

Shakespeare is one of the themes which elicit illustrations of the snares of empirical sociology. An able and original literary critic, Mr. G. C. Macaulay, at the close of a very competent study on Francis Beaumont, has formulated a theory of that decadence which calls for revision. He pronounces that by 1615 "the impulse which had moved the older generation was.....almost exhausted. This, as we have already seen, came in the form of an enthusiastic patriotism, ennobling human life, so far at least as Englishmen were concerned in it, and producing a united and national interest in the representation of its problems and destiny" (*Francis Beaumont*, 1883, p. 187).

Error here emerges at once. It was not national patriotism that evoked either the pre-Shakespearean or the Shakespearean drama. The rude foundations had been laid by many "interludes," by such homespun comedy as *Ralph Roister Doister*, and by the stilted tragedy of *Ferrex and Porrex*. The chronicle-plays of Greene and Peele and Marlowe, worked over by Shakespeare, are far from being the best of the pre-Shakespearean drama. Just after the Armada, Marlowe revealed his powers, not in patriotic plays, but in *Tamburlaine*, followed by *The Jew of Malta*, and *Faustus*. The best of the pre-Shakespearean plays on English history was Marlowe's *Edward II*, in which there was and could be no appeal to patriotic fervour. The best episode in *Edward III* stands out entirely from the "patriotic" part, which is nearly worthless. The superior episode is probably the work of Greene, whose best complete play, *James IV*, turns on fictitious Scottish history, and is only momentarily touched by patriotic feeling. Peele's *Edward I* is inferior as a whole to his *David and Bethsabe*. Kyd made his successes, literary or theatrical, with *The Spanish Tragedy*, *Arden of Feversham*, and the original *Hamlet*. Shakespeare's best work, from the start, is done not in the chronicle-plays but in his comedies, in his Falstaff scenes, and in his tragedies, from *Romeo and Juliet* onwards. These had nothing to do with patriotism, enthusiastic or otherwise. And *Henry V*, which had, is not a great play.

The chief florescence of Elizabethan drama is to be understood in the light of economic causation; and the decline is to be understood similarly. The rise of the London theatres, a process of expansion following on the maintenance of separate companies of players by noblemen and by the court, meant a means of livelihood for actors and playwrights, and of profit for *entrepreneurs*. Greene and Peele, and Kyd and Marlowe, and Jonson and Chapman, wrote not to evoke or respond to national patriotism, but to provide plays that would sell and "draw." The original genius of Marlowe stimulated the others, who nearly all imitated him. *Orlando Furioso*, *Selimus*,

Alphonsus King of Arragon, David and Bethsabe, and even *The Battle of Alcazar*, have nothing to do with patriotism; and the touches of that in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* are subsidiary to the story. There is no extant play on the Armada.

It is pure supererogation, then, to argue that "everything had been done by the first Stuart king to cool down patriotism, and to diminish the self-respect and pride of Englishmen; while at the same time, by his insolent hitherto unheard-of (?) divine-right pretensions, he alarmed them for their political liberties, and by his ecclesiastical policy he exasperated theological controversy; thus contriving, both in politics and in religion, to destroy unity and foster party spirit to an extent which had been unknown for nearly half-a-century. The condition of things," adds Mr. Macaulay, "was unfavourable to everything national, and above all things to the national drama, which became rather the amusement of the idle than the embodiment of a popular enthusiasm." Need it be pointed out that all of Shakespeare's greatest work, after *Hamlet*, which was anything but "national," was produced after the accession of James? What had popular enthusiasm to do with *Othello*, *Macbeth*, *Lear*, *Coriolanus*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *The Tempest*, and *The Winter's Tale*?

The really explanatory factors are (1) the economic, (2) the trend of popular culture. Shakespeare alone of the dramatists of his day made anything like a good income; and he did so in virtue of being an actor and a prudent partner in the proprietorship of his theatre. Kyd, Greene, and Peele all died in misery; and Marlowe must have lived his short life from hand to mouth. Jonson subsisted chiefly by his masques and by the gifts of patrons, and by his own avowal was always poor. Chapman can have fared no better. The concurrence of the abnormal genius of Shakespeare with his gift of commercial management is one of the rarest things in literary history: take that away, and the problem of the "decadence" is seen to be merely part of the statement of the "rise." When men of superior power, taught by the past, ceased to defy poverty by writing for the theatre—and even the vogue of Fletcher and Massinger represented no solid monetary success—plays could less than ever appeal to the "serious" and sectarian sections of the London public. Popular culture ran on the sterile lines of pietism, Puritanism, and the strifes engendered between these and sacerdotalism. All this had begun long before James, though he may have promoted the evolution. Literary art perforce turned to other forms. A successful national war could no more have regenerated the drama than the wars of Henry V could generate it. There was plenty of "national enthusiasm" later, in the periods of Marlborough and Chatham: there was no great drama; and the new fiction had as little to do with

patriotism as had Shakespeare's comedies and tragedies. Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* was not inspired by his politics.

It is well to recognise, finally, that in the nature of things aesthetic, every artistic convention must in time be "played out," the law of variation involving deviations or recoils. Blank-verse drama is a specially limited convention, which only great genius can vitalise. Even in this connection, however, there is danger in *a priori* theorising. Mr. Macaulay quotes from Schlegel the generalisation that "in the commencement of a degeneracy in the dramatic art, the spectators first lose the capability of judging of a play as a whole"; hence "the harmony of the composition, and the due proportion between all the various parts is apt to be neglected, and the flagging interest is stimulated by scenes of horror or strange and startling incidents." The implication is that the Jacobean drama degenerated in this way. Again the facts are opposed to the thesis. If we are to believe Shakespeare and Jonson and Beaumont, the audiences never appreciated plays as wholes. Scenes of "comic relief," utterly alien to the action, come in as early as *Lochrine*. Scenes of physical and moral horror, again, abound in the pre-Shakespearean drama: in *The Spanish Tragedy* and *Arden of Feversham*, in *David and Bethsabe*, in *Titus Andronicus* (a pre-Shakespearean atrocity), in *Selimus* and *Tancred and Gismunda*, and *Alphonsus Emperor of Germany* (a Greene-Peele play wrongly ascribed to Chapman), they are multiplied *ad nauseam*. Rapes, assassinations, incest, tearing-out of eyes and cutting-off of hands, the kissing of a husband's excised heart by his wife, the unwitting eating of her children's flesh by a mother, the dashing out of a child's brains by its grandfather—such are among the flowers of the Elizabethan time. On Schlegel's theory, there was degeneration before there was success. Webster's "horrors" do not seem to have won him great vogue; and Ford's neurotic products had no great popularity. Doubtless weak performers tend to resort to violent devices; but they did so before Shakespeare; and Shakespeare did not stick at trifles in *Lear* and *Othello*.

Decadence in art-forms, in short, is to be studied like other forms of decadence, in the light of the totality of conditions; and is not to be explained in terms of itself. Mr. Macaulay's thesis as a whole might be rebutted by simply citing the fact that the florescence of Spanish drama at the hands of Lope de Vega and Calderon occurred in a period of political decline, when "patriotic enthusiasm" had nothing to live upon. Vega began play-writing just after the defeat of the Armada; and his *Dragontea*, written in exultation over the death of Drake, is not a memorable performance. Velasquez, like Calderon, flourished under Philip IV, in a time of national depression and defeat.

CHAPTER II

THE REBELLION AND THE COMMONWEALTH

§ 1

NEARLY all the conceivable materials of disaffection, save personal misconduct on the king's part,¹ went to prepare the Great Rebellion. Religious antipathies, indeed, no longer rested on the naked ground of lands taken and in danger of being re-taken;² but there had been developed an intense animus of Protestant against Catholic, the instinct of strife running the more violently in that channel because so few others were open, relatively to the store of restless brute force in the country. Perhaps, indeed, Presbyterians hated Episcopalians and Arminians, at bottom, nearly as much as they did Catholics; but the chronic panics, from the time of Elizabeth onwards, the mythology of the Marian period, and the story of the massacres of Alva and of St. Bartholomew's Day, served to unite Protestants in this one point of anti-Papalism, and had set up as it were a new human passion in the sphere of English politics. And to this passion James and Charles in turn ran counter with an infatuated persistence. James, who was so much more annoyed by Puritans than by Papists, planned for his son, with an eye to a dowry, the Spanish marriage, which of all possible matches would most offend the English people; and when that fell through, another Catholic bride was found in the daughter of the King of France. The

¹ Even on this side the king was not fortunate. It would perhaps do him little harm that "he spoke and behaved with indelicacy to ladies in public" (Hallam, citing Milton's *Defensio* and Warburton's *Notes on Clarendon*, vii, 626); but his frigidity and haughtiness were more serious matters. He actually caned Vane for entering a room in the palace reserved for persons of higher rank (*id.*, citing Carte's *Ormond*, i, 356). In the next reign people contrasted his aloofness with his son's accessibility (see *Pepys' Diary*, *passim*). Hallam sums up that "he had in truth none who loved him, till his misfortunes softened his temper, and excited sympathy" (10th ed. ii, 226).

