatives of London and Devonshire in the House of Commons are and ought to be. Now Temple's new Council was to contain fifteen members who were to hold no offices, and the average amount of whose private estates was ten thousand pounds a year, an income which, in proportion to the wants of a man of rank of that period, was at least equal to thirty thousand a year in our time. Was it to be expected that such men would gratuitously take on themselves the labour and responsibility of Ministers, and the unpopularity which the best Ministers must sometimes be prepared to brave? Could there be any doubt that an Opposition would soon be formed within the Cabinet itself, and that the consequence would be disunion, altercation, tardiness in operations, the divulging of secrets, everything most alien from the nature of an executive council?

Is it possible to imagine that considerations so grave and so obvious should have altogether escaped the notice of a man of Temple's sagacity and experience? One of two things appears to us to be certain, either that his project has been misunderstood, or that his talents for public affairs have been overrated.

We lean to the opinion that his project has been misunderstood. His new Council, as we have shown, would have been an exceedingly bad Cabinet. The inference which we are inclined to draw is this, that he meant his Council to serve some other purpose than that of a mere Cabinet. Barillon used four or five words which contain, we think, the key of the whole mystery. Mr. Courtenay calls them pithy words; but he does not, if we are right, apprehend their whole force. "Ce sont," said Barillon, "des Etats, non des conseils."

In order clearly to understand what we imagine to have been Temple's views, the reader must remember that the Government of England was at that moment, and had been during nearly eighty years, in a state of transition. A change, not the less real or the less extensive because disguised under ancient names and forms, was in constant progress. The theory of the Constitution, the fundamental laws which fix the powers of the three branches of the legislature, underwent no material change between the time of Elizabeth and the time of William the Third. The most celebrated laws of the seventeenth century on those subjects, the Petition of Right, the Declaration of Right, are purely declaratory. They purport to be merely recitals of the old polity of England. They do not establish free government as a salutary improvement, but claim it as an undoubted and immemorial inheritance. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that, during the period of which we speak, all the mutual relations of all the orders of the State did practically undergo an entire change. The letter of the law might be unaltered; but, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the power of the Crown was, in fact, decidedly predominant in the State; and at the end of that century the power of Parliament, and especially of the Lower House, had become, in fact, decidedly predominant. At the beginning of the century, the sovereign perpetually violated, with little or no opposition, the clear privileges of Parliament. At the close of the century, the Parliament had virtually drawn to itself just as much as it chose of the prerogative of the Crown. The sovereign retained the shadow of that authority of which the Tudors had held the substance. He had a legislative veto which he never ventured to exercise, a power of appointing Ministers, whom an address of the Commons could at any moment force him to discard, a power of declaring war which, without Parliamentary support, could not be carried on for a single day. The Houses of Parliament were now not merely legislative assemblies, not merely checking assemblies; they were great Councils of State, whose voice, when loudly and firmly raised, was decisive on all questions of foreign and domestic policy. There was no part of the whole system of Government with which they had not power to interfere by advice equivalent to command; and, if they abstained from intermeddling with some departments of the executive administration, they were withheld from doing so only by their own moderation, and by the confidence which they reposed in the Ministers of the Crown. There is perhaps no other instance in history of a change so complete in the real constitution of an empire, unaccompanied by any corresponding change in the theoretical constitution. The disguised transformation of the Roman commonwealth into a despotic monarchy, under the long administration of Augustus, is perhaps the nearest parallel.

This great alteration did not take place without strong and constant resistance on the part of the kings of the house of Stuart. Till 1642, that resistance was generally of an open,

violent, and lawless nature. If the Commons refused supplies, the sovereign levied a benevolence. If the Commons impeached a favourite minister, the sovereign threw the chiefs of the Opposition into prison. Of these efforts to keep down the Parliament by despotic force, without the pretext of law, the last, the most celebrated, and the most wicked was the attempt to seize the five members. That attempt was the signal for civil war, and was followed by eighteen years of blood and confusion.

The days of trouble passed by; the exiles returned; the throne was again set up in its high place; the peerage and the hierarchy recovered their ancient splendour. The fundamental laws which had been recited in the Petition of Right were again solemnly recognised. The theory of the English constitution was the same on the day when the hand of Charles the Second was kissed by the kneeling Houses at Whitehall as on the day when his father set up the royal standard at Nottingham. There was a short period of doting fondness, a hysterica passio of loyal repentance and love. But emotions of this sort are transitory; and the interests on which depends the progress of great societies are permanent. The transport of reconciliation was soon over; and the old struggle recommenced.

The old struggle recommenced; but not precisely after the old fashion. The Sovereign was not indeed a man whom any common warning would have restrained from the grossest violations of law. But it was no common warning that he had received. All around him were the recent signs of the vengeance of an oppressed nation, the fields on which the noblest blood of the island had been poured forth, the castles shattered by the cannon of the Parliamentary armies, the hall where sat the stern tribunal to whose bar had been led, through lowering ranks of pikemen, the captive heir of a hundred kings, the stately pilasters before which the great execution had been so fearlessly done in the face of heaven and earth. The restored Prince, admonished by the fate of his father, never ventured to attack his Parliaments with open and arbitrary violence. It was at one time by means of the Parliament itself, at another time by means of the courts of law, that he attempted to regain for the Crown its old predominance. He began with great advantages. The Parliament of 1661 was called while the nation was still full of joy and tenderness. The great majority of the House of Commons were zealous royalists. All the means of influence which the patronage of the Crown afforded were used without limit. Bribery was reduced to a system. The King, when he could spare money from his pleasures for nothing else, could spare it for purposes of corruption. While the defence of the coasts was neglected, while ships rotted, while arsenals lay empty, while turbulent crowds of unpaid seamen swarmed in the streets of the seaports, something could still be scraped together in the Treasury for the members of the House of Commons. The gold of France was largely employed for the same purpose. Yet it was found, as indeed might have been foreseen, that there is a natural limit to the effect which can be produced by means like

these. There is one thing which the most corrupt senates are unwilling to sell; and that is the power which makes them worth buying. The same selfish motives which induced them to take a price for a particular vote induce them to oppose every measure of which the effect would be to lower the importance, and consequently the price, of their votes. About the income of their power, so to speak, they are quite ready to make bargains. But they are not easily persuaded to part with any fragment of the principal. It is curious to observe how, during the long continuance of this Parliament, the Pensionary Parliament, as it was nicknamed by contemporaries, though every circumstance seemed to be favourable to the Crown, the power of the Crown was constantly sinking, and that of the Commons constantly rising. The meetings of the Houses were more frequent than in former reigns; their interference was more harassing to the Government than in former reigns; they had begun to make peace, to make war; to pull down, if they did not set up, administrations. Already a new class of statesmen had appeared, unheard of before that time, but common ever since. Under the Tudors and the earlier Stuarts, it was generally by courtly arts, or by official skill and knowledge, that a politician raised himself to power. From the time of Charles the Second down to our own days a different species of talent, parliamentary talent, has been the most valuable of all the qualifications of an English statesman. It has stood in the place of all other acquirements. It has covered ignorance, weakness, rashness, the most fatal maladministration. A great negotiator is nothing when compared with a great debater; and a Minister who can make a successful speech need trouble himself little about an unsuccessful expedition. This is the talent which has made judges without law, and diplomatists without French, which has sent to the Admiralty men who did not know the stern of a ship from her bowsprit, and to the India Board men who did not know the difference between a rupee and a pagoda, which made a foreign secretary of Mr. Pitt, who, as George the Second said, had never opened Vattel, and which was very near making a Chancellor of the Exchequer of Mr. Sheridan, who could not work a sum in long division. This was the sort of talent which raised Clifford from obscurity to the head of affairs. To this talent Osborne, by birth a simple country gentleman, owed his white staff, his garter, and his dukedom. The encroachment of the power of the Parliament on the power of the Crown resembled a fatality, or the operation of some great law of nature. The will of the individual on the throne, or of the individuals in the two Houses, seemed to go for nothing. The King might be eager to encroach; yet something constantly drove him back. The Parliament might be loyal, even servile; yet something constantly urged them forward.

These things were done in the green tree. What then was likely to be done in the dry? The Popish Plot and the general election came together, and found a people predisposed to the most violent excitation. The composition of the House of Commons was changed. The Legislature was filled with men who leaned to Republicanism

in politics, and to Presbyterianism in religion. They no sooner met than they commenced an attack on the Government, which, if successful, must have made them supreme in the State.

Where was this to end? To us who have seen the solution the question presents few difficulties. But to a statesman of the age of Charles the Second, to a statesman, who wished, without depriving the Parliament of its privileges, to maintain the monarch in his old supremacy, it must have appeared very perplexing.

Clarendon had, when Minister, struggled honestly, perhaps, but, as was his wont, obstinately, proudly, and offensively, against the growing power of the Commons. He was for allowing them their old authority, and not one atom more. He would never have claimed for the Crown a right to levy taxes from the people without the consent of Parliament. But when the Parliament, in the first Dutch war, most properly insisted on knowing how it was that the money which they had voted had produced so little effect, and began to inquire through what hands it had passed, and on what services it had been expended, Clarendon considered this as a monstrous innovation. He told the King, as he himself says, "that he could not be too indulgent in the defence of the privileges of Parliament, and that he hoped he would never violate any of them; but he desired him to be equally solicitous to prevent the excesses in Parliament, and not to suffer them to extend their jurisdiction to cases they have nothing to do with; and that to restrain them within their proper bounds and limits is as necessary as it is to preserve them from being invaded; and that this was such a new encroachment as had no bottom." This is a single instance. Others might easily be given.

The bigotry, the strong passions, the haughty and disdainful temper, which made Clarendon’s great abilities a source of almost unmixed evil to himself and to the public, had no place in the character of Temple. To Temple, however, as well as to Clarendon, the rapid change which was taking place in the real working of the Constitution gave great disquiet; particularly as Temple had never sat in the English Parliament, and therefore regarded it with none of the predilection which men naturally feel for a body to which they belong, and for a theatre on which their own talents have been advantageously displayed.

To wrest by force from the House of Commons its newly acquired powers was impossible; nor was Temple a man to recommend such a stroke, even if it had been possible. But was it possible that the House of Commons might be induced to let those powers drop? Was it possible that, as a great revolution had been effected without any change in the outward form of the Government, so a great counter-revolution might be effected in the same manner? Was it possible that the Crown and the Parliament might be placed in nearly the same relative position in which they had stood in the reign of Elizabeth, and that this might be done without one

sword drawn, without one execution, and with the general acquiescence of the nation?

The English people--it was probably thus that Temple argued--will not bear to be governed by the unchecked power of the Sovereign, nor ought they to be so governed. At present there is no check but the Parliament. The limits which separate the power of checking those who govern from the power of governing are not easily to be defined. The Parliament, therefore, supported by the nation, is rapidly drawing to itself all the powers of Government. If it were possible to frame some other check on the power of the Crown, some check which might be less galling to the Sovereign than that by which he is now constantly tormented, and yet which might appear to the people to be a tolerable security against maladministration, Parliaments would probably meddle less; and they would be less supported by public opinion in their meddling. That the King's hands may not be rudely tied by others, he must consent to tie them lightly himself. That the executive administration may not be usurped by the checking body, something of the character of a checking body must be given to the body which conducts the executive administration. The Parliament is now arrogating to itself every day a larger share of the functions of the Privy Council. We must stop the evil by giving to the Privy Council something of the constitution of a Parliament. Let the nation see that all the King's measures are directed by a Cabinet composed of representatives of every order in the State, by a Cabinet which contains, not placemen alone, but independent and popular noblemen and gentlemen who have large estates and no salaries, and who are not likely to sacrifice the public welfare in which they have a deep stake, and the credit which they have obtained with the country, to the pleasure of a Court from which they receive nothing. When the ordinary administration is in such hands as these, the people will be quite content to see the Parliament become, what it formerly was, an extraordinary check. They will be quite willing that the House of Commons should meet only once in three years for a short session, and should take as little part in matters of state as it did a hundred years ago.

Thus we believe that Temple reasoned: for on this hypothesis his scheme is intelligible; and on any other hypothesis his scheme appears to us, as it does to Mr. Courtenay, exceedingly absurd and unmeaning. This Council was strictly what Barillon called it, an Assembly of States. There are the representatives of all the great sections of the community, of the Church, of the Law, of the Peerage, of the Commons. The exclusion of one half of the counsellors from office under the Crown, an exclusion which is quite absurd when we consider the Council merely as an executive board, becomes at once perfectly reasonable when we consider the Council as a body intended to restrain the Crown as well as to exercise the powers of the Crown, to perform some of the functions of a Parliament as well as the functions of a Cabinet. We see, too, why Temple dwelt so much on the private wealth of

the members, why he instituted a comparison between their united incomes and the united incomes of the members of the House of Commons. Such a parallel would have been idle in the case of a mere Cabinet. It is extremely significant in the case of a body intended to supersede the House of Commons in some very important functions.

We can hardly help thinking that the notion of this Parliament on a small scale was suggested to Temple by what he had himself seen in the United Provinces. The original Assembly of the States-General consisted, as he tells us, of above eight hundred persons. But this great body was represented by a smaller Council of about thirty, which bore the name and exercised the powers of the States-General. At last the real States altogether ceased to meet; and their power, though still a part of the theory of the Constitution, became obsolete in practice. We do not, of course, imagine that Temple either expected or wished that Parliaments should be thus disused; but he did expect, we think, that something like what had happened in Holland would happen in England, and that a large portion of the functions lately assumed by Parliament would be quietly transferred to the miniature Parliament which he proposed to create.

Had this plan, with some modifications, been tried at an earlier period, in a more composed state of the public mind, and by a better sovereign, we are by no means certain that it might not have effected the purpose for which it was designed. The restraint imposed on the King by the Council of thirty, whom he had himself chosen, would have been feeble indeed when compared with the restraint imposed by Parliament. But it would have been more constant. It would have acted every year, and all the year round; and before the Revolution the sessions of Parliament were short and the recesses long. The advice of the Council would probably have prevented any very monstrous and scandalous measures; and would consequently have prevented the discontents which follow such measures, and the salutary laws which are the fruit of such discontents. We believe, for example, that the second Dutch war would never have been approved by such a Council as that which Temple proposed. We are quite certain that the shutting up of the Exchequer would never even have been mentioned in such a Council. The people, pleased to think that Lord Russell, Lord Cavendish, and Mr. Powle, unplaced and unpensioned, were daily representing their grievances and defending their rights in the Royal presence, would not have pined quite so much for the meeting of Parliaments. The Parliament, when it met, would have found fewer and less glaring abuses to attack. There would have been less misgovernment and less reform. We should not have been cursed with the Cabal, or blessed with the Habeas Corpus Act. In the mean time the Council, considered as an executive Council, would, unless some at least of its powers had been delegated to a smaller body, have been feeble, dilatory, divided, unfit for everything that requires secrecy and despatch, and peculiarly unfit for the administration of war.

The Revolution put an end, in a very different way, to the long contest between the King and the Parliament. From that time, the House of Commons has been predominant in the State. The Cabinet has really been, from that time, a committee nominated by the Crown out of the prevailing party in Parliament. Though the minority in the Commons are Constantly proposing to condemn executive measures, or to call for papers which may enable the House to sit in judgment on such measures, these propositions are scarcely ever carried; and, if a proposition of this kind is carried against the Government, a change of Ministry almost necessarily follows. Growing and struggling power always gives more annoyance and is more unmanageable than established power. The House of Commons gave infinitely more trouble to the Ministers of Charles the Second than to any Ministers of later times; for, in the time of Charles the Second, the House was checking Ministers in whom it did not confide. Now that its ascendency is fully established, it either confides in Ministers or turns them out. This is undoubtedly a far better state of things than that which Temple wished to introduce. The modern Cabinet is a far better Executive Council than his. The worst House of Commons that has sate since the Revolution was a far more efficient check on misgovernment than his fifteen independent counsellors would have been. Yet, everything considered, it seems to us that his plan was the work of an observant, ingenious, and fertile mind.

On this occasion, as on every occasion on which he came prominently forward, Temple had the rare good fortune to please the public as well as the Sovereign. The general exultation was great when it was known that the old Council, made up of the most odious tools of power, was dismissed, that small interior committees, rendered odious by the recent memory of the Cabal, were to be disused, and that the King would adopt no measure till it had been discussed and approved by a body, of which one half consisted of independent gentlemen and noblemen, and in which such persons as Russell, Cavendish, and Temple himself had seats. Town and country were in a ferment of joy. The bells were rung; bonfires were lighted; and the acclamations of England were echoed by the Dutch, who considered the influence obtained by Temple as a certain omen of good for Europe. It is, indeed, much to the honour of his sagacity that every one of his great measures should, in such times, have pleased every party which he had any interest in pleasing. This was the case with the Triple Alliance, with the treaty which concluded the second Dutch war, with the marriage of the Prince of Orange, and, finally, with the institution of this new Council.

The only people who grumbled were those popular leaders of the House of Commons who were not among the Thirty; and, if our view of the measure be correct, they were precisely the people who had good reason to grumble. They were precisely the people whose activity and whose influence the new Council was intended to

destroy.

But there was very soon an end of the bright hopes and loud applauses with which the publication of this scheme had been hailed. The perfidious levity of the King and the ambition of the chiefs of parties produced the instant, entire, and irremediable failure of a plan which nothing but firmness, public spirit, and self-denial on the part of all concerned in it could conduct to a happy issue. Even before the project was divulged, its author had already found reason to apprehend that it would fail. Considerable difficulty was experienced in framing the list of counsellors. There were two men in particular about whom the King and Temple could not agree, two men deeply tainted with the vices common to the English statesman of that age, but unrivalled in talents, address, and influence. These were the Earl of Shaftesbury, and George Savile Viscount Halifax.

It was a favourite exercise among the Greek sophists to write panegyrics on characters proverbial for depravity. One professor of rhetoric sent to Isocrates a panegyric on Busiris; and Isocrates himself wrote another which has come down to us. It is, we presume, from an ambition of the same kind that some writers have lately shown a disposition to eulogise Shaftesbury. But the attempt is vain. The charges against him rest on evidence not to be invalidated by any arguments which human wit can devise, or by any information which may be found in old trunks and escritoires.

It is certain that, just before the Restoration, he declared to the Regicides that he would be damned, body and soul, rather than suffer a hair of their heads to be hurt, and that, just after the Restoration, he was one of the judges who sentenced them to death. It is certain that he was a principal member of the most profligate Administration ever known, and that he was afterwards a principal member oft the most profligate Opposition ever known. It is certain that, in power, he did not scruple to violate the great fundamental principle of the Constitution, in order to exalt the Catholics, and that, out of power, he did not scruple to violate every principle of justice, in order to destroy them. There were in that age some honest men, such as William Penn, who valued toleration so highly that they would willingly have seen it established even by an illegal exertion of the prerogative. There were many honest men who dreaded arbitrary power so much that, on account of the alliance between Popery and arbitrary power, they were disposed to grant no toleration to Papists. On both those classes we look with indulgence, though we think both in the wrong. But Shaftesbury belonged to neither class. He united all that was worst in both. From the misguided friends of toleration he borrowed their contempt for the Constitution, and from the misguided friends of civil liberty their contempt for the rights of conscience. We never can admit that his conduct as a mmember of the Cabal was redeemed by his conduct as a leader of Opposition. On the contrary, his life was such that every part of it, as if by a skilful contrivance, reflects infamy on every other. We

should never have known how abandoned a prostitute he was in place, if we had not known how desperate an incendiary he was out of it. To judge of him fairly, we must bear in mind that the Shaftesbury who, in office, was the chief author of the Declaration of Indulgence, was the same Shaftesbury who, out of office, excited and kept up the savage hatred of the rabble of London against the very class to whom that Declaration of Indulgence was intended to give illegal relief.

It is amusing to see the excuses that are made for him. We will give two specimens. It is acknowledged that he was one of the Ministry which made the alliance with France against Holland, and that this alliance was most pernicious. What, then, is the defence? Even this, that he betrayed his master's counsels to the Electors of Saxony and Brandenburg, and tried to rouse all the Protestant powers of Germany to defend the States. Again, it is acknowledged that he was deeply concerned in the Declaration of Indulgence, and that his conduct on this occasion was not only unconstitutional, but quite inconsistent with the course which he afterwards took respecting the professors of the Catholic faith. What, then, is the defence? Even this, that he meant only to allure concealed Papists to avow themselves, and thus to become open marks for the vengeance of the public. As often as he is charged with one treason, his advocates vindicate him by confessing two. They had better leave him where they find him. For him there is no escape upwards. Every outlet by which he can creep out of his present position, is one which lets him down into a still lower and fouler depth of infamy. To whitewash an Ethiopian is a proverbially hopeless attempt; but to whitewash an Ethiopian by giving him a new coat of blacking is an enterprise more extraordinary still. That in the course of Shaftesbury's dishonest and revengeful opposition to the Court he rendered one or two most useful services to his country we admit. And he is, we think, fairly entitled, if that be any glory, to have his name eternally associated with the Habeas Corpus Act in the same way in which the name of Henry the Eighth is associated with the reformation of the Church, and that of Jack Wilkes with the most sacred rights of electors.

While Shaftesbury was still living, his character was elaborately drawn by two of the greatest writers of the age, by Butler, with characteristic brilliancy of wit, by Dryden, with even more than characteristic energy and loftiness, by both with all the inspiration of hatred. The sparkling illustrations of Butler have been thrown into the shade by the brighter glory of that gorgeous satiric Muse, who comes sweeping by in sceptred pall, borrowed from her most august sisters. But the descriptions well deserve to be compared. The reader will at once perceive a considerable difference between Butler's

"politician,
With more beads than a beast in vision,"

and the Achitophel of Dryden. Butler dwells on Shaftesbury's unprincipled versatility; on his wonderful and almost instinctive skill in discerning the approach of a change of fortune; and on the dexterity with which he extricated himself from the snares in which he left his associates to perish.

"Our state-artificer foresaw
Which way the world began to draw.
For as old sinners have all points
O' th' compass in their bones and joints,
Can by their pangs and aches find
All turns and changes of the wind,
And better than by Napier's bones
Feel in their own the age of moons:
So guilty sinners in a state
Can by their crimes prognosticate,
And in their consciences feel pain
Some days before a shower of rain.
He, therefore, wisely cast about
All ways he could to ensure his throat."

In Dryden's great portrait, on the contrary, violent passion, implacable revenge, boldness amounting to temerity, are the most striking features. Achitophel is one of the "great wits to madness near allied." And again--

"A daring pilot in extremity,
Pleased with the danger when the waves went high,
He sought the storms; but, for a calm unfit,
Would steer too near the sands to boast his wit."

[It has never, we believe, been remarked, that two of the most striking lines in the description of Achitophel are borrowed from a most obscure quarter. In Knolles's History of the Turks, printed more than sixty years before the appearance of Absalom and Achitophel, are the following verses, under a portrait of the Sultan Mustapha the First:

"Greatnesse on goodnesse loves to slide, not stand,
And leaves for Fortune's ice Vertue's firme land."

Dryden's words are

"But wild Ambition loves to slide, not stand,
And Fortune's ice prefers to Virtue's land."

The circumstance is the more remarkable, because Dryden has really no couplet which would seem to a good critic more intensely Drydenian, both in thought and expression, than this, of which the whole thought, and almost the whole expression, are stolen.

As we are on this subject, we cannot refrain from observing that

Mr. Courtenay has done Dryden injustice by inadvertently attributing to him some feeble lines which are in Tate's part of Absalom and Achitophel.]

The dates of the two poems will, we think, explain this discrepancy. The third part of Hudibras appeared in 1678, when the character of Shaftesbury had as yet but imperfectly developed itself. He had, indeed, been a traitor to every party in the State; but his treasons had hitherto prospered. Whether it were accident or sagacity, he had timed his desertions in such a manner that fortune seemed to go to and fro with him from side to side. The extent of his perfidy was known; but it was not till the Popish Plot furnished him with a machinery which seemed sufficiently powerful for all his purposes, that the audacity of his spirit, and the fierceness of his malevolent passions, became fully manifest. His subsequent conduct showed undoubtedly great ability, but not ability of the sort for which he had formerly been so eminent. He was now headstrong, sanguine, full of impetuous confidence in his own wisdom and his own good luck. He, whose fame as a political tactician had hitherto rested chiefly on his skilful retreats, now set himself to break down all the bridges behind him. His plans were castles in the air: his talk was rhodomontade. He took no thought for the morrow: he treated the Court as if the King were already a prisoner in his hands: he built on the favour of the multitude, as if that favour were not proverbially inconstant. The signs of the coming reaction were discerned by men of far less sagacity than his, and scared from his side men more consistent than he had ever pretended to be. But on him they were lost. The counsel of Achitophel, that counsel which was as if a man had inquired of the oracle of God, was turned into foolishness. He who had become a by-word, for the certainty with which he foresaw and the suppleness with which he evaded danger, now, when beset on every side with snares and death, seemed to be smitten with a blindness as strange as his former clear-sightedness, and, turning neither to the right nor to the left, strode straight on with desperate hardihood to his doom. Therefore, after having early acquired and long preserved the reputation of infallible wisdom and invariable success, he lived to see a mighty ruin wrought by his own ungovernable passions, to see the great party which he had led vanquished, and scattered, and trampled down, to see all his own devilish enginery of lying witnesses, partial sheriffs, packed juries, unjust judges, bloodthirsty mobs, ready to be employed against himself and his most devoted followers, to fly from that proud city whose favour had almost raised him to be Mayor of the Palace, to hide himself in squalid retreats, to cover his grey head with ignominious disguises; and he died in hopeless exile, sheltered by the generosity of a State which he had cruelly injured and insulted, from the vengeance of a master whose favour he had purchased by one series of crimes, and forfeited by another.

Halifax had, in common with Shaftesbury, and with almost all the

politicians of that age, a very loose morality where the public was concerned; but in Halifax the prevailing infection was modified by a very peculiar constitution both of heart and head, by a temper singularly free from gall, and by a refining and sceptical understanding. He changed his course as often as Shaftesbury; but he did not change it to the same extent, or in the same direction. Shaftesbury was the very reverse of a trimmer. His disposition led him generally to do his utmost to exalt the side which was up, and to depress the side which was down. His transitions were from extreme to extreme. While he stayed with a party he went all lengths for it: when he quitted it he went all lengths against it. Halifax was emphatically a trimmer; a trimmer both by intellect and by constitution. The name was fixed on him by his contemporaries; and he was so far from being ashamed of it that he assumed it as a badge of honour. He passed from faction to faction. But instead of adopting and inflaming the passions of those whom he joined, he tried to diffuse among them something of the spirit of those whom he had just left. While he acted with the Opposition he was suspected of being a spy of the Court; and when he had joined the Court all the Tories were dismayed by his Republican doctrines.

He wanted neither arguments nor eloquence to exhibit what was commonly regarded as his wavering policy in the fairest light. He trimmed, he said, as the temperate zone trims between intolerable heat and intolerable cold, as a good government trims between despotism and anarchy, as a pure church trims between the errors of the Papist and those of the Anabaptist. Nor was this defence by any means without weight; for though there is abundant proof that his integrity was not of strength to withstand the temptations by which his cupidity and vanity were sometimes assailed, yet his dislike of extremes, and a forgiving and compassionate temper which seems to have been natural to him, preserved him from all participation in the worst crimes of his time. If both parties accused him of deserting them, both were compelled to admit that they had great obligations to his humanity, and that, though an uncertain friend, he was a placable enemy. He voted in favour of Lord Stafford, the victim of the Whigs; he did his utmost to save Lord Russell, the victim of the Tories; and, on the whole, we are inclined to think that his public life, though far indeed from faultless, has as few great stains as that of any politician who took an active part in affairs during the troubled and disastrous period of ten years which elapsed between the fall of Lord Danby and the Revolution.

His mind was much less turned to particular observations, and much more to general speculations, than that of Shaftesbury. Shaftesbury knew the King, the Council, the Parliament, the City, better than Halifax; but Halifax would have written a far better treatise on political science than Shaftesbury. Shaftesbury shone more in consultation, and Halifax in controversy: Shaftesbury was more fertile in expedients, and Halifax in arguments. Nothing that remains from the pen of Shaftesbury will bear a comparison

with the political tracts of Halifax. Indeed, very little of the prose of that age is so well worth reading as the Character of a Trimmer and the Anatomy of an Equvivalent. What particularly strikes us in those works is the writer's passion for generalisation. He was treating of the most exciting subjects in the most agitated times he was himself placed in the very thick of the civil conflict; yet there is no acrimony, nothing inflammatory, nothing personal. He preserves an air of cold superiority, a certain philosophical serenity, which is perfectly marvellous. He treats every question as an abstract question, begins with the widest propositions, argues those propositions on general grounds, and often, when he has brought out his theorem, leaves the reader to make the application, without adding an allusion to particular men, or to passing events. This speculative turn of mind rendered him a bad adviser in cases which required celerity. He brought forward, with wonderful readiness and copiousness, arguments, replies to those arguments, rejoinders to those replies, general maxims of policy, and analogous cases from history. But Shaftesbury was the man for a prompt decision. Of the parliamentary eloquence of these celebrated rivals, we can judge only by report; and, so judging, we should be inclined to think that, though Shaftesbury was a distinguished speaker, the superiority belonged to Halifax. Indeed the readiness of Halifax in debate, the extent of his knowledge, the ingenuity of his reasoning, the liveliness of his expression, and the silver clearness and sweetness of his voice, seems to have made the strongest impression on his contemporaries. By Dryden he is described as

"of piercing wit and pregnant thought,
Endued by nature and by learning taught
To move assemblies."

His oratory is utterly and irretrievably lost to us, like that of Somers, of Bolingbroke, of Charles Townshend, of many others who were accustomed to rise amid the breathless expectation of senates, and to sit down amidst reiterated bursts of applause. But old men who lived to admire the eloquence of Pulteney in its meridian, and that of Pitt in its splendid dawn, still murmured that they had heard nothing like the great speeches of Lord Halifax on the Exclusion Bill. The power of Shaftesbury over large masses was unrivalled. Halifax was disqualified by his whole character, moral and intellectual, for the part of a demagogue. It was in small circles, and, above all, in the House of Lords, that his ascendency was felt.

Shaftesbury seems to have troubled himself very little about theories of government. Halifax was, in speculation, a strong republican, and did not conceal it. He often made hereditary monarchy and aristocracy the subjects of his keen pleasantry, while he was fighting the battles of the Court, and obtaining for himself step after step in the peerage. In this way, he tried to gratify at once his intellectual vanity and his more vulgar

ambition. He shaped his life according to the opinion of the multitude, and indemnified himself by talking according to his own. His colloquial powers were great; his perception of the ridiculous exquisitely fine; and he seems to have had the rare art of preserving the reputation of good breeding and good nature, while habitually indulging a strong propensity to mockery.

Temple wished to put Halifax into the new Council, and leave out Shaftesbury. The King objected strongly to Halifax, to whom he had taken a great dislike, which is not accounted for, and which did not last long. Temple replied that Halifax was a man eminent both by his station and by his abilities, and would, if excluded, do everything against the new arrangement that could be done by eloquence, sarcasm, and intrigue. All who were consulted were of the same mind; and the King yielded, but not till Temple had almost gone on his knees. This point was no sooner settled than his Majesty declared that he would have Shaftesbury too. Temple again had recourse to entreaties and expostulations. Charles told him that the enmity of Shaftesbury would be at least as formidable as that of Halifax, and this was true; but Temple might have replied that by giving power to Halifax they gained a friend, and that by giving power to Shaftesbury they only strengthened an enemy. It was vain to argue and protest. The King only laughed and jested at Temple's anger; and Shaftesbury was not only sworn of the Council, but appointed Lord President.

Temple was so bitterly mortified by this step that he had at one time resolved to have nothing to do with the new Administration, and seriously thought of disqualifying himself from sitting in council by omitting to take the Sacrament. But the urgency of Lady Temple and Lady Giffard induced him to abandon that intention.

The Council was organised on the twenty-first of April, 1679; and, within a few hours, one of the fundamental principles on which it had been constructed was violated. A secret committee, or, in the modern phrase, a cabinet of nine members, was formed. But as this committee included Shaftesbury and Monmouth, it contained within itself the elements of as much faction as would have sufficed to impede all business. Accordingly there soon arose a small interior cabinet, consisting of Essex, Sunderland, Halifax, and Temple. For a time perfect harmony and confidence subsisted between the four. But the meetings of the thirty were stormy. Sharp retorts passed between Shaftesbury and Halifax, who led the opposite parties, In the Council, Halifax generally had the advantage. But it soon became apparent that Shaftesbury still had at his back the majority of the House of Commons. The discontents which the change of Ministry had for a moment quieted broke forth again with redoubled violence; and the only effect which the late measures appeared to have produced was that the Lord President, with all the dignity and authority belonging to his high place, stood at the head of the Opposition. The

impeachment of Lord Danby was eagerly prosecuted. The Commons were determined to exclude the Duke of York from the throne. All offers of compromise were rejected. It must not be forgotten, however, that, in the midst of the confusion, one inestimable law, the only benefit which England has derived from the troubles of that period, but a benefit which may well be set off against a great mass of evil, the Habeas Corpus Act, was pushed through the Houses and received the royal assent.

The King, finding the Parliament as troublesome as ever, determined to prorogue it; and he did so, without even mentioning his intention to the Council by whose advice he had pledged himself, only a month before, to conduct the Government. The counsellors were generally dissatisfied; and Shaftesbury swore, with great vehemence, that if he could find out who the secret advisers were, he would have their heads.

The Parliament rose; London was deserted; and Temple retired to his villa, whence, on council days, he went to Hampton Court. The post of Secretary was again and again pressed on him by his master and by his three colleagues of the inner Cabinet. Halifax, in particular, threatened laughingly to burn down the house at Sheen. But Temple was immovable. His short experience of English politics had disgusted him; and he felt himself so much oppressed by the responsibility under which he at present lay that he had no inclination to add to the load.

When the term fixed for the prorogation had nearly expired, it became necessary to consider what course should be taken. The King and his four confidential advisers thought that a new Parliament might possibly be more manageable, and could not possibly be more refractory, than that which they now had, and they therefore determined on a dissolution. But when the question was proposed at council, the majority, jealous, it should seem, of the small directing knot, and unwilling to bear the unpopularity of the measures of Government, while excluded from all power, joined Shaftesbury, and the members of the Cabinet were left alone in the minority. The King, however, had made up his mind, and ordered the Parliament to be instantly dissolved. Temple’s Council was now nothing more than an ordinary Privy Council, if indeed it were not something less; and, though Temple threw the blame of this on the King, on Lord Shaftesbury, on everybody but himself, it is evident that the failure of his plan is to be chiefly ascribed to its own inherent defects. His Council was too large to transact business which required expedition, secrecy, and cordial cooperation. A Cabinet was therefore formed within the Council. The Cabinet and the majority of the Council differed; and, as was to be expected, the Cabinet carried their point. Four votes outweighed six-and-twenty. This being the case, the meetings of the thirty were not only useless, but positively noxious.

At the ensuing election, Temple was chosen for the University of

Cambridge. The only objection that was made to him by the members of that learned body was that, in his little work on Holland, he had expressed great approbation of the tolerant policy of the States; and this blemish, however serious, was overlooked, in consideration of his high reputation, and of the strong recommendations with which he was furnished by the Court.

During the summer he remained at Sheen, and amused himself with rearing melons, leaving to the three other members of the inner Cabinet the whole direction of public affairs. Some unexplained cause began about this time, to alienate them from him. They do not appear to have been made angry by any part of his conduct, or to have disliked him personally. But they had, we suspect, taken the measure of his mind, and satisfied themselves that he was not a man for that troubled time, and that he would be a mere incumbrance to them. Living themselves for ambition, they despised his love of ease. Accustomed to deep stakes in the game of political hazard, they despised his piddling play. They looked on his cautious measures with the sort of scorn with which the gamblers at the ordinary, in Sir Walter Scott's novel, regarded Nigel's practice of never touching a card but when he was certain to win. He soon found that he was left out of their secrets. The King had, about this time, a dangerous attack of illness. The Duke of York, on receiving the news, returned from Holland. The sudden appearance of the detested Popish successor excited anxiety throughout the country. Temple was greatly amazed and disturbed. He hastened up to London and visited Essex, who professed to be astonished and mortified, but could not disguise a sneering smile. Temple then saw Halifax, who talked to him much about the pleasures of the country, the anxieties of office, and the vanity of all human things, but carefully avoided politics and when the Duke's return was mentioned, only sighed, shook his head, shrugged his shoulders, and lifted up his eyes and hands. In a short time Temple found that his two friends had been laughing at him, and that they had themselves sent for the Duke, in order that his Royal Highness might, if the King should die, be on the spot to frustrate the designs of Monmouth.

He was soon convinced, by a still stronger proof, that, though he had not exactly offended his master or his colleagues in the Cabinet, he had ceased to enjoy their confidence. The result of the general election had been decidedly unfavourable to the Government; and Shaftesbury impatiently expected the day when the Houses were to meet. The King, guided by the advice of the inner Cabinet, determined on a step of the highest importance. He told the Council that he had resolved to prorogue the new Parliament for a year, and requested them not to object; for he had, he said, considered the subject fully, and had made up his mind. All who were not in the secret were thunderstruck, Temple as much as any. Several members rose, and entreated to be heard against the prorogation. But the King silenced them, and declared that his resolution was unalterable. Temple, much hurt at the manner in which both himself and the Council had been treated, spoke with

great spirit. He would not, he said, disobey the King by objecting to a measure an which his Majesty was determined to hear no argument; but he would most earnestly entreat his Majesty, if the present Council was incompetent to give advice, to dissolve it and select another; for it was absurd to have counsellors who did not counsel, and who were summoned only to be silent witnesses of the acts of others. The King listened courteously. But the members of the Cabinet resented this reproof highly; and from that day Temple was almost as much estranged from them as from Shaftesbury.

He wished to retire altogether from business. But just at this time Lord Russell, Lord Cavendish, and some other counsellors of the popular party, waited on the King in a body, declared their strong disapprobation of his measures, and requested to be excused from attending any more at council. Temple feared that if, at this moment, he also were to withdraw, he might be supposed to act in concert with those decided opponents of the Court, and to have determined on taking a course hostile to the Government. He, therefore, continued to go occasionally to the board; but he had no longer any real share in the direction of public affairs.

At length the long term of the prorogation expired. In October 1680, the Houses met; and the great question of the Exclusion was revived. Few parliamentary contests in our history appear to have called forth a greater display of talent; none certainly ever called forth more violent passions. The whole nation was convulsed by party spirit. The gentlemen of every county, the traders of every town, the boys of every public school, were divided into exclusionists and abhorrers. The book-stalls were covered with tracts on the sacredness of hereditary right, on the omnipotence of Parliament, on the dangers of a disputed succession, on the dangers of a Popish reign. It was in the midst of this ferment that Temple took his seat, for the first time, in the House of Commons.

The occasion was a very great one. His talents, his long experience of affairs, his unspotted public character, the high posts which he had filled, seemed to mark him out as a man on whom much would depend. He acted like himself, He saw that, if he supported the Exclusion, he made the King and the heir presumptive his enemies, and that, if he opposed it, he made himself an object of hatred to the unscrupulous and turbulent Shaftesbury. He neither supported nor opposed it. He quietly absented himself from the House. Nay, he took care, he tells us, never to discuss the question in any society whatever. Lawrence Hyde, afterwards Earl of Rochester, asked him why he did not attend in his place. Temple replied that he acted according to Solomon’s advice, neither to oppose the mighty, nor to go about to stop the current of a river. Hyde answered, "You are a wise and a quiet man." And this might be true. But surely such wise and quiet men have no call to be members of Parliament in

critical times.

A single session was quite enough for Temple. When the Parliament was dissolved, and another summoned at Oxford, he obtained an audience of the King, and begged to know whether his Majesty wished him to continue in Parliament. Charles, who had a singularly quick eye for the weaknesses of all who came near him, had no doubt seen through Temple, and rated the parliamentary support of so cool and guarded a friend at its proper value. He answered good-naturedly, but we suspect a little contemptuously, "I doubt, as things stand, your coming into the House will not do much good. I think you may as well let it alone." Sir William accordingly informed his constituents that he should not again apply for their suffrages, and set off for Sheen, resolving never again to meddle with public affairs. He soon found that the King was displeased with him. Charles, indeed, in his usual easy way, protested that he was not angry, not at all. But in a few days he struck Temple's name out of the list of Privy Councillors.

Why this was done Temple declares himself unable to comprehend. But surely it hardly required his long and extensive converse with the world to teach him that there are conjunctures when men think that all who are not with them are against them, that there are conjunctures when a lukewarm friend, who will not put himself the least out of his way, who will make no exertion, who will run no risk, is more distasteful than an enemy. Charles had hoped that the fair character of Temple would add credit to an unpopular and suspected Government. But his Majesty soon found that this fair character resembled pieces of furniture which we have seen in the drawing-rooms of very precise old ladies, and which are a great deal too white to be used. This exceeding niceness was altogether out of season. Neither party wanted a man who was afraid of taking a part, of incurring abuse, of making enemies. There were probably many good and moderate men who would have hailed the appearance of a respectable mediator. But Temple was not a mediator. He was merely a neutral.

At last, however, he had escaped from public life, and found himself at liberty to follow his favourite pursuits. His fortune was easy. He had about fifteen hundred a year, besides the Mastership of the Rolls in Ireland, an office in which he had succeeded his father, and which was then a mere sinecure for life, requiring no residence. His reputation both as a negotiator and a writer stood high. He resolved to be safe, to enjoy himself, and to let the world take its course; and he kept his resolution.

Darker times followed. The Oxford Parliament was dissolved. The Tories were triumphant. A terrible vengeance was inflicted on the chiefs of the Opposition. Temple learned in his retreat the disastrous fate of several of his old colleagues in council. Shaftesbury fled to Holland. Russell died on the scaffold. Essex added a yet sadder and more fearful story to the bloody

chronicles of the Tower. Monmouth clung in agonies of supplication round the knees of the stern uncle whom he had wronged, and tasted a bitterness worse than that of death, the bitterness of knowing that he had humbled himself in vain. A tyrant trampled on the liberties and religion of the realm. The national spirit swelled high under the oppression. Disaffection spread even to the strongholds of loyalty, to the Cloisters of Westminster, to the schools of Oxford, to the guard-room of the household troops, to the very hearth and bed-chamber of the Sovereign. But the troubles which agitated the whole country did not reach the quiet orangery in which Temple loitered away several years without once seeing the smoke of London. He now and then appeared in the circle at Richmond or Windsor. But the only expressions which he is recorded to have used during these perilous times were, that he would be a good subject, but that he had done with politics.

The Revolution came: he remained strictly neutral during the short struggle; and he then transferred to the new settlement the same languid sort of loyalty which he had felt for his former masters. He paid court to William at Windsor, and William dined with him at Sheen. But, in spite of the most pressing solicitations, Temple refused to become Secretary of State. The refusal evidently proceeded only from his dislike of trouble and danger; and not, as some of his admirers would have us believe, from any scruple of conscience or honour. For he consented that his son should take the office of Secretary at War under the new Sovereign. This unfortunate young man destroyed himself within a week after his appointment from vexation at finding that his advice had led the King into some improper steps with regard to Ireland. He seems to have inherited his father’s extreme sensibility to failure, without that singular prudence which kept his father out of all situations in which any serious failure was to be apprehended. The blow fell heavily on the family. They retired in deep dejection to Moor Park, [Mr. Courtenay (vol. ii. p. 160) confounds Moor Park in Surrey, where Temple resided, with the Moor Park in Hertfordshire, which is praised in the Essay on Gardening.] which they now preferred to Sheen, on account of the greater distance from London. In that spot, then very secluded, Temple passed the remainder of his life. The air agreed with him. The soil was fruitful, and well suited to an experimental farmer and gardener. The grounds were laid out with the angular regularity which Sir William had admired in the flower-beds of Haarlem and the Hague. A beautiful rivulet, flowing from the hills of Surrey, bounded the domain. But a straight canal which, bordered by a terrace, intersected the garden, was probably more admired by the lovers of the picturesque in that age. The house was small but neat, and well-furnished; the neighbourhood very thinly peopled. Temple had no visitors, except a few friends who were willing to travel twenty or thirty miles in order to see him, and now and then a foreigner whom curiosity brought to have a look at the author of the Triple Alliance.

Here, in May 1694, died Lady Temple. From the time of her marriage we know little of her, except that her letters were always greatly admired, and that she had the honour to correspond constantly with Queen Mary. Lady Giffard, who, as far as appears, had always been on the best terms with her sister-in-law, still continued to live with Sir William.

But there were other inmates of Moor Park to whom a far higher interest belongs. An eccentric, uncouth, disagreeable young Irishman, who had narrowly escaped plucking at Dublin, attended Sir William as an amanuensis, for board and twenty pounds a year, dined at the second table, wrote bad verses in praise of his employer, and made love to a very pretty, dark-eyed young girl, who waited on Lady Giffard. Little did Temple imagine that the coarse exterior of his dependant concealed a genius equally suited to politics and to letters, a genius destined to shake great kingdoms, to stir the laughter and the rage of millions, and to leave to posterity memorials which can perish only with the English language. Little did he think that the flirtation in his servants' hall, which he perhaps scarcely deigned to make the subject of a jest, was the beginning of a long unprosperous love, which was to be as widely famed as the passion of Petrarch or of Abelard. Sir William's secretary was Jonathan Swift. Lady Giffard's waiting-maid was poor Stella.

Swift retained no pleasing recollection of Moor Park. And we may easily suppose a situation like his to have been intolerably painful to a mind haughty, irascible, and conscious of pre-eminent ability. Long after, when he stood in the Court of Requests with a circle of gartered peers round him, or punned and rhymed with Cabinet Ministers over Secretary St. John's Monte-Pulciano, he remembered, with deep and sore feeling, how miserable he used to be for days together when he suspected that Sir William had taken something ill. He could hardly believe that he, the Swift who chid the Lord Treasurer, rallied the Captain General, and confronted the pride of the Duke of Buckinghamshire with pride still more inflexible, could be the same being who had passed nights of sleepless anxiety, in musing over a cross look or a testy word of a patron. "Faith," he wrote to Stella, with bitter levity, "Sir William spoiled a fine gentleman." Yet, in justice to Temple, we must say that there is no reason to think that Swift was more unhappy at Moor Park than he would have been in a similar situation under any roof in England. We think also that the obligations which the mind of Swift owed to that of Temple were not inconsiderable. Every judicious reader must be struck by the peculiarities which distinguish Swift's political tracts from all similar works produced by mere men of letters. Let any person compare, for example, the Conduct of the Allies, or the Letter to the October Club, with Johnson's False Alarm, or Taxation no Tyranny, and he will be at once struck by the difference of which we speak. He may possibly think Johnson a greater man than Swift. He may possibly prefer Johnson's style to Swift's. But he will at once acknowledge that Johnson writes like

a man who has never been out of his study. Swift writes like a man who has passed his whole life in the midst of public business, and to whom the most important affairs of state are as familiar as his weekly bills.

"Turn him to any cause of policy,
The Gordian knot of it he will unloose,
Familiar as his garter."

The difference, in short, between a political pamphlet by Johnson and a political pamphlet by Swift, is as great as the difference between an account of a battle by Mr. Southey, and the account of the same battle by Colonel Napier. It is impossible to doubt that the superiority of Swift is to be, in a great measure, attributed to his long and close connection with Temple.

Indeed, remote as were the alleys and flower-pots of Moor Park from the haunts of the busy and the ambitious, Swift had ample opportunities of becoming acquainted with the hidden causes of many great events. William was in the habit of consulting Temple, and occasionally visited him. Of what passed between them very little is known. It is certain, however, that when the Triennial Bill had been carried through the two Houses, his Majesty, who was exceedingly unwilling to pass it, sent the Earl of Portland to learn Temple's opinion. Whether Temple thought the bill in itself a good one does not appear; but he clearly saw how imprudent it must be in a prince, situated as William was, to engage in an altercation with his Parliament, and directed Swift to draw up a paper on the subject, which, however, did not convince the King.

The chief amusement of Temple's declining years was literature. After his final retreat from business, he wrote his very agreeable Memoirs, corrected and transcribed many of his letters, and published several miscellaneous treatises, the best of which, we think, is that on Gardening. The style of his essays is, on the whole, excellent, almost always pleasing, and now and then stately and splendid. The matter is generally of much less value; as our readers will readily believe when we inform them that Mr. Courtenay, a biographer, that is to say, a literary vassal, bound by the immemorial law of his tenure to render homage, aids, reliefs, and all other customary services to his lord, avows that he cannot give an opinion about the essay on Heroic Virtue, because he cannot read it without skipping; a circumstance which strikes us as peculiarly strange, when we consider how long Mr. Courtenay was at the India Board, and how many thousand paragraphs of the copious official eloquence of the East he must have perused.

One of Sir William's pieces, however, deserves notice, not, indeed, on account of its intrinsic merit, but on account of the light which it throws on some curious weaknesses of his character, and on account of the extraordinary effects which it

produced in the republic of letters. A most idle and contemptible controversy had arisen in France touching the comparative merit of the ancient and modern writers. It was certainly not to be expected that, in that age, the question would be tried according to those large and philosophical principles of criticism which guided the judgments of Lessing and of Herder. But it might have been expected that those who undertook to decide the point would at least take the trouble to read and understand the authors on whose merits they were to pronounce. Now, it is no exaggeration to say that, among the disputants who clamoured, some for the ancients and some for the moderns, very few were decently acquainted with either ancient or modern literature, and hardly one was well acquainted with both. In Racine's amusing preface to the Iphigenie the reader may find noticed a most ridiculous mistake into which one of the champions of the moderns fell about a passage in the Alcestis of Euripides. Another writer is so inconceivably ignorant as to blame Homer for mixing the four Greek dialects, Doric, Ionic, Aeolic, and Attic, just, says he, as if a French poet were to put Gascon phrases and Picard phrases into the midst of his pure Parisian writing. On the other hand, it is no exaggeration to say that the defenders of the ancients were entirely unacquainted with the greatest productions of later times; nor, indeed, were the defenders of the moderns better informed. The parallels which were instituted in the course of this dispute are inexpressibly ridiculous. Balzac was selected as the rival of Cicero. Corneille was said to unite the merits of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. We should like to see a Prometheus after Corneille's fashion. The Provincial Letters, masterpieces undoubtedly of reasoning, wit, and eloquence, were pronounced to be superior to all the writings of Plato, Cicero, and Lucian together, particularly in the art of dialogue, an art in which, as it happens, Plato far excelled all men, and in which Pascal, great and admirable in other respects, is notoriously very deficient.

This childish controversy spread to England; and some mischievous daemon suggested to Temple the thought of undertaking the defence of the ancients. As to his qualifications for the task, it is sufficient to say that he knew not a word of Greek. But his vanity, which, when he was engaged in the conflicts of active life and surrounded by rivals, had been kept in tolerable order by his discretion, now, when he had long lived in seclusion, and had become accustomed to regard himself as by far the first man of his circle, rendered him blind to his own deficiencies. In an evil hour he published an Essay on Ancient and Modern Learning. The style of this treatise is very good, the matter ludicrous and contemptible to the last degree. There we read how Lycurgus travelled into India, and brought the Spartan laws from that country; how Orpheus made voyages in search of knowledge, and attained to a depth of learning which has made him renowned in all succeeding ages; how Pythagoras passed twenty-two years in Egypt, and, after graduating there, spent twelve years more at Babylon, where the Magi admitted him ad eundem; how the ancient

Brahmins lived two hundred years; how the earliest Greek philosophers foretold earthquakes and plagues, and put down riots by magic; and how much Ninus surpassed in abilities any of his successors on the throne of Assyria. The moderns, Sir William owns, have found out the circulation of blood; but, on the other hand, they have quite lost the art of conjuring; nor can any modern fiddler enchant fishes, fowls, and serpents by his performance. He tells us that "Thales, Pythagoras, Democritus, Hippocrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Epicurus made greater progresses in the several empires of science than any of their successors have since been able to reach"; which is just as absurd as if he had said that the greatest names in British science are Merlin, Michael Scott, Dr. Sydenham, and Lord Bacon. Indeed, the manner in which Temple mixes the historical and the fabulous reminds us of those classical dictionaries, intended for the use of schools, in which Narcissus the lover of himself and Narcissus the freedman of Claudius, Pollux the son of Jupiter and Leda and Pollux the author of the Onomasticon, are ranged under the same headings, and treated as personages equally real.

The effect of this arrangement resembles that which would be produced by a dictionary of modern names, consisting of such articles as the following:-"Jones, William, an eminent Orientalist, and one of the judges of the Supreme Court of judicature in Bengal--Davy, a fiend, who destroys ships--Thomas, a foundling, brought up by Mr. Allworthy." It is from such sources as these that Temple seems to have learned all that he knew about the ancients. He puts the story of Orpheus between the Olympic games and the battle of Arbela; as if we had exactly the same reasons for believing that Orpheus led beasts with his lyre, which we have for believing that there were races at Pisa, or that Alexander conquered Darius.

He manages little better when he comes to the moderns. He gives us a catalogue of those whom he regards as the greatest writers of later times. It is sufficient to say that, in his list of Italians, he has omitted Dante, Petrarch, Ariosto, and Tasso; in his list of Spaniards, Lope and Calderon; in his list of French, Pascal, Bossuet, Moliere, Corneille, Racine, and Boileau; and in his list of English, Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton.

In the midst of all this vast mass of absurdity one paragraph stands out pre-eminent. The doctrine of Temple, not a very comfortable doctrine, is that the human race is constantly degenerating, and that the oldest books in every kind are the best In confirmation of this notion, he remarks that the Fables of Aesop are the best Fables, and the Letters of Phalaris the best Letters in the world. On the merit of the Letters of Phalaris he dwells with great warmth and with extraordinary felicity of language. Indeed we could hardly select a more favourable specimen of the graceful and easy majesty to which his style sometimes rises than this unlucky passage. He knows, he says, that some learned men, or men who pass for learned, such as

Politian, have doubted the genuineness of these letters; but of such doubts he speaks with the greatest contempt. Now it is perfectly certain, first, that the letters are very bad; secondly, that they are spurious; and thirdly, that, whether they be bad or good, spurious or genuine, Temple could know nothing of the matter; inasmuch as he was no more able to construe a line of them than to decipher an Egyptian obelisk.

This Essay, silly as it is, was exceedingly well received, both in England and on the Continent. And the reason is evident. The classical scholars who saw its absurdity were generally on the side of the ancients, and were inclined rather to veil than to expose the blunders of an ally; the champions of the moderns were generally as ignorant as Temple himself; and the multitude was charmed by his flowing and melodious diction. He was doomed, however, to smart, as he well deserved, for his vanity and folly.

Christchurch at Oxford was then widely and justly celebrated as a place where the lighter parts of classical learning were cultivated with success. With the deeper mysteries of philology neither the instructors nor the pupils had the smallest acquaintance. They fancied themselves Scaligers, as Bentley scornfully said, if they could write a copy of Latin verses with only two or three small faults. From this College proceeded a new edition of the Letters of Phalaris, which were rare, and had been in request since the appearance of Temple’s Essay. The nominal editor was Charles Boyle, a young man of noble family and promising parts; but some older members of the society lent their assistance. While this work was in preparation, an idle quarrel, occasioned, it should seem, by the negligence and misrepresentations of a bookseller, arose between Boyle and the King’s Librarian, Richard Bentley. Boyle in the preface to his edition, inserted a bitter reflection on Bentley. Bentley revenged himself by proving that the Epistles of Phalaris were forgeries, and in his remarks on this subject treated Temple, not indecently, but with no great reverence.

Temple, who was quite unaccustomed to any but the most respectful usage, who, even while engaged in politics, had always shrunk from all rude collision, and had generally succeeded in avoiding it, and whose sensitiveness had been increased by many years of seclusion and flattery, was moved to most violent resentment, complained, very unjustly, of Bentley’s foul-mouthed raillery, and declared that he had commenced an answer, but had laid it aside, "having no mind to enter the lists with such a mean, dull, unmannerly pedant" Whatever may be thought of the temper which Sir William showed on this occasion, we cannot too highly applaud his discretion in not finishing and publishing his answer, which would certainly have been a most extraordinary performance.

He was not, however, without defenders. Like Hector, when struck down prostrate by Ajax, he was in an instant covered by a thick

crowd of shields.

Outis edunesato poimena laou
Outasai oudi balein prin gar peribesan aristoi
Polubmas te, kai Aineias, kai dios Agenor,
Sarpedon t'archos Lukion, kai Glaukos amumon.

Christchurch was up in arms; and though that College seems then to have been almost destitute of severe and accurate learning, no academical society could show, a greater array of orators, wits, politicians, bustling adventurers who united the superficial accomplishments of the scholar with the manners and arts of the man of the world; and this formidable body resolved to try how far smart repartees, well-turned sentences, confidence, puffing, and intrigue could, on the question whether a Greek book were or were not genuine, supply the place of a little knowledge of Greek.

Out came the Reply to Bentley, bearing the name of Boyle, but in truth written by Atterbury with the assistance of Smalridge and others. A most remarkable book it is, and often reminds us of Goldsmith's observation, that the French would be the best cooks in the world if they had any butcher's meat, for that they can make ten dishes out of a nettle-top. It really deserves the praise, whatever that praise may be worth, of being the best book ever written by any man on the wrong side of a question of which he was profoundly ignorant. The learning of the confederacy is that of a schoolboy, and not of an extraordinary schoolboy; but it is used with the skill and address of most able, artful, and experienced men; it is beaten out to the very thinnest leaf, and is disposed in such a way as to seem ten times larger than it is. The dexterity with which the confederates avoid grappling with those parts of the subject with which they know themselves to be incompetent to deal is quite wonderful. Now and then, indeed, they commit disgraceful blunders, for which old Busby, under whom they had studied, would have whipped them all round. But this circumstance only raises our opinion of the talents which made such a fight with such scanty means. Let readers who are not acquainted with the controversy imagine a Frenchman, who has acquired just English enough to read the Spectator with a dictionary, coming forward to defend the genuineness of Ireland's Vortigern against Malone; and they will have some notion of the feat which Atterbury had the audacity to undertake, and which, for a time, it was really thought that he had performed.

The illusion was soon dispelled. Bentley's answer for ever settled the question, and established his claim to the first place amongst classical scholars. Nor do those do him justice who represent the controversy as a battle between wit and learning. For though there is a lamentable deficiency of learning on the side of Boyle, there is no want of wit on the side of Bentley. Other qualities, too, as valuable as either wit or learning, appear conspicuously in Bentley's book, a rare

sagacity, an unrivalled power of combination, a perfect mastery of all the weapons of logic. He was greatly indebted to the furious outcry which the misrepresentations, sarcasms, and intrigues of his opponents had raised against him, an outcry in which fashionable and political circles joined, and which was echoed by thousands who did not know whether Phalaris ruled in Sicily or in Siam. His spirit, daring even to rashness, self-confident even to negligence, and proud even to insolent ferocity, was awed for the first and for the last time, awed, not into meanness or cowardice, but into wariness and sobriety. For once he ran no risks; he left no crevice unguarded; he wantoned in no paradoxes; above all, he returned no railing for the railing of his enemies. In almost everything that he has written we can discover proofs of genius and learning. But it is only here that his genius and learning appear to have been constantly under the guidance of good sense and good temper. Here, we find none of that besotted reliance on his own powers and on his own luck, which he showed when he undertook to edit Milton; none of that perverted ingenuity which deforms so many of his notes on Horace; none of that disdainful carelessness by which he laid himself open to the keen and dexterous thrust of Middleton; none of that extravagant vaunting and savage scurrility by which he afterwards dishonoured his studies and his profession, and degraded himself almost to the level of De Pauw.

Temple did not live to witness the utter and irreparable defeat of his champions. He died, indeed, at a fortunate moment, just after the appearance of Boyle’s book, and while all England was laughing at the way in which the Christchurch men had handled the pedant. In Boyle’s book, Temple was praised in the highest terms, and compared to Memmius: not a very happy comparison; for almost the only particular information which we have about Memmius is that, in agitated times, he thought it his duty to attend exclusively to politics, and that his friends could not venture, except when the Republic was quiet and prosperous, to intrude on him with their philosophical and poetical productions. It is on this account that Lucretius puts up the exquisitely beautiful prayer for peace with which his poem opens.

"Nam neque nos agere hoc patriai tempore iniquo
Possumus aequo animo, nec Memmi clara propago
Talibus in rebus communi de esse saluti."

This description is surely by no means applicable to a statesman who had, through the whole course of his life, carefully avoided exposing himself in seasons of trouble; who had repeatedly refused, in most critical conjunctures, to be Secretary of State; and, who now, in the midst of revolutions, plots, foreign and domestic wars, was quietly writing nonsense about the visits of Lycurgus to the Brahmins and the tunes which Arion played to the Dolphin.

We must not omit to mention that, while the controversy about

Phalaris was raging, Swift, in order to show his zeal and attachment, wrote the Battle of the Books, the earliest piece in which his peculiar talents are discernible. We may observe that the bitter dislike of Bentley, bequeathed by Temple to Swift, seems to have been communicated by Swift to Pope, to Arbuthnot, and to others, who continued to tease the great critic long after he had shaken hands very cordially both with Boyle and with Atterbury.

Sir William Temple died at Moor Park in January 1699. He appears to have suffered no intellectual decay. His heart was buried under a sundial which still stands in his favourite garden. His body was laid in Westminster Abbey by the side of his wife; and a place hard by was set apart for Lady Giffard, who long survived him. Swift was his literary executor, superintended the publication of his Letters and Memoirs, and, in the performance of this office, had some acrimonious contests with the family.

Of Temple's character little more remains to be said. Burnet accuses him of holding irreligious opinions, and corrupting everybody who came near him. But the vague assertion of so rash and partial a writer as Burnet, about a man with whom, as far as we know, he never exchanged a word, is of little weight. It is, indeed, by no means improbable that Temple may have been a freethinker. The Osbornes thought him so when he was a very young man. And it is certain that a large proportion of the gentlemen of rank and fashion who made their entrance into society while the Puritan party was at the height of power, and while the memory of the reign of that party was still recent, conceived a strong disgust for all religion. The imputation was common between Temple and all the most distinguished courtiers of the age. Rochester, and Buckingham were open scoffers, and Mulgrave very little better. Shaftesbury, though more guarded, was supposed to agree with them in opinion. All the three noblemen who were Temple's colleagues during the short time of his sitting in the Cabinet were of very indifferent repute as to orthodoxy. Halifax, indeed, was generally considered as an atheist; but he solemnly denied the charge; and, indeed, the truth seems to be that he was more religiously disposed than most of the statesmen of that age, though two impulses which were unusually strong in him, a passion for ludicrous images, and a passion for subtle speculations, sometimes prompted him to talk on serious subjects in a manner which gave grave and just offence. It is not unlikely that Temple, who seldom went below the surface of any question, may have been infected with the prevailing scepticism. All that we can say on the subject is, that there is no trace of impiety in his works, and that the case with which he carried his election for an university, where the majority of the voters were clergymen, though it proves nothing as to his opinions, must, we think, be considered as proving that he was not, as Burnet seems to insinuate, in the habit of talking atheism to all who came near him.

Temple, however, will scarcely carry with him any great accession of authority to the side either of religion or of infidelity. He was no profound thinker. He was merely a man of lively parts and quick observation, a man of the world among men of letters, a man of letters among men of the world. Mere scholars were dazzled by the Ambassador and Cabinet counsellor; mere politicians by the Essayist and Historian. But neither as a writer nor as a statesman can we allot to him any very high place. As a man, he seems to us to have been excessively selfish, but very sober, wary, and far-sighted in his selfishness; to have known better than most people what he really wanted in life; and to have pursued what he wanted with much more than ordinary steadiness and sagacity, never suffering himself to be drawn aside either by bad or by good feelings. It was his constitution to dread failure more than he desired success, to prefer security, comfort, repose, leisure, to the turmoil and anxiety which are inseparable from greatness; and this natural languor of mind, when contrasted with the malignant energy of the keen and restless spirits among whom his lot was cast, sometimes appears to resemble the moderation of virtue. But we must own that he seems to us to sink into littleness and meanness when we compare him, we do not say with any high ideal standard of morality, but with many of those frail men who, aiming at noble ends, but often drawn from the right path by strong passions and strong temptations, have left to posterity a doubtful and checkered fame.

SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH

(July 1835)

History of the Revolution in England, in 1688. Comprising a View of the Reign of James the Second from his Accession to the Enterprise of the Prince of Orange, by the late Right Honourable Sir JAMES MACKINTOSH; and completed to the Settlement of the Crown, by the Editor. To which is prefixed a Notice of the Life, Writings, and Speeches of Sir James Mackintosh. 4to. London: 1834.

[In this review, as it originally stood, the editor of the History of the Revolution was attacked with an asperity which neither literary defects nor speculative differences can justify, and which ought to be reserved for offences against the laws of morality and honour. The reviewer was not actuated by any feeling of personal malevolence: for when he wrote this paper in a distant country, he did not know, or even guess, whom he was assailing. His only motive was regard for the memory of an eminent man whom he loved and honoured, and who appeared to him to have been unworthily treated.

The editor is now dead; and, while living, declared that he had been misunderstood, and that he had written in no spirit of enmity to Sir James Mackintosh, for whom he professed the highest

respect.

Many passages have therefore been softened, and some wholly omitted. The severe censure passed on the literary execution of the "Memoir" and "Continuation" could not be retracted without a violation of truth. But whatever could be construed into an imputation on the moral character of the editor has been carefully expunged.]

It is with unfeigned diffidence that we venture to give our opinion of the last work of Sir James Mackintosh. We have in vain tried to perform what ought to be to a critic an easy and habitual act. We have in vain tried to separate the book from the writer, and to judge of it as if it bore some unknown name. But it is to no purpose. All the lines of that venerable countenance are before us. All the little peculiar cadences of that voice from which scholars and statesmen loved to receive the lessons of a serene and benevolent wisdom are in our ears. We will attempt to preserve strict impartiality. But we are not ashamed to own that we approach this relic of a virtuous and most accomplished man with feelings of respect and gratitude which may possibly pervert our judgment.

It is hardly possible to avoid instituting a comparison between this work and another celebrated Fragment. Our readers will easily guess that we allude to Mr. Fox’s History of James the Second. The two books relate to the same subject. Both were posthumously published. Neither had received the last corrections. The authors belonged to the same political party, and held the same opinions concerning the merits and defects of the English constitution, and concerning most of the prominent characters and events in English history. Both had thought much on the principles of government; yet they were not mere speculators. Both had ransacked the archives of rival kingdoms, and pored on folios which had mouldered for ages in deserted libraries; yet they were not mere antiquaries. They had one eminent qualification for writing history: they had spoken history, acted history, lived history. The turns of political fortune, the ebb and flow of popular feeling, the hidden mechanism by which parties are moved, all these things were the subjects of their constant thought and of their most familiar conversation. Gibbon has remarked that he owed part of his success as a historian to the observations which he had made as an officer in the militia and as a member of the House of Commons. The remark is most just. We have not the smallest doubt that his campaign, though he never saw an enemy, and his parliamentary attendance, though he never made a speech, were of far more use to him than years of retirement and study would have been. If the time that he spent on parade and at mess in Hampshire, or on the Treasury bench and at Brookes’s during the storms which overthrew Lord North and Lord Shelburne, had been passed in the Bodleian Library, he might have avoided some inaccuracies; he might have enriched his notes with a greater

number of references; but he would never have produced so lively a picture of the court, the camp, and the senate-house. In this respect Mr. Fox and Sir James Mackintosh had great advantages over almost every English historian who has written since the time of Burnet. Lord Lyttelton had indeed the same advantages; but he was incapable of using them. Pedantry was so deeply fixed in his nature that the hustings, the Treasury, the Exchequer, the House of Commons, the House of Lords, left him the same dreaming schoolboy that they found him.

When we compare the two interesting works of which we have been speaking, we have little difficulty in giving the preference to that of Sir James Mackintosh. Indeed, the superiority of Mr. Fox to Sir James as an orator is hardly more clear than the superiority of Sir James to Mr. Fox as a historian. Mr. Fox with a pen in his hand, and Sir James on his legs in the House of Commons, were, we think, each out of his proper element. They were men, it is true, of far too much judgment and ability to fail scandalously in any undertaking to which they brought the whole power of their minds. The History of James the Second will always keep its place in our libraries as a valuable book; and Sir James Mackintosh succeeded in winning and maintaining a high place among the parliamentary speakers of his time. Yet we could never read a page of Mr. Fox's writing, we could never listen for a quarter of an hour to the speaking of Sir James, without feeling that there was a constant effort, a tug up hill. Nature, or habit which had become nature, asserted its rights. Mr. Fox wrote debates. Sir James Mackintosh spoke essays.

As far as mere diction was concerned, indeed, Mr. Fox did his best to avoid those faults which the habit of public speaking is likely to generate. He was so nervously apprehensive of sliding into some colloquial incorrectness, of debasing his style by a mixture of parliamentary slang, that he ran into the opposite error, and purified his vocabulary with a scrupulosity unknown to any purist. "Ciceronem Allobroga dixit." He would not allow Addison, Bolingbroke, or Middleton to be a sufficient authority for an expression. He declared that he would use no word which was not to be found in Dryden. In any other person we should have called this solicitude mere foppery; and, in spite of all our admiration for Mr. Fox, we cannot but think that his extreme attention to the petty niceties of language was hardly worthy of so manly and so capacious an understanding. There were purists of this kind at Rome; and their fastidiousness was censured by Horace, with that perfect good sense and good taste which characterise all his writings. There were purists of this kind at the time of the revival of letters; and the two greatest scholars of that time raised their voices, the one from within, the other from without the Alps, against a scrupulosity so unreasonable. "Carent," said Politian, "quae scribunt isti viribus et vita, carent actu, carent effectu, carent indole . . . Nisi liber ille praesto sit ex quo quid excerpant, colligere tria verba non possunt . . . Horum semper igitur oratio tremula, vacillans,

infirma . . . Quaeso ne ista superstitione te alliges . . . Ut bene currere non potest qui pedem ponere studet in alienis tantum vestigiis, ita nec bene scribere qui tanquam de praetscripto non audet egredi."--"Posthac," exclaims Erasmus, "non licebit episcopos appellare patres reverendos, nec in calce literarum scribere annum a Christo nato, quod id nusquam faciat Cicero. Quid autem ineptius quam, toto seculo novato, religione, imperiis, magistratibus, locorum vocabulis, aedificiis, cultu, moribus, non aliter audere loqui quam locutus est Cicero? Si revivisceret ipse Cicero, rideret hoc Ciceronianorum genus."

While Mr. Fox winnowed and sifted his phraseology with a care which seems hardly consistent with the simplicity and elevation of his mind, and of which the effect really was to debase and enfeeble his style, he was little on his guard against those more serious improprieties of manner into which a great orator who undertakes to write history is in danger of falling. There is about the whole book a vehement, contentious, replying manner. Almost every argument is put in the form of an interrogation, an ejaculation, or a sarcasm. The writer seems to be addressing himself to some imaginary audience, to be tearing in pieces a defence of the Stuarts which has just been pronounced by an imaginary Tory. Take, for example, his answer to Hume's remarks on the execution of Sydney; and substitute "the honourable gentleman" or "the noble Lord" for the name of Hume. The whole passage sounds like a powerful reply, thundered at three in the morning from the Opposition Bench. While we read it, we can almost fancy that we see and hear the great English debater, such as he has been described to us by the few who can still remember the Westminster scrutiny and the Oczakow Negotiations, in the full paroxysm of inspiration, foaming, screaming, choked by the rushing multitude of his words.

It is true that the passage to which we have referred, and several other passages which we could point out, are admirable when considered merely as exhibitions of mental power. We at once recognise in them that consummate master of the whole art of intellectual gladiatorship, whose speeches, imperfectly as they have been transmitted to us, should be studied day and night by every man who wishes to learn the science of logical defence. We find in several parts of the History of James the Second fine specimens of that which we conceive to have been the great characteristic Demosthenes among the Greeks, and of Fox among the orators of England, reason penetrated, and, if we may venture on the expression, made red-hot by passion. But this is not the kind of excellence proper to history; and it is hardly too much to say that whatever is strikingly good in Mr. Fox's Fragment is out of place.

With Sir James Mackintosh the case was reversed. His proper place was his library, a circle of men of letters, or a chair of moral and political philosophy. He distinguished himself in Parliament. But nevertheless Parliament was not exactly the sphere for him.

The effect of his most successful speeches was small when compared with the quantity of ability and learning which was expended on them. We could easily name men who, not possessing a tenth part of his intellectual powers, hardly ever address the House of Commons without producing a greater impression than was produced by his most splendid and elaborate orations. His luminous and philosophical disquisition on the Reform Bill was spoken to empty benches. Those, indeed, who had the wit to keep their seats, picked up hints which, skilfully used, made the fortune of more than one speech. But "it was caviare to the general." And even those who listened to Sir James with pleasure and admiration could not but acknowledge that he rather lectured than debated. An artist who should waste on a panorama, or a scene, or on a transparency, the exquisite finishing which we admire in some of the small Dutch interiors, would not squander his powers more than this eminent man too often did. His audience resembled the boy in the Heart of Midlothian, who pushes away the lady’s guineas with contempt, and insists on having the white money. They preferred the silver with which they were familiar, and which they were constantly passing about from hand to hand, to the gold which they had never before seen, and with the value of which they were unacquainted.

It is much to be regretted, we think, that Sir James Mackintosh did not wholly devote his later years to philosophy and literature. His talents were not those which enable a speaker to produce with rapidity a series of striking but transitory impressions, and to excite the minds of five hundred gentlemen at midnight, without saying anything that any one of them will be able to remember in the morning. His arguments were of a very different texture from those which are produced in Parliament at a moment’s notice, which puzzle a plain man who, if he had them before him in writing, would soon detect their fallacy, and which the great debater who employs them forgets within half an hour, and never thinks of again. Whatever was valuable in the compositions of Sir James Mackintosh was the ripe fruit of study and of meditation. It was the same with his conversation. In his most familiar talk there was no wildness, no inconsistency, no amusing nonsense, no exaggeration for the sake of momentary effect. His mind was a vast magazine, admirably arranged. Everything was there; and everything was in its place. His judgments on men, on sects, on books, had been often and carefully tested and weighed, and had then been committed, each to its proper receptacle, in the most capacious and accurately constructed memory that any human being ever possessed. It would have been strange indeed if you had asked for anything that was not to be found in that immense storehouse. The article which you required was not only there. It was ready. It was in its own proper compartment. In a moment it was brought down, unpacked, and displayed. If those who enjoyed the privilege--for a privilege indeed it was--of listening to Sir James Mackintosh had been disposed to find some fault in his conversation, they might perhaps have observed that he yielded too little to the

impulse of the moment. He seemed to be recollecting, not creating. He never appeared to catch a sudden glimpse of a subject in a new light. You never saw his opinions in the making, still rude, still inconsistent, and requiring to be fashioned by thought and discussion. They came forth, like the pillars of that temple in which no sound of axes or hammers was heard, finished, rounded, and exactly suited to their places. What Mr. Charles Lamb has said, with much humour and some truth, of the conversation of Scotchmen in general, was certainly true of this eminent Scotchman. He did not find, but bring. You could not cry halves to anything that turned up while you were in his company.

The intellectual and moral qualities which are most important in a historian, he possessed in a very high degree. He was singularly mild, calm, and impartial in his judgments of men, and of parties. Almost all the distinguished writers who have treated of English history are advocates. Mr. Hallam and Sir James Mackintosh alone are entitled to be called judges. But the extreme austerity of Mr. Hallam takes away something from the pleasure of reading his learned, eloquent, and judicious writings. He is a judge, but a hanging judge, the Page or Buller of the High Court of Literary justice. His black cap is in constant requisition. In the long calendar of those whom he has tried, there is hardly one who has not, in spite of evidence to character and recommendations to mercy, been sentenced and left for execution. Sir James, perhaps, erred a little on the other side. He liked a maiden assize, and came away with white gloves, after sitting in judgment on batches of the most notorious offenders. He had a quick eye for the redeeming parts of a character, and a large toleration for the infirmities of men exposed to strong temptations. But this lenity did not arise from ignorance or neglect of moral distinctions. Though he allowed perhaps too much weight to every extenuating circumstance that could be urged in favour of the transgressor, he never disputed the authority of the law, or showed his ingenuity by refining away its enactments. On every occasion he showed himself firm where principles were in question, but full of charity towards individuals.

We have no hesitation in pronouncing this Fragment decidedly the best history now extant of the reign of James the Second. It contains much new and curious information, of which excellent use has been made. But we are not sure that the book is not in some degree open to the charge which the idle citizen in the Spectator brought against his pudding; "Mem. too many plums, and no suet." There is perhaps too much disquisition and too little narrative; and indeed this is the fault into which, judging from the habits of Sir James’s mind, we should have thought him most likely to fall. What we assuredly did not anticipate was, that the narrative would be better executed than the disquisitions. We expected to find, and we have found, many just delineations of character, and many digressions full of interest, such as the account of the order of Jesuits, and of the state of prison

discipline in England a hundred and fifty years ago. We expected to find, and we have found, many reflections breathing the spirit of a calm and benignant philosophy. But we did not, we own, expect to find that Sir James could tell a story as well as Voltaire or Hume. Yet such is the fact; and if any person doubts it, we would advise him to read the account of the events which followed the issuing of King James's declaration, the meeting of the clergy, the violent scene at the privy council, the commitment, trial, and acquittal of the bishops. The most superficial reader must be charmed, we think, by the liveliness of the narrative. But no person who is not acquainted with that vast mass of intractable materials of which the valuable and interesting part has been extracted and condensed can fully appreciate the skill of the writer. Here, and indeed throughout the book, we find many harsh and careless expressions which the author would probably have removed if he had lived to complete his work. But, in spite of these blemishes, we must say that we should find it difficult to point out, in any modern history, any passage of equal length and at the same time of equal merit. We find in it the diligence, the accuracy, and the judgment of Hallam, united to the vivacity and the colouring of Southey. A history of England, written throughout in this manner, would be the most fascinating book in the language. It would be more in request at the circulating libraries than the last novel.

Sir James was not, we think, gifted with poetical imagination. But that lower kind of imagination which is necessary to the historian he had in large measure. It is not the business of the historian to create new worlds and to people them with new races of beings. He is to Homer and Shakspeare, to Dante and Milton, what Nollekens was to Canova, or Lawrence to Michael Angelo. The object of the historian's imitation is not within him; it is furnished from without. It is not a vision of beauty and grandeur discernible only by the eye of his own mind, but a real model which he did not make, and which he cannot alter. Yet his is not a mere mechanical imitation. The triumph of his skill is to select such parts as may produce the effect of the whole, to bring out strongly all the characteristic features, and to throw the light and shade in such a manner as may heighten the effect. This skill, as far as we can judge from the unfinished work now before us, Sir James Mackintosh possessed in an eminent degree.

The style of this Fragment is weighty, manly, and unaffected. There are, as we have said, some expressions which seem to us harsh, and some which we think inaccurate. These would probably have been corrected, if Sir James had lived to superintend the publication. We ought to add that the printer has by no means done his duty. One misprint in particular is so serious as to require notice. Sir James Mackintosh has paid a high and just tribute to the genius, the integrity, and the courage of a good and great man, a distinguished ornament of English literature, a fearless champion of English liberty, Thomas Burnet, Master of the Charter-House, and author of the most eloquent and

imaginative work, the Telluris Theoria Sacra. Wherever the name of this celebrated man occurs, it is printed "Bennet," both in the text and in the index. This cannot be mere negligence. It is plain that Thomas Burnet and his writings were never heard of by the gentleman who has been employed to edit this volume, and who, not content with deforming Sir James Mackintosh's text by such blunders, has prefixed to it a bad Memoir, has appended to it a bad continuation, and has thus succeeded in expanding the volume into one of the thickest, and debasing it into one of the worst that we ever saw. Never did we fall in with so admirable an illustration of the old Greek proverb, which tells us that half is sometimes more than the whole. Never did we see a case in which the increase of the bulk was so evidently a diminution of the value.

Why such an artist was selected to deface so fine a Torso, we cannot pretend to conjecture. We read that, when the Consul Mummius, after the taking of Corinth, was preparing to send to Rome some works of the greatest Grecian sculptors, he told the packers that if they broke his Venus or his Apollo, he would force them to restore the limbs which should be wanting. A head by a hewer of milestones joined to a bosom by Praxiteles would not surprise or shock us more than this supplement.

The "Memoir" contains much that is worth reading; for it contains many extracts from the compositions of Sir James Mackintosh. But when we pass from what the biographer has done with his scissors to what he has done with his pen, we can find nothing to praise in his work. Whatever may have been the intention with which he wrote, the tendency of his narrative is to convey the impression that Sir James Mackintosh, from interested motives, abandoned the doctrines of the Vindiciae Gallicae. Had such charges appeared in their natural place, we should leave them to their natural fate. We would not stoop to defend Sir James Mackintosh from the attacks of fourth-rate magazines and pothouse newspapers. But here his own fame is turned against him. A book of which not one copy would ever have been bought but for his name in the title-page is made the vehicle of the imputation. Under such circumstances we cannot help exclaiming, in the words of one of the most amiable of Homer's heroes,

Nun tis enieies Patroklios deilio
Mnisastho pasin gar epistato meilichos einai
Zoos eun' nun d' au Thanatos kai Moira kichanei

We have no difficulty in admitting that during the ten or twelve years which followed the appearance of the Vindicae Gallicae, the opinions of Sir James Mackintosh underwent some change. But did this change pass on him alone? Was it not common? Was it not almost universal? Was there one honest friend of liberty in Europe or in America whose ardour had not been damped, whose faith in the high destinies of mankind had not been shaken? Was there one observer to whom the French Revolution, or revolutions

in general, appeared in exactly the same light on the day when the Bastile fell, and on the day when the Girondists were dragged to the scaffold, the day when the Directory shipped off their principal opponents for Guiana, or the day when the Legislative Body was driven from its hall at the point of the bayonet? We do not speak of light-minded and enthusiastic people, of wits like Sheridan, or poets like Alfieri; but of the most virtuous and intelligent practical statesmen, and of the deepest, the calmest, the most impartial political speculators of that time. What was the language and conduct of Lord Spencer, of Lord Fitzwilliam, or Mr. Grattan? What is the tone of M. Dumont's Memoirs, written just at the close of the eighteenth century? What Tory could have spoken with greater disgust or contempt of the French Revolution and its authors? Nay, this writer, a republican, and the most upright and zealous of republicans, has gone so far as to say that Mr. Burke's work on the Revolution had saved Europe. The name of M. Dumont naturally suggests that of Mr. Bentham. He, we presume, was not ratting for a place; and what language did he hold at that time? Look at his little treatise entitled Sophismes Anarchiques. In that treatise he says, that the atrocities of the Revolution were the natural consequences of the absurd principles on which it was commenced; that, while the chiefs of the constituent assembly gloried in the thought that they were pulling down aristocracy, they never saw that their doctrines tended to produce an evil a hundred times more formidable, anarchy; that the theory laid down in the Declaration of the Rights of Man had, in a great measure, produced the crimes of the Reign of Terror; that none but an eyewitness could imagine the horrors of a state of society in which comments on that Declaration were put forth by men with no food in their bellies, with rags on their backs and pikes in their hands. He praises the English Parliament for the dislike which it has always shown to abstract reasonings, and to the affirming of general principles. In M. Dumont's preface to the Treatise on the Principles of Legislation, a preface written under the eye of Mr. Bentham, and published with his sanction, are the following still more remarkable expressions: "M. Bentham est bien loin d'attacher une preference exclusive a aucune forme de gouvernement. Il pense que la meilleure constitution pour un peuple est celle a laquelle il est accoutume . . . Le vice fondamental des theories sur les constitutions politiques, c'est de commencer par attaquer celles qui existent, et d'exciter tout au moins des inquietudes et des jalousies de pouvoir. Une telle disposition n'est point favorable au perfectionnement des lois. La seule epoque ou l'on puisse entreprendre avec succes des grandes reformes de legislation est celle ou les passions publiques sont calmes, et ou le gouvernement jouit de la stabilite la plus grande. L'objet de M. Bentham, en cherchant dans le vice des lois la cause de la plupart des maux, a ete constamment d'eloigner le plus grand de tous, le bouleversement de l'autorite, les revolutions de propriete et de pouvoir."

To so conservative a frame of mind had the excesses of the French

Revolution brought the most illustrious reformers of that time. And why is one person to be singled out from among millions, and arraigned before posterity as a traitor to his opinions only because events produced on him the effect which they produced on a whole generation? People who, like Mr. Brothers in the last generation, and Mr. Percival in this, have been favoured with revelations from heaven, may be quite independent of the vulgar sources of knowledge. But such poor creatures as Mackintosh, Dumont, and Bentham, had nothing but observation and reason to guide them; and they obeyed the guidance of observation and of reason. How is it in physics? A traveller falls in with a berry which he has never before seen. He tastes it, and finds it sweet and refreshing. He praises it, and resolves to introduce it into his own country. But in a few minutes he is taken violently sick; he is convulsed; he is at the point of death. He of course changes his opinion, denounces this delicious food a poison, blames his own folly in tasting it, and cautions his friends against it. After a long and violent struggle he recovers, and finds himself much exhausted by his sufferings, but free from some chronic complaints which had been the torment of his life. He then changes his opinion again, and pronounces this fruit a very powerful remedy, which ought to be employed only in extreme cases and with great caution, but which ought not to be absolutely excluded from the Pharmacopoeia. And would it not be the height of absurdity to call such a man fickle and inconsistent, because he had repeatedly altered his judgment? If he had not altered his judgment, would he have been a rational being? It was exactly the same with the French Revolution. That event was a new phaenomenon in politics. Nothing that had gone before enabled any person to judge with certainty of the course which affairs might take. At first the effect was the reform of great abuses; and honest men rejoiced. Then came commotion, proscription, confiscation, bankruptcy, the assignats, the maximum, civil war, foreign war, revolutionary tribunals, guillotinades, noyades, fusillades. Yet a little while, and a military despotism rose out of the confusion, and menaced the independence of every state in Europe.

And yet again a little while, and the old dynasty returned, followed by a train of emigrants eager to restore the old abuses. We have now, we think, the whole before us. We should therefore be justly accused of levity or insincerity if our language concerning those events were constantly changing. It is our deliberate opinion that the French Revolution, in spite of all its crimes and follies, was a great blessing to mankind. But it was not only natural, but inevitable, that those who had only seen the first act should be ignorant of the catastrophe, and should be alternately elated and depressed as the plot went on disclosing itself to them. A man who had held exactly the same opinion about the Revolution in 1789, in 1794, in 1804, in 1814, and in 1834, would have been either a divinely inspired prophet, or an obstinate fool. Mackintosh was neither. He was simply a wise and good man; and the change which passed on his mind was a

change which passed on the mind of almost every wise and good man in Europe. In fact, few of his contemporaries changed so little. The rare moderation and calmness of his temper preserved him alike from extravagant elation and from extravagant despondency. He was never a Jacobin. He was never an Anti-Jacobin. His mind oscillated undoubtedly, but the extreme points of the oscillation were not very remote. Herein he differed greatly from some persons of distinguished talents who entered into life at nearly the same time with him. Such persons we have seen rushing from one wild extreme to another, out-Paining Paine, out-Castlereaghing Castlereagh, Pantisocratists, Ultra-Tories, heretics, persecutors, breaking the old laws against sedition, calling for new and sharper laws against sedition, writing democratic dramas, writing Laureate odes panegyrising Marten, panegyrising Laud, consistent in nothing but an intolerance which in any person would be censurable, but which is altogether unpardonable in men who, by their own confession, have had such ample experience of their own fallibility. We readily concede to some of these persons the praise of eloquence and poetical invention; nor are we by any means disposed, even where they have been gainers by their conversion, to question their sincerity. It would be most uncandid to attribute to sordid motives actions which admit of a less discreditable explanation. We think that the conduct of these persons has been precisely what was to be expected from men who were gifted with strong imagination and quick sensibility, but who were neither accurate observers nor logical reasoners. It was natural that such men should see in the victory of the third estate of France the dawn of a new Saturnian age. It was natural that the rage of their disappointment should be proportioned to the extravagance of their hopes. Though the direction of their passions was altered, the violence of those passions was the same. The force of the rebound was proportioned to the force of the original impulse. The pendulum swung furiously to the left, because it had been drawn too far to the right.

We own that nothing gives us so high an idea of the judgment and temper of Sir James Mackintosh as the manner in which he shaped his course through those times. Exposed successively to two opposite infections, he took both in their very mildest form. The constitution of his mind was such that neither of the diseases which wrought such havoc all round him could in any serious degree, or for any great length of time, derange his intellectual health. He, like every honest and enlightened man in Europe, saw with delight the great awakening of the French nation. Yet he never, in the season of his warmest enthusiasm, proclaimed doctrines inconsistent with the safety of property and the just authority of governments. He, like almost every other honest and enlightened man, was discouraged and perplexed by the terrible events which followed. Yet he never in the most gloomy times abandoned the cause of peace, of liberty, and of toleration. In that great convulsion which overset almost every other understanding, he was indeed so much shaken that he leaned

sometimes in one direction and sometimes in the other; but he never lost his balance. The opinions in which he at last reposed, and to which, in spite of strong temptations, he adhered with a firm, a disinterested, an ill-requited fidelity, were a just mean between those which he had defended with youthful ardour and with more than manly prowess against Mr. Burke, and those to which he had inclined during the darkest and saddest years in the history of modern Europe. We are much mistaken if this be the picture either of a weak or of a dishonest mind.

What the political opinions of Sir James Mackintosh were in his later years is written in the annals of his country. Those annals will sufficiently refute what the Editor has ventured to assert in the very advertisement to this work. "Sir James Mackintosh," says he, "was avowedly and emphatically a Whig of the Revolution: and since the agitation of religious liberty and parliamentary reform became a national movement, the great transaction of 1688 has been more dispassionately, more correctly, and less highly estimated." If these words mean anything, they must mean that the opinions of Sir James Mackintosh concerning religious liberty and parliamentary reform went no further than those of the authors of the Revolution; in other words, that Sir James Mackintosh opposed Catholic Emancipation, and approved of the old constitution of the House of Commons. The allegation is confuted by twenty volumes of Parliamentary Debates, nay, by innumerable passages in the very fragment which this writer has defaced. We will venture to say that Sir James Mackintosh often did more for religious liberty and for parliamentary reform in a quarter of an hour than most of those zealots who are in the habit of depreciating him have done or will do in the whole course of their lives.

Nothing in the "Memoir" or in the "Continuation of the History" has struck us so much as the contempt with which the writer thinks fit to speak of all things that were done before the coming in of the very last fashions in politics. We think that we have sometimes observed a leaning towards the same fault in writers of a much higher order of intellect. We will therefore take this opportunity of making a few remarks on an error which is, we fear, becoming common, and which appears to us not only absurd, but as pernicious as almost any error concerning the transactions of a past age can possibly be.

We shall not, we hope, be suspected of a bigoted attachment to the doctrines and practices of past generations. Our creed is that the science of government is an experimental science, and that, like all other experimental sciences, it is generally in a state of progression. No man is so obstinate an admirer of the old times as to deny that medicine, surgery, botany, chemistry, engineering, navigation, are better understood now than in any former age. We conceive that it is the same with political science. Like those physical sciences which we have mentioned, it has always been working itself clearer and clearer, and depositing impurity after impurity. There was a time when the

most powerful of human intellects were deluded by the gibberish of the astrologer and the alchemist; and just so there was a time when the most enlightened and virtuous statesmen thought it the first duty of a government to persecute heretics, to found monasteries, to make war on Saracens. But time advances; facts accumulate; doubts arise. Faint glimpses of truth begin to appear, and shine more and more unto the perfect day. The highest intellects, like the tops of mountains, are the first to catch and to reflect the dawn. They are bright, while the level below is still in darkness. But soon the light, which at first illuminated only the loftiest eminences, descends on the plain and penetrates to the deepest valley. First come hints, then fragments of systems, then defective systems, then complete and harmonious systems. The sound opinion, held for a time by one bold speculator, becomes the opinion of a small minority, of a strong minority, of a majority of mankind. Thus, the great progress goes on, till schoolboys laugh at the jargon which imposed on Bacon, till country rectors condemn the illiberality and intolerance of Sir Thomas More.

Seeing these things, seeing that, by the confession of the most obstinate enemies of innovation, our race has hitherto been almost constantly advancing in knowledge, and not seeing any reason to believe that, precisely at the point of time at which we came into the world, a change took place in the faculties of the human mind, or in the mode of discovering truth, we are reformers: we are on the side of progress. From the great advances which European society has made during the last four centuries, in every species of knowledge, we infer, not that there is no more room for improvement, but that, in every science which deserves the name, immense improvements may be confidently expected.

But the very considerations which lead us to look forward with sanguine hope to the future prevent us from looking back with contempt on the past We do not flatter ourselves with the notion that we have attained perfection, and that no more truth remains to be found. We believe that we are wiser than our ancestors. We believe, also, that our posterity will be wiser than we. It would be gross injustice in our grandchildren to talk of us with contempt, merely because they may have surpassed us; to call Watt a fool, because mechanical powers may be discovered which may supersede the use of steam; to deride the efforts which have been made in our time to improve the discipline of prisons, and to enlighten the minds of the poor, because future philanthropists may devise better places of confinement than Mr. Bentham's Panopticon, and better places of education than Mr. Lancaster's Schools. As we would have our descendants judge us, so ought we to judge our fathers. In order to form a correct estimate of their merits, we ought to place ourselves in their situation, to put out of our minds, for a time, all that knowledge which they, however eager in the pursuit of truth, could not have, and which we, however negligent we may have been, could not help having. It

was not merely difficult, but absolutely impossible, for the best and greatest of men, two hundred years ago, to be what a very commonplace person in our days may easily be, and indeed must necessarily be. But it is too much that the benefactors of mankind, after having been reviled by the dunces of their own generation for going too far, should be reviled by the dunces of the next generation for not going far enough.

The truth lies between two absurd extremes. On one side is the bigot who pleads the wisdom of our ancestors as a reason for not doing what they in our place would be the first to do; who opposes the Reform Bill because Lord Somers did not see the necessity of Parliamentary Reform; who would have opposed the Revolution because Ridley and Cranmer professed boundless submission to the royal prerogative; and who would have opposed the Reformation because the Fitzwalters and Mareschals, whose seals are set to the Great Charter, were devoted adherents to the Church of Rome. On the other side is the sciolist who speaks with scorn of the Great Charter because it did not reform the Church of the Reformation, because it did not limit the prerogative; and of the Revolution, because it did not purify the House of Commons. The former of these errors we have often combated, and shall always be ready to combat. The latter, though rapidly spreading, has not, we think, yet come under our notice. The former error bears directly on practical questions, and obstructs useful reforms. It may, therefore, seem to be, and probably is, the more mischievous of the two. But the latter is equally absurd; it is at least equally symptomatic of a shallow understanding and an unamiable temper: and, if it should ever become general, it will, we are satisfied, produce very prejudicial effects. Its tendency is to deprive the benefactors of mankind of their honest fame, and to put the best and the worst men of past times on the same level. The author of a great reformation is almost always unpopular in his own age. He generally passes his life in disquiet and danger. It is therefore for the interest of the human race that the memory of such men should be had in reverence, and that they should be supported against the scorn and hatred of their contemporaries by the hope of leaving a great and imperishable name. To go on the forlorn hope of truth is a service of peril. Who will undertake it, if it be not also a service of honour? It is easy enough, after the ramparts are carried, to find men to plant the flag on the highest tower. The difficulty is to find men who are ready to go first into the breach; and it would be bad policy indeed to insult their remains because they fell in the breach, and did not live to penetrate to the citadel.

Now here we have a book which is by no means a favourable specimen of the English literature of the nineteenth century, a book indicating neither extensive knowledge nor great powers of reasoning. And, if we were to judge by the pity with which the writer speaks of the great statesmen and philosophers of a former age, we should guess that he was the author of the most original

and important inventions in political science. Yet not so: for men who are able to make discoveries are generally disposed to make allowances. Men who are eagerly pressing forward in pursuit of truth are grateful to every one who has cleared an inch of the way for them. It is, for the most part, the man who has just capacity enough to pick up and repeat the commonplaces which are fashionable in his own time who looks with disdain on the very intellects to which it is owing that those commonplaces are not still considered as startling paradoxes or damnable heresies. This writer is just the man who, if he had lived in the seventeenth century, would have devoutly believed that the Papists burned London, who would have swallowed the whole of Oates's story about the forty thousand soldiers, disguised as pilgrims, who were to meet in Gallicia, and sail thence to invade England, who would have carried a Protestant flail under his coat, and who would have been angry if the story of the warming-pan had been questioned. It is quite natural that such a man should speak with contempt of the great reformers of that time, because they did not know some things which he never would have known but for the salutary effects of their exertions. The men to whom we owe it that we have a House of Commons are sneered at because they did not suffer the debates of the House to be published. The authors of the Toleration Act are treated as bigots, because they did not go the whole length of Catholic Emancipation. Just so we have heard a baby, mounted on the shoulders of its father, cry out, "How much taller I am than Papa!"

This gentleman can never want matter for pride, if he finds it so easily. He may boast of an indisputable superiority to all the greatest men of all past ages. He can read and write: Homer probably did not know a letter. He has been taught that the earth goes round the sun: Archimedes held that the sun went round the earth. He is aware that there is a place called New Holland: Columbus and Gama went to their graves in ignorance of the fact. He has heard of the Georgium Sidus: Newton was ignorant of the existence of such a planet. He is acquainted with the use of gunpowder: Hannibal and Caesar won their victories with sword and spear. We submit, however, that this is not the way in which men are to be estimated. We submit that a wooden spoon of our day would not be justified in calling Galileo and Napier blockheads, because they never heard of the differential calculus. We submit that Caxton's press in Westminster Abbey, rude as it is, ought to be looked at with quite as much respect as the best constructed machinery that ever, in our time, impressed the clearest type on the finest paper. Sydenham first discovered that the cool regimen succeeded best in cases of small-pox. By this discovery he saved the lives of hundreds of thousands; and we venerate his memory for it, though he never heard of inoculation. Lady Mary Montague brought inoculation into use; and we respect her for it, though she never heard of vaccination. Jenner introduced vaccination; we admire him for it, and we shall continue to admire him for it, although

some still safer and more agreeable preservative should be discovered. It is thus that we ought to judge of the events and the men of other times. They were behind us. It could not be otherwise. But the question with respect to them is not where they were, but which way they were going. Were their faces set in the right or in the wrong direction? Were they in the front or in the rear of their generation? Did they exert themselves to help onward the great movement of the human race, or to stop it? This is not charity, but simple justice and common sense. It is the fundamental law of the world in which we live that truth shall grow, first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. A person who complains of the men of 1688 for not having been men of 1835 might just as well complain of a projectile for describing a parabola, or of quicksilver for being heavier than water.

Undoubtedly we ought to look at ancient transactions by the light of modern knowledge. Undoubtedly it is among the first duties of a historian to point out the faults of the eminent men of former generations. There are no errors which are so likely to be drawn into precedent, and therefore none which it is so necessary to expose, as the errors of persons who have a just title to the gratitude and admiration of posterity. In politics, as in religion, there are devotees who show their reverence for a departed saint by converting his tomb into a sanctuary for crime. Receptacles of wickedness are suffered to remain undisturbed in the neighbourhood of the church which glories in the relics of some martyred apostle. Because he was merciful, his bones give security to assassins. Because he was chaste, the precinct of his temple is filled with licensed stews. Privileges of an equally absurd kind have been set up against the jurisdiction of political philosophy. Vile abuses cluster thick round every glorious event, round every venerable name; and this evil assuredly calls for vigorous measures of literary police. But the proper course is to abate the nuisance without defacing the shrine, to drive out the gangs of thieves and prostitutes without doing foul and cowardly wrong to the ashes of the illustrious dead.

In this respect, two historians of our own time may be proposed as models, Sir James Mackintosh and Mr. Mill. Differing in most things, in this they closely resemble each other. Sir James is lenient. Mr. Mill is severe. But neither of them ever omits, in the apportioning of praise and of censure, to make ample allowance for the state of political science and political morality in former ages. In the work before us, Sir James Mackintosh speaks with just respect of the Whigs of the Revolution, while he never fails to condemn the conduct of that party towards the members of the Church of Rome. His doctrines are the liberal and benevolent doctrines of the nineteenth century. But he never forgets that the men whom he is describing were men of the seventeenth century.

From Mr. Mill this indulgence, or, to speak more properly, this justice, was less to be expected. That gentleman, in some of his works, appears to consider politics not as an experimental, and therefore a progressive science, but as a science of which all the difficulties may be resolved by short synthetical arguments drawn from truths of the most vulgar notoriety. Were this opinion well founded, the people of one generation would have little or no advantage over those of another generation. But though Mr. Mill, in some of his Essays, has been thus misled, as we conceive, by a fondness for neat and precise forms of demonstration, it would be gross injustice not to admit that, in his History, he has employed a very different method of investigation with eminent ability and success. We know no writer who takes so much pleasure in the truly useful, noble and philosophical employment of tracing the progress of sound opinions from their embryo state to their full maturity. He eagerly culls from old despatches and minutes every expression in which he can discern the imperfect germ of any great truth which has since been fully developed. He never fails to bestow praise on those who, though far from coming up to his standard of perfection, yet rose in a small degree above the common level of their contemporaries. It is thus that the annals of past times ought to be written. It is thus, especially, that the annals of our own country ought to be written.

The history of England is emphatically the history of progress. It is the history of a constant movement of the public mind, of a constant change in the institutions of a great society. We see that society, at the beginning of the twelfth century, in a state more miserable than the state in which the most degraded nations of the East now are. We see it subjected to the tyranny of a handful of armed foreigners. We see a strong distinction of caste separating the victorious Norman from the vanquished Saxon. We see the great body of the population in a state of personal slavery. We see the most debasing and cruel superstition exercising boundless dominion over the most elevated and benevolent minds. We see the multitude sunk in brutal ignorance, and the studious few engaged in acquiring what did not deserve the name of knowledge. In the course of seven centuries the wretched and degraded race have become the greatest and most highly civilised people that ever the world saw, have spread their dominion over every quarter of the globe, have scattered the seeds of mighty empires and republics over vast continents of which no dim intimation had ever reached Ptolemy or Strabo, have created a maritime power which would annihilate in a quarter of an hour the navies of Tyre, Athens, Carthage, Venice, and Genoa together, have carried the science of healing, the means of locomotion and correspondence, every mechanical art, every manufacture, everything that promotes the convenience of life, to a perfection which our ancestors would have thought magical, have produced a literature which may boast of works not inferior to the noblest which Greece has bequeathed to us, have discovered the laws which regulate the motions of the heavenly bodies, have

speculated with exquisite subtilty on the operations of the human mind, have been the acknowledged leaders of the human race in the career of political improvement. The history of England is the history of this great change in the moral, intellectual, and physical state of the inhabitants of our own island. There is much amusing and instructive episodical matter; but this is the main action. To us, we will own, nothing is so interesting and delightful as to contemplate the steps by which the England of Domesday Book, the England of the Curfew and the Forest Laws, the England of crusaders, monks, schoolmen, astrologers, serfs, outlaws, became the England which we know and love, the classic ground of liberty and philosophy, the school of all knowledge, the mart of all trade. The Charter of Henry Beauclerk, the Great Charter, the first assembling of the House of Commons, the extinction of personal slavery, the separation from the See of Rome, the Petition of Right, the Habeas Corpus Act, the Revolution, the establishment of the liberty of unlicensed printing, the abolition of religious disabilities, the reform of the representative system, all these seem to us to be the successive stages of one great revolution--nor can we fully comprehend any one of these memorable events unless we look at it in connection with those which preceded, and with those which followed it. Each of those great and ever-memorable struggles, Saxon against Norman, Villein against Lord, Protestant against Papist, Roundhead against Cavalier, Dissenter against Churchman, Manchester against Old Sarum, was, in its own order and season, a struggle, on the result of which were staked the dearest interests of the human race; and every man who, in the contest which, in his time, divided our country, distinguished himself on the right side, is entitled to our gratitude and respect.

Whatever the editor of this book may think, those persons who estimate most correctly the value of the improvements which have recently been made in our institutions are precisely the persons who are least disposed to speak slightingly of what was done in 1688. Such men consider the Revolution as a reform, imperfect indeed, but still most beneficial to the English people and to the human race, as a reform, which has been the fruitful parent of reforms, as a reform, the happy effects of which are at this moment felt, not only throughout Our own country, but in half the monarchies of Europe, and in the depth of the forests of Ohio. We shall be pardoned, we hope, if we call the attention of our readers to the causes and to the consequences of that great event.

We said that the history of England is the history of progress; and, when we take a comprehensive view of it, it is so. But, when examined in small separate portions, it way with more propriety be called a history of actions and reactions. We have often thought that the motion of the public mind in our country resembles that of the sea when the tide is rising. Each successive wave rushes forward, breaks, and rolls back; but the great flood is steadily coming in. A person who looked on the

waters only for a moment might fancy that they were retiring. A person who looked on them only for five minutes might fancy that they were rushing capriciously to and fro. But when he keeps his eye on them for a quarter of an hour, and sees one seamark disappear after another, it is impossible for him to doubt of the general direction in which the ocean is moved. Just such has been the course of events in England. In the history of the national mind, which is, in truth, the history of the nation, we must carefully distinguish between that recoil which regularly follows every advance and a great general ebb. If we take short intervals, if we compare 1640 and 1660, 1680 and 1685, 1708 and 1712, 1782 and 1794, we find a retrogression. But if we take centuries, if, for example, we compare 1794 with 1660 or with 1685, we cannot doubt in which direction society is proceeding.

The interval which elapsed between the Restoration and the Revolution naturally divides itself into three periods. The first extends from 1660 to 1678, the second from 1678 to 1681, the third from 1681 to 1688.

In 1660 the whole nation was mad with loyal excitement. If we had to choose a lot from among all the multitude of those which men have drawn since the beginning of the world, we would select that of Charles the Second on the day of his return. He was in a situation in which the dictates of ambition coincided with those of benevolence, in which it was easier to be virtuous than to be wicked, to be loved than to be hated, to earn pure and imperishable glory than to become infamous. For once the road of goodness was a smooth descent. He had done nothing to merit the affection of his people. But they had paid him in advance without measure. Elizabeth, after the destruction of the Armada, or after the abolition of monopolies, had not excited a thousandth part of the enthusiasm with which the young exile was welcomed home. He was not, like Lewis the Eighteenth, imposed on his subjects by foreign conquerors; nor did he, like Lewis the Eighteenth, come back to a country which had undergone a complete change. The House of Bourbon was placed in Paris as a trophy of the victory of the European confederation. The return of the ancient princes was inseparably associated in the public mind with the cession of extensive provinces, with the payment of an immense tribute, with the devastation of flourishing departments, with the occupation of the kingdom by hostile armies, with the emptiness of those niches in which the gods of Athens and Rome had been the objects of a new idolatry, with the nakedness of those walls on which the Transfiguration had shone with light as glorious as that which overhung Mount Tabor. They came back to a land in which they could recognise nothing. The seven sleepers of the legend, who closed their eyes when the Pagans were persecuting the Christians, and woke when the Christians were persecuting each other, did not find themselves in a world more completely new to them. Twenty years had done the work of twenty generations. Events had come thick. Men had lived fast. The old institutions and the old feelings had been torn up by the roots. There was a

new Church founded and endowed by the usurper; a new nobility whose titles were taken from fields of battle, disastrous to the ancient line; a new chivalry whose crosses had been won by exploits which had seemed likely to make the banishment of the emigrants perpetual. A new code was administered by a new magistracy. A new body of proprietors held the soil by a new tenure. The most ancient local distinctions had been effaced. The most familiar names had become obsolete. There was no longer a Normandy or a Burgundy, a Brittany and a Guienne. The France of Lewis the Sixteenth had passed away as completely as one of the Preadamite worlds. Its fossil remains might now and then excite curiosity. But it was as impossible to put life into the old institutions as to animate the skeletons which are imbedded in the depths of primeval strata. It was as absurd to think that France could again be placed under the feudal system, as that our globe could be overrun by Mammoths. The revolution in the laws and in the form of government was but an outward sign of that mightier revolution which had taken place in the heart and brain of the people, and which affected every transaction of life, trading, farming, studying, marrying, and giving in marriage. The French whom the emigrant prince had to govern were no more like the French of his youth, than the French of his youth were like the French of the Jacquerie. He came back to a people who knew not him nor his house, to a people to whom a Bourbon was no more than a Carlovingian or a Merovingian. He might substitute the white flag for the tricolor; he might put lilies in the place of bees; he might order the initials of the Emperor to be carefully effaced. But he could turn his eyes nowhere without meeting some object which reminded him that he was a stranger in the palace of his fathers. He returned to a country in which even the passing traveller is every moment reminded that there has lately been a great dissolution and reconstruction of the social system. To win the hearts of a people under such circumstances would have been no easy task even for Henry the Fourth.