² That is, in England. In Scotland they did. It is quite clear that the Scotch disaffection dated from Charles's proposal and attempt, at the very outset of his reign, to recover the tithes that had been appropriated by the nobility. (Compare Burton, *History of Scotland*, v, 270; vi, 45, 75, 77-79, 84, 225; Burnet, *Own Time*, bk. i, ed. 1838, p. 11; Gardiner, *History of England, 1603-1642*, vii, 278; Laing, *History of Scotland*, 2nd ed. iii, 91; Sir James Balfour, *Annals of the Stuart Kings*, ii, 128; Sir Roger Manley, *History of the Rebellions*, 1691, p. 7.) This scheme, though dropped, was naturally never renounced in the king's counsels; and the Church riots of 1637, which are specially embalmed in the egregious myth of Jenny Geddes, are explicitly recorded to have been planned by outsiders. See Guthry's *Memoirs*, 2nd ed. 1747, p. 23. Burton (vi, 153) rejects this testimony on astonishingly fallacious grounds. Of course, the resentment of English interference with Scotch affairs counted for a great deal.

pledges, so natural in the circumstances, to "tolerate" Catholics in England, were a standing ground of panic to the intolerant Protestants, even though unfulfilled; and the new king stood in the sinister position of sheltering in his household the religion for which he dared not claim freedom in the country. Such a ground of unpopularity could be balanced only by some signal grounds of favour; but James and Charles alike chose unpopular grounds of war, and failed badly to boot. To crown all, they exhibited to the full the hereditary unwisdom of their dynasty in the choice of favourites;¹ and the almost unexampled animosity incurred by Buckingham could not but reflect somewhat towards Charles, whose refined and artistic tastes, besides, made him the natural enemy of the text-worshipping and mostly art-hating Puritans.

Thus everything made for friction between king and subjects; and when Charles, to raise necessary funds, resorted to measures of no abnormal oppressiveness as compared with those of the Tudors, he was doggedly resisted by Parliaments professedly standing on law, but really actuated by a fixed suspicion of all his aims. Teeth were on edge all round. When a merchant, mulcted in a heavy customs duty, happened to be a Puritan, he resisted with a special zest; and one such declared before the Privy Council that "in no part of the world, not even in Turkey, were the merchants so screwed and wrung as in England."² The King, unhappily for himself, conciliated nobody. Not content with alienating nobles by imposing huge fines in revival of the forest laws, he incensed the Corporation of London by confiscating their estates in Ulster, conferred by his father, and levying a fine of £70,000 to boot, for alleged breaches of Charter.³ Besides selling many trade monopolies, he passed vexatious sumptuary laws, fixing the prices of poultry, butter, and coals, and insisting on the incorporation of all tradesmen and artificers.⁴ The friction was well-nigh universal; and but for the remarkable prosperity built up by the long peace,⁵ the trouble might have come much sooner. But it is idle to keep up the pretence that what was at stake was the principle of freedom. The first demand of the Parliamentary Opposition was for the more thorough persecution of the Catholics. Parliamentarians such as Eliot were more oppressive in religious matters than Laud himself.

¹ It is to be remembered, as explaining Charles's sacrifice of Strafford, that the latter was generally detested even at Court (Hallam, ii, 108-10). And at the outset the general hatred of the nobility to Laud was the great cause of Charles's weakness (*id.* ii, 86). In France, soon afterwards, the aristocratic hatred to Mazarin set up the civil war of the Fronde.

² Hallam, *Const. Hist.* ii, 7.

³ *Id.* ii, 10-11.

⁴ *Id.* p. 25. Cp. p. 35.

⁵ As to which see Hallam, ii, 81-82.

He sought only uniformity of worship, they uniformity of doctrine; and they punished for heresy more unpardonably than did the Star Chamber for gross libel.

See Gardiner, *History of England, 1603-1642*, small ed. v, 191, as to Eliot's plans to fit out the fleet by means of "those penalties the Papists have already incurred"—a proposal which, says Dr. Gardiner, "if it had been translated into figures, would have created a tyranny too monstrous to be contemplated with equanimity." And Eliot was all for a persecution of the Arminians (*id.* vii, 42-43). In 1645 the Corporation of London petitioned Parliament to suppress "all sects without toleration."

Nor were they less oppressive in their fiscal policy. After beginning a revolt against illegal taxation, Pym secured the imposition of taxes on beverages (1643), on flesh, salt, textile goods, and many other commodities, "at the sword's point," against the general resistance of the people.¹ There were at work a hundred motives of strife; and it was only the preternatural ill-luck or unwisdom of Charles that united Parliament against him so long. It needed all the infatuation of an express training in the metaphysics of divine right to enable a king of England, even after James I, to blunder through the immense network of superstition that hedged him round; indeed, the very intensity of the royalist superstition best explains the royal infatuation. So fixed was the monarchic principle in the minds of the people, who, then as later, swore by monarchy but hated paying for it, that in the earlier years of the struggle not even the zealots could have dreamt of the end that was to be. Regicide entered no man's mind, even as a nightmare.

§ 2

On Charles, as the greatest "architect of ruin" in English political history, psychological interest fastens with only less intensity than on his great antagonist. The astonishing triple portrait by Vandyke reveals, with an audacity that is positively startling when we think of the other effigies by the same artist, a character stamped at once with impotence and untruth. One slight suggestion of strength lies in the look of grave self-esteem—a quality which would in Charles be fostered from the first by his refined revolt from the undignified ways of his father; but it is withal the very countenance of duplicity. Puritan prejudice could not

¹ Cunningham, *English Industry and Commerce*, ii, 219.

exaggerate the testimony of the daring artist. We seem to understand at once how he deceived and alienated Holland and Spain as well as the parties among his own subjects. And it was the very excess of duplicity, or rather the fatal combination of duplicity with infirmity of purpose,¹ that destroyed the man. As the war wore on, and above all after it was closed, the discords of the Parliament and the army were such that the most ordinary practical sagacity could have turned them to the triumph of the king's cause. This is the most instructive phase of the Rebellion. The Presbyterian majority which had grown up in Parliament—a growth still imperfectly elucidated—represented only one of the great warring sects of the day; and if, after Independency, led by Cromwell, had come to daggers drawn with the despots of the Commons, Charles had only agreed to any working settlement whatever, he might with perfect confidence have left the conflicting forces to throttle each other afterwards. Any arrangement he might have made, whether with the Presbyterians or with Cromwell, would have broken down of itself, and he might have set up his own polity in the end. But he so enjoyed his intrigues, as it were indemnifying himself by them for his weakness of will, that he thought to triumph by them alone, and would not wait for the slower chemistry of normal political development; so that the Independents, driven desperate by his deceits, had to execute him in self-preservation.

§ 3

As it was, the history of the Rebellion remains none the less the tragi-comedy of the old constitutionalism. Parliament, resisting as illegal the supremacy of the king, went from one illegality to another in resisting him, till his tyrannies became trivial in comparison. And Cromwell, who must have set out with convictions about the sanctity of law, although doubtless fundamentally moved by the all-pervading fear of Popery, was led by an ironical fate, step by step, into a series of political crimes which, if those of Charles deserved beheading, could be coped with only in the medieval hell.

Cp. Hallam, ii, 252; and Cowley's *Essays*, ed. 1868, p. 139 *et seq.* To say nothing of Cromwell's illegal exactions, his

¹ Hallam makes an excellent generalisation of Charles's two contrasted characteristics of obstinacy and pliability. "He was tenacious of ends, and irresolute as to means; better fitted to reason than to act; never swerving from a few main principles, but diffident of his own judgment in its application to the course of affairs" (as cited, ii, 229). He had cause to be so diffident. Hallam more than once observes how bad his judgment generally was.

selling of at least fifty Englishmen into slavery in the West Indies (on which see Cowley, p. 168; Hallam, ii, 271, *note*; and Carlyle, *Letters and Speeches*, ed. 1857, iii, 100—where the victims are put at “hundreds”)—albeit no worse than the similar selling of Irish and Scotch prisoners—was an act which, if committed earlier by any king, would have covered his name with historical infamy. Prof. Firth points out that the practice began under James I, but it was then applied only to felons and vagrants. Cromwell’s example was followed under Charles II with regard to the Covenanting rebels in Scotland; and the plan was again followed in the cases of Monmouth’s rebellion and that of 1715. (Cited in note on Lomas’s ed. of Carlyle’s *Cromwell*, ii, 438.) As regards Ireland, the selling of prisoners into slavery was not restricted to the case of the survivors of Drogheda (Carlyle’s *Cromwell*, as cited, ii, 53; ed. Lomas, i, 469). It is proved that Cromwell’s agents captured not only youths, but girls, for export to the West Indies (Prendergast, *The Cromwellian Settlement*, 2nd ed. p. 89); and that the slavery there was of the cruellest sort (Cunningham, *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*, ii, 109), though it has to be kept in view that it was not perpetual; the victim being strictly an “indentured labourer,” only for a certain number of years at the mercy of his owner (Gardiner, *Commonwealth and Protectorate*, small ed. iii, 309–10, *note*; iv, 111–13). Of course the limitation of the term made the servitude all the more severe (Lomas’s note cited).

In the end, the Protector terrorised his own law courts as Charles had never dared to do. See Clarendon, bk. xv, ed. Oxford, 1843, p. 862, and Hallam, ii, 253, 271, 272, *note*. Cromwell’s language, as recorded by Clarendon, would startle some of his admirers by its indecency if they took the trouble to read the passage. Cp. Vaughan, *Hist. of England under the Stuarts*, etc., p. 524 (citing Whitelocke and Ludlow), as to the law courts. Vaughan overlooks the selling of royalists as slaves.

It was small wonder that posterity came to canonise the king; for in terms even of the Roundhead principles of impeachment he was a political saint in comparison with the “usurper.” And royalists might well imagine Cromwell as haunted by remorse; for nothing short of the “besotted fanaticism” of which, as Hallam pronounces, he had sucked the dregs, could keep him self-complacent over the retrospect of the Civil War when he was governing by the major-generals, after failing to govern with farcically packed Parliaments. His fanaticism was, of course, in the ratio of his will-power, but each supported the other. The modern exaltation of his character, as against the earlier and rather saner habit of crediting

him with great powers, relatively high purposes, and great misdeeds,¹ has tended to throw in the shade the blazing lesson of his career, which is that, like most of his colleagues, he had set out with no political insight or foresight whatever. His conscientious beginnings are so utterly at issue with his endings that it is indeed almost superfluous to condemn either—as superfluous as to denounce the infatuation of Charles. But it is of importance to remember that his very success as a Carlylean ruler only emphasises the failure of his original politics. He succeeded by way of repudiating nearly every principle on behalf of which he had taken up arms. Even apart from the invigorating spectacle of his executive genius,² he may well stir our sympathy, which is more subtly and deeply exercised by his inner tragedy, by the deadliness of his success in the light of his aims, than by the simpler ill-fortune of Charles. But as politicians our business is not to divide our sympathies between the powerful pietist who was forced to give the lie to his life to save it, and the weak liar who lost his life because he was at bottom faithful to his life's creed. The superiority of Cromwell in strength of will and in administrative faculty is too glaring to need acknowledging; and the lesson that a strong man can tyrannise grossly where a weak man cannot tyrannise trivially, is not one that particularly needs pressing. What it is essential to note is that the course of events which forced and led Cromwell into despotism was for the next generation a strong argument against free Parliamentary government.

Our generation, proceeding mainly on the work of Carlyle, who never really elucidates or even seeks to comprehend political and social developments, has in large part lost sight of the fact that Cromwell was more and more clearly becoming a military despot; and that with twenty more years of life he might have established a new military and naval empire. Yet at the time of his death his financial position was that of a military adventurer at his wits' end, and his unscrupulous attack on Spain was plainly planned by way of coming at money.³ Dr. Gardiner, who has been the first

¹ It is an error to assert, as is often done, that before Carlyle's panegyric the normal English estimate of Cromwell was utterly hostile. Burnet, and even Clarendon and Hume, mixed high praise with their blame; and Macaulay was eloquently panegyric long before Carlyle. The subject is discussed in the author's article on "Cromwell and the Historians" in *Essays in Sociology*, vol. 2.

² It is to be noted that while he was trampling down all the constitutional safeguards for which he had professed to fight, he kept the English universities on relatively as sound a footing as the army. He thus wrought for the advance of reason in the next generation. But he had his share in the Puritan work of destroying the artistic taste and practice of the nation.

³ He had, indeed, proposed to the Dutch a joint campaign for the conquest of Spanish America (Gardiner, *History of the Commonwealth*, ii, 478). But even in that case he would have counted on plunder.

English¹ historian to handle the case with comprehensive insight, rightly compares the position of Cromwell with that of Napoleon. He was in fact just another sample of the recurrent type of the military ruler establishing himself as despot on the ruins of faction. "Except for four months.....the whole of the Protectorate was a time either of war or of active preparation for war; and even during those months the Protector was hesitating, not whether he should keep the peace or not, but merely what enemy he should attack."² Finally he made war on Spain, by the admission of the friendly historian, "after the fashion of a midnight conspirator," deceiving the other side in order to gain a mean advantage.³ To such a policy there was no limit in national conscience, any more than in his. He had a standing army of 57,000 men, an immense force for the England of that day; his revenue stood at two millions and a quarter, nearly four times the figure of twenty years before; and still he was in desperate financial straits, his outlays being nearly half a million in excess of the income.⁴ The result was "a war for material gains"; and it consists with all we know of history to say that with continued success in such undertakings during a lengthened life he would have won the mass of his countrymen to his allegiance.

A few dates and details make the process dramatically clear. Admiral Blake won his first notable victory over Van Tromp in February, 1653; and in April Cromwell felt himself in a position to expel the recalcitrant Parliament, though that had always specially favoured the navy. In this act he had the general approval of the people;⁵ but he took care to change some of the naval commanders.⁶ The next Parliament was the nominated one called the "Barebones," wherein none were elected, and which went to pieces in the strife of its factions, since even nomination could not secure concord among Puritans. Then came the Parliament of 1654, elected from purged constituencies. From this were excluded a hundred members who refused to sign an engagement not to alter the system in force; and finally the remnant was angrily dissolved, and military rule

¹ Villemain, however, had previously made some approach to such a view; and Sir John Seeley has left record of how Sir James Stephen suggested to students a research concerning "the buccaneering Cromwell" (*Expansion of England*, p. 115).

² *Cromwell's Place in History*, pp. 89, 90.

³ Gardiner, *History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate* (1897), ii, 475-76. It is startling to contrast this explicit avowal of Dr. Gardiner with the assertion of Dr. Holland Rose (art. in the *Monthly Review*, July, 1902), that the historian averred to him that English foreign policy always came out well on investigation.

⁴ *Cromwell's Place in History*, p. 97. Cp. p. 101; Burnet, *History of his Own Time*, bk. i, ed. 1838, pp. 44, 49, 50; Thurloe, *State Papers*, 1742, vii, 295.

⁵ Letter of De Bordeaux to Servien, May 5, 1653, given by Guizot, *Histoire de la république d'Angleterre et de Cromwell*, tom. i, end.

⁶ Letter cited.

established under the major-generals. Yet again, in 1656, driven by need of money, the Protector called another packed Parliament, from which he nevertheless lawlessly excluded 102 elected members; and on their protesting there was a distinct increase of the already obvious public displeasure at such repeated acts of tyranny. This was in September; but in October came the news of Stayner's capture of the Spanish treasure-ships; and in November the treasure arrived—what the naval officers had left of it. On this the Parliament promptly voted everything that its master asked for;¹ new taxes were laid to carry on the wanton war with Spain; and in January 1657 it was proposed to offer him the Crown. Yet when, after a six months' adjournment, that Parliament debated points on which he wanted submission, he furiously dissolved it as he had done its predecessors.