In the English Revolution the case was altogether different. Charles was not imposed on his countrymen, but sought by them. His restoration was not attended by any circumstance which could inflict a wound on their national pride. Insulated by our geographical position, insulated by our character, we had fought out our quarrels and effected our reconciliation among ourselves. Our great internal questions had never been mixed up with the still greater question of national independence. The political doctrines of the Roundheads were not, like those of the French philosophers, doctrines of universal application. Our ancestors, for the most part, took their stand, not on a general theory, but on the particular constitution of the realm. They asserted the rights, not of men, but of Englishmen. Their doctrines therefore were not contagious; and, had it been otherwise, no neighbouring country was then susceptible of the contagion. The language in which our discussions were generally conducted was scarcely known even to a single man of letters out of the islands. Our local situation made it almost impossible that we should effect great

conquests on the Continent. The kings of Europe had, therefore, no reason to fear that their subjects would follow the example of the English Puritans, and looked with indifference, perhaps with complacency, on the death of the monarch and the abolition of the monarchy. Clarendon complains bitterly of their apathy. But we believe that this apathy was of the greatest service to the royal cause. If a French or Spanish army had invaded England, and if that army had been cut to pieces, as we have no doubt that it would have been, on the first day on which it came face to face with the soldiers of Preston and Dunbar, with Colonel Fight-the-good-Fight, and Captain Smite-them-hip-and-thigh, the House of Cromwell would probably now have been reigning in England. The nation would have forgotten all the misdeeds of the man who had cleared the soil of foreign invaders.

Happily for Charles, no European state, even when at war with the Commonwealth, chose to bind up its cause with that of the wanderers who were playing in the garrets of Paris and Cologne at being princes and chancellors. Under the administration of Cromwell, England was more respected and dreaded than any power in Christendom and, even under the ephemeral governments which followed his death, no foreign state ventured to treat her with contempt. Thus Charles came back not as a mediator between his people and a victorious enemy, but as a mediator between internal factions. He found the Scotch Covenanters and the Irish Papists alike subdued. He found Dunkirk and Jamaica added to the empire. He was heir to the conquest and to the influence of the able usurper who had excluded him.

The old government of England, as it had been far milder than the old government of France, had been far less violently and completely subverted. The national institutions had been spared, or imperfectly eradicated. The laws had undergone little alteration. The tenures of the soil were still to be learned from Littleton and Coke. The Great Charter was mentioned with as much reverence in the parliaments of the Commonwealth as in those of any earlier or of any later age. A new Confession of Faith and a new ritual had been introduced into the church. But the bulk of the ecclesiastical property still remained. The colleges still held their estates. The parson still received his tithes. The Lords had, at a crisis of great excitement, been excluded by military violence from their House; but they retained their titles and an ample share of the public veneration. When a nobleman made his appearance in the House of Commons he was received with ceremonious respect. Those few Peers who consented to assist at the inauguration of the Protector were placed next to himself, and the most honourable offices of the day were assigned to them. We learn from the debates of Richard’s Parliament how strong a hold the old aristocracy had on the affections of the people. One member of the House of Commons went so far as to say that, unless their Lordships were peaceably restored, the country might soon be convulsed by a war of the Barons. There was indeed no great party hostile to the Upper

House. There was nothing exclusive in the constitution of that body. It was regularly recruited from among the most distinguished of the country gentlemen, the lawyers, and the clergy. The most powerful nobles of the century which preceded the civil war, the Duke of Somerset, the Duke of Northumberland, Lord Seymour of Sudeley, the Earl of Leicester, Lord Burleigh, the Earl of Salisbury, the Duke of Buckingham, the Earl of Strafford, had all been commoners, and had all raised themselves, by courtly arts or by parliamentary talents, not merely to seats in the House of Lords, but to the first influence in that assembly. Nor had the general conduct of the Peers been such as to make them unpopular. They had not, indeed, in opposing arbitrary measures, shown so much eagerness and pertinacity as the Commons. But still they had opposed those measures. They had, at the beginning of the discontents, a common interest with the people. If Charles had succeeded in his scheme of governing without parliaments, the consequence of the Peers would have been grievously diminished. If he had been able to raise taxes by his own authority, the estates of the Peers would have been as much at his mercy as those of the merchants or the farmers. If he had obtained the power of imprisoning his subjects at his pleasure, a Peer ran far greater risk of incurring the royal displeasure, and of being accommodated with apartments in the Tower, than any city trader or country squire. Accordingly Charles found that the Great Council of Peers which he convoked at York would do nothing for him. In the most useful reforms which were made during the first session of the Long Parliament, the Peers concurred heartily with the Lower House; and a large minority of the English nobles stood by the popular side through the first years of the war. At Edgehill, Newbury, Marston, and Naseby, the armies of the Parliament were commanded by members of the aristocracy. It was not forgotten that a Peer had imitated the example of Hampden in refusing the payment of the ship-money, or that a Peer had been among the six members of the legislature whom Charles illegally impeached.

Thus the old constitution of England was without difficulty re-established; and of all the parts of the old constitution the monarchical part was, at the time, dearest to the body of the people. It had been injudiciously depressed, and it was in consequence unduly exalted. From the day when Charles the First became a prisoner had commenced a reaction in favour of his person and of his office. From the day when the axe fell on his neck before the windows of his palace, that reaction became rapid and violent. At the Restoration it had attained such a point that it could go no further. The people were ready to place at the mercy of their Sovereign all their most ancient and precious rights. The most servile doctrines were publicly avowed. The most moderate and constitutional opposition was condemned. Resistance was spoken of with more horror than any crime which a human being can commit. The Commons were more eager than the King himself to avenge the wrongs of the royal house; more desirous than the bishops themselves to restore the church; more ready to give

money than the ministers to ask for it.

They abrogated the excellent law passed in the first session of the Long Parliament, with the general consent of all honest men, to insure the frequent meeting of the great council of the nation. They might probably have been induced to go further, and to restore the High Commission and the Star-Chamber. All the contemporary accounts represent the nation as in a state of hysterical excitement, of drunken joy. In the immense multitude which crowded the beach at Dover, and bordered the road along which the King travelled to London, there was not one who was not weeping. Bonfires blazed. Bells jingled. The streets were thronged at night by boon-companions, who forced all the passers-by to swallow on bended knees brimming glasses to the health of his Most Sacred Majesty, and the damnation of Red-nosed Noll. That tenderness to the fallen which has, through many generation% been a marked feature of the national character, was for a time hardly discernible. All London crowded to shout and laugh round the gibbet where hung the rotten remains of a prince who had made England the dread of the world, who had been the chief founder of her maritime greatness, and of her colonial empire, who had conquered Scotland and Ireland, who had humbled Holland and Spain, the terror of whose name had been as a guard round every English traveller in remote countries, and round every Protestant congregation in the heart of Catholic empires. When some of those brave and honest though misguided men who had sate in judgment on their King were dragged on hurdles to a death of prolonged torture, their last prayers were interrupted by the hisses and execrations of thousands.

Such was England in 1660. In 1678 the whole face of things had changed. At the former of those epochs eighteen years of commotion had made the majority of the people ready to buy repose at any price. At the latter epoch eighteen years of misgovernment had made the same majority desirous to obtain security for their liberties at any risk. The fury of their returning loyalty had spent itself in its first outbreak. In a very few months they had hanged and half-hanged, quartered and embowelled enough to satisfy them. The Roundhead party seemed to be not merely overcome, but too much broken and scattered ever to rally again. Then commenced the reflux of public opinion. The nation began to find out to what a man it had intrusted, without conditions, all its dearest interests, on what a man it had lavished all its fondest affection. On the ignoble nature of the restored exile, adversity had exhausted all her discipline in vain. He had one immense advantage over most other princes. Though born in the purple, he was no better acquainted with the vicissitudes of life and the diversities of character than most of his subjects. He had known restraint, danger, penury, and dependence. He had often suffered from ingratitude, insolence, and treachery. He had received many signal proofs of faithful and heroic attachment. He had seen, if ever man saw, both sides of human nature. But only one side remained in his memory. He had learned only to despise

and to distrust his species, to consider integrity in men, and modesty in women, as mere acting; nor did he think it worth while to keep his opinion to himself. He was incapable of friendship; yet he was perpetually led by favourites without being in the smallest degree duped by them. He knew that their regard to his interests was all simulated; but, from a certain easiness which had no connection with humanity, he submitted, half-laughing at himself, to be made the tool of any woman whose person attracted him, or of any man whose tattle diverted him. He thought little and cared less about religion. He seems to have passed his life in dawdling suspense between Hobbism and Popery. He was crowned in his youth with the Covenant in his hand; he died at last with the Host sticking in his throat; and during most of the intermediate years, was occupied in persecuting both Covenanters and Catholics. He was not a tyrant from the ordinary motives. He valued power for its own sake little, and fame still less. He does not appear to have been vindictive, or to have found any pleasing excitement in cruelty. What he wanted was to be amused, to get through the twenty-four hours pleasantly without sitting down to dry business. Sauntering was, as Sheffield expresses it, the true Sultana Queen of his Majesty's affections. A sitting in council would have been insupportable to him if the Duke of Buckingham had not been there to make mouths at the Chancellor. It has been said, and is highly probable, that in his exile he was quite disposed to sell his rights to Cromwell for a good round sum. To the last his only quarrel with his Parliaments was that they often gave him trouble and would not always give him money. If there was a person for whom he felt a real regard, that person was his brother. If there was a point about which he really entertained a scruple of conscience or of honour, that point was the descent of the crown. Yet he was willing to consent to the Exclusion Bill for six hundred thousand pounds; and the negotiation was broken off only because he insisted on being paid beforehand. To do him justice, his temper was good; his manners agreeable; his natural talents above mediocrity. But he was sensual, frivolous, false, and cold-hearted, beyond almost any prince of whom history makes mention.

Under the government of such a man, the English people could not be long in recovering from the intoxication of loyalty. They were then, as they are still, a brave, proud, and high-spirited race, unaccustomed to defeat, to shame, or to servitude. The splendid administration of Oliver had taught them to consider their country as a match for the greatest empire of the earth, as the first of maritime powers, as the head of the Protestant interest. Though, in the day of their affectionate enthusiasm, they might sometimes extol the royal prerogative in terms which would have better become the courtiers of Aurungzebe, they were not men whom it was quite safe to take at their word. They were much more perfect in the theory than in the practice of passive obedience. Though they might deride the austere manners and scriptural phrases of the Puritans they were still at heart a religious people. The majority saw no great sin in field-sports, stage-

plays, promiscuous dancing, cards, fairs, starch, or false hair. But gross profaneness and licentiousness were regarded with general horror; and the Catholic religion was held in utter detestation by nine-tenths of the middle class.

Such was the nation which, awaking from its rapturous trance, found itself sold to a foreign, a despotic, a Popish court, defeated on its own seas and rivers by a state of far inferior resources and placed under the rule of pandars and buffoons. Our ancestors saw the best and ablest divines of the age turned out of their benefices by hundreds. They saw the prisons filled with men guilty of no other crime than that of worshipping God according to the fashion generally prevailing throughout Protestant Europe. They saw a Popish Queen on the throne, and a Popish heir on the steps of the throne. They saw unjust aggression followed by feeble war, and feeble war ending in disgraceful peace. They saw a Dutch fleet riding triumphant in the Thames. They saw the Triple Alliance broken, the Exchequer shut up, the public credit shaken, the arms of England employed, in shameful subordination to France, against a country which seemed to be the last asylum of civil and religious liberty. They saw Ireland discontented, and Scotland in rebellion. They saw, meantime, Whitehall swarming with sharpers and courtesans.

They saw harlot after harlot, and bastard after bastard, not only raised to the highest honours of the peerage, but supplied out of the spoils of the honest, industrious, and ruined public creditor, with ample means of supporting the new dignity. The government became more odious every day. Even in the bosom of that very House of Commons which had been elected by the nation in the ecstasy of its penitence, of its joy, and of its hope, an opposition sprang up and became powerful. Loyalty which had been proof against all the disasters of the civil war, which had survived the routs of Naseby and Worcester, which had never flinched from sequestration and exile, which the Protector could never intimidate or seduce, began to fail in this last and hardest trial. The storm had long been gathering. At length it burst with a fury which threatened the whole frame of society with dissolution.

When the general election of January 1679 took place, the nation had retraced the path which it had been describing from 1640 to 1660. It was again in the same mood in which it had been when, after twelve years of misgovernment, the Long Parliament assembled. In every part of the country, the name of courtier had become a by-word of reproach. The old warriors of the Covenant again ventured out of those retreats in which they had, at the time of the Restoration, hidden themselves from the insults of the triumphant Malignants, and in which, during twenty years, they had preserved in full vigour

"The unconquerable will
And study of revenge, immortal hate,

With courage never to submit or yield,
And what is else not to be overcome."

Then were again seen in the streets faces which called up strange and terrible recollections of the days when the saints, with the high praises of God in their mouths, and a two-edged sword in their hands, had bound kings with chains, and nobles with links of iron. Then were again heard voices which had shouted "Privilege" by the coach of Charles the First in the time of his tyranny, and had called for "justice" in Westminister Hall on the day of his trial. It has been the fashion to represent the excitement of this period as the effect of the Popish plot. To us it seems clear that the Popish plot was rather the effect than the cause of the general agitation. It was not the disease, but a symptom, though, like many other symptoms, it aggravated the severity of the disease. In 1660 or 1661 it would have been utterly out of the power of such men as Oates or Bedloe to give any serious disturbance to the Government. They would have been laughed at, pilloried, well pelted, soundly whipped, and speedily forgotten. In 1678 or 1679 there would have been an outbreak if those men had never been born. For years things had been steadily tending to such a consummation. Society was one vast mass of combustible matter. No mass so vast and so combustible ever waited long for a spark.

Rational men, we suppose, are now fully agreed that by far the greater part, if not the whole, of Oates's story was a pure fabrication. It is indeed highly probable that, during his intercourse with the Jesuits, he may have heard much wild talk about the best means of re-establishing the Catholic religion in England, and that from some of the absurd daydreams of the zealots with whom he then associated he may have taken hints for his narrative. But we do not believe that he was privy to anything which deserved the name of conspiracy. And it is quite certain that, if there be any small portion of the truth in his evidence, that portion is so deeply buried in falsehood that no human skill can now effect a separation. We must not, however, forget, that we see his story by the light of much information which his contemporaries did not at first possess. We have nothing to say for the witnesses, but something in mitigation to offer on behalf of the public. We own that the credulity which the nation showed on that occasion seems to us, though censurable indeed, yet not wholly inexcusable.

Our ancestors knew, from the experience of several generations at home and abroad, how restless and encroaching was the disposition of the Church of Rome. The heir-apparent of the crown was a bigoted member of that church. The reigning King seemed far more inclined to show favour to that church than to the Presbyterians. He was the intimate ally, or rather the hired servant, of a powerful King, who had already given proofs of his determination to tolerate within his dominions no other religion than that of Rome. The Catholics had begun to talk a bolder language than

formerly, and to anticipate the restoration of their worship in all its ancient dignity and splendour. At this juncture, it is rumoured that a Popish Plot has been discovered. A distinguished Catholic is arrested on suspicion. It appears that he has destroyed almost all his papers. A few letters, however, have escaped the flames; and these letters are found to contain much alarming matter, strange expressions about subsidies from France, allusions to a vast scheme which would "give the greatest blow to the Protestant religion that it had ever received," and which "would utterly subdue a pestilent heresy." It was natural that those who saw these expressions, in letters which had been overlooked, should suspect that there was some horrible villainy in those which had been carefully destroyed. Such was the feeling of the House of Commons: "Question, question, Coleman's letters!" was the cry which drowned the voices of the minority.

Just after the discovery of these papers, a magistrate who had been distinguished by his independent spirit, and who had taken the deposition of the informer, is found murdered, under circumstances which make it almost incredible that he should have fallen either by robbers or by his own hands. Many of our readers can remember the state of London just after the murders of Mar and Williamson, the terror which was on every face, the careful barring of doors, the providing of blunderbusses and watchmen's rattles. We know of a shopkeeper who on that occasion sold three hundred rattles in about ten hours. Those who remember that panic may be able to form some notion of the state of England after the death of Godfrey. Indeed, we must say that, after having read and weighed all the evidence now extant on that mysterious subject, we incline to the opinion that he was assassinated, and assassinated by Catholics, not assuredly by Catholics of the least weight or note, but by some of those crazy and vindictive fanatics who may be found in every large sect, and who are peculiarly likely to be found in a persecuted sect. Some of the violent Cameronians had recently, under similar exasperation, committed similar crimes.

It was natural that there should be a panic; and it was natural that the people should, in a panic, be unreasonable and credulous. It must be remembered also that they had not at first, as we have, the means of comparing the evidence which was given on different trials. They were not aware of one tenth part of the contradictions and absurdities which Oates had committed. The blunders, for example, into which he fell before the Council, his mistake about the person of Don John of Austria, and about the situation of the Jesuits' College at Paris, were not publicly known. He was a bad man; but the spies and deserters by whom governments are informed of conspiracies axe generally bad men. His story was strange and romantic; but it was not more strange and romantic than a well-authenticated Popish plot, which some few people then living might remember, the Gunpowder treason. Oates's account of the burning of London was in itself not more improbable than the project of blowing up King, Lords, and

Commons, a project which had not only been entertained by very distinguished Catholics, but which had very narrowly missed of success. As to the design on the King's person, all the world knew that, within a century, two kings of France and a prince of Orange had been murdered by Catholics, purely from religious enthusiasm, that Elizabeth had been in constant danger of a similar fate, and that such attempts, to say the least, had not been discouraged by the highest authority of the Church of Rome. The characters of some of the accused persons stood high; but so did that of Anthony Babington, and that of Everard Digby. Those who suffered denied their guilt to the last; but no persons versed in criminal proceedings would attach any importance to this circumstance. It was well known also that the most distinguished Catholic casuists had written largely in defence of regicide, of mental reservation, and of equivocation. It was not quite impossible that men whose minds had been nourished with the writings of such casuists might think themselves justified in denying a charge which, if acknowledged, would bring great scandal on the Church. The trials of the accused Catholics were exactly like all the state trials of those days; that is to say, as infamous as they could be. They were neither fairer nor less fair than those of Algernon Sydney, of Rosewell, of Cornish, of all the unhappy men, in short, whom a predominant party brought to what was then facetiously called justice. Till the Revolution purified our institutions and our manners, a state trial was merely a murder preceded by the uttering of certain gibberish and the performance of certain mummeries.

The Opposition had now the great body of the nation with them. Thrice the King dissolved the Parliament; and thrice the constituent body sent him back representatives fully determined to keep strict watch on all his measures, and to exclude his brother from the throne. Had the character of Charles resembled that of his father, this intestine discord would infallibly have ended in a civil war. Obstinacy and passion would have been his ruin. His levity and apathy were his security. He resembled one of those light Indian boats which are safe because they are pliant, which yield to the impact of every wave, and which therefore bound without danger through a surf in which a vessel ribbed with heart of oak would inevitably perish. The only thing about which his mind was unalterably made up was that, to use his own phrase, he would not go on his travels again for anybody or for anything. His easy, indolent behaviour produced all the effects of the most artful policy. He suffered things to take their course; and if Achitophel had been at one of his ears, and Machiavel at the other, they could have given him no better advice than to let things take their course. He gave way to the violence of the movement, and waited for the corresponding violence of the rebound. He exhibited himself to his subjects in the interesting character of an oppressed king, who was ready to do anything to please them, and who asked of them, in return, only some consideration for his conscientious scruples and for his feelings of natural affection, who was ready to accept any

ministers, to grant any guarantees to public liberty, but who could not find it in his heart to take away his brother's birthright. Nothing more was necessary. He had to deal with a people whose noble weakness it has always been not to press too hardly on the vanquished, with a people the lowest and most brutal of whom cry "Shame!" if they see a man struck when he is on the ground. The resentment which the nation bad felt towards the Court began to abate as soon as the Court was manifestly unable to offer any resistance. The panic which Godfrey's death had excited gradually subsided. Every day brought to light some new falsehood or contradiction in the stories of Oates and Bedloe. The people were glutted with the blood of Papists, as they had, twenty years before, been glutted with the blood of regicides. When the first sufferers in the plot were brought to the bar, the witnesses for the defence were in danger of being torn in pieces by the mob. Judges, jurors, and spectators seemed equally indifferent to justice, and equally eager for revenge. Lord Stafford, the last sufferer, was pronounced not guilty by a large minority of his peers; and when he protested his innocence on the scaffold, the people cried out, "God bless you, my lord; we believe you, my lord." The attempt to make a son of Lucy Waters King of England was alike offensive to the pride of the nobles and to the moral feeling of the middle class. The old Cavalier party, the great majority of the landed gentry, the clergy and the universities almost to a man, began to draw together, and to form in close array round the throne.

A similar reaction had begun to take place in favour of Charles the First during the second session of the Long Parliament; and, if that prince had been honest or sagacious enough to keep himself strictly within the limits of the law, we have not the smallest doubt that he would in a few months have found himself at least as powerful as his best friends, Lord Falkland, Culpeper, or Hyde, would have wished to see him. By illegally impeaching the leaders of the Opposition, and by making in person a wicked attempt on the House of Commons, he stopped and turned back that tide of loyal feeling which was just beginning to run strongly. The son, quite as little restrained by law or by honour as the father, was, luckily for himself, a man of a lounging, careless temper, and, from temper, we believe, rather than from policy, escaped that great error which cost the father so dear. Instead of trying to pluck the fruit before it was ripe, he lay still till it fell mellow into his very mouth. If he had arrested Lord Shaftesbury and Lord Russell in a manner not warranted by law, it is not improbable that he would have ended his life in exile. He took the sure course. He employed only his legal prerogatives, and he found them amply sufficient for his purpose.

During the first eighteen or nineteen years of his reign, he had been playing the game of his enemies. From 1678 to 1681 his enemies had played his game. They owed their power to his misgovernment. He owed the recovery of his power to their violence. The great body of the people came back to him after

their estrangement with impetuous affection. He had scarcely been more popular when he landed on the coast of Kent than when, after several years of restraint and humiliation, he dissolved his last Parliament.

Nevertheless, while this flux and reflux of opinion went on, the cause of public liberty was steadily gaining. There had been a great reaction in favour of the throne at the Restoration. But the Star-Chamber, the High Commission, the Ship-money, had for ever disappeared. There was now another similar reaction. But the Habeas Corpus Act had been passed during the short predominance of the Opposition, and it was not repealed.

The King, however, supported as he was by the nation, was quite strong enough to inflict a terrible revenge on the party which had lately held him in bondage. In 1681 commenced the third of those periods in which we have divided the history of England from the Restoration to the Revolution. During this period a third great reaction took place. The excesses of tyranny restored to the cause of liberty the hearts which had been alienated from that cause by the excesses of faction. In 1681, the King had almost all his enemies at his feet. In 1688, the King was an exile in a strange land.

The whole of that machinery which had lately been in motion against the Papists was now put in motion against the Whigs, browbeating judges, packed juries, lying witnesses, clamorous spectators. The ablest chief of the party fled to a foreign country and died there. The most virtuous man of the party was beheaded. Another of its most distinguished members preferred a voluntary death to the shame of a public execution. The boroughs on which the Government could not depend were, by means of legal quibbles, deprived of their charters; and their constitution was remodelled in such a manner as almost to ensure the return of representatives devoted to the Court. All parts of the kingdom emulously sent up the most extravagant assurances of the love which they bore to their sovereign, and of the abhorrence with which they regarded those who questioned the divine origin or the boundless extent of his power. It is scarcely necessary to say that, in this hot competition of bigots and staves, the University of Oxford had the unquestioned pre-eminence. The glory of being further behind the age than any other portion of the British people, is one which that learned body acquired early, and has never lost.

Charles died, and his brother came to the throne; but, though the person of the sovereign was changed, the love and awe with which the office was regarded were undiminished. Indeed, it seems that, of the two princes, James was, in spite of his religion, rather the favourite of the High Church party. He had been specially singled out as the mark of the Whigs; and this circumstance sufficed to make him the idol of the Tories. He called a parliament. The loyal gentry of the counties and the packed

voters of the remodelled boroughs gave him a parliament such as England had not seen for a century, a parliament beyond all comparison the most obsequious that ever sate under a prince of the House of Stuart. One insurrectionary movement, indeed, took place in England, and another in Scotland. Both were put down with ease, and punished with tremendous severity. Even after that bloody circuit, which will never be forgotten while the English race exists in any part of the globe, no member of the House of Commons ventured to whisper even the mildest censure on Jeffreys. Edmund Waller, emboldened by his great age and his high reputation, attacked the cruelty of the military chiefs; and this is the brightest part of his long and checkered public life. But even Waller did not venture to arraign the still more odious cruelty of the Chief Justice. It is hardly too much to say that James, at that time, had little reason to envy the extent of authority possessed by Lewis the Fourteenth,

By what means this vast power was in three years broken down, by what perverse and frantic misgovernment the tyrant revived the spirit of the vanquished Whigs, turned to fixed hostility the neutrality of the trimmers, and drove from him the landed gentry, the Church, the army, his own creatures, his own children, is well known to our readers. But we wish to say something about one part of the question, which in our own time has a little puzzled some very worthy men, and about which the author of the "Continuation" before us has said much with which we can by no means concur.

James, it is said, declared himself a supporter of toleration. If he violated the constitution, he at least violated it for one of the noblest ends that any statesman ever had in view. His object was to free millions of his subjects from penal laws and disabilities which hardly any person now considers as just. He ought, therefore, to be regarded as blameless, or, at worst, as guilty only of employing irregular means to effect a most praiseworthy purpose. A very ingenious man, whom we believe to be a Catholic, Mr. Banim, has written a historical novel, of the literary merit of which we cannot speak very highly, for the purpose of inculcating this opinion. The editor of Mackintosh’s Fragments assures us, that the standard of James bore the nobler inscription, and so forth; the meaning of which is, that William and the other authors of the Revolution were vile Whigs who drove out James from being a Radical; that the crime of the King was his going further in liberality than his subjects: that he was the real champion of freedom; and that Somers, Locke, Newton, and other narrow-minded people of the same sort, were the real bigots and oppressors.

Now, we admit that if the premises can be made out, the conclusion follows. If it can be shown that James did sincerely wish to establish perfect freedom of conscience, we shall think his conduct deserving of indulgence, if not of praise. We shall not be inclined to censure harshly even his illegal acts. We

conceive that so noble and salutary an object would have justified resistance on the part of subjects. We can therefore scarcely deny that it would at least excuse encroachment on the part of a king. But it can be proved, we think, by the strongest evidence, that James had no such object in view, and that, under the pretence of establishing perfect religious liberty, he was trying to establish the ascendency and the exclusive dominion of the Church of Rome.

It is true that he professed himself a supporter of toleration. Every sect clamours for toleration when it is down. We have not the smallest doubt that, when Bonner was in the Marshalsea, he thought it a very hard thing that a man should be locked up in a gaol for not being able to understand the words, "This is my body," in the same way with the lords of the council. It would not be very wise to conclude that a beggar is full of Christian charity, because he assures you that God will reward you if you give him a penny; or that a soldier is humane because he cries out lustily for quarter when a bayonet is at his throat. The doctrine which from the very first origin of religious dissensions, has been held by all bigots of all sects, when condensed into a few words, and stripped of rhetorical disguise is simply this: I am in the right, and you are in the wrong. When you are the stronger you ought to tolerate me; for it is your duty to tolerate truth. But when I am the stronger, I shall persecute you; for it is my duty to persecute error.

The Catholics lay under severe restraints in England. James wished to remove those restraints; and therefore he held a language favourable to liberty of conscience. But the whole history of his life proves that this was a mere pretence. In 1679 he held similar language, in a conversation with the magistrates of Amsterdam; and the author of the "Continuation" refers to the circumstance as a proof that the King had long entertained a strong feeling on the subject. Unhappily it proves only the utter insincerity of all the King’s later professions. If he had pretended to be converted to the doctrines of toleration after his accession to the throne, some credit might have been due to him. But we know most certainly that, in 1679, and long after that year, James was a most bloody and remorseless persecutor. After 1679, he was placed at the head of the government of Scotland. And what had been his conduct in that country? He had hunted down the scattered remnant of the Covenanters with a barbarity of which no other prince of modern times, Philip the Second excepted, had ever shown himself capable. He had indulged himself in the amusement of seeing the torture of the Boot inflicted on the wretched enthusiasts whom persecution had driven to resistance. After his accession, almost his first act was to obtain from the servile parliament of Scotland a law for inflicting death on preachers at conventicles held within houses, and on both preachers and hearers at conventicles held in the open air. All this he had done, for a religion which was not his own. All this he had done, not in defence of truth against error,

but in defence of one damnable error against another, in defence of the Episcopalian against the Presbyterian apostasy. Lewis the Fourteenth is justly censured for trying to dragoon his subjects to heaven. But it was reserved for James to torture and murder for the difference between two roads to hell. And this man, so deeply imbued with the poison of intolerance that, rather than not persecute at all, he would persecute people out of one heresy into another, this man is held up as the champion of religious liberty. This man, who persecuted in the cause of the unclean panther, would not, we are told, have persecuted for the sake of the milk-white and immortal hind.

And what was the conduct of James at the very time when he was professing zeal for the rights of conscience? Was he not even then persecuting to the very best of his power? Was he not employing all his legal prerogatives, and many prerogatives which were not legal, for the purpose of forcing his subjects to conform to his creed? While he pretended to abhor the laws which excluded Dissenters from office, was he not himself dismissing from office his ablest, his most experienced, his most faithful servants, on account of their religious opinions? For what offence was Lord Rochester driven from the Treasury? He was closely connected with the Royal House. He was at the head of the Tory party. He had stood firmly by James in the most trying emergencies. But he would not change his religion, and he was dismissed. That we may not be suspected of overstating the case, Dr. Lingard, a very competent, and assuredly not a very willing witness, shall speak for us. "The King," says that able but partial writer, "was disappointed. He complained to Barillon of the obstinacy and insincerity of the treasurer; and the latter received from the French envoy a very intelligible hint that the loss of office would result from his adhesion to his religious creed. He was, however, inflexible; and James, after a long delay, communicated to him, but with considerable embarrassment and many tears, his final determination. He had hoped, he said, that Rochester, by conforming to the Church of Rome, would have spared him the unpleasant task; but kings must sacrifice their feelings to their duty." And this was the King who wished to have all men of all sects rendered alike capable of holding office. These proceedings were alone sufficient to take away all credit from his liberal professions; and such, as we learn from the despatches of the Papal Nuncio, was really the effect. "Pare," says D'Adda, writing a few days after the retirement of Rochester, "pare che gli animi sono inaspriti della voce che corre tra il popolo, d'esser cacciato il detto ministro per non essere Cattolico, percio tirarsi al esterminio de' Protestanti" Was it ever denied that the favours of the Crown were constantly bestowed and withheld purely on account of the religious opinions of the claimants? And if these things were done in the green tree, what would have been done in the dry? If James acted thus when he had the strongest motives to court his Protestant subjects, what course was he likely to follow when he had obtained from them all that he asked?

Who again was his closest ally? And what was the policy of that ally? The subjects of James, it is true, did not know half the infamy of their sovereign. They did not know, as we know, that, while he was lecturing them on the blessings of equal toleration, he was constantly congratulating his good brother Lewis on the success of that intolerant policy which had turned the fairest tracts of France into deserts, and driven into exile myriads of the most peaceable, industrious, and skilful artisans in the world. But the English did know that the two princes were bound together in the closest union. They saw their sovereign with toleration on his lips, separating himself from those states which had first set the example of toleration, and connecting himself by the strongest ties with the most faithless and merciless persecutor who could then be found on any continental throne.

By what advice again was James guided? Who were the persons in whom he placed the greatest confidence, and who took the warmest interest in his schemes? The ambassador of France, the Nuncio of Rome, and Father Petre the Jesuit. And is not this enough to prove that the establishment of equal toleration was not his plan? Was Lewis for toleration? Was the Vatican for toleration? Was the order of Jesuits for toleration? We know that the liberal professions of James were highly approved by those very governments, by those very societies, whose theory and practice it notoriously was to keep no faith with heretics and to give no quarter to heretics. And are we, in order to save James's reputation for sincerity, to believe that all at once those governments and those societies had changed their nature, had discovered the criminality of all their former conduct, had adopted principles far more liberal than those of Locke, of Leighton, or of Tillotson? Which is the more probable supposition, that the King who had revoked the edict of Nantes, the Pope under whose sanction the Inquisition was then imprisoning and burning, the religious order which, in every controversy in which it had ever been engaged, had called in the aid either of the magistrate or of the assassin, should have become as thorough-going friends to religious liberty as Dr. Franklin and Mr. Jefferson, or that a Jesuit-ridden bigot should be induced to dissemble for the good of the Church?

The game which the Jesuits were playing was no new game. A hundred years before they had preached up political freedom, just as they were now preaching up religious freedom. They had tried to raise the republicans against Henry the Fourth and Elizabeth, just as they were now trying to raise the Protestant Dissenters against the Established Church. In the sixteenth century, the tools of Philip the Second were constantly preaching doctrines that bordered on Jacobinism, constantly insisting on the right of the people to cashier kings, and of every private citizen to plunge his dagger into the heart of a wicked ruler. In the seventeenth century, the persecutors of the Huguenots were crying

out against the tyranny of the Established Church of England, and vindicating with the utmost fervour the right of every man to adore God after his own fashion. In both cases they were alike insincere. In both cases the fool who had trusted them would have found himself miserably duped. A good and wise man would doubtless disapprove of the arbitrary measures of Elizabeth. But would he have really served the interests of political liberty, if he had put faith in the professions of the Romish Casuists, joined their party, and taken a share in Northumberland's revolt, or in Babington's conspiracy? Would he not have been assisting to establish a far worse tyranny than that which he was trying to put down? In the same manner, a good and wise man would doubtless see very much to condemn in the conduct of the Church of England under the Stuarts. But was he therefore to join the King and the Catholics against that Church? And was it not plain that, by so doing, he would assist in setting up a spiritual despotism, compared with which the despotism of the Establishment was as a little finger to the loins, as a rod of whips to a rod of scorpions?

Lewis had a far stronger mind than James. He had at least an equally high sense of honour. He was in a much less degree the slave of his priests. His Protestant subjects had all the security for their rights of conscience which law and solemn compact could give. Had that security been found sufficient? And was not one such instance enough for one generation?

The plan of James seems to us perfectly intelligible. The toleration which, with the concurrence and applause of all the most cruel persecutors in Europe, he was offering to his people, was meant simply to divide them. This is the most obvious and vulgar of political artifices. We have seen it employed a hundred times within our own memory. At this moment we see the Carlists in France hallooing on the Extreme Left against the Centre Left. Four years ago the same trick was practised in England. We heard old buyers and sellers of boroughs, men who had been seated in the House of Commons by the unsparing use of ejectments, and who had, through their whole lives, opposed every measure which tended to increase the power of the democracy, abusing the Reform Bill as not democratic enough, appealing to the labouring classes, execrating the tyranny of the ten-pound householders, and exchanging compliments and caresses with the most noted incendiaries of our time. The cry of universal toleration was employed by James, just as the cry of universal suffrage was lately employed by some veteran Tories. The object of the mock democrats of our time was to produce a conflict between the middle classes and the multitude, and thus to prevent all reform. The object of James was to produce a conflict between the Church and the Protestant Dissenters, and thus to facilitate the victory of the Catholics over both.

We do not believe that he could have succeeded. But we do not

think his plan so utterly frantic and hopeless as it has generally been thought; and we are sure that, if he had been allowed to gain his first point, the people would have had no remedy left but an appeal to physical force, which would have been made under most unfavourable circumstances. He conceived that the Tories, hampered by their professions of passive obedience, would have submitted to his pleasure, and that the Dissenters, seduced by his delusive promises of relief, would have given him strenuous support. In this way he hoped to obtain a law, nominally for the removal of all religious disabilities, but really for the excluding of all Protestants from all offices. It is never to be forgotten that a prince who has all the patronage of the State in his hands can, without violating the letter of the law, establish whatever test he chooses. And, from the whole conduct of James, we have not the smallest doubt that he would have availed himself of his power to the utmost. The statute-book might declare all Englishmen equally capable of holding office; but to what end, if all offices were in the gift of a sovereign resolved not to employ a single heretic? We firmly believe that not one post in the government, in the army, in the navy, on the bench, or at the bar, not one peerage, nay not one ecclesiastical benefice in the royal gift, would have been bestowed on any Protestant of any persuasion. Even while the King had still strong motives to dissemble, he had made a Catholic Dean of Christ Church and a Catholic President of Magdalen College. There seems to be no doubt that the See of York was kept vacant for another Catholic. If James had been suffered to follow this course for twenty years, every military man from a general to a drummer, every officer of a ship, every judge, every King's counsel, every lord-lieutenant of a county, every justice of the peace, every ambassador, every minister of state, every person employed in the royal household, in the custom-house, in the post-office, in the excise, would have been a Catholic. The Catholics would have had a majority in the House of Lords, even if that majority had been made, as Sunderland threatened, by bestowing coronets on a whole troop of the Guards. Catholics would have had, we believe, the chief weight even in the Convocation. Every bishop, every dean, every holder of a crown living, every head of every college which was subject to the royal power, would have belonged to the Church of Rome. Almost all the places of liberal education would have been under the direction of Catholics. The whole power of licensing books would have been in the hands of Catholics. All this immense mass of power would have been steadily supported by the arms and by the gold of France, and would have descended to an heir whose whole education would have been conducted with a view to one single end, the complete re-establishment of the Catholic religion. The House of Commons would have been the only legal obstacle. But the rights of a great portion of the electors were at the mercy of the courts of law; and the courts of law were absolutely dependent on the Crown. We cannot therefore think it altogether impossible that a House might have been packed which would have restored the days of Mary.

We certainly do not believe that this would have been tamely borne. But we do believe that, if the nation had been deluded by the King's professions of toleration, all this would have been attempted, and could have been averted only by a most bloody and destructive contest, in which the whole Protestant population would have been opposed to the Catholics. On the one side would have been a vast numerical superiority. But on the other side would have been the whole organization of government, and two great disciplined armies, that of James, and that of Lewis. We do not doubt that the nation would have achieved its deliverance. But we believe that the struggle would have shaken the whole fabric of society, and that the vengeance of the conquerors would have been terrible and unsparing.

But James was stopped at the outset. He thought himself secure of the Tories, because they professed to consider all resistance as sinful, and of the Protestant Dissenters, because he offered them relief. He was in the wrong as to both. The error into which he fell about the Dissenters was very natural. But the confidence which he placed in the loyal assurances of the High Church party, was the most exquisitely ludicrous proof of folly that a politician ever gave.

Only imagine a man acting for one single day on the supposition that all his neighbours believe all that they profess, and act up to all that they believe. Imagine a man acting on the supposition that he may safely offer the deadliest injuries and insults to everybody who says that revenge is sinful; or that he may safely intrust all his property without security to any person who says that it is wrong to steal. Such a character would be too absurd for the wildest farce. Yet the folly of James did not stop short of this incredible extent. Because the clergy had declared that resistance to oppression was in no case lawful, he conceived that he might oppress them exactly as much as he chose, without the smallest danger of resistance. He quite forgot that, when they magnified the royal prerogative, the prerogative was exerted on their side, that, when they preached endurance, they had nothing to endure, that, when they declared it unlawful to resist evil, none but Whigs and Dissenters suffered any evil. It had never occurred to him that a man feels the calamities of his enemies with one sort of sensibility, and his own with quite a different sort. It had never occurred to him as possible that a reverend divine might think it the duty of Baxter and Bunyan to bear insults and to lie in dungeons without murmuring, and yet when he saw the smallest chance that his own prebend might be transferred to some sly Father from Italy or Flanders, might begin to discover much matter for useful meditation in the texts touching Ehud's knife and Jael's hammer. His majesty was not aware, it should seem, that people do sometimes reconsider their opinions; and that nothing more disposes a man to reconsider his opinions, than a suspicion, that, if he adheres to them, he is very likely to be a beggar or a martyr. Yet it seems strange that these

truths should have escaped the royal mind. Those Churchmen who had signed the Oxford Declaration in favour of passive obedience had also signed the thirty-nine Articles. And yet the very man who confidently expected that, by a little coaxing and bullying, he should induce them to renounce the Articles, was thunderstruck when he found that they were disposed to soften down the doctrines of the Declaration. Nor did it necessarily follow that, even if the theory of the Tories had undergone no modification, their practice would coincide with their theory. It might, one should think, have crossed the mind of a man of fifty, who had seen a great deal of the world, that people sometimes do what they think wrong. Though a prelate might hold that Paul directs us to obey even a Nero, it might not on that account be perfectly safe to treat the Right Reverend Father in God after the fashion of Nero, in the hope that he would continue to obey on the principles of Paul. The King indeed had only to look at home. He was at least as much attached to the Catholic Church as any Tory gentleman or clergyman could be to the Church of England. Adultery was at least as clearly and strongly condemned by his Church as resistance by the Church of England. Yet his priests could not keep him from Arabella Sedley. While he was risking his crown for the sake of his soul, he was risking his soul for the sake of an ugly, dirty mistress. There is something delightfully grotesque in the spectacle of a man who, while living in the habitual violation of his own known duties, is unable to believe that any temptation can draw any other person aside from the path of virtue.

James was disappointed in all his calculations. His hope was that the Tories would follow their principles, and that the Nonconformists would follow their interests. Exactly the reverse took place. The great body of the Tories sacrificed the principle of non-resistance to their interests; the great body of Nonconformists rejected the delusive offers of the King, and stood firmly by their principles. The two parties whose strife had convulsed the empire during half a century were united for a moment; and all that vast royal power which three years before had seemed immovably fixed vanished at once like chaff in a hurricane.

The very great length to which this article has already been extended makes it impossible for us to discuss, as we had meant to do, the characters and conduct of the leading English statesmen at this crisis. But we must offer a few remarks on the spirit and tendency of the Revolution of 1688.

The editor of this volume quotes the Declaration of Right, and tells us that, by looking at it, we may "judge at a glance whether the authors of the Revolution achieved all they might and ought, in their position, to have achieved; whether the Commons of England did their duty to their constituents, their country, posterity, and universal freedom." We are at a loss to imagine how he can have read and transcribed the Declaration of Right,

and yet have so utterly misconceived its nature. That famous document is, as its very name imports, declaratory, and not remedial. It was never meant to be a measure of reform. It neither contained, nor was designed to contain, any allusion to those innovations which the authors of the Revolution considered as desirable, and which they speedily proceeded to make. The Declaration was merely a recital of certain old and wholesome laws which had been violated by the Stuarts, and a solemn protest against the validity of any precedent which might be set up in opposition to those laws. The words run thus: "They do claim, demand, and insist upon all and singular the premises as their undoubted rights and liberties." Before a man begins to make improvements on his estate, he must know its boundaries. Before a legislature sits down to reform a constitution, it is fit to ascertain what that constitution really is. This is all that the Declaration was intended to do; and to quarrel with it because it did not directly introduce any beneficial changes is to quarrel with meat for not being fuel.

The principle on which the authors of the Revolution acted cannot be mistaken. They were perfectly aware that the English institutions stood in need of reform. But they also knew that an important point was gained if they could settle once for all, by a solemn compact, the matters which had, during several generations, been in controversy between Parliament and the Crown. They therefore most judiciously abstained from mixing up the irritating and perplexing question of what ought to be the law with the plain question of what was the law. As to the claims set forth in the Declaration of Right, there was little room for debate, Whigs and Tories were generally agreed as to the illegality of the dispensing power and of taxation imposed by the royal prerogative. The articles were therefore adjusted in a very few days. But if the Parliament had determined to revise the whole constitution, and to provide new securities against misgovernment, before proclaiming the new sovereign, months would have been lost in disputes. The coalition which had delivered the country would have been instantly dissolved. The Whigs would have quarrelled with the Tories, the Lords with the Commons, the Church with the Dissenters; and all this storm of conflicting interests and conflicting theories would have been raging round a vacant throne. In the meantime, the greatest power on the Continent was attacking our allies, and meditating a descent on our own territories. Dundee was preparing to raise the Highlands. The authority of James was still owned by the Irish. If the authors of the Revolution had been fools enough to take this course, we have little doubt that Luxembourg would have been upon them in the midst of their constitution-making. They might probably have been interrupted in a debate on Filmer’s and Sydney’s theories of government by the entrance of the musqueteers of Lewis’s household, and have been marched off, two and two, to frame imaginary monarchies and commonwealths in the Tower. We have had in our own time abundant experience of the effects of such folly. We have seen nation after nation enslaved,

because the friends of liberty wasted in discussions upon abstract questions the time which ought to have been employed in preparing for vigorous national defence. This editor, apparently, would have had the English Revolution of 1688 end as the Revolutions of Spain and Naples ended in our days. Thank God, our deliverers were men of a very different order from the Spanish and Neapolitan legislators. They might on many subjects hold opinions which, in the nineteenth century, would not be considered as liberal. But they were not dreaming pedants. They were statesmen accustomed to the management of great affairs. Their plans of reform were not so extensive as those of the lawgivers of Cadiz; but what they planned, that they effected; and what they effected, that they maintained against the fiercest hostility at home and abroad.

Their first object was to seat William on the throne; and they were right. We say this without any reference to the eminent personal qualities of William, or to the follies and crimes of James. If the two princes had interchanged characters, our opinions would still have been the same. It was even more necessary to England at that time that her king should be a usurper than that he should be a hero. There could be no security for good government without a change of dynasty. The reverence for hereditary right and the doctrine of passive obedience had taken such a hold on the minds of the Tories, that, if James had been restored to power on any conditions, their attachment to him would in all probability have revived, as the indignation which recent oppression had produced faded from their minds. It had become indispensable to have a sovereign whose title to his throne was strictly bound up with the title of the nation to its liberties. In the compact between the Prince of Orange and the Convention, there was one most important article which, though not expressed, was perfectly understood by both parties, and for the performance of which the country had securities far better than all the engagements that Charles the First or Ferdinand the Seventh ever took in the day of their weakness, and broke in the day of their power. The article to which we allude was this, that William would in all things conform himself to what should appear to be the fixed and deliberate sense of his Parliament. The security for the performance was this, that he had no claim to the throne except the choice of Parliament, and no means of maintaining himself on the throne but the support of Parliament. All the great and inestimable reforms which speedily followed the Revolution were implied in those simple words; "The Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, assembled at Westminster, do resolve that William and Mary, Prince and Princess of Orange, be, and be declared King and Queen of England."

And what were the reforms of which we speak? We will shortly recount some which we think the most important; and we will then leave our readers to judge whether those who consider the Revolution as a mere change of dynasty, beneficial to a few

aristocrats, but useless to the body of the people, or those who consider it as a happy era in the history of the British nation and of the human species, have judged more correctly of its nature.

Foremost in the list of the benefits which our country owes to the Revolution we place the Toleration Act. It is true that this measure fell short of the wishes of the leading Whigs. It is true also that, where Catholics were concerned, even the most enlightened of the leading Whigs held opinions by no means so liberal as those which are happily common at the present day. Those distinguished statesmen did, however, make a noble, and, in some respects, a successful struggle for the rights of conscience. Their wish was to bring the great body of the Protestant Dissenters within the pale of the Church by judicious alterations in the Liturgy and the Articles, and to grant to those who still remained without that pale the most ample toleration. They framed a plan of comprehension which would have satisfied a great majority of the seceders; and they proposed the complete abolition of that absurd and odious test which, after having been, during a century and a half, a scandal to the pious and a laughing-stock to the profane, was at length removed in our time. The immense power of the Clergy and of the Tory gentry frustrated these excellent designs. The Whigs, however, did much. They succeeded in obtaining a law in the provisions of which a philosopher will doubtless find much to condemn, but which had the practical effect of enabling almost every Protestant Nonconformist to follow the dictates of his own conscience without molestation. Scarcely a law in the statute-book is theoretically more objectionable than the Toleration Act. But we question whether in the whole of that vast mass of legislation, from the Great Charter downwards, there be a single law which has so much diminished the sum of human suffering, which has done so much to allay bad passions, which has put an end to so much petty tyranny and vexation, which has brought gladness, peace, and a sense of security to so many private dwellings.

The second of those great reforms which the Revolution produced was the final establishment of the Presbyterian Kirk in Scotland. We shall not now inquire whether the Episcopal or the Calvinistic form of church government be more agreeable to primitive practice. Far be it from us to disturb with our doubts the repose of any Oxonian Bachelor of Divinity who conceives that the English prelates with their baronies and palaces, their purple and their fine linen, their mitred carriages and their sumptuous tables, are the true successors of those ancient bishops who lived by catching fish and mending tents. We say only that the Scotch, doubtless from their own inveterate stupidity and malice, were not Episcopalians; that they could not be made Episcopalians; that the whole power of government had been in vain employed for the purpose of converting them; that the fullest instruction on the mysterious questions of the Apostolical succession and the imposition of hands had been

imparted by the very logical process of putting the legs of the students into wooden boots, and driving two or more wedges between their knees; that a course of divinity lectures, of the most edifying kind, had been given in the Grassmarket of Edinburgh; yet that, in spite of all the exertions of those great theological professors, Lauderdale and Dundee, the Covenanters were as obstinate as ever. To the contest between the Scotch nation and the Anglican Church are to be ascribed near thirty years of the most frightful misgovernment ever seen in any part of Great Britain. If the Revolution had produced no other effect than that of freeing the Scotch from the yoke of an establishment which they detested, and giving them one to which they were attached, it would have been one of the happiest events in our history.

The third great benefit which the country derived from the Revolution was the alteration in the mode of granting the supplies. It had been the practice to settle on every prince, at the commencement of his reign, the produce of certain taxes which, it was supposed, would yield a sum sufficient to defray the ordinary expenses of government. The distribution of the revenue was left wholly to the sovereign. He might be forced by a war, or by his own profusion, to ask for an extraordinary grant. But, if his policy were economical and pacific, he might reign many years without once being under the necessity of summoning his Parliament, or of taking their advice when he had summoned them. This was not all. The natural tendency of every society in which property enjoys tolerable security is to increase in wealth. With the national wealth, the produce of the customs, of the excise, and of the post-office, would of course increase; and thus it might well happen that taxes which, at the beginning of a long reign, were barely sufficient to support a frugal government in time of peace, might, before the end of that reign, enable the sovereign to imitate the extravagance of Nero or Heliogabalus, to raise great armies, to carry on expensive wars. Something of this sort had actually happened under Charles the Second, though his reign, reckoned from the Restoration, lasted only twenty-five years. His first Parliament settled on him taxes estimated to produce twelve hundred thousand pounds a year. This they thought sufficient, as they allowed nothing for a standing army in time of peace. At the time of Charles's death, the annual produce of these taxes considerably exceeded a million and a half; and the King who, during the years which immediately followed his accession, was perpetually in distress, and perpetually asking his Parliaments for money, was at last able to keep a body of regular troops without any assistance from the House of Commons. If his reign had been as long as that of George the Third, he would probably, before the close of it, have been in the annual receipt of several millions over and above what the ordinary expenses of civil government required; and of those millions he would have been as absolutely master as the King now is of the sum allotted for his privy-purse. He might have spent them in luxury, in corruption, in paying troops to overawe his people,

or in carrying into effect wild schemes of foreign conquest. The authors of the Revolution applied a remedy to this great abuse. They settled on the King, not the fluctuating produce of certain fixed taxes, but a fixed sum sufficient for the support of his own royal state. They established it as a rule that all the expenses of the army, the navy, and the ordnance should be brought annually under the review of the House of Commons, and that every sum voted should be applied to the service specified in the vote. The direct effect of this change was important. The indirect effect has been more important still. From that time the House of Commons has been really the paramount power in the State. It has, in truth, appointed and removed ministers, declared war, and concluded peace. No combination of the King and the Lords has ever been able to effect anything against the Lower House, backed by its constituents. Three or four times, indeed, the sovereign has been able to break the force of an opposition by dissolving the Parliament. But if that experiment should fail, if the people should be of the same mind with their representatives, he would clearly have no course left but to yield, to abdicate, or to fight.

The next great blessing which we owe to the Revolution is the purification of the administration of justice in political cases. Of the importance of this change no person can judge who is not well acquainted with the earlier volumes of the State Trials. Those volumes are, we do not hesitate to say, the most frightful record of baseness and depravity that is extant in the world. Our hatred is altogether turned away from the crimes and the criminals, and directed against the law and its ministers. We see villanies as black as ever were imputed to any prisoner at any bar daily committed on the bench and in the jury-box. The worst of the bad acts which brought discredit on the old parliaments of France, the condemnation of Lally, for example, or even that of Calas, may seem praiseworthy when compared with the atrocities which follow each other in endless succession as we turn over that huge chronicle of the shame of England. The magistrates of Paris and Toulouse were blinded by prejudice, passion, or bigotry. But the abandoned judges of our own country committed murder with their eyes open. The cause of this is plain. In France there was no constitutional opposition. If a man held language offensive to the Government, he was at once sent to the Bastile or to Vincennes. But in England, at least after the days of the Long Parliament, the King could not, by a mere act of his prerogative, rid himself of a troublesome politician. He was forced to remove those who thwarted him by means of perjured witnesses, packed juries, and corrupt, hardhearted, browbeating judges. The Opposition naturally retaliated whenever they had the upper hand. Every time that the power passed from one party to the other, there was a proscription and a massacre, thinly disguised under the forms of judicial procedure. The tribunals ought to be sacred places of refuge, where, in all the vicissitudes of public affairs, the innocent of all parties may find shelter. They were, before the Revolution, an unclean public

shambles, to which each party in its turn dragged its opponents, and where each found the same venal and ferocious butchers waiting for its custom. Papist or Protestant, Tory or Whig, Priest or Alderman, all was one to those greedy and savage natures, provided only there was money to earn, and blood to shed.

Of course, these worthless judges soon created around them, as was natural, a breed of informers more wicked, if possible, than themselves. The trial by jury afforded little or no protection to the innocent. The juries were nominated by the sheriffs. The sheriffs were in most parts of England nominated by the Crown. In London, the great scene of political contention, those officers were chosen by the people. The fiercest parliamentary election of our time will give but a faint notion of the storm which raged in the city on the day when two infuriated parties, each bearing its badge, met to select the men in whose hands were to be the issues of life and death for the coming year. On that day, nobles of the highest descent did not think it beneath them to canvass and marshal the livery, to head the procession, and to watch the poll. On that day, the great chiefs of parties waited in an agony of suspense for the messenger who was to bring from Guildhall the news whether their lives and estates were, for the next twelve months, to be at the mercy of a friend or of a foe. In 1681, Whig sheriffs were chosen; and Shaftesbury defied the whole power of the Government. In 1682 the sheriffs were Tories. Shaftesbury fled to Holland. The other chiefs of the party broke up their councils, and retired in haste to their country seats. Sydney on the scaffold told those sheriffs that his blood was on their heads. Neither of them could deny the charge; and one of them wept with shame and remorse.

Thus every man who then meddled with public affairs took his life in his hand. The consequence was that men of gentle natures stood aloof from contests in which they could not engage without hazarding their own necks and the fortunes of their children. This was the course adopted by Sir William Temple, by Evelyn, and by many other men who were, in every respect, admirably qualified to serve the State. On the other hand, those resolute and enterprising men who put their heads and lands to hazard in the game of politics naturally acquired, from the habit of playing for so deep a stake, a reckless and desperate turn of mind. It was, we seriously believe, as safe to be a highwayman as to be a distinguished leader of Opposition. This may serve to explain, and in some degree to excuse, the violence with which the factions of that age are justly reproached. They were fighting, not merely for office, but for life. If they reposed for a moment from the work of agitation, if they suffered the public excitement to flag, they were lost men. Hume, in describing this state of things, has employed an image which seems hardly to suit the general simplicity of his style, but which is by no means too strong for the occasion. "Thus," says he, "the two parties actuated by mutual rage, but cooped up within the narrow limits

of the law, levelled with poisoned daggers the most deadly blows against each other's breast, and buried in their factious divisions all, regard to truth, honour, and humanity."

From this terrible evil the Revolution set us free. The law which secured to the judges their seats during life or good behaviour did something. The law subsequently passed for regulating trials in cases of treason did much more. The provisions of that law show, indeed, very little legislative skill. It is not framed on the principle of securing the innocent, but on the principle of giving a great chance of escape to the accused, whether innocent or guilty. This, however, is decidedly a fault on the right side. The evil produced by the occasional escape of a bad citizen is not to be compared with the evils of that Reign of Terror, for such it was, which preceded the Revolution. Since the passing of this law scarcely one single person has suffered death in England as a traitor, who had not been convicted on overwhelming evidence, to the satisfaction of all parties, of the highest crime against the State. Attempts have been made in times of great excitement, to bring in persons guilty of high treason for acts which, though sometimes highly blamable, did not necessarily imply a design falling within the legal definition of treason. All those attempts have failed. During a hundred and forty years no statesman, while engaged in constitutional opposition to a government, has had the axe before his eyes. The smallest minorities, struggling against the most powerful majorities, in the most agitated times, have felt themselves perfectly secure. Pulteney and Fox wore the two most distinguished leaders of Opposition, since the Revolution. Both were personally obnoxious to the Court. But the utmost harm that the utmost anger of the Court could do to them was to strike off the "Right Honourable" from before their names.

But of all the reforms produced by the Revolution, perhaps the most important was the full establishment of the liberty of unlicensed printing. The Censorship which, under some form or other, had existed, with rare and short intermissions, under every government, monarchical or republican, from the time of Henry the Eighth downwards, expired, and has never since been renewed.

We are aware that the great improvements which we have recapitulated were, in many respects, imperfectly and unskilfully executed. The authors of those improvements sometimes, while they removed or mitigated a great practical evil, continued to recognise the erroneous principle from which that evil had sprung. Sometimes, when they had adopted a sound principle, they shrank from following it to all the conclusions to which it would have led them. Sometimes they failed to perceive that the remedies which they applied to one disease of the State were certain to generate another disease, and to render another remedy necessary. Their knowledge was inferior to ours: nor were they always able to act up to their knowledge. The pressure of

circumstances, the necessity of compromising differences of opinion, the power and violence of the party which was altogether hostile to the new settlement, must be taken into the account. When these things are fairly weighed, there will, we think, be little difference of opinion among liberal and right-minded men as to the real value of what the great events of 1688 did for this country.

We have recounted what appear to us the most important of those changes which the Revolution produced in our laws. The changes which it produced in our laws, however, were not more important than the change which it indirectly produced in the public mind, The Whig party had, during seventy years, an almost uninterrupted possession of power. It had always been the fundamental doctrine of that party, that power is a trust for the people; that it is given to magistrates, not for their own, but for the public advantage--that, where it is abused by magistrates, even by the highest of all, it may lawfully be withdrawn. It is perfectly true, that the Whigs were not more exempt than other men from the vices and infirmities of our nature, and that, when they had power, they sometimes abused it. But still they stood firm to their theory. That theory was the badge of their party. It was something more. It was the foundation on which rested the power of the houses of Nassau and Brunswick. Thus, there was a government interested in propagating a class of opinions which most governments are interested in discouraging, a government which looked with complacency on all speculations favourable to public liberty, and with extreme aversion on all speculations favourable to arbitrary power. There was a King who decidedly preferred a republican to a believer in the divine right of kings; who considered every attempt to exalt his prerogative as an attack on his title; and who reserved all his favours for those who declaimed on the natural equality of men, and the popular origin of government. This was the state of things from the Revolution till the death of George the Second. The effect was what might have been expected. Even in that profession which has generally been most disposed to magnify the prerogative, a great change took place. Bishopric after bishopric and deanery after deanery were bestowed on Whigs and Latitudinarians. The consequence was that Whiggism and Latitudinarianism were professed by the ablest and most aspiring churchmen.

Hume complained bitterly of this at the close of his history. "The Whig party," says he, "for a course of near seventy years, has almost without interruption enjoyed the whole authority of government, and no honours or offices could be obtained but by their countenance and protection. But this event, which in some particulars has been advantageous to the State, has proved destructive to the truth of history, and has established many gross falsehoods, which it is unaccountable how any civilised nation could have embraced, with regard to its domestic occurrences. Compositions the most despicable, both for style and matter,"--in a note he instances the writings of Locke, Sydney,

Hoadley, and Rapin,--"have been extolled and propagated and read as if they had equalled the most celebrated remains of antiquity. And forgetting that a regard to liberty, though a laudable passion, ought commonly to be subservient to a reverence for established government, the prevailing faction has celebrated only the partisans of the former." We will not here enter into an argument about the merit of Rapin's History or Locke's political speculations. We call Hume merely as evidence to a fact well known to all reading men, that the literature patronised by the English Court and the English ministry, during the first half of the eighteenth century, was of that kind which courtiers and ministers generally do all in their power to discountenance, and tended to inspire zeal for the liberties of the people rather than respect for the authority of the Government.

There was still a very strong Tory party in England. But that party was in opposition. Many of its members still held the doctrine of passive obedience. But they did not admit that the existing dynasty had any claim to such obedience. They condemned resistance. But by resistance they meant the keeping out of James the Third, and not the turning out of George the Second. No radical of our times could grumble more at the expenses of the royal household, could exert himself more strenuously to reduce the military establishment, could oppose with more earnestness every proposition for arming the executive with extraordinary powers, or could pour more unmitigated abuse on placemen and courtiers. If a writer were now, in a massive Dictionary, to define a Pensioner as a traitor and a slave, the Excise as a hateful tax, the Commissioners of the Excise as wretches, if he were to write a satire full of reflections on men who receive "the price of boroughs and of souls," who "explain their country's dear-bought rights away," or

"whom pensions can incite,
To vote a patriot black, a courtier white,"

we should set him down for something more democratic than a Whig. Yet this was the language which Johnson, the most bigoted of Tories and High Churchmen held under the administration of Walpole and Pelham.

Thus doctrines favourable to public liberty were inculcated alike by those who were in power and by those who were in opposition. It was by means of these doctrines alone that the former could prove that they had a King de jure. The servile theories of the latter did not prevent them from offering every molestation to one whom they considered as merely a King de facto. The attachment of one party to the House of Hanover, of the other to that of Stuart, induced both to talk a language much more favourable to popular rights than to monarchical power. What took place at the first representation of Cato is no bad illustration of the way in which the two great sections of the community almost invariably acted. A play, the whole merit of which consists in its stately

rhetoric sometimes not unworthy of Lucan, about hating tyrants and dying for freedom, is brought on the stage in a time of great political excitement. Both parties crowd to the theatre. Each affects to consider every line as a compliment to itself, and an attack on its opponents. The curtain falls amidst an unanimous roar of applause. The Whigs of the Kit Cat embrace the author, and assure him that he has rendered an inestimable service to liberty. The Tory secretary of state presents a purse to the chief actor for defending the cause of liberty so well. The history of that night was, in miniature, the history of two generations.

We well know how much sophistry there was in the reasonings, and how much exaggeration in the declamations of both parties. But when we compare the state in which political science was at the close of the reign of George the Second with the state in which it had been when James the Second came to the throne, it is impossible not to admit that a prodigious improvement had taken place. We are no admirers of the political doctrines laid down in Blackstone’s Commentaries. But if we consider that those Commentaries were read with great applause in the very schools where, seventy or eighty years before, books had been publicly burned by order of the University of Oxford for containing the damnable doctrine that the English monarchy is limited and mixed, we cannot deny that a salutary change had taken place. "The Jesuits," says Pascal, in the last of his incomparable letters, "have obtained a Papal decree, condemning Galileo’s doctrine about the motion of the earth. It is all in vain. If the world is really turning round, all mankind together will not be able to keep it from turning, or to keep themselves from turning with it." The decrees of Oxford were as ineffectual to stay the great moral and political revolution as those of the Vatican to stay the motion of our globe. That learned University found itself not only unable to keep the mass from moving, but unable to keep itself from moving along with the mass. Nor was the effect of the discussions and speculations of that period confined to our own country. While the Jacobite party was in the last dotage and weakness of its paralytic old age, the political philosophy of England began to produce a mighty effect on France, and, through France, on Europe.

Here another vast field opens itself before us. But we must resolutely turn away from it. We will conclude by advising all our readers to study Sir James Mackintosh’s valuable Fragment, and by expressing our hope that they will soon be able to study it without those accompaniments which have hitherto impeded its circulation.

HORACE WALPOLE

(October 1833)

Letters of Horace Walpole, Earl of Orford, to Sir Horace Mann, British Envoy at the Court of Tuscany. Now first published from the Originals in the Possession of the EARL OF WALDEGRAVE. Edited by LORD DOVER 2 vols. 8vo. London: 1833.

We cannot transcribe this title-page without strong feelings of regret. The editing of these volumes was the last of the useful and modest services rendered to literature by a nobleman of amiable manners, of untarnished public and private character, and of cultivated mind. On this, as on other occasions, Lord Dover performed his part diligently, judiciously, and without the slightest ostentation. He had two merits which are rarely found together in a commentator, he was content to be merely a commentator, to keep in the background, and to leave the foreground to the author whom he had undertaken to illustrate. Yet, though willing to be an attendant, he was by no means a slave; nor did he consider it as part of his duty to see no faults in the writer to whom he faithfully and assiduously rendered the humblest literary offices.

The faults of Horace Walpole's head and heart are indeed sufficiently glaring. His writings, it is true, rank as high among the delicacies of intellectual epicures as the Strasburg pies among the dishes described in the Almanach des Gourmands. But as the pate-de-foie-gras owes its excellence to the diseases of the wretched animal which furnishes it, and would be good for nothing if it were not made of livers preternaturally swollen, so none but an unhealthy and disorganised mind could have produced such literary luxuries as the works of Walpole.

He was, unless we have formed a very erroneous judgment of his character, the most eccentric, the most artificial, the most fastidious, the most capricious of men. His mind was a bundle of inconsistent whims and affectations. His features were covered by mask within mask. When the outer disguise of obvious affectation was removed, you were still as far as ever from seeing the real man. He played innumerable parts and over-acted them all. When he talked misanthropy, he out-Timoned Timon. When he talked philanthropy, he left Howard at an immeasurable distance. He scoffed at courts, and kept a chronicle of their most trifling scandal; at society, and was blown about by its slightest veerings of opinion; at literary fame, and left fair copies of his private letters, with copious notes, to be published after his decease; at rank, and never for a moment forgot that he was an Honourable; at the practice of entail, and tasked the ingenuity of conveyancers to tie up his villa in the strictest settlement.

The conformation of his mind was such that whatever was little seemed to him great, and whatever was great seemed to him little. Serious business was a trifle to him, and trifles were his serious business. To chat with blue-stockings, to write little copies of complimentary verses on little occasions, to

superintend a private press, to preserve from natural decay the perishable topics of Ranelagh and White's, to record divorces and bets, Miss Chudleigh's absurdities and George Selwyn's good sayings, to decorate a grotesque house with pie-crust battlements, to procure rare engravings and antique chimney-boards, to match odd gauntlets, to lay out a maze of walks within five acres of ground, these were the grave employments of his long life. From these he turned to politics as to an amusement. After the labours of the print-shop and the auction-room, he unbent his mind in the House of Commons. And, having indulged in the recreation of making laws and voting millions, he returned to more important pursuits, to researches after Queen Mary's comb, Wolsey's red hat, the pipe which Van Tromp smoked during his last sea-fight, and the spur which King William struck into the flank of Sorrel.

In everything in which Walpole busied himself, in the fine arts, in literature, in public affairs, he was drawn by some strange attraction from the great to the little, and from the useful to the odd. The politics in which he took the keenest interests, were politics scarcely deserving of the name. The growlings of George the Second, the flirtations of Princess Emily with the Duke of Grafton, the amours of Prince Frederic and Lady Middlesex, the squabbles between Gold Stick in waiting and the Master of the Buckhounds, the disagreements between the tutors of Prince George, these matters engaged almost all the attention which Walpole could spare from matters more important still, from bidding for Zinckes and Petitots, from cheapening fragments of tapestry and handles of old lances, from joining bits of painted glass, and from setting up memorials of departed cats and dogs. While he was fetching and carrying the gossip of Kensington Palace and Carlton House, he fancied that he was engaged in politics, and when he recorded that gossip, he fancied that he was writing history.

He was, as he has himself told us, fond of faction as an amusement. He loved mischief: but he loved quiet; and he was constantly on the watch for opportunities of gratifying both his tastes at once. He sometimes contrived, without showing himself, to disturb the course of ministerial negotiations, and to spread confusion through the political circles. He does not himself pretend that, on these occasions, he was actuated by public spirit; nor does he appear to have had any private advantage in view. He thought it a good practical joke to set public men together by the ears; and he enjoyed their perplexities, their accusations, and their recriminations, as a malicious boy enjoys the embarrassment of a misdirected traveller.

About politics, in the high sense of the word, he knew nothing, and cared nothing. He called himself a Whig. His father's son could scarcely assume any other name. It pleased him also to affect a foolish dislike of kings as kings, and a foolish love and admiration of rebels as rebels; and perhaps, while kings were

not in danger, and while rebels were not in being, he really believed that he held the doctrines which he professed. To go no further than the letters now before us, he is perpetually boasting to his friend Mann of his aversion to royalty and to royal persons. He calls the crime of Damien "that least bad of murders, the murder of a king." He hung up in his villa an engraving of the death-warrant of Charles, with the inscription "Major Charta." Yet the most superficial knowledge of history might have taught him that the Restoration, and the crimes and follies of the twenty-eight years which followed the Restoration, were the effects of this Greater Charter. Nor was there much in the means by which that instrument was obtained that could gratify a judicious lover of liberty. A man must hate kings very bitterly, before he can think it desirable that the representatives of the people should be turned out of doors by dragoons, in order to get at a king's head. Walpole's Whiggism, however, was of a very harmless kind. He kept it, as he kept the old spears and helmets at Strawberry Hill, merely for show. He would just as soon have thought of taking down the arms of the ancient Templars and Hospitallers from the walls of his hall, and setting off on a crusade to the Holy Land, as of acting in the spirit of those daring warriors and statesmen, great even in their errors, whose names and seals were affixed to the warrant which he prized so highly. He liked revolution and regicide only when they were a hundred years old. His republicanism, like the courage of a bully, or the love of a fribble, was strong and ardent when there was no occasion for it, and subsided when he had an opportunity of bringing it to the proof. As soon as the revolutionary spirit really began to stir in Europe, as soon as the hatred of kings became something more than a sonorous phrase, he was frightened into a fanatical royalist, and became one of the most extravagant alarmists of those wretched times. In truth, his talk about liberty, whether he knew it or not, was from the beginning a mere cant, the remains of a phraseology which had meant something in the mouths of those from whom he had learned it, but which, in his mouth, meant about as much as the oath by which the Knights of some modern orders bind themselves to redress the wrongs of all injured ladies. He had been fed in his boyhood with Whig speculations on government. He must often have seen, at Houghton or in Downing Street, men who had been Whigs when it was as dangerous to be a Whig as to be a highwayman, men who had voted for the Exclusion Bill, who had been concealed in garrets and cellars after the battle of Sedgemoor, and who had set their names to the declaration that they would live and die with the Prince of Orange. He had acquired the language of these men, and he repeated it by rote, though it was at variance with all his tastes and feelings; just as some old Jacobite families persisted in praying for the Pretender, and in passing their glasses over the water decanter when they drank the King's health, long after they had become loyal supporters of the government of George the Third. He was a Whig by the accident of hereditary connection; but he was essentially a courtier; and not the less a courtier because he pretended to sneer at the

objects which excited his admiration and envy. His real tastes perpetually show themselves through the thin disguise. While professing all the contempt of Bradshaw or Ludlow for crowned heads, he took the trouble to write a book concerning Royal Authors. He pryed with the utmost anxiety into the most minute particulars relating to the Royal family. When, he was a child, he was haunted with a longing to see George the First, and gave his mother no peace till she had found a way of gratifying his curiosity. The same feeling, covered with a thousand disguises, attended him to the grave. No observation that dropped from the lips of Majesty seemed to him too trifling to be recorded. The French songs of Prince Frederic, compositions certainly not deserving of preservation on account of their intrinsic merit, have been carefully preserved for us by this contemner of royalty. In truth, every page of Walpole's works betrays him. This Diogenes, who would be thought to prefer his tub to a palace, and who has nothing to ask of the masters of Windsor and Versailles but that they will stand out of his light, is a gentleman-usher at heart.

He had, it is plain, an uneasy consciousness of the frivolity of his favourite pursuits; and this consciousness produced one of the most diverting of his ten thousand affectations. His busy idleness, his indifference to matters which the world generally regards as important, his passion for trifles, he thought fit to dignify with the name of philosophy. He spoke of himself as of a man whose equanimity was proof to ambitious hopes and fears, who had learned to rate power, wealth, and fame at their true value, and whom the conflict of parties, the rise and fall of statesmen, the ebb and flow of public opinion, moved only to a smile of mingled compassion and disdain. It was owing to the peculiar elevation of his character that he cared about a pinnacle of lath and plaster more than about the Middlesex election, and about a miniature of Grammont more than about the American Revolution. Pitt and Murray might talk themselves hoarse about trifles. But questions of government and war were too insignificant to detain a mind which was occupied in recording the scandal of club-rooms and the whispers of the back-stairs, and which was even capable of selecting and disposing chairs of ebony and shields of rhinoceros-skin.

One of his innumerable whims was an extreme unwillingness to be considered a man of letters. Not that he was indifferent to literary fame. Far from it. Scarcely any writer has ever troubled himself so much about the appearance which his works were to make before posterity. But he had set his heart on incompatible objects. He wished to be a celebrated author, and yet to be a mere idle gentleman, one of those Epicurean gods of the earth who do nothing at all, and who pass their existence in the contemplation of their own perfections. He did not like to have anything in common with the wretches who lodged in the little courts behind St. Martin's Church, and stole out on Sundays to dine with their bookseller. He avoided the society of authors. He

spoke with lordly contempt of the most distinguished among them. He tried to find out some way of writing books, as M. Jourdain's father sold cloth, without derogating from his character of Gentilhomme. "Lui, marchand? C'est pure medisance: il ne l'a jamais ete. Tout ce qu'il faisait, c'est qu'il etait fort obligeant, fort officieux; et comme il se connaissait fort bien en etoffes, il en allait choisir de tons les cotes, les faisait apporter chez lui, et en donnait a ses amis pour de l'argent." There are several amusing instances of Walpole's feeling on this subject in the letters now before us. Mann had complimented him on the learning which appeared in the Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors; and it is curious to see how impatiently Walpole bore the imputation of having attended to anything so unfashionable as the improvement of his mind. "I know nothing. How should I? I who have always lived in the big busy world; who lie a-bed all the morning, calling it morning as long as you please; who sup in company; who have played at faro half my life, and now at loo till two and three in the morning; who have always loved pleasure; haunted auctions. . . . How I have laughed when some of the Magazines have called me the learned gentleman. Pray don't be like the Magazines." This folly might be pardoned in a boy. But a man between forty and fifty years old, as Walpole then was, ought to be quite as much ashamed of playing at loo till three every morning as of being that vulgar thing, a learned gentleman.

The literary character has undoubtedly its full share of faults, and of very serious and offensive faults. If Walpole had avoided those faults, we could have pardoned the fastidiousness with which he declined all fellowship with men of learning. But from those faults Walpole was not one jot more free than the garreteers from whose contact he shrank. Of literary meannesses and literary vices, his life and his works contain as many instances as the life and the works of any member of Johnson's club. The fact is, that Walpole had the faults of Grub Street, with a large addition from St. James's Street, the vanity, the jealousy, and the irritability of a man of letters, the affected superciliousness and apathy of a man of ton.

His judgment of literature, of contemporary literature especially, was altogether perverted by his aristocratical feelings. No writer surely was ever guilty of so much false and absurd criticism. He almost invariably speaks with contempt of those books which are now universally allowed to be the best that appeared in his time; and, on the other hand, he speaks of writers of rank and fashion as if they were entitled to the same precedence in literature which would have been allowed to them in a drawing-room. In these letters, for example, he says that he would rather have written the most absurd lines in Lee than Thomson's Seasons. The periodical paper called The World, on the other hand, was by "our first writers." Who, then, were the first writers of England in the year 1750? Walpole has told us in a note. Our readers will probably guess that Hume, Fielding,

Smollett, Richardson, Johnson, Warburton, Collins, Akenside, Gray, Dyer, Young, Warton, Mason, or some of those distinguished men, were in the list. Not one of them. Our first writers, it seems, were Lord Chesterfield, Lord Bath, Mr. W. Whithed, Sir Charles Williams, Mr. Soame Jenyns, Mr. Cambridge, Mr. Coventry. Of these seven personages, Whithed was the lowest in station, but was the most accomplished tuft-hunter of his time. Coventry was of a noble family. The other five had among them two seats in the House of Lords, two seats in the House of Commons, three seats in the Privy Council, a baronetcy, a blue riband, a red riband, about a hundred thousand pounds a year, and not ten pages that are worth reading. The writings of Whithed, Cambridge, Coventry, and Lord Bath are forgotten. Soame Jenyns is remembered chiefly by Johnson's review of the foolish Essay on the Origin of Evil. Lord Chesterfield stands much lower in the estimation of posterity than he would have done if his letters had never been published. The lampoons of Sir Charles Williams are now read only by the curious, and, though not without occasional flashes of wit, have always seemed to us, we must own, very poor performances.

Walpole judged of French literature after the same fashion. He understood and loved the French language. Indeed, he loved it too well. His style is more deeply tainted with Gallicism than that of any other English writer with whom we are acquainted. His composition often reads, for a page together, like a rude translation from the French. We meet every minute with such sentences as these, "One knows what temperaments Annibal Caracci painted." "The impertinent personage!" "She is dead rich." "Lord Dalkeith is dead of the small-pox in three days." "It will now be seen whether he or they are most patriot."

His love of the French language was of a peculiar kind. He loved it as having been for a century the vehicle of all the polite nothings of Europe, as the sign by which the freemasons of fashion recognised each other in every capital from Petersburgh to Naples, as the language of raillery, as the language of anecdote, as the language of memoirs, as the language of correspondence. Its higher uses he altogether disregarded. The literature of France has been to ours what Aaron was to Moses, the expositor of great truths which would else have perished for want of a voice to utter them with distinctness. The relation which existed between Mr. Bentham and M. Dumont is an exact illustration of the intellectual relation in which the two countries stand to each other. The great discoveries in physics, in metaphysics, in political science, are ours. But scarcely any foreign nation except France has received them from us by direct communication. Isolated by our situation, isolated by our manners, we found truth, but we did not impart it. France has been the interpreter between England and mankind.

In the time of Walpole, this process of interpretation was in full activity. The great French writers were busy in proclaiming

through Europe the names of Bacon, of Newton, and of Locke. The English principles of toleration, the English respect for personal liberty, the English doctrine that all power is a trust for the public good, were making rapid progress. There is scarcely anything in history so interesting as that great stirring up of the mind of France, that shaking of the foundations of all established opinions, that uprooting of old truth and old error. It was plain that mighty principles were at work whether for evil or for good. It was plain that a great change in the whole social system was at hand. Fanatics of one kind might anticipate a golden age, in which men should live under the simple dominion of reason, in perfect equality and perfect amity, without property, or marriage, or king, or God. A fanatic of another kind might see nothing in the doctrines of the philosophers but anarchy and atheism, might cling more closely to every old abuse, and might regret the good old days when St. Dominic and Simon de Montfort put down the growing heresies of Provence. A wise man would have seen with regret the excesses into which the reformers were running; but he would have done justice to their genius and to their philanthropy. He would have censured their errors; but he would have remembered that, as Milton has said, error is but opinion in the making. While he condemned their hostility to religion, he would have acknowledged that it was the natural effect of a system under which religion had been constantly exhibited to them in forms which common sense rejected and at which humanity shuddered. While he condemned some of their political doctrines as incompatible with all law, all property, and all civilisation, he would have acknowledged that the subjects of Lewis the Fifteenth had every excuse which men could have for being eager to pull down, and for being ignorant of the far higher art of setting up. While anticipating a fierce conflict, a great and wide-wasting destruction, he would yet have looked forward to the final close with a good hope for France and for mankind.

Walpole had neither hopes nor fears. Though the most Frenchified English writer of the eighteenth century, he troubled himself little about the portents which were daily to be discerned in the French literature of his time. While the most eminent Frenchmen were studying with enthusiastic delight English politics and English philosophy, he was studying as intently the gossip of the old court of France. The fashions and scandal of Versailles and Marli, fashions and scandal a hundred years old, occupied him infinitely more than a great moral revolution which was taking place in his sight. He took a prodigious interest in every noble sharper whose vast volume of wig and infinite length of riband had figured at the dressing or at the tucking up of Lewis the Fourteenth, and of every profligate woman of quality who had carried her train of lovers backward and forward from king to parliament, and from parliament to king, during the wars of the Fronde. These were the people of whom he treasured up the smallest memorial, of whom he loved to hear the most trifling anecdote, and for whose likenesses he would have given any price.

Of the great French writers of his own time, Montesquieu is the only one of whom he speaks with enthusiasm. And even of Montesquieu he speaks with less enthusiasm than of that abject thing, Crebillon the younger, a scribbler as licentious as Louvet and as dull as Rapin. A man must be strangely constituted who can take interest in pedantic journals of the blockades laid by the Duke of A. to the hearts of the Marquise de B. and the Comtesse de C. This trash Walpole extols in language sufficiently high for the merits of Don Quixote. He wished to possess a likeness of Crebillon; and Liotard, the first painter of miniatures then living, was employed to preserve the features of the profligate dunce. The admirer of the Sopha and of the Lettres Atheniennes had little respect to spare for the men who were then at the head of French literature. He kept carefully out of their way. He tried to keep other People from paying them any attention. He could not deny that Voltaire and Rousseau were clever men; but he took every opportunity of depreciating them. Of D'Alembert he spoke with a contempt which, when the intellectual powers of the two men are compared, seems exquisitely ridiculous. D'Alembert complained that he was accused of having written Walpole's squib against Rousseau. "I hope," says Walpole, "that nobody will attribute D'Alembert's works to me." He was in little danger.

It is impossible to deny, however, that Walpole's writings have real merit, and merit of a very rare, though not of a very high kind. Sir Joshua Reynolds used to say that, though nobody would for a moment compare Claude to Raphael, there would be another Raphael before there was another Claude. And we own that we expect to see fresh Humes and fresh Burkes before we again fall in with that peculiar combination of moral and intellectual qualities to which the writings of Walpole owe their extraordinary popularity.

It is easy to describe him by negatives. He had not a creative imagination. He had not a pure taste. He was not a great reasoner. There is indeed scarcely any writer in whose works it would be possible to find so many contradictory judgments, so many sentences of extravagant nonsense. Nor was it only in his familiar correspondence that he wrote in this flighty and inconsistent manner, but in long and elaborate books, in books repeatedly transcribed and intended for the public eye. We will give an instance or two; for without instances readers not very familiar with his works will scarcely understand our meaning. In the Anecdotes of Painting, he states, very truly, that the art declined after the commencement of the civil wars. He proceeds to inquire why this happened. The explanation, we should have thought, would have been easily found. He might have mentioned the loss of a king who was the most munificent and judicious patron that the fine arts have ever had in England, the troubled state of the country, the distressed condition of many of the aristocracy, perhaps also the austerity of the victorious party. These circumstances, we conceive, fully account for the phaenomenon. But this solution was not odd enough to satisfy

Walpole. He discovers another cause for the decline of the art, the want of models. Nothing worth painting, it seems, was left to paint. "How picturesque," he exclaims, "was the figure of an Anabaptist!"--as if puritanism had put out the sun and withered the trees; as if the civil wars had blotted out the expression of character and passion from the human lip and brow; as if many of the men whom Vandyke painted had not been living in the time of the Commonwealth, with faces little the worse for wear; as if many of the beauties afterwards portrayed by Lely were not in their prime before the Restoration; as if the garb or the features of Cromwell and Milton were less picturesque than those of the round-faced peers, as like each other as eggs to eggs, who look out from the middle of the periwigs of Kneller. In the Memoirs, again, Walpole sneers at the Prince of Wales, afterwards George the Third, for presenting a collection of books to one of the American colleges during the Seven Years' War, and says that, instead of books, his Royal Highness ought to have sent arms and ammunition, as if a war ought to suspend all study and all education; or as if it were the business of the Prince of Wales to supply the colonies with military stores out of his own pocket. We have perhaps dwelt too long on these passages; but we have done so because they are specimens of Walpole's manner. Everybody who reads his works with attention will find that they swarm with loose and foolish observations like those which we have cited; observations which might pass in conversation or in a hasty letter, but which are unpardonable in books deliberately written and repeatedly corrected.

He appears to have thought that he saw very far into men; but we are under the necessity of altogether dissenting from his opinion. We do not conceive that he had any power of discerning the finer shades of character. He practised an art, however, which, though easy and even vulgar, obtains for those who practise it the reputation of discernment with ninety-nine people out of a hundred. He sneered at everybody, put on every action the worst construction which it would bear, "spelt every man backward," to borrow the Lady Hero's phrase,

"Turned every man the wrong side out,
And never gave to truth and virtue that
Which simpleness and merit purchaseth."

In this way any man may, with little sagacity and little trouble, be considered by those whose good opinion is not worth having as a great judge of character.

It is said that the hasty and rapacious Kneller used to send away the ladies who sate to him as soon as he had sketched their faces, and to paint the figure and hands from his housemaid. It was in much the same way that Walpole portrayed the minds oft others. He copied from the life only those glaring and obvious peculiarities which could not escape the most superficial observation. The rest of the canvas he filled up, in a careless

dashing way, with knave and fool, mixed in such proportions as pleased Heaven. What a difference between these daubs and the masterly portraits of Clarendon!

There are contradictions without end in the sketches of character which abound in Walpole's works. But if we were to form our opinion of his eminent contemporaries from a general survey of what he has written concerning them, we should say that Pitt was a strutting, ranting, mouthing actor, Charles Townshend an impudent and voluble jack-pudding, Murray a demure, cold-blooded, cowardly hypocrite, Hardwicke an insolent upstart, with the understanding of a pettifogger and the heart of a hangman, Temple an impertinent poltroon, Egmont a solemn coxcomb, Lyttelton a poor creature whose only wish was to go to heaven in a coronet, Onslow a pompous proser, Washington a braggart, Lord Camden sullen, Lord Townshend malevolent, Secker an atheist who had shammed Christian for a mitre, Whitefield an impostor who swindled his converts out of their watches. The Walpoles fare little better than their neighbours. Old Horace is constantly represented as a coarse, brutal, niggardly buffoon, and his son as worthy of such a father. In short, if we are to trust this discerning judge of human nature, England in his time contained little sense and no virtue, except what was distributed between himself, Lord Waldegrave, and Marshal Conway.

Of such a writer it is scarcely necessary to say, that his works are destitute of every charm which is derived from elevation, or from tenderness of sentiment. When he chose to be humane and magnanimous,--for he sometimes, by way of variety, tried this affectation,--he overdid his part most ludicrously. None of his many disguises sat so awkwardly upon him. For example, he tells us that he did not choose to be intimate with Mr. Pitt. And why? Because Mr. Pitt had been among the persecutors of his father? Or because, as he repeatedly assures us, Mr. Pitt was a disagreeable man in private? Not at all; but because Mr. Pitt was too fond of war, and was great with too little reluctance. Strange that a habitual scoffer like Walpole should imagine that this cant could impose on the dullest reader! If Moliere had put such a speech into the mouth of Tartuffe, we should have said that the fiction was unskilful, and that Orgon could not have been such a fool as to be taken in by it. Of the twenty-six years during which Walpole sat in Parliament, thirteen were years of war. Yet he did not, during all those thirteen years, utter a single word or give a single vote tending to peace. His most intimate friend, the only friend, indeed, to whom he appears to have been sincerely attached, Conway, was a soldier, was fond of his profession, and was perpetually entreating Mr. Pitt to give him employment. In this Walpole saw nothing but what was admirable. Conway was a hero for soliciting the command of expeditions which Mr. Pitt was a monster for sending out.

What then is the charm, the irresistible charm, of Walpole's writings? It consists, we think, in the art of amusing without

exciting. He never convinces the reason or fills the imagination, or touches the heart; but he keeps the mind of the reader constantly attentive and constantly entertained. He had a strange ingenuity peculiarly his own, an ingenuity which appeared in all that he did, in his building, in his gardening, in his upholstery, in the matter and in the manner of his writings. If we were to adopt the classification, not a very accurate classification, which Akenside has given of the pleasures of the imagination, we should say that with the Sublime and the Beautiful Walpole had nothing to do, but that the third province, the Odd, was his peculiar domain. The motto which he prefixed to his Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors might have been inscribed with perfect propriety over the door of every room in his house, and on the title-page of every one of his books; "Dove Diavolo, Messer Ludovico, avete pigliate tante coglionerie?" In his villa, every apartment is a museum; every piece of furniture is a curiosity; there is something strange in the form of the shovel; there is a long story belonging to the bell-rope. We wander among a profusion of rarities, of trifling intrinsic value, but so quaint in fashion, or connected with such remarkable names and events, that they may well detain our attention for a moment. A moment is enough. Some new relic, some new unique, some new carved work, some new enamel, is forthcoming in an instant. One cabinet of trinkets is no sooner closed than another is opened. It is the same with Walpole's writings. It is not in their utility, it is not in their beauty, that their attraction lies. They are to the works of great historians and poets, what Strawberry Hill is to the Museum of Sir Hans Sloane or to the Gallery of Florence. Walpole is constantly showing us things, not of very great value indeed, yet things which we are pleased to see, and which we can see nowhere else. They are baubles; but they are made curiosities either by his grotesque workmanship or by some association belonging to them. His style is one of those peculiar styles by which everybody is attracted, and which nobody can safely venture to imitate. He is a mannerist whose manner has become perfectly easy to him, His affectation is so habitual and so universal that it can hardly be called affectation. The affectation is the essence of the man. It pervades all his thoughts and all his expressions. If it were taken away, nothing would be left. He coins new words, distorts the senses of old words, and twists sentences into forms which make grammarians stare. But all this he does, not only with an air of ease, but as if he could not help doing it. His wit was, in its essential properties, of the same kind with that of Cowley and Donne. Like theirs, it consisted in an exquisite perception of points of analogy and points of contrast too subtile for common observation. Like them, Walpole perpetually startles us by the ease with which he yokes together ideas between which there would seem, at first sight, to be no connection. But he did not, like them, affect the gravity of a lecture, and draw his illustrations from the laboratory and from the schools. His tone was light and fleering; his topics were the topics of the club and the ballroom; and therefore his strange combinations and far-

fetched allusions, though very closely resembling those which tire us to death in the poems of the time of Charles the First, are read with pleasure constantly new.

No man who has written so much is so seldom tiresome. In his books there are scarcely any of those passages which, in our school-days, we used to call skip. Yet he often wrote on subjects which are generally considered as dull, on subjects which men of great talents have in vain endeavoured to render popular. When we compare the Historic Doubts about Richard the Third with Whitaker's and Chalmers's books on a far more interesting question, the character of Mary Queen of Scots; when we compare the Anecdotes of Painting with the works of Anthony Wood, of Nichols, of Granger, we at once see Walpole's superiority, not in industry, not in learning, not in accuracy, not in logical power, but in the art of writing what people will like to read. He rejects all but the attractive parts of his subject. He keeps only what is in itself amusing or what can be made so by the artifice of his diction. The coarser morsels of antiquarian learning he abandons to others, and sets out an entertainment worthy of a Roman epicure, an entertainment consisting of nothing but delicacies, the brains of singing birds, the roe of mullets, the sunny halves of peaches. This, we think, is the great merit of his romance. There is little skill in the delineation of the characters. Manfred is as commonplace a tyrant, Jerome as commonplace a confessor, Theodore as commonplace a young gentleman, Isabella and Matilda as commonplace a pair of young ladies, as are to be found in any of the thousand Italian castles in which condottieri have revelled or in which imprisoned duchesses have pined. We cannot say that we much admire the big man whose sword is dug up in one quarter of the globe, whose helmet drops from the clouds in another, and who, after clattering and rustling for some days, ends by kicking the house down. But the story, whatever its value may be, never flags for a single moment. There are no digressions, or unseasonable descriptions, or long speeches. Every sentence carries the action forward. The excitement is constantly renewed. Absurd as is the machinery, insipid as are the human actors, no reader probably ever thought the book dull.

Walpole's Letters are generally considered as his best performances, and, we think, with reason. His faults are far less offensive to us in his correspondence than in his books. His wild, absurd, and ever-changing opinions about men and things are easily pardoned in familiar letters. His bitter, scoffing, depreciating disposition does not show itself in so unmitigated a manner as in his Memoirs. A writer of letters must in general be civil and friendly to his correspondent at least, if to no other person.

He loved letter-writing, and had evidently, studied it as an art. It was, in truth, the very kind of writing for such a man, for a man very ambitious to rank among wits, yet nervously afraid that,

while obtaining the reputation of a wit, he might lose caste as a gentleman. There was nothing vulgar in writing a letter. Not even Ensign Northerton, not even the Captain described in Hamilton's Bawn,--and Walpole, though the author of many quartos, had some feelings in common with those gallant officers,--would have denied that a gentleman might sometimes correspond with a friend. Whether Walpole bestowed much labour on the composition of his letters, it is impossible to judge from internal evidence. There are passages which seem perfectly unstudied. But the appearance of ease may be the effect of labour. There are passages which have a very artificial air. But they may have been produced without effort by a mind of which the natural ingenuity had been improved into morbid quickness by constant exercise. We are never sure that we see him as he was. We are never sure that what appears to be nature is not disguised art. We are never sure that what appears to be art is not merely habit which has become second nature.

In wit and animation the present collection is not superior to those which have preceded it. But it has one great advantage over them all. It forms a connected whole, a regular journal of what appeared to Walpole the most important transactions of the last twenty years of George the Second's reign. It furnishes much new information concerning the history of that time, the portion of English history of which common readers know the least.

The earlier letters contain the most lively and interesting account which we possess of that "great Walpolean battle," to use the words of Junius, which terminated in the retirement of Sir Robert. Horace entered the House of Commons just in time to witness the last desperate struggle which his father, surrounded by enemies and traitors, maintained, with a spirit as brave as that of the column of Fontenoy, first for victory, and then for honourable retreat. Horace was, of course, on the side of his family. Lord Dover seems to have been enthusiastic on the same side, and goes so far as to call Sir Robert "the glory of the Whigs."

Sir Robert deserved this high eulogium, we think, as little as he deserved the abusive epithets which have often been coupled with his name. A fair character of him still remains to be drawn; and, whenever it shall be drawn, it will be equally unlike the portrait by Coxe and the portrait by Smollett.

He had, undoubtedly, great talents and great virtues. He was not, indeed, like the leaders of the party which opposed his government, a brilliant orator. He was not a profound scholar, like Carteret, or a wit and a fine gentleman, like Chesterfield. In all these respects his deficiencies were remarkable. His literature consisted of a scrap or two of Horace and an anecdote or two from the end of the Dictionary. His knowledge of history was so limited that, in the great debate on the Excise Bill, he was forced to ask Attorney-General Yorke who Empson and Dudley

were. His manners were a little too coarse and boisterous even for that age of Westerns and Topehalls. When he ceased to talk of politics, he could talk of nothing but women and he dilated on his favourite theme with a freedom which shocked even that plain-spoken generation, and which was quite unsuited to his age and station. The noisy revelry of his summer festivities at Houghton gave much scandal to grave people, and annually drove his kinsman and colleague, Lord Townshend, from the neighbouring mansion of Rainham.

But, however ignorant Walpole might be of general history and of general literature, he was better acquainted than any man of his day with what it concerned him most to know, mankind, the English nation, the Court, the House of Commons, and the Treasury. Of foreign affairs he knew little; but his judgment was so good that his little knowledge went very far. He was an excellent parliamentary debater, an excellent parliamentary tactician, an excellent man of business. No man ever brought more industry or more method to the transacting of affairs. No minister in his time did so much; yet no minister had so much leisure.

He was a good-natured man who had during thirty years seen nothing but the worst parts of human nature in other men. He was familiar with the malice of kind people, and the perfidy of honourable people. Proud men had licked the dust before him. Patriots had begged him to come up to the price of their puffed and advertised integrity. He said after his fall that it was a dangerous thing to be a minister, that there were few minds which would not be injured by the constant spectacle of meanness and depravity. To his honour it must be confessed that few minds have come out of such a trial so little damaged in the most important parts. He retired, after more than twenty years of supreme power, with a temper not soured, with a heart not hardened, with simple tastes, with frank manners, and with a capacity for friendship. No stain of treachery, of ingratitude, or of cruelty rests on his memory. Factious hatred, while flinging on his name every other foul aspersion, was compelled to own that he was not a man of blood. This would scarcely seem a high eulogium on a statesman of our times. It was then a rare and honourable distinction. The contests of parties in England had long been carried on with a ferocity unworthy of a civilised people. Sir Robert Walpole was the minister who gave to our Government that character of lenity which it has since generally preserved. It was perfectly known to him that many of his opponents had dealings with the Pretender. The lives of some were at his mercy. He wanted neither Whig nor Tory precedents for using his advantage unsparingly. But with a clemency to which posterity has never done justice, he suffered himself to be thwarted, vilified, and at last overthrown, by a party which included many men whose necks were in his power.

That he practised corruption on a large scale, is, we think, indisputable. But whether he deserves all the invectives which have been uttered against him on that account may be questioned.

No man ought to be severely censured for not being beyond his age in virtue. To buy the votes of constituents is as immoral as to buy the votes of representatives. The candidate who gives five guineas to the freeman is as culpable as the man who gives three hundred guineas to the member. Yet we know that, in our own time, no man is thought wicked or dishonourable, no man is cut, no man is black-balled, because, under the old system of election, he was returned in the only way in which he could be returned, for East Redford, for Liverpool, or for Stafford.
Walpole governed by corruption, because, in his time, it was impossible to govern otherwise. Corruption was unnecessary to the Tudors, for their Parliaments were feeble. The publicity which has of late years been given to parliamentary proceedings has raised the standard of morality among public men. The power of public opinion is so great that, even before the reform of the representation, a faint suspicion that a minister had given pecuniary gratifications to Members of Parliament in return for their votes would have been enough to ruin him. But, during the century which followed the Restoration, the House of Commons was in that situation in which assemblies must be managed by corruption, or cannot be managed at all. It was not held in awe, as in the sixteenth century, by the throne. It was not held in awe as in the nineteenth century, by the opinion of the people. Its constitution was oligarchical. Its deliberations were secret. Its power in the State was immense. The Government had every conceivable motive to offer bribes. Many of the members, if they were not men of strict honour and probity, had no conceivable motive to refuse what the Government offered. In the reign of Charles the Second, accordingly, the practice of buying votes in the House of Commons was commenced by the daring Clifford, and carried to a great extent by the crafty and shameless Danby. The Revolution, great and manifold as were the blessings of which it was directly or remotely the cause, at first aggravated this evil. The importance of the House of Commons was now greater than ever. The prerogatives of the Crown were more strictly limited than ever; and those associations in which, more than in its legal prerogatives, its power had consisted, were completely broken. No prince was ever in so helpless and distressing a situation as William the Third. The party which defended his title was, on general grounds, disposed to curtail his prerogative. The party which was, on general grounds, friendly to prerogative, was adverse to his title. There was no quarter in which both his office and his person could find favour. But while the influence of the House of Commons in the Government was becoming paramount, the influence of the people over the House of Commons was declining. It mattered little in the time of Charles the First whether that House were or were not chosen by the people; it was certain to act for the people, because it would have been at the mercy of the Court but for the support of the people. Now that the Court was at the mercy of the House of Commons, those members who were not returned by popular election had nobody to please but themselves. Even those who were returned by popular election did not live, as now, under a constant sense

of responsibility. The constituents were not, as now, daily apprised of the votes and speeches of their representatives. The privileges which had in old times been indispensably necessary to the security and efficiency of Parliaments were now superfluous. But they were still carefully maintained, by honest legislators from superstitious veneration, by dishonest legislators for their own selfish ends. They had been an useful defence to the Commons during a long and doubtful conflict with powerful sovereigns. They were now no longer necessary for that purpose; and they became a defence to the members against their constituents. That secrecy which had been absolutely necessary in times when the Privy Council was in the habit of sending the leaders of Opposition to the Tower was preserved in times when a vote of the House of Commons was sufficient to hurl the most powerful minister from his post.

The Government could not go on unless the Parliament could be kept in order. And how was the Parliament to be kept in order? Three hundred years ago it would have been enough for the statesman to have the support of the Crown. It would now, we hope and believe, be enough for him to enjoy the confidence and approbation of the great body of the middle class. A hundred years ago it would not have been enough to have both Crown and people on his side. The Parliament had shaken off the control of the Royal prerogative. It had not yet fallen under the control of public opinion. A large proportion of the members had absolutely no motive to support any administration except their own interest, in the lowest sense of the word. Under these circumstances, the country could be governed only by corruption. Bolingbroke, who was the ablest and the most vehement of those who raised the clamour against corruption, had no better remedy to propose than that the Royal prerogative should be strengthened. The remedy would no doubt have been efficient. The only question is, whether it would not have been worse than the disease. The fault was in the constitution of the Legislature; and to blame those ministers who managed the Legislature in the only way in which it could be managed is gross injustice. They submitted to extortion because they could not help themselves. We might as well accuse the poor Lowland farmers who paid black-mail to Rob Roy of corrupting the virtue of the Highlanders, as accuse Sir Robert Walpole of corrupting the virtue of Parliament. His crime was merely this, that he employed his money more dexterously, and got more support in return for it, than any of those who preceded or followed him.

He was himself incorruptible by money. His dominant passion was the love of power: and the heaviest charge which can be brought against him is that to this passion he never scrupled to sacrifice the interests of his country.

One of the maxims which, as his son tells us, he was most In the habit of repeating, was quieta non movere. It was indeed the maxim by which he generally regulated his public conduct. It is

the maxim of a man more solicitous to hold power long than to use it well. It is remarkable that, though he was at the head of affairs during more than twenty years, not one great measure, not one important change for the better or for the worse in any part of our institutions, marks the period of his supremacy. Nor was this because he did not clearly see that many changes were very desirable. He had been brought up in the school of toleration, at the feet of Somers and of Burnet. He disliked the shameful laws against Dissenters. But he never could be induced to bring forward a proposition for repealing them. The sufferers represented to him the injustice with which they were treated, boasted of their firm attachment to the House of Brunswick and to the Whig party, and reminded him of his own repeated declarations of goodwill to their cause. He listened, assented, promised, and did nothing. At length, the question was brought forward by others, and the Minister, after a hesitating and evasive speech, voted against it. The truth was that he remembered to the latest day of his life that terrible explosion of high-church feeling which the foolish prosecution of a foolish parson had occasioned in the days of Queen Anne. If the Dissenters had been turbulent he would probably have relieved them; but while he apprehended no danger from them, he would not run the slightest risk for their sake. He acted in the same manner with respect to other questions. He knew the state of the Scotch Highlands. He was constantly predicting another insurrection in that part of the empire. Yet, during his long tenure of power, he never attempted to perform what was then the most obvious and pressing duty of a British Statesman, to break the power of the Chiefs, and to establish the authority of law through the furthest corners of the Island. Nobody knew better than he that, if this were not done, great mischiefs would follow. But the Highlands were tolerably quiet in his time. He was content to meet daily emergencies by daily expedients; and he left the rest to his successors. They had to conquer the Highlands in the midst of a war with France and Spain, because he had not regulated the Highlands in a time of profound peace.

Sometimes, in spite of all his caution, he found that measures which he had hoped to carry through quietly had caused great agitation. When this was the case he generally modified or withdrew them. It was thus that he cancelled Wood’s patent in compliance with the absurd outcry of the Irish. It was thus that he frittered away the Porteous Bill to nothing, for fear of exasperating the Scotch. It was thus that he abandoned the Excise Bill, as soon as he found that it was offensive to all the great towns of England. The language which he held about that measure in a subsequent session is strikingly characteristic. Pulteney had insinuated that the scheme would be again brought forward. "As to the wicked scheme," said Walpole, "as the gentleman is pleased to call it, which he would persuade gentlemen is not yet laid aside, I for my part assure this House I am not so mad as ever again to engage in anything that looks like an Excise; though, in my private opinion, I still think it was a scheme that

would have tended very much to the interest of the nation."

The conduct of Walpole with regard to the Spanish war is the great blemish of his public life. Archdeacon Coxe imagined that he had discovered one grand principle of action to which the whole public conduct of his hero ought to be referred.

"Did the administration of Walpole," says the biographer, "present any uniform principle which may be traced in every part, and which gave combination and consistency to the whole? Yes, and that principle was, THE LOVE OF PEACE." It would be difficult, we think, to bestow a higher eulogium on any statesman. But the eulogium is far too high for the merits of Walpole. The great ruling principle of his public conduct was indeed a love of peace, but not in the sense in which Archdeacon Coxe uses the phrase. The peace which Walpole sought was not the peace of the country, but the peace of his own administration. During the greater part of his public life, indeed, the two objects were inseparably connected. At length he was reduced to the necessity of choosing between them, of plunging the State into hostilities for which there was no just ground, and by which nothing was to be got, or of facing a violent opposition in the country, in Parliament, and even in the royal closet. No person was more thoroughly convinced than he of the absurdity of the cry against Spain. But his darling power was at stake, and his choice was soon made. He preferred an unjust war to a stormy session. It is impossible to say of a Minister who acted thus that the love of peace was the one grand principle to which all his conduct is to be referred. The governing principle of his conduct was neither love of peace nor love of war, but love of power.

The praise to which he is fairly entitled is this, that he understood the true interest of his country better than any of his contemporaries, and that he pursued that interest whenever it was not incompatible with the interest of his own intense and grasping ambition. It was only in matters of public moment that he shrank from agitation and had recourse to compromise. In his contests for personal influence there was no timidity, no flinching. He would have all or none. Every member of the Government who would not submit to his ascendency was turned out or forced to resign. Liberal of everything else, he was avaricious of power. Cautious everywhere else, when power was at stake he had all the boldness of Richelieu or Chatham. He might easily have secured his authority if he could have been induced to divide it with others. But he would not part with one fragment of it to purchase defenders for all the rest. The effect of this policy was that he had able enemies and feeble allies. His most distinguished coadjutors left him one by one, and joined the ranks of the Opposition. He faced the increasing array of his enemies with unbroken spirit, and thought it far better that they should attack his power than that they should share it.

The Opposition was in every sense formidable. At its head were

two royal personages, the exiled head of the House of Stuart, the disgraced heir of the House of Brunswick. One set of members received directions from Avignon. Another set held their consultations and banquets at Norfolk House. The majority of the landed gentry, the majority of the parochial clergy, one of the universities, and a strong party in the City of London and in the other great towns, were decidedly adverse to the Government. Of the men of letters, some were exasperated by the neglect with which the Minister treated them, a neglect which was the more remarkable, because his predecessors, both Whig and Tory, had paid court with emulous munificence to the wits and poets; others were honestly inflamed by party zeal; almost all lent their aid to the Opposition. In truth, all that was alluring to ardent and imaginative minds was on that side; old associations, new visions of political improvement, high-flown theories of loyalty, high-flown theories of liberty, the enthusiasm of the Cavalier, the enthusiasm of the Roundhead. The Tory gentleman, fed in the common-rooms of Oxford with the doctrines of Filmer and Sacheverell, and proud of the exploits of his great-grandfather, who had charged with Rupert at Marston, who had held out the old manor-house against Fairfax, and who, after the King's return, had been set down for a Knight of the Royal Oak, flew to that section of the Opposition which, under pretence of assailing the existing administration, was in truth assailing the reigning dynasty. The young republican, fresh from his Livy and his Lucan, and glowing with admiration of Hampden, of Russell, and of Sydney, hastened with equal eagerness to those benches from which eloquent voices thundered nightly against the tyranny and perfidy of courts. So many young politicians were caught by these declamations that Sir Robert, in one of his best speeches, observed that the Opposition consisted of three bodies, the Tories, the discontented Whigs, who were known by the name of the Patriots, and the Boys. In fact almost every young man of warm temper and lively imagination, whatever his political bias might be, was drawn into the party adverse to the Government; and some of the most distinguished among them, Pitt, for example, among public men, and Johnson, among men of letters, afterwards openly acknowledged their mistake.