Such is the process of imperialism. With a few more years of ostensibly profitable conquest, Cromwell, acclaimed and urged on in the career of aggression by such different types of poet as Waller² and Marvell,³ would as a matter of course have been made king, with the final consent of the army, and would have ruled as the crowned imperator. In that case his Puritanism, instead of putting any conscientious check on his egoism, would have fed it as Mohammed's faith did his.⁴ Thus his early death was one of the important "accidents" of history.⁵

§ 4

As it was, Cromwell lived only long enough to create an intellectual as well as a conservative reaction. Surprise has been sometimes expressed, and must have been oftener felt, at the virtual High Toryism of the doctrine of Hobbes,⁶ who was so little conservative in his general habit of mind. The truth is that in 1651, or at least in 1660, the monarchism of Hobbes was the ostensible Liberalism of the hour. Parliamentarism had meant first

¹ Guizot, *République d'Angleterre*, éd. 1854, ii, 216.

² *On a War with Spain*. Cp. the poem, *Upon the Death of the Lord Protector*.

³ *Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland*. Dryden's *Heroic Stanzas* on the death of the Protector show how he would have swelled the acclaim.

⁴ A similar idea, I find, is well expressed by Seeley, *Expansion of England*, p. 114.

⁵ As to the element of historic "accident," cp. MM. Langlois and Seignobos, *Introduction aux études historiques*, 2e éd. p. 253.

⁶ Hallam, discriminating the shades of opinion, lays it down that "A favourer of unlimited monarchy was not a Tory, neither was a Republican a Whig. Lord Clarendon was a Tory: Hobbes was not; Bishop Hoadly was a Whig: Milton was not (*History*, as cited, iii, 199). But though Hobbes's political doctrine was odious to the Tory clergy, and even to legitimists as such, it certainly made for Toryism in practice. In the words of Green: "If Hobbes destroyed the old ground of royal despotism, he laid a new and a firmer one." Cp. T. Whittaker, in *Social England*, iv, 280, 281, as to the conflict between "divine right" royalism and Hobbes's principle of an absolute sovereignty set up by social consent to begin with.

sectarian tyranny, then anarchy, then military despotism; and there was not the slightest prospect of a parliamentary government which should mean religious or intellectual freedom all round. Hobbes would infallibly have been at least thrown into prison by the Long Parliament if in its earlier time of power he had published his remarks on the Pentateuch. They punished for much milder exercises of critical opinion. A strong monarchy was become, from the point of view of many enlightened men, positively the best available security for general freedom of life, at a time when the spirit of religion had multiplied tenfold the normal impulses to social tyranny and furnished the deepest channel of social ill-will compatible with national unity. It lay in Christianity, as it lay earlier in Judaism, to breed an intensity of religious strife such as the pagan world never knew. Various countries had seen sects arise and grapple with each other on the score of this or that interpretation of the Hebrew sacred books, and men of conservative bias felt that they were face to face with insane forces incompatible with a democratic system. Religious lore, above all other learning, could make men more "excellently foolish," as Hobbes put it, than was possible to mere ignorance, making new and uncontrollable motives to disunion.

It is not to be assumed, indeed, that a revolution begun on any motive whatever would have maintained itself at the then developed stage of political intelligence; for the English people, which constantly accuses others of lack of faculty for union, had never shown itself any better fitted for rational compromise than the Irish, given conditions of equal stress. Scandinavian, German, Dutch, English—all the Teutonic sections alike had in all ages shown in the fullest degree the force of the primary passions of self-assertion and mutual repulsion, cordially uniting only, if at all, for purposes of aggression. But in the case under notice it was the religious passions that dug the channels of strife; and they must be held to have added to the volume of blind emotion. Thus intensified, the principle had shown itself potent to wreck any commonwealth; and there remained only the choice between a usurper governing through an army and a "legitimate" monarch governing as of old by way of Parliament and a civil service. Parliament had been the most offensive tyrant of all, for while making most parade of legality it had been the most self-seeking,¹ and perhaps even the least respectable as regards its

¹ As to the "high pretensions to religion, combined with an almost unlimited rapacity" (Petty) on the part of many leading Puritans, cp. Gardiner, *Commonwealth and Protectorate*, ii, 167, 172, 187, 194, 302, 358, etc.

personnel. The Liberals of the latter time had their cue given to them by the memorable Falkland, who, grievedly "ingeminating Peace, Peace," had recoiled from the intolerant Puritans, and sadly joined the intolerant Royalists. Macaulay's thrust at him for this,¹ if technically just, was hardly seemly on the critic's part, for Falkland represented exactly the temper of Macaulay's own politics. He was an ideal Whig of the later school—the very saint of moderation. Falkland had indeed special ground for withdrawal from the Puritan party, in that he was convinced that Hampden and Pym had deceived him as to the king's complicity in the Irish Rebellion and other matters. He had been "persuaded to believe many things which he had since found to be untrue."² But in most things the Puritans must have jarred on him.³ Where he had consented to go, albeit deliberately to his death, as a Cavalier, his disciples might well become theoretic monarchists when the whole torrent of public opinion went for the Restoration.

Of course, the hope of social freedom was destined to frustration under the restored monarchy just as before, since there was still no culture force sufficient to purify the animal instinct of antagonism. The Restoration only meant that the Episcopalian dog was uppermost and the Nonconformist under. But all the same, Commonwealth principles were profoundly discredited; and it is notable that never since has Republican principle ostensibly regained in England the stature it had reached in the hotbeds of the Great Rebellion and the Protectorate. The long struggle against the king had educated many of the strivers into democratism, as did the later struggle of the American colonies against George III. Even in the Parliament of Richard Cromwell, after Republican hopes had been so blasted, there were forty-seven avowed Republicans,⁴ the remnant of the breed. With the return of the monarchy it virtually disappears from English politics for a hundred and thirty years;⁵ when again it rises for a moment in the hot air of the French Revolution, only to disappear again for nearly another century. It was after the Rebellion, and not before, that the dogma of divine right became completely current orthodoxy in England.⁶

¹ In the essay on "Hallam's *Constitutional History*" (1828). In the *History* the verdict is more favourable.

² *Lives of the Friends of the Lord Chancellor Clarendon*, by Lady T. Lewis, i, 70; cited in *Falklands*, by T. L. (Author of *Life of Sir Kenelm Digby*), 1897, pp. 121-22.

³ On the general question of his course see the defence of T. L. (work cited, p. 129 sq.), and that by Mr. J. A. R. Marriott, *Life and Times of Viscount Falkland*, 2nd. ed. 1908, p. 331 sq.

⁴ As against from 100 to 140 "neuters" and Royalists, and 170 lawyers or officers (Hallam, ii, 269, note, citing the Clarendon Papers, iii, 443).

⁵ Republicans there still were in the reigns of William and Anne (see Hallam, iii, 120, 230; cp. the author's essay on "Fletcher of Saltoun" in *Our Corner*, Jan., 1888), but they never acted openly as such.

⁶ See below, ch. iii, § 2.

§ 5

The collapse of Republicanism meant the collapse of the class politics that had grown up in the war and in the Commonwealth alongside of the creed politics. The creed politics itself, when carried to the lengths of the doctrine of the Independents, meant a challenge to the political system; and among the more advanced reasoners of the period were some who saw that to put down kingly tyranny was of little avail while class inequalities remained. The Long Parliament, though not going this length, went far in the way of putting down some established abuses; and there are many records of a more searching spirit of innovation. It is important to realise that alike under Charles I and Cromwell the Parliaments tended to be partly composed of and ruled by the more audacious spirits of the time, simply because these had the advantage in discussion wherever they were. The incapacity for speech which in later times has made the Conservative party welcome adventurers as its mouthpieces meant the partial obliteration of the conservative class in the early days of unorganised parliamentary strife; and Cromwell's own Parliaments baffled him in virtue of their large elements of upstart intelligence. He himself, having entered the war from a mixture of motives in which there was no idea of social reconstruction, was merely irritated by the ideals of the more radical agitators, which he could not out-argue, but on which he promptly put his foot. It is true that in the immense ferment set up by the Rebellion impracticable ideas abounded, and that they suggested risks of civil anarchy, even as the multitude of sectaries threatened chaos in religion. We find indeed an express affirmation of anarchism in the literature of the period;¹ and generally the English Revolution had in it most of the subversive elements which later evolved the French, the determining difference being that the English was not attacked from the outside. But there were practical plans also. Lilburne had a really constructive scheme of popular enfranchisement,² which might have built up a democratic force of resistance to

¹ E.g., Richard Overton's pamphlet (1646) entitled *An Arrow against all Tyrants and Tyranny, wherein the Original, Rise, Extent, and End of Magisterial Power, the Natural and National Rights, Freedoms, and Properties of Mankind, are discovered and undeniably maintained*. Its main doctrines are that "To every individual in nature is given an individual property by nature, not to be invaded or usurped by any"; and that "no man hath power over my rights and liberties, and I over no man's." See a long and interesting extract in the *History of Passive Obedience since the Reformation*, Amsterdam, 1689, i, 59. As to the other anarchists, of whom Lilburne was not one, see Gardiner, *History of the Commonwealth*, i, 47, 48.

² Cp. Gardiner, *Cromwell's Place in History*, pp. 37-50; *History of the Great Civil War*, 1889, ii, 53-55, 310-12; iii, 527. While grudgingly noting his straightforwardness, Dr. Gardiner assumes to discredit Lilburne as impracticable, yet is all the while

royalism as such; but Cromwell, while ready to overthrow any part of the constitution that hampered him, would build up nothing in its place. He would have no alteration of the social structure, save in so far as he must protect his Independents from the Presbyterians and Episcopalians alike. And of course, when his polity fell, the ideals of the independents of politics—who had represented only a tribe of scattered intelligences, much fewer than the mere religious sectaries, who were themselves but a vigorous minority—speedily disappeared from English affairs. The standards of the average orthodox class became the standards of public life.

On the side of international relations, finally, Cromwell and the Commonwealth did nothing to improve politics. Commerce began to spread afresh; and commercial and racial jealousy, under the Puritan as later under the Restoration rule, bred war with the Dutch, just as religious hatreds had made war between England and Spain. The final proof of Cromwell's lack of political wisdom is given in his utterly fantastic scheme for a constitutional union of the English and Dutch republics, a scheme which could not have worked for a week. When this proposal was declined by the Dutch States-General, he seems to have been as ready as any filibuster in England to go to war with the States;¹ and it is evident that the Navigation Act of 1651 was at once an act of revenge for the insults put upon the English ambassadors by the Dutch Orangeist populace, against the will of the Dutch Government, and a wanton effort to punish the States for declining the Protector's absurd proposals.² The two Protestant republics thereupon grappled like two worrying dogs; and for their first ostensible victory the English Parliament publicly thanked God as unctuously as for any of the victories of the Civil War.³ In their hands and Cromwell's international politics sank at once to the normal levels of primitive instinct.

Mr. Frederic Harrison (*Cromwell*, ch. xiii) glorifies Cromwell's foreign policy on the score that it made England great in the eyes of foreign countries. Exactly so might we eulogise the foreign policy of Louis XIV or Philip II or Napoleon—so long as it succeeded. Cromwell, up to the time when he began to scheme an empire of naval aggression, simply aimed at a

demonstrating that Cromwell's constructive work utterly collapsed. Lilburne explicitly and accurately predicted that the tyrannies of the new régime would bring about the Restoration (Guizot, *Histoire de la république d'Angleterre et de Cromwell*, ed. Bruxelles, 1854, i, 52).

¹ Dr. Gardiner says he was not, but does not explain away Cromwell's acquiescence. As to the war-spirit in England, see van Kampen, *Geschichte der Niederlande*, ii, 140, 141.

² Guizot, *Histoire de la république d'Angleterre et de Cromwell*, ed. Bruxelles, 1854, i, 202-11; van Kampen, *Geschichte der Niederlande*, ii, 150, 151; Davies, *History of Holland*, 1841, ii, 709.

³ Guizot, as cited, i, 243.

Protestant combination as other rulers aimed at Catholic combinations. There was nothing new in the idea; and it would have been astonishing if he had *not* maintained the naval power of the country. It was to this very end that the luckless Charles imposed his ship-money, which Hampden and his backers refused to pay. As regards home politics, again, Mr. Harrison praises Cromwell for preserving order with unprecedented success, making no allowance for the fact that Cromwell was the first Englishman who governed through a standing army, and making no attempt to refute Ludlow's statements (cited by Hallam, ii, 251, *note*; cp. Vaughan, p. 524, *note*) as to the gross tyranny of the major-generals, or to meet the charge against Cromwell of selling scores of royalists into slavery at Barbadoes. Mr. Harrison finally justifies Cromwell's policy in the main on the score of "necessity," despite the proverbial quotation. It was exactly on the plea of necessity that Charles justified himself in his day, when Cromwell joined in resisting him. Mr. Harrison again extols the "generosity" and "moral elevation" of the intervention for the Vaudois, when on the same page he has to admit the infamy of the Cromwellian treatment of Ireland. He sees no incongruity in Milton's emotion over the "slaughtered saints" of Protestantism, while Catholic ecclesiastics were with his approval being slain like dogs. Moral and social science must hold the balances more evenly than this.

§ 6

While thus showing that in his foreign relations in general he had no higher principle than that which led him to protect the Protestant Vaudois, Cromwell himself could not or would not tolerate Catholicism in England. What was immeasurably worse, he had put thousands of Irish Catholics to the sword, and reduced tens of thousands more to the life conditions of wild animals. His policy in Ireland, if judged by the standards we apply to the rule of other men, must be pronounced one of blind brutality. He had helped to make a civil war in England because his class was at times arbitrarily taxed, and had fears that its worship would be interfered with; and in so doing he felt he had the support and sanction of Omnipotence. When it came to dealing with Irishmen who stood up for their race ideals and their religion, he acted as if for him principles of moral and religious right did not exist.¹ His

¹ There is a hardly credible story (Gardiner, *History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate*, ii, 30) that in supporting Owen's scheme for a liberal religious establishment he declared: "I had rather that Mahometanism were permitted amongst us than that one of God's children should be persecuted." If the story be true, so much the worse for his treatment of Catholics.

most ferocious deeds he justified by reference to the Ulster massacre of 1641, as if all Irishmen had been concerned in that, and as if the previous English massacres had not been tenfold more bloody. Under his own Government, by the calculation of Sir William Petty, out of a population of 1,466,000, 616,000 had in eleven years perished by the sword, by plague, or by famine artificially produced. Of these, 504,000 were reckoned to be of Irish and 112,000 of English descent. And it was planned to reduce the survivors to a life of utter destitution in Connaught and Clare. By the settlement of 1653, ten of the thirty-two Irish counties were allotted to the "Adventurers" who in 1641 had advanced sums of money to aid in putting down the Irish Rebellion; twelve were divided among Cromwell's soldiers; seven, with all the cities and corporations of the kingdom, were reserved for the Commonwealth; and three of the most barren counties—for the most part unreclaimed—were left for the natives. The settlement could not be carried out as planned by the Government, and as evidently desired by Fleetwood, the Lord Deputy, and many of the officers. The very greed of the soldiery defeated the project of a "universal transplantation," for they were as eager for Irish labour as for Irish land.¹ But the confiscation of the land was carried out to the full, and multitudes were forced into Connaught. The worst tyranny of Charles is thus as dust in the balance with Cromwell's expropriation of myriads of conquered Irish. For them he had neither the show of law nor the pretence of equity. They were treated as conquered races had been treated, not by the Romans, who normally sought to absorb in their polity the peoples they overcame, but by barbarians in their mutual wars, where the loser was driven to the wilderness. Far from seeking to grapple as a statesman with the problem of Irish disaffection, he struck into it like a Berserker, on the same inspiration of animal fury as took him into the breach at Drogheda; and his or his officers' enactments, providing for the slaughter of all natives who did not carry certificates of having taken the anti-Royalist oath, are to be matched in history only with the treatment of the conquered Slavs by the Christianising Germans in the Dark Ages.