The aspect of the Opposition, even while it was still a minority in the House of Commons, was very imposing. Among those who, in Parliament or out of Parliament, assailed the administration of Walpole, were Bolingbroke, Carteret, Chesterfield, Argyle, Pulteney, Wyndham, Doddington, Pitt, Lyttelton, Barnard, Pope, Swift, Gay, Arbuthnot, Fielding, Johnson, Thomson, Akenside, Glover.

The circumstance that the Opposition was divided into two parties, diametrically opposed to each other in political opinions, was long the safety of Walpole. It was at last his ruin. The leaders of the minority knew that it would be difficult for them to bring forward any important measure without producing an immediate schism in their party. It was with very great

difficulty that the Whigs in opposition had been induced to give a sullen and silent vote for the repeal of the Septennial Act. The Tories, on the other hand, could not be induced to support Pulteney's motion for an addition to the income of Prince Frederic. The two parties had cordially joined in calling out for a war with Spain; but they now had their war. Hatred of Walpole was almost the only feeling which was common to them. On this one point, therefore, they concentrated their whole strength. With gross ignorance, or gross dishonesty, they represented the Minister as the main grievance of the State. His dismissal, his punishment, would prove the certain cure for all the evils which the nation suffered. What was to be done after his fall, how misgovernment was to be prevented in future, were questions to which there were as many answers as there were noisy and ill-informed members of the Opposition. The only cry in which all could join was, "Down with Walpole!" So much did they narrow the disputed ground, so purely personal did they make the question, that they threw out friendly hints to the other members of the Administration, and declared that they refused quarter to the Prime Minister alone. His tools might keep their heads, their fortunes, even their places, if only the great father of corruption were given up to the just vengeance of the nation.

If the fate of Walpole's colleagues had been inseparably bound up with his, he probably would, even after the unfavourable elections of 1741, have been able to weather the storm. But as soon as it was understood that the attack was directed against him alone, and that, if he were sacrificed, his associates might expect advantageous and honourable terms, the ministerial ranks began to waver, and the murmur of sauve qui peut was heard. That Walpole had foul play is almost certain, but to what extent it is difficult to say. Lord Islay was suspected; the Duke of Newcastle something more than suspected. It would have been strange, indeed, if his Grace had been idle when treason was hatching.

"Ch' i' ho de' traditor' sempre sospetto,
E Gan fu traditor prima che nato."

"His name," said Sir Robert, "is perfidy."

Never was a battle more manfully fought out than the last struggle of the old statesman. His clear judgment, his long experience, and his fearless spirit, enabled him to maintain a defensive war through half the session. To the last his heart never failed him--and, when at last he yielded, he yielded not to the threats of his enemies, but to the entreaties of his dispirited and refractory followers. When he could no longer retain his power, he compounded for honour and security, and retired to his garden and his paintings, leaving to those who had overthrown him shame, discord, and ruin.

Everything was in confusion. It has been said that the confusion was produced by the dexterous policy of Walpole; and,

undoubtedly, he did his best to sow dissension amongst his triumphant enemies. But there was little for him to do. Victory had completely dissolved the hollow truce, which the two sections of the Opposition had but imperfectly observed, even while the event of the contest was still doubtful. A thousand questions were opened in a moment. A thousand conflicting claims were preferred. It was impossible to follow any line of policy which would not have been offensive to a large portion of the successful party. It was impossible to find places for a tenth part of those who thought that they had a right to office. While the parliamentary leaders were preaching patience and confidence, while their followers were clamouring for reward, a still louder voice was heard from without, the terrible cry of a people angry, they hardly know with whom, and impatient they hardly knew for what. The day of retribution had arrived. The Opposition reaped that which they had sown. Inflamed with hatred and cupidity, despairing of success by any ordinary mode of political warfare, and blind to consequences, which, though remote, were certain, they had conjured up a devil whom they could not lay. They had made the public mind drunk with calumny and declamation. They had raised expectations which it was impossible to satisfy. The downfall of Walpole was to be the beginning of a political millennium; and every enthusiast had figured to himself that millennium according to the fashion of his own wishes. The republican expected that the power of the Crown would be reduced to a mere shadow, the high Tory that the Stuarts would be restored, the moderate Tory that the golden days which the Church and the landed interest had enjoyed during the last years of Queen Anne would immediately return. It would have been impossible to satisfy everybody. The conquerors satisfied nobody.

We have no reverence for the memory of those who were then called the patriots. We are for the principles of good government against Walpole,--and for Walpole against the Opposition. It was most desirable that a purer system should be introduced; but, if the old system was to be retained, no man was so fit as Walpole to be at the head of affairs. There were grievous abuses in the Government, abuses more than sufficient to justify a strong Opposition. But the party opposed to Walpole, while they stimulated the popular fury to the highest point, were at no pains to direct it aright. Indeed they studiously misdirected it. They misrepresented the evil. They prescribed inefficient and pernicious remedies. They held up a single man as the sole cause of all the vices of a bad system which had been in full operation before his entrance into public life, and which continued to be in full operation when some of these very brawlers had succeeded to his power. They thwarted his best measures. They drove him into an unjustifiable war against his will. Constantly talking in magnificent language about tyranny, corruption, wicked ministers, servile courtiers, the liberty of Englishmen, the Great Charter, the rights for which our fathers bled, Timoleon, Brutus, Hampden, Sydney, they had absolutely nothing to propose which would have been an improvement on our institutions. Instead

of directing the public mind to definite reforms which might have completed the work of the revolution, which might have brought the legislature into harmony with the nation, and which might have prevented the Crown from doing by influence what it could no longer do by prerogative, they excited a vague craving for change, by which they profited for a single moment, and of which, as they well deserved, they were soon the victims.

Among the reforms which the State then required, there were two of paramount importance, two which would alone have remedied almost every gross abuse, and without which all other remedies would have been unavailing, the publicity of parliamentary proceedings, and the abolition of the rotten boroughs. Neither of these was thought of. It seems us clear that, if these were not adopted, all other measures would have been illusory. Some of the patriots suggested changes which would, beyond all doubt, have increased the existing evils a hundredfold. These men wished to transfer the disposal of employments and the command of the army from the Crown to the Parliament; and this on the very ground that the Parliament had long been a grossly corrupt body. The security against malpractices was to be that the members, instead of having a portion of the public plunder doled out to them by a minister, were to help themselves.

The other schemes of which the public mind was full were less dangerous than this. Some of them were in themselves harmless. But none of them would have done much good, and most of them were extravagantly absurd. What they were we may learn from the instructions which many constituent bodies, immediately after the change of administration, sent up to their representatives. A more deplorable collection of follies can hardly be imagined. There is, in the first place, a general cry for Walpole’s head. Then there are better complaints of the decay of trade, a decay which, in the judgment of these enlightened politicians, was brought about by Walpole and corruption. They would have been nearer to the truth if they had attributed their sufferings to the war into which they had driven Walpole against his better judgment. He had foretold the effects of his unwilling concession. On the day when hostilities against Spain were proclaimed, when the heralds were attended into the city by the chiefs of the Opposition, when the Prince of Wales himself stopped at Temple Bar to drink success to the English arms, the minister heard all the steeples of the city jingling with a merry peal, and muttered, "They may ring the bells now; they will be wringing their hands before long."

Another grievance, for which of course Walpole and corruption were answerable, was the great exportation of English wool. In the judgment of the sagacious electors of several large towns, the remedying of this evil was a matter second only in importance to the hanging of Sir Robert. There were also earnest injunctions that the members should vote against standing armies in time of peace, injunctions which were, to say the least, ridiculously

unseasonable in the midst of a war which was likely to last, and which did actually last, as long as the Parliament. The repeal of the Septennial Act, as was to be expected, was strongly pressed. Nothing was more natural than that the voters should wish for a triennial recurrence of their bribes and their ale. We feel firmly convinced that the repeal of the Septennial Act, unaccompanied by a complete reform of the constitution of the elective body, would have been an unmixed curse to the country. The only rational recommendation which we can find in all these instructions is that the number of placemen in Parliament should be limited, and that pensioners should not he allowed to sit there. It is plain, however, that this cure was far from going to the root of the evil, and that, if it had been adopted without other reforms, secret bribery would probably have been more practised than ever.

We will give one more instance of the absurd expectations which the declamations of the Opposition had raised in the country. Akenside was one of the fiercest and most uncompromising of the young patriots out of Parliament. When he found that the change of administration had produced no change of system, he gave vent to his indignation in the Epistle to Curio, the best poem that he ever wrote, a poem, indeed, which seems to indicate, that, if he had left lyric composition to Gray and Collins, and had employed his powers in grave and elevated satire, he might have disputed the pre-eminence of Dryden. But whatever be the literary merits of the epistle, we can say nothing in praise of the political doctrines which it inculcates. The poet, in a rapturous apostrophe to the spirits of the great men of antiquity, tells us what he expected from Pulteney at the moment of the fall of the tyrant.

"See private life by wisest arts reclaimed,
See ardent youth to noblest manners framed,
See us achieve whate’er was sought by you,
If Curio--only Curio--will be true."

It was Pulteney’s business, it seems, to abolish faro, and masquerades, to stint the young Duke of Marlborough to a bottle of brandy a day, and to prevail on Lady Vane to be content with three lovers at a time.

Whatever the people wanted, they certainly got nothing. Walpole retired in safety; and the multitude were defrauded of the expected show on Tower Hill. The Septennial Act was not repealed. The placemen were not turned out of the House of Commons. Wool, we believe, was still exported. "Private life" afforded as much scandal as if the reign of Walpole and corruption had continued; and "ardent youth" fought with watchmen and betted with blacklegs as much as ever.

The colleagues of Walpole had, after his retreat, admitted some of the chiefs of the Opposition into the Government, and soon

found themselves compelled to submit to the ascendency of one of their new allies. This was Lord Carteret, afterwards Earl Granville. No public man of that age had greater courage, greater ambition, greater activity, greater talents for debate or for declamation. No public man had such profound and extensive learning. He was familiar with the ancient writers, and loved to sit up till midnight discussing philological and metrical questions with Bentley. His knowledge of modern languages was prodigious. The privy council, when he was present; needed no interpreter. He spoke and wrote French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, German, even Swedish. He had pushed his researches into the most obscure nooks of literature. He was as familiar with Canonists and Schoolmen as with orators and poets. He had read all that the universities of Saxony and Holland had produced on the most intricate questions of public law. Harte, in the preface to the second edition of his History of Gustavus Adolphus, bears a remarkable testimony to the extent and accuracy of Lord Carteret's knowledge. "It was my good fortune or prudence to keep the main body of my army (or in other words my matters of fact) safe and entire. The late Earl of Granville was pleased to declare himself of this opinion; especially when he found that I had made Chemnitius one of my principal guides; for his Lordship was apprehensive I might not have seen that valuable and authentic book, which is extremely scarce. I thought myself happy to have contented his Lordship even in the lowest degree: for he understood the German and Swedish histories to the highest perfection."

With all this learning, Carteret was far from being a pedant. His was not one of those cold spirits of which the fire is put out by the fuel. In council, in debate, in society, he was all life and energy. His measures were strong, prompt, and daring, his oratory animated and glowing. His spirits were constantly high. No misfortune, public or private, could depress him. He was at once the most unlucky and the happiest public man of his time.

He had been Secretary of State in Walpole's Administration, and had acquired considerable influence over the mind of George the First. The other ministers could speak no German. The King could speak no English. All the communication that Walpole held with his master was in very bad Latin. Carteret dismayed his colleagues by the volubility with which he addressed his Majesty in German. They listened with envy and terror to the mysterious gutturals which might possibly convey suggestions very little in unison with their wishes.

Walpole was not a man to endure such a colleague as Carteret. The King was induced to give up his favourite. Carteret joined the Opposition, and signalised himself at the head of that party till, after the retirement of his old rival, he again became Secretary of State.

During some months he was chief Minister, indeed sole Minister.

He gained the confidence and regard of George the Second. He was at the same time in high favour with the Prince of Wales. As a debater in the House of Lords, he had no equal among his colleagues. Among his opponents, Chesterfield alone could be considered as his match. Confident in his talents, and in the royal favour, he neglected all those means by which the power of Walpole had been created and maintained. His head was full of treaties and expeditions, of schemes for supporting the Queen of Hungary and for humbling the House of Bourbon. He contemptuously abandoned to others all the drudgery, and, with the drudgery, all the fruits of corruption. The patronage of the Church and of the Bar he left to the Pelhams as a trifle unworthy of his care. One of the judges, Chief Justice Willes, if we remember rightly, went to him to beg some ecclesiastical preferment for a friend. Carteret said, that he was too much occupied with continental politics to think about the disposal of places and benefices. "You may rely on it, then," said the Chief Justice, "that people who want places and benefices will go to those who have more leisure." The prediction was accomplished. It would have been a busy time indeed in which the Pelhams had wanted leisure for jobbing; and to the Pelhams the whole cry of place-hunters and pension-hunters resorted. The parliamentary influence of the two brothers became stronger every day, till at length they were at the head of a decided majority in the House of Commons. Their rival, meanwhile, conscious of his powers, sanguine in his hopes, and proud of the storm which he had conjured up on the Continent, would brook neither superior nor equal. "His rants," says Horace Walpole, "are amazing; so are his parts and his spirits." He encountered the opposition of his colleagues, not with the fierce haughtiness of the first Pitt, or the cold unbending arrogance of the second, but with a gay vehemence, a good-humoured imperiousness, that bore everything down before it. The period of his ascendency was known by the name of the "Drunken Administration"; and the expression was not altogether figurative. His habits were extremely convivial; and champagne probably lent its aid to keep him in that state of joyous excitement in which his life was passed.

That a rash and impetuous man of genius like Carteret should not have been able to maintain his ground in Parliament against the crafty and selfish Pelhams is not strange. But it is less easy to understand why he should have been generally unpopular throughout the country. His brilliant talents, his bold and open temper, ought, it should seem, to have made him a favourite with the public. But the people had been bitterly disappointed; and he had to face the first burst of their rage. His close connection with Pulteney, now the most detested man in the nation, was an unfortunate circumstance. He had, indeed, only three partisans, Pulteney, the King, and the Prince of Wales, a most singular assemblage.

He was driven from his office. He shortly after made a bold, indeed a desperate, attempt to recover power. The attempt failed.

From that time he relinquished all ambitious hopes, and retired laughing to his books and his bottle. No statesman ever enjoyed success with so exquisite a relish, or submitted to defeat with so genuine and unforced a cheerfulness. Ill as he had been used, he did not seem, says Horace Walpole, to have any resentment, or indeed any feeling except thirst.

These letters contain many good stories, some of them no doubt grossly exaggerated, about Lord Carteret; how, in the height of his greatness, he fell in love at first sight on a birthday with Lady Sophia Fermor, the handsome daughter of Lord Pomfret; how he plagued the Cabinet every day with reading to them her ladyship's letters; how strangely he brought home his bride; what fine jewels he gave her; how he fondled her at Ranelagh; and what queen-like state she kept in Arlington Street. Horace Walpole has spoken less bitterly of Carteret than of any public man of that time, Fox, perhaps, excepted; and this is the more remarkable, because Carteret was one of the most inveterate enemies of Sir Robert. In the Memoirs, Horace Walpole, after passing in review all the great men whom England had produced within his memory, concludes by saying, that in genius none of them equalled Lord Granville. Smollett, in Humphrey Clinker, pronounces a similar judgment in coarser language. "Since Granville was turned out, there has been no minister in this nation worth the meal that whitened his periwig."

Carteret fell; and the reign of the Pelhams commenced. It was Carteret's misfortune to be raised to power when the public mind was still smarting from recent disappointment. The nation had been duped, and was eager for revenge. A victim was necessary, and on such occasions the victims of popular rage are selected like the victim of Jephthah. The first person who comes in the way is made the sacrifice. The wrath of the people had now spent itself; and the unnatural excitement was succeeded by an unnatural calm. To an irrational eagerness for something new, succeeded an equally irrational disposition to acquiesce in everything established. A few months back the people had been disposed to impute every crime to men in power, and to lend a ready ear to the high professions of men in opposition. They were now disposed to surrender themselves implicitly to the management of Ministers, and to look with suspicion and contempt on all who pretended to public spirit. The name of patriot had become a by-word of derision. Horace Walpole scarcely exaggerated when he said that, in those times, the most popular declaration which a candidate could make on the hustings was that he had never been and never would be a patriot. At this conjecture took place the rebellion of the Highland clans. The alarm produced by that event quieted the strife of internal factions. The suppression of the insurrection crushed for ever the spirit of the Jacobite party. Room was made in the Government for a few Tories. Peace was patched up with France and Spain. Death removed the Prince of Wales, who had contrived to keep together a small portion of that formidable opposition of which he had been the leader in the time

of Sir Robert Walpole. Almost every man of weight in the House of Commons was officially connected with the Government The even tenor of the session of Parliament was ruffled only by an occasional harangue from Lord Egmont on the army estimates. For the first time since the accession of the Stuarts there was no opposition. This singular good fortune, denied to the ablest statesmen, to Salisbury, to Strafford, to Clarendon, to Somers, to Walpole, had been reserved for the Pelhams.

Henry Pelham, it is true, was by no means a contemptible person. His understanding was that of Walpole on a somewhat smaller scale. Though not a brilliant orator, he was, like his master, a good debater, a good parliamentary tactician, a good man of business. Like his master, he distinguished himself by the neatness and clearness of his financial expositions. Here the resemblance ceased. Their characters were altogether dissimilar. Walpole was good-humoured, but would have his way: his spirits were high, and his manners frank even to coarseness. The temper of Pelham was yielding, but peevish: his habits were regular, and his deportment strictly decorous. Walpole was constitutionally fearless, Pelharn constitutionally timid. Walpole had to face a strong opposition; but no man in the Government durst wag a finger against him. Almost all the opposition which Pelham had to encounter was from members of the Government of which he was the head. His own pay-master spoke against his estimates. His own secretary-at-war spoke against his Regency Bill. In one day Walpole turned Lord Chesterfield, Lord Burlington, and Lord Clinton out of the royal household, dismissed the highest dignitaries of Scotland from their posts, and took away the regiments of the Duke of Bolton and Lord Cobham, because he suspected them of having encouraged the resistance to his Excise Bill. He would far rather have contended with the strongest minority, under the ablest leaders, than have tolerated mutiny in his own party. It would have gone hard with any of his colleagues, who had ventured, on a Government question, to divide the House of Commons against him. Pelham, on the other hand, was disposed to bear anything rather than drive from office any man round whom a new opposition could form. He therefore endured with fretful patience the insubordination of Pitt and Fox. He thought it far better to connive at their occasional infractions of discipline than to hear them, night after night, thundering against corruption and wicked ministers from the other side of the House.

We wonder that Sir Walter Scott never tried his hand on the Duke of Newcastle. An interview between his Grace and Jeanie Deans would have been delightful, and by no means unnatural. There is scarcely any public man in our history of whose manners and conversation so many particulars have been preserved. Single stories may be unfounded or exaggerated. But all the stories about him, whether told by people who were perpetually seeing him in Parliament and attending his levee in Lincoln’s Inn Fields, or by Grub Street writers who never had more than a glimpse of his

star through the windows of his gilded coach, are of the same character. Horace Walpole and Smollett differed in their tastes and opinions as much as two human beings could differ. They kept quite different society. Walpole played at cards with countesses, and corresponded with ambassadors. Smollett passed his life surrounded by printers' devils and famished scribblers. Yet Walpole's Duke and Smollett's Duke are as like as if they were both from one hand. Smollett's Newcastle runs out of his dressing-room, with his face covered with soap-suds, to embrace the Moorish envoy. Walpole's Newcastle pushes his way into the Duke of Grafton's sick-room to kiss the old nobleman's plasters. No man was so unmercifully satirised. But in truth he was himself a satire ready made. All that the art of the satirist does for other men, nature had done for him. Whatever was absurd about him stood out with grotesque prominence from the rest of the character. He was a living, moving, talking caricature. His gait was a shuffling trot; his utterance a rapid stutter; he was always in a hurry; he was never in time; he abounded in fulsome caresses and in hysterical tears. His oratory resembled that of justice Shallow. It was nonsense--effervescent with animal spirits and impertinence. Of his ignorance many anecdotes remain, some well authenticated, some probably invented at coffee-houses, but all exquisitely characteristic. "Oh--yes--yes--to be sure--Annapolis must he defended--troops must be sent to Annapolis--Pray where is Annapolis?"--"Cape Breton an island! Wonderful!--show it me in the map. So it is, sure enough. My dear sir, you always bring us good news. I must go and tell the King that Cape Breton is an island."

And this man was, during near thirty years, Secretary of State, and, during near ten years, First Lord of the Treasury! His large fortune, his strong hereditary connection, his great parliamentary interest, will not alone explain this extraordinary fact. His success is a signal instance of what may be effected by a man who devotes his whole heart and soul without reserve to one object. He was eaten up by ambition. His love of influence and authority resembled the avarice of the old usurer in the Fortunes of Nigel. It was so intense a passion that it supplied the place of talents, that it inspired even fatuity with cunning. "Have no money dealings with my father," says Marth to Lord Glenvarloch; "for, dotard as he is, he will make an ass of you." It was as dangerous to have any political connection with Newcastle as to buy and sell with old Trapbois. He was greedy after power with a greediness all his own. He was jealous of all his colleagues, and even of his own brother. Under the disguise of levity he was false beyond all example of political falsehood. All the able men of his time ridiculed him as a dunce, a driveller, a child who never knew his own mind for an hour together; and he overreached them all round.

If the country had remained at peace, it is not impossible that this man would have continued at the head of affairs without admitting any other person to a share of his authority until the

throne was filled by a new Prince, who brought with him new maxims of government, new favourites, and a strong will. But the inauspicious commencement of the Seven Years' War brought on a crisis to which Newcastle was altogether unequal. After a calm of fifteen years the spirit of the nation was again stirred to its inmost depths. In a few days the whole aspect of the political world was changed.

But that change is too remarkable an event to be discussed at the end of an article already more than sufficiently long. It is probable that we may, at no remote time, resume the subject.

WILLIAM PITT, EARL OF CHATHAM

(January 1834)

A History of the Right Honourable William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, containing his Speeches in Parliament, a considerable Portion of his Correspondence when Secretary of State, upon French, Spanish, and American Affairs, never before published; and an Account of the principal Events and Persons of his Time, connected with his Life, Sentiments and Administration. By the Rev. FRANCIS THACKERAY, A.M. 2 Vols. 4to. London: 1827.

Though several years have elapsed since the publication of this work, it is still, we believe, a new publication to most of our readers. Nor are we surprised at this. The book is large, and the style heavy. The information which Mr. Thackeray has obtained from the State Paper Office is new; but much of it is very uninteresting. The rest of his narrative is very little better than Gifford's or Tomline's Life of the second Pitt, and tells us little or nothing that may not be found quite as well told in the Parliamentary History, the Annual Register, and other works equally common.

Almost every mechanical employment, it is said, has a tendency to injure some one or other of the bodily organs of the artisan. Grinders of cutlery die of consumption; weavers are stunted in their growth; smiths become blear-eyed. In the same manner almost every intellectual employment has a tendency to produce some intellectual malady. Biographers, translators, editors, all, in short, who employ themselves in illustrating the lives or the writings of others, are peculiarly exposed to the Lues Boswelliana, or disease of admiration. But we scarcely remember ever to have seen a patient so far gone in this distemper as Mr. Thackeray. He is not satisfied with forcing us to confess that Pitt was a great orator, a vigorous minister, an honourable and high-spirited gentleman. He will have it that all virtues and all accomplishments met in his hero. In spite of Gods, men, and columns, Pitt must be a poet, a poet capable of producing a heroic poem of the first order; and we are assured that we ought

to find many charms in such lines as these:

"Midst all the tumults of the warring sphere,
My light-charged bark may haply glide;
Some gale may waft, some conscious thought shall cheer,
And the small freight unanxious glide."

[The quotation is faithfully made from Mr. Thackeray. Perhaps Pitt wrote guide in the fourth line.]

Pitt was in the army for a few months in time of peace. Mr. Thackeray accordingly insists on our confessing that, if the young cornet had remained in the service, he would have been one of the ablest commanders that ever lived. But this is not all. Pitt, it seems, was not merely a great poet, in esse, and a great general in posse, but a finished example of moral excellence, the just man made perfect. He was in the right when he attempted to establish an inquisition, and to give bounties for perjury, in order to get Walpole's head. He was in the right when he declared Walpole to have been an excellent minister. He was in the right when, being in opposition, he maintained that no peace ought to be made with Spain, till she should formally renounce the right of search. He was in the right when, being in office, he silently acquiesced in a treaty by which Spain did not renounce the right of search. When he left the Duke of Newcastle, when he coalesced with the Duke of Newcastle, when he thundered against subsidies, when he lavished subsidies with unexampled profusion, when he execrated the Hanoverian connection, when he declared that Hanover ought to be as dear to us as Hampshire, he was still invariably speaking the language of a virtuous and enlightened statesman.

The truth is that there scarcely ever lived a person who had so little claim to this sort of praise as Pitt. He was undoubtedly a great man. But his was not a complete and well-proportioned greatness. The public life of Hampden or of Somers resembles a regular drama, which can be criticised as a whole, and every scene of which is to be viewed in connection with the main action. The public life of Pitt, on the other hand, is a rude though striking piece, a piece abounding in incongruities, a piece without any unity of plan, but redeemed by some noble passages, the effect of which is increased by the tameness or extravagance of what precedes and of what follows. His opinions were unfixed. His conduct at some of the most important conjunctures of his life was evidently determined by pride and resentment. He had one fault, which of all human faults is most rarely found in company with true greatness. He was extremely affected. He was an almost solitary instance of a man of real genius, and of a brave, lofty, and commanding spirit, without simplicity of character. He was an actor in the Closet, an actor at Council, an actor in Parliament; and even in private society he could not lay aside his theatrical tones and attitudes. We know that one of the most distinguished of his partisans often

complained that he could never obtain admittance to Lord Chatham’s room till everything was ready for the representation, till the dresses and properties were all correctly disposed, till the light was thrown with Rembrandt-like effect on the head of the illustrious performer, till the flannels had been arranged with the air of a Grecian drapery, and the crutch placed as gracefully as that of Belisarius or Lear.

Yet, with all his faults and affectations, Pitt had, in a very extraordinary degree, many of the elements of greatness. He had genius, strong passions, quick sensibility, and vehement enthusiasm for the grand and the beautiful. There was something about him which ennobled tergiversation itself. He often went wrong, very wrong. But, to quote the language of Wordsworth,

"He still retained,
’Mid such abasement, what he had received
From nature, an intense and glowing mind."

In an age of low and dirty prostitution, in the age of Dodington and Sandys, it was something to have a man who might perhaps, under some strong excitement, have been tempted to ruin his country, but who never would have stooped to pilfer from her, a man whose errors arose, not from a sordid desire of gain, but from a fierce thirst for power, for glory, and for vengeance. History owes to him this attestation, that at a time when anything short of direct embezzlement of the public money was considered as quite fair in public men, he showed the most scrupulous disinterestedness; that, at a time when it seemed to be generally taken for granted that Government could be upheld only by the basest and most immoral arts, he appealed to the better and nobler parts of human nature; that he made a brave and splendid attempt to do, by means of public opinion, what no other statesman of his day thought it possible to do, except by means of corruption; that he looked for support, not, like the Pelhams, to a strong aristocratical connection, not, like Bute, to the personal favour of the sovereign, but to the middle class of Englishmen; that he inspired that class with a firm confidence in his integrity and ability; that, backed by them, he forced an unwilling court and an unwilling oligarchy to admit him to an ample share of power; and that he used his power in such a manner as clearly proved him to have sought it, not for the sake of profit or patronage, but from a wish to establish for himself a great and durable reputation by means of eminent services rendered to the State.

The family of Pitt was wealthy and respectable. His grandfather was Governor of Madras, and brought back from India that celebrated diamond which the Regent Orleans, by the advice of Saint Simon, purchased for upwards of two millions of livres, and which is still considered as the most precious of the crown jewels of France. Governor Pitt bought estates and rotten boroughs, and sat in the House of Commons for Old Sarum. His son

Robert was at one time member for Old Sarum, and at another for Oakhampton. Robert had two sons. Thomas, the elder, inherited the estates and the parliamentary interest of his father. The second was the celebrated William Pitt.

He was born in November, 1708. About the early part of his life little more is known than that he was educated at Eton, and that at seventeen he was entered at Trinity College, Oxford. During the second year of his residence at the University, George the First died; and the event was, after the fashion of that generation, celebrated by the Oxonians in many middling copies of verses. On this occasion Pitt published some Latin lines, which Mr. Thackeray has preserved. They prove that the young student had but a very limited knowledge even of the mechanical part of his art. All true Etonians will hear with concern that their illustrious schoolfellow is guilty of making the first syllable in labenti short. [So Mr. Thackeray has printed the poem. But it may be charitably hoped that Pitt wrote labanti.] The matter of the poem is as worthless as that of any college exercise that was ever written before or since. There is, of course, much about Mars, Themis, Neptune, and Cocytus. The Muses are earnestly entreated to weep over the urn of Caesar; for Caesar, says the Poet, loved the Muses; Caesar, who could not read a line of Pope, and who loved nothing but punch and fat women.

Pitt had been, from his school-days, cruelly tormented by the gout, and was advised to travel for his health. He accordingly left Oxford without taking a degree, and visited France and Italy. He returned, however, without having received much benefit from his excursion, and continued, till the close of his life, to suffer most severely from his constitutional malady.

His father was now dead, and had left very little to the younger children. It was necessary that William should choose a profession. He decided for the army, and a cornet’s commission was procured for him in the Blues.

But, small as his fortune was, his family had both the power and the inclination to serve him. At the general election of 1734, his elder brother Thomas was chosen both for Old Sarum and for Oakhampton. When Parliament met in 1735, Thomas made his election to serve for Oakhampton, and William was returned for Old Sarum.

Walpole had now been, during fourteen years, at the head of affairs. He had risen to power under the most favourable circumstances. The whole of the Whig party, of that party which professed peculiar attachment to the principles of the Revolution, and which exclusively enjoyed the confidence of the reigning house, had been united in support of his administration. Happily for him, he had been out of office when the South-Sea Act was passed; and, though he does not appear to have foreseen all the consequences of that measure, he had strenuously opposed it, as he had opposed all the measures, good and bad, of Sutherland’s

administration. When the South-Sea Company were voting dividends of fifty per cent, when a hundred pounds of their stock were selling for eleven hundred pounds, when Threadneedle Street was daily crowded with the coaches of dukes and prelates, when divines and philosophers turned gamblers, when a thousand kindred bubbles were daily blown into existence, the periwig-company, and the Spanish-jackass-company, and the quicksilver-fixation-company, Walpole's calm good sense preserved him from the general infatuation. He condemned the prevailing madness in public, and turned a considerable sum by taking advantage of it in private. When the crash came, when ten thousand families were reduced to beggary in a day, when the people, in the frenzy of their rage and despair, clamoured, not only against the lower agents in the juggle, but against the Hanoverian favourites, against the English ministers, against the King himself, when Parliament met, eager for confiscation and blood, when members of the House of Commons proposed that the directors should be treated like parricides in ancient Rome, tied up in sacks, and thrown into the Thames, Walpole was the man on whom all parties turned their eyes. Four years before he had been driven from power by the intrigues of Sunderland and Stanhope; and the lead in the House of Commons had been intrusted to Craggs and Aislabie. Stanhope was no more. Aislabie was expelled from Parliament on account of his disgraceful conduct regarding the South-Sea scheme. Craggs was perhaps saved by a timely death from a similar mark of infamy. A large minority in the House of Commons voted for a severe censure on Sunderland, who, finding it impossible to withstand the force of the prevailing sentiment, retired from office, and outlived his retirement but a very short time. The schism which had divided the Whig party was now completely healed. Walpole had no opposition to encounter except that of the Tories; and the Tories were naturally regarded by the King with the strongest suspicion and dislike.

For a time business went on with a smoothness and a despatch such as had not been known since the days of the Tudors. During the session of 1724, for example, there was hardly a single division except on private bills. It is not impossible that, by taking the course which Pelham afterwards took, by admitting into the Government all the rising talents and ambition of the Whig party, and by making room here and there for a Tory not unfriendly to the House of Brunswick, Walpole might have averted the tremendous conflict in which he passed the later years of his administration, and in which he was at length vanquished. The Opposition which overthrew him was an opposition created by his own policy, by his own insatiable love of power.

In the very act of forming his Ministry he turned one of the ablest and most attached of his supporters into a deadly enemy. Pulteney had strong public and private claims to a high situation in the new arrangement. His fortune was immense. His private character was respectable. He was already a distinguished speaker. He had acquired official experience in an important

post. He had been, through all changes of fortune, a consistent Whig. When the Whig party was split into two sections, Pulteney had resigned a valuable place, and had followed the fortunes of Walpole. Yet, when Walpole returned to power, Pulteney was not invited to take office. An angry discussion took place between the friends. The Ministry offered a peerage. It was impossible for Pulteney not to discern the motive of such an offer. He indignantly refused to accept it. For some time he continued to brood over his wrongs, and to watch for an opportunity of revenge. As soon as a favourable conjuncture arrived he joined the minority, and became the greatest leader of Opposition that the House of Commons had ever seen.

Of all the members of the Cabinet Carteret was the most eloquent and accomplished. His talents for debate were of the first order; his knowledge of foreign affairs was superior to that of any living statesman; his attachment to the Protestant succession was undoubted. But there was not room in one Government for him and Walpole. Carteret retired, and was from that time forward, one of the most persevering and formidable enemies of his old colleague.

If there was any man with whom Walpole could have consented to make a partition of power, that man was Lord Townshend. They were distant kinsmen by birth, near kinsmen by marriage. They had been friends from childhood. They had been schoolfellows at Eton. They were country neighbours in Norfolk. They had been in office together under Godolphin. They had gone into opposition together when Harley rose to power. They had been persecuted by the same House of Commons. They had, after the death of Anne, been recalled together to office. They had again been driven out together by Sunderland, and had again come back together when the influence of Sunderland had declined. Their opinions on public affairs almost always coincided. They were both men of frank, generous, and compassionate natures. Their intercourse had been for many years affectionate and cordial. But the ties of blood, of marriage, and of friendship, the memory of mutual services, the memory of common triumphs and common disasters, were insufficient to restrain that ambition which domineered over all the virtues and vices of Walpole. He was resolved, to use his own metaphor, that the firm of the house should be, not Townshend and Walpole, but Walpole and Townshend. At length the rivals proceeded to personal abuse before a large company, seized each other by the collar, and grasped their swords. The women squalled. The men parted the combatants. By friendly intervention the scandal of a duel between cousins, brothers-in-law, old friends, and old colleagues, was prevented. But the disputants could not long continue to act together. Townshend retired, and, with rare moderation and public spirit, refused to take any part in politics. He could not, he said, trust his temper. He feared that the recollection of his private wrongs might impel him to follow the example of Pulteney, and to oppose measures which he thought generally beneficial to the country. He therefore never visited London after his resignation, but passed the closing

years of his life in dignity and repose among his trees and pictures at Rainham.

Next went Chesterfield. He too was a Whig and a friend of the Protestant succession. He was an orator, a courtier, a wit, and a man of letters. He was at the head of ton in days when, in order to be at the head of ton, it was not sufficient to be dull and supercilious. It was evident that he submitted impatiently to the ascendency of Walpole. He murmured against the Excise Bill. His brothers voted against it in the House of Commons. The Minister acted with characteristic caution and characteristic energy; caution in the conduct of public affairs; energy where his own supremacy was concerned. He withdrew his Bill, and turned out all his hostile or wavering colleagues. Chesterfield was stopped on the great staircase of St. James's, and summoned to deliver up the staff which he bore as Lord Steward of the Household. A crowd of noble and powerful functionaries, the Dukes of Montrose and Bolton, Lord Burlington, Lord Stair, Lord Cobham, Lord Marchmont, Lord Clinton, were at the same time dismissed from the service of the Crown,

Not long after these events the Opposition was reinforced by the Duke of Argyle, a man vainglorious indeed and fickle, but brave, eloquent and popular. It was in a great measure owing to his exertions that the Act of Settlement had been peaceably carried into effect in England immediately after the death of Anne, and that the Jacobite rebellion which, during the following year, broke out in Scotland, had been suppressed. He too carried over to the minority the aid of his great name, his talents, and his paramount influence in his native country.

In each of these cases taken separately, a skilful defender of Walpole might perhaps make out a case for him. But when we see that during a long course of years all the footsteps are turned the same way, that all the most eminent of those public men who agreed with the Minister in their general views of policy left him, one after another, with sore and irritated minds, we find it impossible not to believe that the real explanation of the phaenomenon is to be found in the words of his son, "Sir Robert Walpole loved power so much that he would not endure a rival." Hume has described this famous minister with great felicity in one short sentence,--"moderate in exercising power, not equitable in engrossing it." Kind-hearted, jovial, and placable as Walpole was, he was yet a man with whom no person of high pretensions and high spirit could long continue to act. He had, therefore, to stand against an Opposition containing all the most accomplished statesmen of the age, with no better support than that which he received from persons like his brother Horace or Henry Pelham, whose industrious mediocrity gave no cause for jealousy, or from clever adventurers, whose situation and character diminished the dread which their talents might have inspired. To this last class belonged Fox, who was too poor to live without office; Sir William Yonge, of whom Walpole himself said, that

"Nothing but such parts could buoy up such a character, and that nothing but such a character could drag down such parts; and Winnington, whose private morals lay, justly or unjustly, under imputations of the worst kind."

The discontented Whigs were, not perhaps in number, but certainly in ability, experience, and weight, by far the most important part of the Opposition. The Tories furnished little more than rows of ponderous foxhunters, fat with Staffordshire or Devonshire ale, men who drank to the King over the water, and believed that all the fundholders were Jews, men whose religion consisted in hating the Dissenters, and whose political researches had led them to fear, like Squire Western, that their land might be sent over to Hanover to be put in the sinking-fund. The eloquence of these zealous squires, and remnant of the once formidable October Club, seldom went beyond a hearty Aye or No. Very few members of this party had distinguished themselves much in Parliament, or could, under any circumstances, have been called to fill any high office; and those few had generally, like Sir William Wyndham, learned in the company of their new associates the doctrines of toleration and political liberty, and might indeed with strict propriety be called Whigs.

It was to the Whigs in Opposition, the Patriots, as they were called, that the most distinguished of the English youth who at this season entered into public life attached themselves. These inexperienced politicians felt all the enthusiasm which the name of liberty naturally excites in young and ardent minds. They conceived that the theory of the Tory Opposition and the practice of Walpole’s Government were alike inconsistent with the principles of liberty. They accordingly repaired to the standard which Pulteney had set up. While opposing the Whig minister, they professed a firm adherence to the purest doctrines of Whiggism. He was the schismatic; they were the true Catholics, the peculiar people, the depositaries of the orthodox faith of Hampden and Russell, the one sect which, amidst the corruptions generated by time and by the long possession of power, had preserved inviolate the principles of the Revolution. Of the young men who attached themselves to this portion of the Opposition the most distinguished were Lyttelton and Pitt.

When Pitt entered Parliament, the whole political world was attentively watching the progress of an event which soon added great strength to the Opposition, and particularly to that section of the Opposition in which the young statesman enrolled himself. The Prince of Wales was gradually becoming more and more estranged from his father and his father’s ministers, and more and more friendly to the Patriots.

Nothing is more natural than that, in a monarchy where a constitutional Opposition exists, the heir-apparent of the throne should put himself at the head of that Opposition. He is impelled to such a course by every feeling of ambition and of vanity. He

cannot be more than second in the estimation of the party which is in. He is sure to be the first member of the party which is out. The highest favour which the existing administration can expect from him is that he will not discard them. But, if he joins the Opposition, all his associates expect that he will promote them; and the feelings which men entertain towards one from whom they hope to obtain great advantages which they have not are far warmer than the feelings with which they regard one who, at the very utmost, can only leave them in possession of what they already have. An heir-apparent, therefore, who wishes to enjoy, in the highest perfection, all the pleasure that can be derived from eloquent flattery and profound respect, will always join those who are struggling to force themselves into power. This is, we believe, the true explanation of a fact which Lord Granville attributed to some natural peculiarity in the illustrious House of Brunswick. "This family," said he at Council, we suppose after his daily half-gallon of Burgundy, "always has quarrelled, and always will quarrel, from generation to generation." He should have known something of the matter; for he had been a favourite with three successive generations of the royal house. We cannot quite admit his explanation; but the fact is indisputable. Since the accession of George the First, there have been four Princes of Wales, and they have all been almost constantly in Opposition.

Whatever might have been the motives which induced Prince Frederick to join the party opposed to the Government, his support infused into many members of that party a courage and an energy of which they stood greatly in need. Hitherto it had been impossible for the discontented Whigs not to feel some misgivings when they found themselves dividing night after night, with uncompromising Jacobites who were known to be in constant communication with the exiled family, or with Tories who had impeached Somers, who had murmured against Harley and St. John as too remiss in the cause of the Church and the landed interest, and who, if they were not inclined to attack the reigning family, yet considered the introduction of that family as, at best, only the least of two great evils, as a necessary but painful and humiliating preservative against Popery. The Minister might plausibly say that Pulteney and Carteret, in the hope of gratifying their own appetite for office and for revenge, did not scruple to serve the purposes of a faction hostile to the Protestant succession. The appearance of Frederick at the head of the Patriots silenced this reproach. The leaders of the Opposition might now boast that their course was sanctioned by a person as deeply interested as the King himself in maintaining the Act of Settlement, and that, instead of serving the purposes of the Tory party, they had brought that party over to the side of Whiggism. It must indeed be admitted that, though both the King and the Prince behaved in a manner little to their honour, though the father acted harshly, the son disrespectfully, and both childishly, the royal family was rather strengthened than weakened by the disagreement of its two most distinguished members. A large class of politicians, who

had considered themselves as placed under sentence of perpetual exclusion from office, and who, in their despair, had been almost ready to join in a counter-revolution as the only mode of removing the proscription under which they lay, now saw with pleasure an easier and safer road to power opening before them, and thought it far better to wait till, in the natural course of things, the Crown should descend to the heir of the House of Brunswick, than to risk their lands and their necks in a rising for the House of Stuart. The situation of the royal family resembled the situation of those Scotch families in which father and son took opposite sides during the rebellion, in order that, come what might, the estate might not be forfeited.

In April 1736, Frederick was married to the Princess of Saxe Gotha, with whom he afterwards lived on terms very similar to those on which his father had lived with Queen Caroline. The Prince adored his wife, and thought her in mind and person the most attractive of her sex. But he thought that conjugal fidelity was an unprincely virtue; and, in order to be like Henry the Fourth, and the Regent Orleans, he affected a libertinism for which he had no taste, and frequently quitted the only woman whom he loved for ugly and disagreeable mistresses.

The address which the House of Commons presented to the King on the occasion of the Prince’s marriage was moved, not by the Minister, but by Pulteney, the leader of the Whigs in Opposition. It was on this motion that Pitt, who had not broken silence during the session in which he took his seat, addressed the House for the first time. "A contemporary historian," says Mr. Thackeray, "describes Mr. Pitt’s first speech as superior even to the models of ancient eloquence. According to Tindal, it was more ornamented than the speeches of Demosthenes, and less diffuse than those of Cicero." This unmeaning phrase has been a hundred times quoted. That it should ever have been quoted, except to be laughed at, is strange. The vogue which it has obtained may serve to show in how slovenly a way most people are content to think. Did Tindal, who first used it, or Archdeacon Coxe and Mr. Thackeray, who have borrowed it, ever in their lives hear any speaking which did not deserve the same compliment? Did they ever hear speaking less ornamented than that of Demosthenes, or more diffuse than that of Cicero? We know no living orator, from Lord Brougham down to Mr. Hunt, who is not entitled to the same eulogy. It would be no very flattering compliment to a man’s figure to say, that he was taller than the Polish Count, and shorter than Giant O’Brien, fatter than the Anatomie Vivante, and more slender than Daniel Lambert.

Pitt’s speech, as it is reported in the Gentleman’s Magazine, certainly deserves Tindal’s compliment, and deserves no other. It is just as empty and wordy as a maiden speech on such an occasion might be expected to be. But the fluency and the personal advantages of the young orator instantly caught the ear and eye of his audience. He was, from the day of his first appearance,

always heard with attention; and exercise soon developed the great powers which he possessed.

In our time, the audience of a member of Parliament is the nation. The three or four hundred persons who may be present while a speech is delivered may be pleased or disgusted by the voice and action of the orator; but, in the reports which are read the next day by hundreds of thousands, the difference between the noblest and the meanest figure, between the richest and the shrillest tones, between the most graceful and the most uncouth gesture, altogether vanishes. A hundred years ago, scarcely any report of what passed within the walls of the House of Commons was suffered to get abroad. In those times, therefore, the impression which a speaker might make on the persons who actually heard him was everything. His fame out of doors depended entirely on the report of those who were within the doors. In the Parliaments of that time, therefore, as in the ancient commonwealths, those qualifications which enhance the immediate effect of a speech, were far more important ingredients in the composition of an orator than at present. All those qualifications Pitt possessed in the highest degree. On the stage, he would have been the finest Brutus or Coriolanus ever seen. Those who saw him in his decay, when his health was broken, when his mind was untuned, when he had been removed from that stormy assembly of which he thoroughly knew the temper, and over which he possessed unbounded influence, to a small, a torpid, and an unfriendly audience, say that his speaking was then, for the most part, a low, monotonous muttering, audible only to those who sat close to him, that when violently excited, he sometimes raised his voice for a few minutes, but that it sank again into an unintelligible murmur. Such was the Earl of Chatham, but such was not William Pitt. His figure, when he first appeared in Parliament, was strikingly graceful and commanding, his features high and noble, his eye full of fire. His voice, even when it sank to a whisper, was heard to the remotest benches; and when he strained it to its full extent, the sound rose like the swell of the organ of a great Cathedral, shook the house with its peal, and was heard through lobbies and down staircases to the Court of Requests and the precincts of Westminster Hall. He cultivated all these eminent advantages with the most assiduous care. His action is described by a very malignant observer as equal to that of Garrick. His play of countenance was wonderful: he frequently disconcerted a hostile orator by a single glance of indignation or scorn. Every tone, from the impassioned cry to the thrilling aside, was perfectly at his command. It is by no means improbable that the pains which he took to improve his great personal advantages had, in some respects, a prejudicial operation, and tended to nourish in him that passion for theatrical effect which, as we have already remarked, was one of the most conspicuous blemishes in his character.

But it was not solely or principally to outward accomplishments that Pitt owed the vast influence which, during nearly thirty

years, he exercised over the House of Commons. He was undoubtedly a great orator; and, from the descriptions given by his contemporaries, and the fragments of his speeches which still remain, it is not difficult to discover the nature and extent of his oratorical powers.

He was no speaker of set speeches. His few prepared discourses were complete failures. The elaborate panegyric which he pronounced on General Wolfe was considered as the very worst of all his performances. "No man," says a critic who had often heard him, "ever knew so little what he was going to say." Indeed, his facility amounted to a vice. He was not the master, but the slave of his own speech. So little self-command had he when once he felt the impulse, that he did not like to take part in a debate when his mind was full of an important secret of state. "I must sit still," he once said to Lord Shelburne on such an occasion; "for, when once I am up, everything that is in my mind comes out."

Yet he was not a great debater. That he should not have been so when first he entered the House of Commons is not strange. Scarcely any person has ever become so without long practice and many failures. It was by slow degrees, as Burke said, that Charles Fox became the most brilliant and powerful debater that ever lived. Charles Fox himself attributed his own success to the resolution which he formed when very young, of speaking, well or ill, at least once every night. "During five whole sessions," he used to say, "I spoke every night but one; and I regret only that I did not speak on that night too." Indeed, with the exception of Mr. Stanley, whose knowledge of the science of parliamentary defence resembles an instinct, it would be difficult to name any eminent debater who has not made himself a master of his art at the expense of his audience.

But, as this art is one which even the ablest men have seldom acquired without long practice, so it is one which men of respectable abilities, with assiduous and intrepid practice, seldom fail to acquire. It is singular that, in such an art, Pitt, a man of great parts, of great fluency, of great boldness, a man whose whole life was passed in parliamentary conflict, a man who, during several years, was the leading minister of the Crown in the House of Commons, should never have attained to high excellence. He spoke without premeditation; but his speech followed the course of his own thoughts, and not the course of the previous discussion. He could, indeed, treasure up in his memory some detached expression of an opponent, and make it the text for lively ridicule or solemn reprehension. Some of the most celebrated bursts of his eloquence were called forth by an unguarded word, a laugh, or a cheer. But this was the only sort of reply in which he appears to have excelled. He was perhaps the only great English orator who did not think it any advantage to have the last word, and who generally spoke by choice before his most formidable antagonists. His merit was almost entirely

rhetorical. He did not succeed either in exposition or in refutation; but his speeches abounded with lively illustrations, striking apophthegms, well-told anecdotes, happy allusions, passionate appeals. His invective and sarcasm were terrific. Perhaps no English orator was ever so much feared.

But that which gave most effect to his declamation was the air of sincerity, of vehement feeling, of moral elevation, which belonged to all that he said. His style was not always in the purest taste. Several contemporary judges pronounced it too florid. Walpole, in the midst of the rapturous eulogy which he pronounces on one of Pitt's greatest orations, owns that some of the metaphors were too forced. Some of Pitt's quotations and classical stories are too trite for a clever schoolboy. But these were niceties for which the audience cared little. The enthusiasm of the orator infected all who heard him; his ardour and his noble bearing put fire into the most frigid conceit, and gave dignity to the most puerile allusion.

His powers soon began to give annoyance to the Government; and Walpole determined to make an example of the patriotic cornet. Pitt was accordingly dismissed from the service. Mr. Thackeray says that the Minister took this step, because he plainly saw that it would have been vain to think of buying over so honourable and disinterested an opponent. We do not dispute Pitt's integrity; but we do not know what proof he had given of it when he was turned out of the army; and we are sure that Walpole was not likely to give credit for inflexible honesty to a young adventurer who had never had an opportunity of refusing anything. The truth is, that it was not Walpole's practice to buy off enemies. Mr. Burke truly says, in the Appeal to the Old Whigs, that Walpole gained very few over from the Opposition. Indeed that great minister knew his business far too well. He, knew that, for one mouth which is stopped with a place, fifty other mouths will he instantly opened. He knew that it would have been very bad policy in him to give the world to understand that more was to be got by thwarting his measures than by supporting them. These maxims are as old as the origin of parliamentary corruption in England. Pepys learned them, as he tells us, from the counsellors of Charles the Second.

Pitt was no loser. He was made Groom of the Bedchamber to the Prince of Wales, and continued to declaim against the ministers with unabated violence and with increasing ability. The question of maritime right, then agitated between Spain and England, called forth all his powers. He clamoured for war with a vehemence which it is not easy to reconcile with reason or humanity, but which appears to Mr. Thackeray worthy of the highest admiration. We will not stop to argue a point on which we had long thought that all well-informed people were agreed. We could easily show, we think, that, if any respect be due to international law, if right, where societies of men are concerned, be anything but another name for might, if we do not

adopt the doctrine of the Buccaneers, which seems to be also the doctrine of Mr. Thackeray, that treaties mean nothing within thirty degrees of the line, the war with Spain was altogether unjustifiable. But the truth is, that the promoters of that war have saved the historian the trouble of trying them. They have pleaded guilty. "I have seen," says Burke, "and with some care examined, the original documents concerning certain important transactions of those times. They perfectly satisfied me of the extreme injustice of that war, and of the falsehood of the colours which Walpole, to his ruin, and guided by a mistaken policy, suffered to be daubed over that measure. Some years after, it was my fortune to converse with many of the principal actors against that minister, and with those who principally excited that clamour. None of them, no, not one, did in the least defend the measure, or attempt to justify their conduct. They condemned it as freely as they would have done in commenting upon any proceeding in history in which they were totally unconcerned." Pitt, on subsequent occasions, gave ample proof that he was one of these penitents. But his conduct, even where it appeared most criminal to himself, appears admirable to his biographer.

The elections of 1741 were unfavourable to Walpole; and after a long and obstinate struggle he found it necessary to resign. The Duke of Newcastle and Lord Hardwicke opened a negotiation with the leading Patriots, in the hope of forming an administration on a Whig basis. At this conjuncture, Pitt and those persons who were most nearly connected with him acted in a manner very little to their honour. They attempted to come to an understanding with Walpole, and offered, if he would use his influence with the King in their favour, to screen him from prosecution. They even went so far as to engage for the concurrence of the Prince of Wales. But Walpole knew that the assistance of the Boys, as he called the young Patriots, would avail him nothing if Pulteney and Carteret should prove intractable, and would be superfluous if the great leaders of the Opposition could be gained. He, therefore, declined the proposal. It is remarkable that Mr. Thackeray, who has thought it worth while to preserve Pitt’s bad college verses, has not even alluded to this story, a story which is supported by strong testimony, and which may be found in so common a book as Coxe’s Life of Walpole.

The new arrangements disappointed almost every member of the Opposition, and none more than Pitt. He was not invited to become a place-man; and he therefore stuck firmly to his old trade of patriot. Fortunate it was for him that he did so. Had he taken office at this time, he would in all probability have shared largely in the unpopularity of Pulteney, Sandys, and Carteret. He was now the fiercest and most implacable of those who called for vengeance on Walpole. He spoke with great energy and ability in favour of the most unjust and violent propositions which the enemies of the fallen minister could invent. He urged the House of Commons to appoint a secret tribunal for the purpose of

investigating the conduct of the late First Lord of the Treasury. This was done. The great majority of the inquisitors were notoriously hostile to the accused statesman. Yet they were compelled to own that they could find no fault in him. They therefore called for new powers, for a bill of indemnity to witnesses, or, in plain words, for a bill to reward all who might give evidence, true or false, against the Earl of Orford. This bill Pitt supported, Pitt, who had himself offered to be a screen between Lord Orford and public justice. These are melancholy facts. Mr. Thackeray omits them, or hurries over them as fast as he can; and, as eulogy is his business, he is in the right to do so. But, though there are many parts of the life of Pitt which it is more agreeable to contemplate, we know none more instructive. What must have been the general state of political morality, when a young man, considered, and justly considered, as the most public-spirited and spotless statesman of his time, could attempt to force his way into office by means so disgraceful!

The Bill of Indemnity was rejected by the Lords. Walpole withdrew himself quietly from the public eye; and the ample space which he had left vacant was soon occupied by Carteret. Against Carteret Pitt began to thunder with as much zeal as he had ever manifested against Sir Robert. To Carteret he transferred most of the hard names which were familiar to his eloquence, sole minister, wicked minister, odious minister, execrable minister. The chief topic of Pitt's invective was the favour shown to the German dominions of the House of Brunswick. He attacked with great violence, and with an ability which raised him to the very first rank among the parliamentary speakers, the practice of paying Hanoverian troops with English money. The House of Commons had lately lost some of its most distinguished ornaments. Walpole and Pulteney had accepted peerages; Sir William Wyndham was dead; and among the rising men none could be considered as, on the whole, a match for Pitt.

During the recess of 1744, the old Duchess of Marlborough died. She carried to her grave the reputation of being decidedly the best hater of her time. Yet her love had been infinitely more destructive than her hatred. More than thirty years before, her temper had ruined the party to which she belonged and the husband whom she adored. Time had made her neither wiser nor kinder. Whoever was at any moment great and prosperous was the object of her fiercest detestation. She had hated Walpole; she now hated Carteret. Pope, long before her death, predicted the fate of her vast property.

"To heirs unknown descends the unguarded store,
Or wanders, heaven-directed, to the poor."

Pitt was then one of the poor; and to him Heaven directed a portion of the wealth of the haughty Dowager. She left him a legacy of ten thousand pounds, in consideration of "the noble defence he had made for the support of the laws of England, and

to prevent the ruin of his country."

The will was made in August--The Duchess died in October. In November Pitt was a courtier. The Pelhams had forced the King, much against his will, to part with Lord Carteret, who had now become Earl Granville. They proceeded, after this victory, to form the Government on that basis, called by the cant name of "the broad bottom." Lyttelton had a seat at the Treasury, and several other friends of Pitt were provided for. But Pitt himself was, for the present, forced to be content with promises. The King resented most highly some expressions which the ardent orator had used in the debate on the Hanoverian troops. But Newcastle and Pelham, expressed the strongest confidence that time and their exertions would soften the royal displeasure.

Pitt, on his part, omitted nothing that might facilitate his admission to office. He resigned his place in the household of Prince Frederick, and, when Parliament met, exerted his eloquence in support of the Government. The Pelhams were really sincere in their endeavours to remove the strong prejudices which had taken root in the King’s mind. They knew that Pitt was not a man to be deceived with ease or offended with impunity. They were afraid that they should not be long able to put him off with promises. Nor was it their interest so to put him off. There was a strong tie between him and them. He was the enemy of their enemy. The brothers hated and dreaded the eloquent, aspiring, and imperious Granville. They had traced his intrigues in many quarters. They knew his influence over the royal mind. They knew that, as soon as a favourable opportunity should arrive, he would be recalled to the head of affairs. They resolved to bring things to a crisis; and the question on which they took issue with their master was whether Pitt should or should not be admitted to office. They chose their time with more skill than generosity. It was when rebellion was actually raging in Britain, when the Pretender was master of the northern extremity of the island, that they tendered their resignations. The King found himself deserted, in one day, by the whole strength of that party which had placed his family on the throne. Lord Granville tried to form a Government; but it soon appeared that the parliamentary interest of the Pelhams was irresistible, and that the King’s favourite statesman could count only on about thirty Lords and eighty members of the House of Commons. The scheme was given up. Granville went away laughing. The ministers came back stronger than ever; and the King was now no longer able to refuse anything that they might be pleased to demand. He could only mutter that it was very hard that Newcastle, who was not fit to be chamberlain to the most insignificant prince in Germany, should dictate to the King of England.

One concession the ministers graciously made. They agreed that Pitt should not be placed in a situation in which it would be necessary for him to have frequent interviews with the King. Instead, therefore, of making their new ally Secretary at War as

they had intended, they appointed him Vice-Treasurer of Ireland, and in a few months promoted him to the office of Paymaster of the Forces.

This was, at that time, one of the most lucrative offices in the Government. The salary was but a small part of the emolument which the Paymaster derived from his place. He was allowed to keep a large sum, which, even in time of peace, was seldom less than one hundred thousand pounds, constantly in his hands; and the interest on this sum he might appropriate to his own use. This practice was not secret, nor was it considered as disreputable. It was the practice of men of undoubted honour, both before and after the time of Pitt. He, however, refused to accept one farthing beyond the salary which the law had annexed to his office. It had been usual for foreign princes who received the pay of England to give to the Paymaster of the Forces a small percentage on the subsidies. These ignominious veils Pitt resolutely declined.

Disinterestedness of this kind was, in his days, very rare. His conduct surprised and amused politicians. It excited the warmest admiration throughout the body of the people. In spite of the inconsistencies of which Pitt had been guilty, in spite of the strange contrast between his violence in Opposition and his tameness in office, he still possessed a large share of the public confidence. The motives which may lead a politician to change his connections or his general line of conduct are often obscure; but disinterestedness in pecuniary matters everybody can understand. Pitt was thenceforth considered as a man who was proof to all sordid temptations. If he acted ill, it might be from an error in judgment; it might be from resentment; it might be from ambition. But poor as he was, he had vindicated himself from all suspicion of covetousness.

Eight quiet years followed, eight years during which the minority, which had been feeble ever since Lord Granville had been overthrown, continued to dwindle till it became almost invisible. Peace was made with France and Spain in 1748. Prince Frederick died in 1751; and with him died the very semblance of opposition. All the most distinguished survivors of the party which had supported Walpole and of the party which had opposed him, were united under his successor. The fiery and vehement spirit of Pitt had for a time been laid to rest. He silently acquiesced in that very system of continental measures which he had lately condemned. He ceased to talk disrespectfully about Hanover. He did not object to the treaty with Spain, though that treaty left us exactly where we had been when he uttered his spirit-stirring harangues against the pacific policy of Walpole. Now and then glimpses of his former self appeared; but they were few and transient. Pelham knew with whom he had to deal, and felt that an ally, so little used to control, and so capable of inflicting injury, might well be indulged in an occasional fit of waywardness.

Two men, little, if at all inferior to Pitt in powers of mind, held, like him, subordinate offices in the Government. One of these, Murray, was successively Solicitor-General and Attorney-General. This distinguished person far surpassed Pitt in correctness of taste, in power of reasoning, in depth and variety of knowledge. His parliamentary eloquence never blazed into sudden flashes of dazzling brilliancy; but its clear, placid, and mellow splendour was never for an instant overclouded. Intellectually he was, we believe, fully equal to Pitt; but he was deficient in the moral qualities to which Pitt owed most of his success. Murray wanted the energy, the courage, the all-grasping and all-risking ambition, which make men great in stirring times. His heart was a little cold, his temper cautious even to timidity, his manners decorous even to formality. He never exposed his fortunes or his fame to any risk which he could avoid. At one time he might, in all probability, have been Prime Minister. But the object of his wishes was the judicial bench. The situation of Chief justice might not be so splendid as that of First Lord of the Treasury; but it was dignified; it was quiet; it was secure; and therefore it was the favourite situation of Murray.

Fox, the father of the great man whose mighty efforts in the cause of peace, of truth, and of liberty, have made that name immortal, was Secretary-at-War. He was a favourite with the King, with the Duke of Cumberland, and with some of the most powerful members of the great Whig connection. His parliamentary talents were of the highest order. As a speaker he was in almost all respects the very opposite to Pitt. His figure was ungraceful; his face, as Reynolds and Nollekens have preserved it to us, indicated a strong understanding; but the features were coarse, and the general aspect dark and lowering. His manner was awkward; his delivery was hesitating; he was often at a stand for want of a word; but as a debater, as a master of that keen, weighty, manly logic, which is suited to the discussion of political questions, he has perhaps never been surpassed except by his son. In reply he was as decidedly superior to Pitt as in declamation he was Pitt's inferior. Intellectually the balance was nearly even between the rivals. But here, again, the moral qualities of Pitt turned the scale. Fox had undoubtedly many virtues. In natural disposition as well as in talents, he bore a great resemblance to his more celebrated son. He had the same sweetness of temper, the same strong passions, the same openness, boldness, and impetuosity, the same cordiality towards friends, the same placability towards enemies. No man was more warmly or justly beloved by his family or by his associates. But unhappily he had been trained in a bad political school, in a school, the doctrines of which were, that political virtue is the mere coquetry of political prostitution, that every patriot has his price, that government can be carried on only by means of corruption, and that the State is given as a prey to statesmen. These maxims were too much in vogue throughout the lower ranks of

Walpole's party, and were too much encouraged by Walpole himself, who, from contempt of what, is in our day vulgarly called humbug; often ran extravagantly and offensively into the opposite extreme. The loose political morality of Fox presented a remarkable contrast to the ostentatious purity of Pitt. The nation distrusted the former, and placed implicit confidence in the latter. But almost all the statesmen of the age had still to learn that the confidence of the nation was worth having. While things went on quietly, while there was no opposition, while everything was given by the favour of a small ruling junto, Fox had a decided advantage over Pitt; but when dangerous times came, when Europe was convulsed with war, when Parliament was broken up into factions, when the public mind was violently excited, the favourite of the people rose to supreme power, while his rival sank into insignificance.

Early in the year 1754 Henry Pelham died unexpectedly. "Now I shall have no more peace," exclaimed the old King, when he heard the news. He was in the right. Pelham had succeeded in bringing together and keeping together all the talents of the kingdom. By his death, the highest post to which an English subject can aspire was left vacant; and at the same moment, the influence which had yoked together and reined-in so many turbulent and ambitious spirits was withdrawn.

Within a week after Pelham's death, it was determined that the Duke of Newcastle should be placed at the head of the Treasury; but the arrangement was still far from complete. Who was to be the leading Minister of the Crown in the House of Commons? Was the office to be intrusted to a man of eminent talents? And would not such a man in such a place demand and obtain a larger share of power and patronage than Newcastle would be disposed to concede? Was a mere drudge to be employed? And what probability was there that a mere drudge would be able to manage a large and stormy assembly, abounding with able and experienced men?

Pope has said of that wretched miser Sir John Cutler,

"Cutler saw tenants break and houses fall
For very want: he could not build a wall."

Newcastle's love of power resembled Cutler's love of money. It was an avarice which thwarted itself, a penny-wise and pound-foolish cupidity. An immediate outlay was so painful to him that he would not venture to make the most desirable improvement. If he could have found it in his heart to cede at once a portion of his authority, he might probably have ensured the continuance of what remained. But he thought it better to construct a weak and rotten government, which tottered at the smallest breath, and fell in the first storm, than to pay the necessary price for sound and durable materials. He wished to find some person who would be willing to accept the lead of the House of Commons on terms similar to those on which Secretary Craggs had acted under

Sunderland, five-and-thirty years before. Craggs could hardly be called a minister. He was a mere agent for the Minister. He was not trusted with the higher secrets of State, but obeyed implicitly the directions of his superior, and was, to use Doddington's expression, merely Lord Sunderland's man. But times were changed. Since the days of Sunderland, the importance of the House of Commons had been constantly on the increase. During many years, the person who conducted the business of the Government in that House had almost always been Prime Minister. In these circumstances, it was not to be supposed that any that any person who possessed the talents necessary for the situation would stoop to accept it on such terms as Newcastle was disposed to offer.

Pitt was ill at Bath; and, had he been well and in London, neither the King nor Newcastle would have been disposed to make any overtures to him. The cool and wary Murray had set his heart on professional objects. Negotiations were opened with Fox. Newcastle behaved like himself, that is to say, childishly and basely, The proposition which he made was that Fox should be Secretary of State, with the lead of the House of Commons; that the disposal of the secret-service money, or, in plain words, the business of buying members of Parliament, should be left to the First Lord of the Treasury; but that Fox should be exactly informed of the way in which this fund was employed.

To these conditions Fox assented. But the next day everything was in confusion. Newcastle had changed his mind. The conversation which took place between Fox and the Duke is one of the most curious in English history. "My brother," said Newcastle, "when he was at the Treasury, never told anybody what he did with the secret-service money. No more will I." The answer was obvious. Pelham had been not only First Lord of the Treasury, but also manager of the House of Commons; and it was therefore unnecessary for him to confide to any other person his dealings with the members of that House. "But how," said Fox, "can I lead in the Commons without information on this head? How can I talk to gentlemen when I do not know which of them have received gratifications and which have not? And who," he continued, "is to have the disposal of places?"--"I myself," said the Duke. "How then am I to manage the House of Commons?"-- "Oh, let the members of the House of Commons come to me." Fox then mentioned the general election which was approaching, and asked how the ministerial boroughs were to be filled up. "Do not trouble yourself", said Newcastle; "that is all settled." This was too much for human nature to bear. Fox refused to accept the Secretaryship of State on such terms; and the Duke confided the management of the House of Commons to a dull, harmless man, whose name is almost forgotten in our time, Sir Thomas Robinson.

When Pitt returned from Bath, he affected great moderation, though his haughty soul was boiling with resentment. He did not complain of the manner in which he had been passed by, but said openly that, in his opinion, Fox was the fittest man to lead the

House of Commons. The rivals, reconciled by their common interest and their common enmities, concerted a plan of operations for the next session. "Sir Thomas Robinson lead us!" said Pitt to Fox. "The Duke might as well send his jack-boot to lead us."

The elections of 1754 were favourable to the administration. But the aspect of foreign affairs was threatening. In India the English and the French had been employed, ever since the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, in cutting each other's throats. They had lately taken to the same practice in America. It might have been foreseen that stirring times were at hand, times which would call for abilities very different from those of Newcastle and Robinson.

In November the Parliament met; and before the end of that month the new Secretary of State had been so unmercifully baited by the Paymaster of the Forces and the Secretary-at-War that he was thoroughly sick of his situation. Fox attacked him with great force and acrimony. Pitt affected a kind of contemptuous tenderness for Sir Thomas, and directed his attacks principally against Newcastle. On one occasion he asked in tones of thunder whether Parliament sat only to register the edicts of one too powerful subject? The Duke was scared out of his wits. He was afraid to dismiss the mutineers, he was afraid to promote them; but it was absolutely necessary to do something. Fox, as the less proud and intractable of the refractory pair, was preferred. A seat in the Cabinet was offered to him on condition that he would give efficient support to the ministry in Parliament. In an evil hour for his fame and his fortunes he accepted the offer, and abandoned his connection with Pitt, who never forgave this desertion.

Sir Thomas, assisted by Fox, contrived to get through the business of the year without much trouble. Pitt was waiting his time. The negotiations pending between France and England took every day a more unfavourable aspect. Towards the close of the session the King sent a message to inform the House of Commons that he had found it necessary to make preparations for war. The House returned an address of thanks, and passed a vote of credit. During the recess, the old animosity of both nations was inflamed by a series of disastrous events. An English force was cut off in America and several French merchantmen were taken in the West Indian seas. It was plain that an appeal to arms was at hand.

The first object of the King was to secure Hanover; and Newcastle was disposed to gratify his master. Treaties were concluded, after the fashion of those times, with several petty German princes, who bound themselves to find soldiers if England would find money; and, as it was suspected that Frederic the Second had set his heart on the electoral dominions of his uncle, Russia was hired to keep Prussia in awe.

When the stipulations of these treaties were made known, there

arose throughout the kingdom a murmur from which a judicious observer might easily prognosticate the approach of a tempest. Newcastle encountered strong opposition, even from those whom he had always considered as his tools. Legge, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, refused to sign the Treasury warrants, which were necessary to give effect to the treaties. Those persons who were supposed to possess the confidence of the young Prince of Wales and of his mother held very menacing language. In this perplexity Newcastle sent for Pitt, hugged him, patted him, smirked at him, wept over him, and lisped out the highest compliments and the most splendid promises. The King, who had hitherto been as sulky as possible, would be civil to him at the levee; he should be brought into the Cabinet; he should be consulted about everything; if he would only be so good as to support the Hessian subsidy in the House of Commons. Pitt coldly declined the proffered scat in the Cabinet, expressed the highest love and reverence for the King, and said that, if his Majesty felt a strong personal interest in the Hessian treaty he would so far deviate from the line which he had traced out for himself as to give that treaty his support. "Well, and the Russian subsidy," said Newcastle. "No," said Pitt, "not a system of subsidies." The Duke summoned Lord Hardwicke to his aid; but Pitt was inflexible. Murray would do nothing. Robinson could do nothing. It was necessary to have recourse to Fox. He became Secretary of State, with the full authority of a leader in the House of Commons; and Sir Thomas was pensioned off on the Irish establishment.

In November 1755, the Houses met. Public expectation was wound up to the height. After ten quiet years there was to be an Opposition, countenanced by the heir-apparent of the throne, and headed by the most brilliant orator of the age. The debate on the address was long remembered as one of the parliamentary conflicts of that generation. It began at three in the afternoon, and lasted till five the next morning. It was on this night that Gerard Hamilton delivered that single speech from which his nickname was derived. His eloquence threw into the shade every orator, except Pitt, who declaimed against the subsidies for an hour and a half with extraordinary energy and effect. Those powers which had formerly spread terror through the majorities of Walpole and Carteret were now displayed in their highest perfection before an audience long unaccustomed to such exhibitions. One fragment of this celebrated oration remains in a state of tolerable preservation. It is the comparison between the coalition of Fox and Newcastle, and the junction of the Rhone and the Saone. "At Lyons," said Pitt, "I was taken to see the place where the two rivers meet, the one gentle, feeble, languid, and though languid, yet of no depth, the other a boisterous and impetuous torrent: but different as they are, they meet at last." The amendment moved by the Opposition was rejected by a great majority; and Pitt and Legge were immediately dismissed from their offices.

During several months the contest in the House of Commons was extremely sharp. Warm debates took place in the estimates, debates still warmer on the subsidiary treaties. The Government succeeded in every division; but the fame of Pitt's eloquence, and the influence of his lofty and determined character, continued to increase through the Session; and the events which followed the prorogation made it utterly impossible for any other person to manage the Parliament or the country.

The war began in every part of the world with events disastrous to England, and even more shameful than disastrous. But the most humiliating of these events was the loss of Minorca. The Duke of Richelieu, an old fop who had passed his life from sixteen to sixty in seducing women for whom he cared not one straw, landed on that island, and succeeded in reducing it. Admiral Byng was sent from Gibraltar to throw succours into Port-Mahon; but he did not think fit to engage the French squadron, and sailed back without having effected his purpose. The people were inflamed to madness. A storm broke forth, which appalled even those who remembered the days of Excise and of South-Sea. The shops were filled with libels and caricatures. The walls were covered with placards. The city of London called for vengeance, and the cry was echoed from every corner of the kingdom. Dorsetshire, Huntingdonshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Somersetshire, Lancashire, Suffolk, Shropshire, Surrey, sent up strong addresses to the throne, and instructed their representatives to vote for a strict inquiry into the causes of the late disasters. In the great towns the feeling was as strong as in the counties. In some of the instructions it was even recommended that the supplies should be stopped.

The nation was in a state of angry and sullen despondency, almost unparalleled in history. People have, in all ages, been in the habit of talking about the good old times of their ancestors, and the degeneracy of their contemporaries. This is in general merely a cant. But in 1756 it was something more. At this time appeared Brown's Estimate, a book now remembered only by the allusions in Cowper's Table Talk and in Burke's Letters on a Regicide Peace. It was universally read, admired, and believed. The author fully convinced his readers that they were a race of cowards and scoundrels; that nothing could save them; that they were on the point of being enslaved by their enemies, and that they richly deserved their fate. Such were the speculations to which ready credence was given at the outset of the most glorious war in which England had ever been engaged.

Newcastle now began to tremble for his place, and for the only thing which was dearer to him than his place, his neck. The people were not in a mood to be trifled with. Their cry was for blood. For this once they might be contented with the sacrifice of Byng. But what if fresh disasters should take place? What if an unfriendly sovereign should ascend the throne? What if a hostile House of Commons should be chosen?

At length, in October, the decisive crisis came. The new Secretary of State had been long sick of the perfidy and levity of the First Lord of the Treasury, and began to fear that he might be made a scapegoat to save the old intriguer who, imbecile as he seemed never wanted dexterity where danger was to be avoided. Fox threw up his office, Newcastle had recourse to Murray; but Murray had now within his reach the favourite object of his ambition. The situation of Chief-Justice of the King's Bench was vacant; and the Attorney-General was fully resolved to obtain it, or to go into Opposition. Newcastle offered him any terms, the Duchy of Lancaster for life, a teller-ship of the Exchequer, any amount of pension, two thousand a year, six thousand a year. When the Ministers found that Murrays mind was made up, they pressed for delay, the delay of a session, a month, a week, a day. Would he only make his appearance once more in the House of Commons? Would he only speak in favour of the address? He was inexorable, and peremptorily said that they might give or withhold the Chief-Justiceship, but that he would be Attorney-General no longer

Newcastle now contrived to overcome the prejudices of the King, and overtures were made to Pitt, through Lord Hardwicke. Pitt knew his power, and showed that he knew it. He demanded as an indispensable condition that Newcastle should be altogether excluded from the new arrangement.

The Duke was in a state of ludicrous distress. He ran about chattering and crying, asking advice and listening to none. In the meantime, the Session drew near. The public excitement was unabated. Nobody could be found to face Pitt and Fox in the House of Commons. Newcastle's heart failed him, and he tendered his resignation.

The King sent for Fox, and directed him to form the plan of an administration in concert with Pitt. But Pitt had not forgotten old injuries, and positively refused to act with Fox.

The King now applied to the Duke of Devonshire, and this mediator succeeded in making an arrangement. He consented to take the Treasury. Pitt became Secretary of State, with the lead of the House of Commons. The Great Seal was put into commission. Legge returned to the Exchequer; and Lord Temple, whose sister Pitt had lately married, was placed at the head of the Admiralty.

It was clear from the first that this administration would last but a very short time. It lasted not quite five months; and, during those five months, Pitt and Lord Temple were treated with rudeness by the King, and found but feeble support in the House of Commons. It is a remarkable fact, that the Opposition prevented the re-election of some of the new Ministers. Pitt, who sat for one of the boroughs which were in the Pelham interest, found some difficulty in obtaining a seat after his acceptance of

the seals. So destitute was the new Government of that sort of influence without which no Government could then be durable. One of the arguments most frequently urged against the Reform Bill was that, under a system of popular representation, men whose presence in the House of Commons was necessary to the conducting of public business might often find it impossible to find seats. Should this inconvenience ever be felt, there cannot be the slightest difficulty in devising and applying a remedy. But those who threatened us with this evil ought to have remembered that, under the old system, a great man called to power at a great crisis by the voice of the whole nation was in danger of being excluded, by an aristocratical cabal from that House of which he was the most distinguished ornament.

The most important event of this short administration was the trial of Byng. On that subject public opinion is still divided. We think the punishment of the Admiral altogether unjust and absurd. Treachery, cowardice, ignorance amounting to what lawyers have called crassa ignorantia, are fit objects of severe penal inflictions. But Byng was not found guilty of treachery, of cowardice, or of gross ignorance of his profession. He died for doing what the most loyal subject, the most intrepid warrior, the most experienced seaman, might have done. He died for an error in judgment, an error such as the greatest commanders, Frederick, Napoleon, Wellington, have often committed, and have often acknowledged. Such errors are not proper objects of punishment, for this reason, that the punishing of such errors tends not to prevent them, but to produce them. The dread of an ignominious death may stimulate sluggishness to exertion, may keep a traitor to his standard, may prevent a coward from running away, but it has no tendency to bring out those qualities which enable men to form prompt and judicious decisions in great emergencies. The best marksman may be expected to fail when the apple which is to be his mark is set on his child's head. We cannot conceive anything more likely to deprive an officer of his self-possession at the time when he most needs it than the knowledge that, if, the judgment of his superiors should not agree with his, he will he executed with every circumstance of shame. Queens, it has often been said, run far greater risk in childbed than private women, merely because their medical attendants are more anxious. The surgeon who attended Marie Louise was altogether unnerved by his emotions. "Compose yourself," said Bonaparte; "imagine that you are assisting a poor girl in the Faubourg Saint Antoine." This was surely a far wiser course than that of the Eastern king in the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, who proclaimed that the physicians who failed to cure his daughter should have their heads chopped off. Bonaparte knew mankind well; and, as he acted towards this surgeon, he acted towards his officers. No sovereign was ever so indulgent to mere errors of judgment; and it is certain that no sovereign ever had in his service so many military men fit for the highest commands.

Pitt acted a brave and honest part on this occasion. He ventured

to put both his power and his popularity to hazard, and spoke manfully for Byng, both in Parliament and in the royal presence. But the King was inexorable. "The House of Commons, Sir," said Pitt, "seems inclined to mercy." "Sir," answered the King, "you have taught me to look for the sense of my people in other places than the House of Commons." The saying has more point than most of those which are recorded of George the Second, and, though sarcastically meant, contains a high and just compliment to Pitt.

The King disliked Pitt, but absolutely hated Temple. The new Secretary of State, his Majesty said, had never read Vattel, and was tedious and pompous, but respectful. The first Lord of the Admiralty was grossly impertinent. Walpole tells one story, which, we fear, is much too good to be true, He assures us that Temple entertained his royal master with an elaborate parallel between Byng's behaviour at Minorca, and his Majesty's behaviour at Oudenarde, in which the advantage was all on the side of the Admiral.

This state of things could not last. Early in April, Pitt and all his friends were turned out, and Newcastle was summoned to St. James's. But the public discontent was not extinguished. It had subsided when Pitt was called to power. But it still glowed under the embers; and it now burst at once into a flame. The stocks fell. The Common Council met. The freedom of the city was voted to Pitt. All the greatest corporate towns followed the example. "For some weeks," says Walpole, "it rained gold boxes."

This was the turning point of Pitt's life. It might have been expected that a man of so haughty and vehement a nature, treated so ungraciously by the Court, and supported so enthusiastically by the people, would have eagerly taken the first opportunity of showing his power and gratifying his resentment; and an opportunity was not wanting. The members for many counties and large towns had been instructed to vote for an inquiry into the circumstances which had produced the miscarriage of the preceding year. A motion for inquiry had been carried in the House of Commons, without opposition; and, a few days after Pitt's dismissal, the investigation commenced. Newcastle and his colleagues obtained a vote of acquittal; but the minority were so strong that they could not venture to ask for a vote of approbation, as they had at first intended; and it was thought by some shrewd observers that, if, Pitt had exerted himself to the utmost of his power, the inquiry might have ended in a censure, if not in an impeachment.

Pitt showed on this occasion a moderation and self-government which was not habitual to him. He had found by experience, that he could not stand alone. His eloquence and his popularity had done much, very much for him. Without rank, without fortune, without borough interest, hated by the King, hated by the aristocracy, he was a person of the first importance in the State. He had been suffered to form a ministry, and to pronounce

sentence of exclusion on all his rivals, on the most powerful nobleman of the Whig party, on the ablest debater in the House of Commons. And he now found that he had gone too far. The English Constitution was not, indeed, without a popular element. But other elements generally predominated. The confidence and admiration of the nation might make a statesman formidable at the head of an Opposition, might load him with framed and glazed parchments and gold boxes, might possibly, under very peculiar circumstances, such as those of the preceding year, raise him for a time to power. But, constituted as Parliament then was, the favourite of the people could not depend on a majority in the people's own House. The Duke of Newcastle, however contemptible in morals, manners, and understanding, was a dangerous enemy. His rank, his wealth, his unrivalled parliamentary interest, would alone have made him important. But this was not all. The Whig aristocracy regarded him as their leader. His long possession of power had given him a kind of prescriptive right to possess it still. The House of Commons had been elected when he was at the head of affairs, The members for the ministerial boroughs had all been nominated by him. The public offices swarmed with his creatures.

Pitt desired power; and he desired it, we really believe, from high and generous motives. He was, in the strict sense of the word, a patriot. He had none of that philanthropy which the great French writers of his time preached to all the nations of Europe. He loved England as an Athenian loved the City of the Violet Crown, as a Roman loved the City of the Seven Hills. He saw his country insulted and defeated. He saw the national spirit sinking. Yet he knew what the resources of the empire, vigorously employed, could effect, and he felt that he was the man to employ them vigorously. "My Lord," he said to the Duke of Devonshire, "I am sure that I can save this country, and that nobody else can."

Desiring, then, to be in power, and feeling that his abilities and the public confidence were not alone sufficient to keep him in power against the wishes of the Court and of the aristocracy, he began to think of a coalition with Newcastle.

Newcastle was equally disposed to a reconciliation. He, too, had profited by his recent experience. He had found that the Court and the aristocracy, though powerful, were not everything in the State. A strong oligarchical connection, a great borough interest, ample patronage, and secret-service money, might, in quiet times, be all that a Minister needed; but it was unsafe to trust wholly to such support in time of war, of discontent, and of agitation. The composition of the House of Commons was not wholly aristocratical; and, whatever he the composition of large deliberative assemblies, their spirit is always in some degree popular. Where there are free debates, eloquence must have admirers, and reason must make converts. Where there is a free press, the governors must live in constant awe of the opinions of the governed.

Thus these two men, so unlike in character, so lately mortal enemies, were necessary to each other. Newcastle had fallen in November, for want of that public confidence which Pitt possessed, and of that parliamentary support which Pitt was better qualified than any man of his time to give. Pitt had fallen in April, for want of that species of influence which Newcastle had passed his whole life in acquiring and hoarding. Neither of them had power enough to support himself. Each of them had power enough to overturn the other. Their union would be irresistible. Neither the King nor any party in the State would be able to stand against them.

Under these circumstances, Pitt was not disposed to proceed to extremities against his predecessors in office. Something, however, was due to consistency; and something was necessary for the preservation of his popularity. He did little; but that little he did in such manner as to produce great effect. He came down to the House in all the pomp of gout, his legs swathed in flannels, his arm dangling in a sling. He kept his seat through several fatiguing days, in spite of pain and langour. He uttered a few sharp and vehement sentences; but during the greater part of the discussion, his language was unusually gentle.

When the inquiry had terminated without a vote either of approbation or of censure, the great obstacle to a coalition was removed. Many obstacles, however, remained. The King was still rejoicing in his deliverance from the proud and aspiring Minister who had been forced on him by the cry of the nation. His Majesty's indignation was excited to the highest point when it appeared that Newcastle, who had, during thirty years, been loaded with marks of royal favour, and who had bound himself, by a solemn promise, never to coalesce with Pitt, was meditating a new perfidy. Of all the statesmen of that age, Fox had the largest share of royal favour. A coalition between Fox and Newcastle was the arrangement which the King wished to bring about. But the Duke was too cunning to fall into such a snare. As a speaker in Parliament, Fox might perhaps be, on the whole, as useful to an administration as his great rival; but he was one of the most unpopular men in England. Then, again, Newcastle felt all that jealousy of Fox, which, according to the proverb, generally exists between two of a trade. Fox would certainly intermeddle with that department which the Duke was most desirous to reserve entire to himself, the jobbing department. Pitt, on the other hand, was quite willing to leave the drudgery of corruption to any who might be inclined to undertake it.

During eleven weeks England remained without a ministry; and in the meantime Parliament was sitting, and a war was raging. The prejudices of the King, the haughtiness of Pitt, the jealousy, levity, and treachery of Newcastle, delayed the settlement. Pitt knew the Duke too well to trust him without security. The Duke loved power too much to be inclined to give security. While they

were haggling, the King was in vain attempting to produce a final rupture between them, or to form a Government without them. At one time he applied to Lord Waldegrave, an honest and sensible man, but unpractised in affairs. Lord Waldegrave had the courage to accept the Treasury, but soon found that no administration formed by him had the smallest chance of standing a single week.

At length the King's pertinacity yielded to the necessity of the case. After exclaiming with great bitterness, and with some justice, against the Whigs, who ought, he said, to be ashamed to talk about liberty while they submitted to the footmen of the Duke of Newcastle, his Majesty submitted. The influence of Leicester House prevailed on Pitt to abate a little, and but a little, of his high demands; and all at once, out of the chaos in which parties had for some time been rising, falling, meeting, separating, arose a government as strong at home as that of Pelham, as successful abroad as that of Godolphin.

Newcastle took the Treasury. Pitt was Secretary of State, with the lead in the House of Commons, and with the supreme direction of the war and of foreign affairs. Fox, the only man who could have given much annoyance to the new Government, was silenced by the office of Paymaster, which, during the continuance of that war, was probably the most lucrative place in the whole Government. He was poor, and the situation was tempting; yet it cannot but seem extraordinary that a man who had played a first part in politics, and whose abilities had been found not unequal to that part, who had sat in the Cabinet, who had led the House of Commons, who had been twice intrusted by the King with the office of forming a ministry, who was regarded as the rival of Pitt, and who at one time seemed likely to be a successful rival, should have consented, for the sake of emolument, to take a subordinate place, and to give silent votes for all the measures of a government to the deliberations of which he was not summoned.

The first acts of the new administration were characterized rather by vigour than by judgment. Expeditions were sent against different parts of the French coast with little success. The small island of Aix was taken, Rochefort threatened, a few ships burned in the harbour of St. Maloes, and a few guns and mortars brought home as trophies from the fortifications of Cherbourg. But soon conquests of a very different kind filled the kingdom with pride and rejoicing. A succession of victories undoubtedly brilliant, and, as was thought, not barren, raised to the highest point the fame of the minister to whom the conduct of the war had been intrusted. In July 1758, Louisburg fell. The whole island of Cape Breton was reduced. The fleet to which the Court of Versailles had confided the defence of French America was destroyed. The captured standards were borne in triumph from Kensington Palace to the city, and were suspended in St. Paul's Church, amidst the roar of drums and kettledrums, and the shouts of an immense multitude. Addresses of congratulation came in from

all the great towns of England. Parliament met only to decree thanks and monuments, and to bestow, without one murmur, supplies more than double of those which had been given during the war of the Grand Alliance.

The year 1759 opened with the conquest of Goree. Next fell Guadaloupe; then Ticonderoga; then Niagara. The Toulon squadron was completely defeated by Boscawen off Cape Lagos. But the greatest exploit of the year was the achievement of Wolfe on the heights of Abraham. The news of his glorious death and of the fall of Quebec reached London in the very week in which the Houses met. All was joy and triumph. Envy and faction were forced to join in the general applause. Whigs and Tories vied with each other in extolling the genius and energy of Pitt. His colleagues were never talked of or thought of. The House of Commons, the nation, the colonies, our allies, our enemies, had their eyes fixed on him alone.

Scarcely had Parliament voted a monument to Wolfe, when another great event called for fresh rejoicings. The Brest fleet, under the command of Conflans, had put out to sea. It was overtaken by an English squadron under Hawke. Conflans attempted to take shelter close under the French coast. The shore was rocky; the night was black: the wind was furious: the waves of the Bay of Biscay ran high. But Pitt had infused into each branch of the service a spirit which had long been unknown. No British seaman was disposed to err on the same side with Byng. The pilot told Hawke that the attack could not be made without the greatest danger. "You have done your duty in remonstrating," answered Hawke; "I will answer for everything. I command you to lay me alongside the French admiral." Two French ships of the line struck. Four were destroyed. The rest hid themselves in the rivers of Brittany.

The year 1760 came; and still triumph followed triumph. Montreal was taken; the whole province of Canada was subjugated; the French fleets underwent a succession of disasters in the seas of Europe and America.

In the meantime conquests equalling in rapidity, and far surpassing in magnitude, those of Cortes and Pizarro, had been achieved in the East. In the space of three years the English had founded a mighty empire. The French had been defeated in every part of India. Chandernagore had surrendered to Clive, Pondicherry to Coote. Throughout Bengal, Bahar, Orissa, and the Carnatic, the authority of the East India Company was more absolute than that of Acbar or Aurungzebe had ever been.

On the continent of Europe the odds were against England. We had but one important ally, the King of Prussia; and he was attacked not only by France, but also by Russia and Austria. Yet even on the Continent the energy of Pitt triumphed over all difficulties. Vehemently as he had condemned the practice of subsidising

foreign princes, he now carried that practice further than Carteret himself would have ventured to do. The active and able Sovereign of Prussia received such pecuniary assistance as enabled him to maintain the conflict on equal terms against his powerful enemies. On no subject had Pitt ever spoken with so much eloquence and ardour as on the mischiefs of the Hanoverian connection. He now declared, not without much show of reason, that it would be unworthy of the English people to suffer their King to be deprived of his electoral dominions in an English quarrel. He assured his countrymen that they should be no losers, and that he would conquer America for them in Germany. By taking this line he conciliated the King, and lost no part of his influence with the nation. In Parliament, such was the ascendency which his eloquence, his success, his high situation, his pride, and his intrepidity had obtained for him, that he took liberties with the House of which there had been no example, and which have never since been imitated. No orator could there venture to reproach him with inconsistency. One unfortunate man made the attempt, and was so much disconcerted by the scornful demeanour of the Minister that he stammered, stopped, and sat down. Even the old Tory country gentleman, to whom the very name of Hanover had been odious, gave their hearty Ayes to subsidy after subsidy. In a lively contemporary satire, much more lively indeed than delicate, this remarkable conversation is not unhappily described:

"No more they make a fiddle-faddle
About a Hessian horse or saddle.
No more of continental measures
No more of wasting British treasures.
Ten millions, and a vote of credit,
’Tis right. He can’t be wrong who did it."

The success of Pitt’s continental measures was such as might have been expected from their vigour. When he came into power, Hanover was in imminent danger; and before he had been in office three months, the whole electorate was in the hands of France. But the face of affairs was speedily changed. The invaders were driven out. An army, partly English, partly Hanoverian, partly composed of soldiers furnished by the petty Princes of Germany, was placed under the command of Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick. The French were beaten in 1758 at Crevelt. In 1759 they received a still more complete and humiliating defeat at Minden.

In the meantime, the nation exhibited all the signs of wealth and prosperity. The merchants of London had never been more thriving. The importance of several great commercial and manufacturing towns, of Glasgow in particular, dates from this period. The fine inscription on the monument of Lord Chatham, in Guildhall records the general opinion of the citizens of London, that under his administration commerce had been "united with and made to flourish by war?"

It must be owned that these signs of prosperity were in some degree delusive. It must be owned that some of our conquests were rather splendid than useful. It must be owned that the expense of the war never entered into Pitt's consideration. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that the cost of his victories increased the pleasure with which he contemplated them. Unlike other men in his situation, he loved to exaggerate the sums which the nation was laying out under his direction. He was proud of the sacrifices and efforts which his eloquence and his success had induced his countrymen to make. The price at which he purchased faithful service and complete victory, though far smaller than that which his son, the most profuse and incapable of war ministers, paid for treachery, defeat, and shame, was long and severely felt by the nation.

Even as a war minister, Pitt is scarcely entitled to all the praise which his contemporaries lavished on him. We, perhaps from ignorance, cannot discern in his arrangements any appearance of profound or dexterous combination. Several of his expeditions, particularly those which were sent to the coast of France, were at once costly and absurd. Our Indian conquests, though they add to the splendour of the period during which he was at the head of affairs, were not planned by him. He had undoubtedly great energy, great determination, great means at his command. His temper was enterprising; and, situated as he was, he had only to follow his temper. The wealth of a rich nation, the valour of a brave nation, were ready to support him in every attempt.

In one respect, however, he deserved all the praise that he has ever received. The success of our arms was perhaps owing less to the skill of his dispositions than to the national resources and the national spirit. But that the national spirit rose to the emergency, that the national resources were contributed with unexampled cheerfulness, this was undoubtedly his work. The ardour of his soul had set the whole kingdom on fire. It inflamed every soldier who dragged the cannon up the heights of Quebec, and every sailor who boarded the French ships among the rocks of Brittany. The Minister, before he had been long in office, had imparted to the commanders whom he employed his own impetuous, adventurous, and defying character They, like him, were disposed to risk everything, to play double or quits to the last, to think nothing done while anything remained undone, to fail rather than not to attempt. For the errors of rashness there might be indulgence. For over-caution, for faults like those of Lord George Sackville, there was no mercy. In other times, and against other enemies, this mode of warfare might have failed. But the state of the French government and of the French nation gave every advantage to Pitt. The fops and intriguers of Versailles were appalled and bewildered by his vigour. A panic spread through all ranks of society. Our enemies soon considered it as a settled thing that they were always to be beaten. Thus victory begot victory; till, at last, wherever the forces of the two nations met, they met with disdainful confidence on one side, and

with a craven fear on the other.

The situation which Pitt occupied at the close of the reign of George the Second was the most enviable ever occupied by any public man in English history. He had conciliated the King; he domineered over the House of Commons; he was adored by the people; he was admired by all Europe. He was the first Englishman of his time; and he had made England the first country in the world. The Great Commoner, the name by which he was often designated, might look down with scorn on coronets and garters. The nation was drunk with joy and pride. The Parliament was as quiet as it had been under Pelham. The old party distinctions were almost effaced; nor was their place yet supplied by distinctions of a still more important kind. A new generation of country squires and rectors had arisen who knew not the Stuarts. The Dissenters were tolerated; the Catholics not cruelly persecuted. The Church was drowsy and indulgent. The great civil and religious conflict which began at the Reformation seemed to have terminated in universal repose. Whigs and Tories, Churchmen and Puritans, spoke with equal reverence of the constitution, and with equal enthusiasm of the talents, virtues, and services of the Minister.

A few years sufficed to change the whole aspect of affairs. A nation convulsed by faction, a throne assailed by the fiercest invective, a House of Commons hated and despised by the nation, England set against Scotland, Britain set against America, a rival legislature sitting beyond the Atlantic, English blood shed by English bayonets, our armies capitulating, our conquests wrested from us, our enemies hastening to take vengeance for past humiliation, our flag scarcely able to maintain itself in our own seas, such was the spectacle which Pitt lived to see. But the history of this great revolution requires far more space than we can at present bestow. We leave the Great Commoner in the zenith of his glory. It is not impossible that we may take some other opportunity of tracing his life to its melancholy, yet not inglorious close.

THE EARL OF CHATHAM
(October 1844)

1. Correspondence of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham. 4 vols. 8vo. London: 1840.

2. Letters of Horace Walpole, Earl of Orford, to Horace Mann. 4 vols. 8vo. London: 1843-4.

More than ten years ago we commenced a sketch of the political life of the great Lord Chatham. We then stopped at the death of George the Second, with the intention of speedily resuming our task. Circumstances, which it would be tedious to explain, long prevented us from carrying this intention into effect. Nor can we

regret the delay. For the materials which were within our reach in 1834 were scanty and unsatisfactory when compared with those which we at present possess. Even now, though we have had access to some valuable sources of information which have not yet been opened to the public, we cannot but feel that the history of the first ten years of the reign of George the Third is but imperfectly known to us. Nevertheless, we are inclined to think that we are in a condition to lay before our readers a narrative neither uninstructive nor uninteresting. We therefore return with pleasure to our long interrupted labour.

We left Pitt in the zenith of prosperity and glory, the idol of England, the terror of France, the admiration of the whole civilised world. The wind, from whatever quarter it blew, carried to England tidings of battles won, fortresses taken, provinces added to the empire. At home, factions had sunk into a lethargy, such as had never been known since the great religious schism of the sixteenth century had roused the public mind from repose.

In order that the events which we have to relate may be clearly understood, it may be desirable that we should advert to the causes which had for a time suspended the animation of both the great English parties.

If, rejecting all that is merely accidental, we look at the essential characteristics of the Whig and the Tory, we may consider each of them as the representative of a great principle, essential to the welfare of nations. One is, in an especial manner, the guardian of liberty, and the other of order. One is the moving power, and the other the steadying power of the State. One is the sail, without which society would make no progress; the other the ballast, without which there would be small safety in a tempest. But, during the forty-six years which followed the accession of the House of Hanover, these distinctive peculiarities seemed to be effaced. The Whig conceived that he could not better serve the cause of civil and religious freedom than by strenuously supporting the Protestant dynasty. The Tory conceived that he could not better prove his hatred of revolutions than by attacking a government to which a revolution had given birth. Both came by degrees to attach more importance to the means than to the end. Both were thrown into unnatural situations; and both, like animals transported to an uncongenial climate, languished and degenerated. The Tory, removed from the sunshine of the Court, was as a camel in the snows of Lapland. The Whig, basking in the rays of royal favour, was as a reindeer in the sands of Arabia.

Dante tells us that he saw, in Malebolge, a strange encounter between a human form and a serpent. The enemies, after cruel wounds inflicted, stood for a time glaring on each other. A great cloud surrounded them, and then a wonderful metamorphosis began. Each creature was transfigured into the likeness of its antagonist. The serpent’s tail divided itself into two legs; the

man’s legs intertwined themselves into a tail. The body of the serpent put forth arms; the arms of the man shrank into his body. At length the serpent stood up a man, and spake; the man sank down a serpent, and glided hissing away. Something like this was the transformation which, during the reign of George the First, befell the two English parties. Each gradually took the shape and colour of its foe, till at length the Tory rose up erect the zealot of freedom, and the Whig crawled and licked the dust at the feet of power.

It is true that, when these degenerate politicians discussed questions merely speculative, and, above all, when they discussed questions relating to the conduct of their own grandfathers, they still seemed to differ as their grandfathers had differed. The Whig, who, during three Parliaments, had never given one vote against the Court, and who was ready to sell his soul for the Comptroller’s staff or for the Great Wardrobe, still professed to draw his political doctrines from Locke and Milton, still worshipped the memory of Pym and Hampden, and would still, on the thirtieth of January, take his glass, first to the man in the mask, and then to the man who would do it without a mask. The Tory, on the other hand, while he reviled the mild and temperate Walpole as a deadly enemy of liberty, could see nothing to reprobate in the iron tyranny of Strafford and Laud. But, whatever judgment the Whig or the Tory of that age might pronounce on transactions long past, there can be no doubt that, as respected the practical questions then pending, the Tory was a reformer, and indeed an intemperate and indiscreet reformer, while the Whig was conservative even to bigotry. We have ourselves seen similar effects produced in a neighbouring country by similar causes. Who would have believed, fifteen years ago, that M. Guizot and M. Villemain would have to defend property and social order against the attacks of such enemies as M. Genoude and M. de La Roche Jaquelin?

Thus the successors of the old Cavaliers had turned demagogues; the successors of the old Roundheads had turned courtiers. Yet was it long before their mutual animosity began to abate; for it is the nature of parties to retain their original enmities far more firmly than their original principles. During many years, a generation of Whigs, whom Sidney would have spurned as slaves, continued to wage deadly war with a generation of Tories whom Jeffreys would have hanged for republicans.

Through the whole reign of George the First, and through nearly half of the reign of George the Second, a Tory was regarded as an enemy of the reigning house, and was excluded from all the favours of the Crown. Though most of the country gentlemen were Tories, none but Whigs were created peers and baronets. Though most of the clergy were Tories, none but Whigs were appointed deans and bishops. In every county, opulent and well descended Tory squires complained that their names were left out of the commission of the peace, while men of small estate and mean

birth, who were for toleration and excise, septennial parliaments and standing armies, presided at quarter-sessions, and became deputy lieutenants.

By degrees some approaches were made towards a reconciliation. While Walpole was at the head of affairs, enmity to his power induced a large and powerful body of Whigs, headed by the heir-apparent of the throne, to make an alliance with the Tories, and a truce even with the Jacobites. After Sir Robert's fall, the ban which lay on the Tory party was taken off. The chief places in the administration continued to be filled with Whigs, and, indeed, could scarcely have been filled otherwise; for the Tory nobility and gentry, though strong in numbers and in property, had among them scarcely a single man distinguished by talents, either for business or for debate. A few of them, however, were admitted to subordinate offices; and this indulgence produced a softening effect on the temper of the whole body. The first levee of George the Second after Walpole's resignation was a remarkable spectacle. Mingled with the constant supporters of the House of Brunswick, with the Russells, the Cavendishes, and the Pelhams, appeared a crowd of faces utterly unknown to the pages and gentlemen-ushers, lords of rural manors, whose ale and foxhounds were renowned in the neighbourhood of the Mendip hills, or round the Wrekin, but who had never crossed the threshold of the palace since the days when Oxford, with the white staff in his hand, stood behind Queen Anne.

During the eighteen years which followed this day, both factions were gradually sinking deeper and deeper into repose. The apathy of the public mind is partly to be ascribed to the unjust violence with which the administration of Walpole had been assailed. In the body politic, as in the natural body, morbid languor generally succeeds morbid excitement. The people had been maddened by sophistry, by calumny, by rhetoric, by stimulants applied to the national pride. In the fulness of bread, they had raved as if famine had been in the land. While enjoying such a measure of civil and religious freedom as, till then, no great society had ever known, they had cried out for a Timoleon or a Brutus to stab their oppressor to the heart. They were in this frame of mind when the change of administration took place; and they soon found that there was to be no change whatever in the system of government. The natural consequences followed. To frantic zeal succeeded sullen indifference. The cant of patriotism had not merely ceased to charm the public ear, but had become as nauseous as the cant of Puritanism after the downfall of the Rump. The hot fit was over, the cold fit had begun: and it was long before seditious arts, or even real grievances, could bring back the fiery paroxysm which had run its course and reached its termination.

Two attempts were made to disturb this tranquillity. The banished heir of the House of Stuart headed a rebellion; the discontented heir of the House of Brunswick headed an opposition. Both the

rebellion and the opposition came to nothing. The battle of Culloden annihilated the Jacobite party. The death of Prince Frederic dissolved the faction which, under his guidance, had feebly striven to annoy his father's government. His chief followers hastened to make their peace with the ministry; and the political torpor became complete.

Five years after the death of Prince Frederic, the public mind was for a time violently excited. But this excitement had nothing to do with the old disputes between Whigs and Tories. England was at war with France. The war had been feebly conducted. Minorca had been torn from us. Our fleet had retired before the white flag of the House of Bourbon. A bitter sense of humiliation, new to the proudest and bravest of nations, superseded every other feeling. The cry of all the counties and great towns of the realm was for a government which would retrieve the honour of the English arms. The two most powerful in the country were the Duke of Newcastle and Pitt. Alternate victories and defeats had made them sensible that neither of them could stand alone. The interest of the State, and the interest of their own ambition, impelled them to coalesce. By their coalition was formed the ministry which was in power when George the Third ascended the throne.

The more carefully the structure of this celebrated ministry is examined, the more shall we see reason to marvel at the skill or the luck which had combined in one harmonious whole such various and, as it seemed, incompatible elements of force. The influence which is derived from stainless integrity, the influence which is derived from the vilest arts of corruption, the strength of aristocratical connection, the strength of democratical enthusiasm, all these things were for the first time found together. Newcastle brought to the coalition a vast mass of power, which had descended to him from Walpole and Pelham. The public offices, the church, the courts of law, the army, the navy, the diplomatic service, swarmed with his creatures. The boroughs, which long afterwards made up the memorable schedules A and B, were represented by his nominees. The great Whig families, which, during several generations, had been trained in the discipline of party warfare, and were accustomed to stand together in a firm phalanx, acknowledged him as their captain. Pitt, on the other hand, had what Newcastle wanted, an eloquence which stirred the passions and charmed the imagination, a high reputation for purity, and the confidence and ardent love of millions.

The partition which the two ministers made of the powers of government was singularly happy. Each occupied a province for which he was well qualified; and neither had any inclination to intrude himself into the province of the other. Newcastle took the treasury, the civil and ecclesiastical patronage, and the disposal of that part of the secret-service money which was then employed in bribing members of Parliament. Pitt was Secretary of

State, with the direction of the war and of foreign affairs. Thus the filth of all the noisome and pestilential sewers of government was poured into one channel. Through the other passed only what was bright and stainless. Mean and selfish politicians, pining for commissionerships, gold sticks, and ribands, flocked to the great house at the corner of Lincoln's Inn Fields. There, at every levee, appeared eighteen or twenty pair of lawn sleeves; for there was not, it was said, a single Prelate who had not owed either his first elevation or some subsequent translation to Newcastle. There appeared those members of the House of Commons in whose silent votes the main strength of the Government lay. One wanted a place in the excise for his butler. Another came about a prebend for his son. A third whispered that he had always stood by his Grace and the Protestant succession; that his last election had been very expensive; that potwallopers had now no conscience; that he had been forced to take up money on mortgage; and that he hardly knew where to turn for five hundred pounds. The Duke pressed all their hands, passed his arms round all their shoulders, patted all their backs, and sent away some with wages, and some with promises. From this traffic Pitt stood haughtily aloof. Not only was he himself incorruptible, but he shrank from the loathsome drudgery of corrupting others. He had not, however, been twenty years in Parliament, and ten in office, without discovering how the Government was carried on. He was perfectly aware that bribery was practised on a large scale by his colleagues. Hating the practice, yet despairing of putting it down, and doubting whether, in those times, any ministry could stand without it, he determined to be blind to it. He would see nothing, know nothing, believe nothing. People who came to talk to him about shares in lucrative contracts, or about the means of securing a Cornish corporation, were soon put out of countenance by his arrogant humility. They did him too much honour. Such matters were beyond his capacity. It was true that his poor advice about expeditions and treaties was listened to with indulgence by a gracious sovereign. If the question were, who should command in North America, or who should be ambassador at Berlin, his colleagues would condescend to take his opinion. But he had not the smallest influence with the Secretary of the Treasury, and could not venture to ask even for a tidewaiter's place.