Dr. Gardiner and Mr. Harrison partly defend the massacre of Drogheda as justified by the "laws of war" of the time. It is true that for the period it was not very much out of the way. The Royalist Manley, describing it, says only (*History*

¹ Gardiner, *Commonwealth and Protectorate*, small ed. iv, 118. Dr. Gardiner actually praises Cromwell for "good sense" (p. 98) in seeing that the general plantation decreed by the Declaration of 1653 "was absolutely impracticable." It had been his own decree!

of the *Rebellions*, 1691, p. 227): "I would not condemn the promiscuous slaughter of the Citizens and Souldiers, of Cruelty, because it might be intended for Example and Terror to others, if the like Barbarity had not been committed elsewhere." But Manley seems to have forgotten the friars, whose slaughter neither laws of war nor European custom exonerated. There were really no "laws of war" in the case. Dr. Gardiner (*Student's History*, p. 562; *Commonwealth and Protectorate*, small ed. i, 118) puts it that these laws "left garrisons refusing, as that of Drogheda had done, to surrender an *undefensible* post.....to the mercy or cruelty of the enemy." But it is unwarrantable to call Drogheda an "undefensible post." Dr. Gardiner's thesis that any captured post, however hard to take, is *ipso facto* proved to have been undefensible, may be dismissed as a very bad sophism. Elsewhere he himself puts it (p. 132, *note*) that men "defending a fortified town *after the defences had been captured*" were liable to be slain—a very different thing. Drogheda contained 3,000 foot, mostly English, "the flower of Ormond's army," as Dr. Gardiner avows.

Mr. Harrison (*Oliver Cromwell*, p. 136) perhaps errs in saying that its commander, Sir Arthur Aston, an officer of "great name and experience.....at that time made little doubt of defending it against all the power of Cromwell." Cp. Gardiner, *Com. and Prot.*, small ed. i, 128, as to Aston's straits. It had, however, actually resisted siege by the Catholics for three years, and it was only by desperate efforts that Cromwell carried it. He went into the breach with the forlorn hope, and he gave the order for slaughter, as he himself admits, in the fury of action. The first order, be it observed, was to slay all "in arms *in the town*"—this at a time when men commonly carried arms in time of peace, and members wore their swords in Parliament. It simply meant a massacre of the male inhabitants. The garrison was not so slaughtered: when the surrender of the garrison came, Cromwell's blood-lust was slaked, and he spared all but every tenth man—for slavery in the Barbadoes. Nor did his men merely slay those taken in arms. He tells that "their friars were knocked on the head promiscuously"; and it is impossible wholly to refuse to believe the royalist statement of the time, that men, women, and children were indiscriminately slaughtered. Dr. Gardiner, on somewhat insufficient grounds (*History of the Commonwealth*, i, 135, 136, *note*), entirely rejects the personal testimony of the brother of Anthony à Wood (*Anthony's Autobiography*, ed. Oxford, 1848, pp. 51, 52) as to Cromwell's men holding up children as shields when pursuing some soldiers of the garrison who defended themselves. Dr. Gardiner is himself in error in respect of one charge of improbability which he brings against the narrative, as quoted by himself. But in any case his own narrative, as he evidently

feels, shows the Cromwellian troops to have been sufficiently ferocious. Quarter was promised, and then withheld (Gardiner, i, 117, *note*, 118); and by Dr. Gardiner's own showing the "Parliamentary" account itself avows that the final surrender of the defenders on the "mount" was obtained by sheer treachery—a fact which Dr. Gardiner glosses even while showing it. A Puritan drunk with the lust of battle is a beast like any other. Cromwell himself had to quiet his conscience with his usual drug of religion. But if this act had been done by Cavaliers or Catholics upon a Puritan garrison and Independent priests, he and his party would have held it up to horror for ever.

The only defence he could make was that this was vengeance for the great Irish Massacre—that is to say, that he had shown he could be as bloody as the Irish, who on their part had all the English massacres of the previous generation to avenge—a circumstance carefully ignored by clerical writers who still justify Cromwell in the name of Christianity, as seeking to make future massacres impossible. All the while, there was not the slightest pretence of showing that the garrison of Drogheda had been concerned in the old massacre. Compare, on this, the emphatic verdict of Dr. Gardiner, *History of the Commonwealth*, i, 139. Mr. Harrison (p. 145) quotes Cromwell's challenge to opponents to show any instance of a man "not in arms" being put to death with impunity—this after he had avowed the slaughter of all priests and chaplains! His general assertion of the scrupulousness of his party was palpably false; and it is idle to say that he must have believed it true. That Ireton's Puritan troops slew numbers of disarmed and unarmed Irish with brutal cruelty and treachery *against Ireton's reiterated orders*, is shown by Dr. Gardiner; and he tells how Ireton hanged a girl who tried to escape from Limerick (*Commonwealth*, ii, 48, 53). Is it then to be supposed that Cromwell's men were more humane when he was hounding them on to massacre? As to the further slaughter of natives, there stands the assertion of Father French (*Narrative of the Earl of Clarendon's Settlement and Sale of Ireland*, Dublin, rep. 1846, p. 86) that under the Proclamation which commanded the soldiers to slay any men met on the highway without a certificate of having "taken the engagement" abjuring the monarchy, "silly Peasants who out of Ignorance or want of care.....left their tickets at home, were barbarously murdered." In the circumstances the statement is only too credible.

There remains to be considered the old plea that the massacre of Drogheda made an end of serious resistance, and so saved life. Thus Carlyle: "Wexford Storm followed (not by forethought, it would seem, but by chance of war) in the same fashion; and there was no other storm or slaughter needed in

that country" (*Cromwell*, Comm. on Letter CV). This is one of Carlyle's innumerable misstatements of fact. Even on his own view, the Wexford slaughter had to follow that of Drogheda. But, as Gardiner shows, Cromwell's bloodshed at Drogheda and Wexford, "so far from sparing effusion of blood," though "successful at Ross and at a few lesser strongholds, had only served to exasperate the garrisons of Duncannon, of Kilkenny, and of Clonmel; and in his later movements Cromwell, always prepared to accept the teaching of events (!), had discovered that the way of clemency was the shortest road to conquest" (*Com. and Prot.* i, 157; cp. p. 137). The laudation here too is characteristic; but it disposes of Carlyle's.

Carlyle would never be at pains enough to check his pre-suppositions by the records. As Gardiner tells (p. 123, *note*), he denounces an editor for printing a postscript in which Cromwell admitted the slaughter of "many inhabitants" of Drogheda. This, said Carlyle, had no authority in contemporary copies. "It appears," writes Dr. Gardiner, "in the *official* contemporary copy in *Letters from Ireland*." What is more, the editor in question had given the reference!

There are men who to-day will still applaud Cromwell because he quenched the Irish trouble for the time in massacre and devastation; and others, blenching at the atrocity of the cure, speak of it with bated breath as doing him discredit, while they bate nothing of their censure of the arbitrariness of Charles. Others excuse all Puritan tyranny because of its "sincerity," as if that plea would not exculpate Torquemada and Alva. The plain truth is that Cromwell in no way rose above the moral standards of his generation in his dealings with those whom he was able to oppress. He found in his creed his absolution for every step to which blind instinct led him, in Ireland as in England; and it seems to be his destiny to lead his admirers into the same sophistries—pious with a difference—as served to keep him on good terms with his conscience after suppressing an English Parliament or slaughtering an Irish garrison.

Take, for instance, the fashion in which D'Aubigné shuffles over the Irish massacres, after quoting Cromwell's worst cant on the subject: "This extract will suffice. Cromwell acted in Ireland like a great statesman, and the means he employed were those best calculated promptly to restore order in that unhappy country. And yet we cannot avoid regretting that a man—a Christian man—should have been called to wage so terrible a war, and to show towards his enemies *greater severity than had ever, perhaps, been exercised by the pagan leaders of*

antiquity. 'Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God'' (*The Protector*, 3rd ed. p. 159).

It is too much even to say, as a more scrupulous critic has done, that the phenomenon of the Commonwealth represented a great attempt at a higher life on the part of men nobler and wiser than their contemporaries.¹ It was simply the self-assertion of energetic men of whom some were in some respects ahead of their time; while the others were as bad as their time, and in some respects rather behind it—men bewildered by fanaticism, and incapable of a consistent ethic, whose failure was due as distinctly to their own intellectual vices as to their environment. No serious poetry of any age is more devoid of moral principle than the verses in which Marvell and Waller exult over the wanton attack on Spain, and kindle at the prospect of a future of unscrupulous conquest. Both men were religious; both as ready to sing of "Divine Love" as of human hate; and both in their degree were good types of the supporters of Cromwell. The leaders from the very outset are visibly normal agitators, full of their own grievances, and as devoid of the spirit of fellow-feeling, of concern for all-round righteousness, as any of the men they impeached. Their movement went so far as it did because, firstly, they were vigorous men resisting a weak man, and later their own natural progress to anarchy was checked by the self-assertion of the strongest of them all. Thus their and his service to progressive political science is purely negative. They showed once for all that an ignorance guided by religious zeal and "inspiration" is more surely doomed to disaster than the ignorance of mere primary animal instinct; and that of the many forms of political optimism, that of Christian pietism is for the modern world certainly not the least pernicious. The Puritan name and ideal are in these days commonly associated with high principle and conscientiousness; and it is true that in the temper and the tactic of the early revolutionary movement, despite much dark fanaticism, there was a certain masculine simplicity and sincerity not often matched in our politics since. But as the years went on, principles gave way, dragged down by fanaticism and egoism; and the Puritan temper, lacking light, bred deadly miasmas. Milton himself sinks from the level of the *Areopagitica* to that of the *Eikonoklastes*, an ignoble performance at the behest of the Government, who just then were

¹ Mr. Harrison, as cited, p. 210. Mr. Allanson Picton, in his lectures on the *Rise and Fall of the English Commonwealth*, has with more pains and circumspection sought to make good a similar judgment. But the nature of his performance is tested by his contending on the one hand that the ideal of the Commonwealth was altogether premature, and on the other that Cromwell governed with the real consent of the nation,

suppressing the freedom of the press.¹ In strict historical truth the Puritan name and the ideal must stand for utter failure to carry on a free polity, in virtue of incapacity for rational association; for the stifling of some of the most precious forces of civilisation—the artistic; and further for the grafting on normal self-seeking of the newer and subtler sin of solemn hypocrisy.

This holds good of the Puritan party as a whole. It is possible, however, to take too low a view of the judgment of any given section of it. Dr. Gardiner, for instance, somewhat strains the case when he says (*Student's History*, p. 567) of the Barebone Parliament: "Unfortunately, these godly men [so styled by Cromwell] were the most crotchety and impracticable set ever brought together. The majority wanted to abolish the Court of Chancery without providing a substitute, *and to abolish tithes without providing any other means for the support of the clergy.*" It seems clear that it was the intention of the majority to provide an equivalent for the tithes (see Vaughan, pp. 508, 509; cp. Hallam, ii, 243, 244); and the remark as to the Court of Chancery appears to miss the point. The case against that Court was that it engrossed almost all suits, and yet intolerably delayed them; the proposal was to let the other Courts do the work. Cp. Dr. Gardiner's *Commonwealth and Protectorate*, ii, 241, 262; and as to the tithes, i, 192; ii, 32, 240, 275, 276.

It would be hard to show that either Cromwell or the men he used and overrode were, under trial, more conscientious than the average public men of later times. Well-meaning he and many of them were; but, then, most men are well-meaning up to their lights; the moral test for all is consistency with professed principle under changing conditions. And hardly one was steadfastly true to the principles he put forward. They prevaricated under pressure—under harder pressure, no doubt—like other politicians, with only the difference that they could cite random texts and "the Lord" in their justification. And inasmuch as their godly strifes were as blind and as insoluble as those of any factions in history, they furnished no aid and no encouragement to posterity to attempt anew the great work of social regeneration. If that is ever to be done, it must be with saner inspiration and better light than theirs. It is time that, instead of extolling them as men of superior moral stature and inspiration, we now realise they brought to a bewildering problem a vain enlightenment.

On this view, it may be noted, we have a sufficient explanation

¹ Gardiner, *Commonwealth and Protectorate*, i, 193-96; cp. Whittaker, in *Social England*, iv, 288, 289.

of the dissimulations of which Cromwell was undoubtedly guilty. Between the antiquated asperity of Villemain, who, while extolling his capacity, charges him with *fourberie habituelle* (*Hist. de Cromwell*, 5e édit. p. 272), and the foregone condonations of Carlyle, there is a mean of common sense. Cromwell was a man of immense energy and practical capacity, but with no gift for abstract thought, and spellbound by an incoherent creed. Consequently he was bound to come to serious confusion when he had to deal with tense complexities of conduct and violently competing interests. Coming into desperate positions, for which his religion was worse than no preparation, and in which it could not possibly guide him aright, he must needs trip over the snares of diplomacy, and do his equivocations worse than a more intellectual man would. Cromwell's lying sounds the more offensive because of its constant twang of pietism; but that was simply the dialect in which he had been brought up. Had he lived in our day he would have been able to prevaricate with a wider vocabulary, which makes a great difference.

estimate
of Cromwell.

§ 7

Lest such a criticism should be suspected of prejudice, it may be well to note that a contemporary Doctor of Divinity has at some points exceeded it. It is Dr. Cunningham who argues that, in consequence of the Puritan bias leading to a cult of the Old Testament rather than the New, there occurred under Puritan auspices "a retrogression to a lower type of social morality, which showed itself both at home and abroad."¹ He traces Puritan influence specially "(a) in degrading the condition of the labourer; (b) in reckless treatment of the native [=coloured] races; (c) in the development of the worst forms of slavery."² The present writer, who rarely finds it necessary to oppose a Protestant clergyman on such an issue, is disposed to think the charge overdrawn, for the following reasons: (1) The English treatment of Ireland was to the full as cruel in the Elizabethan period, before Puritanism had gone far, as under Cromwell; (2) the Catholic Spaniards in Mexico and Peru were as cruel as the Puritan colonists in New England. It is true that "in all the terrible story of the dealings of the white man with the savage there are few more miserable instances of cold-blooded cruelty than the wholesale destruction of the Pequod nation—men, women, and children—by the Puritan settlers"³ of

Note
(v. infra)

¹ *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*, i, 106.

² *Id.* p. 107.

³ *Id.* p. 108, 109, citing Bancroft, i, 401, 402. Seeley ignored these and many other matters when he pronounced that the annals of Greater Britain are "conspicuously

Connecticut. But when Catholics and pre-Puritan Protestants and Dutch Protestants act similarly, the case is not to be explained on Dr. Cunningham's theory. The fallacy seems to lie in supposing that the New Testament has ever been a determinant in these matters. Mosheim confesses that in the wars of the Crusades the Christians were more ferocious than the Saracens;¹ and Seneca was at least as humane as Paul.

There is distinct validity, on the other hand, in the charge that Puritanism worsened the life of the working classes, first by taking away their ecclesiastical holidays and gild-festivals, and finally by taking all recreation out of their Sunday. The latter step may be regarded as the assertion of the economic interest of the Protestant clergy against the social needs of their flocks. It was not that the labourers were well off before the Rebellion—here again we must guard against false impressions²—but that "Puritan ascendancy rendered the lot of the labourer hopelessly dull."³ There is reason to believe, further, that the Stuart administration, applying the Elizabethan Poor Law, took considerable pains to relieve distress,⁴ and that the Commonwealth, on the contrary, treated the lapsed mass without sympathy;⁵ and it is not unlikely that, as has been suggested, this had something to do with the popular welcome given to the Restoration.⁶ The conclusion is that "neither the personal character nor the political success of the Puritans need lead us to ignore their baleful influence on society,"⁷ which was, in the opinion of Arnold, despite his passion for their favourite literature, to imprison and turn the key upon the English spirit for two hundred years. Here again the impartial naturalist will detect exaggeration, but much less than in the current hyperboles to the contrary.

For the rest, the commercial and industrial drift of England, the resort to the mineral wealth⁸ that was to be the economic basis of later commerce and empire, the pursuit of capitalistic manufacture, the building up of a class living on interest as the privileged class of the past had lived on land monopoly—all went on under

better than those of Greater Spain, which are infinitely more stained with cruelty and rapacity." In the usual English fashion, he left out of account, too, the horrors of the English conquests of Ireland.

¹ *Ecclesiastical History*, 12 cent., pt. i, ch. ii, § 2.

² See Rogers, *Industrial and Commercial History*, p. 13, as to the distress about 1630.

³ Cunningham, as cited, p. 107.

⁴ Redlich and Hirst, *Local Government in England*, 1903, ii, 361; and Miss Leonard's *Early History of English Poor Relief*, as there cited.