It may be doubted whether he did not owe as much of his popularity to his ostentatious purity as to his eloquence, or to his talents for the administration of war. It was everywhere said with delight and admiration that the Great Commoner, without any advantages of birth or fortune, had, in spite of the dislike of the Court and of the aristocracy, made himself the first man in England, and made England the first country in the world; that his name was mentioned with awe in every palace from Lisbon to Moscow; that his trophies were in all the four quarters of the globe; yet that he was still plain William Pitt, without title or riband, without pension or sinecure place. Whenever he should retire, after saving the State, he must sell his coach horses and

his silver candlesticks. Widely as the taint of corruption had spread, his hands were clean. They had never received, they had never given, the price of infamy. Thus the coalition gathered to itself support from all the high and all the low parts of human nature, and was strong with the whole united strength of virtue and of Mammon.

Pitt and Newcastle were co-ordinate chief ministers. The subordinate places had been filled on the principle of including in the Government every party and shade of party, the avowed Jacobites alone excepted, nay, every public man who, from his abilities or from his situation, seemed likely to be either useful in office or formidable in opposition.

The Whigs, according to what was then considered as their prescriptive right, held by far the largest share of power. The main support of the administration was what may be called the great Whig connection, a connection which, during near half a century, had generally had the chief sway in the country, and which derived an immense authority from rank, wealth, borough interest, and firm union. To this connection, of which Newcastle was the head, belonged the houses of Cavendish, Lennox, Fitzroy, Bentinck, Manners, Conway, Wentworth, and many others of high note.

There were two other powerful Whig connections, either of which might have been a nucleus for a strong opposition. But room had been found in the Government for both. They were known as the Grenvilles and the Bedfords.

The head of the Grenvilles was Richard Earl Temple. His talents for administration and debate were of no high order. But his great possessions, his turbulent and unscrupulous character, his restless activity, and his skill in the most ignoble tactics of faction, made him one of the most formidable enemies that a ministry could have. He was keeper of the privy seal. His brother George was treasurer of the navy. They were supposed to be on terms of close friendship with Pitt, who had married their sister, and was the most uxorious of husbands.

The Bedfords, or, as they were called by their enemies, the Bloomsbury gang, professed to be led by John Duke of Bedford, but in truth led him wherever they chose, and very often led him where he never would have gone of his own accord. He had many good qualities of head and heart, and would have been certainly a respectable, and possibly a distinguished man, if he had been less under the influence of his friends, or more fortunate in choosing them. Some of them were indeed, to do them justice, men of parts. But here, we are afraid, eulogy must end. Sandwich and Rigby were able debaters, pleasant boon companions, dexterous intriguers, masters of all the arts of jobbing and electioneering, and both in public and private life, shamelessly immoral. Weymouth had a natural eloquence, which sometimes

astonished those who knew how little he owed to study. But he was indolent and dissolute, and had early impaired a fine estate with the dice-box, and a fine constitution with the bottle. The wealth and power of the Duke, and the talents and audacity of some of his retainers, might have seriously annoyed the strongest ministry. But his assistance had been secured. He was Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland; Rigby was his secretary; and the whole party dutifully supported the measures of the Government.

Two men had, a short time before, been thought likely to contest with Pitt the lead of the House of Commons, William Murray and Henry Fox. But Murray had been removed to the Lords, and was Chief Justice of the King's Bench. Fox was indeed still in the Commons; but means had been found to secure, if not his strenuous support, at least his silent acquiescence. He was a poor man; he was a doting father. The office of Paymaster-General during an expensive war was, in that age, perhaps the most lucrative situation in the gift of the Government. This office was bestowed on Fox. The prospect of making a noble fortune in a few years, and of providing amply for his darling boy Charles, was irresistibly tempting. To hold a subordinate place, however profitable, after having led the House of Commons, and having been intrusted with the business of forming a ministry, was indeed a great descent. But a punctilious sense of personal dignity was no part of the character of Henry Fox.

We have not time to enumerate all the other men of weight who were, by some tie or other, attached to the Government. We may mention Hardwicke, reputed the first lawyer of the age; Legge, reputed the first financier of the age; the acute and ready Oswald; the bold and humorous Nugent; Charles Townshend, the most brilliant and versatile of mankind; Elliot, Barrington, North, Pratt. Indeed, as far as we recollect, there were in the whole House of Commons only two men of distinguished abilities who were not connected with the Government; and those two men stood so low in public estimation, that the only service which they could have rendered to any government would have been to oppose it. We speak of Lord George Sackville and Bubb Dodington.

Though most of the official men, and all the members of the Cabinet, were reputed Whigs, the Tories were by no means excluded from employment. Pitt had gratified many of them with commands in the militia, which increased both their income and their importance in their own counties; and they were therefore in better humour than at any time since the death of Anne. Some of the party still continued to grumble over their punch at the Cocoa Tree; but in the House of Commons not a single one of the malcontents durst lift his eyes above the buckle of Pitt's shoe.

Thus there was absolutely no opposition. Nay, there was no sign from which it could be guessed in what quarter opposition was likely to arise. Several years passed during which Parliament seemed to have abdicated its chief functions. The journals of the

House of Commons, during four sessions, contain no trace of a division on a party question. The supplies, though beyond precedent great, were voted without discussion. The most animated debates of that period were on road bills and enclosure bills.

The old King was content; and it mattered little whether he were content or not. It would have been impossible for him to emancipate himself from a ministry so powerful, even if he had been inclined to do so. But he had no such inclination. He had once, indeed, been strongly prejudiced against Pitt, and had repeatedly been ill used by Newcastle; but the vigour and success with which the war had been waged in Germany, and the smoothness with which all public business was carried on, had produced a favourable change in the royal mind.

Such was the posture of affairs when, on the twenty-fifth of October, 1760, George the Second suddenly died, and George the Third, then twenty-two years old, became King. The situation of George the Third differed widely from that of his grandfather and that of his great grandfather. Many years had elapsed since a sovereign of England had been an object of affection to any part of his people. The first two Kings of the House of Hanover had neither those hereditary rights which have often supplied the defect of merit, nor those personal qualities which have often supplied the defect of title. A prince may be popular with little virtue or capacity, if he reigns by birthright derived from a long line of illustrious predecessors. An usurper may be popular, if his genius has saved or aggrandised the nation which he governs. Perhaps no rulers have in our time had a stronger hold on the affection of subjects than the Emperor Francis, and his son-in-law the Emperor Napoleon. But imagine a ruler with no better title than Napoleon, and no better understanding than Francis. Richard Cromwell was such a ruler; and, as soon as an arm was lifted up against him, he fell without a struggle, amidst universal derision. George the First and George the Second were in a situation which bore some resemblance to that of Richard Cromwell. They were saved from the fate of Richard Cromwell by the strenuous and able exertions of the Whig party, and by the general conviction that the nation had no choice but between the House of Brunswick and popery. But by no class were the Guelphs regarded with that devoted affection, of which Charles the First, Charles the Second, and James the Second, in spite of the greatest faults, and in the midst of the greatest misfortunes, received innumerable proofs. Those Whigs who stood by the new dynasty so manfully with purse and sword did so on principles independent of, and indeed almost incompatible with, the sentiment of devoted loyalty. The moderate Tories regarded the foreign dynasty as a great evil, which must be endured for fear of a greater evil. In the eyes of the high Tories, the Elector was the most hateful of robbers and tyrants. The crown of another was on his head; the blood of the brave and loyal was on his hands. Thus, during many years, the Kings of England were objects of strong personal aversion to many of their subjects; and of

strong personal attachment to none. They found, indeed, firm and cordial support against the pretender to their throne; but this support was given, not at all for their sake, but for the sake of a religious and political system which would have been endangered by their fall. This support, too, they were compelled to purchase by perpetually sacrificing their private inclinations to the party which had set them on the throne, and which maintained them there.

At the close of the reign of George the Second, the feeling of aversion with which the House of Brunswick had long been regarded by half the nation had died away; but no feeling of affection to that house had yet sprung up. There was little, indeed, in the old King's character to inspire esteem or tenderness. He was not our countryman. He never set foot on our soil till he was more than thirty years old. His speech betrayed his foreign origin and breeding. His love for his native land, though the most amiable part of his character, was not likely to endear him to his British subjects. He was never so happy as when he could exchange St. James's for Hernhausen. Year after year, our fleets were employed to convoy him to the Continent, and the interests of his kingdom were as nothing to him when compared with the interests of his Electorate. As to the rest, he had neither the qualities which make dulness respectable, nor the qualities which make libertinism attractive. He had been a bad son and a worse father, an unfaithful husband and an ungraceful lover. Not one magnanimous or humane action is recorded of him; but many instances of meanness, and of a harshness which, but for the strong constitutional restraints under which he was placed, might have made the misery of his people.

He died; and at once a new world opened. The young King was a born Englishman. All his tastes and habits, good or bad, were English. No portion of his subjects had anything to reproach him with. Even the remaining adherents of the House of Stuart could scarcely impute to him the guilt of usurpation. He was not responsible for the Revolution, for the Act of Settlement, for the suppression of the risings of 1715 and of 1745. He was innocent of the blood of Derwentwater and Kilmarnock, of Balmerino and Cameron. Born fifty years after the old line had been expelled, fourth in descent and third in succession of the Hanoverian dynasty, he might plead some show of hereditary right. His age, his appearance, and all that was known of his character, conciliated public favour. He was in the bloom of youth; his person and address were pleasing. Scandal imputed to him no vice; and flattery might without any glaring absurdity, ascribe to him many princely virtues.

It is not strange, therefore, that the sentiment of loyalty, a sentiment which had lately seemed to be as much out of date as the belief in witches or the practice of pilgrimage, should, from the day of his accession, have begun to revive. The Tories in particular, who had always been inclined to King-worship, and who

had long felt with pain the want of an idol before whom they could bow themselves down, were as joyful as the priests of Apis, when, after a long interval, they had found a new calf to adore. It was soon clear that George the Third was regarded by a portion of the nation with a very different feeling from that which his two predecessors had inspired. They had been merely First Magistrates, Doges, Stadtholders; he was emphatically a King, the anointed of heaven, the breath of his people's nostrils. The years of the widowhood and mourning of the Tory party were over. Dido had kept faith long enough to the cold ashes of a former lord; she had at last found a comforter, and recognised the vestiges of the old flame. The golden days of Harley would return. The Somersets, the Lees, and the Wyndhams would again surround the throne. The latitudinarian Prelates, who had not been ashamed to correspond with Doddridge and to shake hands with Whiston, would be succeeded by divines of the temper of South and Atterbury. The devotion which had been so signally shown to the House of Stuart, which had been proof against defeats, confiscations, and proscriptions, which perfidy, oppression, ingratitude, could not weary out, was now transferred entire to the House of Brunswick. If George the Third would but accept the homage of the Cavaliers, and High Churchmen, he should be to them all that Charles the First and Charles the Second had been.

The Prince, whose accession was thus hailed by a great party long estranged from his house, had received from nature a strong will, a firmness of temper to which a harsher name might perhaps be given, and an understanding not, indeed, acute or enlarged, but such as qualified him to be a good man of business. But his character had not yet fully developed itself. He had been brought up in strict seclusion. The detractors of the Princess Dowager of Wales affirmed that she had kept her children from commerce with society, in order that she might hold an undivided empire over their minds. She gave a very different explanation of her conduct. She would gladly, she said, see her sons and daughters mix in the world, if they could do so without risk to their morals. But the profligacy of the people of quality alarmed her. The young men were all rakes; the young women made love, instead of waiting till it was made to them. She could not bear to expose those whom she loved best to the contaminating influence of such society. The moral advantages of the system of education which formed the Duke of York, the Duke of Cumberland, and the Queen of Denmark, may perhaps be questioned. George the Third was indeed no libertine; but he brought to the throne a mind only half open, and was for some time entirely under the influence of his mother and of his Groom of the Stole, John Stuart, Earl of Bute.

The Earl of Bute was scarcely known, even by name, to the country which he was soon to govern. He had indeed, a short time after he came of age, been chosen to fill a vacancy, which, in the middle of a parliament, had taken place among the Scotch representative peers. He had disobliged the Whig ministers by giving some silent votes with the Tories, had consequently lost his seat at the next

dissolution, and had never been re-elected. Near twenty years had elapsed since he had borne any part in politics. He had passed some of those years at his seat in one of the Hebrides, and from that retirement he had emerged as one of the household of Prince Frederic. Lord Bute, excluded from public life, had found out many ways of amusing his leisure. He was a tolerable actor in private theatricals, and was particularly successful in the part of Lothario. A handsome leg, to which both painters and satirists took care to give prominence, was among his chief qualifications for the stage. He devised quaint dresses for masquerades. He dabbled in geometry, mechanics, and botany. He paid some attention to antiquities and works of art, and was considered in his own circle as a judge of painting, architecture, and poetry. It is said that his spelling was incorrect. But though, in our time, incorrect spelling is justly considered as a proof of sordid ignorance, it would be unjust to apply the same rule to people who lived a century ago. The novel of Sir Charles Grandison was published about the time at which Lord Bute made his appearance at Leicester House. Our readers may perhaps remember the account which Charlotte Grandison gives of her two lovers. One of them, a fashionable baronet who talks French and Italian fluently, cannot write a line in his own language without some sin against orthography; the other, who is represented as a most respectable specimen of the young aristocracy, and something of a virtuoso, is described as spelling pretty well for a lord. On the whole, the Earl of Bute might fairly be called a man of cultivated mind. He was also a man of undoubted honour. But his understanding was narrow, and his manners cold and haughty. His qualifications for the part of a statesman were best described by Frederic, who often indulged in the unprincely luxury of sneering at his dependants. "Bute," said his Royal Highness, "you are the very man to be envoy at some small proud German court where there is nothing to do."

Scandal represented the Groom of the Stole as the favoured lover of the Princess Dowager. He was undoubtedly her confidential friend. The influence which the two united exercised over the mind of the King was for a time unbounded. The Princess, a woman and a foreigner, was not likely to be a judicious adviser about affairs of State. The Earl could scarcely be said to have served even a noviciate in politics. His notions of government had been acquired in the society which had been in the habit of assembling round Frederic at Kew and Leicester House. That society consisted principally of Tories, who had been reconciled to the House of Hanover by the civility with which the Prince had treated them, and by the hope of obtaining high preferment when he should come to the throne. Their political creed was a peculiar modification of Toryism. It was the creed neither of the Tories of the seventeenth nor of the Tories of the nineteenth century. It was the creed, not of Filmer and Sacheverell, not of Perceval and Eldon, but of the sect of which Bolingbroke may be considered as the chief doctor. This sect deserves commendation for having pointed out and justly reprobated some great abuses which sprang

up during the long domination of the Whigs. But it is far easier to point out and reprobate abuses than to propose beneficial reforms: and the reforms which Bolingbroke proposed would either have been utterly inefficient, or would have produced much more mischief than they would have removed.

The Revolution had saved the nation from one class of evils, but had at the same time--such is the imperfection of all things human--engendered or aggravated another class of evils which required new remedies. Liberty and property were secure from the attacks of prerogative. Conscience was respected. No government ventured to infringe any of the rights solemnly recognised by the instrument which had called William and Mary to the throne. But it cannot be denied that, under the new system, the public interests and the public morals were seriously endangered by corruption and faction. During the long struggle against the Stuarts, the chief object of the most enlightened statesmen had been to strengthen the House of Commons, The struggle was over; the victory was won; the House of Commons was supreme in the State; and all the vices which had till then been latent in the representative system were rapidly developed by prosperity and power. Scarcely had the executive government become really responsible to the House of Commons, when it began to appear that the House of Commons was not really responsible to the nation. Many of the constituent bodies were under the absolute control of individuals; many were notoriously at the command of the highest bidder. The debates were not published. It was very seldom known out of doors how a gentleman had voted. Thus, while the ministry was accountable to the Parliament, the majority of the Parliament was accountable to nobody. In such circumstances, nothing could be more natural than that the members should insist on being paid for their votes, should form themselves into combinations for the purpose of raising the price of their votes, and should at critical conjunctures extort large wages by threatening a strike. Thus the Whig ministers of George the First and George the Second were compelled to reduce corruption to a system, and to practise it on a gigantic scale.

If we are right as to the cause of these abuses, we can scarcely be wrong as to the remedy. The remedy was surely not to deprive the House of Commons of its weight in the State. Such a course would undoubtedly have put an end to parliamentary corruption and to parliamentary factions: for, when votes cease to be of importance, they will cease to be bought; and, when knaves can get nothing by combining, they will cease to combine. But to destroy corruption and faction by introducing despotism would have been to cure bad by worse. The proper remedy evidently was, to make the House of Commons responsible to the nation; and this was to be effected in two ways; first, by giving publicity to parliamentary proceedings, and thus placing every member on his trial before the tribunal of public opinion; and secondly, by so reforming the constitution of the House that no man should be able to sit in it who had not been returned by a respectable and

independent body of constituents.

Bolingbroke and Bolingbroke's disciples recommended a very different mode of treating the diseases of the State. Their doctrine was that a vigorous use of the prerogative by a patriot King would at once break all factious combinations, and supersede the pretended necessity of bribing members of Parliament. The King had only to resolve that he would be master, that he would not be held in thraldom by any set of men, that he would take for ministers any persons in whom he had confidence, without distinction of party, and that he would restrain his servants from influencing by immoral means either the constituent bodies or the representative body. This childish scheme proved that those who proposed it knew nothing of the nature of the evil with which they pretended to deal. The real cause of the prevalence of corruption and faction was that a House of Commons, not accountable to the people, was more powerful than the King. Bolingbroke's remedy could be applied only by a King more powerful than the House of Commons. How was the patriot Prince to govern in defiance of the body without whose consent he could not equip a sloop, keep a battalion under arms, send an embassy, or defray even the charges of his own household? Was he to dissolve the Parliament? And what was he likely to gain by appealing to Sudbury and Old Sarum against the venality of their representatives? Was he to send out privy seals? Was he to levy ship-money? If so, this boasted reform must commence in all probability by civil war, and, if consummated, must be consummated by the establishment of absolute monarchy. Or was the patriot King to carry the House of Commons with him in his upright designs? By what means? Interdicting himself from the use of corrupt influence, what motive was he to address to the Dodingtons and Winningtons? Was cupidity, strengthened by habit, to be laid asleep by a few fine sentences about virtue and union?

Absurd as this theory was, it had many admirers, particularly among men of letters. It was now to be reduced to practice; and the result was, as any man of sagacity must have foreseen, the most piteous and ridiculous of failures.

On the very day of the young King's accession, appeared some signs which indicated the approach of a great change. The speech which he made to his Council was not submitted to the Cabinet. It was drawn up by Bute, and contained some expressions which might be construed into reflections on the conduct of affairs during the late reign. Pitt remonstrated, and begged that these expressions might be softened down in the printed copy; but it was not till after some hours of altercation that Bute yielded; and even after Bute had yielded, the King affected to hold out till the following afternoon. On the same day on which this singular contest took place, Bute was not only sworn of the Privy Council, but introduced into the Cabinet.

Soon after this Lord Holdernesse, one of the Secretaries of

State, in pursuance of a plan concerted with the Court, resigned the seals. Bute was instantly appointed to the vacant place.

A general election speedily followed, and the new Secretary entered Parliament in the only way in which he then could enter it, as one of the sixteen representative peers of Scotland. [In the reign of Anne, the House of Lords had resolved that, under the 23rd article of Union, no Scotch peer could be created a peer of Great Britain. This resolution was not annulled till the year 1782.]

Had the ministers been firmly united it can scarcely be doubted that they would have been able to withstand the Court. The parliamentary influence of the Whig aristocracy, combined with the genius, the virtue, and the fame of Pitt, would have been irresistible. But there had been in the Cabinet of George the Second latent jealousies and enmities, which now began to show themselves. Pitt had been estranged from his old ally Legge, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Some of the ministers were envious of Pitt's popularity. Others were, not altogether without cause, disgusted by his imperious and haughty demeanour. Others, again, were honestly opposed to some parts of his policy. They admitted that he had found the country in the depths of humiliation, and had raised it to the height of glory; they admitted that he had conducted the war with energy, ability, and splendid success; but they began to hint that the drain on the resources of the State was unexampled, and that the public debt was increasing with a speed at which Montague or Godolphin would have stood aghast. Some of the acquisitions made by our fleets and armies were, it was acknowledged, profitable as well as honourable; but, now that George the Second was dead, a courtier might venture to ask why England was to become a party in a dispute between two German powers. What was it to her whether the House of Hapsburg or the House of Brandenburg ruled in Silesia? Why were the best English regiments fighting on the Main? Why were the Prussian battalions paid with English gold? The great minister seemed to think it beneath him to calculate the price of victory. As long as the Tower guns were fired, as the streets were illuminated, as French banners were carried in triumph through London, it was to him matter of indifference to what extent the public burdens were augmented. Nay, he seemed to glory in the magnitude of those sacrifices which the people, fascinated by his eloquence and success, had too readily made, and would long and bitterly regret. There was no check on waste or embezzlement. Our commissaries returned from the camp of Prince Ferdinand to buy boroughs, to rear palaces, to rival the magnificence of the old aristocracy of the realm. Already had we borrowed, in four years of war, more than the most skilful and economical government would pay in forty years of peace. But the prospect of peace was as remote as ever. It could not be doubted that France, smarting and prostrate, would consent to fair terms of accommodation; but this was not what Pitt wanted. War had made him powerful and popular; with war, all that was brightest in his life was

associated: for war his talents were peculiarly fitted. He had at length begun to love war for its own sake, and was more disposed to quarrel with neutrals than to make peace with enemies.

Such were the views of the Duke of Bedford and of the Earl of Hardwicke; but no member of the Government held these opinions so strongly as George Grenville, the treasurer of the navy. George Grenville was brother-in-law of Pitt, and had always been reckoned one of Pitt's personal and political friends. But it is difficult to conceive two men of talents and integrity more utterly unlike each other, Pitt, as his sister often said, knew nothing accurately except Spenser's Fairy Queen. He had never applied himself steadily to any branch of knowledge. He was a wretched financier. He never became familiar even with the rules of that House of which he was the brightest ornament. He had never studied public law as a system; and was, indeed, so ignorant of the whole subject, that George the Second, on one occasion, complained bitterly that a man who had never read Vattel should presume to undertake the direction of foreign affairs. But these defects were more than redeemed by high and rare gifts, by a strange power of inspiring great masses of men with confidence and affection, by an eloquence which not only delighted the ear, but stirred the blood, and brought tears into the eyes, by originality in devising plans, by vigour in executing them. Grenville, on the other hand, was by nature and habit a man of details. He had been bred a lawyer; and he had brought the industry and acuteness of the Temple into official and parliamentary life. He was supposed to be intimately acquainted with the whole fiscal system of the country. He had paid especial attention to the law of Parliament, and was so learned in all things relating to the privileges and orders of the House of Commons that those who loved him least pronounced him the only person competent to succeed Onslow in the Chair. His speeches were generally instructive, and sometimes, from the gravity and earnestness with which he spoke, even impressive, but never brilliant, and generally tedious. Indeed, even when he was at the head of affairs, he sometimes found it difficult to obtain the ear of the House. In disposition as well as in intellect, he differed widely from his brother-in-law. Pitt was utterly regardless of money. He would scarcely stretch out his hand to take it; and when it came, he threw it away with childish profusion. Grenville, though strictly upright, was grasping and parsimonious. Pitt was a man of excitable nerves, sanguine in hope, easily elated by success and popularity, keenly sensible of injury, but prompt to forgive; Grenville's character was stem, melancholy, and pertinacious. Nothing was more remarkable in him than his inclination always to look on the dark side of things. He was the raven of the House of Commons, always croaking defeat in the midst of triumphs, and bankruptcy with an overflowing exchequer. Burke, with general applause, compared him, in a time of quiet and plenty, to the evil spirit whom Ovid described looking down on the stately temples and wealthy haven of Athens, and scarce able to refrain

from weeping because she could find nothing at which to weep. Such a man was not likely to be popular. But to unpopularity Grenville opposed a dogged determination, which sometimes forced even those who hated him to respect him.

It was natural that Pitt and Grenville, being such as they were, should take very different views of the situation of affairs. Pitt could see nothing but the trophies; Grenville could see nothing but the bill. Pitt boasted that England was victorious at once in America, in India, and in Germany, the umpire of the Continent, the mistress of the sea. Grenville cast up the subsidies, sighed over the army extraordinaries, and groaned in spirit to think that the nation had borrowed eight millions in one year.

With a ministry thus divided it was not difficult for Bute to deal. Legge was the first who fell. He had given offence to the young King in the late reign, by refusing to support a creature of Bute at a Hampshire election. He was now not only turned out, but in the closet, when he delivered up his seal of office, was treated with gross incivility.

Pitt, who did not love Legge, saw this event with indifference. But the danger was now fast approaching himself. Charles the Third of Spain had early conceived a deadly hatred of England. Twenty years before, when he was King of the Two Sicilies, he had been eager to join the coalition against Maria Theresa. But an English fleet had suddenly appeared in the Bay of Naples. An English Captain had landed, and proceeded to the palace, had laid a watch on the table, and had told his majesty that, within an hour, a treaty of neutrality must be signed, or a bombardment would commence. The treaty was signed; the squadron sailed out of the bay twenty-four hours after it had sailed in; and from that day the ruling passion of the humbled Prince was aversion to the English name. He was at length in a situation in which he might hope to gratify that passion. He had recently become King of Spain and the Indies. He saw, with envy and apprehension, the triumphs of our navy, and the rapid extension of our colonial Empire. He was a Bourbon, and sympathised with the distress of the house from which he sprang. He was a Spaniard; and no Spaniard could bear to see Gibraltar and Minorca in the possession of a foreign power. Impelled by such feelings, Charles concluded a secret treaty with France. By this treaty, known as the Family Compact, the two powers bound themselves, not in express words, but by the clearest implication, to make war on England in common. Spain postponed the declaration of hostilities only till her fleet, laden with the treasures of America, should have arrived.

The existence of the treaty could not be kept a secret from Pitt. He acted as a man of his capacity and energy might be expected to act. He at once proposed to declare war against Spain, and to intercept the American fleet. He had determined, it is said, to

attack without delay both Havanna and the Philippines.

His wise and resolute counsel was rejected. Bute was foremost in opposing it, and was supported by almost the whole Cabinet. Some of the ministers doubted, or affected to doubt, the correctness of Pitt's intelligence; some shrank from the responsibility of advising a course so bold and decided as that which he proposed; some were weary of his ascendency, and were glad to be rid of him on any pretext. One only of his colleagues agreed with him, his brother-in-law, Earl Temple.

Pitt and Temple resigned their offices. To Pitt the young King behaved at parting in the most gracious manner. Pitt, who, proud and fiery everywhere else, was always meek and humble in the closet, was moved even to tears. The King and the favourite urged him to accept some substantial mark of royal gratitude. Would he like to be appointed governor of Canada? A salary of five thousand pounds a year should be annexed to the office. Residence would not be required. It was true that the governor of Canada, as the law then stood, could not be a member of the House of Commons. But a bill should be brought in, authorising Pitt to hold his Government together with a seat in Parliament, and in the preamble should be set forth his claims to the gratitude of his country. Pitt answered, with all delicacy, that his anxieties were rather for his wife and family than for himself, and that nothing would be so acceptable to him as a mark of royal goodness which might be beneficial to those who were dearest to him. The hint was taken. The same Gazette which announced the retirement of the Secretary of State announced also that, in consideration of his great public services, his wife had been created a peeress in her own right, and that a pension of three thousand pounds a year, for three lives, had been bestowed on himself. It was doubtless thought that the rewards and honours conferred on the great minister would have a conciliatory effect on the public mind. Perhaps, too, it was thought that his popularity, which had partly arisen from the contempt which he had always shown for money, would be damaged by a pension; and, indeed, a crowd of libels instantly appeared, in which he was accused of having sold his country. Many of his true friends thought that he would have best consulted the dignity of his character by refusing to accept any pecuniary reward from the Court. Nevertheless, the general opinion of his talents, virtues, and services, remained unaltered. Addresses were presented to him from several large towns. London showed its admiration and affection in a still more marked manner. Soon after his resignation came the Lord Mayor's day. The King and the royal family dined at Guildhall. Pitt was one of the guests. The young Sovereign, seated by his bride in his state coach, received a remarkable lesson. He was scarcely noticed. All eyes were fixed on the fallen minister; all acclamations directed to him. The streets, the balconies, the chimney tops, burst into a roar of delight as his chariot passed by. The ladies waved their handkerchiefs from the windows. The common people clung to the wheels, shook hands with the footmen,

and even kissed the horses. Cries of "No Bute!" "No Newcastle salmon!" were mingled with the shouts of "Pitt for ever!" When Pitt entered Guildhall, he was welcomed by loud huzzas and clapping of hands, in which the very magistrates of the city joined. Lord Bute, in the meantime, was hooted and pelted through Cheapside, and would, it was thought, have been in some danger, if he had not taken the precaution of surrounding his carriage with a strong bodyguard of boxers.

Many persons blamed the conduct of Pitt on this occasion as disrespectful to the King. Indeed, Pitt himself afterwards owned that he had done wrong. He was led into this error, as he was afterwards led into more serious errors, by the influence of his turbulent and mischievous brother-in-law, Temple.

The events which immediately followed Pitt's retirement raised his fame higher than ever. War with Spain proved to be, as he had predicted, inevitable. News came from the West Indies that Martinique had been taken by an expedition which he had sent forth. Havanna fell; and it was known that he had planned an attack on Havanna. Manilla capitulated; and it was believed that he had meditated a blow against Manilla. The American fleet, which he had proposed to intercept, had unloaded an immense cargo of bullion in the haven of Cadiz, before Bute could be convinced that the Court of Madrid really entertained hostile intentions.

The session of Parliament which followed Pitt's retirement passed over without any violent storm. Lord Bute took on himself the most prominent part in the House of Lords. He had become Secretary of State, and indeed Prime Minister, without having once opened his lips in public except as an actor. There was, therefore, no small curiosity to know how he would acquit himself. Members of the House of Commons crowded the bar of the Lords, and covered the steps of the throne. It was generally expected that the orator would break down; but his most malicious hearers were forced to own that he had made a better figure than they expected. They, indeed, ridiculed his action as theatrical, and his style as tumid. They were especially amused by the long pauses which, not from hesitation, but from affectation, he made at all the emphatic words, and Charles Townshend cried out, "Minute guns!" The general opinion however was, that, if Bute had been early practised in debate, he might have become an impressive speaker.

In the Commons, George Grenville had been intrusted with the lead. The task was not, as yet, a very difficult one for Pitt did not think fit to raise the standard of opposition. His speeches at this time were distinguished, not only by that eloquence in which he excelled all his rivals, but also by a temperance and a modesty which had too often been wanting to his character. When war was declared against Spain, he justly laid claim to the merit of having foreseen what had at length become manifest to all, but he carefully abstained from arrogant and acrimonious expressions;

and this abstinence was the more honourable to him, because his temper, never very placid, was now severely tried, both by gout and calumny. The courtiers had adopted a mode of warfare, which was soon turned with far more formidable effect against themselves. Half the inhabitants of the Grub Street garrets paid their milk scores, and got their shirts out of pawn, by abusing Pitt. His German war, his subsidies, his pension, his wife's peerage, were shin of beef and gin, blankets and baskets of small coal, to the starving poetasters of the Fleet. Even in the House of Commons, he was, on one occasion during this session, assailed with an insolence and malice which called forth the indignation of men of all parties; but he endured the outrage with majestic patience. In his younger days he had been but too prompt to retaliate on those who attacked him; but now, conscious of his great services, and of the space which he filled in the eyes of all mankind, he would not stoop to personal squabbles. "This is no season," he said, in the debate on the Spanish war, "for altercation and recrimination. A day has arrived when every Englishman should stand forth for his country. Arm the whole; be one people; forget everything but the public. I set you the example. Harassed by slanderers, sinking under pain and disease, for the public I forget both my wrongs and my infirmities!" On a general review of his life, we are inclined to think that his genius and virtue never shone with so pure an effulgence as during the session Of 1762.

The session drew towards the close; and Bute, emboldened by the acquiescence of the Houses, resolved to strike another great blow, and to become first minister in name as well as in reality. That coalition, which a few months before had seemed all-powerful, had been dissolved. The retreat of Pitt had deprived the Government of popularity. Newcastle had exulted in the fall of the illustrious colleague whom he envied and dreaded, and had not foreseen that his own doom was at hand. He still tried to flatter himself that he was at the head of the Government; but insults heaped on insults at length undeceived him. Places which had always been considered as in his gift, were bestowed without any reference to him. His expostulations only called forth significant hints that it was time for him to retire. One day he pressed on Bute the claims of a Whig Prelate to the archbishopric of York. "If your grace thinks so highly of him," answered. Bute, "I wonder that you did not promote him when you had the power." Still the old man clung with a desperate grasp to the wreck. Seldom, indeed, have Christian meekness and Christian humility equalled the meekness and humility of his patient and abject ambition. At length he was forced to understand that all was over. He quitted that Court where he had held high office during forty-five years, and hid his shame and regret among the cedars of Claremont. Bute became First Lord of the Treasury.

The favourite had undoubtedly committed a great error. It is impossible to imagine a tool better suited to his purposes than that which he thus threw away, or rather put into the hands of

his enemies. If Newcastle had been suffered to play at being first minister, Bute might securely and quietly have enjoyed the substance of power. The gradual introduction of Tories into all the departments of the Government might have been effected without any violent clamour, if the chief of the great Whig connection had been ostensibly at the head of affairs. This was strongly represented to Bute by Lord Mansfield, a man who may justly be called the father of modern Toryism, of Toryism modified to suit an order of things under which the House of Commons is the most powerful body in the State. The theories which had dazzled Bute could not impose on the fine intellect of Mansfield. The temerity with which Bute provoked the hostility of powerful and deeply rooted interests, was displeasing to Mansfield's cold and timid nature. Expostulation, however, was vain. Bute was impatient of advice, drunk with success, eager to be, in show as well as in reality, the head of the Government. He had engaged in an undertaking in which a screen was absolutely necessary to his success, and even to his safety. He found an excellent screen ready in the very place where it was most needed; and he rudely pushed it away.

And now the new system of government came into full operation. For the first time since the accession of the House of Hanover, the Tory party was in the ascendant. The Prime Minister himself was a Tory. Lord Egremont, who had succeeded Pitt as Secretary of State, was a Tory, and the son of a Tory. Sir Francis Dashwood, a man of slender parts, of small experience, and of notoriously immoral character, was made Chancellor of the Exchequer, for no reason that could be imagined, except that he was a Tory, and had been a Jacobite. The royal household was filled with men whose favourite toast, a few years before, had been the King over the water. The relative position of the two great national seats of learning was suddenly changed. The University of Oxford had long been the chief seat of disaffection. In troubled times the High Street had been lined with bayonets; the colleges had been searched by the King's messengers. Grave doctors were in the habit of talking very Ciceronian treason in the theatre; and the undergraduates drank bumpers to Jacobite toasts, and chanted Jacobite airs. Of four successive Chancellors of the University, one had notoriously been in the Pretender's service; the other three were fully believed to be in secret correspondence with the exiled family. Cambridge had therefore been especially favoured by the Hanoverian Princes, and had shown herself grateful for their patronage. George the First had enriched her library; George the Second had contributed munificently to her Senate House. Bishoprics and deaneries were showered on her children. Her Chancellor was Newcastle, the chief of the Whig aristocracy; her High Steward was Hardwicke, the Whig head of the law. Both her burgesses had held office under the Whig ministry. Times had now changed. The University of Cambridge was received at St. James's with comparative coldness. The answers to the addresses of Oxford were all graciousness and warmth.

The watchwords of the new Government were prerogative and purity. The sovereign was no longer to be a puppet in the hands of any subject, or of any combination of subjects. George the Third would not be forced to take ministers whom he disliked, as his grandfather had been forced to take Pitt. George the Third would not be forced to part with any whom he delighted to honour, as his grandfather had been forced to part with Carteret. At the same time, the system of bribery which had grown up during the late reigns was to cease. It was ostentatiously proclaimed that, since the accession of the young King, neither constituents nor representatives had been bought with the secret-service money. To free Britain from corruption and oligarchical cabals, to detach her from continental connections, to bring the bloody and expensive war with France and Spain to a close, such were the specious objects which Bute professed to procure.

Some of these objects he attained. England withdrew, at the cost of a deep stain on her faith, from her German connections. The war with France and Spain was terminated by a peace, honourable indeed and advantageous to our country, yet less honourable and less advantageous than might have been expected from a long and almost unbroken series of victories, by land and sea, in every part of the world. But the only effect of Bute's domestic administration was to make faction wilder, and corruption fouler than ever.

The mutual animosity of the Whig and Tory parties had begun to languish after the fall of Walpole, and had seemed to be almost extinct at the close of the reign of George the Second. It now revived in all its force. Many Whigs, it is true, were still in office. The Duke of Bedford had signed the treaty with France. The Duke of Devonshire, though much out of humour, still continued to be Lord Chamberlain. Grenville, who led the House of Commons, and Fox, who still enjoyed in silence the immense gains of the Pay Office, had always been regarded as strong Whigs. But the bulk of the party throughout the country regarded the new minister with abhorrence. There was, indeed, no want of popular themes for invective against his character. He was a favourite; and favourites have always been odious in this country. No mere favourite had been at the head of the Government since the dagger of Felton had reached the heart of the Duke of Buckingham. After that event the most arbitrary and the most frivolous of the Stuarts had felt the necessity of confiding the chief direction of affairs to men who had given some proof of parliamentary or official talent. Strafford, Falkland, Clarendon, Clifford, Shaftesbury, Lauderdale, Danby, Temple, Halifax, Rochester, Sunderland, whatever their faults might be, were all men of acknowledged ability. They did not owe their eminence merely to the favour of the sovereign. On the contrary, they owed the favour of the sovereign to their eminence. Most of them, indeed, had first attracted the notice of the Court by the capacity and vigour which they had shown in opposition. The Revolution seemed to have for ever secured the State against the domination of a

Carr or a Villiers. Now, however, the personal regard of the King had at once raised a man who had seen nothing of public business, who had never opened his lips in Parliament, over the heads of a crowd of eminent orators, financiers, diplomatists. From a private gentleman, this fortunate minion had at once been turned into a Secretary of State. He had made his maiden speech when at the head of the administration. The vulgar resorted to a simple explanation of the phaenomenon, and the coarsest ribaldry against the Princess Mother was scrawled on every wall, and sung in every alley.

This was not all. The spirit of party, roused by impolitic provocation from its long sleep, roused in turn a still fiercer and more malignant Fury, the spirit of national animosity. The grudge of Whig against Tory was mingled with the grudge of Englishman against Scot. The two sections of the great British people had not yet been indissolubly blended together. The events of 1715 and of 1745 had left painful and enduring traces. The tradesmen of Cornhill had been in dread of seeing their tills and warehouses plundered by barelegged mountaineers from the Grampians. They still recollected that Black Friday, when the news came that the rebels were at Derby, when all the shops in the city were closed, and when the Bank of England began to pay in sixpences. The Scots, on the other hand, remembered, with natural resentment, the severity with which the insurgents had been chastised, the military outrages, the humiliating laws, the heads fixed on Temple Bar, the fires and quartering blocks on Kennington Common. The favourite did not suffer the English to forget from what part of the island he came. The cry of all the south was that the public offices, the army, the navy, were filled with high-cheeked Drummonds and Erskines, Macdonalds and Macgillivrays, who could not talk a Christian tongue, and some of whom had but lately begun to wear Christian breeches. All the old jokes on hills without trees, girls without stockings, men eating the food of horses, pails emptied from the fourteenth story, were pointed against these lucky adventurers. To the honour of the Scots it must be said, that their prudence and their pride restrained them from retaliation. Like the princess in the Arabian tale, they stopped their ears tight, and, unmoved by the shrillest notes of abuse, walked on, without once looking round, straight towards the Golden Fountain.

Bute, who had always been considered as a man of taste and reading, affected, from the moment of his elevation, the character of a Maecenas. If he expected to conciliate the public by encouraging literature and art, he was grievously mistaken. Indeed, none of the objects of his munificence, with the single exception of Johnson, can be said to have been well selected; and the public, not unnaturally, ascribed the selection of Johnson rather to the Doctor’s political prejudices than to his literary merits: for a wretched scribbler named Shebbeare, who had nothing in common with Johnson except violent Jacobitism, and who had stood in the pillory for a libel on the Revolution, was honoured

with a mark of royal approbation, similar to that which was bestowed on the author of the English Dictionary, and of the Vanity of Human Wishes. It was remarked that Adam, a Scotchman, was the Court architect, and that Ramsay, a Scotchman, was the Court painter, and was preferred to Reynolds. Mallet, a Scotchman, of no high literary fame, and of infamous character, partook largely of the liberality of the Government. John Home, a Scotchman, was rewarded for the tragedy of Douglas, both with a pension and with a sinecure place. But, when the author of the Bard, and of the Elegy in a Country Churchyard, ventured to ask for a Professorship, the emoluments of which he much needed, and for the duties of which he was, in many respects, better qualified than any man living, he was refused; and the post was bestowed on the pedagogue under whose care the favourite's son-in-law, Sir James Lowther, had made such signal proficiency in the graces and in the humane virtues.

Thus, the First Lord of the Treasury was detested by many as a Tory, by many as a favourite, and by many as a Scot. All the hatred which flowed from these various sources soon mingled, and was directed in one torrent of obloquy against the treaty of peace. The Duke of Bedford, who had negotiated that treaty, was hooted through the streets. Bute was attacked in his chair, and was with difficulty rescued by a troop of the guards. He could hardly walk the streets in safety without disguising himself. A gentleman who died not many years ago used to say that he once recognised the favourite Earl in the piazza of Covent Garden, muffled in a large coat, and with a hat and wig drawn down over his brows. His lordship's established type with the mob was a jack-boot, a wretched pun on his Christian name and title. A jack-boot, generally accompanied by a petticoat, was sometimes fastened on a gallows, and sometimes committed to the flames. Libels on the Court, exceeding in audacity and rancour any that had been published for many years, now appeared daily both in prose and verse. Wilkes, with lively insolence, compared the mother of George the Third to the mother of Edward the Third, and the Scotch minister to the gentle Mortimer. Churchill, with all the energy of hatred, deplored the fate of his country invaded by a new race of savages, more cruel and ravenous than the Picts or the Danes, the poor, proud children of Leprosy and Hunger. It is a slight circumstance, but deserves to be recorded, that in this year pamphleteers first ventured to print at length the names of the great men whom they lampooned. George the Second had always been the K--. His ministers had been Sir R-- W--, Mr. P--, and the Duke of N--. But the libellers of George the Third, of the Princess Mother, and of Lord Bute did not give quarter to a single vowel.

It was supposed that Lord Temple secretly encouraged the most scurrilous assailants of the Government. In truth, those who knew his habits tracked him as men track a mole. It was his nature to grub underground. Whenever a heap of dirt was flung up it might well be suspected that he was at work in some foul crooked

labyrinth below. Pitt turned away from the filthy work of opposition, with the same scorn with which he had turned away from the filthy work of government. He had the magnanimity to proclaim everywhere the disgust which he felt at the insults offered by his own adherents to the Scottish nation, and missed no opportunity of extolling the courage and fidelity which the Highland regiments had displayed through the whole war. But, though he disdained to use any but lawful and honourable weapons, it was well known that his fair blows were likely to be far more formidable than the privy thrusts of his brother-in-law's stiletto.

Bute's heart began to fail him. The Houses were about to meet. The treaty would instantly be the subject of discussion. It was probable that Pitt, the great Whig connection, and the multitude, would all be on the same side. The favourite had professed to hold in abhorrence those means by which preceding ministers had kept the House of Commons in good humour. He now began to think that he had been too scrupulous. His Utopian visions were at an end. It was necessary, not only to bribe, but to bribe more shamelessly and flagitiously than his predecessors, in order to make up for lost time. A majority must be secured, no matter by what means. Could Grenville do this? Would he do it? His firmness and ability had not yet been tried in any perilous crisis. He had been generally regarded as a humble follower of his brother Temple, and of his brother-in-law Pitt, and was supposed, though with little reason, to be still favourably inclined towards them. Other aid must be called in. And where was other aid to be found?

There was one man, whose sharp and manly logic had often in debate been found a match for the lofty and impassioned rhetoric of Pitt, whose talents for jobbing were not inferior to his talents for debate, whose dauntless spirit shrank from no difficulty or danger, and who was as little troubled with scruples as with fears. Henry Fox, or nobody, could weather the storm which was about to burst. Yet was he a person to whom the Court, even in that extremity, was unwilling to have recourse. He had always been regarded as a Whig of the Whigs. He had been the friend and disciple of Walpole. He had long been connected by close ties with William Duke of Cumberland. By the Tories he was more hated than any man living. So strong was their aversion to him that when, in the late reign, he had attempted to form a party against the Duke of Newcastle, they had thrown all their weight into Newcastle's scale. By the Scots, Fox was abhorred as the confidential friend of the conqueror of Culloden. He was, on personal grounds, most obnoxious to the Princess Mother. For he had, immediately after her husband's death, advised the late King to take the education of her son, the heir-apparent, entirely out of her hands. He had recently given, if possible, still deeper offence; for he had indulged, not without some ground, the ambitious hope that his beautiful sister-in-law, the Lady Sarah Lennox, might be queen of England. It had been observed that the King at one time rode every morning by the grounds of Holland

House, and that on such occasions, Lady Sarah, dressed like a shepherdess at a masquerade, was making hay close to the road, which was then separated by no wall from the lawn. On account of the part which Fox had taken in this singular love affair, he was the only member of the Privy Council who was not summoned to the meeting at which his Majesty announced his intended marriage with the Princess of Mecklenburg. Of all the statesmen of the age, therefore, it seemed that Fox was the last with whom Bute the Tory, the Scot, the favourite of the Princess Mother, could, under any circumstances, act. Yet to Fox Bute was now compelled to apply.

Fox had many noble and amiable qualities, which in private life shone forth in full lustre, and made him dear to his children, to his dependants, and to his friends; but as a public man he had no title to esteem. In him the vices which were common to the whole school of Walpole appeared, not perhaps in their worst, but certainly in their most prominent form; for his parliamentary and official talents made all his faults conspicuous. His courage, his vehement temper, his contempt for appearances, led him to display much that others, quite as unscrupulous as himself, covered with a decent veil. He was the most unpopular of the statesmen of his time, not because he sinned more than many of them, but because he canted less.

He felt his unpopularity; but he felt it after the fashion of strong minds. He became, not cautious, but reckless, and faced the rage of the whole nation with a scowl of inflexible defiance. He was born with a sweet and generous temper; but he had been goaded and baited into a savageness which was not natural to him, and which amazed and shocked those who knew him best. Such was the man to whom Bute, in extreme need, applied for succour.

That succour Fox was not unwilling to afford. Though by no means of an envious temper, he had undoubtedly contemplated the success and popularity of Pitt with bitter mortification. He thought himself Pitt’s match as a debater, and Pitt’s superior as a man of business. They had long been regarded as well-paired rivals. They had started fair in the career of ambition. They had long run side by side. At length Fox had taken the lead, and Pitt had fallen behind. Then had come a sudden turn of fortune, like that in Virgil’s foot-race. Fox had stumbled in the mire, and had not only been defeated, but befouled. Pit had reached the goal, and received the prize. The emoluments of the Pay Office might induce the defeated statesman to submit in silence to the ascendency of his competitor, but could not satisfy a mind conscious of great powers, and sore from great vexations. As soon, therefore, as a party arose adverse to the war and to the supremacy of the great war minister, the hopes of Fox began to revive. His feuds with the Princess Mother, with the Scots, with the Tories, he was ready to forget, if, by the help of his old enemies, he could now regain the importance which he had lost, and confront Pitt on

equal terms.

The alliance was, therefore, soon concluded. Fox was assured that, if he would pilot the Government out of its embarrassing situation, he should be rewarded with a peerage, of which he had long been desirous. He undertook on his side to obtain, by fair or foul means, a vote in favour of the peace. In consequence of this arrangement he became leader of the House of Commons; and Grenville, stifling his vexation as well as he could, sullenly acquiesced in the change.

Fox had expected that his influence would secure to the Court the cordial support of some eminent Whigs who were his personal friends, particularly of the Duke of Cumberland and of the Duke of Devonshire. He was disappointed, and soon found that, in addition to all his other difficulties, he must reckon on the opposition of the ablest prince of the blood, and of the great house of Cavendish.

But he had pledged himself to win the battle: and he was not a man to go back. It was no time for squeamishness. Bute was made to comprehend that the ministry could be saved only by practising the tactics of Walpole to an extent at which Walpole himself would have stared. The Pay Office was turned into a mart for votes. Hundreds of members were closeted there with Fox, and, as there is too much reason to believe, departed carrying with them the wages of infamy. It was affirmed by persons who had the best opportunities of obtaining information, that twenty-five thousand pounds were thus paid away in a single morning. The lowest bribe given, it was said, was a bank-note for two hundred pounds.

Intimidation was joined with corruption. All ranks, from the highest to the lowest, were to be taught that the King would be obeyed. The Lords Lieutenants of several counties were dismissed. The Duke of Devonshire was especially singled out as the victim by whose fate the magnates of England were to take warning. His wealth, rank, and influence, his stainless private character, and the constant attachment of his family to the House of Hanover, did not secure him from gross personal indignity. It was known that he disapproved of the course which the Government had taken; and it was accordingly determined to humble the Prince of the Whigs, as he had been nicknamed by the Princess Mother. He went to the palace to pay his duty. "Tell him," said the King to a page, "I that I will not see him." The page hesitated. "Go to him," said the King, "and tell him those very words." The message was delivered. The Duke tore off his gold key, and went away boiling with anger. His relations who were in office instantly resigned. A few days later, the King called for the list of Privy Councillors, and with his own hand struck out the Duke’s name.

In this step there was at least courage, though little wisdom or good nature. But, as nothing was too high for the revenge of the Court, so also was nothing too low. A persecution, such as had

never been known before, and has never been known since, raged in every public department. Great numbers of humble and laborious clerks were deprived of their bread, not because they had neglected their duties, not because they had taken an active part against the ministry, but merely because they had owed their situations to the recommendation of some nobleman or gentleman who was against the peace. The proscription extended to tidewaiters, to gaugers, to doorkeepers. One poor man to whom a pension had been given for his gallantry in a fight with smugglers, was deprived of it because he had been befriended by the Duke of Grafton. An aged widow, who, on account of her husband’s services in the navy, had, many years before, been made housekeeper to a public office, was dismissed from her situation, because it was imagined that she was distantly connected by marriage with the Cavendish family. The public clamour, as may well be supposed, grew daily louder and louder. But the louder it grew, the more resolutely did Fox go on with the work which he had begun. His old friends could not conceive what had possessed him. "I could forgive," said the Duke of Cumberland, "Fox’s political vagaries; but I am quite confounded by his inhumanity. Surely he used to be the best-natured of men."

At last Fox went so far to take a legal opinion on the question, whether the patents granted by George the Second were binding on George the Third. It is said, that, if his colleagues had not flinched, he would at once have turned out the Tellers of the Exchequer and Justices in Eyre.

Meanwhile the Parliament met. The ministers, more hated by the people than ever, were secure of a majority, and they had also reason to hope that they would have the advantage in the debates as well as in the divisions; for Pitt was confined to his chamber by a severe attack of gout. His friends moved to defer the consideration of the treaty till he should be able to attend: but the motion was rejected. The great day arrived. The discussion had lasted some time, when a loud huzza was heard in Palace Yard. The noise came nearer and nearer, up the stairs, through the lobby. The door opened, and from the midst of a shouting multitude came forth Pitt, borne in the arms of his attendants. His face was thin and ghastly, his limbs swathed in flannel, his crutch in his hand. The bearers set him down within the bar. His friends instantly surrounded him, and with their help he crawled to his seat near the table. In this condition he spoke three hours and a half against the peace. During that time he was repeatedly forced to sit down and to use cordials. It may well be supposed that his voice was faint, that his action was languid, and that his speech, though occasionally brilliant and impressive, was feeble when compared with his best oratorical performances. But those who remembered what he had done, and who saw what he suffered, listened to him with emotions stronger than any that mere eloquence can produce. He was unable to stay for the division, and was carried away from the House amidst shouts as loud as those which had announced his arrival.

A large majority approved the peace. The exultation of the Court was boundless. "Now," exclaimed the Princess Mother, "my son is really King." The young sovereign spoke of himself as freed from the bondage in which his grandfather had been held. On one point, it was announced, his mind was unalterably made up. Under no circumstances whatever should those Whig grandees, who had enslaved his predecessors and endeavoured to enslave himself, be restored to power.

This vaunting was premature. The real strength of the favourite was by no means proportioned to the number of votes which he had, on one particular division, been able to command. He was soon again in difficulties. The most important part of his budget was a tax on cider. This measure was opposed, not only by those who were generally hostile to his administration, but also by many of his supporters. The name of excise had always been hateful to the Tories. One of the chief crimes of Walpole in their eyes, had been his partiality for this mode of raising money. The Tory Johnson had in his Dictionary given so scurrilous a definition of the word Excise, that the Commissioners of Excise had seriously thought of prosecuting him. The counties which the new impost particularly affected had always been Tory counties. It was the boast of John Philips, the poet of the English vintage, that the Cider-land had ever been faithful to the throne, and that all the pruning-hooks of her thousand orchards had been beaten into swords for the service of the ill-fated Stuarts. The effect of Bute’s fiscal scheme was to produce an union between the gentry and yeomanry of the Cider-land and the Whigs of the capital. Herefordshire and Worcestershire were in a flame. The city of London, though not so directly interested, was, if possible, still more excited. The debates on this question irreparably damaged the Government. Dashwood’s financial statement had been confused and absurd beyond belief, and had been received by the House with roars of laughter. He had sense enough to be conscious of his unfitness for the high situation which he held, and exclaimed in a comical fit of despair, "What shall I do? The boys will point at me in the street and cry, ’There goes the worst Chancellor of the Exchequer that ever was.'" George Grenville came to the rescue, and spoke strongly on his favourite theme, the profusion with which the late war had been carried on. That profusion, he said, had made taxes necessary. He called on the gentlemen opposite to him to say where they would have a tax laid, and dwelt on this topic with his usual prolixity. "Let them tell me where," he repeated in a monotonous and somewhat fretful tone. "I say, sir, let them tell me where. I repeat it, sir; I am entitled to say to them, Tell me where." Unluckily for him, Pitt had come down to the House that night, and had been bitterly provoked by the reflections thrown on the war. He revenged himself by murmuring in a whine resembling Grenville’s, a line of a well-known song, "Gentle Shepherd, tell me where." "If," cried Grenville, "gentlemen are to be treated in this way--." Pitt, as was his fashion, when he meant to mark extreme contempt, rose

deliberately, made his bow, and walked out of the House, leaving his brother-in-law in convulsions of rage, and everybody else in convulsions of laughter. It was long before Grenville lost the nickname of the Gentle Shepherd.

But the ministry had vexations still more serious to endure. The hatred which the Tories and Scots bore to Fox was implacable. In a moment of extreme peril, they had consented to put themselves under his guidance. But the aversion with which they regarded him broke forth as soon as the crisis seemed to be over. Some of them attacked him about the accounts of the Pay Office. Some of them rudely interrupted him when speaking, by laughter and ironical cheers. He was naturally desirous to escape from so disagreeable a situation, and demanded the peerage which had been promised as the reward of his services.

It was clear that there must be some change in the composition of the ministry. But scarcely any, even of those who, from their situation, might be supposed to be in all the secrets of the Government, anticipated what really took place. To the amazement of the Parliament and the nation, it was suddenly announced that Bute had resigned.

Twenty different explanations of this strange step were suggested. Some attributed it to profound design, and some to sudden panic. Some said that the lampoons of the Opposition had driven the Earl from the field; some that he had taken office only in order to bring the war to a close, and had always meant to retire when that object had been accomplished. He publicly assigned ill health as his reason for quitting business, and privately complained that he was not cordially seconded by his colleagues, and that Lord Mansfield, in particular, whom he had himself brought into the Cabinet, gave him no support in the House of Peers. Mansfield was, indeed, far too sagacious not to perceive that Bute's situation was one of great peril and far too timorous to thrust himself into peril for the sake of another. The probability, however, is that Bute's conduct on this occasion, like the conduct of most men on most occasions, was determined by mixed motives. We suspect that he was sick of office; for this is a feeling much more common among ministers than persons who see public life from a distance are disposed to believe; and nothing could be more natural than that this feeling should take possession of the mind of Bute. In general, a statesman climbs by slow degrees. Many laborious years elapse before he reaches the topmost pinnacle of preferment. In the earlier part of his career, therefore, he is constantly lured on by seeing something above him. During his ascent he gradually becomes inured to the annoyances which belong to a life of ambition. By the time that he has attained the highest point, he has become patient of labour and callous to abuse. He is kept constant to his vocation, in spite of all its discomforts, at first by hope, and at last by habit. It was not so with Bute. His whole public life lasted little more than two years. On the day

on which he became a politician he became a cabinet minister. In a few months he was, both in name and in show, chief of the administration. Greater than he had been he could not be. If what he already possessed was vanity and vexation of spirit, no delusion remained to entice him onward. He had been cloyed with the pleasures of ambition before he had been seasoned to its pains. His habits had not been such as were likely to fortify his mind against obloquy and public hatred. He had reached his forty-eighth year in dignified ease, without knowing, by personal experience, what it was to be ridiculed and slandered. All at once, without any previous initiation, he had found himself exposed to such a storm of invective and satire as had never burst on the head of any statesman. The emoluments of office were now nothing to him; for he had just succeeded to a princely property by the death of his father-in-law. All the honours which could be bestowed on him he had already secured. He had obtained the Garter for himself, and a British peerage for his son. He seems also to have imagined that by quitting the Treasury he should escape from danger and abuse without really resigning power, and should still be able to exercise in private supreme influence over the royal mind.

Whatever may have been his motives, he retired. Fox at the same time took refuge in the House of Lords; and George Grenville became First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer.

We believe that those who made this arrangement fully intended that Grenville should be a mere puppet in the hands of Bute; for Grenville was as yet very imperfectly known even to those who had observed him long. He passed for a mere official drudge; and he had all the industry, the minute accuracy, the formality, the tediousness, which belong to the character. But he had other qualities which had not yet shown themselves, devouring ambition, dauntless courage, self-confidence amounting to presumption, and a temper which could not endure opposition. He was not disposed to be anybody’s tool; and he had no attachment, political or personal, to Bute. The two men had, indeed, nothing in common, except a strong propensity towards harsh and unpopular courses. Their principles were fundamentally different. Bute was a Tory. Grenville would have been very angry with any person who should have denied his claim to be a Whig. He was more prone to tyrannical measures than Bute; but he loved tyranny only when disguised under the forms of constitutional liberty. He mixed up, after a fashion then not very unusual, the theories of the republicans of the seventeenth century with the technical maxims of English law, and thus succeeded in combining anarchical speculation with arbitrary practice. The voice of the people was the voice of God; but the only legitimate organ through which the voice of the people could be uttered was the Parliament. All power was from the people; but to the Parliament the whole power of the people had been delegated. No Oxonian divine had ever, even in the years which immediately followed the Restoration,

demanded for the King so abject, so unreasoning a homage, as Grenville, on what he considered as the purest Whig principles, demanded for the Parliament. As he wished to see the Parliament despotic over the nation, so he wished to see it also despotic over the Court. In his view the Prime Minister, possessed of the confidence of the House of Commons, ought to be mayor of the Palace. The King was a mere Childeric or Chilperic, who well might think himself lucky in being permitted to enjoy such handsome apartments at Saint James's, and so fine a park at Windsor.

Thus the opinions of Bute and those of Grenville were diametrically opposed. Nor was there any private friendship between the two statesmen. Grenville's nature was not forgiving; and he well remembered how, a few months before, he had been compelled to yield the lead of the House of Commons to Fox.

We are inclined to think, on the whole, that the worst administration which has governed England since the Revolution was that of George Grenville. His public acts may be classed under two heads, outrages on the liberty of the people, and outrages on the dignity of the Crown.

He began by making war on the press. John Wilkes, member of Parliament for Aylesbury, was singled out for persecution. Wilkes had, till very lately, been known chiefly as one of the most profane, licentious, and agreeable rakes about town. He was a man of taste, reading, and engaging manners. His sprightly conversation was the delight of greenrooms and taverns, and pleased even grave hearers when he was sufficiently under restraint to abstain from detailing the particulars of his amours, and from breaking jests on the New Testament. His expensive debaucheries forced him to have recourse to the Jews. He was soon a ruined man, and determined to try his chance as a political adventurer. In Parliament he did not succeed. His speaking, though pert, was feeble, and by no means interested his hearers so much as to make them forget his face, which was so hideous that the caricaturists were forced, in their own despite, to flatter him. As a writer, he made a better figure. He set up a weekly paper, called the North Briton. This journal, written with some pleasantry, and great audacity and impudence, had a considerable number of readers. Forty-four numbers had been published when Bute resigned; and, though almost every number had contained matter grossly libellous, no prosecution had been instituted. The forty-fifth number was innocent when compared with the majority of those which had preceded it, and indeed contained nothing so strong as may in our time be found daily in the leading articles of the Times and Morning Chronicle. But Grenville was now at the head of affairs. A new spirit had been infused into the administration. Authority was to be upheld. The Government was no longer to be braved with impunity. Wilkes was arrested under a general warrant, conveyed to the Tower, and confined there with circumstances of unusual severity. His papers

were seized, and carried to the Secretary of State. These harsh and illegal measures produced a violent outbreak of popular rage, which was soon changed to delight and exultation. The arrest was pronounced unlawful by the Court of Common Pleas, in which Chief justice Pratt presided, and the prisoner was discharged. This victory over the Government was celebrated with enthusiasm both in London and in the cider counties.

While the ministers were daily becoming more odious to the nation, they were doing their best to make themselves also odious to the Court. They gave the King plainly to understand that they were determined not to be Lord Bute's creatures, and exacted a promise that no secret adviser should have access to the royal ear. They soon found reason to suspect that this promise had not been observed. They remonstrated in terms less respectful than their master had been accustomed to hear, and gave him a fortnight to make his choice between his favourite and his Cabinet.

George the Third was greatly disturbed. He had but a few weeks before exulted in his deliverance from the yoke of the great Whig connection. He had even declared that his honour would not permit him ever again to admit the members of that connection into his service. He now found that he had only exchanged one set of masters for another set still harsher and more imperious. In his distress he thought on Pitt. From Pitt it was possible that better terms might be obtained than either from Grenville, or from the party of which Newcastle was the head.

Grenville, on his return from an excursion into the country, repaired to Buckingham House. He was astonished to find at the entrance a chair, the shape of which was well known to him, and indeed to all London. It was distinguished by a large boot, made for the purpose of accommodating the Great Commoner's gouty leg. Grenville guessed the whole. His brother-in-law was closeted with the King. Bute, provoked by what he considered as the unfriendly and ungrateful conduct of his successors, had himself proposed that Pitt should be summoned to the palace.

Pitt had two audiences on two successive days. What passed at the first interview led him to expect that the negotiations would be brought to a satisfactory close; but on the morrow he found the King less complying. The best account, indeed the only trustworthy account of the conference, is that which was taken from Pitt's own mouth by Lord Hardwicke. It appears that Pitt strongly represented the importance of conciliating those chiefs of the Whig party who had been so unhappy as to incur the royal displeasure. They had, he said, been the most constant friends of the House of Hanover. Their power was great; they had been long versed in public business. If they were to be under sentence of exclusion, a solid administration could not be formed. His Majesty could not bear to think of putting himself into the hands of those whom he had recently chased from his Court with the

strongest marks of anger. "I am sorry, Mr. Pitt," he said, "but I see this will not do. My honour is concerned. I must support my honour." How his Majesty succeeded in supporting his honour, we shall soon see.

Pitt retired, and the King was reduced to request the ministers, whom he had been on the point of discarding, to remain in office. During the two years which followed, Grenville, now closely leagued with the Bedfords, was the master of the Court; and a hard master he proved. He knew that he was kept in place only because there was no choice except between himself and the Whigs. That under any circumstances the Whigs would be forgiven, he thought impossible. The late attempt to get rid of him had roused his resentment; the failure of that attempt had liberated him from all fear. He had never been very courtly. He now began to hold a language, to which, since the days of Cornet Joyce and President Bradshaw, no English King had been compelled to listen.

In one matter, indeed, Grenville, at the expense of justice and liberty, gratified the passions of the Court while gratifying his own. The persecution of Wilkes was eagerly pressed. He had written a parody on Pope’s Essay on Man, entitled the Essay on Woman, and had appended to it notes, in ridicule of Warburton’s famous Commentary. This composition was exceedingly profligate, but not more so, we think, than some of Pope’s own works, the imitation of the second satire of the first book of Horace, for example; and, to do Wilkes justice, he had not, like Pope, given his ribaldry to the world. He had merely printed at a private press a very small number of copies, which he meant to present to some of his boon companions, whose morals were in no more danger of being corrupted by a loose book than a negro of being tanned by a warm sun. A tool of the Government, by giving a bribe to the printer, procured a copy of this trash, and placed it in the hands of the ministers. The ministers resolved to visit Wilkes’s offence against decorum with the utmost rigour of the law. What share piety and respect for morals had in dictating this resolution, our readers may judge from the fact that no person was more eager for bringing the libertine poet to punishment than Lord March, afterwards Duke of Queensberry. On the first day of the session of Parliament, the book, thus disgracefully obtained, was laid on the table of the Lords by the Earl of Sandwich, whom the Duke of Bedford’s interest had made Secretary of State. The unfortunate author had not the slightest suspicion that his licentious poem had ever been seen, except by his printer and a few of his dissipated companions, till it was produced in full Parliament. Though he was a man of easy temper, averse from danger, and not very susceptible of shame, the surprise, the disgrace, the prospect of utter ruin, put him beside himself. He picked a quarrel with one of Lord Bute’s dependants, fought a duel, was seriously wounded, and when half recovered, fled to France. His enemies had now their own way both in the Parliament and in the King’s Bench. He was censured, expelled from the House of Commons, outlawed. His works were ordered to be burned by the

common hangman. Yet was the multitude still true to him. In the minds even of many moral and religious men, his crime seemed light when compared with the crime of his accusers. The conduct of Sandwich in particular, excited universal disgust. His own vices were notorious; and, only a fortnight before he laid the Essay on Woman before the House of Lords, he had been drinking and singing loose catches with Wilkes at one of the most dissolute clubs in London. Shortly after the meeting of Parliament, the Beggar's Opera was acted at Covent Garden theatre. When Macheath uttered the words--"That Jemmy Twitcher should peach me I own surprised me,"--pit, boxes, and galleries, burst into a roar which seemed likely to bring the roof down. From that day Sandwich was universally known by the nickname of Jemmy Twitcher. The ceremony of burning the North Briton was interrupted by a riot. The constables were beaten; the paper was rescued; and, instead of it, a jack-boot and a petticoat were committed to the flames. Wilkes had instituted an action for the seizure of his papers against the Under-secretary of State. The jury gave a thousand pounds damages. But neither these nor any other indications of public feeling had power to move Grenville. He had the Parliament with him: and, according to his political creed, the sense of the nation was to be collected from the Parliament alone.

Soon, however, he found reason to fear that even the Parliament might fail him. On the question of the legality of general warrants, the Opposition, having on its side all sound principles, all constitutional authorities, and the voice of the whole nation, mustered in great force, and was joined by many who did not ordinarily vote against the Government. On one occasion the ministry, in a very full House, had a majority of only fourteen votes. The storm, however, blew over. The spirit of the Opposition, from whatever cause, began to flag at the moment when success seemed almost certain. The session ended without any change. Pitt, whose eloquence had shone with its usual lustre in all the principal debates, and whose popularity was greater than ever, was still a private man. Grenville, detested alike by the Court and by the people, was still minister.

As soon as the Houses had risen, Grenville took a step which proved, even more signally than any of his past acts, how despotic, how acrimonious, and how fearless his nature was. Among the gentlemen not ordinarily opposed to the Government, who, on the great constitutional question of general warrants, had voted with the minority, was Henry Conway, brother of the Earl of Hertford, a brave soldier, a tolerable speaker, and a well-meaning, though not a wise or vigorous politician. He was now deprived of his regiment, the merited reward of faithful and gallant service in two wars. It was confidently asserted that in this violent measure the King heartily concurred.

But whatever pleasure the persecution of Wilkes, or the dismissal of Conway, may have given to the royal mind, it is certain that

his Majesty's aversion to his ministers increased day by day. Grenville was as frugal of the public money as of his own, and morosely refused to accede to the King's request, that a few thousand pounds might be expended in buying some open fields to the west of the gardens of Buckingham House. In consequence of this refusal, the fields were soon covered with buildings, and the King and Queen were overlooked in their most private walks by the upper windows of a hundred houses. Nor was this the worst. Grenville was as liberal of words as he was sparing of guineas. Instead of explaining himself in that clear, concise, and lively manner, which alone could win the attention of a young mind new to business, he spoke in the closet just as he spoke in the House of Commons. When he had harangued two hours, he looked at his watch, as he had been in the habit of looking at the clock opposite the Speaker's chair, apologised for the length of his discourse, and then went on for an hour more. The members of the House of Commons can cough an orator down, or can walk away to dinner; and they were by no means sparing in the use of these privileges when Grenville was on his legs. But the poor young King had to endure all this eloquence with mournful civility. To the end of his life he continued to talk with horror of Grenville's orations.

About this time took place one of the most singular events in Pitt's life. There was a certain Sir William Pynsent, a Somersetshire baronet of Whig politics, who had been a Member of the House of Commons in the days of Queen Anne, and had retired to rural privacy when the Tory party, towards the end of her reign, obtained the ascendency in her councils. His manners were eccentric. His morals lay under very odious imputations. But his fidelity to his political opinions was unalterable. During fifty years of seclusion he continued to brood over the circumstances which had driven him from public life, the dismissal of the Whigs, the peace of Utrecht, the desertion of our allies. He now thought that he perceived a close analogy between the well remembered events of his youth and the events which he had witnessed in extreme old age; between the disgrace of Marlborough and the disgrace of Pitt; between the elevation of Harley and the elevation of Bute; between the treaty negotiated by St. John and the treaty negotiated by Bedford; between the wrongs of the House of Austria in 1712 and the wrongs of the House of Brandenburgh in 1762. This fancy took such possession of the old man's mind that he determined to leave his whole property to Pitt. In this way, Pitt unexpectedly came into possession of near three thousand pounds a year. Nor could all the malice of his enemies find any ground for reproach in the transaction. Nobody could call him a legacy-hunter. Nobody could accuse him of seizing that to which others had a better claim. For he had never in his life seen Sir William; and Sir William had left no relation so near as to be entitled to form any expectations respecting the estate.

The fortunes of Pitt seemed to flourish; but his health was worse than ever. We cannot find that, during the session which began in

January 1765, he once appeared in Parliament. He remained some months in profound retirement at Hayes, his favourite villa, scarcely moving except from his armchair to his bed, and from his bed to his armchair, and often employing his wife as his amanuensis in his most confidential correspondence. Some of his detractors whispered that his invisibility was to be ascribed quite as much to affectation as to gout. In truth his character, high and splendid as it was, wanted simplicity. With genius which did not need the aid of stage tricks, and with a spirit which should have been far above them, he had yet been, through life, in the habit of practising them. It was, therefore, now surmised that, having acquired all the considerations which could be derived from eloquence and from great services to the State, he had determined not to make himself cheap by often appearing in public, but, under the pretext of ill health, to surround himself with mystery, to emerge only at long intervals and on momentous occasions, and at other times to deliver his oracles only to a few favoured votaries, who were suffered to make pilgrimages to his shrine. If such were his object, it was for a time fully attained. Never was the magic of his name so powerful, never was he regarded by his country with such superstitious veneration, as during this year of silence and seclusion.

While Pitt was thus absent from Parliament, Grenville proposed a measure destined to produce a great revolution, the effects of which will long be felt by the whole human race. We speak of the act for imposing stamp-duties on the North American colonies. The plan was eminently characteristic of its author. Every feature of the parent was found in the child. A timid statesman would have shrunk from a step, of which Walpole, at a time when the colonies were far less powerful, had said--"He who shall propose it will be a much bolder man than I" But the nature of Grenville was insensible to fear. A statesman of large views would have felt that to lay taxes at Westminster on New England and New York, was a course opposed, not indeed to the letter of the Statute Book, or to any decision contained in the Term Reports, but to the principles of good government, and to the spirit of the constitution. A statesman of large views would also have felt that ten times the estimated produce of the American stamps would have been dearly purchased by even a transient quarrel between the mother country and the colonies. But Grenville knew of no spirit of the constitution distinct from the letter of the law, and of no national interests except those which are expressed by pounds, shillings, and pence. That his policy might give birth to deep discontents in all the provinces, from the shore of the Great Lakes to the Mexican sea; that France and Spain might seize the opportunity of revenge; that the empire might be dismembered; that the debt, that debt with the amount of which he perpetually reproached Pitt, might, in consequence of his own policy, be doubled; these were possibilities which never occurred to that small, sharp mind.

The Stamp Act will be remembered as long as the globe lasts. But,

at the time, it attracted much less notice in this country than another Act which is now almost utterly forgotten. The King fell ill, and was thought to be in a dangerous state. His complaint, we believe, was the same which, at a later period, repeatedly incapacitated him for the performance of his regal functions. The heir-apparent was only two years old. It was clearly proper to make provision for the administration of the Government, in case of a minority. The discussions on this point brought the quarrel between the Court and the ministry to a crisis. The King wished to be intrusted with the power of naming a regent by will. The ministers feared, or affected to fear, that, if this power were conceded to him, he would name the Princess Mother, nay, possibly the Earl of Bute. They, therefore, insisted on introducing into the bill words confining the King's choice to the royal family. Having thus excluded Bute, they urged the King to let them, in the most marked manner, exclude the Princess Dowager also. They assured him that the House of Commons would undoubtedly strike her name out, and by this threat they wrung from him a reluctant assent. In a few days, it appeared that the representations by which they had induced the King to put this gross and public affront on his mother were unfounded. The friends of the Princess in the House of Commons moved that her name should be inserted. The ministers could not decently attack the parent of their master. They hoped that the Opposition would come to their help, and put on them a force to which they would gladly have yielded. But the majority of the Opposition, though hating the Princess, hated Grenville more, beheld his embarrassment with delight, and would do nothing to extricate him from it. The Princess's name was accordingly placed in the list of persons qualified to hold the regency.

The King's resentment was now it the height. The present evil seemed to him more intolerable than any other. Even the junta of Whig grandees could not treat him worse than he had been treated by his present ministers. In his distress, he poured out his whole heart to his uncle, the Duke of Cumberland. The Duke was not a man to be loved; but he was eminently a man to be trusted. He had an intrepid temper, a strong understanding, and a high sense of honour and duty. As a general, he belonged to a remarkable class of captains, captains we mean, whose fate it has been to lose almost all the battles which they have fought, and yet to be reputed stout and skilful soldiers. Such captains were Coligny and William the Third. We might, perhaps, add Marshal Soult to the list. The bravery of the Duke of Cumberland was such as distinguished him even among the princes of his brave house. The indifference with which he rode about amidst musket balls and cannon balls was not the highest proof of his fortitude. Hopeless maladies, horrible surgical operations, far from unmanning him, did not even discompose him. With courage he had the virtues which are akin to courage. He spoke the truth, was open in enmity and friendship, and upright in all his dealings. But his nature was hard; and what seemed to him justice was rarely tempered with mercy. He was, therefore, during many years, one of the most

unpopular men in England. The severity with which he had treated the rebels after the battle of Culloden, had gained for him the name of the Butcher. His attempts to introduce into the army of England, then in a most disorderly state, the rigorous discipline of Potsdam, had excited still stronger disgust. Nothing was too bad to be believed of him. Many honest people were so absurd as to fancy that, if he were left Regent during the minority of his nephews, there would be another smothering in the Tower. These feelings, however, had passed away. The Duke had been living, during some years, in retirement. The English, full of animosity against the Scots, now blamed his Royal Highness only for having left so many Camerons and Macphersons to be made gaugers and custom-house officers. He was, therefore, at present, a favourite with his countrymen, and especially with the inhabitants of London.

He had little reason to love the King, and had shown clearly, though not obtrusively, his dislike of the system which had lately been pursued. But he had high and almost romantic notions of the duty which, as a prince of the blood, he owed to the head of his house. He determined to extricate his nephew from bondage, and to effect a reconciliation between the Whig party and the throne, on terms honourable to both.

In this mind he set off for Hayes, and was admitted to Pitt's sick-room; for Pitt would not leave his chamber, and would not communicate with any messenger of inferior dignity. And now began a long series of errors on the part of the illustrious statesman, errors which involved his country in difficulties and distresses more serious even than those from which his genius had formerly rescued her. His language was haughty, unreasonable, almost unintelligible. The only thing which could be discerned through a cloud of vague and not very gracious phrases, was that he would not at that moment take office. The truth, we believe, was this. Lord Temple, who was Pitt's evil genius, had just formed a new scheme of politics. Hatred of Bute and of the Princess had, it should seem, taken entire possession of Temple's soul. He had quarrelled with his brother George, because George had been connected with Bute and the Princess. Now that George appeared to be the enemy of Bute and of the Princess, Temple was eager to bring about a general family reconciliation. The three brothers, as Temple, Grenville, and Pitt, were popularly called, might make a ministry without leaning for aid either on Bute or on the Whig connection. With such views, Temple used all his influence to dissuade Pitt from acceding to the propositions of the Duke of Cumberland. Pitt was not convinced. But Temple had an influence over him such as no other person had ever possessed. They were very old friends, very near relations. If Pitt's talents and fame had been useful to Temple, Temple's purse had formerly, in times of great need, been useful to Pitt. They had never been parted in politics. Twice they had come into the Cabinet together; twice they had left it together. Pitt could not bear to think of taking office without his chief ally. Yet he felt that he was doing

wrong, that he was throwing away a great opportunity of serving his country. The obscure and unconciliatory style of the answers which he returned to the overtures of the Duke of Cumberland, may be ascribed to the embarrassment and vexation of a mind not at peace with itself. It is said that he mournfully exclaimed to Temple,

"Extinxti te meque, soror, populumque, patresque
Sidonios, urbemque tuam."

The prediction was but too just.

Finding Pitt impracticable, the Duke of Cumberland advised the King to submit to necessity, and to keep Grenville and the Bedfords. It was, indeed, not a time at which offices could safely be left vacant. The unsettled state of the Government had produced a general relaxation through all the departments of the public service. Meetings, which at another time would have been harmless, now turned to riots, and rapidly rose almost to the dignity of rebellions. The Houses of Parliament were blockaded by the Spitalfields weavers. Bedford House was assailed on all sides by a furious rabble, and was strongly garrisoned with horse and foot. Some people attributed these disturbances to the friends of Bute, and some to the friends of Wilkes. But, whatever might be the cause, the effect was general insecurity. Under such circumstances the King had no choice. With bitter feelings of mortification, he informed the ministers that he meant to retain them.

They answered by demanding from him a promise on his royal word never more to consult Lord Bute. The promise was given. They then demanded something more. Lord Bute’s brother, Mr. Mackenzie, held a lucrative office in Scotland. Mr. Mackenzie must be dismissed. The King replied that the office had been given under very peculiar circumstances, and that he had promised never to take it away while he lived. Grenville was obstinate; and the King, with a very bad grace, yielded.

The session of Parliament was over. The triumph of the ministers was complete. The King was almost as much a prisoner as Charles the First had been when in the Isle of Wight. Such were the fruits of the policy which, only a few months before, was represented as having for ever secured the throne against the dictation of insolent subjects.

His Majesty’s natural resentment showed itself in every look and word. In his extremity he looked wistfully towards that Whig connection, once the object of his dread and hatred. The Duke of Devonshire, who had been treated with such unjustifiable harshness, had lately died, and had been succeeded by his son, who was still a boy. The King condescended to express his regret for what had passed, and to invite the young Duke to Court. The noble youth came, attended by his uncles, and was received with

marked graciousness.

This and many other symptoms of the same kind irritated the ministers. They had still in store for their sovereign an insult which would have provoked his grandfather to kick them out of the room. Grenville and Bedford demanded an audience of him, and read him a remonstrance of many pages, which they had drawn up with great care. His Majesty was accused of breaking his word, and of treating his advisers with gross unfairness. The Princess was mentioned in language by no means eulogistic. Hints were thrown out that Bute's head was in danger. The King was plainly told that he must not continue to show, as he had done, that he disliked the situation in which he was placed, that he must frown upon the Opposition, that he must carry it fair towards his ministers in public. He several times interrupted the reading, by declaring that he had ceased to hold any communication with Bute. But the ministers, disregarding his denial, went on; and the King listened in silence, almost choked by rage. When they ceased to read, he merely made a gesture expressive of his wish to be left alone. He afterwards owned that he thought he should have gone into a fit.

Driven to despair, he again had recourse to the Duke of Cumberland; and the Duke of Cumberland again had recourse to Pitt. Pitt was really desirous to undertake the direction of affairs, and owned, with many dutiful expressions, that the terms offered by the King were all that any subject could desire. But Temple was impracticable; and Pitt, with great regret, declared that he could not, without the concurrence of his brother-in-law, undertake the administration.

The Duke now saw only one way of delivering his nephew. An administration must be formed of the Whigs in opposition, without Pitt's help. The difficulties seemed almost insuperable. Death and desertion had grievously thinned the ranks of the party lately supreme in the State. Those among whom the Duke's choice lay might be divided into two classes, men too old for important offices, and men who had never been in any important office before. The Cabinet must be composed of broken invalids or of raw recruits.

This was an evil, yet not an unmixed evil. If the new Whig statesmen had little experience in business and debate, they were, on the other hand, pure from the taint of that political immorality which had deeply infected their predecessors. Long prosperity had corrupted that great party which had expelled the Stuarts, limited the prerogatives of the Crown, and curbed the intolerance of the Hierarchy. Adversity had already produced a salutary effect. On the day of the accession of George the Third, the ascendency of the Whig party terminated; and on that day the purification of the Whig party began. The rising chiefs of that party were men of a very different sort from Sandys and Winnington, from Sir William Yonge and Henry Fox. They were men

worthy to have charged by the side of Hampden at Chalgrove, or to have exchanged the last embrace with Russell on the scaffold in Lincoln's Inn Fields. They carried into politics the same high principles of virtue which regulated their private dealings, nor would they stoop to promote even the noblest and most salutary ends by means which honour and probity condemn. Such men were Lord John Cavendish, Sir George Savile, and others whom we hold in honour as the second founders of the Whig party, as the restorers of its pristine health and energy after half a century of degeneracy.

The chief of this respectable band was the Marquess of Rockingham, a man of splendid fortune, excellent sense, and stainless character. He was indeed nervous to such a degree that, to the very close of his life, he never rose without great reluctance and embarrassment to address the House of Lords.

But, though not a great orator, he had in a high degree some of the qualities of a statesman. He chose his friends well; and he had, in an extraordinary degree, the art of attaching them to him by ties of the most honourable kind. The cheerful fidelity with which they adhered to him through many years of almost hopeless opposition was less admirable than the disinterestedness and delicacy which they showed when he rose to power.

We are inclined to think that the use and the abuse of party cannot be better illustrated than by a parallel between two powerful connections of that time, the Rockinghams and the Bedfords. The Rockingham party was, in our view, exactly what a party should be. It consisted of men bound together by common opinions, by common public objects, by mutual esteem. That they desired to obtain, by honest and constitutional means, the direction of affairs, they openly avowed. But, though often invited to accept the honours and emoluments of office, they steadily refused to do so on any conditions inconsistent with their principles. The Bedford party, as a party, had, as far as we can discover, no principle whatever. Rigby and Sandwich wanted public money, and thought that they should fetch a higher price jointly than singly. They therefore acted in concert, and prevailed on a much more important and a much better man than themselves to act with them.

It was to Rockingham that the Duke of Cumberland now had recourse. The Marquess consented to take the Treasury. Newcastle, so long the recognised chief of the Whigs, could not well be excluded from the ministry. He was appointed Keeper of the Privy Seal. A very honest clear-headed country gentleman, of the name of Dowdeswell, became Chancellor of the Exchequer. General Conway, who had served under the Duke of Cumberland, and was strongly attached to his royal highness, was made Secretary of State, with the lead in the House of Commons. A great Whig nobleman, in the prime of manhood, from whom much was at that time expected, Augustus, Duke of Grafton, was the other

Secretary.

The oldest man living could remember no Government so weak in oratorical talents and in official experience. The general opinion was, that the ministers might hold office during the recess, but that the first day of debate in Parliament would be the last day of their power. Charles Townshend was asked what he thought of the new administration. "It is," said be, "mere lutestring; pretty summer wear. It will never do for the winter."

At this conjuncture Lord Rockingham had the wisdom to discern the value, and secure the aid, of an ally, who, to eloquence surpassing the eloquence of Pitt, and to industry which shamed the industry of Grenville, united an amplitude of comprehension to which neither Pitt nor Grenville could lay claim. A young Irishman had, some time before, come over to push his fortune in London. He had written much for the booksellers; but he was best known by a little treatise, in which the style and reasoning of Bolingbroke were mimicked with exquisite skill, and by a theory, of more ingenuity than soundness, touching the pleasures which we receive from the objects of taste He had also attained a high reputation as a talker, and was regarded by the men of letters who supped together at the Turk's Head as the only match in conversation for Dr. Johnson. He now became private secretary to Lord Rockingham, and was brought into Parliament by his patron's influence. These arrangements, indeed, were not made without some difficulty. The Duke of Newcastle, who was always meddling and chattering, adjured the First Lord of the Treasury to be on his guard against this adventurer, whose real name was O'Bourke, and whom his Grace knew to be a wild Irishman, a Jacobite, a Papist, a concealed Jesuit. Lord Rockingham treated the calumny as it deserved; and the Whig party was strengthened and adorned by the accession of Edmund Burke.

The party, indeed, stood in need of accessions; for it sustained about this time an almost irreparable loss. The Duke of Cumberland had formed the Government, and was its main support. His exalted rank and great name in some degree balanced the fame of Pitt. As mediator between the Whigs and the Court, he held a place which no other person could fill. The strength of his character supplied that which was the chief defect of the new ministry. Conway, in particular, who, with excellent intentions and respectable talents, was the most dependent and irresolute of human beings, drew from the counsels of that masculine mind a determination not his own. Before the meeting of Parliament the Duke suddenly died. His death was generally regarded as the signal of great troubles, and on this account, as well as from respect for his personal qualities, was greatly lamented. It was remarked that the mourning in London was the most general ever known, and was both deeper and longer than the Gazette had prescribed.

In the meantime, every mail from America brought alarming

tidings. The crop which Grenville had sown his successors had now to reap, The colonies were in a state bordering on rebellion. The stamps were burned. The revenue officers were tarred and feathered. All traffic between the discontented provinces and the mother country was interrupted. The Exchange of London was in dismay. Half the firms of Bristol and Liverpool were threatened with bankruptcy. In Leeds, Manchester, Nottingham, it was said that three artisans out of every ten had been turned adrift. Civil war seemed to be at hand; and it could not be doubted that, if once the British nation were divided against itself, France and Spain would soon take part in the quarrel.

Three courses were open to the ministers. The first was to enforce the Stamp Act by the sword. This was the course on which the King, and Grenville, whom the King hated beyond all living men, were alike bent. The natures of both were arbitrary and stubborn. They resembled each other so much that they could never be friends; but they resembled each other also so much that they saw almost all important practical questions in the same point of view. Neither of them would bear to be governed by the other; but they were perfectly agreed as to the best way of governing the people.

Another course was that which Pitt recommended. He held that the British Parliament was not constitutionally competent to pass a law for taxing the colonies. He therefore considered the Stamp Act as a nullity, as a document of no more validity than Charles's writ of ship-money, or James's proclamation dispensing with the penal laws. This doctrine seems to us, we must own, to be altogether untenable.

Between these extreme courses lay a third way. The opinion of the most judicious and temperate statesmen of those times was that the British constitution had set no limit whatever to the legislative power of the British King, Lords, and Commons, over the whole British Empire. Parliament, they held, was legally competent to tax America, as Parliament was legally competent to commit any other act of folly or wickedness, to confiscate the property of all the merchants in Lombard Street, or to attaint any man in the kingdom of high treason, without examining witnesses against him, or hearing him in his own defence. The most atrocious act of confiscation or of attainder is just as valid an act as the Toleration Act or the Habeas Corpus Act. But from acts of confiscation and acts of attainder lawgivers are bound, by every obligation of morality, systematically to refrain. In the same manner ought the British legislature to refrain from taxing the American colonies. The Stamp Act was indefensible, not because it was beyond the constitutional competence of Parliament, but because it was unjust and impolitic, sterile of revenue, and fertile of discontents. These sound doctrines were adopted by Lord Rockingham and his colleagues, and were, during a long course of years, inculcated by Burke, in orations, some of which will last as long as the

English language.

The winter came; the Parliament met; and the state of the colonies instantly became the subject of fierce contention. Pitt, whose health had been somewhat restored by the waters of Bath, reappeared in the House of Commons, and, with ardent and pathetic eloquence, not only condemned the Stamp Act, but applauded the resistance of Massachusetts and Virginia, and vehemently maintained, in defiance, we must say, of all reason and of all authority, that, according to the British constitution, the supreme legislative power does not include the power to tax. The language of Grenville, on the other hand, was such as Strafford might have used at the council-table of Charles the First, when news came of the resistance to the liturgy at Edinburgh. The colonists were traitors; those who excused them were little better. Frigates, mortars, bayonets, sabres, were the proper remedies for such distempers.

The ministers occupied an intermediate position; they proposed to declare that the legislative authority of the British Parliament over the whole Empire was in all cases supreme; and they proposed, at the same time, to repeal the Stamp Act. To the former measure Pitt objected; but it was carried with scarcely a dissentient voice. The repeal of the Stamp Act Pitt strongly supported; but against the Government was arrayed a formidable assemblage of opponents. Grenville and the Bedfords were furious. Temple, who had now allied himself closely with his brother, and separated himself from Pitt, was no despicable enemy. This, however, was not the worst. The ministry was without its natural strength. It had to struggle, not only against its avowed enemies, but against the insidious hostility of the King, and of a set of persons who, about this time, began to be designated as the King’s friends.

The character of this faction has been drawn by Burke with even more than his usual force and vivacity. Those who know how strongly, through his whole life, his judgment was biassed by his passions, may not unnaturally suspect that he has left us rather a caricature than a likeness; and yet there is scarcely, in the whole portrait, a single touch of which the fidelity is not proved by facts of unquestionable authenticity.

The public generally regarded the King’s friends as a body of which Bute was the directing soul. It was to no purpose that the Earl professed to have done with politics, that he absented himself year after year from the levee and the drawing-room, that he went to the north, that he went to Rome. The notion that, in some inexplicable manner, he dictated all the measures of the Court, was fixed in the minds, not only of the multitude, but of some who had good opportunities of obtaining information, and who ought to have been superior to vulgar prejudices. Our own belief is that these suspicions were unfounded, and that he ceased to have any communication with the King on political matters some

time before the dismissal of George Grenville. The supposition of Bute's influence is, indeed, by no means necessary to explain the phaenomena. The King, in 1765, was no longer the ignorant and inexperienced boy who had, in 1760, been managed by his mother and his Groom of the Stole. He had, during several years, observed the struggles of parties, and conferred daily on high questions of State with able and experienced politicians. His way of life had developed his understanding and character. He was now no longer a puppet, but had very decided opinions both of men and things. Nothing could be more natural than that he should have high notions of his own prerogatives, should be impatient of opposition and should wish all public men to be detached from each other and dependent on himself alone; nor could anything be more natural than that, in the state in which the political world then was, he should find instruments fit for his purposes.

Thus sprang into existence and into note a reptile species of politicians never before and never since known in our country. These men disclaimed all political ties, except those which bound them to the throne. They were willing to coalesce with any party, to abandon any party, to undermine any party, to assault any party, at a moment's notice. To them, all administrations, and all oppositions were the same. They regarded Bute, Grenville, Rockingham, Pitt, without one sentiment either of predilection or of aversion. They were the King's friends. It is to be observed that this friendship implied no personal intimacy. These people had never lived with their master as Dodington at one time lived with his father, or as Sheridan afterwards lived with his son. They never hunted with him in the morning, or played cards with him in the evening, never shared his mutton or walked with him among his turnips. Only one or two of them ever saw his face, except on public days. The whole band, however, always had early and accurate information as to his personal inclinations. These people were never high in the administration. They were generally to be found in places of much emolument, little labour, and no responsibility; and these places they continued to occupy securely while the Cabinet was six or seven times reconstructed. Their peculiar business was not to support the Ministry against the Opposition, but to support the King against the Ministry. Whenever his Majesty was induced to give a reluctant assent to the introduction of some bill which his constitutional advisers regarded as necessary, his friends in the House of Commons were sure to speak against it, to vote against it, to throw in its way every obstruction compatible with the forms of Parliament. If his Majesty found it necessary to admit into his closet a Secretary of State or a First Lord of the Treasury whom he disliked, his friends were sure to miss no opportunity of thwarting and humbling the obnoxious minister. In return for these services, the King covered them with his protection. It was to no purpose that his responsible servants complained to him that they were daily betrayed and impeded by men who were eating the bread of the Government He sometimes justified the offenders, sometimes excused them, sometimes owned that they were to blame, but said

that he must take time to consider whether he could part with them. He never would turn them out; and, while everything else in the State was constantly changing, these sycophants seemed to have a life estate in their offices.

It was well known to the King's friends that, though his Majesty had consented to the repeal of the Stamp Act, he had consented with a very bad grace, and that though he had eagerly welcomed the Whigs, when, in his extreme need and at his earnest entreaty, they had undertaken to free him from an insupportable yoke, he had by no means got over his early prejudices against his deliverers. The ministers soon found that, while they were encountered in front by the whole force of a strong Opposition, their rear was assailed by a large body of those whom they had regarded as auxiliaries.

Nevertheless, Lord Rockingham and his adherents went on resolutely with the bill for repealing the Stamp Act. They had on their side all the manufacturing and commercial interests of the realm. In the debates the Government was powerfully supported. Two great orators and statesmen, belonging to two different generations, repeatedly put forth all their powers in defence of the bill. The House of Commons heard Pitt for the last time, and Burke for the first time, and was in doubt to which of them the palm of eloquence should be assigned. It was indeed a splendid sunset and a splendid dawn.

For a time the event seemed doubtful. In several divisions the ministers were hard pressed. On one occasion, not less than twelve of the King's friends, all men in office, voted against the Government. It was to no purpose that Lord Rockingham remonstrated with the King. His Majesty confessed that there was ground for complaint, but hoped that gentle means would bring the mutineers to a better mind. If they persisted in their misconduct, he would dismiss them.

At length the decisive day arrived. The gallery, the lobby, the Court of Requests, the staircases, were crowded with merchants from all the great ports of the island. The debate lasted till long after midnight. On the division the ministers had a great majority. The dread of civil war, and the outcry of all the trading towns of the kingdom, had been too strong for the combined strength of the Court and the Opposition.

It was in the first dim twilight of a February morning that the doors were thrown open, and that the chiefs of the hostile parties showed themselves to the multitude. Conway was received with loud applause. But, when Pitt appeared, all eyes were fixed on him alone. All hats were in the air. Loud and long huzzas accompanied him to his chair, and a train of admirers escorted him all the way to his home. Then came forth Grenville. As soon as he was recognised, a storm of hisses and curses broke forth. He turned fiercely on the crowd, and caught one by the throat.

The bystanders were in great alarm. If a scuffle began, none could say how it might end. Fortunately the person who had been collared only said, "If I may not hiss, sir, I hope I may laugh," and laughed in Grenville's face.

The majority had been so decisive, that all the opponents of the Ministry, save one, were disposed to let the bill pass without any further contention. But solicitation and expostulation were thrown away on Grenville. His indomitable spirit rose up stronger and stronger under the load of public hatred. He fought out the battle obstinately to the end. On the last reading he had a sharp altercation with his brother-in-law, the last of their many sharp altercations. Pitt thundered in his loftiest tones against the man who had wished to dip the ermine of a British King in the blood of the British people. Grenville replied with his wonted intrepidity and asperity. "If the tax," he said, "were still to be laid on, I would lay it on. For the evils which it may produce my accuser is answerable. His profusion made it necessary. His declarations against the constitutional powers of Kings, Lords, and Commons, have made it doubly necessary. I do not envy him the huzza. I glory in the hiss. If it were to be done again, I would do it."

The repeal of the Stamp Act was the chief measure of Lord Rockingham's Government. But that Government is entitled to the praise of having put a stop to two oppressive practices, which, in Wilkes's case, had attracted the notice and excited the just indignation of the public. The House of Commons was induced by the ministers to pass a resolution condemning the use of general warrants, and another resolution condemning the seizure of papers in cases of libel.

It must be added, to the lasting honour of Lord Rockingham, that his administration was the first which, during a long course of years, had the courage and the virtue to refrain from bribing members of Parliament. His enemies accused him and his friends of weakness, of haughtiness, of party spirit; but calumny itself never dared to couple his name with corruption.

Unhappily his Government, though one of the best that has ever existed in our country, was also one of the weakest. The King's friends assailed and obstructed the ministers at every turn. To appeal to the King was only to draw forth new promises and new evasions. His Majesty was sure that there must be some misunderstanding. Lord Rockingham had better speak to the gentlemen. They should be dismissed on the next fault. The next fault was soon committed, and his Majesty still continued to shuffle. It was too bad. It was quite abominable; but it mattered less as the prorogation was at hand. He would give the delinquents one more chance. If they did not alter their conduct next session, he should not have one word to say for them. He had already resolved that, long before the commencement of the next session, Lord Rockingham should cease to be minister.

We have now come to a part of our story which, admiring as we do the genius and the many noble qualities of Pitt, we cannot relate without much pain. We believe that, at this conjuncture, he had it in his power to give the victory either to the Whigs or to the King's friends. If he had allied himself closely with Lord Rockingham, what could the Court have done? There would have been only one alternative, the Whigs or Grenville; and there could be no doubt what the King's choice would be. He still remembered, as well he might, with the uttermost bitterness, the thraldom from which his uncle had freed him, and said about this time, with great vehemence, that he would sooner see the Devil come into his closet than Grenville.

And what was there to prevent Pitt from allying himself with Lord Rockingham? On all the most important questions their views were the same. They had agreed in condemning the peace, the Stamp Act, the general warrant, the seizure of papers. The points on which they differed were few and unimportant. In integrity, in disinterestedness, in hatred of corruption, they resembled each other. Their personal interests could not clash. They sat in different Houses, and Pitt had always declared that nothing should induce him to be First Lord of the Treasury.

If the opportunity of forming a coalition beneficial to the State, and honourable to all concerned, was suffered to escape, the fault was not with the Whig ministers. They behaved towards Pitt with an obsequiousness which, had it not been the effect of sincere admiration and of anxiety for the public interests, might have been justly called servile. They repeatedly gave him to understand that, if he chose to join their ranks, they were ready to receive him, not as an associate, but as a leader. They had proved their respect for him by bestowing a peerage on the person who, at that time, enjoyed the largest share of his confidence, Chief Justice Pratt. What then was there to divide Pitt from the Whigs? What, on the other hand, was there in common between him and the King's friends, that he should lend himself to their purposes, he who had never owed anything to flattery or intrigue, he whose eloquence and independent spirit had overawed two generations of slaves and jobbers, he who had twice been forced by the enthusiasm of an admiring nation on a reluctant Prince?

Unhappily the Court had gained Pitt, not, it is true, by those ignoble means which were employed when such men as Rigby and Wedderburn were to be won, but by allurements suited to a nature noble even in its aberrations. The King set himself to seduce the one man who could turn the Whigs out without letting Grenville in. Praise, caresses, promises, were lavished on the idol of the nation. He, and he alone, could put an end to faction, could bid defiance to all the powerful connections in the land united, Whigs and Tories, Rockinghams, Bedfords, and Grenvilles. These blandishments produced a great effect. For though Pitt's spirit was high and manly, though his eloquence was often exerted with

formidable effect against the Court, and though his theory of government had been learned in the school of Locke and Sydney, he had always regarded the person of the sovereign with profound veneration. As soon as he was brought face to face with royalty, his imagination and sensibility were too strong for his principles. His Whiggism thawed and disappeared; and he became, for the time, a Tory of the old Ormond pattern. Nor was he by any means unwilling to assist in the work of dissolving all political connections. His own weight in the State was wholly independent of such connections. He was therefore inclined to look on them with dislike, and made far too little distinction between gangs of knaves associated for the mere purpose of robbing the public, and confederacies of honourable men for the promotion of great public objects. Nor had he the sagacity to perceive that the strenuous efforts which he made to annihilate all parties tended only to establish the ascendency of one party, and that the basest and most hateful of all.

It may be doubted whether he would have been thus misled, if his mind had been in full health and vigour. But the truth is that he had for some time been in an unnatural state of excitement. No suspicion of this sort had yet got abroad. His eloquence had never shone with more splendour than during the recent debates. But people afterwards called to mind many things which ought to have roused their apprehensions. His habits were gradually becoming more and more eccentric. A horror of all loud sounds, such as is said to have been one of the many oddities of Wallenstein, grew upon him. Though the most affectionate of fathers, he could not at this time bear to hear the voices of his own children, and laid out great sums at Hayes in buying up houses contiguous to his own, merely that he might have no neighbours to disturb him with their noise. He then sold Hayes, and took possession of a villa at Hampstead, where he again began to purchase houses to right and left. In expense, indeed, he vied, during this part of his life, with the wealthiest of the conquerors of Bengal and Tanjore. At Burton Pynsent, he ordered a great extent of ground to be planted with cedars. Cedars enough for the purpose were not to be found in Somersetshire. They were therefore collected in London, and sent down by land carriage. Relays of labourers were hired; and the work went on all night by torchlight. No man could be more abstemious than Pitt; yet the profusion of his kitchen was a wonder even to epicures. Several dinners were always dressing; for his appetite was capricious and fanciful; and at whatever moment he felt inclined to eat, he expected a meal to be instantly on the table. Other circumstances might be mentioned, such as separately are of little moment, but such as, when taken altogether, and when viewed in connection with the strange events which followed, justify us in believing that his mind was already in a morbid state.

Soon after the close of the session of Parliament, Lord Rockingham received his dismissal. He retired, accompanied by a firm body of friends, whose consistency and uprightness enmity

itself was forced to admit. None of them had asked or obtained any pension or any sinecure, either in possession or in reversion. Such disinterestedness was then rare among politicians. Their chief, though not a man of brilliant talents, had won for himself an honourable fame, which he kept pure to the last. He had, in spite of difficulties which seemed almost insurmountable, removed great abuses and averted a civil war. Sixteen years later, in a dark and terrible day, he was again called upon to save the State, brought to the very brink of ruin by the same perfidy and obstinacy which had embarrassed, and at length overthrown his first administration.

Pitt was planting in Somersetshire when he was summoned to Court by a letter written by the royal hand. He instantly hastened to London. The irritability of his mind and body were increased by the rapidity with which he travelled; and when he reached his journey's end he was suffering from fever. Ill as he was, he saw the King at Richmond, and undertook to form an administration.

Pitt was scarcely in the state in which a man should be who has to conduct delicate and arduous negotiations. In his letters to his wife, he complained that the conferences in which it was necessary for him to bear a part heated his blood and accelerated his pulse. From other sources of information we learn, that his language, even to those whose co-operation he wished to engage, was strangely peremptory and despotic. Some of his notes written at this time have been preserved, and are in a style which Lewis the Fourteenth would have been too well bred to employ in addressing any French gentleman.

In the attempt to dissolve all parties, Pitt met with some difficulties. Some Whigs, whom the Court would gladly have detached from Lord Rockingham, rejected all offers. The Bedfords were perfectly willing to break with Grenville; but Pitt would not come up to their terms. Temple, whom Pitt at first meant to place at the head of the Treasury, proved intractable. A coldness indeed had, during some months, been fast growing between the brothers-in-law, so long and so closely allied in politics. Pitt was angry with Temple for opposing the repeal of the Stamp Act. Temple was angry with Pitt for refusing to accede to that family league which was now the favourite plan at Stowe. At length the Earl proposed an equal partition of power and patronage, and offered, on this condition, to give up his brother George. Pitt thought the demand exorbitant, and positively refused compliance. A bitter quarrel followed. Each of the kinsmen was true to his character. Temple's soul festered with spite, and Pitt's swelled into contempt. Temple represented Pitt as the most odious of hypocrites and traitors. Pitt held a different and perhaps a more provoking tone. Temple was a good sort of man enough, whose single title to distinction was, that he had a large garden, with a large piece of water, and had a great many pavilions and summer-houses. To his fortunate connection with a great orator and statesman he was indebted for an importance in the State

which his own talents could never have gained for him. That importance had turned his head. He had begun to fancy that he could form administrations, and govern empires. It was piteous to see a well meaning man under such a delusion.

In spite of all these difficulties, a ministry was made such as the King wished to see, a ministry in which all his Majesty's friends were comfortably accommodated, and which, with the exception of his Majesty's friends, contained no four persons who had ever in their lives been in the habit of acting together. Men who had never concurred in a single vote found themselves seated at the same board. The office of Paymaster was divided between two persons who had never exchanged a word. Most of the chief posts were filled either by personal adherents of Pitt, or by members of the late ministry, who had been induced to remain in place after the dismissal of Lord Rockingham. To the former class belonged Pratt, now Lord Camden, who accepted the great seal, and Lord Shelburne, who was made one of the Secretaries of State. To the latter class belonged the Duke of Grafton, who became First Lord of the Treasury, and Conway, who kept his old position both in the Government and in the House of Commons. Charles Townshend, who had belonged to every party, and cared for none, was Chancellor of the Exchequer. Pitt himself was declared Prime Minister, but refused to take any laborious office. He was created Earl of Chatham, and the Privy Seal was delivered to him.

It is scarcely necessary to say, that the failure, the complete and disgraceful failure, of this arrangement, is not to be ascribed to any want of capacity in the persons whom we have named. None of them was deficient in abilities; and four of them, Pitt himself, Shelburne, Camden, and Townshend, were men of high intellectual eminence. The fault was not in the materials, but in the principle on which the materials were put together. Pitt had mixed up these conflicting elements, in the full confidence that he should be able to keep them all in perfect subordination to himself, and in perfect harmony with other. We shall soon see how the experiment succeeded.

On the very day on which the new Prime Minister kissed hands, three-fourths of that popularity which he had long enjoyed without a rival, and to which he owed the greater part of his authority, departed from him. A violent outcry was raised, not against that part of his conduct which really deserved severe condemnation, but against a step in which we can see nothing to censure. His acceptance of a peerage produced a general burst of indignation. Yet surely no peerage had ever been better earned; nor was there ever a statesman who more needed the repose of the Upper House. Pitt was now growing old. He was much older in constitution than in years. It was with imminent risk to his life that he had, on some important occasions, attended his duty in Parliament. During the session of 1764, he had not been able to take part in a single debate. It was impossible that he should go through the nightly labour of conducting the business of the

Government in the House of Commons. His wish to be transferred, under such circumstances, to a less busy and a less turbulent assembly, was natural and reasonable. The nation, however, overlooked all these considerations. Those who had most loved and honoured the Great Commoner were loudest in invective against the new-made Lord. London had hitherto been true to him through every vicissitude. When the citizens learned that he had been sent for from Somersetshire, that he had been closeted with the King at Richmond, and that he was to be first minister, they had been in transports of joy. Preparations were made for a grand entertainment and for a general illumination. The lamps had actually been placed round the monument, when the Gazette announced that the object of all this enthusiasm was an Earl. Instantly the feast was countermanded. The lamps were taken down. The newspapers raised the roar of obloquy. Pamphlets, made up of calumny and scurrility, filled the shops of all the booksellers; and of those pamphlets, the most galling were written under the direction of the malignant Temple. It was now the fashion to compare the two Williams, William Pulteney and William Pitt. Both, it was said, had, by eloquence and simulated patriotism, acquired a great ascendency in the House of Commons and in the country. Both had been intrusted with the office of reforming the Government. Both had, when at the height of power and popularity, been seduced by the splendour of the coronet. Both had been made earls, and both had at once become objects of aversion and scorn to the nation which a few hours before had regarded them with affection and veneration.

The clamour against Pitt appears to have had a serious effect on the foreign relations of the country. His name had till now acted like a spell at Versailles and Saint Ildefonso. English travellers on the Continent had remarked that nothing more was necessary to silence a whole room full of boasting Frenchmen than to drop a hint of the probability that Mr. Pitt would return to power. In an instant there was deep silence: all shoulders rose, and all faces were lengthened. Now, unhappily, every foreign court, in learning that he was recalled to office, learned also that he no longer possessed the hearts of his countrymen. Ceasing to be loved at home, he ceased to be feared abroad. The name of Pitt had been a charmed name. Our envoys tried in vain to conjure with the name of Chatham.

The difficulties which beset Chatham were daily increased by the despotic manner in which he treated all around him. Lord Rockingham had, at the time of the change of ministry, acted with great moderation, had expressed a hope that the new Government would act on the principles of the late Government, and had even interfered to prevent many of his friends from quitting office. Thus Saunders and Keppel, two naval commanders of great eminence, had been induced to remain at the Admiralty, where their services were much needed. The Duke of Portland was still Lord Chamberlain, and Lord Besborough Postmaster. But within a quarter of a year, Lord Chatham had so deeply affronted these men, that

they all retired in disgust. In truth, his tone, submissive in the closet, was at this time insupportably tyrannical in the Cabinet. His colleagues were merely his clerks for naval, financial, and diplomatic business. Conway, meek as he was, was on one occasion provoked into declaring that such language as Lord Chatham's had never been heard west of Constantinople, and was with difficulty prevented by Horace Walpole from resigning, and rejoining the standard of Lord Rockingham.

The breach which had been made in the Government by the defection of so many of the Rockinghams, Chatham hoped to supply by the help of the Bedfords. But with the Bedfords he could not deal as he had dealt with other parties. It was to no purpose that he bade high for one or two members of the faction, in the hope of detaching them from the rest. They were to be had; but they were to be had only in the lot. There was indeed for a moment some wavering and some disputing among them. But at length the counsels of the shrewd and resolute Rigby prevailed. They determined to stand firmly together, and plainly intimated to Chatham that he must take them all, or that he should get none of them. The event proved that they were wiser in their generation than any other connection in the State. In a few months they were able to dictate their own terms.

The most important public measure of Lord Chatham's administration was his celebrated interference with the corn trade. The harvest had been bad; the price of food was high; and he thought it necessary to take on himself the responsibility of laying an embargo on the exportation of grain. When Parliament met, this proceeding was attacked by the Opposition as unconstitutional, and defended by the ministers as indispensably necessary. At last an act was passed to indemnify all who had been concerned in the embargo.

The first words uttered by Chatham, in the House of Lords, were in defence of his conduct on this occasion. He spoke with a calmness, sobriety, and dignity, well suited to the audience which he was addressing. A subsequent speech which he made on the same subject was less successful. He bade defiance to aristocratical connections, with a superciliousness to which the Peers were not accustomed, and with tones and gestures better suited to a large and stormy assembly than to the body of which he was now a member. A short altercation followed, and he was told very plainly that he should not be suffered to browbeat the old nobility of England.

It gradually became clearer and clearer that he was in a distempered state of mind. His attention had been drawn to the territorial acquisitions of the East India Company, and he determined to bring the whole of that great subject before Parliament. He would not, however, confer on the subject with any of his colleagues. It was in vain that Conway, who was charged with the conduct of business in the House of Commons, and Charles

Townshend, who was responsible for the direction of the finances, begged for some glimpse of light as to what was in contemplation. Chatham's answers were sullen and mysterious. He must decline any discussion with them; he did not want their assistance; he had fixed on a person to take charge of his measure in the House of Commons. This person was a member who was not connected with the Government, and who neither had, nor deserved to have the ear of the House, a noisy, purseproud, illiterate demagogue, whose Cockney English and scraps of mispronounced Latin were the jest of the newspapers, Alderman Beckford. It may well be supposed that these strange proceedings produced a ferment through the whole political world. The city was in commotion. The East India Company invoked the faith of charters. Burke thundered against the ministers. The ministers looked at each other, and knew not what to say. In the midst of the confusion, Lord Chatham proclaimed himself gouty, and retired to Bath. It was announced, after some time, that he was better, that he would shortly return, that he would soon put everything in order. A day was fixed for his arrival in London. But when he reached the Castle inn at Marlborough, he stopped, shut himself up in his room, and remained there some weeks. Everybody who travelled that road was amazed by the number of his attendants. Footmen and grooms, dressed in his family livery filled the whole inn, though one of the largest in England, and swarmed in the streets of the little town. The truth was that the invalid had insisted that, during his stay, all the waiters and stable-boys of the Castle should wear his livery.

His colleagues were in despair. The Duke of Grafton proposed to go down to Marlborough in order to consult the oracle. But he was informed that Lord Chatham must decline all conversation on business. In the meantime, all the parties which were out of office, Bedfords, Grenvilles, and Rockinghams, joined to oppose the distracted Government on the vote for the land tax. They were reinforced by almost all the county members, and had a considerable majority. This was the first time that a ministry had been beaten on an important division in the House of Commons since the fall of Sir Robert Walpole. The administration, thus furiously assailed from without, was torn by internal dissensions. It had been formed on no principle whatever. From the very first, nothing but Chatham's authority had prevented the hostile contingents which made up his ranks from going to blows with each other. That authority was now withdrawn, and everything was in commotion. Conway, a brave soldier, but in civil affairs the most timid and irresolute of men, afraid of disobliging the King, afraid of being abused in the newspapers, afraid of being thought factious if he went out, afraid of being thought interested if he stayed in, afraid of everything, and afraid of being known to be afraid of anything, was beaten backwards and forwards like a shuttlecock between Horace Walpole who wished to make him Prime Minister, and Lord John Cavendish who wished to draw him into opposition. Charles Townshend, a man of splendid eloquence, of lax principles, and of boundless vanity and

presumption, would submit to no control. The full extent of his parts, of his ambition, and of his arrogance, had not yet been made manifest; for he had always quailed before the genius and the lofty character of Pitt. But now that Pitt had quitted the House of Commons, and seemed to have abdicated the part of chief minister, Townshend broke loose from all restraint.

While things were in this state, Chatham at length returned to London. He might as well have remained at Marlborough. He would see nobody. He would give no opinion on any public matter. The Duke of Grafton begged piteously for an interview, for an hour, for half an hour, for five minutes. The answer was, that it was impossible. The King himself repeatedly condescended to expostulate and implore. "Your duty," he wrote, "your own honour, require you to make an effort." The answers to these appeals were commonly written in Lady Chatham's hand, from her lord's dictation; for he had not energy even to use a pen. He flings himself at the King's feet. He is penetrated by the royal goodness so signally shown to the most unhappy of men. He implores a little more indulgence. He cannot as yet transact business. He cannot see his colleagues. Least of all can he bear the excitement of an interview with majesty.

Some were half inclined to suspect that he was, to use a military phrase, malingering. He had made, they said, a great blunder, and had found it out. His immense popularity, his high reputation for statesmanship, were gone for ever. Intoxicated by pride, he had undertaken a task beyond his abilities. He now saw nothing before him but distresses and humiliations; and he had therefore simulated illness, in order to escape from vexations which he had not fortitude to meet. This suspicion, though it derived some colour from that weakness which was the most striking blemish of his character, was certainly unfounded. His mind, before he became first minister, had been, as we have said, in an unsound state; and physical and moral causes now concurred to make the derangement of his faculties complete. The gout, which had been the torment of his whole life, had been suppressed by strong remedies. For the first time since he was a boy at Oxford, he had passed several months without a twinge. But his hand and foot had been relieved at the expense of his nerves. He became melancholy, fanciful, irritable. The embarrassing state of public affairs, the grave responsibility which lay on him, the consciousness of his errors, the disputes of his colleagues, the savage clamours raised by his detractors, bewildered his enfeebled mind. One thing alone, he said, could save him. He must repurchase Hayes. The unwilling consent of the new occupant was extorted by Lady Chatham's entreaties and tears; and her lord was somewhat easier. But if business were mentioned to him, he, once the proudest and boldest of mankind, behaved like a hysterical girl, trembled from head to foot, and burst into a flood of tears.

His colleagues for a time continued to entertain the expectation that his health would soon be restored, and that he would emerge

from his retirement. But month followed month, and still he remained hidden in mysterious seclusion, and sunk, as far as they could learn, in the deepest dejection of spirits. They at length ceased to hope or to fear anything from him; and though he was still nominally Prime Minister, took without scruple steps which they knew to be diametrically opposed to all his opinions and feelings, allied themselves with those whom he had proscribed, disgraced those whom he most esteemed, and laid taxes on the colonies, in the face of the strong declarations which he had recently made.

When he had passed about a year and three quarters in gloomy privacy, the King received a few lines in Lady Chatham's hand. They contained a request, dictated by her lord, that he might be permitted to resign the Privy Seal. After some civil show of reluctance, the resignation was accepted. Indeed Chatham was, by this time, almost as much forgotten as if he had already been lying in Westminster Abbey.

At length the clouds which had gathered over his mind broke and passed away. His gout returned, and freed him from a more cruel malady. His nerves were newly braced. His spirits became buoyant. He woke as from a sickly dream. It was a strange recovery. Men had been in the habit of talking of him as of one dead, and, when he first showed himself at the King's levee, started as if they had seen a ghost. It was more than two years and a half since he had appeared in public.

He, too, had cause for wonder. The world which he now entered was not the world which he had quitted. The administration which he had formed had never been, at any one moment, entirely changed. But there had been so many losses and so many accessions, that he could scarcely recognise his own work. Charles Townshend was dead. Lord Shelburne had been dismissed. Conway had sunk into utter insignificance. The Duke of Grafton had fallen into the hands of the Bedfords. The Bedfords had deserted Grenville, had made their peace with the King and the King's friends, and had been admitted to office. Lord North was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and was rising fast in importance. Corsica had been given up to France without a struggle. The disputes with the American colonies had been revived. A general election had taken place. Wilkes had returned from exile, and, outlaw as he was, had been chosen knight of the shire for Middlesex. The multitude was on his side. The Court was obstinately bent on ruining him, and was prepared to shake the very foundations of the constitution for the sake of a paltry revenge. The House of Commons, assuming to itself an authority which of right belongs only to the whole legislature, had declared Wilkes incapable of sitting in Parliament. Nor had it been thought sufficient to keep him out. Another must be brought in. Since the freeholders of Middlesex had obstinately refused to choose a member acceptable to the Court, the House had chosen a member for them. This was not the only instance, perhaps not the most disgraceful instance, of the

inveterate malignity of the Court. Exasperated by the steady opposition of the Rockingham party, the King's friends had tried to rob a distinguished Whig nobleman of his private estate, and had persisted in their mean wickedness till their own servile majority had revolted from mere disgust and shame. Discontent had spread throughout the nation, and was kept up by stimulants such as had rarely been applied to the public mind. Junius had taken the field, and trampled Sir William Draper in the dust, had well-nigh broken the heart of Blackstone, and had so mangled the reputation of the Duke of Grafton, that his grace had become sick of office, and was beginning to look wistfully towards the shades of Euston. Every principle of foreign, domestic, and colonial policy which was dear to the heart of Chatham had, during the eclipse of his genius, been violated by the Government which he had formed.

The remaining years of his life were spent in vainly struggling against that fatal policy which, at the moment when he might have given it a death-blow, he had been induced to take under his protection. His exertions redeemed his own fame, but they effected little for his country.

He found two parties arrayed against the Government, the party of his own brothers-in-law, the Grenvilles, and the party of Lord Rockingham. On the question of the Middlesex election these parties were agreed. But on many other important questions they differed widely; and they were, in truth, not less hostile to each other than to the Court. The Grenvilles had, during several years, annoyed the Rockinghams with a succession of acrimonious pamphlets. It was long before the Rockinghams could be induced to retaliate. But an ill-natured tract, written under Grenville's direction, and entitled A State of the Nation, was too much for their patience. Burke undertook to defend and avenge his friends, and executed the task with admirable skill and vigour. On every point he was victorious, and nowhere more completely victorious than when he joined issue on those dry and minute questions of statistical and financial detail in which the main strength of Grenville lay. The official drudge, even on his own chosen ground, was utterly unable to maintain the fight against the great orator and philosopher. When Chatham reappeared, Grenville was still writhing with the recent shame and smart of this well-merited chastisement. Cordial co-operation between the two sections of the Opposition was impossible. Nor could Chatham easily connect himself with either. His feelings, in spite of many affronts given and received, drew him towards the Grenvilles. For he had strong domestic affections; and his nature, which, though haughty, was by no means obdurate, had been softened by affliction. But from his kinsmen he was separated by a wide difference of opinion on the question of colonial taxation. A reconciliation, however, took place. He visited Stowe: he shook hands with George Grenville; and the Whig freeholders of Buckinghamshire, at their public dinners, drank many bumpers to the union of the three brothers.

In opinions, Chatham was much nearer to the Rockinghams than to his own relatives. But between him and the Rockinghams there was a gulf not easily to be passed. He had deeply injured them, and in injuring them, had deeply injured his country. When the balance was trembling between them and the Court, he had thrown the whole weight of his genius, of his renown, of his popularity, into the scale of misgovernment. It must be added, that many eminent members of the party still retained a bitter recollection of the asperity and disdain with which they had been treated by him at the time when he assumed the direction of affairs. It is clear from Burke's pamphlets and speeches, and still more clear from his private letters, and from the language which he held in conversation, that he regarded Chatham with a feeling not far removed from dislike. Chatham was undoubtedly conscious of his error, and desirous to atone for it. But his overtures of friendship, though made with earnestness, and even with unwonted humility, were at first received by Lord Rockingham with cold and austere reserve. Gradually the intercourse of the two statesmen became courteous and even amicable. But the past was never wholly forgotten.

Chatham did not, however, stand alone. Round him gathered a party, small in number, but strong in great and various talents. Lord Camden, Lord Shelburne, Colonel Barre, and Dunning, afterwards Lord Ashburton, were the principal members of this connection.

There is no reason to believe that, from this time till within a few weeks of Chatham's death, his intellect suffered any decay. His eloquence was almost to the last heard with delight. But it was not exactly the eloquence of the House of Lords. That lofty and passionate, but somewhat desultory declamation, in which he excelled all men, and which was set off by looks, tones, and gestures, worthy of Garrick or Talma, was out of place in a small apartment where the audience often consisted of three or four drowsy prelates, three or four old judges, accustomed during many years to disregard rhetoric, and to look only at facts and arguments, and three or four listless and supercilious men of fashion, whom anything like enthusiasm moved to a sneer. In the House of Commons, a flash of his eye, a wave of his arm, had sometimes cowed Murray. But, in the House of Peers, his utmost vehemence and pathos produced less effect than the moderation, the reasonableness, the luminous order and the serene dignity, which characterised the speeches of Lord Mansfield.

On the question of the Middlesex election, all the three divisions of the Opposition acted in concert. No orator in either House defended what is now universally admitted to have been the constitutional cause with more ardour or eloquence than Chatham. Before this subject had ceased to occupy the public mind, George Grenville died. His party rapidly melted away; and in a short time most of his adherents appeared on the ministerial benches.

Had George Grenville lived many months longer, the friendly ties which, after years of estrangement and hostility, had been renewed between him and his brother-in-law, would, in all probability, have been a second time violently dissolved. For now the quarrel between England and the North American colonies took a gloomy and terrible aspect. Oppression provoked resistance; resistance was made the pretext for fresh oppression. The warnings of all the greatest statesmen of the age were lost on an imperious Court and a deluded nation. Soon a colonial senate confronted the British Parliament. Then the colonial militia crossed bayonets with the British regiments. At length the commonwealth was torn asunder. Two millions of Englishmen, who, fifteen years before, had been as loyal to their prince and as proud of their country as the people of Kent or Yorkshire, separated themselves by a solemn act from the Empire. For a time it seemed that the insurgents would struggle to small purpose against the vast financial and military means of the mother country. But disasters, following one another in rapid succession, rapidly dispelled the illusions of national vanity. At length a great British force, exhausted, famished, harassed on every side by a hostile peasantry, was compelled to deliver up its arms. Those Governments which England had, in the late war, so signally humbled, and which had during many years been sullenly brooding over the recollections of Quebec, of Minden, and of the Moro, now saw with exultation that the day of revenge was at hand. France recognised the independence of the United States, and there could be little doubt that the example would soon be followed by Spain.

Chatham and Rockingham had cordially concurred in opposing every part of the fatal policy which had brought the State into this dangerous situation. But their paths now diverged. Lord Rockingham thought, and, as the event proved, thought most justly, that the revolted colonies were separated from the Empire for ever, and that the only effect of prolonging the war on the American continent would be to divide resources which it was desirable to concentrate. If the hopeless attempt to subjugate Pennsylvania and Virginia were abandoned, war against the House of Bourbon might possibly be avoided, or, if inevitable, might be carried on with success and glory. We might even indemnify ourselves for part of what we had lost, at the expense of those foreign enemies who had hoped to profit by our domestic dissensions. Lord Rockingham, therefore, and those who acted with him, conceived that the wisest course now open to England was to acknowledge the independence of the United States, and to turn her whole force against her European enemies.

Chatham, it should seem, ought to have taken the same side. Before France had taken any part in our quarrel with the colonies, he had repeatedly, and with great energy of language, declared that it was impossible to conquer America, and he could not without absurdity maintain that it was easier to conquer

France and America together than America alone. But his passions overpowered his judgment, and made him blind to his own inconsistency. The very circumstances which made the separation of the colonies inevitable made it to him altogether insupportable. The dismemberment of the Empire seemed to him less ruinous and humiliating, when produced by domestic dissensions, than when produced by foreign interference. His blood boiled at the degradation of his country. Whatever lowered her among the nations of the earth, he felt as a personal outrage to himself. And the feeling was natural. He had made her so great. He had been so proud of her; and she had been so proud of him, He remembered how, more than twenty years before, in a day of gloom and dismay, when her possessions were torn from her, when her flag was dishonoured, she had called on him to save her. He remembered the sudden and glorious change which his energy had wrought, the long series of triumphs, the days of thanksgiving, the nights of illumination. Fired by such recollections, he determined to separate himself from those who advised that the independence of the colonies should be acknowledged. That he was in error will scarcely, we think, be disputed by his warmest admirers. Indeed, the treaty, by which, a few years later, the republic of the United States was recognised, was the work of his most attached adherents and of his favourite son.

The Duke of Richmond had given notice of an address to the throne, against the further prosecution of hostilities with America. Chatham had, during some time, absented himself from Parliament, in consequence of his growing infirmities. He determined to appear in his place on this occasion, and to declare that his opinions were decidedly at variance with those of the Rockingham party. He was in a state of great excitement. His medical attendants were uneasy, and strongly advised him to calm himself, and to remain at home. But he was not to be controlled. His son William and his son-in-law Lord Mahon, accompanied him to Westminster. He rested himself in the Chancellor’s room till the debate commenced, and then, leaning on his two young relations, limped to his seat. The slightest particulars of that day were remembered, and have been carefully recorded. He bowed, it was remarked, with great courtliness to those peers who rose to make way for him and his supporters. His crutch was in his hand. He wore, as was his fashion, a rich velvet coat. His legs were swathed in flannel. His wig was so large, and his face so emaciated, that none of his features could be discerned, except the high curve of his nose, and his eyes, which still retained a gleam of the old fire.

When the Duke of Richmond had spoken, Chatham rose. For some time his voice was inaudible. At length his tones became distinct and his action animated. Here and there his hearers caught a thought or an expression which reminded them of William Pitt. But it was clear that he was not himself. He lost the thread of his discourse, hesitated, repeated the same words several times, and was so confused that, in speaking of the Act of Settlement, he

could not recall the name of the Electress Sophia. The House listened in solemn silence, and with the aspect of profound respect and compassion. The stillness was so deep that the dropping of a handkerchief would have been heard. The Duke of Richmond replied with great tenderness and courtesy; but while he spoke, the old man was observed to be restless and irritable. The Duke sat down. Chatham stood up again, pressed his hand on his breast, and sank down in an apoplectic fit. Three or four lords who sat near him caught him in his fall. The House broke up in confusion. The dying man was carried to the residence of one of the officers of Parliament, and was so far restored as to be able to bear a journey to Hayes. At Hayes, after lingering a few weeks, he expired in his seventieth year. His bed was watched to the last, with anxious tenderness, by his wife and children; and he well deserved their care. Too often haughty and wayward to others, to them he had been almost effeminately kind. He had through life been dreaded by his political opponents, and regarded with more awe than love even by his political associates. But no fear seems to have mingled with the affection which his fondness, constantly overflowing in a thousand endearing forms, had inspired in the little circle at Hayes.

Chatham, at the time of his decease, had not, in both Houses of Parliament, ten personal adherents. Half the public men of the age had been estranged from him by his errors, and the other half by the exertions which he had made to repair his errors. His last speech had been an attack at once on the policy pursued by the Government, and on the policy recommended by the Opposition. But death restored him to his old place in the affection of his country. Who could hear unmoved of the fall of that which had been so great, and which had stood so long? The circumstances, too, seemed rather to belong to the tragic stage than to real life. A great statesman, full of years and honours, led forth to the Senate House by a son of rare hopes, and stricken down in full council while straining his feeble voice to rouse the drooping spirit of his country, could not but be remembered with peculiar veneration and tenderness. The few detractors who ventured to murmur were silenced by the indignant clamours of a nation which remembered only the lofty genius, the unsullied probity, the undisputed services, of him who was no more. For once, the chiefs of all parties were agreed. A public funeral, a public monument, were eagerly voted. The debts of the deceased were paid. A provision was made for his family. The City of London requested that the remains of the great man whom she had so long loved and honoured might rest under the dome of her magnificent cathedral. But the petition came too late. Everything was already prepared for the interment in Westminster Abbey.

Though men of all parties had concurred in decreeing posthumous honours to Chatham, his corpse was attended to the grave almost exclusively by opponents of the Government. The banner of the lordship of Chatham was borne by Colonel Barre, attended by the Duke of Richmond and Lord Rockingham. Burke, Savile, and Dunning

upheld the pall. Lord Camden was conspicuous in the procession. The chief mourner was young William Pitt. After the lapse of more than twenty-seven years, in a season as dark and perilous, his own shattered frame and broken heart were laid, with the same pomp, in the same consecrated mould.

Chatham sleeps near the northern door of the Church, in a spot which has ever since been appropriated to statesmen, as the other end of the same transept has long been to poets. Mansfield rests there, and the second William Pitt, and Fox, and Grattan, and Canning, and Wilberforce. In no other cemetery do so many great citizens lie within so narrow a space. High over those venerable graves towers the stately monument of Chatham, and from above, his effigy, graven by a cunning hand, seems still, with eagle face and outstretched arm, to bid England be of good cheer, and to hurl defiance at her foes. The generation which reared that memorial of him has disappeared. The time has come when the rash and indiscriminate judgments which his contemporaries passed on his character may be calmly revised by history. And history, while, for the warning of vehement, high, and daring natures, she notes his many errors, will yet deliberately pronounce, that, among the eminent men whose bones lie near his, scarcely one has left a more stainless, and none a more splendid name.

LORD CLIVE

(January 1840)

The Life of Robert Lord Clive; collected from the Family Papers, communicated by the Earl of Powis. By MAJOR-GENERAL SIR JOHN MALCOLM, K.C.B. 3 vols. 8vo. London: 1836.

We have always thought it strange that, while the history of the Spanish empire in America is familiarly known to all the nations of Europe, the great actions of our countrymen in the East should, even among ourselves, excite little interest. Every schoolboy knows who imprisoned Montezuma, and who strangled Atahualpa. But we doubt whether one in ten, even among English gentlemen of highly cultivated minds, can tell who won the battle of Buxar, who perpetrated the massacre of Patna, whether Sujah Dowlah ruled in Oude or in Travancore, or whether Holkar was a Hindoo, or a Mussulman. Yet the victories of Cortes were gained over savages who had no letters, who were ignorant of the use of metals, who had not broken in a single animal to labour, who wielded no better weapons than those which could be made out of sticks, flints, and fish-bones, who regarded a horse-soldier as a monster, half man and half beast, who took a harquebusier for a sorcerer, able to scatter the thunder and lightning of the skies. The people of India, when we subdued them, were ten times as numerous as the Americans whom the Spaniards vanquished, and were at the same time quite as highly civilised as the victorious Spaniards. They had reared cities larger and fairer than

Saragossa or Toledo, and buildings more beautiful and costly than the cathedral of Seville. They could show bankers richer than the richest firms of Barcelona or Cadiz, viceroys whose splendour far surpassed that of Ferdinand the Catholic, myriads of cavalry and long trains of artillery which would have astonished the Great Captain. It might have been expected, that every Englishman who takes any interest in any part of history would be curious to know how a handful of his countrymen, separated from their home by an immense ocean, subjugated, in the course of a few years, one of the greatest empires in the world. Yet, unless we greatly err, this subject is, to most readers, not only insipid, but positively distasteful. Perhaps the fault lies partly with the historians. Mr. Mill's book, though it has undoubtedly great and rare merit, is not sufficiently animated and picturesque to attract those who read for amusement. Orme, inferior to no English historian in style and power of painting, is minute even to tediousness. In one volume he allots, on an average, a closely printed quarto page to the events of every forty-eight hours. The consequence is, that his narrative, though one of the most authentic and one of the most finely written in our language, has never been very popular, and is now scarcely ever read.

We fear that the volumes before us will not much attract those readers whom Orme and Mill have repelled. The materials placed at the disposal of Sir John Malcolm by the late Lord Powis were indeed of great value. But we cannot say that they have been very skilfully worked up. It would, however, be unjust to criticise with severity a work which, if the author had lived to complete and revise it, would probably have been improved by condensation and by a better arrangement. We are more disposed to perform the pleasing duty of expressing our gratitude to the noble family to which the public owes so much useful and curious information.

The effect of the book, even when we make the largest allowance for the partiality of those who have furnished and of those who have digested the materials, is, on the whole, greatly to raise the character of Lord Clive. We are far indeed from sympathising with Sir John Malcolm, whose love passes the love of biographers, and who can see nothing but wisdom and justice in the actions of his idol. But we are at least equally far from concurring in the severe judgment of Mr. Mill, who seems to us to show less discrimination in his account of Clive than in any other part of his valuable work. Clive, like most men who are born with strong passions and tried by strong temptations, committed great faults. But every person who takes a fair and enlightened view of his whole career must admit that our island, so fertile in heroes and statesmen, has scarcely ever produced a man more truly great either in arms or in council.

The Clives had been settled, ever since the twelfth century, on an estate of no great value, near Market-Drayton, in Shropshire. In the reign of George the First this moderate but ancient inheritance was possessed by Mr. Richard Clive, who seems to have

been a plain man of no great tact or capacity. He had been bred to the law, and divided his time between professional business and the avocations of a small proprietor.

He married a lady from Manchester, of the name of Gaskill, and became the father of a very numerous family. His eldest son, Robert, the founder of the British empire in India, was born at the old seat of his ancestors on the twenty-ninth of September, 1725.

Some lineaments of the character of the man were early discerned in the child. There remain letters written by his relations when he was in his seventh year; and from these letters it appears that, even at that early age, his strong will and his fiery passions, sustained by a constitutional intrepidity which sometimes seemed hardly compatible with soundness of mind, had begun to cause great uneasiness to his family. "Fighting," says one of his uncles, "to which he is out of measure addicted, gives his temper such a fierceness and imperiousness, that he flies out on every trifling occasion." The old people of the neighbourhood still remember to have heard from their parents how Bob Clive climbed to the top of the lofty steeple of Market-Drayton, and with what terror the inhabitants saw him seated on a stone spout near the summit. They also relate how he formed all the idle lads of the town into a kind of predatory army, and compelled the shopkeepers to submit to a tribute of apples and half-pence, in consideration of which he guaranteed the security of their windows. He was sent from school to school, making very little progress in his learning, and gaining for himself everywhere the character of an exceedingly naughty boy. One of his masters, it is said, was sagacious enough to prophesy that the idle lad would make a great figure in the world. But the general opinion seems to have been that poor Robert was a dunce, if not a reprobate. His family expected nothing good from such slender parts and such a headstrong temper. It is not strange therefore, that they gladly accepted for him, when he was in his eighteenth year, a writer-ship in the service of the East India Company, and shipped him off to make a fortune or to die of a fever at Madras.

Far different were the prospects of Clive from those of the youths whom the East India College now annually sends to the Presidencies of our Asiatic empire. The Company was then purely a trading corporation. Its territory consisted of few square miles, for which rent was paid to the native governments. Its troops were scarcely numerous enough to man the batteries of three or four ill-constructed forts, which had been erected for the protection of the warehouses. The natives who composed a considerable part of these little garrisons, had not yet been trained in the discipline of Europe, and were armed, some with swords and shields, some with bows and arrows. The business of the servant of the Company was not, as now, to conduct the judicial, financial, and diplomatic business of a great country, but to take stock, to make advances to weavers, to ship cargoes,

and above all to keep an eye on private traders who dared to infringe the monopoly. The younger clerks were so miserably paid that they could scarcely subsist without incurring debt; the elder enriched themselves by trading on their own account; and those who lived to rise to the top of the service often accumulated considerable fortunes.

Madras, to which Clive had been appointed, was, at this time, perhaps, the first in importance of the Company's settlements. In the preceding century Fort St. George had arisen on a barren spot beaten by a raging surf; and in the neighbourhood a town, inhabited by many thousands of natives, had sprung up, as towns spring up in the East, with the rapidity of the prophet's gourd. There were already in the suburbs many white villas, each surrounded by its garden, whither the wealthy agents of the Company retired, after the labours of the desk and the warehouse, to enjoy the cool breeze which springs up at sunset from the Bay of Bengal. The habits of these mercantile grandees appear to have been more profuse, luxurious, and ostentatious, than those of the high judicial and political functionaries who have succeeded them. But comfort was far less understood. Many devices which now mitigate the heat of the climate, preserve health, and prolong life, were unknown. There was far less intercourse with Europe than at present. The voyage by the Cape, which in our time has often been performed within three months, was then very seldom accomplished in six, and was sometimes protracted to more than a year. Consequently, the Anglo-Indian was then much more estranged from his country, much more addicted to Oriental usages, and much less fitted to mix in society after his return to Europe, than the Anglo-Indian of the present day.

Within the fort and its precinct, the English exercised, by permission of the native government, an extensive authority, such as every great Indian landowner exercised within his own domain. But they had never dreamed of claiming independent power. The surrounding country was ruled by the Nabob of the Carnatic, a deputy of the Viceroy of the Deccan, commonly called the Nizam, who was himself only a deputy of the mighty prince designated by our ancestors as the Great Mogul. Those names, once so august and formidable, still remain.

There is still a Nabob of the Carnatic, who lives on a pension allowed to him by the English out of the revenues of the provinces which his ancestors ruled. There is still a Nizam, whose capital is overawed by a British cantonment, and to whom a British resident gives, under the name of advice, commands which are not to be disputed. There is still a Mogul, who is permitted to play at holding courts and receiving petitions, but who has less power to help or hurt than the youngest civil servant of the Company.

Clive's voyage was unusually tedious even for that age. The ship remained some months at the Brazils, where the young adventurer

picked up some knowledge of Portuguese, and spent all his pocket-money. He did not arrive in India till more than a year after he had left England. His situation at Madras was most painful. His funds were exhausted. His pay was small. He had contracted debts. He was wretchedly lodged, no small calamity in a climate which can be made tolerable to an European only by spacious and well placed apartments. He had been furnished with letters of recommendation to a gentleman who might have assisted him; but when he landed at Fort St. George he found that this gentleman had sailed for England. The lad's shy and haughty disposition withheld him from introducing himself to strangers. He was several months in India before he became acquainted with a single family. The climate affected his health and spirits. His duties were of a kind ill-suited to his ardent and daring character. He pined for his home, and in his letters to his relations expressed his feelings in language softer and more pensive than we should have expected either from the waywardness of his boyhood, or from the inflexible sternness of his later years. "I have not enjoyed" says he "one happy day since I left my native country"; and again, "I must confess, at intervals, when I think of my dear native England, it affects me in a very peculiar manner.... If I should be so far blest as to revisit again my own country, but more especially Manchester, the centre of all my wishes, all that I could hope or desire for would be presented before me in one view."

One solace he found of the most respectable kind. The Governor possessed a good library, and permitted Clive to have access to it. The young man devoted much of his leisure to reading, and acquired at this time almost all the knowledge of books that he ever possessed. As a boy he had been too idle, as a man he soon became too busy, for literary pursuits.

But neither climate nor poverty, neither study nor the sorrows of a home-sick exile, could tame the desperate audacity of his spirit. He behaved to his official superiors as he had behaved to his schoolmasters, and he was several times in danger of losing his situation. Twice, while residing in the Writers' Buildings, he attempted to destroy himself; and twice the pistol which he snapped at his own head failed to go off. This circumstance, it is said, affected him as a similar escape affected Wallenstein. After satisfying himself that the pistol was really well loaded, he burst forth into an exclamation that surely he was reserved for something great.

About this time an event which at first seemed likely to destroy all his hopes in life suddenly opened before him a new path to eminence. Europe had been, during some years, distracted by the war of the Austrian succession. George the Second was the steady ally of Maria Theresa. The house of Bourbon took the opposite side. Though England was even then the first of maritime powers, she was not, as she has since become, more than a match on the sea for all the nations of the world together; and she found it

difficult to maintain a contest against the united navies of France and Spain. In the eastern seas France obtained the ascendency. Labourdonnais, governor of Mauritius, a man of eminent talents and virtues, conducted an expedition to the continent of India in spite of the opposition of the British fleet, landed, assembled an army, appeared before Madras, and compelled the town and fort to capitulate. The keys were delivered up; the French colours were displayed on Fort St. George; and the contents of the Company's warehouses were seized as prize of war by the conquerors. It was stipulated by the capitulation that the English inhabitants should be prisoners of war on parole, and that the town should remain in the hands of the French till it should be ransomed. Labourdonnais pledged his honour that only a moderate ransom should be required.

But the success of Labourdonnais had awakened the jealousy of his countryman, Dupleix, governor of Pondicherry. Dupleix, moreover, had already begun to revolve gigantic schemes, with which the restoration of Madras to the English was by no means compatible. He declared that Labourdonnais had gone beyond his powers; that conquests made by the French arms on the continent of India were at the disposal of the governor of Pondicherry alone; and that Madras should be razed to the ground. Labourdonnais was compelled to yield. The anger which the breach of the capitulation excited among the English was increased by the ungenerous manner in which Dupleix treated the principal servants of the Company. The Governor and several of the first gentlemen of Fort St. George were carried under a guard to Pondicherry, and conducted through the town in a triumphal procession under the eyes of fifty thousand spectators. It was with reason thought that this gross violation of public faith absolved the inhabitants of Madras from the engagements into which they had entered with Labourdonnais. Clive fled from the town by night in the disguise of a Mussulman, and took refuge at Fort St. David, one of the small English settlements subordinate to Madras.

The circumstances in which he was now placed naturally led him to adopt a profession better suited to his restless and intrepid spirit than the business of examining packages and casting accounts. He solicited and obtained an ensign's commission in the service of the Company, and at twenty-one entered on his military career. His personal courage, of which he had, while still a writer, given signal proof by a desperate duel with a military bully who was the terror of Fort St. David, speedily made him conspicuous even among hundreds of brave men. He soon began to show in his new calling other qualities which had not before been discerned in him, judgment, sagacity, deference to legitimate authority. He distinguished himself highly in several operations against the French, and was particularly noticed by Major Lawrence, who was then considered as the ablest British officer in India.

Clive had been only a few months in the army when intelligence

arrived that peace had been concluded between Great Britain and France. Dupleix was in consequence compelled to restore Madras to the English Company; and the young ensign was at liberty to resume his former business. He did indeed return for a short time to his desk. He again quitted it in order to assist Major Lawrence in some petty hostilities with the natives, and then again returned to it. While he was thus wavering between a military and a commercial life, events took place which decided his choice. The politics of India assumed a new aspect. There was peace between the English and French Crowns; but there arose between the English and French Companies trading to the East a war most eventful and important, a war in which the prize was nothing less than the magnificent inheritance of the house of Tamerlane.

The empire which Baber and his Moguls reared in the sixteenth century was long one of the most extensive and splendid in the world. In no European kingdom was so large a population subject to a single prince, or so large a revenue poured into the treasury. The beauty and magnificence of the buildings erected by the sovereigns of Hindostan amazed even travellers who had seen St. Peter's. The innumerable retinues and gorgeous decorations which surrounded the throne of Delhi dazzled even eyes which were accustomed to the pomp of Versailles. Some of the great viceroys who held their posts by virtue of commissions from the Mogul ruled as many subjects as the King of France or the Emperor of Germany. Even the deputies of these deputies might well rank, as to extent of territory and amount of revenue, with the Grand Duke of Tuscany, or the Elector of Saxony.

There can be little doubt that this great empire, powerful and prosperous as it appears on a superficial view, was yet, even in its best days, far worse governed than the worst governed parts of Europe now are. The administration was tainted with all the vices of Oriental despotism, and with all the vices inseparable from the domination of race over race. The conflicting pretensions of the princes of the royal house produced a long series of crimes and public disasters. Ambitious lieutenants of the sovereign sometimes aspired to independence. Fierce tribes Of Hindoos, impatient of a foreign yoke, frequently withheld tribute, repelled the armies of the government from the mountain fastnesses, and poured down in arms on the cultivated plains. In spite, however, of much constant maladministration, in spite of occasional convulsions which shook the whole frame of society, this great monarchy, on the whole, retained, during some generations, an outward appearance of unity, majesty, and energy. But, throughout the long reign of Aurungzebe, the state, notwithstanding all that the vigour and policy of the prince could effect, was hastening to dissolution. After his death, which took place in the year 1707, the ruin was fearfully rapid. Violent shocks from without co-operated with an incurable decay which was fast proceeding within; and in a few years the empire had undergone utter decomposition.

The history of the successors of Theodosius bears no small analogy to that of the successors of Aurungzebe. But perhaps the fall of the Carlovingians furnishes the nearest parallel to the fall of the Moguls. Charlemagne was scarcely interred when the imbecility and the disputes of his descendants began to bring contempt on themselves and destruction on their subjects. The wide dominion of the Franks was severed into a thousand pieces. Nothing more than a nominal dignity was left to the abject heirs of an illustrious name, Charles the Bald, and Charles the Fat, and Charles the Simple. Fierce invaders, differing, from each other in race, language, and religion, flocked, as if by concert, from the farthest corners of the earth, to plunder provinces which the government could no longer defend. The pirates of the Northern Sea extended their ravages from the Elbe to the Pyrenees, and at length fixed their seat in the rich valley of the Seine. The Hungarian, in whom the trembling monks fancied that they recognised the Gog or Magog of prophecy, carried back the plunder of the cities of Lombardy to the depths of the Pannonian forests. The Saracen ruled in Sicily, desolated the fertile plains of Campania, and spread terror even to the walls of Rome. In the midst of these sufferings, a great internal change passed upon the empire. The corruption of death began to ferment into new forms of life. While the great body, as a whole, was torpid and passive, every separate member began to feel with a sense and to move with an energy all its own. Just here, in the most barren and dreary tract of European history, all feudal privileges, all modern nobility, take their source. It is to this point, that we trace the power of those princes who, nominally vassals, but really independent, long governed, with the titles of dukes, marquesses, and counts, almost every part of the dominions which had obeyed Charlemagne.

Such or nearly such was the change which passed on the Mogul empire during the forty years which followed the death of Aurungzebe. A succession of nominal sovereigns, sunk in indolence and debauchery, sauntered away life in secluded palaces, chewing bang, fondling concubines, and listening to buffoons. A succession of ferocious invaders descended through the western passes, to prey on the defenceless wealth of Hindostan. A Persian conqueror crossed the Indus, marched through the gates of Delhi, and bore away in triumph those treasures of which the magnificence had astounded Roe and Bernier, the Peacock Throne, on which the richest jewels of Golconda had been disposed by the most skilful hands of Europe, and the inestimable Mountain of Light, which, after many strange vicissitudes, lately shone in the bracelet of Runjeet Sing, and is now destined to adorn the hideous idol of Orissa. The Afghan soon followed to complete the work of the devastation which the Persian had begun. The warlike tribes of Rajpootana, threw off the Mussulman yoke. A band of mercenary soldiers occupied Rohilcund. The Seiks ruled or the Indus. The Jauts spread dismay along the Jumna. The highlands which border on the western sea-coast of India

poured forth a yet more formidable race, a race which was long the terror of every native power, and which, after many desperate and doubtful struggles, yielded only to the fortune and genius of England. It was under the reign of Aurungzebe that this wild clan of plunderers first descended from their mountains; and soon after his death, every corner of his wide empire learned to tremble at the mighty name of the Mahrattas. Many fertile viceroyalties were entirely subdued by them. Their dominions stretched across the peninsula from sea to sea. Mahratta captains reigned at Poonah, at Gualior, in Guzerat, in Berar, and in Tanjore. Nor did they, though they had become great sovereigns, therefore cease to be freebooters. They still retained the predatory habits of their forefathers. Every region which was not subject to their rule was wasted by their incursions. Wherever their kettle-drums were heard, the peasant threw his bag of rice on his shoulder, hid his small savings in his girdle, and fled with his wife and children to the mountains or the jungles, to the milder neighbourhood of the hyaena and the tiger. Many provinces redeemed their harvests by the payment of an annual ransom. Even the wretched phantom who still bore the imperial title stooped to pay this ignominious black-mail. The camp-fires of one rapacious leader were seen from the walls of the palace of Delhi. Another, at the head of his innumerable cavalry, descended year after year on the rice-fields of Bengal. Even the European factors trembled for their magazines. Less than a hundred years ago, it was thought necessary to fortify Calcutta against the horsemen of Berar, and the name of the Mahratta ditch still preserves the memory of the danger.

Wherever the viceroys of the Mogul retained authority they became sovereigns. They might still acknowledge in words the superiority of the house of Tamerlane; as a Count of Flanders or a Duke of Burgundy might have acknowledged the superiority of the most helpless driveller among the later Carlovingians. They might occasionally send to their titular sovereign a complimentary present, or solicit from him a title of honour. In truth, however, they were no longer lieutenants removable at pleasure, but independent hereditary princes. In this way originated those great Mussulman houses which formerly ruled Bengal and the Carnatic, and those which still, though in a state of vassalage, exercise some of the powers of royalty at Lucknow and Hyderabad.

In what was this confusion to end? Was the strife to continue during centuries? Was it to terminate in the rise of another great monarchy ? Was the Mussulman or the Mahratta to be the Lord of India? Was another Baber to descend from the mountains, and to lead the hardy tribes of Cabul and Chorasan against a wealthier and less warlike race? None of these events seemed improbable. But scarcely any man, however sagacious, would have thought it possible that a trading company, separated from India by fifteen thousand miles of sea, and possessing in India only a few acres for purposes of commerce, would, in less than a hundred years, spread its empire from Cape Comorin to the eternal snow of the

Himalayas; would compel Mahratta and Mahommedan to forget their mutual feuds in common subjection; would tame down even those wild races which had resisted the most powerful of the Moguls; and, having united under its laws a hundred millions of subjects, would carry its victorious arms far to the cast of the Burrampooter, and far to the west of the Hydaspes, dictate terms of peace at the gates of Ava, and seat its vassal on the throne of Candahar.

The man who first saw that it was possible to found an European empire on the ruins of the Mogul monarchy was Dupleix. His restless, capacious, and inventive mind had formed this scheme, at a time when the ablest servants of the English Company were busied only about invoices and bills of lading. Nor had he only proposed to himself the end. He had also a just and distinct view of the means by which it was to be attained. He clearly saw that the greatest force which the princes of India could bring into the field would be no match for a small body of men trained in the discipline, and guided by the tactics, of the West. He saw also that the natives of India might, under European commanders, be formed into armies, such as Saxe or Frederic would be proud to command. He was perfectly aware that the most easy and convenient way in which an European adventurer could exercise sovereignty in India, was to govern the motions, and to speak through the mouth of some glittering puppet dignified by the title of Nabob or Nizam. The arts both of war and policy, which a few years later were employed with such signal success by the English, were first understood and practised by this ingenious and aspiring Frenchman.

The situation of India was such that scarcely any aggression could be without a pretext, either in old laws or in recent practice. All rights were in a state of utter uncertainty; and the Europeans who took part in the disputes of the natives confounded the confusion, by applying to Asiatic politics the public law of the West, and analogies drawn from the feudal system. If it was convenient to treat a Nabob as an independent prince, there was an excellent plea for doing so. He was independent, in fact. If it was convenient to treat him as a mere deputy of the Court of Delhi, there was no difficulty; for he was so in theory. If it was convenient to consider his office as an hereditary dignity, or as a dignity held during life only, or as a dignity held only during the good pleasure of the Mogul, arguments and precedents might be found for every one of those views. The party who had the heir of Baber in their hands, represented him as the undoubted, the legitimate, the absolute sovereign, whom all subordinate authorities were bound to obey. The party against whom his name was used did not want plausible pretexts for maintaining that the empire was in fact dissolved, and that though it might be decent to treat the Mogul with respect, as a venerable relic of an order of things which had passed away, it was absurd to regard him as the real master of Hindostan.

In the year 1748, died one of the most powerful of the new masters of India, the great Nizam al Mulk, Viceroy of the Deccan. His authority descended to his son, Nazir Jung. Of the provinces subject to this high functionary, the Carnatic was the wealthiest and the most extensive. It was governed by an ancient Nabob, whose name the English corrupted into Anaverdy Khan.

But there were pretenders to the government both of the viceroyalty and of the subordinate province. Mirzapha Jung, a grandson of Nizam al Mulk, appeared as the competitor of Nazir Jung. Chunda Sahib, son-in-law of a former Nabob of the Carnatic, disputed the title of Anaverdy Khan. In the unsettled state of Indian law it was easy for both Mirzapha Jung and Chunda Sahib to make out something like a claim of right. In a society altogether disorganised, they had no difficulty in finding greedy adventurers to follow their standards. They united their interests, invaded the Carnatic, and applied for assistance to the French, whose fame had been raised by their success against the English in a recent war on the coast of Coromandel.

Nothing could have happened more pleasing to the subtle and ambitious Dupleix. To make a Nabob of the Carnatic, to make a Viceroy of the Deccan, to rule under their names the whole of Southern India; this was indeed an attractive prospect. He allied himself with the pretenders, and sent four hundred French soldiers, and two thousand sepoys, disciplined after the European fashion, to the assistance of his confederates. A battle was fought. The French distinguished themselves greatly. Anaverdy Khan was defeated and slain. His son, Mahommed Ali, who was afterwards well known in England as the Nabob of Arcot, and who owes to the eloquence of Burke a most unenviable immortality, fled with a scanty remnant of his army to Trichinopoly; and the conquerors became at once masters of almost every part of the Carnatic.

This was but the beginning of the greatness of Dupleix. After some months of fighting, negotiation and intrigue, his ability and good fortune seemed to have prevailed everywhere. Nazir Jung perished by the hands of his own followers; Mirzapha Jung was master of the Deccan; and the triumph of French arms and French policy was complete. At Pondicherry all was exultation and festivity. Salutes were fired from the batteries, and Te Deum sung in the churches. The new Nizam came thither to visit his allies; and the ceremony of his installation was performed there with great pomp. Dupleix, dressed in the garb worn by Mahommedans of the highest rank, entered the town in the same palanquin with the Nizam, and, in the pageant which followed, took precedence of all the court. He was declared Governor of India from the river Kristna to Cape Comorin, a country about as large as France, with authority superior even to that of Chunda Sahib. He was intrusted with the command of seven thousand cavalry. It was announced that no mint would be suffered to exist in the Carnatic except that at

Pondicherry. A large portion of the treasures which former Viceroys of the Deccan had accumulated had found its way into the coffers of the French governor. It was rumoured that he had received two hundred thousand pounds sterling in money, besides many valuable jewels. In fact, there could scarcely be any limit to his gains. He now ruled thirty millions of people with almost absolute power. No honour or emolument could be obtained from the government but by his intervention. No petition, unless signed by him, was perused by the Nizam.

Mirzapha Jung survived his elevation only a few months, But another prince of the same house was raised to the throne by French influence, and ratified all the promises of his predecessor. Dupleix was now the greatest potentate in India.

His countrymen boasted that his name was mentioned with awe even in the chambers of the palace of Delhi. The native population looked with amazement on the progress which, in the short space of four years, an European adventurer had made towards dominion in Asia. Nor was the vainglorious Frenchman content with the reality of power. He loved to display his greatness with arrogant ostentation before the eyes of his subjects and of his rivals. Near the spot where his policy had obtained its chief triumph, by the fall of Nazir Jung, and the elevation of Mirzapha, he determined to erect a column, on the four sides of which four pompous inscriptions, in four languages, should proclaim his glory to all the nations of the East. Medals stamped with emblems of his successes were buried beneath the foundations of his stately pillar, and round it arose a town bearing the haughty name of Dupleix Fatihabad, which is, being interpreted, the City of the Victory of Dupleix.

The English had made some feeble and irresolute attempts to stop the rapid and brilliant career of the rival Company, and continued to recognise Mahommed Ali as Nabob of the Carnatic. But the dominions of Mahommed Ali consisted of Trichinopoly alone: and Trichinopoly was now invested by Chunda Sahib and his French auxiliaries. To raise the siege seemed impossible. The small force which was then at Madras had no commander. Major Lawrence had returned to England; and not a single officer of established character remained in the settlement. The natives had learned to look with contempt on the mighty nation which was soon to conquer and to rule them. They had seen the French colours flying on Fort St. George; they had seen the chiefs of the English factory led in triumph through the streets of Pondicherry; they had seen the arms and counsels of Dupleix everywhere successful, while the opposition which the authorities of Madras had made to his progress, had served only to expose their own weakness, and to heighten his glory. At this moment, the valour and genius of an obscure English youth suddenly turned the tide of fortune.

Clive was now twenty-five years old. After hesitating for some time between a military and a commercial life, he had at length

been placed in a post which partook of both characters, that of commissary to the troops, with the rank of captain. The present emergency called forth all his powers. He represented to his superiors that unless some vigorous effort were made, Trichinopoly would fall, the house of Anaverdy Khan would perish, and the French would become the real masters of the whole peninsula of India. It was absolutely necessary to strike some daring blow. If an attack were made on Arcot, the capital of the Carnatic, and the favourite residence of the Nabobs, it was not impossible that the siege of Trichinopoly would be raised. The heads of the English settlement, now thoroughly alarmed by the success of Dupleix, and apprehensive that, in the event of a new war between France and Great Britain, Madras would be instantly taken and destroyed, approved of Clive's plan, and intrusted the execution of it to himself. The young captain was put at the head of two hundred English soldiers, and three hundred sepoys, armed and disciplined after the European fashion. Of the eight officers who commanded this little force under him, only two had ever been in action, and four of the eight were factors of the Company, whom Clive's example had induced to offer their services. The weather was stormy; but Clive pushed on, through thunder, lightning, and rain, to the gates of Arcot. The garrison, in a panic, evacuated the fort, and the English entered it without a blow.

But Clive well knew that he should not be suffered to retain undisturbed possession of his conquest. He instantly began to collect provisions, to throw up works, and to make preparations for sustaining a siege. The garrison, which had fled at his approach, had now recovered from its dismay, and, having been swelled by large reinforcements from the neighbourhood to a force of three thousand men, encamped close to the town. At dead of night, Clive marched out of the fort, attacked the camp by surprise, slew great numbers, dispersed the rest, and returned to his quarters without having lost a single man.

The intelligence of these events was soon carried to Chunda Sahib, who, with his French allies, was besieging Trichinopoly. He immediately detached four thousand men from his camp, and sent them to Arcot. They were speedily joined by the remains of the force which Clive had lately scattered. They were further strengthened by two thousand men from Vellore, and by a still more important reinforcement of a hundred and fifty French soldiers whom Dupleix despatched from Pondicherry. The whole of his army, amounting to about ten thousand men, was under the command of Rajah Sahib, son of Chunda Sahib.

Rajah Sahib proceeded to invest the fort of Arcot, which seemed quite incapable of sustaining a siege. The walls were ruinous, the ditches dry, the ramparts too narrow to admit the guns, the battlements too low to protect the soldiers. The little garrison had been greatly reduced by casualties. It now consisted of a hundred and twenty Europeans and two hundred sepoys. Only four

officers were left; the stock of provisions was scanty; and the commander, who had to conduct the defence under circumstances so discouraging, was a young man of five-and-twenty, who had been bred a bookkeeper.

During fifty days the siege went on. During fifty days the young captain maintained the defence, with a firmness, vigilance, and ability, which would have done honour to the oldest marshal in Europe. The breach, however, increased day by day. The garrison began to feel the pressure of hunger. Under such circumstances, any troops so scantily provided with officers might have been expected to show signs of insubordination; and the danger was peculiarly great in a force composed of men differing widely from each other in extraction, colour, language, manners, and religion. But the devotion of the little band to its chief surpassed anything that is related of the Tenth Legion of Caesar, or of the Old Guard of Napoleon. The sepoys came to Clive, not to complain of their scanty fare, but to propose that all the grain should be given to the Europeans, who required more nourishment than the natives of Asia. The thin gruel, they said, which was strained away from the rice, would suffice for themselves. History contains no more touching instance of military fidelity, or of the influence of a commanding mind.

An attempt made by the government of Madras to relieve the place had failed. But there was hope from another quarter. A body of six thousand Mahrattas, half soldiers, half robbers, under the command of a chief named Morari Row, had been hired to assist Mahommed Ali; but thinking the French power irresistible, and the triumph of Chunda Sahib certain, they had hitherto remained inactive on the frontiers of the Carnatic. The fame of the defence of Arcot roused them from their torpor. Morari Row declared that he had never before believed that Englishmen could fight, but that he would willingly help them since he saw that they had spirit to help themselves. Rajah Sahib learned that the Mahrattas were in motion. It was necessary for him to be expeditious. He first tried negotiation. He offered large bribes to Clive, which were rejected with scorn. He vowed that, if his proposals were not accepted, he would instantly storm the fort, and put every man in it to the sword. Clive told him in reply, with characteristic haughtiness, that his father was an usurper, that his army was a rabble, and that he would do well to think twice before he sent such poltroons into a breach defended by English soldiers.

Rajah Sahib determined to storm the fort. The day was well suited to a bold military enterprise. It was the great Mahommedan festival which is sacred to the memory of Hosein, the son of Ali. The history of Islam contains nothing more touching than the event which gave rise to that solemnity. The mournful legend relates how the chief of the Fatimites, when all his brave followers had perished round him, drank his latest draught of water, and uttered his latest prayer, how the assassins carried

his head in triumph, how the tyrant smote the lifeless lips with his staff, and how a few old men recollected with tears that they had seen those lips pressed to the lips of the Prophet of God. After the lapse of near twelve centuries, the recurrence of this solemn season excites the fiercest and saddest emotions in the bosoms of the devout Moslem of India. They work themselves up to such agonies of rage and lamentation that some, it is said, have given up the ghost from the mere effect of mental excitement. They believe that, whoever, during this festival, falls in arms against the infidels, atones by his death for all the sins of his life, and passes at once to the garden of the Houris. It was at this time that Rajah Sahib determined to assault Arcot. Stimulating drugs were employed to aid the effect of religious zeal, and the besiegers, drunk with enthusiasm, drunk with bang, rushed furiously to the attack.

Clive had received secret intelligence of the design, had made his arrangements, and, exhausted by fatigue, had thrown himself on his bed. He was awakened by the alarm, and was instantly at his post. The enemy advanced, driving before them elephants whose foreheads were armed with iron plates. It was expected that the gates would yield to the shock of these living battering-rams. But the huge beasts no sooner felt the English musket-balls than they turned round, and rushed furiously away, trampling on the multitude which had urged them forward. A raft was launched on the water which filled one part of the ditch. Clive, perceiving that his gunners at that post did not understand their business, took the management of a piece of artillery himself, and cleared the raft in a few minutes. When the moat was dry the assailants mounted with great boldness; but they were received with a fire so heavy and so well directed, that it soon quelled the courage even of fanaticism and of intoxication. The rear ranks of the English kept the front ranks supplied with a constant succession of loaded muskets, and every shot told on the living mass below. After three desperate onsets, the besiegers retired behind the ditch.

The struggle lasted about an hour. Four hundred of the assailants fell. The garrison lost only five or six men. The besieged passed an anxious night, looking for a renewal of the attack. But when the day broke, the enemy were no more to be seen. They had retired, leaving to the English several guns and a large quantity of ammunition.

The news was received at Fort St. George with transports of joy and pride. Clive was justly regarded as a man equal to any command. Two hundred English soldiers and seven hundred sepoys were sent to him, and with this force he instantly commenced offensive operations. He took the fort of Timery, effected a junction with a division of Morari Row’s army, and hastened, by forced marches, to attack Rajah Sahib, who was at the head of about five thousand men, of whom three hundred were French. The action was sharp; but Clive gained a complete victory. The military chest of Rajah Sahib fell into the hands of the

conquerors. Six hundred sepoys, who had served in the enemy's army, came over to Clive's quarters, and were taken into the British service. Conjeveram surrendered without a blow. The governor of Arnee deserted Chunda Sahib, and recognised the title of Mahommed Ali.

Had the entire direction of the war been intrusted to Clive, it would probably have been brought to a speedy close. But the timidity and incapacity which appeared in all the movements of the English, except where he was personally present, protracted the struggle. The Mahrattas muttered that his soldiers were of a different race from the British whom they found elsewhere. The effect of this languor was that in no long time Rajah Sahib, at the head of a considerable army, in which were four hundred French troops, appeared almost under the guns of Fort St. George, and laid waste the villas and gardens of the gentlemen of the English settlement. But he was again encountered and defeated by Clive. More than a hundred of the French were killed or taken, a loss more serious than that of thousands of natives. The victorious army marched from the field of battle to Fort St. David. On the road lay the City of the Victory of Dupleix, and the stately monument which was designed to commemorate the triumphs of France in the East. Clive ordered both the city and the monument to be razed to the ground. He was induced, we believe, to take this step, not by personal or national malevolence, but by a just and profound policy. The town and its pompous name, the pillar and its vaunting inscriptions, were among the devices by which Dupleix had laid the public mind of India under a spell. This spell it was Clive's business to break. The natives had been taught that France was confessedly the first power in Europe, and that the English did not presume to dispute her supremacy. No measure could be more effectual for the removing of this delusion than the public and solemn demolition of the French trophies.

The government of Madras, encouraged by these events, determined to send a strong detachment, under Clive, to reinforce the garrison of Trichinopoly. But just at this conjuncture, Major Lawrence arrived from England, and assumed the chief command. From the waywardness and impatience of control which had characterised Clive, both at school and in the counting-house, it might have been expected that he would not, after such achievements, act with zeal and good humour in a subordinate capacity. But Lawrence had early treated him with kindness; and it is bare justice to Clive, to say that, proud and overbearing as he was, kindness was never thrown away upon him. He cheerfully placed himself under the orders of his old friend, and exerted himself as strenuously in the second post as he could have done in the first. Lawrence well knew the value of such assistance. Though himself gifted with no intellectual faculty higher than plain good sense, he fully appreciated the powers of his brilliant coadjutor. Though he had made a methodical study of military tactics, and, like all men regularly bred to a

profession, was disposed to look with disdain on interlopers, he had yet liberality enough to acknowledge that Clive was an exception to common rules. "Some people," he wrote, "are pleased to term Captain Clive fortunate and lucky; but, in my opinion, from the knowledge I have of the gentleman, he deserved and might expect from his conduct everything as it fell out;--a man of an undaunted resolution, of a cool temper, and of a presence of mind which never left him in the greatest danger--born a soldier; for, without a military education of any sort, or much conversing with any of the profession, from his judgment and good sense, he led on an army like an experienced officer and a brave soldier, with a prudence that certainly warranted success."

The French had no commander to oppose to the two friends. Dupleix, not inferior in talents for negotiation and intrigue to any European who has borne a part in the revolutions of India, was ill qualified to direct in person military operations. He had not been bred a soldier, and had no inclination to become one. His enemies accused him of personal cowardice; and he defended himself in a strain worthy of Captain Bobadil. He kept away from shot, he said, because silence and tranquillity were propitious to his genius, and he found it difficult to pursue his meditations amidst the noise of fire-arms. He was thus under the necessity of intrusting to others the execution of his great warlike designs; and he bitterly complained that he was ill served. He had indeed been assisted by one officer of eminent merit, the celebrated Bussy. But Bussy had marched northward with the Nizam, and was fully employed in looking after his own interests, and those of France, at the court of that prince. Among the officers who remained with Dupleix, there was not a single man of capacity; and many of them were boys, at whose ignorance and folly the common soldiers laughed.

The English triumphed everywhere. The besiegers of Trichinopoly were themselves besieged and compelled to capitulate. Chunda Sahib fell into the hands of the Mahrattas, and was put to death, at the instigation probably of his competitor, Mahommed Ali. The spirit of Dupleix, however, was unconquerable, and his resources inexhaustible. From his employers in Europe he no longer received help or countenance. They condemned his policy. They gave him no pecuniary assistance. They sent him for troops only the sweepings of the galleys. Yet still he persisted, intrigued, bribed, promised, lavished his private fortune, strained his credit, procured new diplomas from Delhi, raised up new enemies to the government of Madras on every side, and found tools even among the allies of the English Company. But all was in vain. Slowly, but steadily, the power of Britain continued to increase, and that of France to decline.

The health of Clive had never been good during his residence in India; and his constitution was now so much impaired that he determined to return to England. Before his departure he undertook a service of considerable difficulty, and performed it

with his usual vigour and dexterity. The forts of Covelong and Chingleput were occupied by French garrisons. It was determined to send a force against them. But the only force available for this purpose was of such a description that no officer but Clive would risk his reputation by commanding it. It consisted of five hundred newly levied sepoys and two hundred recruits who had just landed from England, and who were the worst and lowest wretches that the Company's crimps could pick up in the flash-houses of London. Clive, ill and exhausted as he was, undertook to make an army of this undisciplined rabble, and marched with them to Covelong. A shot from the fort killed one of these extraordinary soldiers; on which all the rest faced about and ran away, and it was with the greatest difficulty that Clive rallied them. On another occasion, the noise of a gun terrified the sentinels so much that one of them was found, some hours later, at the bottom of a well. Clive gradually accustomed them to danger, and, by exposing himself constantly in the most perilous situations, shamed them into courage. He at length succeeded in forming a respectable force out of his unpromising materials. Covelong fell. Clive learned that a strong detachment was marching to relieve it from Chingleput. He took measures to prevent the enemy from learning that they were too late, laid an ambuscade for them on the road, killed a hundred of them with one fire, took three hundred prisoners, pursued the fugitives to the gates of Chingleput, laid siege instantly to that fastness, reputed one of the strongest in India, made a breach, and was on the point of storming, when the French commandant capitulated and retired with his men.

Clive returned to Madras victorious, but in a state of health which rendered it impossible for him to remain there long. He married at this time a young lady of the name of Maskelyne, sister of the eminent mathematician, who long held the post of Astronomer Royal. She is described as handsome and accomplished; and her husband's letters, it is said, contain proofs that he was devotedly attached to her.

Almost immediately after the marriage, Clive embarked with his bride for England. He returned a very different person from the poor slighted boy who had been sent out ten years before to seek his fortune. He was only twenty-seven; yet his country already respected him as one of her first soldiers. There was then general peace in Europe. The Carnatic was the only part of the world where the English and French were in arms against each other. The vast schemes of Dupleix had excited no small uneasiness in the city of London; and the rapid turn of fortune, which was chiefly owing to the courage and talents of Clive, had been hailed with great delight. The young captain was known at the India House by the honourable nickname of General Clive, and was toasted by that appellation at the feasts of the Directors. On his arrival in England, he found himself an object of general interest and admiration. The East India Company thanked him for his services in the warmest terms, and bestowed on him a sword

set with diamonds. With rare delicacy, he refused to receive this token of gratitude, unless a similar compliment were paid to his friend and commander, Lawrence.

It may easily be supposed that Clive was most cordially welcomed home by his family, who were delighted by his success, though they seem to have been hardly able to comprehend how their naughty idle Bobby had become so great a man. His father had been singularly hard of belief. Not until the news of the defence of Arcot arrived in England was the old gentleman heard to growl out that, after all, the booby had something in him. His expressions of approbation became stronger and stronger as news arrived of one brilliant exploit after another; and he was at length immoderately fond and proud of his son.

Clive's relations had very substantial reasons for rejoicing at his return. Considerable sums of prize money had fallen to his share; and he had brought home a moderate fortune, part of which he expended in extricating his father from pecuniary difficulties, and in redeeming the family estate. The remainder he appears to have dissipated in the course of about two years. He lived splendidly, dressed gaily even for those times, kept a carriage and saddle-horses, and, not content with these ways of getting rid of his money, resorted to the most speedy and effectual of all modes of evacuation, a contested election followed by a petition.

At the time of the general election of 1754, the Government was in a very singular state. There was scarcely any formal opposition. The Jacobites had been cowed by the issue of the last rebellion. The Tory party had fallen into utter contempt. It had been deserted by all the men of talents who had belonged to it, and had scarcely given a symptom of life during some years. The small faction which had been held together by the influence and promises of Prince Frederic, had been dispersed by his death. Almost every public man of distinguished talents in the kingdom, whatever his early connections might have been, was in office, and called himself a Whig. But this extraordinary appearance of concord was quite delusive. The administration itself was distracted by bitter enmities and conflicting pretensions. The chief object of its members was to depress and supplant each other. The Prime Minister, Newcastle, weak, timid, jealous, and perfidious, was at once detested and despised by some of the most important members of his Government, and by none more than by Henry Fox, the Secretary-at-War. This able, daring, and ambitious man seized every opportunity of crossing the First Lord of the Treasury, from whom he well knew that he had little to dread and little to hope; for Newcastle was through life equally afraid of breaking with men of parts and of promoting them.

Newcastle had set his heart on returning two members for St. Michael, one of those wretched Cornish boroughs which were swept away by the Reform Act of 1832. He was opposed by Lord Sandwich,

whose influence had long been paramount there: and Fox exerted himself strenuously in Sandwich's behalf. Clive, who had been introduced to Fox, and very kindly received by him, was brought forward on the Sandwich interest, and was returned. But a petition was presented against the return, and was backed by the whole influence of the Duke of Newcastle.

The case was heard, according to the usage of that time, before a committee of the whole House. Questions respecting elections were then considered merely as party questions. Judicial impartiality was not even affected. Sir Robert Walpole was in the habit of saying openly that, in election battles, there ought to be no quarter. On the present occasion the excitement was great. The matter really at issue was, not whether Clive had been properly or improperly returned, but whether Newcastle or Fox was to be master of the new House of Commons, and consequently first minister. The contest was long and obstinate, and success seemed to lean sometimes to one side and sometimes to the other. Fox put forth all his rare powers of debate, beat half the lawyers in the House at their own weapons, and carried division after division against the whole influence of the Treasury. The committee decided in Clive's favour. But when the resolution was reported to the House, things took a different course. The remnant of the Tory Opposition, contemptible as it was, had yet sufficient weight to turn the scale between the nicely balanced parties of Newcastle and Fox. Newcastle the Tories could only despise. Fox they hated, as the boldest and most subtle politician and the ablest debater among the Whigs, as the steady friend of Walpole, as the devoted adherent of the Duke of Cumberland. After wavering till the last moment, they determined to vote in a body with the Prime Minister's friends. The consequence was that the House, by a small majority, rescinded the decision of the committee, and Clive was unseated.

Ejected from Parliament, and straitened in his means, he naturally began to look again towards India. The Company and the Government were eager to avail themselves of his services. A treaty favourable to England had indeed been concluded in the Carnatic. Dupleix had been superseded, and had returned with the wreck of his immense fortune to Europe, where calumny and chicanery soon hunted him to his grave. But many signs indicated that a war between France and Great Britain was at hand; and it was therefore thought desirable to send an able commander to the Company's settlements in India. The Directors appointed Clive governor of Fort St. David. The King gave him the commission of a lieutenant-colonel in the British army, and in 1755 he again sailed for Asia.

The first service on which he was employed after his return to the East was the reduction of the stronghold of Gheriah. This fortress, built on a craggy promontory, and almost surrounded by the ocean, was the den of a pirate named Angria, whose barks had long been the terror of the Arabian Gulf. Admiral Watson, who

commanded the English squadron in the Eastern seas, burned Angria's fleet, while Clive attacked the fastness by land. The place soon fell, and a booty of a hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling was divided among the conquerors.

After this exploit, Clive proceeded to his government of Fort St. David. Before he had been there two months, he received intelligence which called forth all the energy of his bold and active mind.

Of the provinces which had been subject to the house of Tamerlane, the wealthiest was Bengal. No part of India possessed such natural advantages both for agriculture and for commerce. The Ganges, rushing through a hundred channels to the sea, has formed a vast plain of rich mould which, even under the tropical sky, rivals the verdure of an English April. The rice-fields yield an increase such as is elsewhere unknown. Spices, sugar, vegetable oils, are produced with marvellous exuberance. The rivers afford an inexhaustible supply of fish. The desolate islands along the sea-coast, overgrown by noxious vegetation, and swarming with deer and tigers, supply the cultivated districts with abundance of salt. The great stream which fertilises the soil is, at the same time, the chief highway of Eastern commerce. On its banks, and on those of its tributary waters, are the wealthiest marts, the most splendid capitals, and the most sacred shrines of India. The tyranny of man had for ages struggled in vain against the overflowing bounty of nature. In spite of the Mussulman despot and of the Mahratta freebooter, Bengal was known through the East as the garden of Eden, as the rich kingdom. Its population multiplied exceedingly. Distant provinces were nourished from the overflowing of its granaries - and the noble ladies of London and Paris were clothed in the delicate produce of its looms, The race by whom this rich tract was peopled, enervated by a soft climate and accustomed to peaceful employments, bore the same relation to other Asiatics which the Asiatics generally bear to the bold and energetic children of Europe. The Castilians have a proverb, that in Valencia the earth is water and the men women; and the description is at least equally applicable to the vast plain of the Lower Ganges. Whatever the Bengalee does he does languidly. His favourite pursuits are sedentary. He shrinks from bodily exertion; and, though voluble in dispute, and singularly pertinacious in the war of chicane, he seldom engages in a personal conflict, and scarcely ever enlists as a soldier. We doubt whether there be a hundred genuine Bengalees in the whole army of the East India Company. There never, perhaps, existed a people so thoroughly fitted by nature and by habit for a foreign yoke.

The great commercial companies of Europe had long possessed factories in Bengal. The French were settled, as they still are, at Chandernagore on the Hoogley. Higher up the stream the Dutch held Chinsurah. Nearer to the sea, the English had built Fort William. A church and ample warehouses rose in the vicinity. A

row of spacious houses, belonging to the chief factors of the East India Company, lined the banks of the river; and in the neighbourhood had sprung up a large and busy native town, where some Hindoo merchants of great opulence had fixed their abode. But the tract now covered by the palaces of Chowringhee contained only a few miserable huts thatched with straw. A jungle, abandoned to waterfowl and alligators, covered the site of the present Citadel, and the Course, which is now daily crowded at sunset with the gayest equipages of Calcutta. For the ground on which the settlement stood, the English, like other great landholders, paid rent to the Government; and they were, like other great landholders, permitted to exercise a certain jurisdiction within their domain.

The great province of Bengal, together with Orissa and Bahar, had long been governed by a viceroy, whom the English called Aliverdy Khan, and who, like the other viceroys of the Mogul, had become virtually independent. He died in 1756, and the sovereignty descended to his grandson, a youth under twenty years of age, who bore the name of Surajah Dowlah. Oriental despots are perhaps the worst class of human beings; and this unhappy boy was one of the worst specimens of his class. His understanding was naturally feeble, and his temper naturally unamiable. His education had been such as would have enervated even a vigorous intellect, and perverted even a generous disposition. He was unreasonable, because nobody ever dared to reason with him, and selfish, because he had never been made to feel himself dependent on the goodwill of others. Early debauchery had unnerved his body and his mind. He indulged immoderately in the use of ardent spirits, which inflamed his weak brain almost to madness. His chosen companions were flatterers sprung from the dregs of the people, and recommended by nothing but buffoonery and, servility. It is said that he had arrived at the last stage of human depravity, when cruelty becomes pleasing for its own sake, when the sight of pain as pain, where no advantage is to be gained, no offence punished, no danger averted, is an agreeable excitement. It had early been his amusement to torture beasts and birds; and, when he grew up, he enjoyed with still keener relish the misery of his fellow-creatures.

From a child Surajah Dowlah had hated the English. It was his whim to do so; and his whims were never opposed. He had also formed a very exaggerated notion of the wealth which might be obtained by plundering them; and his feeble and uncultivated mind was incapable of perceiving that the riches of Calcutta, had they been even greater than he imagined, would not compensate him for what he must lose, if the European trade, of which Bengal was a chief seat, should be driven by his violence to some other quarter. Pretexts for a quarrel were readily found. The English, in expectation of a war with France, had begun to fortify their settlement without special permission from the Nabob. A rich native, whom he longed to plunder, had taken refuge at Calcutta, and had not been delivered up. On such grounds as these Surajah

Dowlah marched with a great army against Fort William.

The servants of the Company at Madras had been forced by Dupleix to become statesmen and soldiers. Those in Bengal were still mere traders, and were terrified and bewildered by the approaching danger. The governor, who had heard much of Surajah Dowlah's cruelty, was frightened out of his wits, jumped into a boat, and took refuge in the nearest ship. The military commandant thought that he could not do better than follow so good an example. The fort was taken after a feeble resistance; and great numbers of the English fell into the hands of the conquerors. The Nabob seated himself with regal pomp in the principal hall of the factory, and ordered Mr. Holwell, the first in rank among the prisoners, to be brought before him. His Highness talked about the insolence of the English, and grumbled at the smallness of the treasure which he had found, but promised to spare their lives, and retired to rest.

Then was committed that great crime, memorable for its singular atrocity, memorable for the tremendous retribution by which it was followed. The English captives were left to the mercy of the guards, and the guards determined to secure them for the night in the prison of the garrison, a chamber known by the fearful name of the Black Hole. Even for a single European malefactor, that dungeon would, in such a climate, have been too close and narrow. The space was only twenty feet square. The air-holes were small and obstructed. It was the summer solstice, the season when the fierce heat of Bengal can scarcely be rendered tolerable to natives of England by lofty halls and by the constant waving of fans. The number of the prisoners was one hundred and forty-six. When they were ordered to enter the cell, they imagined that the soldiers were joking; and, being in high spirits on account of the promise of the Nabob to spare their lives, they laughed and jested at the absurdity of the notion. They soon discovered their mistake. They expostulated; they entreated; but in vain. The guards threatened to cut down all who hesitated. The captives were driven into the cell at the point of the sword, and the door was instantly shut and locked upon them.

Nothing in history or fiction, not even the story which Ugolino told in the sea of everlasting ice, after he had wiped his bloody lips on the scalp of his murderer, approaches the horrors which were recounted by the few survivors of that night. They cried for mercy. They strove to burst the door. Holwell who, even in that extremity, retained some presence of mind, offered large bribes to the gaolers. But the answer was that nothing could be done without the Nabob's orders, that the Nabob was asleep, and that he would be angry if anybody woke him. Then the prisoners went mad with despair. They trampled each other down, fought for the places at the windows, fought for the pittance of water with which the cruel mercy of the murderers mocked their agonies, raved, prayed, blasphemed, implored the guards to fire among them. The gaolers in the meantime held lights to the bars,

and shouted with laughter at the frantic struggles of their victims. At length the tumult died away in low gaspings and moanings. The day broke. The Nabob had slept off his debauch, and permitted the door to be opened. But it was some time before the soldiers could make a lane for the survivors, by piling up on each side the heaps of corpses on which the burning climate had already begun to do its loathsome work. When at length a passage was made, twenty-three ghastly figures, such as their own mothers would not have known, staggered one by one out of the charnel-house. A pit was instantly dug. The dead bodies, a hundred and twenty-three in number, were flung into it promiscuously and covered up.

But these things--which, after the lapse of more than eighty years, cannot be told or read without horror--awakened neither remorse nor pity in the bosom of the savage Nabob. He inflicted no punishment on the murderers. He showed no tenderness to the survivors. Some of them, indeed, from whom nothing was to be got, were suffered to depart; but those from whom it was thought that anything could be extorted were treated with execrable cruelty. Holwell, unable to walk, was carried before the tyrant, who reproached him, threatened him, and sent him up the country in irons, together with some other gentlemen who were suspected of knowing more than they chose to tell about the treasures of the Company. These persons, still bowed down by the sufferings of that great agony, were lodged in miserable sheds, and fed only with grain and water, till at length the intercessions of the female relations of the Nabob procured their release. One Englishwoman had survived that night. She was placed in the harem of the Prince at Moorshedabad.

Surajah Dowlah, in the meantime, sent letters to his nominal sovereign at Delhi, describing the late conquest in the most pompous language. He placed a garrison in Fort William, forbade Englishmen to dwell in the neighbourhood, and directed that, in memory of his great actions, Calcutta should thenceforward be called Alinagore, that is to say, the Port of God.

In August the news of the fall of Calcutta reached Madras, and excited the fiercest and bitterest resentment. The cry of the whole settlement was for vengeance. Within forty-eight hours after the arrival of the intelligence it was determined that an expedition should be sent to the Hoogley, and that Clive should be at the head of the land forces. The naval armament was under the command of Admiral Watson. Nine hundred English infantry, fine troops and full of spirit, and fifteen hundred sepoys, composed the army which sailed to punish a Prince who had more subjects than Lewis the Fifteenth or the Empress Maria Theresa. In October the expedition sailed; but it had to make its way against adverse winds and did not reach Bengal till December.

The Nabob was revelling in fancied security at Moorshedabad. He was so profoundly ignorant of the state of foreign countries that

he often used to say that there were not ten thousand men in all Europe; and it had never occurred to him as possible that the English would dare to invade his dominions. But, though undisturbed by any fear of their military power, he began to miss them greatly. His revenues fell off; and his ministers succeeded in making him understand that a ruler may sometimes find it more profitable to protect traders in the open enjoyment of their gains than to put them to the torture for the purpose of discovering hidden chests of gold and jewels. He was already disposed to permit the Company to resume its mercantile operations in his country, when he received the news that an English armament was in the Hoogley. He instantly ordered all his troops to assemble at Moorshedabad, and marched towards Calcutta.

Clive had commenced operations with his usual vigour. He took Budgebudge, routed the garrison of Fort William, recovered Calcutta, stormed and sacked Hoogley. The Nabob, already disposed to make some concessions to the English, was confirmed in his pacific disposition by these proofs of their power and spirit. He accordingly made overtures to the chiefs of the invading armament, and offered to restore the factory, and to give compensation to those whom he had despoiled.

Clive’s profession was war; and he felt that there was something discreditable in an accommodation with Surajah Dowlah. But his power was limited. A committee, chiefly composed of servants of the Company who had fled from Calcutta, had the principal direction of affairs; and these persons were eager to be restored to their posts and compensated for their losses. The government of Madras, apprised that war had commenced in Europe, and apprehensive of an attack from the French, became impatient for the return of the armament. The promises of the Nabob were large, the chances of a contest doubtful; and Clive consented to treat, though he expressed his regret that things should not be concluded in so glorious a manner as he could have wished.

With this negotiation commences a new chapter in the life of Clive. Hitherto he had been merely a soldier carrying into effect, with eminent ability and valour, the plans of others. Henceforth he is to be chiefly regarded as a statesman; and his military movements are to be considered as subordinate to his political designs. That in his new capacity he displayed great ability, and obtained great success, is unquestionable. But it is also unquestionable that the transactions in which he now began to take a part have left a stain on his moral character.

We can by no means agree with Sir John Malcolm, who is obstinately resolved to see nothing but honour and integrity in the conduct of his hero. But we can as little agree with Mr. Mill, who has gone so far as to say that Clive was a man "to whom deception, when it suited his purpose, never cost a pang." Clive seems to us to have been constitutionally the very opposite of a knave, bold even to temerity, sincere even to indiscretion,

hearty in friendship, open in enmity. Neither in his private life, nor in those parts of his public life in which he had to do with his countrymen, do we find any signs of a propensity to cunning. On the contrary, in all the disputes in which he was engaged as an Englishman against Englishmen, from his boxing-matches at school to those stormy altercations at the India House and in Parliament amidst which his later years were passed, his very faults were those of a high and magnanimous spirit. The truth seems to have been that he considered Oriental politics as a game in which nothing was unfair. He knew that the standard of morality among the natives of India differed widely from that established in England. He knew that he had to deal with men destitute of what in Europe is called honour, with men who would give any promise without hesitation, and break any promise without shame, with men who would unscrupulously employ corruption, perjury, forgery, to compass their ends. His letters show that the great difference between Asiatic and European morality was constantly in his thoughts. He seems to have imagined, most erroneously in our opinion, that he could effect nothing against such adversaries, if he was content to be bound by ties from which they were free, if he went on telling truth, and hearing none, if he fulfilled, to his own hurt, all his engagements with confederates who never kept an engagement that was not to their advantage. Accordingly this man, in the other parts of his life an honourable English gentleman and a soldier, was no sooner matched against an Indian intriguer, than he became himself an Indian intriguer, and descended, without scruple, to falsehood, to hypocritical caresses, to the substitution of documents, and to the counterfeiting of hands.

The negotiations between the English and the Nabob were carried on chiefly by two agents, Mr. Watts, a servant of the Company, and a Bengalee of the name of Omichund. This Omichund had been one of the wealthiest native merchants resident at Calcutta, and had sustained great losses in consequence of the Nabob's expedition against that place. In the course of his commercial transactions, he had seen much of the English, and was peculiarly qualified to serve as a medium of communication between them and a native court. He possessed great influence with his own race, and had in large measure the Hindoo talents, quick observation, tact, dexterity, perseverance, and the Hindoo vices, servility, greediness, and treachery.

The Nabob behaved with all the faithlessness of an Indian statesman, and with all the levity of a boy whose mind had been enfeebled by power and self-indulgence. He promised, retracted, hesitated, evaded. At one time he advanced with his army in a threatening manner towards Calcutta; but when he saw the resolute front which the English presented, he fell back in alarm, and consented to make peace with them on their own terms. The treaty was no sooner concluded than he formed new designs against them. He intrigued with the French authorities at Chandernagore. He invited Bussy to march from the Deccan to the Hoogley, and to

drive the English out of Bengal. All this was well known to Clive and Watson. They determined accordingly to strike a decisive blow, and to attack Chandernagore, before the force there could be strengthened by new arrivals, either from the south of India, or from Europe. Watson directed the expedition by water, Clive by land. The success of the combined movements was rapid and complete. The fort, the garrison, the artillery, the military stores, all fell into the hands of the English. Near five hundred European troops were among the prisoners.

The Nabob had feared and hated the English, even while he was still able to oppose to them their French rivals. The French were now vanquished; and he began to regard the English with still greater fear and still greater hatred. His weak and unprincipled mind oscillated between servility and insolence. One day he sent a large sum to Calcutta, as part of the compensation due for the wrongs which he had committed, The next day he sent a present of jewels to Bussy, exhorting that distinguished officer to hasten to protect Bengal "against Clive, the daring in war, on whom," says his Highness, "may all bad fortune attend." He ordered his army to march against the English. He countermanded his orders. He tore Clive's letters. He then sent answers in the most florid language of compliment. He ordered Watts out of his presence, and threatened to impale him. He again sent for Watts, and begged pardon for the insult. In the meantime, his wretched maladministration, his folly, his dissolute manners, and his love of the lowest company, had disgusted all classes of his subjects, soldiers, traders, civil functionaries, the proud and ostentatious Mahommedans, the timid, supple, and parsimonious Hindoos. A formidable confederacy was formed against him, in which were included Roydullub, the minister of finance, Meer Jaffier, the principal commander of the troops, and Jugget Seit, the richest banker in India. The plot was confided to the English agents, and a communication was opened between the malcontents at Moorshedabad and the committee at Calcutta.

In the committee there was much hesitation; but Clive's voice was given in favour of the conspirators, and his vigour and firmness bore down all opposition. It was determined that the English should lend their powerful assistance to depose Surajah Dowlah, and to place Meer Jaffier on the throne of Bengal. In return, Meer Jaffier promised ample compensation to the Company and its servants, and a liberal donative to the army, the navy, and the committee. The odious vices of Surajah Dowlah, the wrongs which the English had suffered at his hands, the dangers to which our trade must have been exposed, had he continued to reign, appear to us fully to justify the resolution of deposing him. But nothing can justify the dissimulation which Clive stooped to practise. He wrote to Surajah Dowlah in terms so affectionate that they for a time lulled that weak prince into perfect security. The same courier who carried this "soothing letter," as Clive calls it, to the Nabob, carried to Mr. Watts a letter in the following terms: "Tell Meer Jaffier to fear nothing. I will join him with five

thousand men who never turned their backs. Assure him I will march nigh and day to his assistance, and stand by him as long as I have a man left."

It was impossible that a plot which had so many ramifications should long remain entirely concealed. Enough reached the ear of the Nabob to arouse his suspicions. But he was soon quieted by the fictions and artifices which the inventive genius of Omichund produced with miraculous readiness. All was going well; the plot was nearly ripe; when Clive learned that Omichund was likely to play false. The artful Bengalee had been promised a liberal compensation for all that he had lost at Calcutta. But this would not satisfy him. His services had been great. He held the thread of the whole intrigue. By one word breathed in the ear of Surajah Dowlah, he could undo all that he had done. The lives of Watts, of Meer Jaffier of all the conspirators, were at his mercy; and he determined to take advantage of his situation and to make his own terms. He demanded three hundred thousand pounds sterling as the price of his secrecy and of his assistance. The committee, incensed by the treachery and appalled by the danger, knew not what course to take. But Clive was more than Omichund's match in Omichund's own arts. The man, he said, was a villain. Any artifice which would defeat such knavery was justifiable. The best course would be to promise what was asked. Omichund would soon be at their mercy; and then they might punish him by withholding from him, not only the bribe which he now demanded, but also the compensation which all the other sufferers of Calcutta were to receive.

His advice was taken. But how was the wary and sagacious Hindoo to be deceived? He had demanded that an article touching his claims should be inserted in the treaty between Meer Jaffier and the English, and he would not be satisfied unless he saw it with his own eyes. Clive had an expedient ready. Two treaties were drawn up, one on white paper, the other on red, the former real, the latter fictitious. In the former Omichund's name was not mentioned; the latter, which was to be shown to him, contained a stipulation in his favour.

But another difficulty arose. Admiral Watson had scruples about signing the red treaty. Omichund's vigilance and acuteness were such that the absence of so important a name would probably awaken his suspicions. But Clive was not a man to do anything by halves. We almost blush to write it He forged Admiral Watson's name.

All was now ready for action. Mr. Watts fled secretly from Moorshedabad. Clive put his troops in motion, and wrote to the Nabob in a tone very different from that of his previous letters. He set forth all the wrongs which the British had suffered, offered to submit the points in dispute to the arbitration of Meer Jaffier, and concluded by announcing that, as the rains were about to set in, he and his men would do themselves the honour of

waiting on his Highness for an answer.

Surajah Dowlah instantly assembled his whole force, and marched to encounter the English. It had been agreed that Meer Jaffier should separate himself from the Nabob, and carry over his division to Clive. But, as the decisive moment approached, the fears of the conspirator overpowered his ambition. Clive had advanced to Cossimbuzar; the Nabob lay with a mighty power a few miles off at Plassey; and still Meer Jaffier delayed to fulfil his engagements, and returned evasive answers to the earnest remonstrances of the English general.

Clive was in a painfully anxious situation. He could place no confidence in the sincerity or in the courage of his confederate; and, whatever confidence he might place in his own military talents, and in the valour and discipline of his troops, it was no light thing to engage an army twenty times numerous as his own. Before him lay a river over which it was easy to advance, but over which, if things went ill, not one of his little band would ever return. On this occasion, for the first and for the last time, his dauntless spirit, during a few hours, shrank from the fearful responsibility of making a decision He called a council of war. The majority pronounced against fighting; and Clive declared his concurrence with the majority. Long afterwards, he said that he had never called but one council of war, and that, if he had taken the advice of that council, the British would never have been masters of Bengal. But scarcely had the meeting broken up when he was himself again. He retired alone under the shade of some trees, and passed near an hour there in thought. He came back determined to put everything to the hazard, and gave orders that all should be in readiness for passing the river on the morrow.

The river was passed; and, at the close of a toilsome day’s march, the army, long after sunset, took up its quarters in grove of mango-trees near Plassey, within a mile of the enemy. Clive was unable to sleep; he heard, through the whole night the sound of drums and cymbals from the vast camp of the Nabob. It is not strange that even his stout heart should no and then have sunk, when he reflected against what odds, and for what a prize, he was in a few hours to contend.

Nor was the rest of Surajah Dowlah more peaceful. His mind, at once weak and stormy, was distracted by wild and horrible apprehensions. Appalled by the greatness and nearness of the crisis, distrusting his captains, dreading every one who approached him, dreading to be left alone, he sat gloomily in his tent, haunted, a Greek poet would have said, by the furies of those who had cursed him with their last breath in the Black Hole.

The day broke, the day which was to decide the fate of India. At sunrise the army of the Nabob, pouring through many openings of

the camp, began to move towards the grove where the English lay. Forty thousand infantry, armed with firelocks, pikes, swords, bows and arrows, covered the plain. They were accompanied by fifty pieces of ordnance of the largest size, each tugged by a long team of white oxen, and each pushed on from behind by an elephant. Some smaller guns, under the direction of a few French auxiliaries, were perhaps more formidable. The cavalry were fifteen thousand, drawn, not from the effeminate population of Bengal, but from the bolder race which inhabits the northern provinces; and the practised eye of Clive could perceive that both the men and the horses were more powerful than those of the Carnatic. The force which he had to oppose to this great multitude consisted of only three thousand men. But of these nearly a thousand were English; and all were led by English officers, and trained in the English discipline. Conspicuous in the ranks of the little army were the men of the Thirty-Ninth Regiment, which still bears on its colours, amidst many honourable additions won under Wellington in Spain and Gascony, the name of Plassey, and the proud motto, Primus in Indis.

The battle commenced with a cannonade in which the artillery of the Nabob did scarcely any execution, while the few fieldpieces of the English produced great effect. Several of the most distinguished officers in Surajah Dowlah's service fell. Disorder began to spread through his ranks. His own terror increased every moment. One of the conspirators urged on him the expediency of retreating. The insidious advice, agreeing as it did with what his own terrors suggested, was readily received. He ordered his army to fall back, and this order decided his fate. Clive snatched the moment, and ordered his troops to advance. The confused and dispirited multitude gave way before the onset of disciplined valour. No mob attacked by regular soldiers was ever more completely routed. The little band of Frenchmen, who alone ventured to confront the English, were swept down the stream of fugitives. In an hour the forces of Surajah Dowlah were dispersed, never to reassemble. Only five hundred of the vanquished were slain. But their camp, their guns, their baggage, innumerable waggons, innumerable cattle, remained in the power of the conquerors. With the loss of twenty-two soldiers killed and fifty wounded, Clive had scattered an army of near sixty thousand men, and subdued an empire larger and more populous than Great Britain.

Meer Jaffier had given no assistance to the English during the action. But, as soon as he saw that the fate of the day was decided, he drew off his division of the army, and, when the battle was over, sent his congratulations to his ally. The next morning he repaired to the English quarters, not a little uneasy as to the reception which awaited him there. He gave evident signs of alarm when a guard was drawn out to receive him with the honours due to his rank. But his apprehensions were speedily removed, Clive came forward to meet him, embraced him, saluted him as Nabob of the three great provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and

Orissa, listened graciously to his apologies, and advised him to march without delay to Moorshedabad.

Surajah Dowlah had fled from the field of battle with all the speed with which a fleet camel could carry him, and arrived at Moorshedabad in little more than twenty-four hours. There he called his councillors round him. The wisest advised him to put himself into the hands of the English, from whom he had nothing worse to fear than deposition and confinement. But he attributed this suggestion to treachery. Others urged him to try the chance of war again. He approved the advice, and issued orders accordingly. But he wanted spirit to adhere even during one day to a manly resolution. He learned that Meer Jaffier had arrived, and his terrors became insupportable. Disguised in a mean dress, with a casket of jewels in his hand, he let himself down at night from a window of his palace, and accompanied by only two attendants, embarked on the river for Patna.

In a few days Clive arrived at Moorshedabad, escorted by two hundred English soldiers and three hundred sepoys. For his residence had been assigned a palace, which was surrounded by a garden so spacious that all the troops who accompanied him could conveniently encamp within it. The ceremony of the installation of Meer Jaffier was instantly performed. Clive led the new Nabob to the seat of honour, placed him on it, presented to him, after the immemorial fashion of the East, an offering of gold, and then, turning to the natives who filled the hall, congratulated them on the good fortune which had freed them from a tyrant. He was compelled on this occasion to use the services of an interpreter; for it is remarkable that, long as he resided in India, intimately acquainted as he was with Indian politics and with the Indian character, and adored as he was by his Indian soldiery, he never learned to express himself with facility in any Indian language. He is said indeed to have been sometimes under the necessity of employing, in his intercourse with natives of India, the smattering of Portuguese which he had acquired, when a lad, in Brazil.

The new sovereign was now called upon to fulfil the engagements into which he had entered with his allies. A conference was held at the house of Jugget Seit, the great banker, for the purpose of making the necessary arrangements. Omichund came thither, fully believing himself to stand high in the favour of Clive, who, with dissimulation surpassing even the dissimulation of Bengal, had up to that day treated him with undiminished kindness. The white treaty was produced and read. Clive then turned to Mr. Scrafton, one of the servants of the Company, and said in English, "It is now time to undeceive Omichund." "Omichund," said Mr. Scrafton in Hindostanee, "the red treaty is a trick, you are to have nothing." Omichund fell back insensible into the arms of his attendants. He revived; but his mind was irreparably ruined. Clive, who, though little troubled by scruples of conscience in his dealings with Indian politicians, was not inhuman, seems to

have been touched. He saw Omichund a few days later, spoke to him kindly, advised him to make a pilgrimage to one of the great temples of India, in the hope that change of scene might restore his health, and was even disposed, notwithstanding all that had passed, again to employ him in the public service. But from the moment of that sudden shock, the unhappy man sank gradually into idiocy. He who had formerly been distinguished by the strength of his understanding and the simplicity of his habits, now squandered the remains of his fortune on childish trinkets, and loved to exhibit himself dressed in rich garments, and hung with precious stones. In this abject state he languished a few months, and then died.

We should not think it necessary to offer any remarks for the purpose of directing the judgment of our readers, with respect to this transaction, had not Sir John Malcolm undertaken to defend it in all its parts. He regrets, indeed, that it was necessary to employ means so liable to abuse as forgery; but he will not admit that any blame attaches to those who deceived the deceiver. He thinks that the English were not bound to keep faith with one who kept no faith with them and that, if they had fulfilled their engagements with the wily Bengalee, so signal an example of successful treason would have produced a crowd of imitators. Now, we will not discus this point on any rigid principles of morality. Indeed, it is quite unnecessary to do so for, looking at the question as a question of expediency in the lowest sense of the word, and using no arguments but such as Machiavelli might have employed in his conferences with Borgia, we are convinced that Clive was altogether in the wrong, and that he committed, not merely a crime, but a blunder. That honesty is the best policy is a maxim which we firmly believe to be generally correct, even with respect to the temporal interest of individuals; but with respect to societies, the rule is subject to still fewer exceptions, and that for this reason, that the life of societies is longer than the life of individuals. It is possible to mention men who have owed great worldly prosperity to breaches of private faith; but we doubt whether it be possible to mention a state which has on the whole been a gainer by a breach of public faith. The entire history of British India is an illustration of the great truth, that it is not prudent to oppose perfidy to perfidy, and that the most efficient weapon with which men can encounter falsehood is truth. During a long course of years, the English rulers of India, surrounded by allies and enemies whom no engagement could bind, have generally acted with sincerity and uprightness; and the event has proved that sincerity and uprightness are wisdom. English valour and English intelligence have done less to extend and to preserve our Oriental empire than English veracity. All that we could have gained by imitating the doublings, the evasions, the fictions, the perjuries which have been employed against us, is as nothing, when compared with what we have gained by being the one power in India on whose word reliance can be placed. No oath which superstition can devise, no hostage however precious, inspires a

hundredth part of the confidence which is produced by the "yea, yea," and "nay, nay," of a British envoy. No fastness, however strong by art or nature, gives to its inmates a security like that enjoyed by the chief who, passing through the territories of powerful and deadly enemies, is armed with the British guarantee. The mightiest princes of the East can scarcely, by the offer of enormous usury, draw forth any portion of the wealth which is concealed under the hearths of their subjects. The British Government offers little more than four per cent. and avarice hastens to bring forth tens of millions of rupees from its most secret repositories. A hostile monarch may promise mountains of gold to our sepoys on condition that they will desert the standard of the Company The Company promises only a moderate pension after a long service. But every sepoy knows that the promise of the Company will be kept; he knows that if he lives a hundred years his rice and salt are as secure as the salary of the Governor-General; and he knows that there is not another state in India which would not, in spite of the most solemn vows, leave him to die of hunger in a ditch as soon as he had ceased to be useful. The greatest advantage which government can possess is to be the one trustworthy government in the midst of governments which nobody can trust This advantage we enjoy in Asia. Had we acted during the last two generations on the principles which Sir John Malcolm appears to have considered as sound, had we as often as we had to deal with people like Omichund, retaliated by lying and forging, and breaking faith, after their fashion, it is our firm belief that no courage or capacity could have upheld our empire.

Sir John Malcolm admits that Clive’s breach of faith could be justified only by the strongest necessity. As we think that breach of faith not only unnecessary, but most inexpedient, we need hardly say that we altogether condemn it.

Omichund was not the only victim of the revolution. Surajah Dowlah was taken a few days after his flight, and was brought before Meer Jaffier. There he flung himself on the ground in convulsions of fear, and with tears and loud cries implored the mercy which he had never shown. Meer Jaffier hesitated; but his son Meeran, a youth of seventeen, who in feebleness of brain and savageness of nature greatly resemble the wretched captive, was implacable. Surajah Dowlah was led into a secret chamber, to which in a short time the minister of death were sent. In this act the English bore no part and Meer Jaffier understood so much of their feelings that h thought it necessary to apologise to them for having avenge them on their most malignant enemy.

The shower of wealth now fell copiously on the Company and its servants. A sum of eight hundred thousand pound sterling, in coined silver, was sent down the river from Moorshedabad to Fort William. The fleet which conveyed this treasure consisted of more than a hundred boats, and performed its triumphal voyage with flags flying and music playing. Calcutta, which a few months

before had been desolate, was now more prosperous than ever. Trade revived; and the signs of affluence appeared in every English house. As to Clive, there was no limit to his acquisitions but his own moderation. The treasury of Bengal was thrown open to him. There were piled up, after the usage of Indian princes, immense masses of coin, among which might not seldom he detected the florins and byzants with which, before any European ship had turned the Cape of Good Hope, the Venetians purchased the stuffs and spices of the East. Clive walked between heaps of gold and silver, crowned with rubies and diamonds, and was at liberty to help himself. He accepted between two and three hundred thousand pounds.

The pecuniary transactions between Meer Jaffier and Clive were sixteen years later condemned by the public voice, and severely criticised in Parliament. They are vehemently defended by Sir John Malcolm. The accusers of the victorious general represented his gains as the wages of corruption, or as plunder extorted at the point of the sword from a helpless ally. The biographer, on the other hand, considers these great acquisitions as free gifts, honourable alike to the donor and to the receiver, and compares them to the rewards bestowed by foreign powers on Marlborough, on Nelson, and on Wellington. It had always, he says, been customary in the East to give and receive presents; and there was, as yet, no Act of Parliament positively prohibiting English functionaries in India from profiting by this Asiatic usage. This reasoning, we own, does not quite satisfy us. We do not suspect Clive of selling the interests of his employers or his country; but we cannot acquit him of having done what, if not in itself evil, was yet of evil example. Nothing is more clear than that a general ought to be the servant of his own government, and of no other. It follows that whatever rewards he receives for his services ought to be given either by his own government, or with the full knowledge and approbation of his own government. This rule ought to be strictly maintained even with respect to the merest bauble, with respect to a cross, a medal, or a yard of coloured riband. But how can any government be well served, if those who command its forces are at liberty, without its permission, without its privity, to accept princely fortunes from its allies? It is idle to say that there was then no Act of Parliament prohibiting the practice of taking presents from Asiatic sovereigns. It is not on the Act which was passed at a later period for the purpose of preventing any such taking of presents, but on grounds which were valid before that Act was passed, on grounds of common law and common sense, that we arraign the conduct of Clive. There is no Act that we know of, prohibiting the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs from being in the pay of continental powers, but it is not the less true that a Secretary who should receive a secret pension from France would grossly violate his duty, and would deserve severe punishment. Sir John Malcolm compares the conduct of Clive with that of the Duke of Wellington. Suppose,--and we beg pardon for putting such a supposition even for the sake of argument,--that the Duke of Wellington had, after the

campaign of 1815, and while he commanded the army of occupation in France, privately accepted two hundred thousand pounds from Lewis the Eighteenth, as a mark of gratitude for the great services which his Grace had rendered to the House of Bourbon; what would be thought of such a transaction? Yet the statute-book no more forbids the taking of presents in Europe now than it forbade the taking of presents in Asia then.

At the same time, it must be admitted that, in Clive's case, there were many extenuating circumstances. He considered himself as the general, not of the Crown, but of the Company. The Company had, by implication at least, authorised its agents to enrich themselves by means of the liberality of the native princes, and by other means still more objectionable. It was hardly to be expected that the servant should entertain strict notions of his duty than were entertained by his masters. Though Clive did not distinctly acquaint his employers with what had taken place and request their sanction, he did not, on the other hand, by studied concealment, show that he was conscious of having done wrong. On the contrary, he avowed with the greatest openness that the Nabob's bounty had raised him to affluence. Lastly, though we think that he ought not in such a way to have taken anything, we must admit that he deserves praise for having taken so little. He accepted twenty lacs of rupees. It would have cost him only a word to make the twenty forty. It was a very easy exercise of virtue to declaim in England against Clive's rapacity; but not one in a hundred of his accusers would have shown so much self-command in the treasury of Moorshedabad.

Meer Jaffier could be upheld on the throne only by the hand which had placed him on it. He was not, indeed, a mere boy; nor had he been so unfortunate as to be born in the purple. He was not therefore quite so imbecile or quite so depraved as his predecessor had been. But he had none of the talents or virtues which his post required; and his son and heir, Meeran, was another Surajah Dowlah. The recent revolution had unsettled the minds of men. Many chiefs were in open insurrection against the new Nabob. The viceroy of the rich and powerful province of Oude, who, like the other viceroys of the Mogul was now in truth an independent sovereign, menaced Bengal with invasion. Nothing but the talents and authority of Clive could support the tottering government. While things were in this state, a ship arrived with despatches which had been written at the India House before the news of the battle of Plassey had reached London. The Directors had determined to place the English settlements in Bengal under a government constituted in the most cumbrous and absurd manner; and to make the matter worse, no place in the arrangement was assigned to Clive. The persons who were selected to form this new government, greatly to their honour, took on themselves the responsibility of disobeying these preposterous orders, and invited Clive to exercise the supreme authority. He consented; and it soon appeared that the servants of the Company had only anticipated the wishes of their employers. The Directors, on

receiving news of Clive's brilliant success, instantly appointed him governor of their possessions in Bengal, with the highest marks of gratitude and esteem. His power was now boundless, and far surpassed even that which Dupleix had attained in the south of India. Meer Jaffier regarded him with slavish awe. On one occasion, the Nabob spoke with severity to a native chief of high rank, whose followers had been engaged in a brawl with some of the Company's sepoys. "Are you yet to learn," he said, "who that Colonel Clive is, and in what station God has placed him?" The chief, who, as a famous jester and an old friend of Meer Jaffier, could venture to take liberties, answered, "I affront the Colonel! I, who never get up in the morning without making three low bows to his jackass!" This was hardly an exaggeration. Europeans and natives were alike at Clive's feet. The English regarded him as the only man who could force Meer Jaffier to keep his engagements with them. Meer Jaffier regarded him as the only man who could protect the new dynasty against turbulent subjects and encroaching neighbours.

It is but justice to say that Clive used his power ably and vigorously for the advantage of his country. He sent forth an expedition against the tract lying to the north of the Carnatic. In this tract the French still had the ascendency; and it was important to dislodge them. The conduct of the enterprise was intrusted to an officer of the name of Forde, who was then little known, but in whom the keen eye of the governor had detected military talents of a high order. The success of the expedition was rapid and splendid.

While a considerable part of the army of Bengal was thus engaged at a distance, a new and formidable danger menaced the western frontier. The Great Mogul was a prisoner at Delhi in the hands of a subject. His eldest son, named Shah Alum, destined to be, during many years, the sport of adverse fortune, and to be a tool in the hands, first of the Mahrattas, and then of the English, had fled from the palace of his father. His birth was still revered in India. Some powerful princes, the Nabob of Oude in particular, were inclined to favour him. Shah Alum found it easy to draw to his standard great numbers of the military adventurers with whom every part of the country swarmed. An army of forty thousand men, of various races and religions, Mahrattas, Rohillas, Jauts, and Afghans, were speedily assembled round him; and he formed the design of overthrowing the upstart whom the English had elevated to a throne, and of establishing his own authority throughout Bengal, Orissa, and Bahar.

Meer Jaffier's terror was extreme; and the only expedient which occurred to him was to purchase, by the payment of a large sum of money, an accommodation with Shah Alum. This expedient had been repeatedly employed by those who, before him, had ruled the rich and unwarlike provinces near the mouth of the Ganges. But Clive treated the suggestion with a scorn worthy of his strong sense and dauntless courage. "If you do this," he wrote, "you will have

the Nabob of Oude, the Mahrattas, and many more, come from all parts of the confines of your country, who will bully you out of money till you have none left in your treasury. I beg your Excellency will rely on the fidelity of the English, and of those troops which are attached to you." He wrote in a similar strain to the governor of Patna, a brave native soldier whom he highly esteemed. "Come to no terms; defend your city to the last. Rest assured that the English are staunch and firm friends, and that they never desert a cause in which they have once taken a part."

He kept his word. Shah Alum had invested Patna, and was on the point of proceeding to storm, when he learned that the Colonel was advancing by forced marches. The whole army which was approaching consisted of only four hundred and fifty Europeans and two thousand five hundred sepoys. But Clive and his Englishmen were now objects of dread over all the East. As soon as his advance guard appeared, the besiegers fled before him. A few French adventurers who were about the person of the prince advised him to try the chance of battle; but in vain. In a few days this great army, which had been regarded with so much uneasiness by the court of Moorshedabad, melted away before the mere terror of the British name.

The conqueror returned in triumph to Fort William. The joy of Meer Jaffier was as unbounded as his fears had been, and led him to bestow on his preserver a princely token of gratitude. The quit-rent which the East India Company were bound to pay to the Nabob for the extensive lands held by them to the south of Calcutta amounted to near thirty thousand pounds sterling a year. The whole of this splendid estate, sufficient to support with dignity the highest rank of the British peerage, was now conferred on Clive for life.

This present we think Clive justified in accepting. It was a present which, from its very nature, could be no secret. In fact, the Company itself was his tenant, and, by its acquiescence, signified its approbation of Meer Jaffier’s grant.

But the gratitude of Meer Jaffier did not last long. He had for some time felt that the powerful ally who had set him up, might pull him down, and had been looking round for support against the formidable strength by which he had himself been hitherto supported. He knew that it would be impossible to find among the natives of India any force which would look the Colonel’s little army in the face. The French power in Bengal was extinct. But the fame of the Dutch had anciently been great in the Eastern seas; and it was not yet distinctly known in Asia how much the power of Holland had declined in Europe. Secret communications passed between the court of Moorshedabad and the Dutch factory at Chinsurah; and urgent letters were sent from Chinsurah, exhorting the government of Batavia to fit out an expedition which might balance the power of the English in Bengal. The authorities of Batavia, eager to extend the influence of their country, and

still more eager to obtain for themselves a share of the wealth which had recently raised so many English adventurers to opulence, equipped a powerful armament. Seven large ships from Java arrived unexpectedly in the Hoogley. The military force on board amounted to fifteen hundred men, of whom about one half were Europeans. The enterprise was well timed. Clive had sent such large detachments to oppose the French in the Carnatic that his army was now inferior in number to that of the Dutch. He knew that Meer Jaffier secretly favoured the invaders. He knew that he took on himself a serious responsibility if he attacked the forces of a friendly power; that the English ministers could not wish to see a war with Holland added to that in which they were already engaged with France; that they might disavow his acts; that they might punish him. He had recently remitted a great part of his fortune to Europe, through the Dutch East India Company; and he had therefore a strong interest in avoiding any quarrel. But he was satisfied that, if he suffered the Batavian armament to pass up the river and to join the garrison of Chinsurah, Meer Jaffier would throw himself into the arms of these new allies, and that the English ascendency in Bengal would be exposed to most serious danger. He took his resolution with characteristic boldness, and was most ably seconded by his officers, particularly by Colonel Forde, to whom the most important part of the operations was intrusted. The Dutch attempted to force a passage. The English encountered them both by land and water. On both elements the enemy had a great superiority of force. On both they were signally defeated. Their ships were taken. Their troops were put to a total rout. Almost all the European soldiers, who constituted the main strength of the invading army, were killed or taken. The conquerors sat down before Chinsurah; and the chiefs of that settlement, now thoroughly humbled, consented to the terms which Clive dictated. They engaged to build no fortifications, and to raise no troops beyond a small force necessary for the police of their factories; and it was distinctly provided that any violation of these covenants should be punished with instant expulsion from Bengal.

Three months after this great victory, Clive sailed for England. At home, honours and rewards awaited him, not indeed equal to his claims or to his ambition, but still such as, when his age, his rank in the army, and his original place in society are considered, must be pronounced rare and splendid. He was raised to the Irish peerage, and encouraged to expect an English title. George the Third, who had just ascended the throne, received him with great distinction. The ministers paid him marked attention; and Pitt, whose influence in the House of Commons and in the country was unbounded, was eager to mark his regard for one whose exploits had contributed so much to the lustre of that memorable period. The great orator had already in Parliament described Clive as a heaven-born general, as a man who, bred to the labour of the desk, had displayed a military genius which might excite the admiration of the King of Prussia. There were then no reporters in the gallery; but these words, emphatically spoken by

the first statesman of the age, had passed from mouth to mouth, had been transmitted to Clive in Bengal, and had greatly delighted and flattered him. Indeed, since the death of Wolfe, Clive was the only English general of whom his countrymen had much reason to be proud. The Duke of Cumberland had been generally unfortunate; and his single victory, having been gained over his countrymen and used with merciless severity, had been more fatal to his popularity than his many defeats. Conway, versed in the learning of his profession, and personally courageous, wanted vigour and capacity. Granby, honest, generous, and brave as a lion, had neither science nor genius. Sackville, inferior in knowledge and abilities to none of his contemporaries, had incurred, unjustly as we believe, the imputation most fatal to the character of a soldier. It was under the command of a foreign general that the British had triumphed at Minden and Warburg. The people therefore, as was natural, greeted with pride and delight a captain of their own, whose native courage and self-taught skill had placed him on a level with the great tacticians of Germany.

The wealth of Clive was such as enabled him to vie with the first grandees of England. There remains proof that he had remitted more than a hundred and eighty thousand pounds through the Dutch East India Company, and more than forty thousand pounds through the English Company. The amount which he had sent home through private houses was also considerable. He had invested great sums in jewels, then a very common mode of remittance from India. His purchases of diamonds, at Madras alone, amounted to twenty-five thousand pounds. Besides a great mass of ready money, he had his Indian estate, valued by himself at twenty-seven thousand a year. His whole annual income, in the opinion of Sir John Malcolm, who is desirous to state it as low as possible, exceeded forty thousand pounds; and incomes of forty thousand pounds at the time of the accession of George the Third were at least as rare as incomes of a hundred thousand pounds now. We may safely affirm that no Englishman who started with nothing has ever, in any line of life, created such a fortune at the early age of thirty-four.

It would be unjust not to add that Clive made a creditable use of his riches. As soon as the battle of Plassey had laid the foundation of his fortune, he sent ten thousand pounds to his sisters, bestowed as much more on other poor friends and relations, ordered his agent to pay eight hundred a year to his parents, and to insist that they should keep a carriage, and settled five hundred a year on his old commander Lawrence, whose means were very slender. The whole sum which Clive expended in this manner may be calculated at fifty thousand pounds.

He now set himself to cultivate Parliamentary interest. His purchases of land seem to have been made in a great measure with that view, and, after the general election of 1761, he found himself in the House of Commons, at the head of a body of dependants whose support must have been important to any

administration. In English politics, however, he did not take a prominent part. His first attachments, as we have seen, were to Mr. Fox; at a later period he was attracted by the genius and success of Mr. Pitt; but finally he connected himself in the closest manner with George Grenville. Early in the session Of 1764, when the illegal and impolitic persecution of that worthless demagogue Wilkes had strongly excited the public mind, the town was amused by an anecdote, which we have seen in some unpublished memoirs of Horace Walpole. Old Mr. Richard Clive, who, since his son's elevation, had been introduced into society for which his former habits had not well fitted him, presented himself at the levee. The King asked him where Lord Clive was. "He will be in town very soon," said the old gentleman, loud enough to be heard by the whole circle, "and then your Majesty will have another vote."

But in truth all Clive's views were directed towards the country in which he had so eminently distinguished himself as a soldier and a statesman; and it was by considerations relating to India that his conduct as a public man in England was regulated. The power of the Company, though an anomaly, is in our time, we are firmly persuaded, a beneficial anomaly. In the time of Clive, it was not merely an anomaly, but a nuisance. There was no Board of Control. The Directors were for the most part mere traders, ignorant of general politics, ignorant of the peculiarities of the empire which had strangely become subject to them. The Court of Proprietors, wherever it chose to interfere, was able to have its way. That Court was more numerous, as well as more powerful, than at present; for then every share of five hundred pounds conferred a vote. The meetings were large, stormy, even riotous, the debates indecently virulent. All the turbulence of a Westminster election, all the trickery and corruption of a Grampound election, disgraced the proceedings of this assembly on questions of the most solemn importance. Fictitious votes were manufactured on a gigantic scale. Clive himself laid out a hundred thousand pounds in the purchase of stock, which he then divided among nominal proprietors on whom he could depend, and whom he brought down in his train to every discussion and every ballot. Others did the same, though not to quite so enormous an extent.

The interest taken by the public of England in Indian questions was then far greater than at present, and the reason is obvious. At present a writer enters the service young; he climbs slowly; he is fortunate if, at forty-five, he can return to his country with an annuity of a thousand a year, and with savings amounting to thirty thousand pounds. A great quantity of wealth is made by English functionaries in India; but no single functionary makes a very large fortune, and what is made is slowly, hardly, and honestly earned. Only four or five high political offices are reserved for public men from England. The residencies, the secretaryships, the seats in the boards of revenue and in the Sudder courts are all filled by men who have given the best years

of life to the service of the Company; nor can any talents however splendid or any connections however powerful obtain those lucrative posts for any person who has not entered by the regular door, and mounted by the regular gradations. Seventy years ago, less money was brought home from the East than in our time. But it was divided among a very much smaller number of persons, and immense sums were often accumulated in a few months. Any Englishman, whatever his age might be, might hope to be one of the lucky emigrants. If he made a good speech in Leadenhall Street, or published a clever pamphlet in defence of the chairman, he might be sent out in the Company's service, and might return in three or four years as rich as Pigot or as Clive. Thus the India House was a lottery-office, which invited everybody to take a chance, and held out ducal fortunes as the prizes destined for the lucky few. As soon as it was known that there was a part of the world where a lieutenant-colonel had one morning received as a present an estate as large as that of the Earl of Bath or the Marquess of Rockingham, and where it seemed that such a trifle as ten or twenty thousand pounds was to be had by any British functionary for the asking, society began to exhibit all the symptoms of the South Sea year, a feverish excitement, an ungovernable impatience to be rich, a contempt for slow, sure, and moderate gains.

At the head of the preponderating party in the India House, had long stood a powerful, able, and ambitious director of the name of Sulivan. He had conceived a strong jealousy of Clive, and remembered with bitterness the audacity with which the late governor of Bengal had repeatedly set at nought the authority of the distant Directors of the Company. An apparent reconciliation took place after Clive's arrival; but enmity remained deeply rooted in the hearts of both. The whole body of Directors was then chosen annually. At the election of 1763, Clive attempted to break down the power of the dominant faction. The contest was carried on with a violence which he describes as tremendous. Sulivan was victorious, and hastened to take his revenge. The grant of rent which Clive had received from Meer Jaffier was, in the opinion of the best English lawyers, valid. It had been made by exactly the same authority from which the Company had received their chief possessions in Bengal, and the Company had long acquiesced in it. The Directors, however, most unjustly determined to confiscate it, and Clive was forced to file a bill in chancery against them.

But a great and sudden turn in affairs was at hand. Every ship from Bengal had for some time brought alarming tidings. The internal misgovernment of the province had reached such a point that it could go no further. What, indeed, was to be expected from a body of public servants exposed to temptation such that, as Clive once said, flesh and blood could not bear it, armed with irresistible power, and responsible only to the corrupt, turbulent, distracted, ill-informed Company, situated at such a distance that the average interval between the sending of a

despatch and the receipt of an answer was above a year and a half? Accordingly, during the five years which followed the departure of Clive from Bengal, the misgovernment of the English was carried to a point such as seems hardly compatible with the very existence of society. The Roman proconsul, who, in a year or two, squeezed out of a province the means of rearing marble palaces and baths on the shores of Campania, of drinking from amber, of feasting on singing birds, of exhibiting armies of gladiators and flocks of camelopards; the Spanish viceroy, who, leaving behind him the curses of Mexico or Lima, entered Madrid with a long train of gilded coaches, and of sumpter-horses trapped and shod with silver, were now outdone. Cruelty, indeed, properly so called, was not among the vices of the servants of the Company. But cruelty itself could hardly have produced greater evils than sprang from their unprincipled eagerness to be rich. They pulled down their creature, Meer Jaffier. They set up in his place another Nabob, named Meer Cossim. But Meer Cossim had parts and a will; and, though sufficiently inclined to oppress his subjects himself, he could not bear to see them ground to the dust by oppressions which yielded him no profit, nay, which destroyed his revenue in the very source. The English accordingly pulled down Meer Cossim, and set up Meer Jaffier again; and Meer Cossim, after revenging himself by a massacre surpassing in atrocity that of the Black Hole, fled to the dominions of the Nabob of Oude. At every one of these revolutions, the new prince divided among his foreign masters whatever could be scraped together in the treasury of his fallen predecessor. The immense population of his dominions was given up as a prey to those who had made him a sovereign, and who could unmake him. The servants of the Company obtained, not for their employers, but for themselves, a monopoly of almost the whole internal trade. They forced the natives to buy dear and to sell cheap. They insulted with impunity the tribunals, the police, and the fiscal authorities of the country. They covered with their protection a set of native dependants who ranged through the provinces, spreading desolation and terror wherever they appeared. Every servant of a British factor was armed with all the power of his master; and his master was armed with all the power of the Company. Enormous fortunes were thus rapidly accumulated at Calcutta, while thirty millions of human beings were reduced to the extremity of wretchedness. They had been accustomed to live under tyranny, but never under tyranny like this. They found the little finger of the Company thicker than the loins of Surajah Dowlah. Under their old masters they had at least one resource: when the evil became insupportable, the people rose and pulled down the government. But the English government was not to be so shaken off. That government, oppressive as the most oppressive form of barbarian despotism, was strong with all the strength of civilisation. It resembled the government of evil Genii, rather than the government of human tyrants. Even despair could not inspire the soft Bengalee with courage to confront men of English breed, the hereditary nobility of mankind, whose skill and valour had so often triumphed in

spite of tenfold odds. The unhappy race never attempted resistance. Sometimes they submitted in patient misery. Sometimes they fled from the white man, as their fathers had been used to fly from the Mahratta; and the palanquin of the English traveller was often carried through silent villages and towns, which the report of his approach had made desolate.

The foreign lords of Bengal were naturally objects of hatred to all the neighbouring powers; and to all the haughty race presented a dauntless front. The English armies, everywhere outnumbered, were everywhere victorious. A succession of commanders, formed in the school of Clive, still maintained the fame of their country. "It must be acknowledged," says the Mussulman historian of those times, "that this nation's presence of mind, firmness of temper, and undaunted bravery, are past all question. They join the most resolute courage to the most cautious prudence; nor have they their equals in the art of ranging themselves in battle array and fighting in order. If to so many military qualifications they knew how to join the arts of government, if they exerted as much ingenuity and solicitude in relieving the people of God, as they do in whatever concerns their military affairs, no nation in the world would be preferable to them, or worthier of command. But the people under their dominion groan everywhere, and are reduced to poverty and distress. Oh God! come to the assistance of thine afflicted servants, and deliver them from the oppressions which they suffer."

It was impossible, however, that even the military establishment should long continue exempt from the vices which pervaded every other part of the government. Rapacity, luxury, and the spirit of insubordination spread from the civil service to the officers of the army, and from the officers to the soldiers. The evil continued to grow till every mess-room became the seat of conspiracy and cabal, and till the sepoys could be kept in order only by wholesale executions.

At length the state of things in Bengal began to excite uneasiness at home. A succession of revolutions; a disorganised administration; the natives pillaged, yet the Company not enriched; every fleet bringing back fortunate adventurers who were able to purchase manors and to build stately dwellings, yet bringing back also alarming accounts of the financial prospects of the government; war on the frontiers; disaffection in the army; the national character disgraced by excesses resembling those of Verres and Pizarro; such was the spectacle which dismayed those who were conversant with Indian affairs. The general cry was that Clive, and Clive alone, could save the empire which he had founded.

This feeling manifested itself in the strongest manner at a very full General Court of Proprietors. Men of all parties, forgetting their feuds and trembling for their dividends, exclaimed that

Clive was the man whom the crisis required, that the oppressive proceedings which had been adopted respecting his estate ought to be dropped, and that he ought to be entreated to return to India.

Clive rose. As to his estate, he said, he would make such propositions to the Directors, as would, he trusted, lead to an amicable settlement. But there was a still greater difficulty. It was proper to tell them that he never would undertake the government of Bengal while his enemy Sulivan was chairman of the Company. The tumult was violent. Sulivan could scarcely obtain a hearing. An overwhelming majority of the assembly was on Clive's side. Sulivan wished to try the result of a ballot. But, according to the bye-laws of the Company, there can be no ballot except on a requisition signed by nine proprietors; and, though hundreds were present, nine persons could not be found to set their hands to such a requisition.

Clive was in consequence nominated Governor and Commander-in-chief of the British possessions in Bengal. But he adhered to his declaration, and refused to enter on his office till the event of the next election of Directors should be known. The contest was obstinate; but Clive triumphed. Sulivan, lately absolute master of the India House, was within a vote of losing his own seat; and both the chairman and the deputy-chairman were friends of the new governor.

Such were the circumstances under which Lord Clive sailed for the third and last time to India. In May 1765, he reached Calcutta; and he found the whole machine of government even more fearfully disorganised than he had anticipated. Meer Jaffier, who had some time before lost his eldest son Meeran, had died while Clive was on his voyage out. The English functionaries at Calcutta had already received from home strict orders not to accept presents from the native princes. But, eager for gain, and unaccustomed to respect the commands of their distant, ignorant, and negligent masters, they again set up the throne of Bengal to sale. About one hundred and forty thousand pounds sterling was distributed among nine of the most powerful servants of the Company; and, in consideration of this bribe, an infant son of the deceased Nabob was placed on the seat of his father. The news of the ignominious bargain met Clive on his arrival. In a private letter, written immediately after his landing, to an intimate friend, he poured out his feelings in language, which, proceeding from a man so daring, so resolute, and so little given to theatrical display of sentiment, seems to us singularly touching. "Alas!" he says, "how is the English name sunk! I could not avoid paying the tribute of a few tears to the departed and lost fame of the British nation--irrecoverably so, I fear. However, I do declare, by that great Being who is the searcher of all hearts, and to whom we must be accountable if there be a hereafter, that I am come out with a mind superior to all corruption, and that I am determined to destroy these great and growing evils, or perish in the attempt."

The Council met, and Clive stated to them his full determination to make a thorough reform, and to use for that purpose the whole of the ample authority, civil and military, which had been confided to him. Johnstone, one of the boldest and worst men in the assembly, made some show of opposition. Clive interrupted him, and haughtily demanded whether he meant to question the power of the new government. Johnstone was cowed, and disclaimed any such intention. All the faces round the board grew long and pale; and not another syllable of dissent was uttered.

Clive redeemed his pledge. He remained in India about a year and a half; and in that short time effected one of the most extensive, difficult, and salutary reforms that ever was accomplished by any statesman. This was the part of his life on which he afterwards looked back with most pride. He had it in his power to triple his already splendid fortune; to connive at abuses while pretending to remove them; to conciliate the goodwill of all the English in Bengal, by giving up to their rapacity a helpless and timid race, who knew not where lay the island which sent forth their oppressors, and whose complaints had little chance of being heard across fifteen thousand miles of ocean. He knew that if he applied himself in earnest to the work of reformation, he should raise every bad passion in arms against him. He knew how unscrupulous, how implacable, would be the hatred of those ravenous adventurers who, having counted on accumulating in a few months fortunes sufficient to support peerages, should find all their hopes frustrated. But he had chosen the good part; and he called up all the force of his mind for a battle far harder than that of Plassey. At first success seemed hopeless; but soon all obstacles began to bend before that iron courage and that vehement will. The receiving of presents from the natives was rigidly prohibited. The private trade of the servants of the Company was put down. The whole settlement seemed to be set, as one man, against these measures. But the inexorable governor declared that, if he could not find support at Fort William, he would procure it elsewhere, and sent for some civil servants from Madras to assist him in carrying on the administration. The most factious of his opponents he turned out of their offices. The rest submitted to what was inevitable; and in a very short time all resistance was quelled.

But Clive was far too wise a man not to see that the recent abuses were partly to be ascribed to a cause which could not fail to produce similar abuses, as soon as the pressure of his strong hand was withdrawn. The Company had followed a mistaken policy with respect to the remuneration of its servants. The salaries were too low to afford even those indulgences which are necessary to the health and comfort of Europeans in a tropical climate. To lay by a rupee from such scanty pay was impossible. It could not be supposed that men of even average abilities would consent to pass the best years of life in exile, under a burning sun, for no other consideration than these stinted wages. It had accordingly been understood, from a very early period, that the Company's

agents were at liberty to enrich themselves by their private trade. This practice had been seriously injurious to the commercial interests of the corporation. That very intelligent observer, Sir Thomas Roe, in the reign of James the First, strongly urged the Directors to apply a remedy to the abuse. "Absolutely prohibit the private trade," said he; "for your business will be better done. I know this is harsh. Men profess they come not for bare wages. But you will take away this plea if you give great wages to their content; and then you know what you part from."

In spite of this excellent advice, the Company adhered the old system, paid low salaries, and connived at the indirect gains of the agents. The pay of a member of Council was only three hundred pounds a year. Yet it was notorious that such a functionary could not live in India for less than ten times that sum; and it could not be, expected that he would be content to live even handsomely in India without laying up something against the time of his return to England. This system, before the conquest of Bengal, might affect the amount of the dividends payable to the proprietors, but could do little harm in any other way. But the Company was now a ruling body. Its servants might still be called factors, junior merchants, senior merchants. But they were in truth proconsuls, propraetors, procurators, of extensive, regions. They had immense power. Their regular pay was universally admitted to be insufficient. They were, by the ancient usage of the service, and by the implied permission of their employers, warranted in enriching themselves by indirect means; and this had been the origin of the frightful oppression and corruption which had desolated Bengal. Clive saw clearly that it was absurd to give men power, and to require them to live in penury. He justly concluded that no reform could be effectual which should not be coupled with a plan for liberally remunerating the civil servants of the Company. The Directors, he knew, were not disposed to sanction any increase of the salaries out of their own treasury. The only course which remained open to the governor was one which exposed him to much misrepresentation, but which we think him fully justified in adopting. He appropriated to the support of the service the monopoly of salt, which has formed, down to our own time, a principal head of Indian revenue; and he divided the proceeds according to a scale which seems to have been not unreasonably fixed. He was in consequence accused by his enemies, and has been accused by historians, of disobeying his instructions, of violating his promises, of authorising that very abuse which it was his special mission to destroy, namely, the trade of the Company’s servants. But every discerning and impartial judge will admit, that there was really nothing in common between the system which he set up and that which he was sent to destroy. The monopoly of salt had been a source of revenue to the Government of India before Clive was born. It continued to be so long after his death. The civil servants were clearly entitled to a maintenance out of the revenue; and all that Clive did was to charge a particular

portion of the revenue with their maintenance. He thus, while he put an end to the practices by which gigantic fortunes had been rapidly accumulated, gave to every British functionary employed in the East the means of slowly, but surely, acquiring a competence. Yet, such is the injustice of mankind, that none of those acts which are the real stains of his life has drawn on him so much obloquy as this measure, which was in truth a reform necessary to the success of all his other reforms.

He had quelled the opposition of the civil servants: that of the army was more formidable. Some of the retrenchments which had been ordered by the Directors affected the interests of the military service; and a storm arose, such as even Caesar would not willingly have faced. It was no light thing to encounter the resistance of those who held the power of the sword, in a country governed only by the sword. Two hundred English officers engaged in a conspiracy against the government, and determined to resign their commissions on the same day, not doubting that Clive would grant any terms, rather than see the army, on which alone the British empire in the East rested, left without commanders. They little knew the unconquerable spirit with which they had to deal. Clive had still a few officers round his person on whom he could rely. He sent to Fort St George for a fresh supply. He gave commissions even to mercantile agents who were disposed to support him at this crisis; and he sent orders that every officer who resigned should be instantly brought up to Calcutta. The conspirators found that they had miscalculated. The governor was inexorable. The troops were steady. The sepoys, over whom Clive had always possessed extraordinary influence, stood by him with unshaken fidelity. The leaders in the plot were arrested, tried, and cashiered. The rest, humbled and dispirited, begged to be permitted to withdraw their resignations. Many of them declared their repentance even with tears. The younger offenders Clive treated with lenity. To the ringleaders he was inflexibly severe; but his severity was pure from all taint of private malevolence. While he sternly upheld the just authority of his office, he passed by personal insults and injuries with magnanimous disdain. One of the conspirators was accused of having planned the assassination of the governor; but Clive would not listen to the charge. "The officers," he said, "are Englishmen, not assassins."

While he reformed the civil service and established his authority over the army, he was equally successful in his foreign policy. His landing on Indian ground was the signal for immediate peace. The Nabob of Oude, with a large army, lay at that time on the frontier of Bahar. He had been joined by many Afghans and Mahrattas, and there was no small reason to expect a general coalition of all the native powers against the English. But the name of Clive quelled in an instant all opposition. The enemy implored peace in the humblest language, and submitted to such terms as the new governor chose to dictate.

At the same time, the Government of Bengal was placed on a new

footing. The power of the English in that province had hitherto been altogether undefined. It was unknown to the ancient constitution of the empire, and it had been ascertained by no compact. It resembled the power which, in the last decrepitude of the Western Empire, was exercised over Italy by the great chiefs of foreign mercenaries, the Ricimers and the Odoacers, who put up and pulled down at their pleasure a succession of insignificant princes, dignified with the names of Caesar and Augustus. But as in Italy, so in India, the warlike strangers at length found it expedient to give to a domination which had been established by arms the sanction of law and ancient prescription. Theodoric thought it politic to obtain from the distant Court of Byzantium a commission appointing him ruler of Italy; and Clive, in the same manner, applied to the Court of Delhi for a formal grant of the powers of which he already possessed the reality. The Mogul was absolutely helpless; and, though he murmured, had reason to be well pleased that the English were disposed to give solid rupees, which he never could have extorted from them, in exchange for a few Persian characters which cost him nothing. A bargain was speedily struck; and the titular sovereign of Hindostan issued a warrant, empowering the Company to collect and administer the revenues of Bengal, Orissa, and Bahar.

There was still a Nabob, who stood to the British authorities in the same relation in which the last drivelling Chilperics and Childerics of the Merovingian line stood to their able and vigorous Mayors of the Palace, to Charles Martel, and to Pepin. At one time Clive had almost made up his mind to discard this phantom altogether; but he afterwards thought that it might be convenient still to use the name of the Nabob, particularly in dealings with other European nations. The French, the Dutch, and the Danes, would, he conceived, submit far more readily to the authority of the native Prince, whom they had always been accustomed to respect, than to that of a rival trading corporation. This policy may, at that time, have been judicious. But the pretence was soon found to be too flimsy to impose on anybody; and it was altogether laid aside. The heir of Meer Jaffier still resides at Moorshedabad, the ancient capital of his house, still bears the title of Nabob, is still accosted by the English as "Your Highness," and is still suffered to retain a portion of the regal state which surrounded his ancestors. A pension of a hundred and sixty thousand pounds a year is annually paid to him by the government. His carriage is surrounded by guards, and preceded by attendants with silver maces. His person and his dwelling are exempted from the ordinary authority of the ministers of justice. But he has not the smallest share of political power, and is, in fact, only a noble and wealthy subject of the Company.

It would have been easy for Clive, during his second administration in Bengal, to accumulate riches such as no subject in Europe possessed. He might indeed, without subjecting the rich inhabitants of the province to any pressure beyond that to which

their mildest rulers had accustomed them, have received presents to the amount of three hundred thousand pounds a year. The neighbouring princes would gladly have paid any price for his favour. But he appears to have strictly adhered to the rules which he had laid down for the guidance of others. The Rajah of Benares offered him diamonds of great value. The Nabob of Oude pressed him to accept a large sum of money and a casket of costly jewels. Clive courteously, but peremptorily refused; and it should be observed that he made no merit of his refusal, and that the facts did not come to light till after his death. He kept an exact account of his salary, of his share of the profits accruing from the trade in salt, and of those presents which, according to the fashion of the East, it would be churlish to refuse. Out of the sum arising from these resources, he defrayed the expenses of his situation. The surplus he divided among a few attached friends who had accompanied him to India. He always boasted, and as far as we can judge, he boasted with truth, that this last administration diminished instead of increasing his fortune.

One large sum indeed he accepted. Meer Jaffier had left him by will above sixty thousand pounds sterling in specie and jewels: and the rules which had been recently laid down extended only to presents from the living, and did not affect legacies from the dead. Clive took the money, but not for himself. He made the whole over to the Company, in trust for officers and soldiers invalided in their service. The fund which still bears his name owes its origin to this princely donation.

After a stay of eighteen months, the state of his health made it necessary for him to return to Europe. At the close of January 1767, he quitted for the last time the country, on whose destinies he had exercised so mighty an influence.

His second return from Bengal was not, like his first, greeted by the acclamations of his countrymen. Numerous causes were already at work which embittered the remaining years of his life, and hurried him to an untimely grave. His old enemies at the India House were still powerful and active; and they had been reinforced by a large band of allies whose violence far exceeded their own. The whole crew of pilferers and oppressors from whom he had rescued Bengal persecuted him with the implacable rancour which belongs to such abject natures. Many of them even invested their property in India stock, merely that they might be better able to annoy the man whose firmness had set bounds to their rapacity. Lying newspapers were set up for no purpose but to abuse him; and the temper of the public mind was then such, that these arts, which under ordinary circumstances would have been ineffectual against truth and merit produced an extraordinary impression.

The great events which had taken place in India had called into existence a new class of Englishmen, to whom their countrymen gave the name of Nabobs. These persons had generally sprung from

families neither ancient nor opulent; they had generally been sent at an early age to the East; and they had there acquired large fortunes, which they had brought back to their native land. It was natural that, not having had much opportunity of mixing with the best society, they should exhibit some of the awkwardness and some of the pomposity of upstarts. It was natural that, during their sojourn in Asia, they should have acquired some tastes and habits surprising, if not disgusting, to persons who never had quitted Europe. It was natural that, having enjoyed great consideration in the East, they should not be disposed to sink into obscurity at hom; and as they had money, and had not birth or high connection, it was natural that they should display a little obtrusively the single advantage which they possessed. Wherever they settled there was a kind of feud between them and the old nobility and gentry, similar to that which raged in France between the farmer-general and the marquess. This enmity to the aristocracy long continued to distinguish the servants of the Company. More than twenty years after the time of which we are now speaking, Burke pronounced that among the Jacobins might be reckoned "the East Indians almost to a man, who cannot bear to find that their present importance does not bear a proportion to their wealth."

The Nabobs soon became a most unpopular class of men. Some of them had in the East displayed eminent talents, and rendered great services to the state; but at home their talents were not shown to advantage, and their services were little known. That they had sprung from obscurity, that they had acquired great wealth, that they exhibited it insolently, that they spent it extravagantly, that they raised the price of everything in their neighbourhood, from fresh eggs to rotten boroughs, that their liveries outshone those of dukes, that their coaches were finer than that of the Lord Mayor, that the examples of their large and ill-governed households corrupted half the servants in the country, that some of them, with all their magnificence, could not catch the tone of good society, but, in spite of the stud and the crowd of menials, of the plate and the Dresden china, of the venison and the Burgundy, were still low men; these were things which excited, both in the class from which they had sprung and in the class into which they attempted to force themselves, the bitter aversion which is the effect of mingled envy and contempt. But when it was also rumoured that the fortune which had enabled its possessor to eclipse the Lord Lieutenant on the race-ground, or to carry the county against the head of a house as old as Domesday Book, had been accumulated by violating public faith, by deposing legitimate princes, by reducing whole provinces to beggary, all the higher and better as well as all the low and evil parts of human nature were stirred against the wretch who had obtained by guilt and dishonour the riches which he now lavished with arrogant and inelegant profusion. The unfortunate Nabob seemed to be made up of those foibles against which comedy has pointed the most merciless ridicule, and of those crimes which have thrown the deepest gloom over tragedy, of Turcaret and

Nero, of Monsieur Jourdain and Richard the Third. A tempest of execration and derision, such as can be compared only to that outbreak of public feeling against the Puritans which took place at the time of the Restoration, burst on the servants of the Company. The humane man was horror-struck at the way in which they had got their money, the thrifty man at the way in which they spent it. The Dilettante sneered at their want of taste. The Maccaroni black-balled them as vulgar fellows. Writers the most unlike in sentiment and style, Methodists and libertines, philosophers and buffoons, were for once on the same side. It is hardly too much to say that, during a space of about thirty years, the whole lighter literature of England was coloured by the feelings which we have described. Foote brought on the stage an Anglo-Indian chief, dissolute, ungenerous, and tyrannical, ashamed of the humble friends of his youth, hating the aristocracy, yet childishly eager to be numbered among them, squandering his wealth on pandars and flatterers, tricking out his chairmen with the most costly hot-house flowers, and astounding the ignorant with jargon about rupees, lacs, and jaghires. Mackenzie, with more delicate humour, depicted a plain country family raised by the Indian acquisitions of one of its members to sudden opulence, and exciting derision by an awkward mimicry of the manners of the great. Cowper, in that lofty expostulation which glows with the very spirit of the Hebrew poets, placed the oppression of India foremost in the list of those national crimes for which God had punished England with years of disastrous war, with discomfiture in her own seas, and with the loss of her transatlantic empire. If any of our readers will take the trouble to search in the dusty recesses of circulating libraries for some novel published sixty years ago, the chance is that the villain or sub-villain of the story will prove to be a savage old Nabob, with an immense fortune, a tawny complexion, a bad liver, and a worse heart.

Such, as far as we can now judge, was the feeling of the country respecting Nabobs in general. And Clive was eminently the Nabob, the ablest, the most celebrated, the highest in rank, the highest in fortune, of all the fraternity. His wealth was exhibited in a manner which could not fail to excite odium. He lived with great magnificence in Berkeley Square. He reared one palace in Shropshire and another at Claremont. His parliamentary influence might vie with that of the greatest families. But in all this splendour and power envy found something to sneer at. On some of his relations wealth and dignity seem to have sat as awkwardly as on Mackenzie’s Margery Mushroom. Nor was he himself, with all his great qualities, free from those weaknesses which the satirists of that age represented as characteristic of his whole class. In the field, indeed, his habits were remarkably simple. He was constantly on horseback, was never seen but in his uniform, never wore silk, never entered a palanquin, and was content with the plainest fare. But when he was no longer at the head of an army, he laid aside this Spartan temperance for the ostentatious luxury of a Sybarite. Though his person was ungraceful, and though his

harsh features were redeemed from vulgar ugliness only by their stern, dauntless, and commanding expression, he was fond of rich and gay clothing, and replenished his wardrobe with absurd profusion. Sir John Malcolm gives us a letter worthy of Sir Matthew Mite, in which Clive orders "two hundred shirts, the best and finest that can be got for love or money." A few follies of this description, grossly exaggerated by report, produced an unfavourable impression on the public mind. But this was not the worst. Black stories, of which the greater part were pure inventions, were circulated touching his conduct in the East. He had to bear the whole odium, not only of those bad acts to which he had once or twice stooped, but of all the bad acts of all the English in India, of bad acts committed when he was absent, nay, of bad acts which he had manfully opposed and severely punished. The very abuses against which he had waged an honest, resolute, and successful war were laid to his account. He was, in fact, regarded as the personification of all the vices and weaknesses which the public, with or without reason, ascribed to the English adventurers in Asia. We have ourselves heard old men, who knew nothing of his history, but who still retained the prejudices conceived in their youth, talk of him as an incarnate fiend. Johnson always held this language. Brown, whom Clive employed to lay out his pleasure grounds, was amazed to see in the house of his noble employer a chest which had once been filled with gold from the treasury of Moorshedabad, and could not understand how the conscience of the criminal could suffer him to sleep with such an object so near to his bedchamber. The peasantry of Surrey looked with mysterious horror on the stately house which was rising at Claremont, and whispered that the great wicked lord had ordered the walls to be made so thick in order to keep out the devil, who would one day carry him away bodily. Among the gaping clowns who drank in this frightful story was a worthless ugly lad of the name of Hunt, since widely known as William Huntington, S.S.; and the superstition which was strangely mingled with the knavery of that remarkable impostor seems to have derived no small nutriment from the tales which he heard of the life and character of Clive.

In the meantime, the impulse which Clive had given to the administration of Bengal was constantly becoming fainter and fainter. His policy was to a great extent abandoned; the abuses which he had suppressed began to revive; and at length the evils which a bad government had engendered were aggravated by one of those fearful visitations which the best government cannot avert. In the summer of 1770, the rains failed; the earth was parched up; the tanks were empty; the rivers shrank within their beds; and a famine, such as is known only in countries where every household depends for support on its own little patch of cultivation, filled the whole valley of the Ganges with misery and death. Tender and delicate women, whose veils had never been lifted before the public gaze, came forth from the inner chambers in which Eastern jealousy had kept watch over their beauty, threw themselves on the earth before the passers-by, and, with loud

wailings, implored a handful of rice for their children. The Hoogley every day rolled down thousands of corpses close to the porticoes and gardens of the English conquerors. The very streets of Calcutta were blocked up by the dying and the dead. The lean and feeble survivors had not energy enough to bear the bodies of their kindred to the funeral pile or to the holy river, or even to scare away the jackals and vultures, who fed on human remains in the face of day. The extent of the mortality was never ascertained; but it was popularly reckoned by millions. This melancholy intelligence added to the excitement which already prevailed in England on Indian subjects. The proprietors of East India stock were uneasy about their dividends. All men of common humanity were touched by the calamities of our unhappy subjects; and indignation soon began to mingle itself with pity. It was rumoured that the Company's servants had created the famine by engrossing all the rice of the country; that they had sold grain for eight, ten, twelve times the price at which they had bought it; that one English functionary who, the year before, was not worth a hundred guineas, had, during that season of misery, remitted sixty thousand pounds to London. These charges we believe to have been unfounded. That servants of the Company had ventured, since Clive's departure, to deal in rice, is probable. That, if they dealt in rice, they must have gained by the scarcity, is certain. But there is no reason for thinking that they either produced or aggravated an evil which physical causes sufficiently explain. The outcry which was raised against them on this occasion was, we suspect, as absurd as the imputations which, in times of dearth at home, were once thrown by statesmen and judges, and are still thrown by two or three old women, on the corn factors. It was, however, so loud and so general that it appears to have imposed even on an intellect raised so high above vulgar prejudices as that of Adam Smith. What was still more extraordinary, these unhappy events greatly increased the unpopularity of Lord Clive. He had been some years in England when the famine took place. None of his acts had the smallest tendency to produce such a calamity. If the servants of the Company had traded in rice, they had done so in direct contravention of the rule which he had laid down, and, while in power, had resolutely enforced. But, in the eyes of his countrymen, he was, as we have said, the Nabob, the Anglo-Indian character personified; and, while he was building and planting in Surrey, he was held responsible for all the effects of a dry season in Bengal.

Parliament had hitherto bestowed very little attention on our Eastern possessions. Since the death of George the Second, a rapid succession of weak administrations, each of which was in turn flattered and betrayed by the Court, had held the semblance of power. Intrigues in the palace, riots in the capital, and insurrectionary movements in the American colonies, had left the advisers of the Crown little leisure to study Indian politics. When they did interfere, their interference was feeble and irresolute. Lord Chatham, indeed, during the short period of his

ascendency in the councils of George the Third, had meditated a bold attack on the Company. But his plans were rendered abortive by the strange malady which about that time began to overcloud his splendid genius.

At length, in 1772, it was generally felt that Parliament could no longer neglect the affairs of India. The Government was stronger than any which had held power since the breach between Mr. Pitt and the great Whig connection in 1761. No pressing question of domestic or European policy required the attention of public men. There was a short and delusive lull between two tempests. The excitement produced by the Middlesex election was over; the discontents of America did not yet threaten civil war; the financial difficulties of the Company brought on a crisis; the Ministers were forced to take up the subject; and the whole storm, which had long been gathering, now broke at once on the head of Clive.

His situation was indeed singularly unfortunate. He was hated throughout the country, hated at the India House, hated, above all, by those wealthy and powerful servants of the Company, whose rapacity and tyranny he had withstood. He had to bear the double odium of his bad and of his good actions, of every Indian abuse and of every Indian reform. The state of the political world was such that he could count on the support of no powerful connection. The party to which he had belonged, that of George Grenville, had been hostile to the Government, and yet had never cordially united with the other sections of the Opposition, with the little band which still followed the fortunes of Lord Chatham, or with the large and respectable body of which Lord Rockingham was the acknowledged leader. George Grenville was now dead: his followers were scattered; and Clive, unconnected with any of the powerful factions which divided the Parliament, could reckon only on the votes of those members who were returned by himself.

His enemies, particularly those who were the enemies of his virtues, were unscrupulous, ferocious, implacable. Their malevolence aimed at nothing less than the utter ruin of his fame and fortune. They wished to see him expelled from Parliament, to see his spurs chopped off, to see his estate confiscated; and it may be doubted whether even such a result as this would have quenched their thirst for revenge.

Clive’s parliamentary tactics resembled his military tactics. Deserted, surrounded, outnumbered, and with everything at stake, he did not even deign to stand on the defensive, but pushed boldly forward to the attack. At an early stage of the discussions on Indian affairs he rose, and in a long and elaborate speech vindicated himself from a large part of the accusations which had been brought against him. He is said to have produced a great impression on his audience. Lord Chatham, who, now the ghost of his former self, loved to haunt the scene

of his glory, was that night under the gallery of the House of Commons, and declared that he had never heard a finer speech. It was subsequently printed under Clive's direction, and, when the fullest allowance has been made for the assistance which he may have obtained from literary friends, proves him to have possessed, not merely strong sense and a manly spirit, but talents both for disquisition and declamation which assiduous culture might have improved into the highest excellence. He confined his defence on this occasion to the measures of his last administration, and succeeded so far that his enemies thenceforth thought it expedient to direct their attacks chiefly against the earlier part of his life.

The earlier part of his life unfortunately presented some assailable points to their hostility. A committee was chosen by ballot to inquire into the affairs of India; and by this committee the whole history of that great revolution which threw down Surajah Dowlah and raised Meer Jaffier was sifted with malignant care. Clive was subjected to the most unsparing examination and cross-examination, and afterwards bitterly complained that he, the Baron of Plassey, had been treated like a sheep-stealer. The boldness and ingenuousness of his replies would alone suffice to show how alien from his nature were the frauds to which, in the course of his Eastern negotiations, he had sometimes descended. He avowed the arts which he had employed to deceive Omichund, and resolutely said that he was not ashamed of them, and that, in the same circumstances, he would again act in the same manner. He admitted that he had received immense sums from Meer Jaffier; but he denied that, in doing so, he had violated any obligation of morality or honour. He laid claim, on the contrary, and not without some reason, to the praise of eminent disinterestedness. He described in vivid language the situation in which his victory had placed him: great princes dependent on his pleasure; an opulent city afraid of being given up to plunder; wealthy bankers bidding against each other for his smiles; vaults piled with gold and jewels thrown open to him alone. "By God, Mr. Chairman," he exclaimed, "at this moment I stand astonished at my own moderation."

The inquiry was so extensive that the Houses rose before it had been completed. It was continued in the following session. When at length the committee had concluded its labours, enlightened and impartial men had little difficulty in making up their minds as to the result. It was clear that Clive had been guilty of some acts which it is impossible to vindicate without attacking the authority of all the most sacred laws which regulate the intercourse of individuals and of states. But it was equally clear that he had displayed great talents, and even great virtues; that he had rendered eminent services both to his country and to the people of India; and that it was in truth not for his dealings with Meer Jaffier, nor for the fraud which he had practised on Omichund, but for his determined resistance to avarice and tyranny, that he was now called in question.

Ordinary criminal justice knows nothing of set-off. The greatest desert cannot be pleaded in answer to a charge of the slightest transgression. If a man has sold beer on a Sunday morning, it is no defence that he has saved the life of a fellow-creature at the risk of his own. If he has harnessed a Newfoundland dog to his little child's carriage, it is no defence that he was wounded at Waterloo. But it is not in this way that we ought to deal with men who, raised far above ordinary restraints, and tried by far more than ordinary temptations, are entitled to a more than ordinary measure of indulgence. Such men should be judged by their contemporaries as they will be judged by posterity. Their bad actions ought not indeed to be called good; but their good and bad actions ought to be fairly weighed; and if on the whole the good preponderate, the sentence ought to be one, not merely of acquittal, but of approbation. Not a single great ruler in history can be absolved by a judge who fixes his eye inexorably on one or two unjustifiable acts. Bruce the deliverer of Scotland, Maurice the deliverer of Germany, William the deliverer of Holland, his great descendant the deliverer of England, Murray the good regent, Cosmo the father of his country, Henry the Fourth of France, Peter the Great of Russia, how would the best of them pass such a scrutiny? History takes wider views; and the best tribunal for great political cases is the tribunal which anticipates the verdict of history.

Reasonable and moderate men of all parties felt this in Clive's case. They could not pronounce him blameless; but they were not disposed to abandon him to that low-minded and rancorous pack who had run him down and were eager to worry him to death. Lord North, though not very friendly to him, was not disposed to go to extremities against him. While the inquiry was still in progress, Clive, who had some years before been created a Knight of the Bath, was installed with great pomp in Henry the Seventh's Chapel. He was soon after appointed Lord Lieutenant of Shropshire. When he kissed hands, George the Third, who had always been partial to him, admitted him to a private audience, talked to him half an hour on Indian politics, and was visibly affected when the persecuted general spoke of his services and of the way in which they had been requited.

At length the charges came in a definite form before the House of Commons. Burgoyne, chairman of the committee, a man of wit, fashion, and honour, an agreeable dramatic writer, an officer whose courage was never questioned, and whose skill was at that time highly esteemed, appeared as the accuser. The members of the administration took different sides; for in that age all questions were open questions, except such as were brought forward by the Government, or such as implied censure on the Government. Thurlow, the Attorney-General, was among the assailants. Wedderburne, the Solicitor-General, strongly attached to Clive, defended his friend with extraordinary force of argument and language. It is a curious circumstance that, some

years later, Thurlow was the most conspicuous champion of Warren Hastings, while Wedderburne was among the most unrelenting persecutors of that great though not faultless statesman. Clive spoke in his own defence at less length and with less art than in the preceding year, but with much energy and pathos. He recounted his great actions and his wrongs; and, after bidding his hearers remember, that they were about to decide not only on his honour but on their own, he retired from the House.

The Commons resolved that acquisitions made by the arms of the State belong to the State alone, and that it is illegal in the servants of the State to appropriate such acquisitions to themselves. They resolved that this wholesome rule appeared to have been systematically violated by the English functionaries in Bengal. On a subsequent day they went a step further, and resolved that Clive had, by means of the power which he possessed as commander of the British forces in India, obtained large sums from Meer Jaffier. Here the Commons stopped. They had voted the major and minor of Burgoyne's syllogism; but they shrank from drawing the logical conclusion. When it was moved that Lord Clive had abused his powers, and set an evil example to the servants of the public, the previous question was put and carried. At length, long after the sun had risen on an animated debate, Wedderburne moved that Lord Clive had at the same time rendered great and meritorious services to his country; and this motion passed without a division.

The result of this memorable inquiry appears to us, on the whole, honourable to the justice, moderation, and discernment of the Commons. They had indeed no great temptation to do wrong. They would have been very bad judges of an accusation brought against Jenkinson or against Wilkes. But the question respecting Clive was not a party question; and the House accordingly acted with the good sense and good feeling which may always be expected from an assembly of English gentlemen, not blinded by faction.

The equitable and temperate proceedings of the British Parliament were set off to the greatest advantage by a foil. The wretched government of Lewis the Fifteenth had murdered, directly or indirectly, almost every Frenchman who had served his country with distinction in the East. Labourdonnais was flung into the Bastile, and, after years of suffering, left it only to die. Dupleix, stripped of his immense fortune, and broken-hearted by humiliating attendance in ante-chambers, sank into an obscure grave. Lally was dragged to the common place of execution with a gag between his lips. The Commons of England, on the other hand, treated their living captain with that discriminating justice which is seldom shown except to the dead. They laid down sound general principles; they delicately pointed out where he had deviated from those principles; and they tempered the gentle censure with liberal eulogy. The contrast struck Voltaire, always partial to England, and always eager to expose the abuses of the Parliaments of France. Indeed he seems, at this time, to have

meditated a history of the conquest of Bengal. He mentioned his design to Dr. Moore, when that amusing writer visited him at Ferney. Wedderburne took great interest in the matter, and pressed Clive to furnish materials. Had the plan been carried into execution, we have no doubt that Voltaire would have produced a book containing much lively and picturesque narrative, many just and humane sentiments poignantly expressed, many grotesque blunders, many sneers at the Mosaic chronology, much scandal about the Catholic missionaries, and much sublime theo-philanthropy, stolen from the New Testament, and put into the mouths of virtuous and philosophical Brahmins.

Clive was now secure in the enjoyment of his fortune and his honours. He was surrounded by attached friends and relations; and he had not yet passed the season of vigorous bodily and mental exertion. But clouds had long been gathering over his mind, and now settled on it in thick darkness. From early youth he had been subject to fits of that strange melancholy "which rejoiceth exceedingly and is glad when it can find the grave." While still a writer at Madras, he had twice attempted to destroy himself. Business and prosperity had produced a salutary effect on his spirits. In India, while he was occupied by great affairs, in England, while wealth and rank had still the charm of novelty, he had borne up against his constitutional misery. But he had now nothing to do, and nothing to wish for. His active spirit in an inactive situation drooped and withered like a plant in an uncongenial air. The malignity with which his enemies had pursued him, the indignity with which he had been treated by the committee, the censure, lenient as it was, which the House of Commons had pronounced, the knowledge that he was regarded by a large portion of his countrymen as a cruel and perfidious tyrant, all concurred to irritate and depress him. In the meantime, his temper was tried by acute physical suffering. During his long residence in tropical climates, he had contracted several painful distempers. In order to obtain ease he called in the help of opium; and he was gradually enslaved by this treacherous ally. To the last, however, his genius occasionally flashed through the gloom. It was said that he would sometimes, after sitting silent and torpid for hours, rouse himself to the discussion of some great question, would display in full vigour all the talents of the soldier and the statesman, and would then sink back into his melancholy repose.

The disputes with America had now become so serious that an appeal to the sword seemed inevitable; and the Ministers were desirous to avail themselves of the services of Clive. Had he still been what he was when he raised the siege of Patna and annihilated the Dutch army and navy at the mouth of the Ganges, it is not improbable that the resistance of the colonists would have been put down, and that the inevitable separation would have been deferred for a few years. But it was too late. His strong mind was fast sinking under many kinds of suffering. On the twenty-second of November, 1774, he died by his own hand. He had

just completed his forty-ninth year.

In the awful close of so much prosperity and glory, the vulgar saw only a confirmation of all their prejudices; and some men of real piety and genius so far forgot the maxims both of religion and of philosophy as confidently to ascribe the mournful event to the just vengeance of God, and to the horrors of an evil conscience. It is with very different feelings that we contemplate the spectacle of a great mind ruined by the weariness of satiety, by the pangs of wounded honour, by fatal diseases, and more fatal remedies.

Clive committed great faults; and we have not attempted to disguise them. But his faults, when weighed against his merits, and viewed in connection with his temptations, do not appear to us to deprive him of his right to an honourable place in the estimation of posterity.

From his first visit to India dates the renown of the English arms in the East. Till he appeared, his countrymen were despised as mere pedlars, while the French were revered as a people formed for victory and command. His courage and capacity dissolved the charm. With the defence of Arcot commences that long series of Oriental triumphs which closes with the fall of Ghizni. Nor must we forget that he was only twenty-five years old when he approved himself ripe for military command. This is a rare if not a singular distinction. It is true that Alexander, Conde, and Charles the Twelfth, won great battles at a still earlier age--but those princes were surrounded by veteran generals of distinguished skill, to whose suggestions must be attributed the victories of the Granicus, of Rocroi and of Narva. Clive, an inexperienced youth, had yet more experience than any of those who served under him. He had to form himself, to form his officers, and to form his army. The only man, as far as we recollect, who at an equally early age ever gave equal proof of talents for war, was Napoleon Bonaparte.

From Clive’s second visit to India dates the political ascendency of the English in that country. His dexterity and resolution realised, in the course of a few months, more than an the gorgeous visions which had floated before the imagination of Dupleix. Such an extent of cultivated territory, such an amount of revenue, such a multitude of subjects, was never added to the dominion of Rome by the most successful proconsul. Nor were such wealthy spoils ever borne under arches of triumph, down the Sacred Way, and through the crowded Forum, to the threshold of Tarpeian Jove. The fame of those who subdued Antiochus and Tigranes grows dim when compared with the splendour of the exploits which the young English adventurer achieved at the head of an army not equal in numbers to one half of a Roman legion.

From Clive’s third visit to India dates the purity of the administration of our Eastern empire. When he landed in Calcutta

in 1765, Bengal was regarded as a place to which Englishmen were sent only to get rich, by any means, in the shortest possible time. He first made dauntless and unsparing war on that gigantic system of oppression, extortion, and corruption. In that war he manfully put to hazard his ease, his fame, and his splendid fortune. The same sense of justice which forbids us to conceal or extenuate the faults of his earlier days compels us to admit that those faults were nobly repaired. If the reproach of the Company and of its servants has been taken away, if in India the yoke of foreign masters, elsewhere the heaviest of all yokes, has been found lighter than that of any native dynasty, if to that gang of public robbers, which formerly spread terror through the whole plain of Bengal, has succeeded a body of functionaries not more highly distinguished by ability and diligence than by integrity, disinterestedness, and public spirit, if we now see such men as Munro, Elphinstone, and Metcalfe, after leading victorious armies, after making and deposing kings, return, proud of their honourable poverty, from a land which once held out to every greedy factor the hope of boundless wealth, the praise is in no small measure due to Clive. His name stands high on the roll of conquerors. But it is found in a better list, in the list of those who have done and suffered much for the happiness of mankind. To the warrior, history will assign a place in the same rank with Lucullus and Trajan. Nor will she deny to the reformer a share of that veneration with which France cherishes the memory of Turgot, and with which the latest generations of Hindoos will contemplate the statue of Lord William Bentinck.

WARREN HASTINGS

(October 1841)

Memoirs of the Life of Warren Hastings, first Governor-General of Bengal. Compiled from Original Papers, by the Rev. G.R. GLEIG M.A. 3 vols. 8vo. London: 1841.

We are inclined to think that we shall best meet the wishes of our readers, if, instead of minutely examining this book, we attempt to give, in a way necessarily hasty and imperfect, our own view of the life and character of Mr. Hastings. Our feeling towards him is not exactly that of the House of Commons which impeached him in 1787; neither is it that of the House of Commons which uncovered and stood up to receive him in 1813. He had great qualities, and he rendered great services to the State. But to represent him as a man of stainless virtue is to make him ridiculous; and from regard for his memory, if from no other feeling, his friends would have done well to lend no countenance to such adulation. We believe that, if he were now living, he would have sufficient judgment and sufficient greatness of mind to wish to be shown as he was. He must have known that there were dark spots on his fame. He might also have felt with pride that the splendour of his fame would bear many spots. He would have

wished posterity to have a likeness of him, though an unfavourable likeness, rather than a daub at once insipid and unnatural, resembling neither him nor anybody else. "Paint me as I am," said Oliver Cromwell, while sitting to young Lely. "If you leave out the scars and wrinkles, I will not pay you a shilling." Even in such a trifle, the great Protector showed both his good sense and his magnanimity. He did not wish all that was characteristic in his countenance to be lost, in the vain attempt to give him the regular features and smooth blooming cheeks of the curl-pated minions of James the First. He was content that his face should go forth marked with all the blemishes which had been put on it by time, by war, by sleepless nights, by anxiety, perhaps by remorse; but with valour, policy, authority, and public care written in all its princely lines. If men truly great knew their own interest, it is thus that they would wish their minds to be portrayed.

Warren Hastings sprang from an ancient and illustrious race. It has been affirmed that his pedigree can be traced back to the great Danish sea-king, whose sails were long the terror of both coasts of the British Channel, and who, after many fierce and doubtful struggles, yielded at last to the valour and genius of Alfred. But the undoubted splendour of the line of Hastings needs no illustration from fable. One branch of that line wore, in the fourteenth century, the coronet of Pembroke. From another branch sprang the renowned Chamberlain, the faithful adherent of the White Rose, whose fate has furnished so striking a theme both to poets and to historians. His family received from the Tudors the earldom of Huntingdon, which, after long dispossession, was regained in our time by a series of events scarcely paralleled in romance.

The lords of the manor of Daylesford, in Worcestershire, claimed to be considered as the heads of this distinguished family. The main stock, indeed, prospered less than some of the younger shoots. But the Daylesford family, though not ennobled, was wealthy and highly considered, till, about two hundred years ago, it was overwhelmed by the great ruin of the civil wax. The Hastings of that time was a zealous cavalier. He raised money on his lands, sent his plate to the mint at Oxford, joined the royal army, and, after spending half his property in the cause of King Charles, was glad to ransom himself by making over most of the remaining half to Speaker Lenthal. The old seat at Daylesford still remained in the family; but it could no longer be kept up: and in the following generation it was sold to a merchant of London.

Before this transfer took place, the last Hastings of Daylesford had presented his second son to the rectory of the parish in which the ancient residence of the family stood. The living was of little value; and the situation of the poor clergyman, after the sale of the estate, was deplorable. He was constantly engaged in lawsuits about his tithes with the new lord of the manor, and

was at length utterly ruined. His eldest son, Howard, a well-conducted young man, obtained a place in the Customs. The second son, Pynaston, an idle worthless boy, married before he was sixteen, lost his wife in two years, and died in the West Indies, leaving to the care of his unfortunate father a little orphan, destined to strange and memorable vicissitudes of fortune.

Warren, the son of Pynaston, was born on the sixth of December, 1731. His mother died a few days later, and he was left dependent on his distressed grandfather. The child was early sent to the village school, where he learned his letters on the same bench with the sons of the peasantry; nor did anything in his garb or face indicate that his life was to take a widely different course from that of the young rustics with whom he studied and played. But no cloud could overcast the dawn of so much genius and so much ambition. The very ploughmen observed, and long remembered, how kindly little Warren took to his book. The daily sight of the lands which his ancestors had possessed, and which had passed into the hands of strangers, filled his young brain with wild fancies and projects. He loved to hear stories of the wealth and greatness of his progenitors, of their splendid housekeeping, their loyalty, and their valour. On one bright summer day, the boy, then just seven years old, lay on the bank of the rivulet which flows through the old domain of his house to join the Isis. There, as threescore and ten years later he told the tale, rose in his mind a scheme which, through all the turns of his eventful career, was never abandoned. He would recover the estate which had belonged to his fathers. He would be Hastings of Daylesford. This purpose, formed in infancy and poverty, grew stronger as his intellect expanded and as his fortune rose. He pursued his plan with that calm but indomitable force of will which was the most striking peculiarity of his character. When, under a tropical sun, he ruled fifty millions of Asiatics, his hopes, amidst all the cares of war, finance, and legislation, still pointed to Daylesford. And when his long public life, so singularly chequered with good and evil, with glory and obloquy, had at length closed for ever, it was to Daylesford that he retired to die.

When he was eight years old, his uncle Howard determined to take charge of him, and to give him a liberal education. The boy went up to London, and was sent to a school at Newington, where he was well taught but ill fed. He always attributed the smallness of his stature to the hard and scanty fare of this seminary. At ten he was removed to Westminster school, then flourishing under the care of Dr. Nichols. Vinny Bourne, as his pupils affectionately called him, was one of the masters. Churchill, Colman, Lloyd, Cumberland, Cowper, were among the students. With Cowper, Hastings formed a friendship which neither the lapse of time, nor a wide dissimilarity of opinions and pursuits, could wholly dissolve. It does not appear that they ever met after they had grown to manhood. But forty years later, when the voices of many great orators were crying for vengeance on the oppressor of

India, the shy and secluded poet could image to himself Hastings the Governor-General only as the Hastings with whom he had rowed on the Thames and played in the cloister, and refused to believe that so good-tempered a fellow could have done anything very wrong. His own life had been spent in praying, musing, and rhyming among the waterlilies of the Ouse. He had preserved in no common measure the innocence of childhood. His spirit had indeed been severely tried, but not by temptations which impelled him to any gross violation of the rules of social morality. He had never been attacked by combinations of powerful and deadly enemies. He had never been compelled to make a choice between innocence and greatness, between crime and ruin. Firmly as he held in theory the doctrine of human depravity, his habits were such that he was unable to conceive how far from the path of right even kind and noble natures may be hurried by the rage of conflict and the lust of dominion.

Hastings had another associate at Westminster of whom we shall have occasion to make frequent mention, Elijah Impey. We know little about their school days. But, we think, we may safely venture to guess that, whenever Hastings wished to play any trick more than usually naughty, he hired Impey with a tart or a ball to act as fag in the worst part of the prank.

Warren was distinguished among his comrades as an excellent swimmer, boatman, and scholar. At fourteen he was first in the examination for the foundation. His name in gilded letters on the walls of the dormitory still attests his victory over many older competitors. He stayed two years longer at the school, and was looking forward to a studentship at Christ Church, when an event happened which changed the whole course of his life. Howard Hastings died, bequeathing his nephew to the care of a friend and distant relation, named Chiswick. This gentleman, though he did not absolutely refuse the charge, was desirous to rid himself of it as soon as possible. Dr. Nichols made strong remonstrances against the cruelty of interrupting the studies of a youth who seemed likely to be one of the first scholars of the age. He even offered to bear the expense of sending his favourite pupil to Oxford. But Mr. Chiswick was inflexible. He thought the years which had already been wasted on hexameters and pentameters quite sufficient. He had it in his power to obtain for the lad a writership in the service of the East India Company. Whether the young adventurer, when once shipped off, made a fortune, or died of a liver complaint, he equally ceased to be a burden to anybody. Warren was accordingly removed from Westminster school, and placed for a few months at a commercial academy, to study arithmetic and book-keeping. In January 1750, a few days after he had completed his seventeenth year, he sailed for Bengal, and arrived at his destination in the October following.

He was immediately placed at a desk in the Secretary’s office at Calcutta, and laboured there during two years. Fort William was then purely a commercial settlement. In the south of India the

encroaching policy of Dupleix had transformed the servants of the English Company, against their will, into diplomatists and Generals. The war of the succession was raging in the Carnatic; and the tide had been suddenly turned against the French by the genius of young Robert Clive. But in Bengal the European settlers, at peace with the natives and with each other, were wholly occupied with ledgers and bills of lading.

After two years passed in keeping accounts at Calcutta, Hastings was sent up the country to Cossimbazar, a town which lies on the Hoogley, about a mile from Moorshedabad, and which then bore to Moorshedabad a relation, if we may compare small things with great, such as the city of London bears to Westminster. Moorshedabad was the abode of the prince who, by an authority ostensibly derived from the Mogul, but really independent, ruled the three great provinces of Bengal, Orissa, and Bahar. At Moorshedabad were the court, the harem, and the public offices. Cossimbazar was a port and a place of trade, renowned for the quantity and excellence of the silks which were sold in its marts, and constantly receiving and sending forth fleets of richly laden barges. At this important point, the Company had established a small factory subordinate to that of Fort William. Here, during several years, Hastings was employed in making bargains for stuffs with native brokers. While he was thus engaged, Surajah Dowlah succeeded to the government, and declared war against the English. The defenceless settlement of Cossimbazar, lying close to the tyrant’s capital, was instantly seized. Hastings was sent a prisoner to Moorshedabad, but, in consequence of the humane intervention of the servants of the Dutch Company, was treated with indulgence. Meanwhile the Nabob marched on Calcutta; the governor and the commandant fled; the town and citadel were taken, and most of the English prisoners perished in the Black Hole.

In these events originated the greatness of Warren Hastings. The fugitive governor and his companions had taken refuge on the dreary islet of Fulda, near the mouth of the Hoogley. They were naturally desirous to obtain full information respecting the proceedings of the Nabob; and no person seemed so likely to furnish it as Hastings, who was a prisoner at large in the immediate neighbourhood of the court. He thus became a diplomatic agent, and soon established a high character for ability and resolution. The treason which at a later period was fatal to Surajah Dowlah was already in progress; and Hastings was admitted to the deliberations of the conspirators. But the time for striking had not arrived. It was necessary to postpone the execution of the design; and Hastings, who was now in extreme peril, fled to Fulda.

Soon after his arrival at Fulda, the expedition from Madras, commanded by Clive, appeared in the Hoogley. Warren, young, intrepid, and excited probably by the example of the Commander of the Forces, who, having like himself been a mercantile agent of

the Company, had been turned by public calamities into a soldier, determined to serve in the ranks. During the early operations of the war he carried a musket. But the quick eye of Clive soon perceived that the head of the young volunteer would be more useful than his arm. When, after the battle of Plassey, Meer Jaffier was proclaimed Nabob of Bengal, Hastings was appointed to reside at the court of the new prince as agent for the Company.

He remained at Moorshedabad till the year 1761, when he became a Member of Council, and was consequently forced to reside at Calcutta. This was during the interval between Clive's first and second administration, an interval which has left on the fame of the East India Company a stain not wholly effaced by many years of just and humane government. Mr. Vansittart, the Governor, was at the head of a new and anomalous empire. On one side was a band of English functionaries, daring, intelligent, eager to be rich. On the other side was a great native population, helpless, timid, accustomed to crouch under oppression. To keep the stronger race from preying on the weaker, was an undertaking which tasked to the utmost the talents and energy of Clive. Vansittart, with fair intentions, was a feeble and inefficient ruler. The master caste, as was natural, broke loose from all restraint; and then was seen what we believe to be the most frightful of all spectacles, the strength of civilisation without its mercy. To all other despotism there is a check, imperfect indeed, and liable to gross abuse, but still sufficient to preserve society from the last extreme of misery. A time comes when the evils of submission are obviously greater than those of resistance, when fear itself begets a sort of courage, when a convulsive burst of popular rage and despair warns tyrants not to presume too far on the patience of mankind. But against misgovernment such as then afflicted Bengal it was impossible to struggle. The superior intelligence and energy of the dominant class made their power irresistible. A war of Bengalees against Englishmen was like a war of sheep against wolves, of men against daemons. The only protection which the conquered could find was in the moderation, the clemency, the enlarged policy of the conquerors. That protection, at a later period, they found. But at first English power came among them unaccompanied by English morality. There was an interval between the time at which they became our subjects, and the time at which we began to reflect that we were bound to discharge towards them the duties of rulers. During that interval the business of a servant of the Company was simply to wring out of the natives a hundred or two hundred thousand pounds as speedily as possible, that he might return home before his constitution had suffered from the heat, to marry a peer's daughter, to buy rotten boroughs in Cornwall, and to give balls in St. James's Square. Of the conduct of Hastings at this time little is known; but the little that is known, and the circumstance that little is known, must be considered as honourable to him. He could not protect the natives: all that he could do was to abstain from plundering and oppressing them; and this he appears to have done. It is certain that at this time he continued poor; and it is equally certain

that by cruelty and dishonesty he might easily have become rich. It is certain that he was never charged with having borne a share in the worst abuses which then prevailed; and it is almost equally certain that, if he had borne a share in those abuses, the able and bitter enemies who afterwards persecuted him would not have failed to discover and to proclaim his guilt. The keen, severe, and even malevolent scrutiny to which his whole public life was subjected, a scrutiny unparalleled, as we believe, in the history of mankind, is in one respect advantageous to his reputation. It brought many lamentable blemishes to light; but it entitles him to be considered pure from every blemish which has not been brought to light.

The truth is that the temptations to which so many English functionaries yielded in the time of Mr. Vansittart were not temptations addressed to the ruling passions of Warren Hastings. He was not squeamish in pecuniary transactions; but he was neither sordid nor rapacious. He was far too enlightened a man to look on a great empire merely as a buccaneer would look on a galleon. Had his heart been much worse than it was, his understanding would have preserved him from that extremity of baseness. He was an unscrupulous, perhaps an unprincipled statesman; but still he was a statesman, and not a freebooter.

In 1764 Hastings returned to England. He had realised only a very moderate fortune; and that moderate fortune was soon reduced to nothing, partly by his praiseworthy liberality, and partly by his mismanagement. Towards his relations he appears to have acted very generously. The greater part of his savings he left in Bengal, hoping probably to obtain the high usury of India. But high usury and bad security generally go together; and Hastings lost both interest and principal.

He remained four years in England. Of his life at this time very little is known. But it has been asserted, and is highly probable, that liberal studies and the society of men of letters occupied a great part of his time. It is to be remembered to his honour that, in days when the languages of the East were regarded by other servants of the Company merely as the means of communicating with weavers and moneychangers, his enlarged and accomplished mind sought in Asiatic learning for new forms of intellectual enjoyment, and for new views of government and society. Perhaps, like most persons who have paid much attention to departments of knowledge which lie out of the common track, he was inclined to overrate the value of his favourite studies. He conceived that the cultivation of Persian literature might with advantage be made a part of the liberal education of an English gentleman; and he drew up a plan with that view. It is said that the University of Oxford, in which Oriental learning had never, since the revival of letters, been wholly neglected, was to be the seat of the institution which he contemplated. An endowment was expected from the munificence of the Company: and professors thoroughly competent to interpret Hafiz and Ferdusi were to be

engaged in the East. Hastings called on Johnson, with the hope, as it should seem, of interesting in this project a man who enjoyed the highest literary reputation, and who was particularly connected with Oxford. The interview appears to have left on Johnson's mind a most favourable impression of the talents and attainments of his visitor. Long after, when Hastings was ruling the immense population of British India, the old philosopher wrote to him, and referred in the most courtly terms, though with great dignity, to their short but agreeable intercourse.

Hastings soon began to look again towards India. He had little to attach him to England; and his pecuniary embarrassments were great. He solicited his old masters the Directors for employment, They acceded to his request, with high compliments both to his abilities and to his integrity, and appointed him a Member of Council at Madras. It would be unjust not to mention that, though forced to borrow money for his outfit, he did not withdraw any portion of the sum which he had appropriated to the relief of his distressed relations. In the spring of 1769 he embarked on board of the Duke of Grafton, and commenced a voyage distinguished by incidents which might furnish matter for a novel.

Among the passengers in the Duke of Grafton was a German of the name of Imhoff. He called himself a Baron; but he was in distressed circumstances, and was going out to Madras as a portrait-painter, in the hope of picking up some of the pagodas which were then lightly got and as lightly spent by the English in India. The Baron was accompanied by his wife, a native, we have somewhere read, of Archangel. This young woman, who, born under the Arctic circle, was destined to play the part of a Queen under the tropic of Cancer, had an agreeable person, a cultivated mind, and manners in the highest degree engaging. She despised her husband heartily, and, as the story which we have to tell sufficiently proves, not without reason. She was interested by the conversation and flattered by the attentions of Hastings. The situation was indeed perilous. No place is so propitious to the formation either of close friendships or of deadly enmities as an Indiaman. There are very few people who do not find a voyage which lasts several months insupportably dull. Anything is welcome which may break that long monotony, a sail, a shark, an albatross, a man overboard. Most passengers find some resource in eating twice as many meals as on land. But the great devices for killing the time are quarrelling and flirting. The facilities for both these exciting pursuits are great. The inmates of the ship are thrown together far more than in any country-seat or boarding-house. None can escape from the rest except by imprisoning himself in a cell in which he can hardly turn. All food, all exercise, is taken in company. Ceremony is to a great extent banished. It is every day in the power of a mischievous person to inflict innumerable annoyances. It is every day in the power of an amiable person to confer little services. It not seldom happens that serious distress and danger call forth, in

genuine beauty and deformity, heroic virtues and abject vices which, in the ordinary intercourse of good society, might remain during many years unknown even to intimate associates. Under such circumstances met Warren Hastings and the Baroness Imhoff, two persons whose accomplishments would have attracted notice in any court of Europe. The gentleman had no domestic ties. The lady was tied to a husband for whom she had no regard, and who had no regard for his own honour. An attachment sprang up, which was soon strengthened by events such as could hardly have occurred on land. Hastings fell ill. The Baroness nursed him with womanly tenderness, gave him his medicines with her own hand, and even sat up in his cabin while he slept. Long before the Duke of Grafton reached Madras, Hastings was in love. But his love was of a most characteristic description. Like his hatred, like his ambition, like all his passions, it was strong, but not impetuous. It was calm, deep, earnest, patient of delay, unconquerable by time. Imhoff was called into council by his wife and his wife's lover. It was arranged that the Baroness should institute a suit for a divorce in the courts of Franconia, that the Baron should afford every facility to the proceeding, and that, during the years which might elapse before the sentence should be pronounced, they should continue to live together. It was also agreed that Hastings should bestow some very substantial marks of gratitude on the complaisant husband, and should, when the marriage was dissolved, make the lady his wife, and adopt the children whom she had already borne to Imhoff.

At Madras, Hastings found the trade of the Company in a very disorganised state. His own tastes would have led him rather to political than to commercial pursuits: but he knew that the favour of his employers depended chiefly on their dividends, and that their dividends depended chiefly on the investment. He, therefore, with great judgment, determined to apply his vigorous mind for a time to this department of business, which had been much neglected, since the servants of the Company had ceased to be clerks, and had become warriors and negotiators.

In a very few months he effected an important reform. The Directors notified to him their high approbation, and were so much pleased with his conduct that they determined to place him at the head of the government at Bengal. Early in 1772 he quitted Fort St. George for his new post. The Imhoffs, who were still man and wife, accompanied him, and lived at Calcutta on the same plan which they had already followed during more than two years.

When Hastings took his seat at the head of the council-board, Bengal was still governed according to the system which Clive had devised, a system which was, perhaps, skilfully contrived for the purpose of facilitating and concealing a great revolution, but which, when that revolution was complete and irrevocable, could produce nothing but inconvenience. There were two governments, the real and the ostensible. The supreme power belonged to the

Company, and was in truth the most despotic power that can be conceived. The only restraint on the English masters of the country was that which their own justice and humanity imposed on them. There was no constitutional check on their will, and resistance to them was utterly hopeless.

But though thus absolute in reality the English had not yet assumed the style of sovereignty. They held their territories as vassals of the throne of Delhi; they raised their revenues as collectors appointed by the imperial commission; their public seal was inscribed with the imperial titles; and their mint struck only the imperial coin.

There was still a nabob of Bengal, who stood to the English rulers of his country in the same relation in which Augustulus stood to Odoacer, or the last Merovingians to Charles Martel and Pepin. He lived at Moorshedabad, surrounded by princely magnificence. He was approached with outward marks of reverence, and his name was used in public instruments. But in the government of the country he had less real share than the youngest writer or cadet in the Company’s service.

The English council which represented the Company at Calcutta was constituted on a very different plan from that which has since been adopted. At present the Governor is, as to all executive measures, absolute. He can declare war, conclude peace, appoint public functionaries or remove them, in opposition to the unanimous sense of those who sit with him in council. They are, indeed, entitled to know all that is done, to discuss all that is done, to advise, to remonstrate, to send protests to England. But it is with the Governor that the supreme power resides, and on him that the whole responsibility rests. This system, which was introduced by Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas in spite of the strenuous opposition of Mr. Burke, we conceive to be on the whole the best that was ever devised for the government of a country where no materials can be found for a representative constitution. In the time of Hastings the Governor had only one vote in council, and, in case of an equal division, a casting vote. It therefore happened not unfrequently that he was overruled on the gravest questions and it was possible that he might be wholly excluded, for years together, from the real direction of public affairs.

The English functionaries at Fort William had as yet paid little or no attention to the internal government of Bengal. The only branch of politics about which they much busied themselves was negotiation with the native princes. The police, the administration of justice, the details of the collection of revenue, were almost entirely neglected. We may remark that the phraseology of the Company’s servants still bears the traces of this state of things. To this day they always use the word "political," as synonymous with "diplomatic." We could name a gentleman still living, who was described by the highest authority as an invaluable public servant, eminently fit to be at

the head of the internal administration of a whole presidency, but unfortunately quite ignorant of all political business.

The internal government of Bengal the English rulers delegated to a great native minister, who was stationed at Moorshedabad. All military affairs, and, with the exception of what pertains to mere ceremonial, all foreign affairs, were withdrawn from his control; but the other departments of the administration were entirely confided to him. His own stipend amounted to near a hundred thousand pounds sterling a year. The personal allowance of the nabob, amounting to more than three hundred thousand pounds a year, passed through the minister's hands, and was, to a great extent, at his disposal. The collection of the revenue, the administration of justice, the maintenance of order, were left to this high functionary; and for the exercise of his immense power he was responsible to none but the British masters of the country.

A situation so important, lucrative, and splendid, was naturally an object of ambition to the ablest and most powerful natives. Clive had found it difficult to decide between conflicting pretensions. Two candidates stood out prominently from the crowd, each of them the representative of a race and of a religion.

One of these was Mahommed Reza Khan, a Mussulman of Persian extraction, able, active, religious after the fashion of his people, and highly esteemed by them. In England he might perhaps have been regarded as a corrupt and greedy politician. But, tried by the lower standard of Indian morality, he might be considered as a man of integrity and honour.

His competitor was a Hindoo Brahmin whose name has by a terrible and melancholy event, been inseparably associated with that of Warren Hastings, the Maharajah Nuncomar. This man had played an important part in all the revolutions which, since the time of Surajah Dowlah, had taken place in Bengal. To the consideration which in that country belongs to high and pure caste, he added the weight which is derived from wealth, talents, and experience. Of his moral character it is difficult to give a notion to those who are acquainted with human nature only as it appears in our island. What the Italian is to the Englishman, what the Hindoo is to the Italian, what the Bengalee is to other Hindoos, that was Nuncomar to other Bengalees. The physical organisation of the Bengalee is feeble even to effeminacy. He lives in a constant vapour bath. His pursuits are sedentary, his limbs delicate, his movements languid. During many ages he has been trampled upon by men of bolder and more hardy breeds. Courage, independence, veracity, are qualities to which his constitution and his situation are equally unfavourable. His mind bears a singular analogy to his body. It is weak even to helplessness for purposes of manly resistance; but its suppleness and its tact move the children of sterner climates to admiration not unmingled with contempt. All those arts which are the natural defence of the

weak are more familiar to this subtle race than to the Ionian of the time of Juvenal, or to the Jew of the dark ages. What the horns are to the buffalo, what the paw is to the tiger, what the sting is to the bee, what beauty, according to the old Greek song, is to woman, deceit is to the Bengalee. Large promises, smooth excuses, elaborate tissues of circumstantial falsehood, chicanery, perjury, forgery, are the weapons, offensive and defensive, of the people of the Lower Ganges. All those millions do not furnish one sepoy to the armies of the Company. But as userers, as money-changers, as sharp legal practitioners, no class of human beings can bear a comparison with them. With all his softness, the Bengalee is by no means placable in his enmities or prone to pity. The pertinacity with which he adheres to his purposes yields only to the immediate pressure of fear. Nor does he lack a certain kind of courage which is often wanting to his masters. To inevitable evils he is sometimes found to oppose a passive fortitude, such as the Stoics attributed to their ideal sage. An European warrior who rushes on a battery of cannon with a loud hurrah, will sometimes shriek under the surgeon's knife, and fall in an agony of despair at the sentence of death. But the Bengalee, who would see his country overrun, his house laid in ashes, his children murdered or dishonoured, without having the spirit to strike one blow, has yet been known to endure torture with the firmness of Mucius, and to mount the scaffold with the steady step and even pulse of Algernon Sydney.

In Nuncomar, the national character was strongly and with exaggeration personified. The Company's servants had repeatedly detected him in the most criminal intrigues. On one occasion he brought a false charge against another Hindoo, and tried to substantiate it by producing forged documents. On another occasion it was discovered that, while professing the strongest attachment to the English, he was engaged in several conspiracies against them, and in particular that he was the medium of a correspondence between the court of Delhi and the French authorities in the Carnatic. For these and similar practices he had been long detained in confinement. But his talents and influence had not only procured his liberation, but had obtained for him a certain degree of consideration even among the British rulers of his country.

Clive was extremely unwilling to place a Mussulman at the head of the administration of Bengal. On the other hand, he could not bring himself to confer immense power on a man to whom every sort of villainy had repeatedly been brought home. Therefore, though the nabob, over whom Nuncomar had by intrigue acquired great influence, begged that the artful Hindoo might be intrusted with the government, Clive, after some hesitation, decided honestly and wisely in favour of Mahommed Reza Khan. When Hastings became Governor, Mahommed Reza Khan had held power seven years. An infant son of Meer Jaffier was now nabob; and the guardianship of the young prince's person had been confided to the minister.

Nuncomar, stimulated at once by cupidity and malice, had been constantly attempting to hurt the reputation of his successful rival. This was not difficult. The revenues of Bengal, under the administration established by Clive, did not yield such a surplus as had been anticipated by the Company; for, at that time, the most absurd notions were entertained in England respecting the wealth of India. Palaces of porphyry, hung with the richest brocade, heaps of pearls and diamonds, vaults from which pagodas and gold mohurs were measured out by the bushel, filled the imagination even of men of business. Nobody seemed to be aware of what nevertheless was most undoubtedly the truth, that India was a poorer country than countries which in Europe are reckoned poor, than Ireland, for example, or than Portugal. It was confidently believed by Lords of the Treasury and members for the city that Bengal would not only defray its own charges, but would afford an increased dividend to the proprietors of India stock, and large relief to the English finances. These absurd expectations were disappointed; and the Directors, naturally enough, chose to attribute the disappointment rather to the mismanagement of Mahommed Reza Khan than to their own ignorance of the country intrusted to their care. They were confirmed in their error by the agents of Nuncomar; for Nuncomar had agents even in Leadenhall Street. Soon after Hastings reached Calcutta, he received a letter addressed by the Court of Directors, not to the Council generally, but to himself in particular. He was directed to remove Mahommed Reza Khan, to arrest him together with all his family and all his partisans, and to institute a strict inquiry into the whole administration of the province. It was added that the Governor would do well to avail himself of the assistance of Nuncomar in the investigation. The vices of Nuncomar were acknowledged. But even from his vices, it was said, much advantage might at such a conjuncture be derived; and, though he could not safely be trusted, it might still be proper to encourage him by hopes of reward.

The Governor bore no goodwill to Nuncomar. Many years before, they had known each other at Moorshedabad; and then a quarrel had arisen between them which all the authority of their superiors could hardly compose. Widely as they differed in most points, they resembled each other in this, that both were men of unforgiving natures. To Mahommed Reza Khan, on the other hand, Hastings had no feelings of hostility. Nevertheless he proceeded to execute the instructions of the Company with an alacrity which he never showed, except when instructions were in perfect conformity with his own views. He had, wisely as we think, determined to get rid of the system of double government in Bengal. The orders of the Directors furnished him with the means of effecting his purpose, and dispensed him from the necessity of discussing the matter with his Council. He took his measures with his usual vigour and dexterity. At midnight, the palace of Mahommed Reza Khan at Moorshedabad was surrounded by a battalion of sepoys. The Minister was roused from his slumbers and informed that he was a prisoner. With the Mussulman gravity, he bent his

head and submitted himself to the will of God. He fell not alone. A chief named Schitab Roy had been intrusted with the government of Bahar. His valour and his attachment to the English had more than once been signally proved. On that memorable day on which the people of Patna saw from their walls the whole army of the Mogul scattered by the little band of Captain Knox, the voice of the British conquerors assigned the palm of gallantry to the brave Asiatic. "I never," said Knox, when he introduced Schitab Roy, covered with blood and dust, to the English functionaries assembled in the factory, "I never saw a native fight so before." Schitab Roy was involved in the ruin of Mahommed Reza Khan, was removed from office, and was placed under arrest. The members of the Council received no intimation of these measures till the prisoners were on their road to Calcutta.

The inquiry into the conduct of the minister was postponed on different pretences. He was detained in an easy confinement during many months. In the meantime, the great revolution which Hastings had planned was carried into effect. The office of minister was abolished. The internal administration was transferred to the servants of the Company. A system, a very imperfect system, it is true, of civil and criminal justice, under English superintendence, was established. The nabob was no longer to have even an ostensible share in the government; but he was still to receive a considerable annual allowance, and to be surrounded with the state of sovereignty. As he was an infant, it was necessary to provide guardians for his person and property. His person was intrusted to a lady of his father’s harem, known by the name of the Munny Begum. The office of treasurer of the household was bestowed on a son of Nuncomar, named Goordas. Nuncomar’s services were wanted; yet he could not safely be trusted with power; and Hastings thought it a masterstroke of policy to reward the able and unprincipled parent by promoting the inoffensive child.

The revolution completed, the double government dissolved, the Company installed in the full sovereignty of Bengal, Hastings had no motive to treat the late ministers with rigour. Their trial had been put off on various pleas till the new organization was complete. They were then brought before a committee, over which the Governor presided. Schitab Roy was speedily acquitted with honour. A formal apology was made to him for the restraint to which he had been subjected. All the Eastern marks of respect were bestowed on him. He was clothed in a robe of state, presented with jewels and with a richly harnessed elephant, and sent back to his government at Patna. But his health had suffered from confinement; his high spirit had been cruelly wounded; and soon after his liberation he died of a broken heart.

The innocence of Mahommed Reza Khan was not so clearly established. But the Governor was not disposed to deal harshly. After a long hearing, in which Nuncomar appeared as the accuser, and displayed both the art and the inveterate rancour which

distinguished him, Hastings pronounced that the charge had not been made out, and ordered the fallen minister to be set at liberty.

Nuncomar had purposed to destroy the Mussulman administration, and to rise on its ruin. Both his malevolence and his cupidity had been disappointed. Hastings had made him a tool, had used him for the purpose of accomplishing the transfer of the government from Moorshedabad to Calcutta, from native to European hands. The rival, the enemy, so long envied, so implacably persecuted, had been dismissed unhurt. The situation so long and ardently desired had been abolished. It was natural that the Governor should be from that time an object of the most intense hatred to the vindictive Brahmin. As yet, however, it was necessary to suppress such feelings. The time was coming when that long animosity was to end in a desperate and deadly struggle.

In the meantime, Hastings was compelled to turn his attention to foreign affairs. The object of his diplomacy was at this time simply to get money. The finances of his government were in an embarrassed state, and this embarrassment he was determined to relieve by some means, fair or foul. The principle which directed all his dealings with his neighbours is fully expressed by the old motto of one of the great predatory families of Teviotdale, "Thou shalt want ere I want." He seems to have laid it down, as a fundamental proposition which could not be disputed, that, when he had not as many lacs of rupees as the public service required, he was to take them from anybody who had. One thing, indeed, is to be said in excuse for him. The pressure applied to him by his employers at home, was such as only the highest virtue could have withstood, such as left him no choice except to commit great wrongs, or to resign his high post, and with that post all his hopes of fortune and distinction. The Directors, it is true, never enjoined or applauded any crime. Far from it. Whoever examines their letters written at that time, will find there many just and humane sentiments, many excellent precepts, in short, an admirable code of political ethics. But every exhortation is modified or nullified by a demand for money. "Govern leniently, and send more money; practise strict justice and moderation towards neighbouring powers, and send more money"--this is, in truth, the sum of almost all the instructions that Hastings ever received from home. Now these instructions, being interpreted, mean simply, "Be the father and the oppressor of the people; be just and unjust, moderate and rapacious." The Directors dealt with India, as the Church, in the good old times, dealt with a heretic. They delivered the victim over to the executioners, with an earnest request that all possible tenderness might be shown. We by no means accuse or suspect those who framed these despatches of hypocrisy. It is probable that, writing fifteen thousand miles from the place where their orders were to be carried into effect, they never perceived the gross inconsistency of which they were guilty. But the inconsistency was at once manifest to their vicegerent at Calcutta, who, with an empty

treasury, with an unpaid army, with his own salary often in arrear, with deficient crops, with government tenants daily running away, was called upon to remit home another half million without fail. Hastings saw that it was absolutely necessary for him to disregard either the moral discourses or the pecuniary requisitions of his employers. Being forced to disobey them in something, he had to consider what kind of disobedience they would most readily pardon; and he correctly judged that the safest course would be to neglect the sermons and to find the rupees.

A mind so fertile as his, and so little restrained by conscientious scruples, speedily discovered several modes of relieving the financial embarrassments of the Government. The allowance of the Nabob of Bengal was reduced at a stroke from three hundred and twenty thousand pounds a year to half that sum. The Company had bound itself to pay near three hundred thousand pounds a year to the Great Mogul, as a mark of homage for the provinces which he had intrusted to their care; and they had ceded to him the districts of Corah and Allahabad. On the plea that the Mogul was not really independent, but merely a tool in the hands of others, Hastings determined to retract these concessions. He accordingly declared that the English would pay no more tribute, and sent troops to occupy Allahabad and Corah. The situation of these places was such, that there would be little advantage and great expense in retaining them. Hastings, who wanted money and not territory, determined to sell them. A purchaser was not wanting. The rich province of Oude had, in the general dissolution of the Mogul Empire, fallen to the share of the great Mussulman house by which it is still governed. About twenty years ago, this house, by the permission of the British Government, assumed the royal title; but in the time of Warren Hastings such an assumption would have been considered by the Mahommedans of India as a monstrous impiety. The Prince of Oude, though he held the power, did not venture to use the style of sovereignty. To the appellation of Nabob or Viceroy, he added that of Vizier of the monarchy of Hindostan, just as in the last century the Electors of Saxony and Brandenburg, though independent of the Emperor, and often in arms against him, were proud to style themselves his Grand Chamberlain and Grand Marshal. Sujah Dowlah, then Nabob Vizier, was on excellent terms with the English. He had a large treasure. Allahabad and Corah were so situated that they might be of use to him and could be of none to the Company. The buyer and seller soon came to an understanding; and the provinces which had been torn from the Mogul were made over to the Government of Oude for about half a million sterling.

But there was another matter still more important to be settled by the Vizier and the Governor. The fate of a brave people was to be decided. It was decided in a manner which has left a lasting stain on the fame of Hastings and of England.

The people of Central Asia had always been to the inhabitants of India what the warriors of the German forests were to the subjects of the decaying monarchy of Rome. The dark, slender, and timid Hindoo shrank from a conflict with the strong muscle and resolute spirit of the fair race which dwelt beyond the passes. There is reason to believe that, at a period anterior to the dawn of regular history, the people who spoke the rich and flexible Sanskrit came from regions lying far beyond the Hyphasis and the Hystaspes, and imposed their yoke on the children of the soil. It is certain that, during the last ten centuries, a succession of invaders descended from the west on Hindostan; nor was the course of conquest ever turned back towards the setting sun, till that memorable campaign in which the cross of Saint George was planted on the walls of Ghizni.

The Emperors of Hindostan themselves came from the other side of the great mountain ridge; and it had always been their practice to recruit their army from the hardy and valiant race from which their own illustrious house sprang. Among the military adventurers who were allured to the Mogul standards from the neighbourhood of Cabul and Candahar, were conspicuous several gallant bands, known by the name of the Rohillas. Their services had been rewarded with large tracts of land, fiefs of the spear, if we may use an expression drawn from an analogous state of things, in that fertile plain through which the Ramgunga flows from the snowy heights of Kumaon to join the Ganges. In the general confusion which followed the death of Aurungzebe, the warlike colony became virtually independent. The Rohillas were distinguished from the other inhabitants of India by a peculiarly fair complexion. They were more honourably distinguished by courage in war, and by skill in the arts of peace. While anarchy raged from Lahore to Cape Comorin, their little territory enjoyed the blessings of repose under the guardianship of valour. Agriculture and commerce flourished among them; nor were they negligent of rhetoric and poetry. Many persons now living have heard aged men talk with regret of the golden days when the Afghan princes ruled in the vale of Rohilcund.

Sujah Dowlah had set his heart on adding this rich district to his own principality. Right, or show of right, he had absolutely none. His claim was in no respect better founded than that of Catherine to Poland, or that of the Bonaparte family to Spain. The Rohillas held their country by exactly the same title by which he held his, and had governed their country far better than his had ever been governed. Nor were they a people whom it was perfectly safe to attack. Their land was indeed an open plain destitute of natural defences; but their veins were full of the high blood of Afghanistan. As soldiers, they had not the steadiness which is seldom found except in company with strict discipline; but their impetuous valour had been proved on many fields of battle. It was said that their chiefs, when united by common peril, could bring eighty thousand men into the field. Sujah Dowlah had himself seen them fight, and wisely shrank from

a conflict with them. There was in India one army, and only one, against which even those proud Caucasian tribes could not stand. It had been abundantly proved that neither tenfold odds, nor the martial ardour of the boldest Asiatic nations, could avail ought against English science and resolution. Was it possible to induce the Governor of Bengal to let out to hire the irresistible energies of the imperial people, the skill against which the ablest chiefs of Hindostan were helpless as infants, the discipline which had so often triumphed over the frantic struggles of fanaticism and despair, the unconquerable British courage which is never so sedate and stubborn as towards the close of a doubtful and murderous day?

This was what the Nabob Vizier asked, and what Hastings granted. A bargain was soon struck. Each of the negotiators had what the other wanted. Hastings was in need of funds to carry on the government of Bengal, and to send remittances to London; and Sujah Dowlah had an ample revenue. Sujah Dowlah was bent on subjugating the Rohillas; and Hastings had at his disposal the only force by which the Rohillas could be subjugated. It was agreed that an English army should be lent to the Nabob Vizier, and that, for the loan, he should pay four hundred thousand pounds sterling, besides defraying all the charge of the troops while employed in his service.

"I really cannot see," says Mr. Gleig, "upon what grounds, either of political or moral justice, this proposition deserves to be stigmatised as infamous." If we understand the meaning of words, it is infamous to commit a wicked action for hire, and it is wicked to engage in war without provocation. In this particular war, scarcely one aggravating circumstance was wanting. The object of the Rohilla war was this, to deprive a large population, who had never done us the least harm, of a good government, and to place them, against their will, under an execrably bad one. Nay, even this is not all. England now descended far below the level even of those petty German princes who, about the same time, sold us troops to fight the Americans. The hussar-mongers of Hesse and Anspach had at least the assurance that the expeditions on which their soldiers were to be employed would be conducted in conformity with the humane rules of civilised warfare. Was the Rohilla war likely to be so conducted? Did the Governor stipulate that it should be so conducted? He well knew what Indian warfare was. He well knew that the power which he covenanted to put into Sujah Dowlah’s hands would, in all probability, be atrociously abused; and he required no guarantee, no promise, that it should not be so abused. He did not even reserve to himself the right of withdrawing his aid in case of abuse, however gross. We are almost ashamed to notice Major Scott’s plea, that Hastings was justified in letting out English troops to slaughter the Rohillas, because the Rohillas were not of Indian race, but a colony from a distant country. What were the English themselves? Was it for them to proclaim a crusade for the expulsion of all

intruders from the countries watered by the Ganges? Did it lie in their mouths to contend that a foreign settler who establishes an empire in India is a caput lupinum? What would they have said if any other power had, on such a ground, attacked Madras or Calcutta, without the slightest provocation? Such a defence was wanting to make the infamy of the transaction complete. The atrocity of the crime, and the hypocrisy of the apology, are worthy of each other.

One of the three brigades of which the Bengal army consisted was sent under Colonel Champion to join Sujah Dowlah's forces. The Rohillas expostulated, entreated, offered a large ransom, but in Vain. They then resolved to defend themselves to the last. A bloody battle was fought. "The enemy," says Colonel Champion, "gave proof of a good share of military knowledge; and it is impossible to describe a more obstinate firmness of resolution than they displayed." The dastardly sovereign of Oude fled from the field. The English were left unsupported; but their fire and their charge were irresistible. It was not, however, till the most distinguished chiefs had fallen, fighting bravely at the head of their troops, that the Rohilla ranks gave way. Then the Nabob Vizier and his rabble made their appearance, and hastened to plunder the camp of the valiant enemies whom they had never dared to look in the face. The soldiers of the Company, trained in an exact discipline, kept unbroken order, while the tents were pillaged by these worthless allies. But many voices were heard to exclaim, "We have had all the fighting, and those rogues are to have all the profit."

Then the horrors of Indian war were let loose on the fair valleys and cities of Rohilcund. The whole country was in a blaze. More than a hundred thousand people fled from their homes to pestilential jungles, preferring famine, and fever, and the haunts of tigers, to the tyranny of him, to whom an English and a Christian government had, for shameful lucre, sold their substance, and their blood, and the honour of their wives and daughters. Colonel Champion remonstrated with the Nabob Vizier, and sent strong representations to Fort William; but the Governor had made no conditions as to the mode in which the war was to be carried on. He had troubled himself about nothing, but his forty lacs; and, though he might disapprove of Sujah Dowlah's wanton barbarity, he did not think himself entitled to interfere, except by offering advice. This delicacy excites the admiration of the biographer. "Mr. Hastings," he says, "could not himself dictate to the Nabob, nor permit the commander of the Company's troops to dictate how the war was to be carried on." No, to be sure. Mr. Hastings had only to put down by main force the brave struggles of innocent men fighting for their liberty. Their military resistance crushed his duties ended; and he had then only to fold his arms and look on, while their villages were burned, their children butchered, and their women violated. Will Mr. Gleig seriously maintain this opinion? Is any rule more plain than this, that whoever voluntarily gives to another irresistible

power over human beings is bound to take order that such power shall not be barbarously abused? But we beg pardon of our readers for arguing a point so clear.

We hasten to the end of this sad and disgraceful story. The war ceased. The finest population in India was subjected to a greedy, cowardly, cruel tyrant. Commerce and agriculture languished. The rich province which had tempted the cupidity of Sujah Dowlah became the most miserable part even of his miserable dominions. Yet is the injured nation not extinct. At long intervals gleams of its ancient spirit have flashed forth; and even at this day, valour, and self-respect, and a chivalrous feeling rare among Asiatics, and a bitter remembrance of the great crime of England, distinguish that noble Afghan race. To this day they are regarded as the best of all sepoys at the cold steel; and it was very recently remarked, by one who had enjoyed great opportunities of observation, that the only natives of India to whom the word "gentleman" can with perfect propriety be applied, are to be found among the Rohillas.

Whatever we may think of the morality of Hastings, it cannot be denied that the financial results of his policy did honour to his talents. In less than two years after he assumed the government, he had without imposing any additional burdens on the people subject to his authority, added about four hundred and fifty thousand pounds to the annual income of the Company, besides procuring about a million in ready money. He had also relieved the finances of Bengal from military expenditure, amounting to near a quarter of a million a year, and had thrown that charge on the Nabob of Oude. There can be no doubt that this was a result which, if it had been obtained by honest means, would have entitled him to the warmest gratitude of his country, and which, by whatever means obtained, proved that he possessed great talents for administration.

In the meantime, Parliament had been engaged in long and grave discussions on Asiatic affairs. The ministry of Lord North, in the session of 1773, introduced a measure which mode a considerable change in the constitution of the Indian Government. This law, known by the name of the Regulating Act, provided that the presidency of Bengal should exercise a control over the other possessions of the Company; that the chief of that presidency should be styled Governor-General; that he should be assisted by four Councillors; and that a supreme court of judicature, consisting of a chief justice and three inferior judges, should be established at Calcutta. This court was made independent of the Governor-General and Council, and was intrusted with a civil and criminal jurisdiction of immense and, at the same time, of undefined extent.

The Governor-General and Councillors were named in the Act, and were to hold their situations for five years. Hastings was to be the first Governor-General. One of the four new Councillors, Mr.

Barwell, an experienced servant of the Company, was then in India. The other three, General Clavering, Mr. Monson, and Mr. Francis, were sent out from England.

The ablest of the new Councillors was, beyond all doubt, Philip Francis. His acknowledged compositions prove that he possessed considerable eloquence and information. Several years passed in the public offices had formed him to habits of business. His enemies have never denied that he had a fearless and manly spirit; and his friends, we are afraid, must acknowledge that his estimate of himself was extravagantly high, that his temper was irritable, that his deportment was often rude and petulant, and that his hatred was of intense bitterness and long duration.

It is scarcely possible to mention this eminent man without adverting for a moment to the question which his name at once suggests to every mind. Was he the author of the Letters Of Junius? Our own firm belief is that he was. The evidence is, we think, such as would support a verdict in a civil, nay, in a criminal proceeding. The handwriting of Junius is the very peculiar handwriting of Francis, slightly disguised. As to the position, pursuits, and connections of Junius, the following are the most important facts which can be considered as clearly proved: first, that he was acquainted with the technical forms of the Secretary of State's office; secondly, that he was intimately acquainted with the business of the War Office; thirdly, that he, during the year 1770, attended debates in the House of Lords, and took notes of speeches, particularly of the speeches of Lord Chatham; fourthly, that he bitterly resented the appointment of Mr. Chamier to the place of Deputy Secretary-at-War; fifthly, that he was bound by some strong tie to the first Lord Holland. Now, Francis passed some years in the Secretary of State's office. He was subsequently Chief Clerk of the War Office. He repeatedly mentioned that he had himself, in 1770, heard speeches of Lord Chatham; and some of these speeches were actually printed from his notes. He resigned his clerkship at the War Office from resentment at the appointment of Mr. Chamier. It was by Lord Holland that he was first introduced into the public service. Now, here are five marks, all of which ought to be found in Junius. They are all five found in Francis. We do not believe that more than two of them can be found in any other person whatever. If this argument does not settle the question, there is an end of all reasoning on circumstantial evidence.

The internal evidence seems to us to point the same way. The style of Francis bears a strong resemblance to that of Junius; nor are we disposed to admit, what is generally taken for granted, that the acknowledged compositions of Francis are very decidedly inferior to the anonymous letters. The argument from inferiority, at all events, is one which may be urged with at least equal force against every claimant that has ever been mentioned, with the single exception of Burke; and it would be a waste of time to prove that Burke was not Junius. And what

conclusion, after all, can be drawn from mere inferiority? Every writer must produce his best work; and the interval between his best work and his second best work may be very wide indeed. Nobody will say that the best letters of Junius are more decidedly superior to the acknowledged works of Francis than three or four of Corneille's tragedies to the rest, than three or four of Ben Jonson's comedies to the rest, than the Pilgrim's Progress to the other works of Bunyan, than Don Quixote to the other works of Cervantes. Nay, it is certain that Junius, whoever he may have been, was a most unequal writer. To go no further than the letters which bear the signature of Junius; the letter to the king, and the letters to Horne Tooke, have little in common, except the asperity; and asperity was an ingredient seldom wanting either in the writings or in the speeches of Francis.

Indeed one of the strongest reasons for believing that Francis was Junius is the moral resemblance between the two men. It is not difficult, from the letters which, under various signatures, are known to have been written by Junius, and from his dealings with Woodfall and others, to form a tolerably correct notion of his character. He was clearly a man not destitute of real patriotism and magnanimity, a man whose vices were not of a sordid kind. But he must also have been a man in the highest degree arrogant and insolent, a man prone to malevolence, and prone to the error of mistaking his malevolence for public virtue. "Doest thou well to be angry?" was the question asked in old time of the Hebrew prophet. And he answered, "I do well." This was evidently the temper of Junius; and to this cause we attribute the savage cruelty which disgraces several of his letters. No man is so merciless as he who, under a strong self-delusion, confounds his antipathies with his duties. It may be added that Junius, though allied with the democratic party by common enmities, was the very opposite of a democratic politician. While attacking individuals with a ferocity which perpetually violated all the laws of literary warfare, he regarded the most defective parts of old institutions with a respect amounting to pedantry, pleaded the cause of Old Sarum with fervour, and contemptuously told the capitalists of Manchester and Leeds that, if they wanted votes, they might buy land and become freeholders of Lancashire and Yorkshire. All this, we believe, might stand, with scarcely any change, for a character of Philip Francis.

It is not strange that the great anonymous writer should have been willing at that time to leave the country which had been so powerfully stirred by his eloquence. Everything had gone against him. That party which he clearly preferred to every other, the party of George Grenville, had been scattered by the death of its chief; and Lord Suffolk had led the greater part of it over to the ministerial benches. The ferment produced by the Middlesex election had gone down. Every faction must have been alike an object of aversion to Junius. His opinions on domestic affairs

separated him from the Ministry; his opinions on colonial affairs from the Opposition. Under such circumstances, he had thrown down his pen in misanthropical despair. His farewell letter to Woodfall bears date the nineteenth of January, 1773. In that letter, he declared that he must be an idiot to write again; that he had meant well by the cause and the public; that both were given up; that there were not ten men who would act steadily together on any question. "But it is all alike," he added, "vile and contemptible. You have never flinched that I know of; and I shall always rejoice to hear of your prosperity." These were the last words of Junius. In a year from that time, Philip Francis was on his voyage to Bengal.

With the three new Councillors came out the judges of the Supreme Court. The chief justice was Sir Elijah Impey. He was an old acquaintance of Hastings; and it is probable that the Governor-General, if he had searched through all the inns of court, could not have found an equally serviceable tool. But the members of Council were by no means in an obsequious mood. Hastings greatly disliked the new form of government, and had no very high opinion of his coadjutors. They had heard of this, and were disposed to be suspicious and punctilious. When men are in such a frame of mind, any trifle is sufficient to give occasion for dispute. The members of Council expected a salute of twenty-one guns from the batteries of Fort William. Hastings allowed them only seventeen. They landed in ill-humour. The first civilities were exchanged with cold reserve. On the morrow commenced that long quarrel which, after distracting British India, was renewed in England, and in which all the most eminent statesmen and orators of the age took active part on one or the other side.

Hastings was supported by Barwell. They had not always been friends. But the arrival of the new members of Council from England naturally had the effect of uniting the old servants of the Company. Clavering, Monson, and Francis formed the majority. They instantly wrested the government out of the hands of Hastings, condemned, certainly not without justice, his late dealings with the Nabob Vizier, recalled the English agent from Oude, and sent thither a creature of their own, ordered the brigade which had conquered the unhappy Rohillas to return to the Company’s territories, and instituted a severe inquiry into the conduct of the war. Next, in spite of the Governor-General’s remonstrances, they proceeded to exercise, in the most indiscreet manner, their new authority over the subordinate presidencies; threw all the affairs of Bombay into confusion; and interfered, with an incredible union of rashness and feebleness, in the intestine disputes of the Mahratta Government. At the same time, they fell on the internal administration of Bengal, and attacked the whole fiscal and judicial system, a system which was undoubtedly defective, but which it was very improbable that gentlemen fresh from England would be competent to amend. The effect of their reforms was that all protection to life and property was withdrawn, and that gangs of robbers plundered and

slaughtered with impunity in the very suburbs of Calcutta. Hastings continued to live in the Government-house, and to draw the salary of Governor-General. He continued even to take the lead at the council-board in the transaction of ordinary business; for his opponents could not but feel that he knew much of which they were ignorant, and that he decided, both surely and speedily, many questions which to them would have been hopelessly puzzling. But the higher powers of government and the most valuable patronage had been taken from him.

The natives soon found this out. They considered him as a fallen man; and they acted after their kind. Some of our readers may have seen, in India, a cloud of crows pecking a sick vulture to death, no bad type of what happens in that country, as often as fortune deserts one who has been great and dreaded. In an instant, all the sycophants who had lately been ready to lie for him, to forge for him, to pandar for him, to poison for him, hasten to purchase the favour of his victorious enemies by accusing him. An Indian government has only to let it be understood that it wishes a particular man to be ruined; and, in twenty-four hours, it will be furnished with grave charges, supported by depositions so full and circumstantial that any person unaccustomed to Asiatic mendacity would regard them as decisive. It is well if the signature of the destined victim is not counterfeited at the foot of some illegal compact, and if some treasonable paper is not slipped into a hiding-place in his house. Hastings was now regarded as helpless. The power to make or mar the fortune of every man in Bengal had passed, as it seemed, into the hands of the new Councillors. Immediately charges against the Governor-General began to pour in. They were eagerly welcomed by the majority, who, to do them justice, were men of too much honour knowingly to countenance false accusations, but who were not sufficiently acquainted with the East to be aware that, in that part of the world, a very little encouragement from power will call forth, in a week, more Oateses, and Bedloes, and Dangerfields, than Westminster Hall sees in a century.

It would have been strange indeed if, at such a juncture, Nuncomar had remained quiet. That bad man was stimulated at once by malignity, by avarice, and by ambition. Now was the time to be avenged on his old enemy, to wreak a grudge of seventeen years, to establish himself in the favour of the majority of the Council, to become the greatest native in Bengal. From the time of the arrival of the new Councillors he had paid the most marked court to them, and had in consequence been excluded, with all indignity, from the Government-house. He now put into the hands of Francis with great ceremony, a paper, containing several charges of the most serious description. By this document Hastings was accused of putting offices up to sale, and of receiving bribes for suffering offenders to escape. In particular, it was alleged that Mahommed Reza Khan had been dismissed with impunity, in consideration of a great sum paid to

the Governor-General.

Francis read the paper in Council. A violent altercation followed. Hastings complained in bitter terms of the way in which he was treated, spoke with contempt of Nuncomar and of Nuncomar's accusation, and denied the right of the Council to sit in judgment on the Governor. At the next meeting of the Board, another communication from Nuncomar was produced. He requested that he might be permitted to attend the Council, and that he might be heard in support of his assertions. Another tempestuous debate took place. The Governor-General maintained that the council-room was not a proper place for such an investigation; that from persons who were heated by daily conflict with him he could not expect the fairness of judges; and that he could not, without betraying the dignity of his post, submit to be confronted with such a man as Nuncomar. The majority, however, resolved to go into the charges. Hastings rose, declared the sitting at an end, and left the room, followed by Barwell. The other members kept their seats, voted themselves a council, put Clavering in the chair, and ordered Nuncomar to be called in. Nuncomar not only adhered to the original charges, but, after the fashion of the East, produced a large supplement. He stated that Hastings had received a great sum for appointing Rajah Goordas treasurer of the Nabob's household, and for committing the care of his Highness's person to the Munny Begum. He put in a letter purporting to bear the seal of the Munny Begum, for the purpose of establishing the truth of his story. The seal, whether forged, as Hastings affirmed, or genuine, as we are rather inclined to believe, proved nothing. Nuncomar, as everybody knows who knows India, had only to tell the Munny Begum that such a letter would give pleasure to the majority of the Council, in order to procure her attestation. The majority, however, voted that the charge was made out; that Hastings had corruptly received between thirty and forty thousand pounds; and that he ought to be compelled to refund.

The general feeling among the English in Bengal was strongly in favour of the Governor-General. In talents for business, in knowledge of the country, in general courtesy of demeanour, he was decidedly superior to his persecutors. The servants of the Company were naturally disposed to side with the most distinguished member of their own body against a clerk from the War Office, who, profoundly ignorant of the native language, and of the native character, took on himself to regulate every department of the administration. Hastings, however, in spite of the general sympathy of his countrymen, was in a most painful situation. There was still an appeal to higher authority in England. If that authority took part with his enemies, nothing was left to him but to throw up his office. He accordingly placed his resignation in the hands of his agent in London, Colonel Macleane. But Macleane was instructed not to produce the resignation, unless it should be fully ascertained that the feeling at the India House was adverse to the Governor-General.

The triumph of Nuncomar seemed to be complete. He held a daily levee, to which his countrymen resorted in crowds, and to which on one occasion, the majority of the Council condescended to repair. His house was an office for the purpose of receiving charges against the Governor-General. It was said that, partly by threats, and partly by wheedling, the villainous Brahmin had induced many of the wealthiest men of the province to send in complaints. But he was playing a perilous game. It was not safe to drive to despair a man of such resources and of such determination as Hastings. Nuncomar, with all his acuteness, did not understand the nature of the institutions under which he lived. He saw that he had with him the majority of the body which made treaties, gave places, raised taxes. The separation between political and judicial functions was a thing of which he had no conception. It bad probably never occurred to him that there was in Bengal an authority perfectly independent of the Council, an authority which could protect one whom the Council wished to destroy and send to the gibbet one whom the Council wished to protect. Yet such was the fact. The Supreme Court was, within the sphere of its own duties, altogether independent of the Government. Hastings, with his usual sagacity, had seen how much advantage he might derive from possessing himself of this stronghold; and he had acted accordingly. The judges, especially the Chief Justice, were hostile to the majority of the Council. The time had now come for putting this formidable machinery into action.

On a sudden, Calcutta was astounded by the news that Nuncomar had been taken up on a charge of felony, committed and thrown into the common gaol. The crime imputed to him was that six years before he had forged a bond. The ostensible prosecutor was a native. But it was then, and still is, the opinion of everybody, idiots and biographers excepted, that Hastings was the real mover in the business.

The rage of the majority rose to the highest point. They protested against the proceedings of the Supreme Court, and sent several urgent messages to the judges, demanding that Nuncomar should be admitted to bail. The Judges returned haughty and resolute answers. All that the Council could do was to heap honours and emoluments on the family of Nuncomar; and this they did. In the meantime the assizes commenced; a true bill was found; and Nuncomar was brought before Sir Elijah Impey and a jury composed of Englishmen. A great quantity of contradictory swearing, and the necessity of having every word of the evidence interpreted, protracted the trial to a most unusual length. At last a verdict of guilty was returned, and the Chief Justice pronounced sentence of death on the prisoner.

That Impey ought to have respited Nuncomar we hold to be perfectly clear. Whether the whole proceeding was not illegal, is a question. But it is certain, that whatever may have been,

according to technical rules of construction, the effect of the statute under which the trial took place, it was most unjust to hang a Hindoo for forgery. The law which made forgery capital in England was passed without the smallest reference to the state of society in India. It was unknown to the natives of India. It had never been put in execution among them, certainly not for want of delinquents. It was in the highest degree shocking to all their notions. They were not accustomed to the distinction which many circumstances, peculiar to our own state of society, have led us to make between forgery and other kinds of cheating. The counterfeiting of a seal was, in their estimation, a common act of swindling; nor had it ever crossed their minds that it was to be punished as severely as gang-robbery or assassination. A just judge would, beyond all doubt, have reserved the case for the consideration of the sovereign. But Impey would not hear of mercy or delay.

The excitement among all classes was great. Francis and Francis's few English adherents described the Governor-General and the Chief justice as the worst of murderers. Clavering, it was said, swore that even at the foot of the gallows, Nuncomar should be rescued. The bulk of the European society, though strongly attached to the Governor-General, could not but feel compassion for a man who, with all his crimes, had so long filled so large a space in their sight, who had been great and powerful before the British empire in India began to exist, and to whom, in the old times, governors and members of Council, then mere commercial factors, had paid court for protection. The feeling of the Hindoos was infinitely stronger. They were, indeed, not a people to strike one blow for their countryman. But his sentence filled them with sorrow and dismay. Tried even by their low standard of morality, he was a bad man. But bad as he was, he was the head of their race and religion, a Brahmin of the Brahmins. He had inherited the purest and highest caste. He had practised with the greatest punctuality all those ceremonies to which the superstitious Bengalees ascribe far more importance than to the correct discharge of the social duties. They felt, therefore, as a devout Catholic in the dark ages would have felt, at seeing a prelate of the highest dignity sent to the gallows by a secular tribunal. According to their old national laws, a Brahmin could not be put to death for any crime whatever. And the crime for which Nuncomar was about to die was regarded by them in much the same light in which the selling of an unsound horse, for a sound price, is regarded by a Yorkshire jockey.

The Mussulmans alone appear to have seen with exultation the fate of the powerful Hindoo, who had attempted to rise by means of the ruin of Mahommed Reza Khan. The Mahommedan historian of those times takes delight in aggravating the charge. He assures us that in Nuncomar's house a casket was found containing counterfeits of the seals of all the richest men of the province. We have never fallen in with any other authority for this story, which in itself is by no means improbable.

The day drew near; and Nuncomar prepared himself to die with that quiet fortitude with which the Bengalee, so effeminately timid in personal conflict, often encounters calamities for which there is no remedy. The sheriff, with the humanity which is seldom wanting in an English gentleman, visited the prisoner on the eve of the execution, and assured him that no indulgence, consistent with the law, should be refused to him. Nuncomar expressed his gratitude with great politeness and unaltered composure. Not a muscle of his face moved. No a sigh broke from him. He put his finger to his forehead, and calmly said that fate would have its way, and that there was no resisting the pleasure of God. He sent his compliments to Francis, Clavering, and Monson, and charged them to protect Rajah Goordas, who was about to become the head of the Brahmins of Bengal. The sheriff withdrew, greatly agitated by what had passed, and Nuncomar sat composedly down to write notes and examine accounts.

The next morning, before the sun was in his power, an immense concourse assembled round the place where the gallows had been set up. Grief and horror were on every face; yet to the last the multitude could hardly believe that the English really purposed to take the life of the great Brahmin. At length the mournful procession came through the crowd. Nuncomar sat up in his palanquin, and looked round him with unaltered serenity. He had just parted from those who were most nearly connected with him. Their cries and contortions had appalled the European ministers of justice, but had not produced the smallest effect on the iron stoicism of the prisoner. The only anxiety which he expressed was that men of his own priestly caste might be in attendance to take charge of his corpse. He again desired to be remembered to his friends in the Council, mounted the scaffold with firmness, and gave the signal to the executioner. The moment that the drop fell, a howl of sorrow and despair rose from the innumerable spectators. Hundreds turned away their faces from the polluting sight, fled with loud wailings towards the Hoogley, and plunged into its holy waters, as if to purify themselves from the guilt of having looked on such a crime. These feelings were not confined to Calcutta. The whole province was greatly excited; and the population of Dacca, in particular, gave strong signs of grief and dismay.

Of Impey’s conduct it is impossible to speak too severely. We have already said that, in our opinion, he acted unjustly in refusing to respite Nuncomar. No rational man can doubt that he took this course in order to gratify the Governor-General. If we had ever had any doubts on that point, they would have been dispelled by a letter which Mr. Gleig has published. Hastings, three or four years later, described Impey as the man "to whose support he was at one time indebted for the safety of his fortune, honour, and reputation." These strong words can refer only to the case of Nuncomar; and they must mean that Impey hanged Nuncomar in order to support Hastings. It is, therefore,

our deliberate opinion that Impey, sitting as a judge, put a man unjustly to death in order to serve a political purpose.

But we look on the conduct of Hastings in a somewhat different light. He was struggling for fortune, honour, liberty, all that makes life valuable. He was beset by rancorous and unprincipled enemies. From his colleagues he could expect no justice. He cannot be blamed for wishing to crush his accusers. He was indeed bound to use only legitimate means for that end. But it was not strange that he should have thought any means legitimate which were pronounced legitimate by the sages of the law, by men whose peculiar duty it was to deal justly between adversaries, and whose education might be supposed to have peculiarly qualified them for the discharge of that duty. Nobody demands from a party the unbending equity of a judge. The reason that judges are appointed is, that even a good man cannot be trusted to decide a cause in which he is himself concerned. Not a day passes on which an honest prosecutor does not ask for what none but a dishonest tribunal would grant. It is too much to expect that any man, when his dearest interests are at stake, and his strongest passions excited, will, as against himself, be more just than the sworn dispensers of justice. To take an analogous case from the history of our own island; suppose that Lord Stafford, when in the Tower on suspicion of being concerned in the Popish plot, had been apprised that Titus Oates had done something which might, by a questionable construction, be brought under the head of felony. Should we severely blame Lord Stafford, in the supposed case, for causing a prosecution to be instituted, for furnishing funds, for using all his influence to intercept the mercy of the Crown? We think not. If a judge, indeed, from favour to the Catholic lords, were strain the law in order to hang Oates, such a judge would richly deserve impeachment. But it does not appear to us that the Catholic lord, by bringing the case before the judge for decision, would materially overstep the limits of a just self-defence.

While, therefore, we have not the least doubt that this memorable execution is to be attributed to Hastings, we doubt whether it can with justice be reckoned among his crimes. That his conduct was dictated by a profound policy is evident. He was in a minority in Council. It was possible that he might long be in a minority. He knew the native character well. He knew in what abundance accusations are certain to flow in against the most innocent inhabitant of India who is under the frown of power. There was not in the whole black population of Bengal a placeholder, a place-hunter, a government tenant, who did not think that he might better himself by sending up a deposition against the Governor-General. Under these circumstances, the persecuted statesman resolved to teach the whole crew of accusers and witnesses, that, though in a minority at the council-board, he was still to be feared. The lesson which he gave then was indeed a lesson not to be forgotten. The head of the combination which had been formed against him, the richest, the most powerful,

the most artful of the Hindoos, distinguished by the favour of those who then held the government, fenced round by the superstitious reverence of millions, was hanged in broad day before many thousands of people. Everything that could make the warning impressive, dignity in the sufferer, solemnity in the proceeding, was found in this case. The helpless rage and vain struggles of the Council made the triumph more signal. From that moment the conviction of every native was that it was safer to take the part of Hastings in a minority than that of Francis in a majority, and that he who was so venturous as to join in running down the Governor-General might chance, in the phrase of the Eastern poet, to find a tiger, while beating the jungle for a deer. The voices of a thousand informers were silenced in an instant. From that time, whatever difficulties Hastings might have to encounter, he was never molested by accusations from natives of India.

It is a remarkable circumstance that one of the letters of Hastings to Dr. Johnson bears date a very few hours after the death of Nuncomar. While the whole settlement was in commotion, while a mighty and ancient priesthood were weeping over the remains of their chief, the conqueror in that deadly grapple sat down, with characteristic self-possession to write about the Tour to the Hebrides, Jones's Persian Grammar, and the history, traditions, arts, and natural productions of India.

In the meantime, intelligence of the Rohilla war, and of the first disputes between Hastings and his colleagues, had reached London. The Directors took part with the majority, and sent out a letter filled with severe reflections on the conduct of Hastings. They condemned, in strong but just terms, the iniquity of undertaking offensive wars merely for the sake of pecuniary advantage. But they utterly forgot that, if Hastings had by illicit means obtained pecuniary advantages, he had done so, not for his own benefit, but in order to meet their demands. To enjoin honesty, and to insist on having what could not be honestly got, was then the constant practice of the Company. As Lady Macbeth says of her husband, they "would not play false, and yet would wrongly win."

The Regulating Act, by which Hastings had been appointed Governor-General for five years, empowered the Crown to remove him on an address from the Company. Lord North was desirous to procure such an address. The three members of Council who had been sent out from England were men of his own choice. General Clavering, in particular, was supported by a large parliamentary connection, such as no Cabinet could be inclined to disoblige. The wish of the minister was to displace Hastings, and to put Clavering at the head of the Government. In the Court of Directors parties were very nearly balanced. Eleven voted against Hastings; ten for him. The Court of Proprietors was then convened. The great sale-room presented a singular appearance. Letters had been sent by the Secretary of the Treasury, exhorting

all the supporters of Government who held India stock to be in attendance. Lord Sandwich marshalled the friends of the administration with his usual dexterity and alertness. Fifty peers and privy councillors, seldom seen so far eastward, we counted in the crowd. The debate lasted till midnight. The opponents of Hastings had a small superiority on the division; but a ballot was demanded; and the result was that the Governor-General triumphed by a majority of above a hundred votes over the combined efforts of the Directors and the Cabinet. The ministers were greatly exasperated by this defeat. Even Lord North lost his temper, no ordinary occurrence with him, and threatened to convoke Parliament before Christmas, and to bring in a bill for depriving the Company of all political power, and for restricting it to its old business of trading in silks and teas.

Colonel Macleane, who through all this conflict had zealously supported the cause of Hastings, now thought that his employer was in imminent danger of being turned out branded with parliamentary censure, perhaps prosecuted. The opinion of the Crown lawyers had already been taken respecting some parts of the Governor-General's conduct. It seemed to be high time to think of securing an honourable retreat. Under these circumstances, Macleane thought himself justified in producing the resignation with which he had been intrusted. The instrument was not in very accurate form; but the Directors were too eager to be scrupulous. They accepted the resignation, fixed on Mr. Wheler, one of their own body to succeed Hastings, and sent out orders that Genera Clavering, as senior member of Council, should exercise the functions of Governor-General till Mr. Wheler should arrive.

But, while these things were passing in England, a great change had taken place in Bengal. Monson was no more. Only four members of the Government were left. Clavering and Francis were on one side, Barwell and the Governor-General on the other; and the Governor-General had the casting vote. Hastings, who had been during two years destitute of all power and patronage, became at once absolute. He instantly proceeded to retaliate on his adversaries. Their measures were reversed: their creatures were displaced. A new valuation of the lands of Bengal, for the purposes of taxation, was ordered: and it was provided that the whole inquiry should be conducted by the Governor-General, and that all the letters relating to it should run in his name. He began, at the same time, to revolve vast plans of conquest and dominion, plans which he lived to see realised, though not by himself. His project was to form subsidiary alliances with the native princes, particularly with those of Oude and Berar, and thus to make Britain the paramount power in India. While he was meditating these great designs, arrived the intelligence that he had ceased to be Governor-General, that his resignation had been accepted, that Wheler was coming out immediately, and that, till Wheler arrived, the chair was to be filled by Clavering.

Had Hastings still been in a minority, he would probably have

retired without a struggle; but he was now the real master of British India, and he was not disposed to quit his high place. He asserted that he had never given any instructions which could warrant the steps taken at home. What his instructions had been, he owned he had forgotten. If he had kept a copy of them he had mislaid it. But he was certain that he had repeatedly declared to the Directors that he would not resign. He could not see how the court possessed of that declaration from himself, could receive his resignation from the doubtful hands of an agent. If the resignation were invalid, all the proceedings which were founded on that resignation were null, and Hastings was still Governor-General.

He afterwards affirmed that, though his agents had not acted in conformity with his instructions, he would nevertheless have held himself bound by their acts, if Clavering had not attempted to seize the supreme power by violence. Whether this assertion were or were not true, it cannot be doubted that the imprudence of Clavering gave Hastings an advantage. The General sent for the keys of the fort and of the treasury, took possession of the records, and held a council at which Francis attended. Hastings took the chair in another apartment, and Barwell sat with him. Each of the two parties had a plausible show of right. There was no authority entitled to their obedience within fifteen thousand miles. It seemed that there remained no way of settling the dispute except an appeal to arms; and from such an appeal Hastings, confident of his influence over his countrymen in India, was not inclined to shrink. He directed the officers of the garrison at Fort William and of all the neighbouring stations to obey no orders but his. At the same time, with admirable judgment, he offered to submit the case to the Supreme Court, and to abide by its decision. By making this proposition he risked nothing; yet it was a proposition which his opponents could hardly reject. Nobody could be treated as a criminal for obeying what the judges should solemnly pronounce to be the lawful government. The boldest man would shrink from taking arms in defence of what the judges should pronounce to be usurpation. Clavering and Francis, after some delay, unwillingly consented to abide by the award of the court. The court pronounced that the resignation was invalid, and that therefore Hastings was still Governor-General under the Regulating Act; and the defeated members of the Council, finding that the sense of the whole settlement was against them, acquiesced in the decision.

About this time arrived the news that, after a suit which had lasted several years, the Franconian courts had decreed a divorce between Imhoff and his wife. The Baron left Calcutta, carrying with him the means of buying an estate in Saxony. The lady became Mrs. Hastings. The event was celebrated by great festivities; and all the most conspicuous persons at Calcutta, without distinction of parties, were invited to the Government-house. Clavering, as the Mahommedan chronicler tells the story, was sick in mind and body, and excused himself from joining the splendid assembly. But

Hastings, whom, as it should seem, success in ambition and in love had put into high good-humour, would take no denial. He went himself to the General's house, and at length brought his vanquished rival in triumph to the gay circle which surrounded the bride. The exertion was too much for a frame broken by mortification as well as by disease. Clavering died a few days later.

Wheler, who came out expecting to be Governor-General, and was forced to content himself with a seat at the council-board, generally voted with Francis. But the Governor-General, with Barwell's help and his own casting vote, was still the master. Some change took place at this time in the feeling both of the Court of Directors and of the Ministers of the Crown. All designs against Hastings were dropped; and, when his original term of five years expired, he was quietly reappointed. The truth is, that the fearful dangers to which the public interests in every quarter were now exposed, made both Lord North and the Company unwilling to part with a Governor whose talents, experience, and resolution, enmity itself was compelled to acknowledge.

The crisis was indeed formidable. That great and victorious empire, on the throne of which George the Third had taken his seat eighteen years before, with brighter hopes than had attended the accession of any of the long line of English sovereigns, had, by the most senseless misgovernment, been brought to the verge of ruin. In America millions of Englishmen were at war with the country from which their blood, their language, their religion, and their institutions were derived, and to which, but a short time before, they had been as strongly attached as the inhabitants of Norfolk and Leicestershire. The great powers of Europe, humbled to the dust by the vigour and genius which had guided the councils of George the Second, now rejoiced in the prospect of a signal revenge. The time was approaching when our island, while struggling to keep down the United States of America, and pressed with a still nearer danger by the too just discontents of Ireland, was to be assailed by France, Spain, and Holland, and to be threatened by the armed neutrality of the Baltic; when even our maritime supremacy was to be in jeopardy; when hostile fleets were to command the Straits of Calpe and the Mexican Sea; when the British flag was to be scarcely able to protect the British Channel. Great as were the faults of Hastings, it was happy for our country that at that conjuncture, the most terrible through which she has ever passed, he was the ruler of her Indian dominions.

An attack by sea on Bengal was little to be apprehended. The danger was that the European enemies of England might form an alliance with some native power, might furnish that power with troops, arms, and ammunition, and might thus assail our possessions on the side of the land. It was chiefly from the Mahrattas that Hastings anticipated danger. The original seat of that singular people was the wild range of hills which runs along

the western coast of India. In the reign of Aurungzebe the inhabitants of those regions, led by the great Sevajee, began to descend on the possessions of their wealthier and less warlike neighbours. The energy, ferocity, and cunning of the Mahrattas, soon made them the most conspicuous among the new powers which were generated by the corruption of the decaying monarchy. At first they were only robbers. They soon rose to the dignity of conquerors. Half the provinces of the empire were turned into Mahratta principalities, Freebooters, sprung from low castes, and accustomed to menial employments, became mighty Rajahs. The Bonslas, at the head of a band of plunderers, occupied the vast region of Berar. The Guicowar, which is, being interpreted, the Herdsman, founded that dynasty which still reigns in Guzerat. The houses of Scindia and Holkar waxed great in Malwa. One adventurous captain made his nest on the impregnable rock of Gooti. Another became the lord of the thousand villages which are scattered among the green rice-fields of Tanjore.

That was the time throughout India of double government. The form and the power were everywhere separated. The Mussulman nabobs who had become sovereign princes, the Vizier in Oude, and the Nizam at Hyderabad, still called themselves the viceroys of the House of Tamerlane. In the same manner the Mahratta states, though really independent of each other, pretended to be members of one empire. They all acknowledged, by words and ceremonies, the supremacy of the heir of Sevajee, a roi faineant who chewed bang and toyed with dancing girls in a state prison at Sattara, and of his Peshwa or mayor of the palace, a great hereditary magistrate, who kept a court with kingly state at Poonah, and whose authority was obeyed in the spacious provinces of Aurungabad and Bejapoor.

Some months before wax was declared in Europe the Government of Bengal was alarmed by the news that a French adventurer, who passed for a man of quality, had arrived at Poonah. It was said that he had been received there with great distinction, that he had delivered to the Peshwa letters and presents from Louis the Sixteenth, and that a treaty, hostile to England, had been concluded between France and the Mahrattas.

Hastings immediately resolved to strike the first blow. The title of the Peshwa was not undisputed. A portion of the Mahratta nation was favourable to a pretender. The Governor General determined to espouse this pretender’s interest, to move an army across the peninsula of India, and to form a close alliance with the chief of the house of Bonsla, who ruled Berar, and who, in power and dignity, was inferior to none of the Mahratta princes.

The army had marched, and the negotiations with Berar were in progress, when a letter from the English consul at Cairo brought the news that war had been proclaimed both in London and Paris. All the measures which the crisis required were adopted by Hastings without a moment’s delay. The French factories in Bengal were seized. Orders were sent to Madras that Pondicherry should

instantly be occupied. Near Calcutta works were thrown up which were thought to render the approach of a hostile force impossible. A maritime establishment was formed for the defence of the river. Nine new battalions of sepoys were raised, and a corps of native artillery was formed out of the hardy Lascars of the Bay of Bengal. Having made these arrangements, the Governor-General, with calm confidence, pronounced his presidency secure from all attack, unless the Mahrattas should march against it in conjunction with the French.

The expedition which Hastings had sent westward was not so speedily or completely successful as most of his undertakings. The commanding officer procrastinated. The authorities at Bombay blundered. But the Governor-General persevered. A new commander repaired the errors of his predecessor. Several brilliant actions spread the military renown of the English through regions where no European flag had ever been seen. It is probable that, if a new and more formidable danger had not compelled Hastings to change his whole policy, his plans respecting the Mahratta empire would have been carried into complete effect.

The authorities in England had wisely sent out to Bengal, as commander of the forces and member of the Council, one of the most distinguished soldiers of that time. Sir Eyre Coote had, many years before, been conspicuous among the founders of the British empire in the East. At the council of war which preceded the battle of Plassey, he earnestly recommended, in opposition to the majority, that daring course which, after some hesitation, was adopted, and which was crowned with such splendid success. He subsequently commanded in the south of India against the brave and unfortunate Lally, gained the decisive battle of Wandewash over the French and their native allies, took Pondicherry, and made the English power supreme in the Carnatic. Since those great exploits near twenty years had elapsed. Coote had no longer the bodily activity which he had shown in earlier days; nor was the vigour of his mind altogether unimpaired. He was capricious and fretful, and required much coaxing to keep him in good humour. It must, we fear, be added that the love of money had grown upon him, and that he thought more about his allowances, and less about his duties, than might have been expected from so eminent a member of so noble a profession. Still he was perhaps the ablest officer that was then to be found in the British army. Among the native soldiers his name was great and his influence unrivalled. Nor is he yet forgotten by them. Now and then a white-bearded old sepoy may still be found who loves to talk of Porto Novo and Pollilore. It is but a short time since one of those aged men came to present a memorial to an English officer, who holds one of the highest employments in India. A print of Coote hung in the room. The veteran recognised at once that face and figure which he had not seen for more than half a century, and, forgetting his salaam to the living, halted, drew himself up lifted his hand, and with solemn reverence paid his military obeisance to the dead.

Coote, though he did not, like Barwell, vote constantly with the Governor-General, was by no means inclined to join in systematic opposition, and on most questions concurred with Hastings, who did his best, by assiduous courtship, and by readily granting the most exorbitant allowances, to gratify the strongest passions of the old soldier.

It seemed likely at this time that a general reconciliation would put an end to the quarrels which had, during some years, weakened and disgraced the Government of Bengal. The dangers of the empire might well induce men of patriotic feeling--and of patriotic feeling neither Hastings nor Francis was destitute--to forget private enmities, and to co-operate heartily for the general good. Coote had never been concerned in faction. Wheler was thoroughly tired of it. Barwell had made an ample fortune, and, though he had promised that he would not leave Calcutta while his help was needed in Council, was most desirous to return to England, and exerted himself to promote an arrangement which would set him at liberty.

A compact was made, by which Francis agreed to desist from opposition, and Hastings engaged that the friends of Francis should be admitted to a fair share of the honours and emoluments of the service. During a few months after this treaty there was apparent harmony at the council-board.

Harmony, indeed, was never more necessary: for at this moment internal calamities, more formidable than war itself menaced Bengal. The authors of the Regulating Act Of 1773 had established two independent powers, the one judicial, and the other political; and, with a carelessness scandalously common in English legislation, had omitted to define the limits of either. The judges took advantage of the indistinctness, and attempted to draw to themselves supreme authority, not only within Calcutta. but through the whole of the great territory subject to the Presidency of Fort William. There are few Englishmen who will not admit that the English law, in spite of modern improvements, is neither so cheap nor so speedy as might be wished. Still, it is a system which has grown up among us. In some points it has been fashioned to suit our feelings; in others, it has gradually fashioned our feelings to suit itself. Even to its worst evils we are accustomed; and therefore, though we may complain of them, they do not strike us with the horror and dismay which would be produced by a new grievance of smaller severity. In India the case is widely different. English law, transplanted to that country, has all the vices from which we suffer here; it has them all in a far higher degree; and it has other vices, compared with which the worst vices from which we suffer are trifles. Dilatory here, it is far more dilatory in a land where the help of an interpreter is needed by every judge and by every advocate. Costly here, it is far more costly in a land into which the legal practitioners must be imported from an immense distance. All

English labour in India, from the labour of the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief, down to that of a groom or a watchmaker, must be paid for at a higher rate than at home. No man will be banished, and banished to the torrid zone, for nothing. The rule holds good with respect to the legal profession. No English barrister will work, fifteen thousand miles from all his friends, with the thermometer at ninety-six in the shade, for the emoluments which will content him in chambers that overlook the Thames. Accordingly, the fees at Calcutta are about three times as great as the fees of Westminster Hall; and this, though the people of India are, beyond all comparison, poorer than the people of England. Yet the delay and the expense, grievous as they are, form the smallest part of the evil which English law, imported without modifications into India, could not fail to produce. The strongest feelings of our nature, honour, religion, female modesty, rose up against the innovation. Arrest on mesne process was the first step in most civil proceedings; and to a native of rank arrest was not merely a restraint, but a foul personal indignity. Oaths were required in every stage of every suit; and the feeling of a quaker about an oath is hardly stronger than that of a respectable native. That the apartments of a woman of quality should be entered by strange men, or that her face should be seen by them, are, in the East, intolerable outrages, outrages which are more dreaded than death, and which can be expiated only by the shedding of blood. To these outrages the most distinguished families of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa were now exposed. Imagine what the state of our own country would be, if a jurisprudence were on a sudden introduced among us, which should be to us what our jurisprudence was to our Asiatic subjects. Imagine what the state of our country would be, if it were enacted that any man, by merely swearing that a debt was due to him, should acquire a right to insult the persons of men of the most honourable and sacred callings and of women of the most shrinking delicacy, to horsewhip a general officer, to put a bishop in the stocks, to treat ladies in the way which called forth the blow of Wat Tyler. Something like this was the effect of the attempt which the Supreme Court made to extend its jurisdiction over the whole of the Company’s territory.

A reign of terror began, of terror heightened by mystery for even that which was endured was less horrible than that which was anticipated. No man knew what was next to be expected from this strange tribunal. It came from beyond the black water, as the people of India, with mysterious horror, call the sea. It consisted of judges not one of whom was familiar with the usages of the millions over whom they claimed boundless authority. Its records were kept in unknown characters; its sentences were pronounced in unknown sounds. It had already collected round itself an army of the worst part the native population, informers, and false witnesses, and common barrators, and agents of chicane, and above all, a banditti of bailiffs followers, compared with whom the retainers of the worst English sponging-houses, in the worst times, might be considered as upright and

tender-hearted. Many natives, highly considered among their countrymen, were seized, hurried up to Calcutta, flung into the common gaol, not for any crime even imputed, not for any debt that had been proved, but merely as a precaution till their cause should come to trial There were instances in which men of the most venerable dignity, persecuted without a cause by extortioners, died of rage and shame in the gripe of the vile alguazils of Impey. The harems of noble Mahommedans, sanctuaries respected in the East by governments which respected nothing else, were burst open by gangs of bailiffs. The Mussulmans, braver and less accustomed to submission than the Hindoos, sometimes stood on their defence; and there were instances in which they shed their blood in the doorway, while defending, sword in hand, the sacred apartments of their women. Nay, it seemed as if even the faint-hearted Bengalee, who had crouched at the feet of Surajah Dowlah, who had been mute during the administration of Vansittart, would at length find courage in despair. No Mahratta invasion had ever spread through the province such dismay as this inroad of English lawyers. All the injustice of former oppressors, Asiatic and European, appeared as a blessing when compared with the justice of the Supreme Court.

Every class of the population, English and native, with the exception of the ravenous pettifoggers who fattened on the misery and terror of an immense community, cried out loudly against this fearful oppression. But the judges were immovable. If a bailiff was resisted, they ordered the soldiers to be called out. If a servant of the Company, in conformity with the orders of the Government, withstood the miserable catchpoles who, with Impey's writs in their hands, exceeded the insolence and rapacity of gang-robbers, he was flung into prison for a contempt. The lapse of sixty years, the virtue and wisdom of many eminent magistrates who have during that time administered justice in the Supreme Court, have not effaced from the minds of the people of Bengal the recollection of those evil days.

The members of the Government were, on this subject, united as one man. Hastings had courted the judges; he had found them useful instruments; but he was not disposed to make them his own masters, or the masters of India. His mind was large; his knowledge of the native character most accurate. He saw that the system pursued by the Supreme Court was degrading to the Government and ruinous to the people; and he resolved to oppose it manfully. The consequence was, that the friendship, if that be the proper word for such a connection, which had existed between him and Impey, was for a time completely dissolved. The Government placed itself firmly between the tyrannical tribunal and the people. The Chief Justice proceeded to the wildest excesses. The Governor-General and all the members of Council were served with writs, calling on them to appear before the King's justices, and to answer for their public acts. This was too much. Hastings, with just scorn, refused to obey the call, set at liberty the persons wrongfully detained by the court, and

took measures for resisting the outrageous proceedings of the sheriff's officers, if necessary, by the sword. But he had in view another device, which might prevent the necessity of an appeal to arms. He was seldom at a loss for an expedient; and he knew Impey well. The expedient, in this case, was a very simple one, neither more nor less than a bribe. Impey was, by Act of Parliament, a judge, independent of the Government of Bengal, and entitled to a salary of eight thousand a year. Hastings proposed to make him also a judge in the Company's service, removable at the pleasure of the Government of Bengal; and to give him, in that capacity, about eight thousand a year more. It was understood that, in consideration of this new salary, Impey would desist from urging the high pretensions of his court. If he did urge these pretensions, the Government could, at a moment's notice, eject him from the new place which had been created for him. The bargain was struck; Bengal was saved; an appeal to force was averted; and the Chief Justice was rich, quiet and infamous.

Of Impey's conduct it is unnecessary to speak. It was of a piece with almost every part of his conduct that comes under the notice of history. No other such judge has dishonoured the English ermine, since Jeffreys drank himself to death in the Tower. But we cannot agree with those who have blamed Hastings for this transaction. The case stood thus. The negligent manner in which the Regulating Act had been framed put it in the power of the Chief Justice to throw a great country into the most dreadful confusion. He was determined to use his power to the utmost, unless he was paid to be still; and Hastings consented to pay him. The necessity was to be deplored. It is also to be deplored that pirates should be able to exact ransom, by threatening to make their captives walk the plank. But to ransom a captive from pirates has always been held a humane and Christian act; and it would be absurd to charge the payer of the ransom with corrupting the virtue of the corsair. This, we seriously think, is a not unfair illustration of the relative position of Impey, Hastings, and the people of India. Whether it was right in Impey to demand or to accept a price for powers which, if they really belonged to him, he could not abdicate, which, if they did not belong to him, he ought never to have usurped, and which in neither case he could honestly sell, is one question. It is quite another question whether Hastings was not right to give any sum, however large, to any man, however worthless, rather than either surrender millions of human being to pillage, or rescue them by civil war.

Francis strongly opposed this arrangement. It may, indeed be suspected that personal aversion to Impey was as strong motive with Francis as regard for the welfare of the province. To a mind burning with resentment, it might seem better to leave Bengal to the oppressors than to redeem it by enriching them. It is not improbable, on the other hand, that Hastings may have been the more willing to resort to an expedient agreeable to the Chief Justice, because that high functionary had already been so

serviceable, and might, when existing dissensions were composed, be serviceable again.

But it was not on this point alone that Francis was now opposed to Hastings. The peace between them proved to be only a short and hollow truce, during which their mutual aversion was constantly becoming stronger. At length an explosion took place. Hastings publicly charged Francis with having deceived him, and with having induced Barwell to quit the service by insincere promises. Then came a dispute, such as frequently arises even between honourable men, when they may make important agreements by mere verbal communication. An impartial historian will probably be of opinion that they had misunderstood each other: but their minds were so much embittered that they imputed to each other nothing less than deliberate villainy. "I do not," said Hastings, in a minute recorded on the Consultations of the Government, "I do not trust to Mr. Francis's promises of candour, convinced that he is incapable of it. I judge of his public conduct by his private, which I have found to be void of truth and honour." After the Council had risen, Francis put a challenge into the Governor-General's hand. It was instantly accepted. They met, and fired. Francis was shot through the body. He was carried to a neighbouring house, where it appeared that the wound, though severe, was not mortal. Hastings inquired repeatedly after his enemy's health, and proposed to call on him; but Francis coldly declined the visit. He had a proper sense, he said, of the Governor-General's politeness, but could not consent to any private interview. They could meet only at the council-board.

In a very short time it was made signally manifest to how great a danger the Governor-General had, on this occasion, exposed his country. A crisis arrived with which he, and he alone, was competent to deal. It is not too much to say that if he had been taken from the head of affairs, the years 1780 and 1781 would have been as fatal to our power in Asia as to our power in America.

The Mahrattas had been the chief objects of apprehension to Hastings. The measures which he had adopted for the purpose of breaking their power, had at first been frustrated by the errors of those whom he was compelled to employ; but his perseverance and ability seemed likely to be crowned with success, when a far more formidable danger showed itself in a distant quarter.

About thirty years before this time, a Mahommedan soldier had begun to distinguish himself in the wars of Southern India. His education had been neglected; his extraction was humble. His father had been a petty officer of revenue; his grandfather a wandering dervise. But though thus meanly descended, though ignorant even of the alphabet, the adventurer had no sooner been placed at the head of a body of troops than he approved himself a man born for conquest and command. Among the crowd of chiefs who were struggling for a share of India, none could compare with him in the qualities of the captain and the statesman. He became a

general; he became a sovereign. Out of the fragments of old principalities, which had gone to pieces in the general wreck he formed for himself a great, compact, and vigorous empire. That empire he ruled with the ability, severity, and vigilance of Lewis the Eleventh. Licentious in his pleasures, implacable in his revenge, he had yet enlargement of mind enough to perceive how much the prosperity of subjects adds to the strength of governments. He was an oppressor; but he had at least the merit of protecting his people against all oppression except his own. He was now in extreme old age; but his intellect was as clear, and his spirit as high, as in the prime of manhood. Such was the great Hyder Ali, the founder of the Mahommedan kingdom of Mysore, and the most formidable enemy with whom the English conquerors of India have ever had to contend.

Had Hastings been governor of Madras, Hyder would have been either made a friend, or vigorously encountered as an enemy. Unhappily the English authorities in the south provoked their powerful neighbour's hostility, without being prepared to repel it. On a sudden, an army of ninety thousand men, far superior in discipline and efficiency to any other native force that could be found in India, came pouring through those wild passes which, worn by mountain torrents, and dark with jungle, lead down from the table-land of Mysore to the plains of the Carnatic. This great army was accompanied by a hundred pieces of cannon; and its movements were guided by many French officers, trained in the best military schools of Europe.

Hyder was everywhere triumphant. The sepoys in many British garrisons flung down their arms. Some forts were surrendered by treachery, and some by despair. In a few days the whole open country north of the Coleroon had submitted. The English inhabitants of Madras could already see by night, from the top of Mount St. Thomas, the eastern sky reddened by a vast semicircle of blazing villages. The white villas, to which our countrymen retire after the daily labours of government and of trade, when the cool evening breeze springs up from the bay, were now left without inhabitants; for bands of the fierce horsemen of Mysore had already been seen prowling among the tulip-trees, and near the gay verandas. Even the town was not thought secure, and the British merchants and public functionaries made haste to crowd themselves behind the cannon of Fort St. George.

There were the means, indeed, of assembling an army which might have defended the presidency, and even driven the invader back to his mountains. Sir Hector Munro was at the head of one considerable force; Baillie was advancing with another. United, they might have presented a formidable front even to such an enemy as Hyder. But the English commanders, neglecting those fundamental rules of the military art of which the propriety is obvious even to men who had never received a military education, deferred their junction, and were separately attacked. Baillie's detachment was destroyed. Munro was forced to abandon his

baggage, to fling his guns into the tanks, and to save himself by a retreat which might be called a flight. In three weeks from the commencement of the war, the British empire in Southern India had been brought to the verge of ruin. Only a few fortified places remained to us. The glory of our arms had departed. It was known that a great French expedition might soon be expected on the coast of Coromandel. England, beset by enemies on every side, was in no condition to protect such remote dependencies.

Then it was that the fertile genius and serene courage of Hastings achieved their most signal triumph. A swift ship, flying before the southwest monsoon, brought the evil tidings in few days to Calcutta. In twenty-four hours the Governor-General had framed a complete plan of policy adapted to the altered state of affairs. The struggle with Hyder was a struggle for life and death. All minor objects must be sacrificed to the preservation of the Carnatic. The disputes with the Mahrattas must be accommodated. A large military force and a supply of money must be instantly sent to Madras. But even these measures would be insufficient, unless the war, hitherto so grossly mismanaged, were placed under the direction of a vigorous mind. It was no time for trifling. Hastings determined to resort to an extreme exercise of power, to suspend the incapable governor of Fort St. George, to send Sir Eyre Coote to oppose Hyder, and to intrust that distinguished general with the whole administration of the war.

In spite of the sullen opposition of Francis, who had now recovered from his wound, and had returned to the Council, the Governor-General's wise and firm policy was approved by the majority of the Board. The reinforcements were sent off with great expedition, and reached Madras before the French armament arrived in the Indian seas. Coote, broken by age and disease, was no longer the Coote of Wandewash; but he was still a resolute and skilful commander. The progress of Hyder was arrested; and in a few months the great victory of Porto Novo retrieved the honour of the English arms.

In the meantime Francis had returned to England, and Hastings was now left perfectly unfettered. Wheler had gradually been relaxing in his opposition, and, after the departure of his vehement and implacable colleague, cooperated heartily with the Governor-General, whose influence over the British in India, always great, had, by the vigour and success of his recent measures, been considerably increased.

But, though the difficulties arising from factions within the Council were at an end, another class of difficulties had become more pressing than ever. The financial embarrassment was extreme. Hastings had to find the means, not only of carrying on the government of Bengal, but of maintaining a most costly war against both Indian and European enemies in the Carnatic, and of making remittances to England. A few years before this time he had obtained relief by plundering the Mogul and enslaving the

Rohillas; nor were the resources of his fruitful mind by any means exhausted.

His first design was on Benares, a city which in wealth, population, dignity, and sanctity, was among the foremost of Asia. It was commonly believed that half a million of human beings was crowded into that labyrinth of lofty alleys, rich with shrines, and minarets, and balconies, and carved oriels, to which the sacred apes clung by hundreds. The traveller could scarcely make his way through the press of holy mendicants and not less holy bulls. The broad and stately flights of steps which descended from these swarming haunts to the bathing-places along the Ganges were worn every day by the footsteps of an innumerable multitude of worshippers. The schools and temples drew crowds of pious Hindoos from every province where the Brahminical faith was known. Hundreds of devotees came thither every month to die: for it was believed that a peculiarly happy fate awaited the man who should pass from the sacred city into the sacred river. Nor was superstition the only motive which allured strangers to that great metropolis. Commerce had as many pilgrims as religion. All along the shores of the venerable stream lay great fleets of vessels laden with rich merchandise. From the looms of Benares went forth the most delicate silks that adorned the balls of St. James's and of the Petit Trianon; and in the bazars, the muslins of Bengal and the sabres of Oude were mingled with the jewels of Golconda and the shawls of Cashmere. This rich capital, and the surrounding tract, had long been under the immediate rule of a Hindoo prince, who rendered homage to the Mogul emperors. During the great anarchy of India, the lords of Benares became independent of the Court of Delhi, but were compelled to submit to the authority of the Nabob of Oude. Oppressed by this formidable neighbour, they invoked the protection of the English. The English protection was given; and at length the Nabob Vizier, by a solemn treaty, ceded all his rights over Benares to the Company. From that time the Rajah was the vassal of the Government of Bengal, acknowledged its supremacy, and engaged to send an annual tribute to Fort William. This tribute Cheyte Sing, the reigning prince, had paid with strict punctuality.

About the precise nature of the legal relation between the Company and the Rajah of Benares, there has been much warm and acute controversy. On the one side, it has been maintained that Cheyte Sing was merely a great subject on whom the superior power had a right to call for aid in the necessities of the empire. On the other side, it has been contended that he was an independent prince, that the only claim which the Company had upon him was for a fixed tribute, and that, while the fixed tribute was regularly paid, as it assuredly was, the English had no more right to exact any further contribution from him than to demand subsidies from Holland or Denmark. Nothing is easier than to find precedents and analogies in favour of either view.

Our own impression is that neither view is correct. It was too

much the habit of English politicians to take it for granted that there was in India a known and definite constitution by which questions of this kind were to be decided. The truth is that, during the interval which elapsed between the fall of the house of Tamerlane and the establishment of the British ascendency, there was no such constitution. The old order of things had passed away; the new order of things was not yet formed. All was transition, confusion, obscurity. Everybody kept his head as he best might, and scrambled for whatever he could get. There have been similar seasons in Europe. The time of the dissolution of the Carlovingian empire is an instance. Who would think of seriously discussing the question, what extent of pecuniary aid and of obedience Hugh Capet had constitutional right to demand from the Duke of Brittany or the Duke of Normandy? The words "constitutional right" had, in that state of society, no meaning. If Hugh Capet laid hands on all the possessions of the Duke of Normandy, this might be unjust and immoral; but it would not be illegal, in the sense in which the ordinances of Charles the Tenth were illegal. If, on the other hand, the Duke of Normandy made war on Hugh Capet, this might be unjust and immoral; but it would not be illegal, in the sense in which the expedition of Prince Louis Bonaparte was illegal.

Very similar to this was the state of India sixty years ago. Of the existing governments not a single one could lay claim to legitimacy, or could plead any other title than recent occupation. There was scarcely a province in which the real sovereignty and the nominal sovereignty were not disjoined. Titles and forms were still retained which implied that the heir of Tamerlane was an absolute ruler, and that the Nabobs of the provinces were his lieutenants. In reality, he was a captive. The Nabobs were in some places independent princes. In other places, as in Bengal and the Carnatic, they had, like their master, become mere phantoms, and the Company was supreme. Among the Mahrattas, again, the heir of Sevajee still kept the title of Rajah; but he was a prisoner, and his prime minister, the Peshwa, had become the hereditary chief of the state. The Peshwa, in his turn, was fast sinking into the same degraded situation into which he had reduced the Rajah. It was, we believe, impossible to find, from the Himalayas to Mysore, a single government which was once a government de facto and a government de jure, which possessed the physical means of making itself feared by its neighbours and subjects, and which had at the same time the authority derived from law and long prescription.

Hastings clearly discerned, what was hidden from most of his contemporaries, that such a state of things gave immense advantages to a ruler of great talents and few scruples. In every international question that could arise, he had his option between the de facto ground and the de jure ground; and the probability was that one of those grounds would sustain any claim that it might be convenient for him to make, and enable him to resist any claim made by others. In every controversy,

accordingly, he resorted to the plea which suited his immediate purpose, without troubling himself in the least about consistency; and thus he scarcely ever failed to find what, to persons of short memories and scanty information, seemed to be a justification for what he wanted to do. Sometimes the Nabob of Bengal is a shadow, sometimes a monarch. Sometimes the Vizier is a mere deputy, sometimes an independent potentate. If it is expedient for the Company to show some legal title to the revenues of Bengal, the grant under the seal of the Mogul is brought forward as an instrument of the highest authority. When the Mogul asks for the rents which were reserved to him by that very grant, he is told that he is a mere pageant, that the English power rests on a very different foundation from a charter given by him, that he is welcome to play at royalty as long as he likes, but that he must expect no tribute from the real masters of India.

It is true that it was in the power of others, as well as of Hastings, to practise this legerdemain; but in the controversies of governments, sophistry is of little use unless it be backed by power. There is a principle which Hastings was fond of asserting in the strongest terms, and on which he acted with undeviating steadiness. It is a principle which, we must own, though it may be grossly abused, can hardly be disputed in the present state of public law. It is this, that where an ambiguous question arises between two governments, there is, if they cannot agree, no appeal except to force, and that the opinion of the stronger must prevail. Almost every question was ambiguous in India. The English Government was the strongest in India. The consequences are obvious. The English Government might do exactly what it chose.

The English Government now chose to wring money out of Cheyte Sing. It had formerly been convenient to treat him as a sovereign prince; it was now convenient to treat him as a subject. Dexterity inferior to that of Hastings could easily find, in the general chaos of laws and customs, arguments for either course. Hastings wanted a great supply. It was known that Cheyte Sing had a large revenue, and it was suspected that he had accumulated a treasure. Nor was he a favourite at Calcutta. He had, when the Governor-General was in great difficulties, courted the favour of Francis and Clavering. Hastings, who, less perhaps from evil passions than from policy, seldom left an injury unpunished, was not sorry that the fate of Cheyte Sing should teach neighbouring princes the same lesson which the fate of Nuncomar had already impressed on the inhabitants of Bengal.

In 1778, on the first breaking out of the war with France, Cheyte Sing was called upon to pay, in addition to his fixed tribute, an extraordinary contribution of fifty thousand pounds. In 1779, an equal sum was exacted. In 1780, the demand was renewed. Cheyte Sing, in the hope of obtaining some indulgence, secretly offered the Governor-General a bribe of twenty thousand pounds. Hastings

took the money, and his enemies have maintained that he took it intending to keep it. He certainly concealed the transaction, for a time, both from the Council in Bengal and from the Directors at home; nor did he ever give any satisfactory reason for the concealment. Public spirit, or the fear of detection, at last determined him to withstand the temptation. He paid over the bribe to the Company's treasury, and insisted that the Rajah should instantly comply with the demands of the English Government. The Rajah, after the fashion of his countrymen, shuffled, solicited, and pleaded poverty. The grasp of Hastings was not to be so eluded. He added to the requisition another ten thousand pounds as a fine for delay, and sent troops to exact the money.

The money was paid. But this was not enough. The late events in the south of India had increased the financial embarrassments of the Company. Hastings was determined to plunder Cheyte Sing, and, for that end, to fasten a quarrel on him. Accordingly, the Rajah was now required to keep a body of cavalry for the service of the British Government. He objected and evaded. This was exactly what the Governor-General wanted. He had now a pretext for treating the wealthiest of his vassals as a criminal. "I resolved,"--these were the words of Hastings himself,--"to draw from his guilt the means of relief of the Company's distresses, to make him pay largely for his pardon, or to exact a severe vengeance for past delinquency." The plan was simply this, to demand larger and larger contributions till the Rajah should be driven to remonstrate, then to call his remonstrance a crime, and to punish him by confiscating all his possessions.

Cheyte Sing was in the greatest dismay. He offered two hundred thousand pounds to propitiate the British Government. But Hastings replied that nothing less than half a million would be accepted. Nay, he began to think of selling Benares to Oude, as he had formerly sold Allahabad and Rohilcund. The matter was one which could not be well managed at a distance; and Hastings resolved to visit Benares.

Cheyte Sing received his liege lord with every mark of reverence, came near sixty miles, with his guards, to meet and escort the illustrious visitor, and expressed his deep concern at the displeasure of the English. He even took off his turban, and laid it in the lap of Hastings, a gesture which in India marks the most profound submission and devotion. Hastings behaved with cold and repulsive severity. Having arrived at Benares, he sent to the Rajah a paper containing the demands of the Government of Bengal. The Rajah, in reply, attempted to clear himself from the accusations brought against him. Hastings, who wanted money and not excuses, was not to be put off by the ordinary artifices of Eastern negotiation. He instantly ordered the Rajah to be arrested and placed under the custody of two companies of sepoys.

In taking these strong measures, Hastings scarcely showed his

usual judgment. It is possible that, having had little opportunity of personally observing any part of the population of India, except the Bengalees, he was not fully aware of the difference between their character and that of the tribes which inhabit the upper provinces. He was now in a land far more favourable to the vigour of the human frame than the Delta of the Ganges; in a land fruitful of soldiers, who have been found worthy to follow English battalions to the charge and into the breach. The Rajah was popular among his subjects. His administration had been mild; and the prosperity of the district which he governed presented a striking contrast to the depressed state of Bahar under our rule, and a still more striking contrast to the misery of the provinces which were cursed by the tyranny of the Nabob Vizier. The national and religious prejudices with which the English were regarded throughout India were peculiarly intense in the metropolis of the Brahminical superstition. It can therefore scarcely he doubted that the Governor-General, before he outraged the dignity of Cheyte Sing by an arrest, ought to have assembled a force capable of bearing down all opposition. This had not been done. The handful of sepoys who attended Hastings would probably have been sufficient to overawe Moorshedabad, or the Black Town of Calcutta. But they were unequal to a conflict with the hardy rabble of Benares. The streets surrounding the palace were filled by an immense multitude, of whom a large proportion, as is usual in Upper India, wore arms. The tumult became a fight, and the fight a massacre. The English officers defended themselves with desperate courage against overwhelming numbers, and fell, as became them, sword in hand. The sepoys were butchered. The gates were forced. The captive prince, neglected by his gaolers, during the confusion, discovered an outlet which opened on the precipitous bank of the Ganges, let himself down to the water by a string made of the turbans of his attendants, found a boat, and escaped to the opposite shore.

If Hastings had, by indiscreet violence, brought himself into a difficult and perilous situation, it is only just to acknowledge that he extricated himself with even more than his usual ability and presence of mind. He had only fifty men with him. The building in which he had taken up his residence was on every side blockaded by the insurgents, But his fortitude remained unshaken. The Rajah from the other side of the river sent apologies and liberal offers. They were not even answered. Some subtle and enterprising men were found who undertook to pass through the throng of enemies, and to convey the intelligence of the late events to the English cantonments. It is the fashion of the natives of India to wear large earrings of gold. When they travel, the rings are laid aside, lest the precious metal should tempt some gang of robbers; and, in place of the ring, a quill or a roll of paper is inserted in the orifice to prevent it from closing. Hastings placed in the cars of his messengers letters rolled up in the smallest compass. Some of these letters were addressed to the commanders of English troops. One was written to

assure his wife of his safety. One was to the envoy whom he had sent to negotiate with the Mahrattas. Instructions for the negotiation were needed; and the Governor-General framed them in that situation of extreme danger, with as much composure as if he had been writing in his palace at Calcutta.

Things, however, were not yet at the worst. An English officer of more spirit than judgment, eager to distinguish himself, made a premature attack on the insurgents beyond the river. His troops were entangled in narrow streets, and assailed by a furious population. He fell, with many of his men; and the survivors were forced to retire.

This event produced the effect which has never failed to follow every check, however slight, sustained in India by the English arms. For hundreds of miles round, the whole country was in commotion. The entire population of the district of Benares took arms. The fields were abandoned by the husbandmen, who thronged to defend their prince. The infection spread to Oude. The oppressed people of that province rose up against the Nabob Vizier, refused to pay their imposts, and put the revenue officers to flight. Even Bahar was ripe for revolt. The hopes of Cheyte Sing began to rise. Instead of imploring mercy in the humble style of a vassal, he began to talk the language of a conqueror, and threatened, it was said, to sweep the white usurpers out of the land. But the English troops were now assembling fast. The officers, and even the private men, regarded the Governor-General with enthusiastic attachment, and flew to his aid with an alacrity which, as he boasted, had never been shown on any other occasion. Major Popham, a brave and skilful soldier, who had highly distinguished himself in the Mahratta war, and in whom the Governor-General reposed the greatest confidence, took the command. The tumultuary army of the Rajah was put to rout. His fastnesses were stormed. In a few hours, above thirty thousand men left his standard, and returned to their ordinary avocations. The unhappy prince fled from his country for ever. His fair domain was added to the British dominions. One of his relations indeed was appointed rajah; but the Rajah of Benares was henceforth to be, like the Nabob of Bengal, a mere pensioner.

By this revolution, an addition of two hundred thousand pounds a year was made to the revenues of the Company. But the immediate relief was not as great as had been expected. The treasure laid up by Cheyte Sing had been popularly estimated at a million sterling. It turned out to be about a fourth part of that sum; and, such as it was, it was seized by the army, and divided as prize-money.

Disappointed in his expectations from Benares, Hastings was more violent than he would otherwise have been, in his dealings with Oude. Sujah Dowlah had long been dead. His son and successor, Asaph-ul-Dowlah, was one of the weakest and most vicious even of

Eastern princes. His life was divided between torpid repose and the most odious forms of sensuality. In his court there was boundless waste, throughout his dominions wretchedness and disorder. He had been, under the skilful management of the English Government, gradually sinking from the rank of an independent prince to that of a vassal of the Company. It was only by the help of a British brigade that he could be secure from the aggressions of neighbours who despised his weakness, and from the vengeance of subjects who detested his tyranny. A brigade was furnished, and he engaged to defray the charge of paying and maintaining it. From that time his independence was at an end. Hastings was not a man to lose the advantage which he had thus gained. The Nabob soon began to complain of the burden which he had undertaken to bear. His revenues, he said, were falling off; his servants were unpaid; he could no longer support the expense of the arrangement which he had sanctioned. Hastings would not listen to these representations. The Vizier, he said, had invited the Government of Bengal to send him troops, and had promised to pay for them. The troops had been sent. How long the troops were to remain in Oude was a matter not settled by the treaty. It remained, therefore, to be settled between the contracting parties. But the contracting parties differed. Who then must decide? The stronger.

Hastings also argued that, if the English force was withdrawn, Oude would certainly become a prey to anarchy, and would probably be overrun by a Mahratta army. That the finances of Oude were embarrassed he admitted, But he contended, not without reason, that the embarrassment was to be attributed to the incapacity and vices of Asaph-ul-Dowlah himself, and that if less were spent on the troops, the only effect would be that more would be squandered on worthless favourites.

Hastings, had intended, after settling the affairs of Benares, to visit Lucknow, and there to confer with Asaph-ul-Dowlah. But the obsequious courtesy of the Nabob Vizier prevented this visit. With a small train he hastened to meet the Governor-General. An interview took place in the fortress which, from the crest of the precipitous rock of Chunar, looks down on the waters of the Ganges.

At first sight it might appear impossible that the negotiation should come to an amicable close. Hastings wanted an extraordinary supply of money. Asaph-ul-Dowlah wanted to obtain a remission of what he already owed. Such a difference seemed to admit of no compromise. There was, however, one course satisfactory to both sides, one course by which it wan possible to relieve the finances both of Oude and of Bengal; and that course was adopted. It was simply this, that the Governor-General and the Nabob Vizier should join to rob a third party; and the third party whom they determined to rob was the parent of one of the robbers.

The mother of the late Nabob and his wife, who was the mother of the present Nabob, were known as the Begums or Princesses of Oude. They had possessed great influence over Sujah Dowlah, and had, at his death, been left in possession of a splendid dotation. The domains of which they received the rents and administered the government were of wide extent. The treasure hoarded by the late Nabob, a treasure which was popularly estimated at near three millions sterling, was in their hands. They continued to occupy his favourite palace at Fyzabad, the Beautiful Dwelling; while Asaph-ul-Dowlah held his court in the stately Lucknow, which he had built for himself on the shores of the Goomti, and had adorned with noble mosques and colleges.

Asaph-ul-Dowlah had already extorted considerable sums from his mother. She had at length appealed to the English; and the English had interfered. A solemn compact had been made, by which she consented to give her son some pecuniary assistance, and he in his turn promised never to commit any further invasion of her rights. This compact was formally guaranteed by the Government of Bengal. But times had changed; money was wanted; and the power which had given the guarantee was not ashamed to instigate the spoiler to excesses such that even he shrank from them.

It was necessary to find some pretext for a confiscation inconsistent, not merely with plighted faith, not merely with the ordinary rules of humanity and justice, but also with that great law of filial piety which, even in the wildest tribes of savages, even in those more degraded communities which wither under the influence of a corrupt half-civilisation, retains a certain authority over the human mind. A pretext was the last thing that Hastings was likely to want. The insurrection at Benares had produced disturbances in Oude. These disturbances it was convenient to impute to the Princesses. Evidence for the imputation there was scarcely any; unless reports wandering from one mouth to another, and gaining something by every transmission, may be called evidence. The accused were furnished with no charge; they were permitted to make no defence for the Governor-General wisely considered that, if he tried them, he might not be able to find a ground for plundering them. It was agreed between him and the Nabob Vizier that the noble ladies should, by a sweeping act of confiscation, be stripped of their domains and treasures for the benefit of the Company, and that the sums thus obtained should be accepted by the Government of Bengal in satisfaction of its claims on the Government of Oude.

While Asaph-ul-Dowlah was at Chunar, he was completely subjugated by the clear and commanding intellect of the English statesman. But, when they had separated, the Vizier began to reflect with uneasiness on the engagements into which he had entered. His mother and grandmother protested and implored. His heart, deeply corrupted by absolute power and licentious pleasures, yet not naturally unfeeling, failed him in this crisis. Even the English resident at Lucknow, though hitherto devoted to Hastings, shrank

from extreme measures. But the Governor-General was inexorable. He wrote to the resident in terms of the greatest severity, and declared that, if the spoliation which had been agreed upon were not instantly carried into effect, he would himself go to Lucknow, and do that from which feebler minds recoil with dismay. The resident, thus menaced, waited on his Highness, and insisted that the treaty of Chunar should be carried into full and immediate effect. Asaph-ul-Dowlah yielded making at the same time a solemn protestation that he yielded to compulsion. The lands were resumed; but the treasure was not so easily obtained. It was necessary to use violence. A body of the Company's troops marched to Fyzabad, and forced the gates of the palace. The Princesses were confined to their own apartments. But still they refused to submit. Some more stringent mode of coercion was to be found. A mode was found of which, even at this distance of time, we cannot speak without shame and sorrow.

There were at Fyzabad two ancient men, belonging to that unhappy class which a practice, of immemorial antiquity in the East, has excluded from the pleasures of love and from the hope of posterity. It has always been held in Asiatic courts that beings thus estranged from sympathy with their kind are those whom princes may most safely trust. Sujah Dowlah had been of this opinion. He had given his entire confidence to the two eunuchs; and after his death they remained at the head of the household of his widow.

These men were, by the orders of the British Government, seized, imprisoned, ironed, starved almost to death, in order to extort money from the Princesses. After they had been two months in confinement, their health gave way. They implored permission to take a little exercise in the garden of their prison. The officer who was in charge of them stated that, if they were allowed this indulgence, there was not the smallest chance of their escaping, and that their irons really added nothing to the security of the custody in which they were kept. He did not understand the plan of his superiors. Their object in these inflictions was not security but torture; and all mitigation was refused. Yet this was not the worst. It was resolved by an English government that these two infirm old men should be delivered to the tormentors. For that purpose they were removed to Lucknow. What horrors their dungeon there witnessed can only be guessed. But there remains on the records of Parliament, this letter, written by a British resident to a British soldier:

"Sir, the Nabob having determined to inflict corporal punishment upon the prisoners under your guard, this is to desire that his officers, when they shall come, may have free access to the prisoners, and be permitted to do with them as they shall see proper."

While these barbarities were perpetrated at Lucknow, the Princesses were still under duress at Fyzabad. Food was allowed

to enter their apartments only in such scanty quantities that their female attendants were in danger of perishing with hunger. Month after month this cruelty continued, till at length, after twelve hundred thousand pounds had been wrung out of the Princesses, Hastings began to think that he had really got to the bottom of their coffers, arid that no rigour could extort more. Then at length the wretched men who were detained at Lucknow regained their liberty. When their irons were knocked off, and the doors of their prison opened, their quivering lips, the tears which ran down their cheeks, and the thanksgivings which they poured forth to the common Father of Mussulmans and Christians, melted even the stout hearts of the English warriors who stood by.

But we must not forget to do justice to Sir Elijah Impey's conduct on this occasion. It was not indeed easy for him to intrude himself into a business so entirely alien from all his official duties. But there was something inexpressibly alluring, we must suppose, in the peculiar rankness of the infamy which was then to be got at Lucknow. He hurried thither as fast as relays of palanquin-bearers could carry him. A crowd of people came before him with affidavits against the Begums, ready drawn in their hands. Those affidavits he did not read. Some of them, indeed, he could not read; for they were in the dialects of Northern India, and no interpreter was employed. He administered the oath to the deponents with all possible expedition, and asked not a single question, not even whether they had perused the statements to which they swore. This work performed, he got again into his palanquin, and posted back to Calcutta, to be in time for the opening of term. The cause was one which, by his own confession, lay altogether out of his jurisdiction. Under the charter of justice, he had no more right to inquire into crimes committed by Asiatics in Oude than the Lord President of the Court of Session of Scotland to hold an assize at Exeter. He had no right to try the Begums, nor did he pretend to try them. With what object, then, did he undertake so long a journey? Evidently in order that he might give, in an irregular manner, that sanction which in a regular manner he could not give, to the crimes of those who had recently hired him; and in order that a confused mass of testimony which he did not sift, which he did not even read, might acquire an authority not properly belonging to it, from the signature of the highest judicial functionary in India.

The time was approaching, however, when he was to be stripped of that robe which has never, since the Revolution, been disgraced so foully as by him. The state of India had for some time occupied much of the attention of the British Parliament. Towards the close of the American war, two committees of the Commons sat on Eastern affairs. In one Edmund Burke took the lead. The other was under the presidency of the able and versatile Henry Dundas, then Lord Advocate of Scotland. Great as are the changes which, during the last sixty years, have taken place in our Asiatic

dominions, the reports which those committees laid on the table of the House will still be found most interesting and instructive.

There was as yet no connection between the Company and either of the great parties in the State. The ministers had no motive to defend Indian abuses. On the contrary, it was for their interest to show, if possible, that the government and patronage of our Oriental empire might, with advantage, be transferred to themselves, The votes, therefore, which, in consequence of the reports made by the two committees, were passed by the Commons, breathed the spirit of stern and indignant justice. The severest epithets were applied to several of the measures of Hastings, especially to the Rohilla war; and it was resolved, on the motion of Mr. Dundas, that the Company ought to recall a Governor-General who had brought such calamities on the Indian people, and such dishonour on the British name. An act was passed for limiting the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. The bargain which Hastings had made with the Chief Justice was condemned in the strongest terms; and an address was presented to the King, praying that Impey might be summoned home to answer for his misdeeds.

Impey was recalled by a letter from the Secretary of State. But the proprietors of India Stock resolutely refused to dismiss Hastings from their service, and passed a resolution affirming, what was undeniably true, that they were intrusted by law with the right of naming and removing their Governor-General, and that they were not bound to obey the directions of a single branch of the legislature with respect to such nomination or removal.

Thus supported by his employers, Hastings remained at the head of the Government of Bengal till the spring of 1785. His administration, so eventful and stormy, closed in almost perfect quiet. In the Council there was no regular opposition to his measures. Peace was restored to India. The Mahratta war had ceased. Hyder was no more. A treaty had been concluded with his son, Tippoo; and the Carnatic had been evacuated by the armies of Mysore. Since the termination of the American war, England had no European enemy or rival in the Eastern seas.

On a general review of the long administration of Hastings, it is impossible to deny that, against the great crimes by which it is blemished, we have to set off great public services. England had passed through a perilous crisis. She still, indeed, maintained her place in the foremost rank of European powers; and the manner in which she had defended herself against fearful odds had inspired surrounding nations with a high opinion both of her spirit and of her strength. Nevertheless, in every part of the world, except one, she had been a loser. Not only had she been compelled to acknowledge the independence of thirteen colonies peopled by her children, and to conciliate the Irish by giving up the right of legislating for them; but, in the Mediterranean, in

the Gulf of Mexico, on the coast of Africa, on the continent of America, she had been compelled to cede the fruits of her victories in former wars. Spain regained Minorca and Florida; France regained Senegal, Goree, and several West Indian Islands. The only quarter of the world in which Britain had lost nothing was the quarter in which her interests had been committed to the care of Hastings. In spite of the utmost exertions both of European and Asiatic enemies, the power of our country in the East had been greatly augmented. Benares was subjected, the Nabob Vizier reduced to vassalage. That our influence had been thus extented, nay, that Fort William and Fort St. George had not been occupied by hostile armies, was owing, if we may trust the general voice of the English in India, to the skill and resolution of Hastings.

His internal administration, with all its blemishes, gives him a title to be considered as one of the most remarkable men in our history. He dissolved the double government. He transferred the direction of affairs to English hands. Out of a frightful anarchy, he educed at least a rude and imperfect order. The whole organisation by which justice was dispensed, revenue collected, peace maintained throughout a territory not inferior in population to the dominions of Lewis the Sixteenth or the Emperor Joseph, was formed and superintended by him. He boasted that every public office, without exception, which existed when he left Bengal, was his creation. It is quite true that this system, after all the improvements suggested by the experience of sixty years, still needs improvement, and that it was at first far more defective than it now is. But whoever seriously considers what it is to construct from the beginning the whole of a machine so vast and complex as a government, will allow that what Hastings effected deserves high admiration. To compare the most celebrated European ministers to him seems to us as unjust as it would be to compare the best baker in London with Robinson Crusoe, who, before he could bake a single loaf, had to make his plough and his harrow, his fences and his scarecrows, his sickle and his flail, his mill and his oven.

The just fame of Hastings rises still higher, when we reflect that he was not bred a statesman; that he was sent from school to a counting-house; and that he was employed during the prime of his manhood as a commercial agent, far from all intellectual society.

Nor must we forget that all, or almost all, to whom, when placed at the head of affairs, he could apply for assistance, were persons who owed as little as himself, or less than himself, to education. A minister in Europe finds himself, on the first day on which he commences his functions, surrounded by experienced public servants, the depositaries of official traditions. Hastings had no such help. His own reflection, his own energy, were to supply the place of all Downing Street and Somerset House. Having had no facilities for learning, he was forced to

teach. He had first to form himself, and then to form his instruments; and this not in a single department, but in all the departments of the administration.

It must be added that, while engaged in this most arduous task, he was constantly trammelled by orders from home, and frequently borne down by a majority in Council. The preservation of an Empire from a formidable combination of foreign enemies, the construction of a government in all its parts, were accomplished by him, while every ship brought out bales of censure from his employers, and while the records of every consultation were filled with acrimonious minutes by his colleagues. We believe that there never was a public man whose temper was so severely tried; not Marlborough, when thwarted by the Dutch Deputies; not Wellington, when he had to deal at once with the Portuguese Regency, the Spanish juntas, and Mr. Percival. But the temper of Hastings was equal to almost any trial. It was not sweet; but it was calm. Quick and vigorous as his intellect was, the patience with which he endured the most cruel vexations, till a remedy could be found, resembled the patience of stupidity. He seems to have been capable of resentment, bitter and long enduring; yet his resentment so seldom hurried him into any blunder, that it may be doubted whether what appeared to be revenge was anything but policy.

The effect of this singular equanimity was that he always had the full command of all the resources of one of the most fertile minds that ever existed. Accordingly no complication of perils and embarrassments could perplex him. For every difficulty he had a contrivance ready; and, whatever may be thought of the justice and humanity of some of his contrivances, it is certain that they seldom failed to serve the purpose for which they were designed.

Together with this extraordinary talent for devising expedients, Hastings possessed, in a very high degree, another talent scarcely less necessary to a man in his situation; we mean the talent for conducting political controversy. It is as necessary to an English statesman in the East that he should be able to write, as it is to a minister in this country that he should be able to speak. It is chiefly by the oratory of a public man here that the nation judges of his powers. It is from the letters and reports of a public man in India that the dispensers of patronage form their estimate of him. In each case, the talent which receives peculiar encouragement is developed, perhaps at the expense of the other powers. In this country, we sometimes hear men speak above their abilities. It is not very unusual to find gentlemen in the Indian service who write above their abilities. The English politician is a little too much of a debater; the Indian politician a little too much of an essayist.

Of the numerous servants of the Company who have distinguished themselves as framers of minutes and despatches, Hastings stands at the head. He was indeed the person who gave to the official

writing of the Indian governments the character which it still retains. He was matched against no common antagonist. But even Francis was forced to acknowledge, with sullen and resentful candour, that there was no contending against the pen of Hastings. And, in truth, the Governor-General's power of making out a case, of perplexing what it was inconvenient that people should understand, and of setting in the clearest point of view whatever would bear the light, was incomparable. His style must be praised with some reservation. It was in general forcible, pure, and polished; but it was sometimes, though not often, turgid, and, on one or two occasions, even bombastic. Perhaps the fondness of Hastings for Persian literature may have tended to corrupt his taste.

And, since we have referred to his literary tastes, it would be most unjust not to praise the judicious encouragement which, as a ruler, he gave to liberal studies and curious researches. His patronage was extended, with prudent generosity, to voyages, travels, experiments, publications. He did little, it is true, towards introducing into India the learning of the West. To make the young natives of Bengal familiar with Milton and Adam Smith, to substitute the geography, astronomy, and surgery of Europe for the dotages of the Brahminical superstition, or for the imperfect science of ancient Greece transfused through Arabian expositions, this was a scheme reserved to crown the beneficent administration of a far more virtuous ruler. Still it is impossible to refuse high commendation to a man who, taken from a ledger to govern an empire, overwhelmed by public business, surrounded by people as busy as himself and separated by thousands of leagues from almost all literary society, gave, both by his example and by his munificence, a great impulse to learning. In Persian and Arabic literature he was deeply skilled. With the Sanscrit he was not himself acquainted; but those who first brought that language to the knowledge of European students owed much to his encouragement. It was under his protection that the Asiatic Society commenced its honourable career. That distinguished body selected him to be its first president; but, with excellent taste and feeling, he declined the honour in favour of Sir William Jones. But the chief advantage which the students of Oriental letters derived from his patronage remains to be mentioned. The Pundits of Bengal had always looked with great jealousy on the attempts of foreigners to pry into those mysteries which were locked up in the sacred dialect. The Brahminical religion had been persecuted by the Mahommedans. What the Hindoos knew of the spirit of the Portuguese Government might warrant them in apprehending persecution from Christians. That apprehension, the wisdom and moderation of Hastings removed. He was the first foreign ruler who succeeded in gaining the confidence of the hereditary priests of India, and who induced them to lay open to English scholars the secrets of the old Brahminical theology and jurisprudence.

It is indeed impossible to deny that, in the great art of

inspiring large masses of human beings with confidence and attachment, no ruler ever surpassed Hastings. If he had made himself popular with the English by giving up the Bengalees to extortion and oppression, or if, on the other hand, he had conciliated the Bengalees and alienated the English, there would have been no cause for wonder. What is peculiar to him is that, being the chief of a small band of strangers, who exercised boundless power over a great indigenous population, he made himself beloved both by the subject many and by the dominant few. The affection felt for him by the civil service was singularly ardent and constant. Through all his disasters and perils, his brethren stood by him with steadfast loyalty. The army, at the same time, loved him as armies have seldom loved any but the greatest chiefs who have led them to victory. Even in his disputes with distinguished military men, he could always count on the support of the military profession. While such was his empire over the hearts of his countrymen, he enjoyed among the natives a popularity, such as other governors have perhaps better merited, but such as no other governor has been able to attain. He spoke their vernacular dialects with facility and precision. He was intimately acquainted with their feelings and usages. On one or two occasions, for great ends, he deliberately acted in defiance of their opinion; but on such occasions he gained more in their respect than he lost in their love, In general, he carefully avoided all that could shock their national or religious prejudices. His administration was indeed in many respects faulty; but the Bengalee standard of good government was not high. Under the Nabobs, the hurricane of Mahratta cavalry had passed annually over the rich alluvial plain. But even the Mahratta shrank from a conflict with the mighty children of the sea; and the immense rich harvests of the Lower Ganges were safely gathered in under the protection of the English sword. The first English conquerors had been more rapacious and merciless even than the Mahrattas--but that generation had passed away. Defective as was the police, heavy as were the public burdens, it is probable that the oldest man in Bengal could not recollect a season of equal security and prosperity. For the first time within living memory, the province was placed under a government strong enough to prevent others from robbing, and not inclined to play the robber itself. These things inspired goodwill. At the same time, the constant success of Hastings and the manner in which he extricated himself from every difficulty made him an object of superstitious admiration; and the more than regal splendour which he sometimes displayed dazzled a people who have much in common with children. Even now, after the lapse of more than fifty years, the natives of India still talk of him as the greatest of the English; and nurses sing children to sleep with a jingling ballad about the fleet horses and richly caparisoned elephants of Sahib Warren Hostein.

The gravest offence of which Hastings was guilty did not affect his popularity with the people of Bengal; for those offences were committed against neighbouring states. Those offences, as our

readers must have perceived, we are not disposed to vindicate; yet, in order that the censure may be justly apportioned to the transgression, it is fit that the motive of the criminal should be taken into consideration. The motive which prompted the worst acts of Hastings was misdirected and ill-regulated public spirit. The rules of justice, the sentiments of humanity, the plighted faith of treaties, were in his view as nothing, when opposed to the immediate interest of the State. This is no justification, according to the principles either of morality, or of what we believe to be identical with morality, namely, far-sighted policy. Nevertheless the common sense of mankind, which in questions of this sort seldom goes far wrong, will always recognise a distinction between crimes which originate in an inordinate zeal for the commonwealth, and crimes which originate in selfish cupidity. To the benefit of this distinction Hastings is fairly entitled. There is, we conceive, no reason to suspect that the Rohilla war, the revolution of Benares, or the spoliation of the Princesses of Oude, added a rupee to his fortune. We will not affirm that, in all pecuniary dealings, he showed that punctilious integrity, that dread of the faintest appearance of evil, which is now the glory of the Indian civil service. But when the school in which he had been trained, and the temptations to which he was exposed are considered, we are more inclined to praise him for his general uprightness with respect to money, than rigidly to blame him for a few transactions which would now be called indelicate and irregular, but which even now would hardly be designated as corrupt. A rapacious man he certainly was not. Had he been so, he would infallibly have returned to his country the richest subject in Europe. We speak within compass, when we say that, without applying any extraordinary pressure, he might easily have obtained from the zemindars of the Company's provinces and from neighbouring princes, in the course of thirteen years, more than three millions sterling, and might have outshone the splendour of Carlton House and of the Palais Royal. He brought home a fortune such as a Governor-General, fond of state, and careless of thrift, might easily, during so long a tenure of office, save out of his legal salary. Mrs. Hastings, we are afraid, was less scrupulous. It was generally believed that she accepted presents with great alacrity, and that she thus formed, without the connivance of her husband, a private hoard amounting to several lacs of rupees. We are the more inclined to give credit to this story, because Mr. Gleig, who cannot but have heard it, does not, as far as we have observed, notice or contradict it.

The influence of Mrs. Hastings over her husband was indeed such that she might easily have obtained much larger sums than she was ever accused of receiving. At length her health began to give way; and the Governor-General, much against his will, was compelled to send her to England. He seems to have loved her with that love which is peculiar to men of strong minds, to men whose affection is not easily won or widely diffused. The talk of Calcutta ran for some time on the luxurious manner in which he

fitted up the round-house of an Indiaman for her accommodation, on the profusion of sandal-wood and carved ivory which adorned her cabin, and on the thousands of rupees which had been expended in order to procure for her the society of an agreeable female companion during the voyage. We may remark here that the letters of Hastings to his wife are exceedingly characteristic. They are tender, and full of indications of esteem and confidence; but, at the same time, a little more ceremonious than is usual in so intimate a relation. The solemn courtesy with which he compliments "his elegant Marian" reminds us now and then of the dignified air with which Sir Charles Grandison bowed over Miss Byron’s hand in the cedar parlour.

After some months, Hastings prepared to follow his wife to England. When it was announced that he was about to quit his office, the feeling of the society which he had so long governed manifested itself by many signs. Addresses poured in from Europeans and Asiatics, from civil functionaries, soldiers, and traders. On the day on which he delivered up the keys of office, a crowd of friends and admirers formed a lane to the quay where he embarked. Several barges escorted him far down the river; and some attached friends refused to quit him till the low coast of Bengal was fading from the view, and till the pilot was leaving the ship.

Of his voyage little is known, except that he amused himself with books and with his pen; and that, among the compositions by which he beguiled the tediousness of that long leisure, was a pleasing imitation of Horace’s Otium Divos rogat. This little poem was inscribed to Mr. Shore, afterwards Lord Teignmouth, a man of whose integrity, humanity, and honour, it is impossible to speak too highly, but who, like some other excellent members of the civil service, extended to the conduct of his friend Hastings an indulgence of which his own conduct never stood in need.

The voyage was, for those times, very speedy. Hastings was little more than four months on the sea. In June 1785, he landed at Plymouth, posted to London, appeared at Court, paid his respects in Leadenhall Street, and then retired with his wife to Cheltenham.

He was greatly pleased with his reception. The King treated him with marked distinction. The Queen, who had already incurred much censure on account of the favour which, in spite of the ordinary severity of her virtue, she had shown to the "elegant Marian," was not less gracious to Hastings. The Directors received him in a solemn sitting; and their chairman read to him a vote of thanks which they had passed without one dissentient voice. "I find myself," said Hastings, in a letter written about a quarter of a year after his arrival in England, "I find myself everywhere, and universally, treated with evidences, apparent even to my own observation, that I possess the good opinion of my country."

The confident and exulting tone of his correspondence about this time is the more remarkable, because he had already received ample notice of the attack which was in preparation. Within a week after he landed at Plymouth, Burke gave notice in the House of Commons of a motion seriously affecting a gentleman lately returned from India. The Session, however, was then so far advanced, that it was impossible to enter on so extensive and important a subject.

Hastings, it is clear, was not sensible of the danger of his position. Indeed that sagacity, that judgment, that readiness in devising expedients, which had distinguished him in the East, seemed now to have forsaken him; not that his abilities were at all impaired; not that he was not still the same man who had triumphed over Francis and Nuncomar, who had made the Chief justice and the Nabob Vizier his tools, who had deposed Cheyte Sing, and repelled Hyder Ali. But an oak, as Mr. Grattan finely said, should not be transplanted at fifty. A man who having left England when a boy, returns to it after thirty or forty years passed in India, will find, be his talents what they may, that he has much both to learn and to unlearn before he can take a place among English statesmen. The working of a representative system, the war of parties, the arts of debate, the influence of the press, are startling novelties to him. Surrounded on every side by new machines and new tactics, he is as much bewildered as Hannibal would have been at Waterloo, or Themistocles at Trafalgar. His very acuteness deludes him. His very vigour causes him to stumble. The more correct his maxims, when applied to the state of society to which he is accustomed, the more certain they are to lead him astray. This was strikingly the case with Hastings. In India he had a bad hand; but he was master of the game, and he won every stake. In England he held excellent cards, if he had known how to play them; and it was chiefly by his own errors that he was brought to the verge of ruin.

Of all his errors the most serious was perhaps the choice of a champion. Clive, in similar circumstances, had made a singularly happy selection. He put himself into the hands of Wedderburn, afterwards Lord Loughborough, one of the few great advocates who have also been great in the House of Commons. To the defence of Clive, therefore, nothing was wanting, neither learning nor knowledge of the world, neither forensic acuteness nor that eloquence which charms political assemblies. Hastings intrusted his interests to a very different person, a Major in the Bengal army, named Scott. This gentleman had been sent over from India some time before as the agent of the Governor-General. It was rumoured that his services were rewarded with Oriental munificence; and we believe that he received much more than Hastings could conveniently spare. The Major obtained a seat in Parliament, and was there regarded as the organ of his employer. It was evidently impossible that a gentleman so situated could speak with the authority which belongs to an independent position. Nor had the agent of Hastings the talents necessary for

obtaining the ear of an assembly which, accustomed to listen to great orators, had naturally become fastidious. He was always on his legs; he was very tedious; and he had only one topic, the merits and wrongs of Hastings. Everybody who knows the House of Commons will easily guess what followed. The Major was soon considered as the greatest bore of his time. His exertions were not confined to Parliament. There was hardly a day on which the newspapers did not contain some puff upon Hastings, signed Asiaticus or Bengalensis, but known to be written by the indefatigable Scott; and hardly a month in which some bulky pamphlet on the same subject, and from the same pen, did not pass to the trunkmakers and the pastry-cooks. As to this gentleman's capacity for conducting a delicate question through Parliament, our readers will want no evidence beyond that which they will find in letters preserved in these volumes. We will give a single specimen of his temper and judgment. He designated the greatest man then living as "that reptile Mr. Burke."

In spite, however, of this unfortunate choice, the general aspect of affairs was favourable to Hastings. The King was on his side. The Company and its servants were zealous in his cause. Among public men he had many ardent friends. Such were Lord Mansfield, who had outlived the vigour of his body, but not that of his mind; and Lord Lansdowne, who, though unconnected with any party, retained the importance which belongs to great talents and knowledge. The ministers were generally believed to be favourable to the late Governor-General. They owed their power to the clamour which had been raised against Mr. Fox's East India Bill. The authors of that bill, when accused of invading vested rights, and of setting up powers unknown to the constitution, had defended themselves by pointing to the crimes of Hastings, and by arguing that abuses so extraordinary justified extraordinary measures. Those who, by opposing that bill, had raised themselves to the head of affairs, would naturally be inclined to extenuate the evils which had been made the plea for administering so violent a remedy; and such, in fact, was their general disposition. The Lord Chancellor Thurlow, in particular, whose great place and force of intellect gave him a weight in the Government inferior only to that of Mr. Pitt, espoused the cause of Hastings with indecorous violence. Mr. Pitt, though he had censured many parts of the Indian system, had studiously abstained from saying a word against the late chief of the Indian Government. To Major Scott, indeed, the young minister had in private extolled Hastings as a great, a wonderful man, who had the highest claims on the Government. There was only one objection to granting all that so eminent a servant of the public could ask. The resolution of censure still remained on the journals of the House of Commons. That resolution was, indeed, unjust; but, till it was rescinded, could the minister advise the King to bestow any mark of approbation on the person censured? If Major Scott is to be trusted, Mr. Pitt declared that this was the only reason which prevented the advisers of the Crown from conferring a peerage on the late Governor-General. Mr. Dundas was

the only important member of the administration who was deeply committed to a different view of the subject. He had moved the resolution which created the difficulty; but even from him little was to be apprehended. Since he had presided over the committee on Eastern affairs, great changes had taken place. He was surrounded by new allies; he had fixed his hopes on new objects; and whatever may have been his good qualities,--and he had many,--flattery itself never reckoned rigid consistency in the number.

From the Ministry, therefore, Hastings had every reason to expect support; and the Ministry was very powerful. The Opposition was loud and vehement against him. But the Opposition, though formidable from the wealth and influence of some of its members, and from the admirable talents and eloquence of others, was outnumbered in Parliament, and odious throughout the country. Nor, as far as we can judge, was the Opposition generally desirous to engage in so serious an undertaking as the impeachment of an Indian Governor. Such an impeachment must last for years. It must impose on the chiefs of the party an immense load of labour. Yet it could scarcely, in any manner, affect the event of the great political game. The followers of the coalition were therefore more inclined to revile Hastings than to prosecute him. They lost no opportunity of coupling his name with the names of the most hateful tyrants of whom history makes mention. The wits of Brooks's aimed their keenest sarcasms both at his public and at his domestic life. Some fine diamonds which he had presented, as it was rumoured, to the royal family, and a certain richly-carved ivory bed which the Queen had done him the honour to accept from him, were favourite subjects of ridicule. One lively poet proposed, that the great acts of the fair Marian's present husband should be immortalised by the pencil of his predecessor; and that Imhoff should be employed to embellish the House of Commons with paintings of the bleeding Rohillas, of Nuncomar swinging, of Cheyte Sing letting himself down to the Ganges. Another, in an exquisitely humorous parody of Virgil's third eclogue, propounded the question, what that mineral could be of which the rays had power to make the most austere of princesses the friend of a wanton. A third described, with gay malevolence, the gorgeous appearance of Mrs. Hastings at St. James's, the galaxy of jewels, torn from Indian Begums, which adorned her head-dress, her necklace gleaming with future votes, and the depending questions that shone upon her ears. Satirical attacks of this description, and perhaps a motion for a vote of censure, would have satisfied the great body of the Opposition. But there were two men whose indignation was not to be so appeased, Philip Francis and Edmund Burke.

Francis had recently entered the House of Commons, and had already established a character there for industry and ability. He laboured indeed under one most unfortunate defect, want of fluency. But he occasionally expressed himself with a dignity and energy worthy of the greatest orators, Before he had been many days in Parliament, he incurred the bitter dislike of Pitt, who

constantly treated him with as much asperity as the laws of debate would allow. Neither lapse of years nor change of scene had mitigated the enmities which Francis had brought back from the East. After his usual fashion, he mistook his malevolence for virtue, nursed it, as preachers tell us that we ought to nurse our good dispositions, and paraded it, on all occasions, with Pharisaical ostentation.

The zeal of Burke was still fiercer; but it was far purer. Men unable to understand the elevation of his mind, have tried to find out some discreditable motive for the vehemence and pertinacity which he showed on this occasion. But they have altogether failed. The idle story that he had some private slight to revenge has long been given up, even by the advocates of Hastings. Mr. Gleig supposes that Burke was actuated by party spirit, that he retained a bitter remembrance of the fall of the coalition, that he attributed that fall to the exertions of the East India interest, and that he considered Hastings as the head and the representative of that interest. This explanation seems to be sufficiently refuted by a reference to dates. The hostility of Burke to Hastings commenced long before the coalition; and lasted long after Burke had become a strenuous supporter of those by whom the coalition had been defeated. It began when Burke and Fox, closely allied together, were attacking the influence of the Crown, and calling for peace with the American republic. It continued till Burke, alienated from Fox, and loaded with the favours of the Crown, died, preaching a crusade against the French republic. We surely cannot attribute to the events of 1784 an enmity which began in 1781, and which retained undiminished force long after persons far more deeply implicated than Hastings in the events of 1784 had been cordially forgiven. And why should we look for any other explanation of Burke's conduct than that which we find on the surface? The plain truth is that Hastings had committed some great crimes, and that the thought of those crimes made the blood of Burke boil in his veins. For Burke was a man in whom compassion for suffering, and hatred of injustice and tyranny, were as strong as in Las Casas or Clarkson. And although in him, as in Las Casas and in Clarkson, these noble feelings were alloyed with the infirmity which belongs to human nature, he is, like them, entitled to this great praise, that he devoted years of intense labour to the service of a people with whom he had neither blood nor language, neither religion nor manners in common, and from whom no requital, no thanks, no applause could be expected.

His knowledge of India was such as few, even of those Europeans who have passed many years in that country have attained, and such as certainly was never attained by any public man who had not quitted Europe. He had studied the history, the laws, and the usages of the East with an industry, such as is seldom found united to so much genius and so much sensibility. Others have perhaps been equally laborious, and have collected an equal mass of materials. But the manner in which Burke brought his higher

powers of intellect to work on statements of facts, and on tables of figures, was peculiar to himself. In every part of those huge bales of Indian information which repelled almost all other readers, his mind, at once philosophical and poetical, found something to instruct or to delight. His reason analysed and digested those vast and shapeless masses; his imagination animated and coloured them. Out of darkness, and dulness, and confusion, he formed a multitude of ingenious theories and vivid pictures. He had, in the highest degree, that noble faculty whereby man is able to live in the past and in the future, in the distant and in the unreal. India and its inhabitants were not to him, as to most Englishmen, mere names and abstractions, but a real country and a real people. The burning sun, the strange vegetation of the palm and the cocoa-tree, the rice-field, the tank, the huge trees, older than the Mogul empire, under which the village crowds assemble, the thatched roof of the peasant's hut, the rich tracery of the mosque where the imaum prays with his face to Mecca, the drums, and banners, and gaudy idols, the devotee swinging in the air, the graceful maiden, with the pitcher on her head, descending the steps to the riverside, the black faces, the long beards, the yellow streaks of sect, the turbans and the flowing robes, the spears and the silver maces, the elephants with their canopies of state, the gorgeous palanquin of the prince, and the close litter of the noble lady, all these things were to him as the objects amidst which his own life had been passed, as the objects which lay on the road between Beaconsfield and St. James's Street. All India was present to the eye of his mind, from the hall where suitors laid gold and perfumes at the feet of sovereigns to the wild moor where the gipsy camp was pitched, from the bazar, humming like a bee-hive with the crowd of buyers and sellers, to the jungle where the lonely courier shakes his bunch of iron rings to scare away the hyaenas. He had just as lively an idea of the insurrection at Benares as of Lord George Gordon's riots, and of the execution of Nuncomar as of the execution of Dr. Dodd. Oppression in Bengal was to him the same thing as oppression in the streets of London.

He saw that Hastings had been guilty of some most unjustifiable acts. All that followed was natural and necessary in a mind like Burke's. His imagination and his passions, once excited, hurried him beyond the bounds of justice and good sense. His reason, powerful as it was, became the slave of feelings which it should have controlled. His indignation, virtuous in its origin, acquired too much of the character of personal aversion. He could see no mitigating circumstance, no redeeming merit. His temper, which, though generous and affectionate, had always been irritable, had now been made almost savage by bodily infirmities and mental vexations, Conscious of great powers and great virtues, he found himself, in age and poverty, a mark for the hatred of a perfidious Court and a deluded people. In Parliament his eloquence was out of date. A young generation, which knew him not, had filled the House. Whenever he rose to speak, his voice

was drowned by the unseemly interruption of lads who were in their cradles when his orations on the Stamp Act called forth the applause of the great Earl of Chatham. These things had produced on his proud and sensitive spirit an effect at which we cannot wonder. He could no longer discuss any question with calmness, or make allowance for honest differences of opinion. Those who think that he was more violent and acrimonious in debates about India than on other occasions, are ill-informed respecting the last years of his life. In the discussions on the Commercial Treaty with the Court of Versailles, on the Regency, on the French Revolution, he showed even more virulence than in conducting the impeachment. Indeed it may be remarked that the very persons who called him a mischievous maniac, for condemning in burning words the Rohilla war and the spoliation of the Begums, exalted him into a prophet as soon as he began to declaim, with greater vehemence, and not with greater reason, against the taking of the Bastile and the insults offered to Marie Antoinette. To us he appears to have been neither a maniac in the former case, nor a prophet in the latter, but in both cases a great and good man, led into extravagance by a sensibility which domineered over all his faculties.

It may be doubted whether the personal antipathy of Francis, or the nobler indignation of Burke, would have led their party to adopt extreme measures against Hastings, if his own conduct had been judicious. He should have felt that, great as his public services had been, he was not faultless, and should have been content to make his escape, without aspiring to the honours of a triumph. He and his agent took a different view. They were impatient for the rewards which, as they conceived, it were deferred only till Burke’s attack should be over. They accordingly resolved to force on a decisive action with an enemy for whom, if they had been wise, they would have made a bridge of gold. On the first day of the session of 1786, Major Scott reminded Burke of the notice given in the preceding year, and asked whether it was seriously intended to bring any charge against the late Governor-General. This challenge left no course open to the Opposition, except to come forward as accusers, or to acknowledge themselves calumniators. The administration of Hastings had not been so blameless, nor was the great party of Fox and North so feeble, that it could be prudent to venture on so bold a defiance. The leaders of the Opposition instantly returned the only answer which they could with honour return; and the whole party was irrevocably pledged to a prosecution.

Burke began his operations by applying for Papers. Some of the documents for which he asked were refused by, the ministers, who, in the debate, held language such as strongly confirmed the prevailing opinion, that they intended to support Hastings. In April, the charges were laid on the table. They had been drawn by Burke with great ability, though in a form too much resembling that of a pamphlet. Hastings was furnished with a copy of the accusation; and it was intimated to him that he might, if he

thought fit, be heard in his own defence at the bar of the Commons.

Here again Hastings was pursued by the same fatality which had attended him ever since the day when he set foot on English ground. It seemed to be decreed that this man, so politic and so successful in the East, should commit nothing but blunders in Europe. Any judicious adviser would have told him that the best thing which he could do would be to make an eloquent, forcible, and affecting oration at the bar of the House; but that, if he could not trust himself to speak, and found it necessary to read, he ought to be as concise as possible. Audiences accustomed to extemporaneous debating of the highest excellence are always impatient of long written compositions. Hastings, however, sat down as he would have done at the Government-house in Bengal, and prepared a paper of immense length. That paper, if recorded on the consultations of an Indian administration, would have been justly praised as a very able minute. But it was now out of place. It fell flat, as the best written defence must have fallen flat, on an assembly accustomed to the animated and strenuous conflicts of Pitt and Fox. The members, as soon as their curiosity about the face and demeanour of so eminent a stranger was satisfied, walked away to dinner, and left Hastings to tell his story till midnight to the clerks and the Serjeant-at-Arms.

All preliminary steps having been duly taken, Burke, in the beginning of June, brought forward the charge relating to the Rohilla war. He acted discreetly in placing this accusation in the van; for Dundas had formerly moved, and the House had adopted, a resolution condemning, in the most severe terms, the policy followed by Hastings with regard to Rohilcund, Dundas had little, or rather nothing, to say in defence of his own consistency; but he put a bold face on the matter, and opposed the motion. Among other things, he declared that, though he still thought the Rohilla war unjustifiable, he considered the services which Hastings had subsequently rendered to the State as sufficient to atone even for so great an offence Pitt did not speak, but voted with Dundas; and Hastings was absolved by a hundred and nineteen votes against sixty-seven.

Hastings was now confident of victory. It seemed, indeed, that he had reason to be so. The Rohilla war was, of all his measures, that which his accusers might with greatest advantage assail. It had been condemned by the Court of Directors. It had been condemned by the House of Commons. It had been condemned by Mr. Dundas, who had since become the chief minister of the Crown for Indian affairs. Yet Burke, having chosen this strong ground, had been completely defeated on it. That, having failed here, he should succeed on any point, was generally thought impossible. It was rumoured at the clubs and coffee-houses that one or perhaps two more charges would be brought forward, that if, on those charges, the sense of the House of Commons should be against impeachment, the Opposition would let the matter drop, that

Hastings would be immediately raised to the peerage, decorated with the star of the Bath, sworn of the Privy Council, and invited to lend the assistance of his talents and experience to the India Board. Lord Thurlow, indeed, some months before, had spoken with contempt of the scruples which prevented Pitt from calling Hastings to the House of Lords; and had even said that, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer was afraid of the Commons, there was nothing to prevent the Keeper of the Great Seal from taking the royal pleasure about a patent of peerage. The very title was chosen. Hastings was to be Lord Daylesford. For, through all changes of scene and changes of fortune, remained unchanged his attachment to the spot which had witnessed the greatness and the fall of his family, and which had borne so great a part in the first dreams of his young ambition.

But in a very few days these fair prospects were overcast. On the thirteenth of June, Mr. Fox brought forward, with great ability and eloquence, the charge respecting the treatment of Cheyte Sing. Francis followed on the same side. The friends of Hastings were in high spirits when Pitt rose. With his usual abundance and felicity of language, the Minister gave his opinion on the case. He maintained that the Governor-General was justified in calling on the Rajah of Benares for pecuniary assistance, and in imposing a fine when that assistance was contumaciously withheld. He also thought that the conduct of the Governor-General during the insurrection had been distinguished by ability and presence of mind. He censured, with great bitterness, the conduct of Francis, both in India and in Parliament, as most dishonest and malignant. The necessary inference from Pitt's arguments seemed to be that Hastings ought to be honourably acquitted; and both the friends and the opponents of the Minister expected from him a declaration to that effect. To the astonishment of all parties, he concluded by saying that, though he thought it right in Hastings to fine Cheyte Sing for contumacy, yet the amount of the fine was too great for the occasion. On this ground, and on this ground alone, did Mr. Pitt, applauding every other part of the conduct of Hastings with regard to Benares, declare that he should vote in favour of Mr. Fox's motion.

The House was thunderstruck; and it well might be so. For the wrong done to Cheyte Sing, even had it been as flagitious as Fox and Francis contended, was a trifle when compared with the horrors which had been inflicted on Rohilcund. But if Mr. Pitt's view of the case of Cheyte Sing were correct, there was no ground for an impeachment, or even for a vote of censure. If the offence of Hastings was really no more than this, that, having a right to impose a mulct, the amount of which mulct was not defined, but was left to be settled by his discretion, he had, not for his own advantage, but for that of the State, demanded too much, was this an offence which required a criminal proceeding of the highest solemnity, a criminal proceeding, to which during sixty years, no public functionary had been subjected? We can see, we think, in what way a man of sense and integrity might have been

induced to take any course respecting Hastings, except the course which Mr. Pitt took. Such a man might have thought a great example necessary, for the preventing of injustice, and for the vindicating of the national honour, and might, on that ground, have voted for impeachment both on the Rohilla charge, and on the Benares charge. Such a man might have thought that the offences of Hastings had been atoned for by great services, and might, on that ground, have voted against the impeachment, on both charges. With great diffidence, we give it as our opinion that the most correct course would, on the whole, have been to impeach on the Rohilla charge, and to acquit on the Benares charge. Had the Benares charge appeared to us in the same light in which it appeared to Mr. Pitt, we should, without hesitation, have voted for acquittal on that charge. The one course which it is inconceivable that any man of a tenth part of Mr. Pitt's abilities can have honestly taken was the course which he took. He acquitted Hastings on the Rohilla charge. He softened down the Benares charge till it became no charge at all; and then he pronounced that it contained matter for impeachment.

Nor must it be forgotten that the principal reason assigned by the ministry for not impeaching Hastings on account of the Rohilla war was this, that the delinquencies of the early part of his administration had been atoned for by the excellence of the later part. Was it not most extraordinary that men who had held this language could afterwards vote that the later part of his administration furnished matter for no less than twenty articles of impeachment? They first represented the conduct of Hastings in 1780 and 1781 as so highly meritorious that, like works of supererogation in the Catholic theology, it ought to be efficacious for the cancelling of former offences; and they then prosecuted him for his conduct in 1780 and 1781.

The general astonishment was the greater, because, only twenty-four hours before, the members on whom the minister could depend had received the usual notes from the Treasury, begging them to be in their places and to vote against Mr. Fox's motion. It was asserted by Mr. Hastings, that, early on the morning of the very day on which the debate took place, Dundas called on Pitt, woke him, and was, closeted with him many hours. The result of this conference was a determination to give up the late Governor-General to the vengeance of the Opposition. It was impossible even for the most powerful minister to carry all his followers with him in so strange a course. Several persons high in office, the Attorney-General, Mr. Grenville, and Lord Mulgrave, divided against Mr. Pitt. But the devoted adherents who stood by the head of the Government without asking questions, were sufficiently numerous to turn the scale. A hundred and nineteen members voted for Mr. Fox's motion; seventy-nine against it. Dundas silently followed Pitt.

That good and great man, the late William Wilberforce, often related the events of this remarkable night. He described the

amazement of the House, and the bitter reflections which were muttered against the Prime Minister by some of the habitual supporters of Government. Pitt himself appeared to feel that his conduct required some explanation. He left the treasury bench, sat for some time next to Mr. Wilberforce, and very earnestly declared that he had found it impossible, as a man of conscience, to stand any longer by Hastings. The business, he said, was too bad. Mr. Wilberforce, we are bound to add, fully believed that his friend was sincere, and that the suspicions to which this mysterious affair gave rise were altogether unfounded.

Those suspicions, indeed, were such as it is painful to mention. The friends of Hastings, most of whom, it is to be observed, generally supported the administration, affirmed that the motive of Pitt and Dundas was jealousy. Hastings was personally a favourite with the King. He was the idol of the East India Company and of its servants. If he were absolved by the Commons, seated among the Lords, admitted to the Board of Control, closely allied with the strong-minded and imperious Thurlow, was it not almost certain that he would soon draw to himself the entire management of Eastern affairs?

Was it not possible that he might become a formidable rival in the Cabinet? It had probably got abroad that very singular communications had taken place between Thurlow and Major Scott, and that, if the First Lord of the Treasury was afraid to recommend Hastings for a peerage, the Chancellor was ready to take the responsibility of that step on himself. Of all ministers, Pitt was the least likely to submit with patience to such an encroachment on his functions. If the Commons impeached Hastings, all danger was at an end. The proceeding, however it might terminate, would probably last some years. In the meantime, the accused person would be excluded from honours and public employments, and could scarcely venture even to pay his duty at Court. Such were the motives attributed by a great part of the public to the young minister, whose ruling passion was generally believed to be avarice of power.

The prorogation soon interrupted the discussions respecting Hastings. In the following year, those discussions were resumed. The charge touching the spoliation of the Begums was brought forward by Sheridan, in a speech which was so imperfectly reported that it may be said to be wholly lost, but which was without doubt, the most elaborately brilliant of all the productions of his ingenious mind. The impression which it produced was such as has never been equalled. He sat down, not merely amidst cheering, but amidst the loud clapping of hands, in which the Lords below the bar and the strangers in the gallery joined. The excitement of the House was such that no other speaker could obtain a hearing; and the debate was adjourned. The ferment spread fast through the town. Within four and twenty hours, Sheridan was offered a thousand pounds for the copyright of the speech, if he would himself correct it for

the press. The impression made by this remarkable display of eloquence on severe and experienced critics, whose discernment may be supposed to have been quickened by emulation, was deep and permanent. Mr. Windham, twenty years later, said that the speech deserved all its fame, and was, in spite of some faults of taste, such as were seldom wanting either in the literary or in the parliamentary performances of Sheridan, the finest that had been delivered within the memory of man. Mr. Fox, about the same time, being asked by the late Lord Holland what was the best speech ever made in the House of Commons, assigned the first place, without hesitation, to the great oration of Sheridan on the Oude charge.

When the debate was resumed, the tide ran so strongly against the accused that his friends were coughed and scraped down. Pitt declared himself for Sheridan's motion; and the question was carried by a hundred and seventy-five votes against sixty-eight.

The Opposition, flushed with victory and strongly supported by the public sympathy, proceeded to bring forward a succession of charges relating chiefly to pecuniary transactions. The friends of Hastings were discouraged, and, having now no hope of being able to avert an impeachment, were not very strenuous in their exertions. At length the House, having agreed to twenty articles of charge, directed Burke to go before the Lords, and to impeach the late Governor-General of High Crimes and Misdemeanours. Hastings was at the same time arrested by the Serjeant-at-Arms, and carried to the bar of the Peers.

The session was now within ten days of its close. It was, therefore, impossible that any progress could be made in the trial till the next year. Hastings was admitted to bail; and further proceedings were postponed till the Houses should re-assemble.

When Parliament met in the following winter, the Commons proceeded to elect a Committee for managing the impeachment. Burke stood at the head; and with him were associated most of the leading members of the Opposition. But when the name of Francis was read a fierce contention arose. It was said that Francis and Hastings were notoriously on bad terms, that they had been at feud during many years, that on one occasion their mutual aversion had impelled them to seek each other's lives, and that it would be improper and indelicate to select a private enemy to be a public accuser. It was urged on the other side with great force, particularly by Mr. Windham, that impartiality, though the first duty of a judge, had never been reckoned among the qualities of an advocate; that in the ordinary administration of criminal justice among the English, the aggrieved party, the very last person who ought to be admitted into the jury-box, is the prosecutor; that what was wanted in a manager was, not that he should be free from bias, but that he should be able, well informed, energetic, and active. The ability and information of

Francis were admitted; and the very animosity with which he was reproached, whether a virtue or a vice, was at least a pledge for his energy and activity. It seems difficult to refute these arguments. But the inveterate hatred borne by Francis to Hastings had excited general disgust. The House decided that Francis should not be a manager. Pitt voted with the majority, Dundas with the minority.

In the meantime, the preparations for the trial had proceeded rapidly; and on the thirteenth of February, 1788, the sittings of the Court commenced. There have been spectacles more dazzling to the eye, more gorgeous with jewellery and cloth of gold, more attractive to grown-up children, than that which was then exhibited at Westminster; but, perhaps, there never was a spectacle so well calculated to strike a highly cultivated, a reflecting, and imaginative mind. All the various kinds of interest which belong to the near and to the distant, to the present and to the past, were collected on one spot and in one hour. All the talents and all the accomplishments which are developed by liberty and civilisation were now displayed, with every advantage that could be derived both from cooperation and from contrast Every step in the proceedings carried the mind either backward, through many troubled centuries, to the days when the foundations of our constitution were laid; or far away, over boundless seas and deserts, to dusky nations living under strange stars, worshipping strange gods, and writing strange characters from right to left. The High Court of Parliament was to sit, according to forms handed down from the days of the Plantagenets, on an Englishman accused of exercising tyranny over the lord of the holy city of Benares, and over the ladies of the princely house of Oude.

The place was worthy of such a trial. It was the great hall of William Rufus, the hall which had resounded with acclamations at the inauguration of thirty kings, the hall which had witnessed the just sentence of Bacon and the just absolution of Somers, the hall where the eloquence of Strafford had for a moment awed and melted a victorious party inflamed with just resentment, the hall where Charles had confronted the High Court of Justice with the placid courage which has half redeemed his fame. Neither military nor civil pomp was wanting. The avenues were lined with grenadiers. The streets were kept clear by cavalry. The peers, robed in gold and ermine, were marshalled by the heralds under Garter King-at-Arms. The judges in their vestments of state attended to give advice on points of law. Near a hundred and seventy lords, three-fourths of the Upper House as the Upper House then was, walked in solemn order from their usual place of assembling to the tribunal. The junior Baron present led the way, George Eliott, Lord Heathfield, recently ennobled for his memorable defence of Gibraltar against the fleets and armies of France and Spain. The long procession was closed by the Duke of Norfolk, Earl Marshal of the realm, by the great dignitaries, and by the brothers and sons of the King. Last of all came the Prince

of Wales, conspicuous by his fine person and noble bearing. The grey old walls were hung with scarlet. The long galleries were crowded by an audience such as has rarely excited the fears or the emulation of an orator. There were gathered together, from all parts of a great, free, enlightened, and prosperous empire, grace and female loveliness, wit and learning, the representatives of every science and of every art. There were seated round the Queen the fair-haired young daughters of the house of Brunswick. There the Ambassadors of great Kings and Commonwealths gazed with admiration on a spectacle which no other country in the world could present. There Siddons, in the prime of her majestic beauty, looked with emotion on a scene surpassing all the imitations of the stage. There the historian of the Roman Empire thought of the days when Cicero pleaded the cause of Sicily against Verres, and when, before a senate which still retained some show of freedom, Tacitus thundered against the oppressor of Africa. There were seen, side by side, the greatest painter and the greatest scholar of the age. The spectacle had allured Reynolds from that easel which has preserved to us the thoughtful foreheads of so many writers and statesmen, and the sweet smiles of to many noble matrons. It had induced Parr to suspend his labours in that dark and profound mine from which he had extracted a vast treasure of erudition, a treasure too often buried in the earth, too often paraded with injudicious and inelegant ostentation, but still precious, massive, and splendid.

There appeared the voluptuous charms of her to whom the heir of the throne had in secret plighted his faith. There too was she, the beautiful mother of a beautiful race, the Saint Cecilia, whose delicate features, lighted up by love and music, art has rescued from the common decay. There were the members of that brilliant society which quoted, criticised, and exchanged repartees, under the rich peacock hangings of Mrs. Montague. And there the ladies whose lips, more persuasive than those of Fox himself, had carried the Westminster election against palace and treasury, shone round Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire.

The Serjeants made proclamation. Hastings advanced to the bar, and bent his knee. The culprit was indeed not unworthy of that great presence. He had ruled an extensive and populous country, had made laws and treaties, had sent forth armies, had set up and pulled down princes. And in his high place he had so borne himself, that all had feared him, that most had loved him, and that hatred itself could deny him no title to glory, except virtue. He looked like a great man, and not like a bad man. A person small and emaciated, yet deriving dignity from a carriage which, while it indicated deference to the Court, indicated also habitual self-possession and self-respect, a high and intellectual forehead, a brow pensive, but not gloomy, a mouth of inflexible decision, a face pale and worn, but serene, on which was written, as legibly as under the picture in the council-chamber at Calcutta, Mens aequa in arduis; such was the aspect with which the great proconsul presented himself to his judges.

His counsel accompanied him, men all of whom were afterwards raised by their talents and learning to the highest posts in their profession, the bold and strong-minded Law, afterwards Chief Justice of the King's Bench; the more humane and eloquent Dallas, afterwards Chief Justice of the Common Pleas; and Plomer, who, near twenty years later, successfully conducted in the same high court the defence of Lord Melville, and subsequently became Vice-chancellor and Master of the Rolls.

But neither the culprit nor his advocates attracted so much notice as the accusers. In the midst of the blaze of red drapery, a space had been fitted up with green benches and tables for the Commons. The managers, with Burke at their head, appeared in full dress. The collectors of gossip did not fail to remark that even Fox, generally so regardless of his appearance, had paid to the illustrious tribunal the compliment of wearing a bag and sword. Pitt had refused to be one of the conductors of the impeachment; and his commanding, copious, and sonorous eloquence was wanting to that great muster of various talents. Age and blindness had unfitted Lord North for the duties of a public prosecutor; and his friends were left without the help of his excellent sense, his tact and his urbanity. But in spite of the absence of these two distinguished members of the Lower House, the box in which the managers stood contained an array of speakers such as perhaps had not appeared together since the great age of Athenian eloquence. There were Fox and Sheridan, the English Demosthenes and the English Hyperides. There was Burke, ignorant, indeed, or negligent of the art of adapting his reasonings and his style to the capacity and taste of his hearers, but in amplitude of comprehension and richness of imagination superior to every orator, ancient or modern. There, with eyes reverentially fixed on Burke, appeared the finest gentleman of the age, his form developed by every manly exercise, his face beaming with intelligence and spirit, the ingenious, the chivalrous, the high-souled Windham. Nor, though surrounded by such men, did the youngest manager pass unnoticed. At an age when most of those who distinguish themselves in life are still contending for prizes and fellowships at college, he had won for himself a conspicuous place in Parliament. No advantage of fortune or connection was wanting that could set off to the height his splendid talents and his unblemished honour. At twenty-three he had been thought worthy to be ranked with the veteran statesmen who appeared as the delegates of the British Commons, at the bar of the British nobility. All who stood at that bar, save him alone, are gone, culprit, advocates, accusers. To the generation which is now in the vigour of life, he is the sole representative of a great age which has passed away. But those who, within the last ten years, have listened with delight, till the morning sun shone on the tapestries of the House of Lords, to the lofty and animated eloquence of Charles Earl Grey, are able to form some estimate of the powers of a race of men among whom he was not the foremost.
The charges and the answers of Hastings were first read. The

ceremony occupied two whole days, and was rendered less tedious than it would otherwise have been by the silver voice and just emphasis of Cowper, the clerk of the court, a near relation of the amiable poet. On the third day Burke rose. Four sittings were occupied by his opening speech, which was intended to be a general introduction to all the charges. With an exuberance of thought and a splendour of diction which more than satisfied the highly raised expectation of the audience, he described the character and institutions of the natives of India, recounted the circumstances in which the Asiatic empire of Britain had originated, and set forth the constitution of the Company and of the English Presidencies. Having thus attempted to communicate to his hearers an idea of Eastern society, as vivid as that which existed in his own mind, he proceeded to arraign the administration of Hastings as systematically conducted in defiance of morality and public law. The energy and pathos of the great orator extorted expressions of unwonted admiration from the stem and hostile Chancellor, and, for a moment, seemed to pierce even the resolute heart of the defendant. The ladies in the galleries, unaccustomed to such displays of eloquence, excited by the solemnity of the occasion, and perhaps not unwilling to display their taste and sensibility, were in a state of uncontrollable emotion. Handkerchiefs were pulled out; smelling bottles were handed round; hysterical sobs and screams were heard: and Mrs. Sheridan was carried out in a fit. At length the orator concluded. Raising his voice till the old arches of Irish oak resounded, "Therefore," said be, "hath it with all confidence been ordered, by the Commons of Great Britain, that I impeach Warren Hastings of high crimes and misdemeanours. I impeach him in the name of the Commons' House of Parliament, whose trust he has betrayed. I impeach him in the name of the English nation, whose ancient honour he has sullied. I impeach him in the name of the people of India, whose rights he has trodden under foot, and whose country he has turned into a desert. Lastly, in the name of human nature itself, in the name of both sexes, in the name of every age, in the name of every rank, I impeach the common enemy and oppressor of all!"

When the deep murmur of various emotions had subsided, Mr. Fox rose to address the Lords respecting the course of proceeding to be followed. The wish of the accusers was that the Court would bring to a close the investigation of the first charge before the second was opened. The wish of Hastings and of his counsel was that the managers should open all the charges, and produce all the evidence for the prosecution, before the defence began. The Lords retired to their own House to consider the question. The Chancellor took the side of Hastings. Lord Loughborough, who was now in opposition, supported the demand of the managers. The division showed which way the inclination of the tribunal leaned. A majority of near three to one decided in favour of the course for which Hastings contended.

When the Court sat again, Mr. Fox, assisted by Mr. Grey, opened

the charge respecting Cheyte Sing, and several days were spent in reading papers and hearing witnesses. The next article was that relating to the Princesses of Oude. The conduct of this part of the case was intrusted to Sheridan. The curiosity of the public to hear him was unbounded. His sparkling and highly finished declamation lasted two days; but the Hall was crowded to suffocation during the whole time. It was said that fifty guineas had been paid for a single ticket. Sheridan, when he concluded, contrived, with a knowledge of stage effect which his father might have envied, to sink back, as if exhausted, into the arms of Burke, who hugged him with the energy of generous admiration.

June was now far advanced. The session could not last much longer; and the progress which had been made in the impeachment was not very satisfactory. There were twenty charges. On two only of these had even the case for the prosecution been heard; and it was now a year since Hastings had been admitted to bail.

The interest taken by the public in the trial was great when the Court began to sit, and rose to the height when Sheridan spoke on the charge relating to the Begums. From that time the excitement went down fast. The spectacle had lost the attraction of novelty. The great displays of rhetoric were over. What was behind was not of a nature to entice men of letters from their books in the morning, or to tempt ladies who had left the masquerade at two to be out of bed before eight There remained examinations and cross-examinations. There remained statements of accounts. There remained the reading of papers, filled with words unintelligible to English ears, with lacs and crores, zemindars and aumils, sunnuds and perwarmahs, jaghires and nuzzurs. There remained bickerings, not always carried on with the best taste or the best temper, between the managers of the impeachment and the counsel for the defence, particularly between Mr. Burke and Mr. Law. There remained the endless marches and counter-marches of the Peers between their House and the Hall: for as often as a point of law was to be discussed, their Lordships retired to discuss it apart; and the consequence was, as a Peer wittily said, that the judges walked and the trial stood still.

It is to be added that, in the spring of 1788, when the trial commenced, no important question, either of domestic or foreign policy, occupied the public mind. The proceeding in Westminster Hall, therefore, naturally attracted most of the attention of Parliament and of the country. It was the one great event of that season. But in the following year the King’s illness, the debates on the Regency, the expectation of a change of ministry, completely diverted public attention from Indian affairs; and within a fortnight after George the Third had returned thanks in St. Paul’s for his recovery, the States General of France met at Versailles. In the midst of the agitation produced by these events, the impeachment was for a time almost forgotten.

The trial in the Hall went on languidly. In the session of 1788,

when the proceedings had the interest of novelty, and when the Peers had little other business before them, only thirty-five days were given to the impeachment. In 1789, the Regency Bill occupied the Upper House till the session was far advanced. When the King recovered the circuits were beginning. The judges left town; the Lords waited for the return of the oracles of jurisprudence; and the consequence was that during the whole year only seventeen days were given to the case of Hastings. It was clear that the matter would be protracted to a length unprecedented in the annals of criminal law.

In truth, it is impossible to deny that impeachment, though it is a fine ceremony, and though it may have been useful in the seventeenth century, is not a proceeding from which much good can now be expected. Whatever confidence may be placed in the decision of the Peers on an appeal arising out of ordinary litigation, it is certain that no man has the least confidence in their impartiality, when a great public functionary, charged with a great state crime, is brought to their bar. They are all politicians. There is hardly one among them whose vote on an impeachment may not be confidently predicted before a witness has been examined; and, even if it were possible to rely on their justice, they would still be quite unfit to try such a cause as that of Hastings. They sit only during half the year. They have to transact much legislative and much judicial business. The law-lords, whose advice is required to guide the unlearned majority, are employed daily in administering justice elsewhere. It is impossible, therefore, that during a busy session, the Upper House should give more than a few days to an impeachment. To expect that their Lordships would give up partridge-shooting, in order to bring the greatest delinquent to speedy justice, or to relieve accused innocence by speedy acquittal, would be unreasonable indeed. A well-constituted tribunal, sitting regularly six days in the week, and nine hours in the day, would have brought the trial of Hastings to a close in less than three months. The Lords had not finished their work in seven years.

The result ceased to be matter of doubt, from the time when the Lords resolved that they would be guided by the rules of evidence which are received in the inferior courts of the realm. Those rules, it is well known, exclude much information which would be quite sufficient to determine the conduct of any reasonable man, in the most important transactions of private life. These rules, at every assizes, save scores of culprits whom judges, jury, and spectators, firmly believe to be guilty. But when those rules were rigidly applied to offences committed many years before, at the distance of many thousands of miles, conviction was, of course, out of the question. We do not blame the accused and his counsel for availing themselves of every legal advantage in order to obtain an acquittal. But it is clear that an acquittal so obtained cannot be pleaded in bar of the judgment of history.

Several attempts were made by the friends of Hastings to put a

stop to the trial. In 1789 they proposed a vote of censure upon Burke, for some violent language which he had used respecting the death of Nuncomar and the connection between Hastings and Impey. Burke was then unpopular in the last degree both with the House and with the country. The asperity and indecency of some expressions which he had used during the debates on the Regency had annoyed even his warmest friends. The vote of censure was carried; and those who had moved it hoped that the managers would resign in disgust. Burke was deeply hurt. But his zeal for what he considered as the cause of justice and mercy triumphed over his personal feelings. He received the censure of the House with dignity and meekness, and declared that no personal mortification or humiliation should induce him to flinch from the sacred duty which he had undertaken.

In the following year the Parliament was dissolved; and the friends of Hastings entertained a hope that the new House of Commons might not be disposed to go on with the impeachment. They began by maintaining that the whole proceeding was terminated by the dissolution. Defeated on this point, they made a direct motion that the impeachment should be dropped; but they were defeated by the combined forces of the Government and the Opposition. It was, however, resolved that, for the sake of expedition, many of the articles should be withdrawn. In truth, had not some such measure been adopted, the trial would have lasted till the defendant was in his grave.

At length, in the spring of 1795, the decision was pronounced, near eight years after Hastings had been brought by the Sergeant-at-Arms of the Commons to the bar of the Lords. On the last day of this great procedure the public curiosity, long suspended, seemed to be revived. Anxiety about the judgment there could be none; for it had been fully ascertained that there was a great majority for the defendant. Nevertheless many wished to see the pageant, and the Hall was as much crowded as on the first day. But those who, having been present on the first day, now bore a part in the proceedings of the last, were few; and most of those few were altered men.

As Hastings himself said, the arraignment had taken place before one generation, and the judgment was pronounced by another. The spectator could not look at the woolsack, or at the red benches of the Peers, or at the green benches of the Commons, without seeing something that reminded him of the instability of all human things, of the instability of power and fame and life, of the more lamentable instability of friendship. The great seal was borne before Lord Loughborough, who, when the trial commenced, was a fierce opponent of Mr. Pitt’s Government, and who was now a member of that Government, while Thurlow, who presided in the court when it first sat, estranged from all his old allies, sat scowling among the junior barons. Of about a hundred and sixty nobles who walked in the procession on the first day, sixty had been laid in their family vaults. Still more affecting must have

been the sight of the managers' box. What had become of that fair fellowship, so closely bound together by public and private ties, so resplendent with every talent and accomplishment? It had been scattered by calamities more bitter than the bitterness of death. The great chiefs were still living, and still in the full vigour of their genius. But their friendship was at an end. It had been violently and publicly dissolved, with tears and stormy reproaches. If those men, once so dear to each other, were now compelled to meet for the purpose of managing the impeachment, they met as strangers whom public business had brought together, and behaved to each other with cold and distant civility. Burke had in his vortex whirled away Windham. Fox had been followed by Sheridan and Grey.

Only twenty-nine Peers voted. Of these only six found Hastings guilty on the charges relating to Cheyte Sing and to the Begums. On other charges, the majority in his favour was still greater. On some he was unanimously absolved. He was then called to the bar, was informed from the woolsack that the Lords had acquitted him, and was solemnly discharged. He bowed respectfully and retired.

We have said that the decision had been fully expected. It was also generally approved. At the commencement of the trial there had been a strong and indeed unreasonable feeling against Hastings. At the close of the trial there was a feeling equally strong and equally unreasonable in his favour. One cause of the change was, no doubt, what is commonly called the fickleness of the multitude, but what seems to us to be merely the general law of human nature. Both in individuals and in masses violent excitement is always followed by remission, and often by reaction. We are all inclined to depreciate whatever we have overpraised, and, on the other hand, to show undue indulgence where we have shown undue rigour. It was thus in the case of Hastings. The length of his trial, moreover, made him an object of compassion. It was thought, and not without reason, that, even if he was guilty, he was still an ill-used man, and that an impeachment of eight years was more than a sufficient punishment. It was also felt that, though, in the ordinary course of criminal law, a defendant is not allowed to set off his good actions against his crimes, a great political cause should be tried on different principles, and that a man who had governed an empire during thirteen years might have done some very reprehensible things, and yet might be on the whole deserving of rewards and honours rather than of fine and imprisonment. The press, an instrument neglected by the prosecutors, was used by Hastings and his friends with great effect. Every ship, too, that arrived from Madras or Bengal, brought a cuddy full of his admirers. Every gentleman from India spoke of the late Governor-General as having deserved better, and having been treated worse, than any man living. The effect of this testimony unanimously given by all persons who knew the East, was naturally very great. Retired members of the Indian services, civil and military, were settled

in all corners of the kingdom. Each of them was, of course, in his own little circle, regarded as an oracle on an Indian question; and they were, with scarcely one exception, the zealous advocates of Hastings. It is to be added, that the numerous addresses to the late Governor-General, which his friends in Bengal obtained from the natives and transmitted to England, made a considerable impression. To these addresses we attach little or no importance. That Hastings was beloved by the people whom he governed is true; but the eulogies of pundits, zemindars, Mahommedan doctors, do not prove it to be true. For an English collector or judge would have found it easy to induce any native who could write to sign a panegyric on the most odious ruler that ever was in India. It was said that at Benares, the very place at which the acts set forth in the first article of impeachment had been committed, the natives had erected a temple to Hastings; and this story excited a strong sensation in England. Burke's observations on the apotheosis were admirable. He saw no reason for astonishment, he said, in the incident which had been represented as so striking. He knew something of the mythology of the Brahmins. He knew that as they worshipped some gods from love, so they worshipped others from fear. He knew that they erected shrines, not only to the benignant deities of light and plenty, but also to the fiends who preside over smallpox and murder; nor did he at all dispute the claim of Mr. Hastings to be admitted into such a Pantheon. This reply has always struck us as one of the finest that ever was made in Parliament. It is a grave and forcible argument, decorated by the most brilliant wit and fancy.

Hastings was, however, safe. But in everything except character, he would have been far better off if, when first impeached, he had at once pleaded guilty, and paid a fine of fifty thousand pounds. He was a ruined man. The legal expenses of his defence had been enormous. The expenses which did not appear in his attorney's bill were perhaps larger still. Great sums had been paid to Major Scott. Great sums had been laid out in bribing newspapers, rewarding pamphleteers, and circulating tracts. Burke, so early as 1790, declared in the House of Commons that twenty thousand pounds had been employed in corrupting the press. It is certain that no controversial weapon, from the gravest reasoning to the coarsest ribaldry, was left unemployed. Logan defended the accused Governor with great ability in prose. For the lovers of verse, the speeches of the managers were burlesqued in Simpkin's letters. It is, we are afraid, indisputable that Hastings stooped so low as to court the aid of that malignant and filthy baboon John Williams, who called himself Anthony Pasquin. It was necessary to subsidise such allies largely. The private boards of Mrs. Hastings had disappeared. It is said that the banker to whom they had been intrusted had failed. Still if Hastings had practised strict economy, he would, after all his losses, have had a moderate competence; but in the management of his private affairs he was imprudent. The dearest wish of his heart had always been to regain Daylesford. At length, in the

very year in which his trial commenced, the wish was accomplished; and the domain, alienated more than seventy years before, returned to the descendant of its old lords. But the manor-house was a ruin; and the grounds round it had, during many years, been utterly neglected. Hastings proceeded to build, to plant, to form a sheet of water, to excavate a grotto; and, before he was dismissed from the bar of the House of Lords, he had expended more than forty thousand pounds in adorning his seat.

The general feeling both of the Directors and of the proprietors of the East India Company was that he had great claims on them, that his services to them had been eminent, and that his misfortunes had been the effect of his zeal for their interest. His friends in Leadenhall Street proposed to reimburse him the costs of his trial, and to settle on him an annuity of five thousand pounds a year. But the consent of the Board of Control was necessary; and at the head of the Board of Control was Mr. Dundas, who had himself been a party to the impeachment, who had, on, that account, been reviled with great bitterness by the adherents of Hastings, and who, therefore, was not in a very complying mood. He refused to consent to what the Directors suggested. The Directors remonstrated. A long controversy followed. Hastings, in the meantime, was reduced to such distress that he could hardly pay his weekly bills. At length a compromise was made. An annuity for life of four thousand pounds was settled on Hastings; and in order to enable him to meet pressing demands, he was to receive ten years' annuity in advance. The Company was also permitted to lend him fifty thousand pounds, to be repaid by instalments without interest. This relief, though given in the most absurd manner, was sufficient to enable the retired Governor to live in comfort, and even in luxury, if he had been a skilful manager. But he was careless and profuse, and was more than once under the necessity of applying to the Company for assistance, which was liberally given.

He had security and affluence, but not the power and dignity which, when he landed from India, he had reason to expect. He had then looked forward to a coronet, a red riband, a seat at the Council Board, an office at Whitehall. He was then only fifty-two, and might hope for many years of bodily and mental vigour. The case was widely different when he left the bar of the Lords. He was now too old a man to turn his mind to a new class of studies and duties. He had no chance of receiving any mark of royal favour while Mr. Pitt remained in power; and, when Mr. Pitt retired, Hastings was approaching his seventieth year.

Once, and only once, after his acquittal, he interfered in politics; and that interference was not much to his honour. In 1804 he exerted himself strenuously to prevent Mr. Addington, against whom Fox and Pitt had combined, from resigning the Treasury. It is difficult to believe that a man, so able and energetic as Hastings, can have thought that, when Bonaparte was

at Boulogne with a great army, the defence of our island could safely be intrusted to a ministry which did not contain a single person whom flattery could describe as a great statesman. It is also certain that, on the important question which had raised Mr. Addington to power, and on which he differed from both Fox and Pitt, Hastings, as might have been expected, agreed with Fox and Pitt, and was decidedly opposed to Addington. Religious intolerance has never been the vice of the Indian service, and certainly was not the vice of Hastings. But Mr. Addington had treated him with marked favour. Fox had been a principal manager of the impeachment. To Pitt it was owing that there had been an impeachment; and Hastings, we fear, was on this occasion guided by personal considerations, rather than by a regard to the public interest.

The last twenty-four years of his life were chiefly passed at Daylesford. He amused himself with embellishing his grounds, riding fine Arab horses, fattening prize-cattle, and trying to rear Indian animals and vegetables in England. He sent for seeds of a very fine custard-apple, from the garden of what had once been his own villa, among the green hedgerows of Allipore. He tried also to naturalise in Worcestershire the delicious leechee, almost the only fruit of Bengal which deserves to be regretted even amidst the plenty of Covent Garden. The Mogul emperors, in the time of their greatness, had in vain attempted to introduce into Hindostan the goat of the table-land of Thibet, whose down supplies the looms of Cashmere with the materials of the finest shawls. Hastings tried, with no better fortune, to rear a breed at Daylesford; nor does he seem to have succeeded better with the cattle of Bootan, whose tails are in high esteem as the best fans for brushing away the mosquitoes.

Literature divided his attention with his conservatories and his menagerie. He had always loved books, and they were now necessary to him. Though not a poet, in any high sense of the word, he wrote neat and polished lines with great facility, and was fond of exercising this talent. Indeed, if we must speak out, he seems to have been more of a Trissotin than was to be expected from the powers of his mind, and from the great part which he had played in life. We are assured in these Memoirs that the first thing which he did in the morning was to write a copy of verses. Men the family and guests assembled, the poem made its appearance as regularly as the eggs and rolls; and Mr. Gleig requires us to believe that, if from any accident Hastings came to the breakfast-table without one of his charming performances in his hand, the omission was felt by all as a grievous disappointment. Tastes differ widely. For ourselves, we must say that, however good the breakfasts at Daylesford may have been,--and we are assured that the tea was of the most aromatic flavour, and that neither tongue nor venison-pasty was wanting,--we should have thought the reckoning high if we had been forced to earn our repast by listening every day to a new madrigal or sonnet composed by our host. We are glad, however, that Mr. Gleig has

preserved this little feature of character, though we think it by no means a beauty. It is good to be often reminded of the inconsistency of human nature, and to learn to look without wonder or disgust on the weaknesses which are found in the strongest minds. Dionysius in old times, Frederic in the last century, with capacity and vigour equal to the conduct of the greatest affairs, united all the little vanities and affectations of provincial bluestockings. These great examples may console the admirers of Hastings for the affliction of seeing him reduced to the level of the Hayleys and Sewards.

When Hastings had passed many years in retirement, and had long outlived the common age of men, he again became for a short time an object of general attention. In 1813 the charter of the East India Company was renewed; and much discussion about Indian affairs took place in Parliament. It was determined to examine witnesses at the bar of the Commons; and Hastings was ordered to attend. He had appeared at that bar once before. It was when he read his answer to the charges which Burke had laid on the table. Since that time twenty-seven years had elapsed; public feeling had undergone a complete change; the nation had now forgotten his faults, and remembered only his services. The reappearance, too, of a man who had been among the most distinguished of a generation that had passed away, who now belonged to history, and who seemed to have risen from the dead, could not but produce a solemn and pathetic effect. The Commons received him with acclamations, ordered a chair to be set for him, and, when he retired, rose and uncovered. There were, indeed, a few who did not sympathise with the general feeling. One or two of the managers of the impeachment were present. They sate in the same seats which they had occupied when they had been thanked for the services which they had rendered in Westminster Hall: for, by the courtesy of the House, a member who has been thanked in his place is considered as having a right always to occupy that place. These gentlemen were not disposed to admit that they had employed several of the best years of their lives in persecuting an innocent man. They accordingly kept their seats, and pulled their hats over their brows; but the exceptions only made the prevailing enthusiasm more remarkable. The Lords received the old man with similar tokens of respect. The University of Oxford conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Laws; and, in the Sheldonian Theatre, the undergraduates welcomed him with tumultuous cheering.

These marks of public esteem were soon followed by marks of royal favour. Hastings was sworn of the Privy Council, and was admitted to a long private audience of the Prince Regent, who treated him very graciously. When the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia visited England, Hastings appeared in their train both at Oxford and in the Guildhall of London, and, though surrounded by a crowd of princes and great warriors, was everywhere received with marks of respect and admiration. He was presented by the Prince Regent both to Alexander and to Frederic William; and his

Royal Highness went so far as to declare in public that honours far higher than a seat in the Privy Council were due, and would soon be paid, to the man who had saved the British dominions in Asia. Hastings now confidently expected a peerage; but, from some unexplained cause, he was again disappointed.

He lived about four years longer, in the enjoyment of good spirits, of faculties not impaired to any painful or degrading extent, and of health such as is rarely enjoyed by those who attain such an age. At length, on the twenty-second of August, 1818, in the eighty-sixth year of his age, he met death with the same tranquil and decorous fortitude which he had opposed to all the trials of his various and eventful life.

With all his faults,--and they were neither few nor small--only one cemetery was worthy to contain his remains. In that temple of silence and reconciliation where the enmities of twenty generations lie buried, in the Great Abbey which has during many ages afforded a quiet resting-place to those whose minds and bodies have been shattered by the contentions of the Great Hall, the dust of the illustrious accused should have mingled with the dust of the illustrious accusers. This was not to be. Yet the place of interment was not ill chosen. Behind the chancel of the parish church of Daylesford, in earth which already held the bones of many chiefs of the house of Hastings, was laid the coffin of the greatest man who has ever borne that ancient and widely extended name. On that very spot probably, four-score years before, the little Warren, meanly clad and scantily fed, had played with the children of ploughmen. Even then his young mind had revolved plans which might be called romantic. Yet, however romantic, it is not likely that they had been so strange as the truth. Not only had the poor orphan retrieved the fallen fortunes of his line--not only had he repurchased the old lands, and rebuilt the old dwelling--he had preserved and extended an empire. He had founded a polity. He had administered government and war with more than the capacity of Richelieu. He had patronised learning with the judicious liberality of Cosmo. He had been attacked by the most formidable combination of enemies that ever sought the destruction of a single victim; and over that combination, after a struggle of ten years, he had triumphed. He had at length gone down to his grave in the fulness of age, in peace, after so many troubles, in honour, after so much obloquy.

Those who look on his character without favour or malevolence will pronounce that, in the two great elements of all social virtue, in respect for the rights of others, and in sympathy for the sufferings of others, he was deficient. His principles were somewhat lax. His heart was somewhat hard. But though we cannot with truth describe him either as a righteous or as a merciful ruler, we cannot regard without admiration the amplitude and fertility of his intellect, his rare talents for command, for administration, and for controversy, his dauntless courage, his

honourable poverty, his fervent zeal for the interests of the State, his noble equanimity, tried by both extremes of fortune, and never disturbed by either.

LORD HOLLAND

(July 1841)

The Opinions of Lord Holland, as recorded in the journals of the House of Lords from 1797 to 1841. Collected and edited by D. C. MOYLAN, of Lincoln's Inn, Barrister-at-law. 8vo. London: 1841.

Many reasons make it impossible for us to lay before our readers, at the present moment, a complete view of the character and public career of the late Lord Holland. But we feel that we have already deferred too long the duty of paying some tribute to his memory. We feel that it is more becoming to bring without further delay an offering, though intrinsically of little value, than to leave his tomb longer without some token of our reverence and love.

We shall say very little of the book which lies on our table. And yet it is a book which, even if it had been the work of a less distinguished man, or had appeared under circumstances less interesting, would have well repaid an attentive perusal. It is valuable, both as a record of principles and as a model of composition. We find in it all the great maxims which, during more than forty years, guided Lord Holland's public conduct, and the chief reasons on which those maxims rest, condensed into the smallest possible space, and set forth with admirable perspicuity, dignity, and precision. To his opinions on Foreign Policy we for the most part cordially assent; but now and then we are inclined to think them imprudently generous. We could not have signed the protest against the detention of Napoleon. The Protest respecting the course which England pursued at the Congress of Verona, though it contains much that is excellent, contains also positions which, we are inclined to think, Lord Holland would, at a later period, have admitted to be unsound. But to all his doctrines on constitutional questions, we give our hearty approbation; and we firmly believe that no British Government has ever deviated from that line of internal policy which he has traced, without detriment to the public.

We will give, as a specimen of this little volume, a single passage, in which a chief article of the political creed of the Whigs is stated and explained, with singular clearness, force, and brevity. Our readers will remember that, in 1825, the Catholic Association raised the cry of emancipation with most formidable effect. The Tories acted after their kind. Instead of removing the grievance they tried to put down the agitation, and brought in a law, apparently sharp and stringent, but in truth utterly impotent, for restraining the right of petition. Lord

Holland’s Protest on that occasion is excellent:

"We are," says he, "well aware that the privileges of the people, the rights of free discussion, and the spirit and letter of our popular institutions, must render,--and they are intended to render,--the continuance of an extensive grievance and of the dissatisfaction consequent thereupon, dangerous to the tranquillity of the country, and ultimately subversive of the authority of the State. Experience and theory alike forbid us to deny that effect of a free constitution; a sense of justice and a love of liberty equally deter us from lamenting it. But we have always been taught to look for the remedy of such disorders in the redress of the grievances which justify them, and in the removal of the dissatisfaction from which they flow--not in restraints on ancient privileges, not in inroads on the right of public discussion, nor in violations of the principles of a free government. If, therefore, the legal method of seeking redress, which has been resorted to by persons labouring under grievous disabilities, be fraught with immediate or remote danger to the State, we draw from that circumstance a conclusion long since foretold by great authority--namely, that the British constitution, and large exclusions, cannot subsist together; that the constitution must destroy them, or they will destroy the constitution."

It was not, however, of this little book, valuable and interesting as it is, but of the author, that we meant to speak; and we will try to do so with calmness and impartiality.

In order to fully appreciate the character of Lord Holland, it is necessary to go far back into the history of his family; for he had inherited something more than a coronet and an estate. To the House of which he was the head belongs one distinction which we believe to be without a parallel in our annals. During more than a century, there has never been a time at which a Fox has not stood in a prominent station among public men. Scarcely had the chequered career of the first Lord Holland closed, when his son, Charles, rose to the head of the Opposition, and to the first rank among English debaters. And before Charles was borne to Westminster Abbey a third Fox had already become one of the most conspicuous politicians in the kingdom.

It is impossible not to be struck by the strong family likeness which, in spite of diversities arising from education and position, appears in these three distinguished persons. In their faces and figures there was a resemblance, such as is common enough in novels, where one picture is good for ten generations, but such as in real life is seldom found. The ample person, the massy and thoughtful forehead, the large eyebrows, the full cheek and lip, the expression, so singularly compounded of sense, humour, courage, openness, a strong will and a sweet temper, were common to all. But the features of the founder of the House, as the pencil of Reynolds and the chisel of Nollekens have handed

them down to us, were disagreeably harsh and exaggerated. In his descendants, the aspect was preserved, but it was softened, till it became, in the late lord, the most gracious and interesting countenance that was ever lighted up by the mingled lustre of intelligence and benevolence.

As it was with the faces of the men of this noble family, so was it also with their minds. Nature had done much for them all. She had moulded them all of that clay of which she is most sparing. To all she had given strong reason and sharp wit, a quick relish for every physical and intellectual enjoyment, constitutional intrepidity, and that frankness by which constitutional intrepidity is generally accompanied, spirits which nothing could depress, tempers easy, generous, and placable, and that genial courtesy which has its seat in the heart, and of which artificial politeness is only a faint and cold imitation. Such a disposition is the richest inheritance that ever was entailed on any family.

But training and situation greatly modified the fine qualities which nature lavished with such profusion on three generations of the house of Fox. The first Lord Holland was a needy political adventurer. He entered public life at a time when the standard of integrity among statesmen was low. He started as the adherent of a minister who had indeed many titles to respect, who possessed eminent talents both for administration and for debate, who understood the public interest well, and who meant fairly by the country, but who had seen so much perfidy and meanness that he had become sceptical as to the existence of probity. Weary of the cant of patriotism, Walpole had learned to talk a cant of a different kind. Disgusted by that sort of hypocrisy which is at least a homage to virtue, he was too much in the habit of practising the less respectable hypocrisy which ostentatiously displays, and sometimes even simulates vice. To Walpole Fox attached himself, politically and personally, with the ardour which belonged to his temperament. And it is not to be denied that in the school of Walpole he contracted faults which destroyed the value of his many great endowments. He raised himself, indeed, to the first consideration in the House of Commons; he became a consummate master of the art of debate; he attained honours and immense wealth; but the public esteem and confidence were withheld from him. His private friends, indeed, justly extolled his generosity and good nature. They maintained that in those parts of his conduct which they could least defend there was nothing sordid, and that, if he was misled, he was misled by amiable feelings, by a desire to serve his friends, and by anxious tenderness for his children. But by the nation he was regarded as a man of insatiable rapacity and desperate ambition; as a man ready to adopt, without scruple, the most immoral and the most unconstitutional manners; as a man perfectly fitted, by all his opinions and feelings, for the work of managing the Parliament by means of secret-service money, and of keeping down the people with the bayonet. Many of his contemporaries had a morality quite as lax as his: but very few among them had his

talents, and none had his hardihood and energy. He could not, like Sandys and Doddington, find safety in contempt. He therefore became an object of such general aversion as no statesman since the fall of Strafford has incurred, of such general aversion as was probably never in any country incurred by a man of so kind and cordial a disposition. A weak mind would have sunk under such a load of unpopularity. But that resolute spirit seemed to derive new firmness from the public hatred. The only effect which reproaches appeared to produce on him, was to sour, in some degree, his naturally sweet temper. The last acts of his public life were marked, not only by that audacity which he had derived from nature, not only by that immorality which he had learned in the school of Walpole, but by a harshness which almost amounted to cruelty, and which had never been supposed to belong to his character. His severity increased the unpopularity from which it had sprung. The well-known lampoon of Gray may serve as a specimen of the feeling of the country. All the images are taken from shipwrecks, quicksands, and cormorants. Lord Holland is represented as complaining, that the cowardice of his accomplices bad prevented him from putting down the free spirit of the city of London by sword and fire, and as pining for the time when birds of prey should make their nests in Westminster Abbey, and unclean beasts burrow in St. Paul's.

Within a few months after the death of this remarkable man, his second son Charles appeared at the head of the party opposed to the American War. Charles had inherited the bodily and mental constitution of his father, and had been much, far too much, under his father's influence. It was indeed impossible that a son of so affectionate and noble a nature should not have been warmly attached to a parent who possessed many fine qualities, and who carried his indulgence and liberality towards his children even to a culpable extent. Charles saw that the person to whom he was bound by the strongest ties was, in the highest degree, odious to the nation; and the effect was what might have been expected from the strong passions and constitutional boldness of so high-spirited a youth. He cast in his lot with his father, and took, while still a boy, a deep part in the most unjustifiable and unpopular measures that had been adopted since the reign of James the Second. In the debates on the Middlesex Election, he distinguished himself, not only by his precocious powers of eloquence, but by the vehement and scornful manner in which he bade defiance to public opinion. He was at that time regarded as a man likely to be the most formidable champion of arbitrary government that had appeared since the Revolution, to be a Bute with far greater powers, a Mansfield with far greater courage. Happily his father's death liberated him early from the pernicious influence by which he had been misled. His mind expanded. His range of observation became wider. His genius broke through early prejudices. His natural benevolence and magnanimity had fair play. In a very short time he appeared in a situation worthy of his understanding and of his heart. From a family whose name was associated in the public mind with tyranny and

corruption, from a party of which the theory and the practice were equally servile, from the midst of the Luttrells, the Dysons, the Barringtons, came forth the greatest parliamentary defender of civil and religious liberty.

The late Lord Holland succeeded to the talents and to the fine natural dispositions of his House. But his situation was very different from that of the two eminent men of whom we have spoken. In some important respects it was better, in some it was worse than theirs. He had one great advantage over them. He received a good political education. The first lord was educated by Sir Robert Walpole. Mr. Fox was educated by his father. The late lord was educated by Mr. Fox. The pernicious maxims early imbibed by the first Lord Holland, made his great talents useless and worse than useless to the State. The pernicious maxims early imbibed by Mr. Fox, led him, at the commencement of his public life, into great faults which, though afterwards nobly expiated, were never forgotten. To the very end of his career, small men, when they had nothing else to say in defence of their own tyranny, bigotry, and imbecility, could always raise a cheer by some paltry taunt about the election of Colonel Luttrell, the imprisonment of the lord mayor, and other measures in which the great Whig leader had borne a part at the age of one or two and twenty. On Lord Holland no such slur could be thrown. Those who most dissent from his opinions must acknowledge that a public life more consistent is not to be found in our annals. Every part of it is in perfect harmony with every other part; and the whole is in perfect harmony with the great principles of toleration and civil freedom. This rare felicity is in a great measure to be attributed to the influence of Mr. Fox. Lord Holland, as was natural in a person of his talents and expectations, began at a very early age to take the keenest interest in politics; and Mr. Fox found the greatest pleasure in forming the mind of so hopeful a pupil. They corresponded largely on political subjects when the young lord was only sixteen; and their friendship and mutual confidence continued to the day of that mournful separation at Chiswick. Under such training such a man as Lord Holland was in no danger of falling into those faults which threw a dark shade over the whole career of his grandfather, and from which the youth of his uncle was not wholly free.

On the other hand, the late Lord Holland, as compared with his grandfather and his uncle, laboured under one great disadvantage. They were members of the House of Commons. He became a Peer while still an infant. When he entered public life, the House of Lords was a very small and a very decorous assembly. The minority to which he belonged was scarcely able to muster five or six votes on the most important nights, when eighty or ninety lords were present. Debate had accordingly become a mere form, as it was in the Irish House of Peers before the Union. This was a great misfortune to a man like Lord Holland. It was not by occasionally addressing fifteen or twenty solemn and unfriendly auditors that his grandfather and his uncle attained their unrivalled

parliamentary skill. The former had learned his art in "the great Walpolean battles," on nights when Onslow was in the chair seventeen hours without intermission, when the thick ranks on both sides kept unbroken order till long after the winter sun had risen upon them, when the blind were led out by the hand into the lobby and the paralytic laid down in their bed-clothes on the benches. The powers of Charles Fox were, from the first, exercised in conflicts not less exciting. The great talents of the late Lord Holland had no such advantage. This was the more unfortunate, because the peculiar species of eloquence which belonged to him in common with his family required much practice to develop it. With strong sense, and the greatest readiness of wit, a certain tendency to hesitation was hereditary in the line of Fox. This hesitation arose, not from the poverty, but from the wealth of their vocabulary. They paused, not from the difficulty of finding one expression, but from the difficulty of choosing between several. It was only by slow degrees and constant exercise that the first Lord Holland and his son overcame the defect. Indeed neither of them overcame it completely.

In statement, the late Lord Holland was not successful; his chief excellence lay in reply. He had the quick eye of his house for the unsound parts of an argument, and a great felicity in exposing them. He was decidedly more distinguished in debate than any peer of his time who had not sat in the House of Commons. Nay, to find his equal among persons similarly situated, we must go back eighty years to Earl Granville. For Mansfield, Thurlow, Loughborough, Grey, Grenville, Brougham, Plunkett, and other eminent men, living and dead, whom we will not stop to enumerate, carried to the Upper House an eloquence formed and matured in the Lower. The opinion of the most discerning judges was that Lord Holland’s oratorical performances, though sometimes most successful, afforded no fair measure of his oratorical powers, and that, in an assembly of which the debates were frequent and animated, he would have attained a very high order of excellence. It was, indeed, impossible to listen to his conversation without seeing that he was born a debater. To him, as to his uncle, the exercise of the mind in discussion was a positive pleasure. With the greatest good nature and good breeding, he was the very opposite to an assenter. The word "disputatious" is generally used as a word of reproach; but we can express our meaning only by saying that Lord Holland was most courteously and pleasantly disputatious. In truth, his quickness in discovering and apprehending distinctions and analogies was such as a veteran judge might envy. The lawyers of the Duchy of Lancaster were astonished to find in an unprofessional man so strong a relish for the esoteric parts of their science, and complained that as soon as they had split a hair, Lord Holland proceeded to split the filaments into filaments still finer. In a mind less happily constituted, there might have been a risk that this turn for subtilty would have produced serious evil. But in the heart and understanding of Lord Holland there was ample security against all such danger. He was not a man to be the dupe of his own

ingenuity. He put his logic to its proper use; and in him the dialectician was always subordinate to the statesman.

His political life is written in the chronicles of his country. Perhaps, as we have already intimated, his opinions on two or three great questions of foreign policy were open to just objection. Yet even his errors, if he erred, were amiable and respectable. We are not sure that we do not love and admire him the more because he was now and then seduced from what we regard as a wise policy by sympathy with the oppressed, by generosity towards the fallen, by a philanthropy so enlarged that it took in all nations, by love of peace, a love which in him was second only to the love of freedom, and by the magnanimous credulity of a mind which was as incapable of suspecting as of devising mischief.

To his views on questions of domestic policy the voice of his countrymen does ample justice. They revere the memory of the man who was, during forty years, the constant protector of all oppressed races and persecuted sects, of the man whom neither the prejudices nor the interests belonging to his station could seduce from the path of right, of the noble, who in every great crisis cast in his lot with the commons, of the planter, who made manful war on the slave-trade of the landowner, whose whole heart was in the struggle against the corn-laws.

We have hitherto touched almost exclusively on those parts of Lord Holland’s character which were open to the observation of millions. How shall we express the feelings with which his memory is cherished by those who were honoured with his friendship? Or in what language shall we speak of that house, once celebrated for its rare attractions to the furthest ends of the civilised world, and now silent and desolate as the grave? To that house, a hundred and twenty years ago, a poet addressed those tender and graceful lines, which have now acquired a new meaning not less sad than that which they originally bore:

"Thou hill, whose brow the antique structures grace,
Reared by bold chiefs of Warwick’s noble race,
Why, once so loved, whene’er thy bower appears,
O’er my dim eyeballs glance the sudden tears?
How sweet were once thy prospects fresh and fair,
Thy sloping walks and unpolluted air!
How sweet the glooms beneath thine aged trees,
Thy noon-tide shadow and thine evening breeze
His image thy forsaken bowers restore;
Thy walks and airy prospects charm no more
No more the summer in thy glooms allayed,
Thine evening breezes, and thy noon-day shade."

Yet a few years, and the shades and structures may follow their illustrious masters. The wonderful city which, ancient and gigantic as it is, still continues to grow as fast as a young

town of logwood by a water-privilege in Michigan, may soon displace those turrets and gardens which are associated with so much that is interesting and noble, with the courtly magnificence of Rich with the loves of Ormond, with the counsels of Cromwell, with the death of Addison. The time is coming when, perhaps, a few old men, the last survivors of our generation, will in vain seek, amidst new streets, and squares, and railway stations, for the site of that dwelling which was in their youth the favourite resort of wits and beauties, of painters and poets, of scholars, philosophers, and statesmen. They will then remember, with strange tenderness, many objects once familiar to them, the avenue and the terrace, the busts and the paintings, the carving, the grotesque gilding, and the enigmatical mottoes. With peculiar fondness they will recall that venerable chamber, in which all the antique gravity of a college library was so singularly blended with all that female grace and wit could devise to embellish a drawing-room. They will recollect, not unmoved, those shelves loaded with the varied learning of many lands and many ages, and those portraits in which were preserved the features of the best and wisest Englishmen of two generations. They will recollect how many men who have guided the politics of Europe, who have moved great assemblies by reason and eloquence, who have put life into bronze and canvas, or who have left to posterity things so written as it shall not willingly let them die, were there mixed with all that was loveliest and gayest in the society of the most splendid of capitals. They will remember the peculiar character which belonged to that circle, in which every talent and accomplishment, every art and science, had its place. They will remember how the last debate was discussed in one corner, and the last comedy of Scribe in another; while Wilkie gazed with modest admiration on Sir Joshua’s Baretti; while Mackintosh turned over Thomas Aquinas to verify a quotation; while Talleyrand related his conversations with Barras at the Luxembourg, or his ride with Lannes over the field of Austerlitz. They will remember, above all, the grace, and the kindness, far more admirable than grace, with which the princely hospitality of that ancient mansion was dispensed. They will remember the venerable and benignant countenance and the cordial voice of him who bade them welcome. They will remember that temper which years of pain, of sickness, of lameness, of confinement, seemed only to make sweeter and sweeter, and that frank politeness, which at once relieved all the embarrassment of the youngest and most timid writer or artist, who found himself for the first time among Ambassadors and Earls. They will remember that constant flow of conversation, so natural, so animated, so various, so rich with observation and anecdote; that wit which never gave a wound; that exquisite mimicry which ennobled, instead of degrading; that goodness of heart which appeared in every look and accent, and gave additional value to every talent and acquirement. They will remember, too, that he whose name they hold in reverence was not less distinguished by the inflexible uprightness of his political conduct than by his loving disposition and his winning manners. They will remember that, in

the last lines which he traced, he expressed his joy that he had done nothing unworthy of the friend of Fox and Grey; and they will have reason to feel similar joy, if, in looking back on many troubled years, they cannot accuse themselves of having done anything unworthy of men who were distinguished by the friendship of Lord Holland.

Xxx

INDEX AND GLOSSARY OF ALLUSIONS

ACBAR, contemporary with Elizabeth, firmly established the Mogul rule in India; Aurungzebe (1659-1707) extended the Mogul Empire over South India.

Aislabie, Chancellor of the Exchequer; forfeited most of his huge profits.

Alexander VI., Pope, father of Lucretia and Caesar Borgia. He obtained his office by bribery and held it by a series of infamous crimes (d. 1503).

Alguazils, "a Spanish adaptation of the Arabic al-wazir, the minister and used in Spanish both for a justiciary and a bailiff." Here it implies cruel and extortionate treatment.

Allipore, a suburb of Calcutta.

Amadis, the model knight who is the hero of the famous mediaeval prose-romance of the same title. Of Portuguese origin, it was afterwards translated and expanded in Spanish and in French.

Aminta, a pastoral play composed by Tasso in 1581.

Antiochus and Tigranes, overthrown respectively by Pompey, B.C. 65, and Lucullus, B.C. 69.

Atahualpa, King of Peru, captured and put to death by Pizarro in 1532.

Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester and champion of the High Church and Tory party (1662-1732).

Aumils, district governors.

Aurungzebe, dethroned and succeeded Shah Jehan in 1658 (d. 1707).

Austrian Succession, War of (see the Essay on Frederic the Great, vol. v. of this edition).

BABINGTON, Anthony, an English Catholic, executed in 1586 for

plotting to assassinate Elizabeth. Everard Digby was concerned in the Gunpowder Plot of 1605.

Babington, an English Catholic executed in 1586 for plotting to assassinate Elizabeth under the instruction of a Jesuit named Ballard.

Ballard. See Babington.

Barbariccia and Draghignazzo, the fiends who torment the lost with hooks in the lake of boiling pitch in Malebolge, the eighth circle in Dante's Inferno.

Baretti, Giuseppe, an Italian lexiographer who came to London, was patronised by Johnson and became Secretary of the Royal Academy.

Barillon, the French Ambassador in England.

Barnard, Sir John, an eminent London merchant, and Lord Mayor (1685-1764).

Barras, a member of the Jacobin (q. v.) club; he put an end to Robespierre's Reign of Terror and was a member of the Directory till Napoleon abolished it (d. 1829).

Batavian liberties, Batavia is an old name for Holland; the Celtic tribe known as Batavii once dwelt there.

Bath, Lord, William Pulteney, Sir R. Walpole's opponent, and author of a few magazine articles (1684-1764).

Belisarius, Justinian's great general, who successively repulsed the Persians, Vandals, Goths, and Huns, but who, tradition says, was left to become a beggar (d. 565).

Benevolences, royal demands from individuals not sanctioned by Parliament and supposed to be given willingly; declared illegal by the Bill of Rights, 1689.

Bentinck, Lord William, the Governor. General (1828-1835) under whom suttee was abolished, internal communications opened up, and education considerably furthered.

Bentivoglio, Cardinal, a disciple of Galileo, and one of the Inquisitors who signed his condemnation (1579-1641).

Berkeley and Pomfret, where Edward II. and Richard II. respectively met their deaths.

Bernier, a French traveller who wandered over India, 1656-1668.

Blues, The, Royal Horse Guards.

Board of Control, a body responsible to the Ministry with an authoritative parliamentary head established by Pitt's India Bill (1784).

Bobadil, the braggart hero in Johnson's Every Man in his Humour,

Bolingbroke, Viscount, Tory Minister under Anne; brought about the Peace of Utrecht, 1713. His genius and daring were undoubted, but as a party leader he failed utterly.

Bolivar, the Washington of South America, who freed Venezuela, Colombia, and Bolivia from Spain (1783-1830).

Bonner, Bishop of London, served "Bloody" Mary's anti-Protestant zeal, died in the Marshalsea Prison under Elizabeth.

Bonslas, a Maratha tribe not finally subdued till 1817.

Bradshaw, President of the Court that condemned Charles I.

Braganza, House of, the reigning family of Portugal; Charles II married Catherine of Braganza in 1662.

Breda, Peace of, July 21, 1667. Breda is in North Brabant, Holland.

Brissotines, those moderate republicans in the French Revolution who are often known as the Girondists.

Broghill, Lord, better known as Rope Boyle, author of Parthenissa, etc.

Brooks's, the great Whig Club in St. James's Street amongst whose members were Burke, Sheridan, Fox, and Garrick.

Brothers, Richard, a fanatic who held that the English were the lost ten tribes of Israel(1757-1824).

Browne's Estimate (of the Manners and Principles of the Times), the author was a clergyman noted also for his defence of utilitarianism in answer to Shaftesbury (Lecky, Hist. Eng. in 18th Cent., ii, 89 f.).

Brutus, i. The reputed expeller of the last King of Rome; ii. One of Caesar's murderers.

Bulicame, the seventh circle in the Inferno, the place of all the violent.

Buller, Sir Francis, English judge, author of Introduction to the Law of Trials at Nisi Prius (1745-1800).

Burger, Gottfried, German poet (1748-1794), author of the fine ballad "The Wild Huntsman."

Burgoyne, afterwards the General in command of the British troops whose surrender at Saratoga practically settled the American War of Independence.

Burlington, Lord, Richard Boyle, an enthusiastic architect of the Italian school (1695-1Z53).

Button, Henry, a Puritan divine, pilloried, mutilated, and imprisoned by the Star Chamber (1578-1648).

Busiris, a mythological King of Egypt who used to sacrifice one foreigner yearly in the hope of ending a prolonged famine.

Buxar, between Patna and Benares, where Major Munro defeated Sujah Dowlah and Meer Cossim in 1765.

CALAS, Jean, a tradesman of Toulouse, done to death on the wheel in 1762 on the false charge of murdering his son to prevent his becoming a Romanist. Voltaire took his case up and vindicated his memory.

Camden, Lord, the Chief Justice of the Common Pleas who declared general warrants illegal and released Wilkes in 1763.

Capel, Lord Arthur, at first sided with the Parliament, but afterwards joined the King; executed for attempting to escape from Colchester in 1649.

Caracci, Annibal, an Italian painter of the Elizabethan age.

Carlton House, the residence of George IV. when Prince of Wales.

Cartoons, the, the famous designs by Raphael, originally intended for tapestry.

Cato, Addison’s play, produced in 1713.

Cavendish, Lord, first Duke of Devonshire (d. 1707). He gave evidence in favour of Russell and tried to secure his escape.

Cesare Borgia, son of Pope Alexander VI. and brother of Lucrezia, whose infamous ability, cruelty, and treachery he even surpassed.

Chandernagora, on the Hooghly twenty miles from Calcutta. Pondicherry, in the Carnatic (i.e. the S.E. coast of India) is still a French possession.

Chemnitius, a seventeenth-century German historian who wrote a

History of the Swedish War in Germany.

Chicksands, in Bedfordshire.

Childeric or Chilperic, the former was King of the Franks (c460-480), the latter King of Neustria (c. 560-580); both were puppets in the hands of their subjects.

Chorasan, a Persian province.

Chowringhee, still the fashionable quarter of Calcutta.

Chudleigh, Miss, maid of honour to the Princess of Wales (mother of George III.); the original of Beatrix in Thackeray's Esmond.

Churchill, John, the famous Duke of Marlborough.

Clootz, a French Revolutionary and one of the founders of the Worship of Reason; guillotined 1794.

Cocytus, one of the five rivers of Hades (see Milton's Paradise Lost, ii. 577ff).

Coleroon, the lower branch of the river Kaveri: it rises in Mysore and flows to the Bay of Bengal.

Colman, the Duke of York's confessor, in whose rooms were found papers held to support Oates's story.

Conde, a French general who, fighting for Spain, besieged Arras but had to abandon it after a defeat by Turenne.

Conjeveram, south-west from Madras and east from Arcot.

Conway, Marshal, cousin to Walpole; fought at Fontenoy and Culloden; moved the repeal of the Stamp Act (1766).

Corah, one hundred miles north-west from Allahabad, formerly a town of great importance, now much decayed.

Cornelia, a noble and virtuous Roman matron, daughter of Scipio Africanus and wife of Sempronius Graccus.

Cortes, conqueror of Mexico (1485-1547).

Cosmo di Medici, a great Florentine ruler, who, however, understood the use of assassination,

Cossimbuzar (see the description in the Essay on Hastings).

Court of Requests, instituted under Henry VII. for the recovery of small debts and superseded by the County Courts in 1847.

Covelong and Chingleput, between Madras and Pondicherry.

Craggs. Secretary of State: a man of ablity and character, probably innocent in the South Sea affair.

Crevelt, near Cleves, in West Prussia; Minden is in Westphalia.

Cumberland . . . single victory, at Culloden, over the young Pretender's forces, in 1745.

Cutler, St. John, a wealthy London merchant (1608?-1693) whose permanent avarice outshone his occasional benefactions (see Pope, Moral Essays, iii. 315).

DAGOBERTS . . . Charles Martel, nominal and real rulers of France in the seventh and eighth centuries.

D'Aguesseau, a famous French jurist, law reformer, and magistrate (1668-1751).

D'Alembert, a mathematician and philosopher who helped to sow the seeds of the French Revolution. Macaulay quite misrepresents Walpole's attitude to him (see letter of 6th Nov. 1768).

Damien, the attempted assassinator of Louis XV. in 1757.

Danby, Thomas Osborne, Esq. of, one of Charles II.'s courtiers, impeached for his share in the negotiations by which France was to pension Charles on condition of his refusal to assist the Dutch.

Danes, only had a few trading stations in India, which they sold to the British in 1845.

Demosthenes and Hyperides, the two great orators of Athens who were also contemporaries and friends.

De Pauw, Cornelius, a Dutch canon (1739-99), esteemed by Frederic the Great among others, as one of the freest speculators of his day.

Derby, James Stanley, Earl of, one of Charles I's supporters, captured at Worcester and beheaded in 1651.

Derwentwater . . . Cameron, Stuart adherents who suffered for their share in the attempts of 1715 and 1745.

Dido, Queen of Carthage, who after years of mourning for her first husband, vainly sought the love of Aeneas.

Dionysius, the tyrant of Syracuse (367-343 B.C.) who gathered to

his court the foremost men of the time in literature and philosophy.

Dodd, Dr., a royal chaplain and fashion ablepreacher whose extravagance led him to forge a bond of Lord Chesterfield's, for which he was sentenced to death and duly executed (1729-77).

Dodington, George Bubb, a time-serving and unprincipled politician in the time of George II., afterwards Baron Melcombe.

Dubois, Cardinal, Prime Minister of France. An able statesman and a notorious debauchee (1656-1723).

Duke of Lancaster, Henry IV., the deposer and successor of Richard II.

Dumont, Pierre, a French writer who settled in England and became the translator and exponent of Bentham's works to Europe (1759-1829).

Dundee, the persecutor of the Scottish Covenanters under Charles II

Dyer, John, author of some descriptive poems, e.g. Grongar Hill (1700-58).

ELDON, John Scott, Earl of, was in turn Solicitor-General, Attorney-General, Lord Chief Justice of Common Pleas and Lord Chancellor, and throughout a staunch Tory (1751-1838).

Empson and Dudley, ministers and tax-raisers under Henry VII, executed by Henry VIII.

Ensign Northerton (see Fielding's Tom Jones, VII. xii.-xv.).

Escobar, a Spanish Jesuit preacher and writer (1589-1669).

Escurial, the palace and monastery built by Philip II.

Essex, One of the Rye House Conspirators; he was found in the Tower with his throat cut, whether as the result of suicide or murder is not known.

Euston, a late Jacobean house (and park) 10 miles from Bury St. Edmunds.

Faithful Shepherdess, a pastoral by Fletcher which may have suggested the general plan and some of the details of Comus.

Farinata (see Dante's Inferno, canto 10).

Farmer-general, the tax-gatherers of France, prior to the Revolution: they contracted with the Government for the right to collect or "farm" the taxes.

Ferdinand the Catholic, King of Aragon, who, by marrying Isabella of Castile and taking Granada from the Moors, united Spain under one crown.

Filicaja, a Florentine poet (1642-1707); according to Macaulay ("Essay on Addison") "the greatest lyric poet of modern times,".

Filmer, Sir Robert, advocated the doctrine of absolute regal power in his Patriarcha, 1680.

Foigard, Father, a French refugee priest in Farquhar's Beaux Stratagem.

Fouche, Joseph, duke of Otranto. A member of the National Convention, who voted for the death of Louis XVI., and afterwards served under Napoleon (as Minister of Police) and Louis XVIII.

Fox, Henry F., father of Charles James Fox, and later Lord Holland.

Franche-Comte, that part of France which lies south of Lorraine and west of Switzerland.

French Memoirs, those of Margaret of Valois, daughter of Henry II. Of and wife of Henry (IV.) of Navarre.

Friar Dominic, a character in Dryden's Spanish Friar designed to ridicule priestly vices.

Fronde, a French party who opposed the power Of Mazarin and the Parliament of Paris during the minority of Louis XIV.

GRERIAH, c. seventy miles south from Bombay.

Ghizni, in Afghanistan, taken by Sir John Keane in 1839.

Gifford, John, the pseudonym of John Richards Green, a voluminous Tory pamphleteer (1758-1818).

Giudecca. In the ninth and lowest circle of the Inferno, the place of those who betray their benefactors,

Glover, a London merchant who wrote some poetry, including Admiral Hosier's Ghost.

Godfrey, Sir Edmund, this Protestant magistrate who took Titus Oates's depositions and was next morning found murdered near Primrose Hill.

Godolphin, Lord of the Treasury under Charles II., James II., and William III. Prime Minister 1702-10 when Harley ousted him (d. 1712)

Gooti, north from Mysore in the Bellary district, 589

Goree, near Cape Verde, west coast of Africa, Gaudaloupe, is in West Indies; Ticonderaga and Niagara, frontier forts in Canada.

Gowries, the, Alexander Ruthven and his brother, the Earl of Gowrie, who were killed in a scuffle during the visit of King James to their house in Perth (Aug. 1600).

Grammont, a French count whose Memoirs give a vivid picture of life at Charles II.'s court.

Grandison, Sir Charles . . . Miss Byron, the title character (and his lady-love) of one of Richardson's novels.

Granicus, Rocroi, Narva, won respectively by Alexander (aged 22) against the Persians, by Conde (aged 22) against the Spaniards, and by Charles XII. (aged 18) against the Russians.

Great Captain, the, Gonzalvo Hernandez di Cordova, who drove the Moors from Granada and the French from Italy (d. 1515).

Guarini, (see Pastor Fido).

Guicciardini, Florentian statesman and historian; disciple of Macchiavelli secured the restoration of the Medici, (1485-1540).

Guizot and Villemain, in 1829 upheld liberal opinions against Charles X., in 1844 took the part of monarchy and Louis Philippe. Genonde and Jaquelin made the reverse change.

HAFIZ and Ferdusi, famous Persian poets: the former flourished in the eleventh, the latter in the thirteenth century.

Hamilton, Count, friend of James II. and author of the Memoirs of the Count de Grammont, the best picture of the English court of the Restoration (1646-1720)

Hamilton's Bawn, a tumble-down house in the north of Ireland which inspired Swift to write an amusing Poem.

Hamilton, Gerard, M.P. for Petersfield, a man of somewhat

despicable character. The nickname was "Single-speech Hamilton."

Hammond, Henry, Rector of Penshurst in Kent, and commentator on the New Testament, the Psalms, etc.

Hardwicke, Lord, the Lord Chancellor (1737-56), whose Marriage Act (1753) put an end to Fleet marriages.

Harte, Walter, poet, historian, and tutor to Lord Chesterfield's son (1709-74).

Hayley and Seward, inferior authors who were at one time very popular.

Hebert, Jacques Rene, editor of the violent revolutionary organ Pere Duchesne; for opposing his colleagues he was arrested and guillotined (1756-94).

Heliogabalus, made emperor of Rome by the army in 218; ruled moderately at first, but soon abandoned himself to excesses of all kinds, and was assassinated.

Helvetius, a French philosopher of the materialist school (1715-71).

Henry the Fourth, the famous French king, "Henry of Navarre" (?1589-1610).

Hildebrand, Pope Gregory VII., who waged war against the vices of society and the imperial tyranny over the Church.

Hilpa and Shalum, Chinese antediluvians (see Spectator, vol. viii.). Hilpa was a princess and Shalum her lover.

Hoadley, Benjamin, a prelate and keen controversialist on the side of civil and religious liberty (1676-1761).

Holkar, a Mahratta chief whose headquarters were at Indore.

Hosein, the son of Ali Hosein's mother was Fatima, the favourite daughter of Mahomet.

Houghton, Sir R. Walpole's Norfolk seat.

Hunt, Mr., a well-to-do Wiltshire farmer, who after many attempts entered Parliament in 1832.

Huntingdon, William, the S.S.="Sinner Save"; Huntingdon was one of those religious impostors who professed to be the recipient of divine visions and prophetic oracles.

Hydaspes, or Hytaspes, the Greek name for the river Jhelam in the Punjab.

Hyphasis, the Greek name for the river Beds in the Punjab.

ILDEFONSO, ST., a village in Old Castile containing a Spanish royal residence built by Philip V. on the model of Versailles.

JACOBINS, those holding extreme democratic principles. The name is derived from an extreme Party of French Revolutionists who used to meet in the ball of the Jacobin Friars.

Jaghires, landed estates.

Jauts, a fighting Hindoo race inhabiting the North-West Provinces.

Jefferson, Thomas, an American statesman, who took a prominent part in struggle for independence, and became President, 1801 to 1807.

Jenkinson, one of Bute's supporters, afterwards Earl of Liverpool.

Jomini, a celebrated Swiss military writer, who served in the French army as aide-de-camp to Marshal Ney (1779-1869).

Monsieur Jourdain, the honest but uneducated tradesman of Moliere's Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme, whose sudden wealth lands him in absurd attempts at aristocracy. 539

Justices in Eyre, i.e. in itinere, on circuit. In 1284 such were superseded by judges of assize.

KLOPSTOCK, author of the German epic Messiah, and one of the pioneers of modern German literature (1724-1803).

Knight of Malta, a play by Fletcher, Massinger, and another, produced before 1619.

Knipperdoling, one of the leading German Anabaptists, stadtholder of Munster, 1534-35, beheaded there in Jan. 1536.

LALLY, Baron de Tollendal, a distinguished French general in India who, however, could not work harmoniously with his brother officers or with his native troops, and was defeated by Eyre Coote at Wandewash in January 1760. He was imprisoned in the

Bastille and executed (1766) on a charge of betraying French interests.

Las Casas, a Catholic bishop who laboured among the aborigines of South America, interposing himself between them and the cruelty of the Spaniards. Clarkson (ib.) was Wilberforce's fellow-worker in the abolition of slavery.

Latitudinarians, the school of Cudworth and Henry More (end of seventeenth century), who sought to affiliate the dogmas of the Church to a rational philosophy,

Law Mr., afterwards Edward (first) Lord Ellenborough.

Lee, Nathaniel, a minor play-writer (1653-92).

Legge, son of the Earl of Dartmouth. Lord Of the Admiralty 1746, of the Treasury 1747, Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1754 (1708-64).

Lennox, Charlotte, friend of Johnson and Richardson, wrote The Female Don Quixote and Shakespeare Illustrated.

Lenthal, Speaker, who presided at the trial of Charles I.

Leo, tenth pope (1513-21) of the name, Giovanni de Medici, son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, and patron of art, science, and letters.

Lingard, Dr. Job., a Roman Catholic priest who wrote a history of England to the Accession of William and Mary (d. 1851).

Locusta, a famous female poisoner employed by Agrippina and Nero.

Lothario, a loose character in Rowe's tragedy of The Fair Penitent.

Lucan, the Roman epic Poet whose Pharsalia describes the struggle between Caesar and Pompey and breathes freedom throughout.

Ludlow, Edmund, a member of the Court that condemned Charles I. An ardent republican, he went into exile when Cromwell was appointed Protector.

MACKENZIE, HENRY, author of The Man of Feeling and other sentimental writings.

Maccaroni, an eighteenth-century term for a dandy or fop.

Maecenas, patron of literature in the Augustan age of Rome. Virgil and Horace were largely favoured by him,

Malebolge, i.e. the place of darkness and horror--the eighth Of the ten circles or pits in Dante's Inferno, and the abode of barterers, hypocrites, evil counsellors, etc.

Malwa, about 100 miles east from Baroda and nearly 350 miles north-cast from Bombay.

Marat, Jean Paul, a fanatical democrat whose one fixed idea was wholesale slaughter of the aristocracy; assassinated by Charlotte Corday (1743-93).

Mariendal, in Germany. Turenne's defeat here was an incident in the Thirty Years' War.

Marlborough, Nelson, Wellington, the first was made Prince of Mindelheim by Emperor Joseph I, the second Duke of Bronte by Ferdinand IV., the third Duke of Vittoria by Ferdinand VII.

Marli, a forest and village ten miles west from Paris, seat of a royal (now presidential) country-house.

Marten, Henry, one of the most extreme and most conspicuous members of the Parliamentary Party. Charles I insulted him in public and ordered him to be turned out of Hyde Park (1602-80). The Marten mentioned on p.4 as guilty of judicial misfeasance was his father (1562?-41).

Mason, William, friend and biographer of Gray; wrote Caractacus and some odes (1725-97).

Mathias, a noted Anabaptist who, with John of Leyden, committed great excesses in the endeavour to set up a Kingdom of Mount Zion in Munster, Westphalia (1535).

Maurice, Elector of Saxony (1521-23) and leader of the Protestants of Germany against the Emperor Charles V.

Mayor of the Palace, the chief minister of the Kings of France between 638 and 742.

Mayor of the Palace, the name given to the comptroller of the household of the Frankish kings. By successive encroachments these officials became at length more powerful than the monarchs, whom they finally ousted.

Mazarin(e) Cardinal, chief minister of France during the first eighteen years of Louis XIV.'s reign,

Memmius, Roman Governor of Bithynia, distinguished for his rhetorical and literary gifts, 270

Merovingian line, a dynasty of Frankish kings in the sixth and seventh centuries A.D. They were gradually superseded in power by

their "Mayors of the Palace," and were succeeded by the Carolingians.

Middleton, Conyers, a Cambridge theologian who had some controversy with Bentley; distinguished for his "absolutely plain style" of writing (1683-50).

Miguel, Don, King of Portugal, whose usurpation of the throne, refusal to marry Maria, daughter of Don Pedro of Brazil, and general conduct of affairs, led to a civil war, as a result of which he had to withdraw to Italy (1802-66).

Mississippi Scheme, a plan for reducing the French National Debt, similar in folly and in downfall to the South Sea Bubble.

Mite, Sir Matthew (see Foote's comedy, The Nabob).

Montague, Charles, Earl of Halifax, Chancellor of the Exchequer 1694; First Lord of Treasury 1697; impeached by the Tories for peculation and acquitted; Prime Minister 1714; reformed the currency.

Montezuma and Guatemozin, two of the native rulers of Mexico prior to its conquest by Cortez in 1519.

Montezuma, Emperor of Mexico, seized by Cortez in 1519.

Moro, the, a strong fort at the entrance to the harbour of Havana, taken after a hard struggle by the English under Admiral Sir George Pocock and General the Earl of Albemarle in July 1762.

Moore, Dr., father of Sir John Moore, European traveller, and author of the novel Zeluco.

Moorish Envoy, Algerine in Humphrey Clinker.

Mountain of Light, the Koh-i-noor, which after many adventures is now one of the English crown jewels.

Mucius, a Roman, who, when condemned to the stake, thrust his right hand unflinchingly into a fire lit for a sacrifice. He was spared and given the name Scaevola, i. e. left-handed.

Murray, orator; afterwards Earl of Mansfield, and Lord Chief Justice (1705-93).

NAPIER, COLONEL, served under Sir John Moore. Like Southey he wrote a History of the Peninsular War.

Nimeguen, treaty of; by this it was agreed that France should restore all her Dutch conquests, but should keep the Spanish

conquest of Franche-Comte, a clause which naturally incensed the Emperor and the King of Spain.

Nollekens, Joseph, the eminent English sculptor, and friend of George III. (1737-1823).

Nuzzurs, presents to persons in authority.

OATES, Bedloe, Dangerfield, in 1678 pretended to have discovered a "Popish Plot" which aimed at overthrowing the King and Protestantism.

Odoacer, a Hun, who became emperor in 476 and was assassinated by his colleague, Theodoric (ib.) the Ostrogoth in 493.

O'Meara, Barry Edward, Napoleon's physician in St. Helena, and author of A Voice from St. Helena; or, Napoleon in Exile.

Onomasticon, a Greek dictionary of antiquities, in ten books, arranged according to subject-matter.

Onslow, Arthur, Speaker of the House of Commons from 1728 to 1761.

Oromasdes and Arimanes, Ormuzd and Ahriman, the embodiments of the principles of good and evil respectively, in the Zoroastrian religion.

Oxenstiern, Chancellor to Gustavus Adolphus and the director of the negotiations which led to the Peace of Westphalia and the close of the Thirty Years' War.

PAGE, SIR FRANCIS, a judge whose "reputation for coarseness and brutality (e.g. Pope, Dunciad, iv. 2730) is hardly warranted by the few reported cases in which he took part"(1661?-1741).

Palais Royal, in Paris, formerly very magnificent.

Pannonia, roughly equivalent to the modern Hungary.

Pasquin, Anthony, a fifteenth-century Italian tailor, noted for his caustic wit.

Pastor Fido, a pastoral play, composed in 1585 by Guarini on the model of Aminta.

Patna, massacre of.

Peacock Throne, a gilded and jewelled couch with a canopy, described by a French jeweller named Tavernier, who saw it in

1665, and possibly the present throne of the Shah of Persia.

Perceval, Spencer, supported the Tory party, and became its leader in 1809; assassinated in the Commons Lobby, 1812.

Perwannahs, magisterial documents containing instructions or orders.

Peters, Hugh, a famous Independent divine and chaplain to the Parliamentary forces, executed in 1660 for his alleged share in the death of Charles 1. He was an upright and genial man, but somewhat lacking in moderation and taste.

Petit Trianon, a chateau built for Madame du Barry by Louis XV, and afterwards the favourite resort of Marie Antoinette. In a subsequent edition Macaulay substituted Versailles.

Phalaris, a tyrant of Agrigentum in Sicily (sixth century).

Pigot, Governor of Madras when Clive was in Bengal, and also, as Lord Pigot, in the time of Warren Hastings.

Pinto, Fernandez Mendez, a Portuguese traveller (d. 1583), who visited the Far East and possibly landed in the Gulf of Pekin.

Politian, one of the early scholars of the Renaissance; patronized by Lorenzo de Medici (1454-94).

Pontiff, that inglorious, Peter Marone (Celestine V.), who was tricked into abdicating the papacy for Boniface VIII, and died in prison.

Porto Novo and Pollilore, where Coote defeated Hyder Ali in July and August 1781, and so finished a long campaign in the Carnatic.

Powis, Lord, Edward Clive, created Earl of Powis in 1804.

Powle, a leading Politician and lawyer in the events connected with the accession Of William III.

Prynne, William, a Puritan, who attacked the stage and the Queen’s virtue, and suffered by order of the Star Chamber. In late life he changed his opinions, was imprisoned by Cromwell, and favoured by Charles II.

Pyrenees, treaty of the, closed the war between France and Spain (1660), which had continued twelve years after the Peace of Westphalia was signed. For the other treaties mentioned here see the essay on "The War of the Spanish Succession," in vol. ii.

RAPIN, a Huguenot who joined the army of William of Orange, and

wrote a Histoire d'Angleterre which surpassed all its predecessors.

Ricimer, a fifth-century Swabian soldier who deposed the Emperor Avitus, and then set up and deposed Majorian, Libius Severus and Anthemius, and finally set up Olybrius.

Rix dollar, a Scandinavian coin worth between three and four shillings.

Roe, Sir Thomas, an English traveller who, in 1615, went on an embassy to Jehangir at Agra.

Rohilcund, north-west of Oude.

Rohillas, Mussulman mountaineers inhabiting Rohilcund (q.v.).

Russell, Lord William, the Hampden of the Restoration period. Fought hard for the exclusion of James II. from the crown; unjustly executed for alleged share in the "Rye House Plot" (1639-83). Algernon Sydney (1621-83) was a fellow-worker and sufferer.

SACHEVERELL, Henry, a famous divine of Queen Anne's reign, who was impeached by the Whigs for forwardly preaching the doctrine of non-resistance.

Sackville, Lord George, the general commanding the British cavalry at Minden. Nervousness led to his disobeying a critical order to charge, which would have completed the French rout, and he was court-martialled and degraded.

Saint Cecilia, Mrs. Sheridan, painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds in this character because of her love of, and skill in, music.

Salmacius, the Latin name of Claude de Saumaise an eminent French scholar and linguist (1588-1653), whose Defence of Charles 1. provoked Milton's crushing reply, Defensio Pro populo Anglicano

Sandys, Samuel, opposed Sir R. Walpole, on whose retirement he became Chancellor of the Exchequer, and afterwards a peer.

Sattara, a fortified town c. one hundred miles southeast from Bombay.

Saxe, the foremost French general in the War of the Austrian Succession (1696-1750.)

Scaligers;, Julius Caesar S., a learned Italian writer and classical scholar (1484-1558) and his son Joseph Justus S., who lived in France and was also an eminent scholar.

Schedules A and B. In the Reform Act Of 1832 Schedule A comprised those boroughs which were no longer to be represented, B those which were to send one member instead of two.

Scroggs, the infamous Chief-Justice of the King's Bench in the reign of Charles II., impeached in 680, and pensioned by Charles.

Secker, Archbishop of Canterbury from 1758 to 1768.

Seigneur Oreste and Madame Andromaque. See Racine's Andromaque.

Settle, Elkanah. See Flecknoe and Settle.

Sidney, Algernon, condemned and executed on scanty and illegal evidence on a charge of implication in the Rye House Plot of 1683.

Somers, President of the Council (1708-10) a great Whig leader (he had defended the Seven Bishops) and patron of literature (1650-1716).

Spinola, Spanish marquis and general who served his country with all his genius and fortune for naught (1571-1630).

Sporus, a favourite of Nero. Owing to his resemblance to that emperor's wife he was, after her death, dressed as a woman, and went through a marriage ceremony with Nero.

Stafford, Lord, executed in 1680, on a false charge of complicity in Oates's Popish Plot.

Stanley, Mr., fourth Earl of Derby, the "Rupert of Debate."

Stella, Esther Johnson, the daughter of one of Lady Giffard's friends.

St. Martin's Church, the site of the present G. P. 0., formerly a monastery, church, and "sanctuary."

Sudbury and Old Sarum, rotten boroughs, the one in Suffolk disfranchised in 1844, the other near Salisbury in 1832.

Sudder Courts, courts of criminal and civil jurisdiction which, in Macaulay's day, existed alongside the Supreme Court, but which, since 1858, have with the Supreme Court, been merged in the "High Courts."

Sunnuds, certificates of possession.

Surajah Dowlah, better Suraj-ud-daulah.

Swan River, in the S.W. of Australia, to which country the name of New Holland was at first given.

Switzer, that brave, Ulrich Zwingli, the Swiss reformer, who fell at Cappel in 1531.

TALLEYRAND, French diplomatist (1754-1831), rendered good service to the Revolution, was influential under Buonaparte and Louis Philippe's ambassador to England,

Talma, Francis Joseph, a famous French actor of tragic parts, who passed part of his life in England (1763-1826).

Talus, Sir Artegal's iron man, who in Spenser's Faery Queen, Book v., represents the executive power of State Justice.

Tamerlane, the Tartar who invaded India in 1398, and whose descendant, Baber, founded the Mogul dynasty.

Tanjore, a district of Madras, noted for its fertility; ceded to the East India Company by the Marathas in 1799. The town of Tanjore is about 300 miles south from Madras.

Temple, Lord Pitt's brother-in-law. Cf. Macaulay's severe description of him in the second "Essay on Chatham." (vol. v. of this edition).

Themis, Justice.

Theodosius, emperor of the East 378-395, and for a short time of the West also. He partly checked the Goths' advance.

Theramenes, Athenian philosopher and general (third century B.C.), unjustly accused and condemned to drink hemlock.

Theseus, the, one of the most perfect statues in the "Elgin marbles," of the British Museum.

Thurtell, John, a notorious boxer and gambler (b. 1794), who was hanged at Hertford on January 9th, 1824, for the brutal murder of William Weare, one of his boon-companions.

Thirty-Ninth, i.e. the Dorsets.

Thyrsis, a herdsman in the Idylls of Theocritus; similarly a shepherd in Virgil's Eclogues; hence a rustic or shepherd.

Timoleon, the Corinthian who expelled the tyrants from the Greek cities of Sicily (415-337 B.C.).

Tindal, Nicholas, clergyman and miscellaneous author (1687-1774).

Topehall, Smollett's drunken fox-hunter in Roderick Random.

Torso, lit. "trunk," a statue which has lost its head and members.

Torstenson, Bernard, pupil of Gustavus Adolphus, and General-in-Chief of the Swedish army from 1641. He carried the Thirty Years' War into the heart of Austria.

Trapbois, the usurer in Scott's Fortunes of Nigel ch. xvii.-xxv.

Trissotin, a literary fop in Moliere's Les Femmes Savantes.

Turcaret, the title-character in one of Le Sage's comedies.

Turgot, the French statesman (1727-81) who for two years managed the national finances under Louis XVI., and whose reforms, had they not been thwarted by the nobility and the king's indecision, would have considerably mitigated the violence of the Revolution.

Turk's Head. The most famous coffeehouse of this name was in the Strand, and was one of Johnson's frequent resorts.

UGOLINO See Dante's Inferno, xxxii., xxxiii.,

VANSITTART, was governor of Bengal in the interval between Clive's first and second administrations.

Vattel, the great jurist whose Droit des Gens, a work on Natural Law and its relation to International Law, appeared in 1758.

Vellore, west of Arcot.

Verres, the Roman governor of Sicily (73-77 B.C.), for plundering which island he was brought to trial and prosecuted by Cicero.

Virgil's foot race. In Aeneid v. 325 ff it is told how Nisus, who was leading, tripped Salius, his second, that his, friend Euryalus might gain the prize.

WALDEGRAVE, Lord, Governor to George III. before the latter's accession; married Walpole's niece.

Wallenstein, Duke of Friedland, the ablest commander on the Catholic side in the Thirty Years' War

Warburg, like Minden 1759, a victory gained by Ferdinand of Brunswick over the French (1760).

Watson, Admiral, made no protest against his name being signed, and claimed his share of the profits.

Western, Mrs. See Fielding’s Tom Jones.

Whithed, Mr. W., Poet-laureate from 1757 to 1785; author of the School for Lovers, etc.

Wild, Jonathan, a detective who turned villain and was executed for burglary in 1725; the hero of one of Fielding s stories.

Williams, Sir Charles Hanbury, Ambassador to Berlin (1746-49), His satires against Walpole’s opponents are easy and humorous (d. 1759).

Winnington. In turn Lord of the Admiralty, Lord of the Treasury, And Paymaster of the Forces. He had infinitely more wit than principle.

Wood’s patent the permission granted to Wood of Wolverhampton to mint copper coin for Ireland, which called forth Swift’s Drapier Letters.

YORKE, Attorney-General; Earl of Hardwicke (q.v.).

ZEMINDARS, landholders,

Zincke and Petitot, eighteenth and seventeenth century enamel painters who came to England from the Continent.

dleigh, Miss, maid of honour to the Princess of Wales (mother

of George III.); the original of Beatrix in Thackeray’s Esmond.

Churchill, John, the famous Duke of Marlborough.

Clootz, a French Revolutionary and one of the founders of the Worship of Reason; guillotined 1794.

Cocytus, one of the five rivers of Hades (see Milton's Paradise Lost, ii. 577ff).

Coleroon, the lower branch of the river Kaveri: it rises in Mysore and flows to the Bay of Bengal.

Colman, the Duke of York's confessor, in whose rooms were found papers held to support Oates's story.

Conde, a French general who, fighting for Spain, besieged Arras but had to abandon it after a defeat by Turenne.

Conjeveram, south-west from Madras and east from Arcot.

Conway, Marshal, cousin to Walpole; fought at Fontenoy and Culloden; moved the repeal of the Stamp Act (1766).

Corah, one hundred miles north-west from Allahabad, formerly a town of great importance, now much decayed.

Cornelia, a noble and virtuous Roman matron, daughter of Scipio Africanus and wife of Sempronius Graccus.

Cortes, conqueror of Mexico (1485-1547).

Cosmo di Medici, a great Florentine ruler, who, however,

understood the use of assassination,

Cossimbuzar (see the description in the Essay on Hastings).

Court of Requests, instituted under Henry VII. for the recovery

of small debts and superseded by the County Courts in 1847.

Covelong and Chingleput, between Madras and Pondicherry.

Craggs. Secretary of State: a man of ablity and character,

probably innocent in the South Sea affair.

Crevelt, near Cleves, in West Prussia; Minden is in Westphalia.

Cumberland . . . single victory, at Culloden, over the young

Pretender’s forces, in 1745.

Cutler, St. John, a wealthy London merchant (1608?-1693) whose

permanent avarice outshone his occasional benefactions (see Pope,

Moral Essays, iii. 315).

DAGOBERTS . . . Charles Martel, nominal and real rulers of France

in the seventh and eighth centuries.

D'Aguesseau, a famous French jurist, law reformer, and magistrate (1668-1751).

D'Alembert, a mathematician and philosopher who helped to sow the seeds of the French Revolution. Macaulay quite misrepresents Walpole's attitude to him (see letter of 6th Nov. 1768).

Damien, the attempted assassinator of Louis XV. in 1757.

Danby, Thomas Osborne, Esq. of, one of Charles II.'s courtiers, impeached for his share in the negotiations by which France was to pension Charles on condition of his refusal to assist the Dutch.

Danes, only had a few trading stations in India, which they sold to the British in 1845.

Demosthenes and Hyperides, the two great orators of Athens who were also contemporaries and friends.

De Pauw, Cornelius, a Dutch canon (1739-99), esteemed by Frederic the Great among others, as one of the freest speculators of his day.

Derby, James Stanley, Earl of, one of Charles I's supporters,

captured at Worcester and beheaded in 1651.

Derwentwater . . . Cameron, Stuart adherents who suffered for their share in the attempts of 1715 and 1745.

Dido, Queen of Carthage, who after years of mourning for her first husband, vainly sought the love of Aeneas.

Dionysius, the tyrant of Syracuse (367-343 B.C.) who gathered to his court the foremost men of the time in literature and philosophy.

Dodd, Dr., a royal chaplain and fashion ablepreacher whose extravagance led him to forge a bond of Lord Chesterfield's, for which he was sentenced to death and duly executed (1729-77).

Dodington, George Bubb, a time-serving and unprincipled politician in the time of George II., afterwards Baron Melcombe.

Dubois, Cardinal, Prime Minister of France. An able statesman and a notorious debauchee (1656-1723).

Duke of Lancaster, Henry IV., the deposer and successor of Richard II.

Dumont, Pierre, a French writer who settled in England and became

the translator and exponent of Bentham's works to Europe (1759-1829).

Dundee, the persecutor of the Scottish Covenanters under Charles II

Dyer, John, author of some descriptive poems, e.g. Grongar Hill (1700-58).

ELDON, John Scott, Earl of, was in turn Solicitor-General, Attorney-General, Lord Chief Justice of Common Pleas and Lord Chancellor, and throughout a staunch Tory (1751-1838).

Empson and Dudley, ministers and tax-raisers under Henry VII, executed by Henry VIII.

Ensign Northerton (see Fielding's Tom Jones, VII. xii.-xv.).

Escobar, a Spanish Jesuit preacher and writer (1589-1669).

Escurial, the palace and monastery built by Philip II.

Essex, One of the Rye House Conspirators; he was found in the Tower with his throat cut, whether as the result of suicide or murder is not known.

Euston, a late Jacobean house (and park) 10 miles from Bury St. Edmunds.

Faithful Shepherdess, a pastoral by Fletcher which may have suggested the general plan and some of the details of Comus.

Farinata (see Dante’s Inferno, canto 10).

Farmer-general, the tax-gatherers of France, prior to the Revolution: they contracted with the Government for the right to collect or "farm" the taxes.

Ferdinand the Catholic, King of Aragon, who, by marrying Isabella of Castile and taking Granada from the Moors, united Spain under one crown.

Filicaja, a Florentine poet (1642-1707); according to Macaulay ("Essay on Addison") "the greatest lyric poet of modern times,".

Filmer, Sir Robert, advocated the doctrine of absolute regal power in his Patriarcha, 1680.

Foigard, Father, a French refugee priest in Farquhar’s Beaux

Stratagem.

Fouche, Joseph, duke of Otranto. A member of the National Convention, who voted for the death of Louis XVI., and afterwards served under Napoleon (as Minister of Police) and Louis XVIII.

Fox, Henry F., father of Charles James Fox, and later Lord Holland.

Franche-Comte, that part of France which lies south of Lorraine and west of Switzerland.

French Memoirs, those of Margaret of Valois, daughter of Henry II. Of and wife of Henry (IV.) of Navarre.

Friar Dominic, a character in Dryden’s Spanish Friar designed to ridicule priestly vices.

Fronde, a French party who opposed the power Of Mazarin and the Parliament of Paris during the minority of Louis XIV.

GRERIAH, c. seventy miles south from Bombay.

Ghizni, in Afghanistan, taken by Sir John Keane in 1839.

Gifford, John, the pseudonym of John Richards Green, a voluminous Tory pamphleteer (1758-1818).

Giudecca. In the ninth and lowest circle of the Inferno, the place of those who betray their benefactors,

Glover, a London merchant who wrote some poetry, including Admiral Hosier's Ghost.

Godfrey, Sir Edmund, this Protestant magistrate who took Titus Oates's depositions and was next morning found murdered near Primrose Hill.

Godolphin, Lord of the Treasury under Charles II., James II., and William III. Prime Minister 1702-10 when Harley ousted him (d. 1712)

Gooti, north from Mysore in the Bellary district, 589

Goree, near Cape Verde, west coast of Africa, Gaudaloupe, is in West Indies; Ticonderaga and Niagara, frontier forts in Canada.

Gowries, the, Alexander Ruthven and his brother, the Earl of Gowrie, who were killed in a scuffle during the visit of King James to their house in Perth (Aug. 1600).

Grammont, a French count whose Memoirs give a vivid picture of life at Charles II.'s court.

Grandison, Sir Charles . . . Miss Byron, the title character (and his lady-love) of one of Richardson's novels.

Granicus, Rocroi, Narva, won respectively by Alexander (aged 22) against the Persians, by Conde (aged 22) against the Spaniards, and by Charles XII. (aged 18) against the Russians.

Great Captain, the, Gonzalvo Hernandez di Cordova, who drove the Moors from Granada and the French from Italy (d. 1515).

Guarini, (see Pastor Fido).

Guicciardini, Florentian statesman and historian; disciple of Macchiavelli secured the restoration of the Medici, (1485-1540).

Guizot and Villemain, in 1829 upheld liberal opinions against Charles X., in 1844 took the part of monarchy and Louis Philippe. Genonde and Jaquelin made the reverse change.

HAFIZ and Ferdusi, famous Persian poets: the former flourished in the eleventh, the latter in the thirteenth century.

Hamilton, Count, friend of James II. and author of the Memoirs of the Count de Grammont, the best picture of the English court of the Restoration (1646-1720)

Hamilton's Bawn, a tumble-down house in the north of Ireland which inspired Swift to write an amusing Poem.

Hamilton, Gerard, M.P. for Petersfield, a man of somewhat despicable character. The nickname was "Single-speech Hamilton."

Hammond, Henry, Rector of Penshurst in Kent, and commentator on the New Testament, the Psalms, etc.

Hardwicke, Lord, the Lord Chancellor (1737-56), whose Marriage Act (1753) put an end to Fleet marriages.

Harte, Walter, poet, historian, and tutor to Lord Chesterfield's son (1709-74).

Hayley and Seward, inferior authors who were at one time very popular.

Hebert, Jacques Rene, editor of the violent revolutionary organ Pere Duchesne; for opposing his colleagues he was arrested and guillotined (1756-94).

Heliogabalus, made emperor of Rome by the army in 218; ruled moderately at first, but soon abandoned himself to excesses of all kinds, and was assassinated.

Helvetius, a French philosopher of the materialist school (1715-71).

Henry the Fourth, the famous French king, "Henry of Navarre" (?1589-1610).

Hildebrand, Pope Gregory VII., who waged war against the vices of society and the imperial tyranny over the Church.

Hilpa and Shalum, Chinese antediluvians (see Spectator, vol. viii.). Hilpa was a princess and Shalum her lover.

Hoadley, Benjamin, a prelate and keen controversialist on the side of civil and religious liberty (1676-1761).

Holkar, a Mahratta chief whose headquarters were at Indore.

Hosein, the son of Ali Hosein's mother was Fatima, the favourite daughter of Mahomet.

Houghton, Sir R. Walpole's Norfolk seat.

Hunt, Mr., a well-to-do Wiltshire farmer, who after many attempts entered Parliament in 1832.

Huntingdon, William, the S.S.="Sinner Save"; Huntingdon was one of those religious impostors who professed to be the recipient of divine visions and prophetic oracles.

Hydaspes, or Hytaspes, the Greek name for the river Jhelam in the Punjab.

Hyphasis, the Greek name for the river Beds in the Punjab.

ILDEFONSO, ST., a village in Old Castile containing a Spanish royal residence built by Philip V. on the model of Versailles.

JACOBINS, those holding extreme democratic principles. The name is derived from an extreme Party of French Revolutionists who used to meet in the ball of the Jacobin Friars.

Jaghires, landed estates.

Jauts, a fighting Hindoo race inhabiting the North-West

Provinces.

Jefferson, Thomas, an American statesman, who took a prominent part in struggle for independence, and became President, 1801 to 1807.

Jenkinson, one of Bute’s supporters, afterwards Earl of Liverpool.

Jomini, a celebrated Swiss military writer, who served in the French army as aide-de-camp to Marshal Ney (1779-1869).

Monsieur Jourdain, the honest but uneducated tradesman of Moliere’s Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme, whose sudden wealth lands him in absurd attempts at aristocracy. 539

Justices in Eyre, i.e. in itinere, on circuit. In 1284 such were superseded by judges of assize.

KLOPSTOCK, author of the German epic Messiah, and one of the pioneers of modern German literature (1724-1803).

Knight of Malta, a play by Fletcher, Massinger, and another, produced before 1619.

Knipperdoling, one of the leading German Anabaptists, stadtholder of Munster, 1534-35, beheaded there in Jan. 1536.

LALLY, Baron de Tollendal, a distinguished French general in India who, however, could not work harmoniously with his brother officers or with his native troops, and was defeated by Eyre Coote at Wandewash in January 1760. He was imprisoned in the Bastille and executed (1766) on a charge of betraying French interests.

Las Casas, a Catholic bishop who laboured among the aborigines of South America, interposing himself between them and the cruelty of the Spaniards. Clarkson (ib.) was Wilberforce's fellow-worker in the abolition of slavery.

Latitudinarians, the school of Cudworth and Henry More (end of seventeenth century), who sought to affiliate the dogmas of the Church to a rational philosophy,

Law Mr., afterwards Edward (first) Lord Ellenborough.

Lee, Nathaniel, a minor play-writer (1653-92).

Legge, son of the Earl of Dartmouth. Lord Of the Admiralty 1746,

of the Treasury 1747, Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1754 (1708-64).

Lennox, Charlotte, friend of Johnson and Richardson, wrote The Female Don Quixote and Shakespeare Illustrated.

Lenthal, Speaker, who presided at the trial of Charles I.

Leo, tenth pope (1513-21) of the name, Giovanni de Medici, son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, and patron of art, science, and letters.

Lingard, Dr. Job., a Roman Catholic priest who wrote a history of England to the Accession of William and Mary (d. 1851).

Locusta, a famous female poisoner employed by Agrippina and Nero.

Lothario, a loose character in Rowe's tragedy of The Fair Penitent.

Lucan, the Roman epic Poet whose Pharsalia describes the struggle between Caesar and Pompey and breathes freedom throughout.

Ludlow, Edmund, a member of the Court that condemned Charles I. An ardent republican, he went into exile when Cromwell was appointed Protector.

MACKENZIE, HENRY, author of The Man of Feeling and other sentimental writings.

Maccaroni, an eighteenth-century term for a dandy or fop.

Maecenas, patron of literature in the Augustan age of Rome. Virgil and Horace were largely favoured by him,

Malebolge, i.e. the place of darkness and horror--the eighth Of the ten circles or pits in Dante’s Inferno, and the abode of barterers, hypocrites, evil counsellors, etc.

Malwa, about 100 miles east from Baroda and nearly 350 miles north-cast from Bombay.

Marat, Jean Paul, a fanatical democrat whose one fixed idea was wholesale slaughter of the aristocracy; assassinated by Charlotte Corday (1743-93).

Mariendal, in Germany. Turenne’s defeat here was an incident in the Thirty Years’ War.

Marlborough, Nelson, Wellington, the first was made Prince of Mindelheim by Emperor Joseph I, the second Duke of Bronte by Ferdinand IV., the third Duke of Vittoria by Ferdinand VII.

Marli, a forest and village ten miles west from Paris, seat of a royal (now presidential) country-house.

Marten, Henry, one of the most extreme and most conspicuous members of the Parliamentary Party. Charles I insulted him in public and ordered him to be turned out of Hyde Park (1602-80). The Marten mentioned on p.4 as guilty of judicial misfeasance was his father (1562?-41).

Mason, William, friend and biographer of Gray; wrote Caractacus and some odes (1725-97).

Mathias, a noted Anabaptist who, with John of Leyden, committed great excesses in the endeavour to set up a Kingdom of Mount Zion in Munster, Westphalia (1535).

Maurice, Elector of Saxony (1521-23) and leader of the Protestants of Germany against the Emperor Charles V.

Mayor of the Palace, the chief minister of the Kings of France between 638 and 742.

Mayor of the Palace, the name given to the comptroller of the household of the Frankish kings. By successive encroachments these officials became at length more powerful than the monarchs, whom they finally ousted.

Mazarin(e) Cardinal, chief minister of France during the first eighteen years of Louis XIV.’s reign,

Memmius, Roman Governor of Bithynia, distinguished for his rhetorical and literary gifts, 270

Merovingian line, a dynasty of Frankish kings in the sixth and seventh centuries A.D. They were gradually superseded in power by their "Mayors of the Palace," and were succeeded by the Carolingians.

Middleton, Conyers, a Cambridge theologian who had some controversy with Bentley; distinguished for his "absolutely plain style" of writing (1683-50).

Miguel, Don, King of Portugal, whose usurpation of the throne, refusal to marry Maria, daughter of Don Pedro of Brazil, and general conduct of affairs, led to a civil war, as a result of which he had to withdraw to Italy (1802-66).

Mississippi Scheme, a plan for reducing the French National Debt, similar in folly and in downfall to the South Sea Bubble.

Mite, Sir Matthew (see Foote’s comedy, The Nabob).

Montague, Charles, Earl of Halifax, Chancellor of the Exchequer 1694; First Lord of Treasury 1697; impeached by the Tories for peculation and acquitted; Prime Minister 1714; reformed the currency.

Montezuma and Guatemozin, two of the native rulers of Mexico prior to its conquest by Cortez in 1519.

Montezuma, Emperor of Mexico, seized by Cortez in 1519.

Moro, the, a strong fort at the entrance to the harbour of Havana, taken after a hard struggle by the English under Admiral Sir George Pocock and General the Earl of Albemarle in July 1762.

Moore, Dr., father of Sir John Moore, European traveller, and author of the novel Zeluco.

Moorish Envoy, Algerine in Humphrey Clinker.

Mountain of Light, the Koh-i-noor, which after many adventures is now one of the English crown jewels.

Mucius, a Roman, who, when condemned to the stake, thrust his right hand unflinchingly into a fire lit for a sacrifice. He was spared and given the name Scaevola, i. e. left-handed.

Murray, orator; afterwards Earl of Mansfield, and Lord Chief

Justice (1705-93).

NAPIER, COLONEL, served under Sir John Moore. Like Southey he wrote a History of the Peninsular War.

Nimeguen, treaty of; by this it was agreed that France should restore all her Dutch conquests, but should keep the Spanish conquest of Franche-Comte, a clause which naturally incensed the Emperor and the King of Spain.

Nollekens, Joseph, the eminent English sculptor, and friend of George III. (1737-1823).

Nuzzurs, presents to persons in authority.

OATES, Bedloe, Dangerfield, in 1678 pretended to have discovered a "Popish Plot" which aimed at overthrowing the King and Protestantism.

Odoacer, a Hun, who became emperor in 476 and was assassinated by his colleague, Theodoric (ib.) the Ostrogoth in 493.

O’Meara, Barry Edward, Napoleon’s physician in St. Helena, and

author of A Voice from St. Helena; or, Napoleon in Exile.

Onomasticon, a Greek dictionary of antiquities, in ten books,

arranged according to subject-matter.

Onslow, Arthur, Speaker of the House of Commons from 1728 to 1761.

Oromasdes and Arimanes, Ormuzd and Ahriman, the embodiments of the

principles of good and evil respectively, in the Zoroastrian

religion.

Oxenstiern, Chancellor to Gustavus Adolphus and the director of

the negotiations which led to the Peace of Westphalia and the

close of the Thirty Years’ War.

PAGE, SIR FRANCIS, a judge whose "reputation for coarseness and

brutality (e.g. Pope, Dunciad, iv. 2730) is hardly warranted by

the few reported cases in which he took part"(1661?-1741).

Palais Royal, in Paris, formerly very magnificent.

Pannonia, roughly equivalent to the modern Hungary.

Pasquin, Anthony, a fifteenth-century Italian tailor, noted for

his caustic wit.

Pastor Fido, a pastoral play, composed in 1585 by Guarini on the model of Aminta.

Patna, massacre of.

Peacock Throne, a gilded and jewelled couch with a canopy, described by a French jeweller named Tavernier, who saw it in 1665, and possibly the present throne of the Shah of Persia.

Perceval, Spencer, supported the Tory party, and became its leader in 1809; assassinated in the Commons Lobby, 1812.

Perwannahs, magisterial documents containing instructions or orders.

Peters, Hugh, a famous Independent divine and chaplain to the Parliamentary forces, executed in 1660 for his alleged share in the death of Charles 1. He was an upright and genial man, but somewhat lacking in moderation and taste.

Petit Trianon, a chateau built for Madame du Barry by Louis XV, and afterwards the favourite resort of Marie Antoinette. In a subsequent edition Macaulay substituted Versailles.

Phalaris, a tyrant of Agrigentum in Sicily (sixth century).

Pigot, Governor of Madras when Clive was in Bengal, and also, as Lord Pigot, in the time of Warren Hastings.

Pinto, Fernandez Mendez, a Portuguese traveller (d. 1583), who visited the Far East and possibly landed in the Gulf of Pekin.

Politian, one of the early scholars of the Renaissance; patronized by Lorenzo de Medici (1454-94).

Pontiff, that inglorious, Peter Marone (Celestine V.), who was tricked into abdicating the papacy for Boniface VIII, and died in prison.

Porto Novo and Pollilore, where Coote defeated Hyder Ali in July and August 1781, and so finished a long campaign in the Carnatic.

Powis, Lord, Edward Clive, created Earl of Powis in 1804.

Powle, a leading Politician and lawyer in the events connected with the accession Of William III.

Prynne, William, a Puritan, who attacked the stage and the Queen's virtue, and suffered by order of the Star Chamber. In late life he changed his opinions, was imprisoned by Cromwell, and favoured by Charles II.

Pyrenees, treaty of the, closed the war between France and Spain (1660), which had continued twelve years after the Peace of Westphalia was signed. For the other treaties mentioned here see the essay on "The War of the Spanish Succession," in vol. ii.

RAPIN, a Huguenot who joined the army of William of Orange, and wrote a Histoire d'Angleterre which surpassed all its predecessors.

Ricimer, a fifth-century Swabian soldier who deposed the Emperor Avitus, and then set up and deposed Majorian, Libius Severus and Anthemius, and finally set up Olybrius.

Rix dollar, a Scandinavian coin worth between three and four shillings.

Roe, Sir Thomas, an English traveller who, in 1615, went on an embassy to Jehangir at Agra.

Rohilcund, north-west of Oude.

Rohillas, Mussulman mountaineers inhabiting Rohilcund (q.v.).

Russell, Lord William, the Hampden of the Restoration period.

Fought hard for the exclusion of James II. from the crown;

unjustly executed for alleged share in the "Rye House Plot" (1639-

83). Algernon Sydney (1621-83) was a fellow-worker and sufferer.

SACHEVERELL, Henry, a famous divine of Queen Anne’s reign, who was

impeached by the Whigs for forwardly preaching the doctrine of

non-resistance.

Sackville, Lord George, the general commanding the British cavalry

at Minden. Nervousness led to his disobeying a critical order to

charge, which would have completed the French rout, and he was

court-martialled and degraded.

Saint Cecilia, Mrs. Sheridan, painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds in

this character because of her love of, and skill in, music.

Salmacius, the Latin name of Claude de Saumaise an eminent French

scholar and linguist (1588-1653), whose Defence of Charles 1.

provoked Milton’s crushing reply, Defensio Pro populo Anglicano

Sandys, Samuel, opposed Sir R. Walpole, on whose retirement he

became Chancellor of the Exchequer, and afterwards a peer.

Sattara, a fortified town c. one hundred miles southeast from

Bombay.

Saxe, the foremost French general in the War of the Austrian Succession (1696-1750.)

Scaligers;, Julius Caesar S., a learned Italian writer and classical scholar (1484-1558) and his son Joseph Justus S., who lived in France and was also an eminent scholar.

Schedules A and B. In the Reform Act Of 1832 Schedule A comprised those boroughs which were no longer to be represented, B those which were to send one member instead of two.

Scroggs, the infamous Chief-Justice of the King's Bench in the reign of Charles II., impeached in 680, and pensioned by Charles.

Secker, Archbishop of Canterbury from 1758 to 1768.

Seigneur Oreste and Madame Andromaque. See Racine's Andromaque.

Settle, Elkanah. See Flecknoe and Settle.

Sidney, Algernon, condemned and executed on scanty and illegal evidence on a charge of implication in the Rye House Plot of 1683.

Somers, President of the Council (1708-10) a great Whig leader (he

had defended the Seven Bishops) and patron of literature (1650-1716).

Spinola, Spanish marquis and general who served his country with all his genius and fortune for naught (1571-1630).

Sporus, a favourite of Nero. Owing to his resemblance to that emperor’s wife he was, after her death, dressed as a woman, and went through a marriage ceremony with Nero.

Stafford, Lord, executed in 1680, on a false charge of complicity in Oates’s Popish Plot.

Stanley, Mr., fourth Earl of Derby, the "Rupert of Debate."

Stella, Esther Johnson, the daughter of one of Lady Giffard’s friends.

St. Martin’s Church, the site of the present G. P. 0., formerly a monastery, church, and "sanctuary."

Sudbury and Old Sarum, rotten boroughs, the one in Suffolk disfranchised in 1844, the other near Salisbury in 1832.

Sudder Courts, courts of criminal and civil jurisdiction which, in Macaulay’s day, existed alongside the Supreme Court, but which, since 1858, have with the Supreme Court, been merged in

the "High Courts."

Sunnuds, certificates of possession.

Surajah Dowlah, better Suraj-ud-daulah.

Swan River, in the S.W. of Australia, to which country the name of New Holland was at first given.

Switzer, that brave, Ulrich Zwingli, the Swiss reformer, who fell at Cappel in 1531.

TALLEYRAND, French diplomatist (1754-1831), rendered good service to the Revolution, was influential under Buonaparte and Louis Philippe’s ambassador to England,

Talma, Francis Joseph, a famous French actor of tragic parts, who passed part of his life in England (1763-1826).

Talus, Sir Artegal’s iron man, who in Spenser’s Faery Queen, Book v., represents the executive power of State Justice.

Tamerlane, the Tartar who invaded India in 1398, and whose descendant, Baber, founded the Mogul dynasty.

Tanjore, a district of Madras, noted for its fertility; ceded to the East India Company by the Marathas in 1799. The town of Tanjore is about 300 miles south from Madras.

Temple, Lord Pitt’s brother-in-law. Cf. Macaulay’s severe description of him in the second "Essay on Chatham." (vol. v. of this edition).

Themis, Justice.

Theodosius, emperor of the East 378-395, and for a short time of the West also. He partly checked the Goths’ advance.

Theramenes, Athenian philosopher and general (third century B.C.), unjustly accused and condemned to drink hemlock.

Theseus, the, one of the most perfect statues in the "Elgin marbles," of the British Museum.

Thurtell, John, a notorious boxer and gambler (b. 1794), who was hanged at Hertford on January 9th, 1824, for the brutal murder of William Weare, one of his boon-companions.

Thirty-Ninth, i.e. the Dorsets.

Thyrsis, a herdsman in the Idylls of Theocritus; similarly a

shepherd in Virgil’s Eclogues; hence a rustic or shepherd.

Timoleon, the Corinthian who expelled the tyrants from the Greek cities of Sicily (415-337 B.C.).

Tindal, Nicholas, clergyman and miscellaneous author (1687-1774).

Topehall, Smollett’s drunken fox-hunter in Roderick Random.

Torso, lit. "trunk," a statue which has lost its head and members.

Torstenson, Bernard, pupil of Gustavus Adolphus, and General-in-Chief of the Swedish army from 1641. He carried the Thirty Years’ War into the heart of Austria.

Trapbois, the usurer in Scott’s Fortunes of Nigel ch. xvii.-xxv.

Trissotin, a literary fop in Moliere’s Les Femmes Savantes.

Turcaret, the title-character in one of Le Sage’s comedies.

Turgot, the French statesman (1727-81) who for two years managed the national finances under Louis XVI., and whose reforms, had they not been thwarted by the nobility and the king’s indecision, would have considerably mitigated the violence of the Revolution.

Turk’s Head. The most famous coffeehouse of this name was in the Strand, and was one of Johnson’s frequent resorts.

UGOLINO See Dante’s Inferno, xxxii., xxxiii.,

VANSITTART, was governor of Bengal in the interval between Clive’s first and second administrations.

Vattel, the great jurist whose Droit des Gens, a work on Natural Law and its relation to International Law, appeared in 1758.

Vellore, west of Arcot.

Verres, the Roman governor of Sicily (73-77 B.C.), for plundering which island he was brought to trial and prosecuted by Cicero.

Virgil’s foot race. In Aeneid v. 325 ff it is told how Nisus, who was leading, tripped Salius, his second, that his, friend Euryalus