⁵ See Child's testimony, cited below, p. 467. That, however, specifies no superiority in the methods of the monarchy.

⁶ Redlich and Hirst, as cited, ii, 363, note.

⁷ Cunningham, p. 109.

⁸ See Rogers, *Industrial and Commercial History*, p. 4, as to the iron trade.

Puritanism as under Catholicism,¹ Anglicanism, Calvinism, Lutheranism. The early Puritans, taking up the Catholic tradition, denounced usury; but the clergy of industrial and burgher-ruled States, beginning with Calvin, perforce receded from that veto.² Even under Elizabeth there was a good deal of banking,³ and under Cromwell English merchants and money-dealers had learned all the lessons the Dutch could teach them, weighing the Protector's borrowing credit in the scales of the market as they would any other. The spirit of pitiless commercial competition flourished alike under Roundhead and Cavalier,⁴ save in so far as it was manacled by invidious monopolies; the lust of "empire" was as keen among the middle class in Cromwell's day as in Elizabeth's and our own; and even the lot of the workers began to approximate to its modern aspect through the greater facility of transfer⁵ which followed on the old rigidity of feudal law and medieval usage. The industrial age was coming to birth.

¹ As to usury in the reign of Henry VII see Busch, *England unter den Tudors*, i, 257, 389. On the general canonist teaching there is a very thorough research in Prof. Ashley's *Introduction to Economic History*, vol. ii, ch. vi.

² Cunningham, *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*, vol. ii (*Modern Times*), pp. 74-87.

³ *Id.* p. 100.

⁴ *Id.* pp. 87, 88, 102.

⁵ Cunningham, *op. cit.* p. 90. As to the upset of gild monopolies in the sixteenth century, see p. 76.

CHAPTER III

FROM THE RESTORATION TO ANNE

§ 1

THE broad outcome of the monarchic restoration under Charles II is the intensifying of the royalist sentiment by way of reaction from the Rebellion and the autocracy of the Protector. It has been held that had Richard Cromwell had the energy of his father he might easily have maintained his position, so quietly was his accession at first accepted; and no doubt his irresolution made much of the difference between success and failure; but nothing can be clearer than the leaning of the mass of the people to the "lawful" dynasty. It is a proof of Cromwell's complete dislocation of the old state of touch between the official classes and the public,¹ that the army leaders had no misgivings when they commenced to intrigue against Richard, and that Monk was so slow to declare for the king when the event showed how immense was the royalist preponderance. During the Rebellion, London, led by the Puritans, had dominated the country; under the Protectorate, town and country were alike dominated by a selected official and military class, representing a minority with military force to impose its rule. As soon as this class began to disrupt in factions, the released play of common sentiment began to carry all forward on a broad tide towards a Restoration; the only footing on which the English people could yet unite being one of tradition and superstition. The anarchy of a State still unfitted for republican government had before brought about the Protectorate: it now led back to the monarchy. And that the new monarchy did not become as absolute as the contemporary rule of Louis XIV was solely owing to the accident of the later adhesion of the restored dynasty to the Church of Rome, which the mass of the people feared more than they did even the prospect of another Civil War. It was the memory of the Fronde that enabled Louis to override the remains of the French constitution and set up an autocracy; and the same force was now at work

¹ Armand Carrel (*Histoire de la Contre-Révolution en Angleterre*, ed. Bruxelles, 1836, p. 8) notes the "apathetic indifference" to which Cromwell's imperialist rule had reduced the middle classes.

in England. It was the memory of the Civil War that made the people so much more forbearing with the new king, when his private adhesion to the Catholic Church became generally suspected,¹ than their fathers had been with his father. By temperament and from experience they were disposed to do anything for the throne; but the general fear of Popery on the one hand, and the special royalist aversion to the Puritan sects on the other, plunged the State into a new ferment of ecclesiastical politics, the strifes of which so far absorbed the general energy that ill-luck in the commercial wars with Holland seems to have been almost a necessary result, even had the king ruled well. Not that the generation of Charles II was a whit less bent on dominion and acquisition than the decade of the Protectorate.

In this new situation, under a king too little devoted to his trade to choose really sagacious courses, but too shrewd to ruin himself, occur the beginnings of parliamentary statesmanship, in the modern sense of government in harmony with the Crown. The powerful administration of Strafford had been a matter of helping the Crown to resist Parliament. The very capable though unforeseeing statesmanship of the Pym and Hampdens of the Long Parliament, again, was a matter of resisting the Crown; and with Shaftesbury such resistance recurred; but the indolence of the king, joined with his sense of the dangers of the old favouritism, gave rise to the principle of Ministerial Government before partisan Cabinets had come into existence. Clarendon had in him much of the constitutionalist temper. Shaftesbury, however, was better qualified both by training and parts for the task of statesmanship in a stormy and unscrupulous generation. Read dispassionately, his story is seen to be in the main what his careful vindicator would make it—that of a man of average moral quality, with exceptional energy and resource. The legend of his wickedness² is somewhat puzzling, in view of his staunch hostility to Romanism, and of his political superiority to the famous Deist statesman of the next generation, Bolingbroke, who has been so little blackened in comparison. A reasonable explanation is that Shaftesbury was damned by the Church for resisting the king, while Bolingbroke's services to the Church covered his multitude of sins. But the idle rumours of

¹ It is to be noted in this connection that at first the secret was very well kept. There can be no reasonable doubt that Shaftesbury and Lauderdale were kept in the dark as to the Treaty of Dover, in which Charles agreed with Louis to introduce Catholicism in England. Macaulay's suggestion to the contrary comes of his determination to hear nothing in Shaftesbury's defence.

² This is accepted by Armand Carrel, who calls him (*Histoire de la Contre-Révolution en Angleterre*, p. 6) "homme d'une immoralité profonde."

Shaftesbury's debauchery¹ apparently damaged him with the Protestant Dissenters, and his wickedly reckless policy over the Popish Plot might easily secure him a share in the infamy which is the sole association of the name of Titus Oates. Here also, however, he has been calumniated. Burnet, though plainly disliking him, says nothing of debauchery in his life, and declined to believe, when Charles suggested it, that he had any part in trumping up the falsehoods about the Plot.²

There can be no reasonable doubt that Shaftesbury honestly believed there was a great danger of the re-establishment of Popery, and it is not at all improbable that he credited some of the tales told, as Lord Russell solemnly testified at the scaffold that he for his part had done. To acquit Russell and criminate Shaftesbury is possible only to those who have made up their minds before trying the case. It is practically certain, moreover, that some vague Catholic plotting really did take place;³ and in the then posture of affairs nothing was more likely. Shaftesbury, like the other capable statesmen of the Restoration, was in favour of toleration of the Dissenters; but like all other Protestant statesmen of the age, he thought it impossible to tolerate Catholicism. Nor can it well be doubted that had Charles or James been able to establish the Roman system, it would have gone hard with Protestantism. It is true that the only exhibition thus far of the spirit of tolerance in Protestant and Catholic affairs in France and England had been on the part of Richelieu towards the Huguenots, themselves intensely intolerant; but it could not reasonably be supposed that an English Catholic king or statesman, once well fixed in power, would have the wisdom or forbearance of Richelieu. The two systems, in fine, aimed at each other's annihilation; and Shaftesbury simply acted, politically that is, as the men of the First Rebellion would have done in similar circumstances. Instead of dismissing

¹ It is to be regretted that Green, while admitting that Mr. Christie was "in some respects" successful in his vindication of Shaftesbury, should have left his own account of Shaftesbury's character glaringly unfair. Verbally following Burnet, he pronounces Ashley "at best a Deist" in his religion, and adds that his life was "that of a debauchee," going on to couple the terms "Deist and debauchee" in a very clerical fashion. And yet in the previous paragraph he admits that "the debauchery of Ashley was simply a mask. He was, in fact, *temperate by nature and habit*, and his ill-health rendered any great excess impossible." The non-correction of the flat contradiction must apparently be set down to Green's ill-health. As a matter of fact, the charge of debauchery is baseless. Long before Mr. Christie, one of the annotators of Burnet's *History* (ed. 1838, p. 64, note) defended Shaftesbury generally, and pointed out that "in private life we have no testimony that he was depraved." Cp. Christie, *Life of Anthony Ashley Cooper*, 1871, i, 316.

² *History of His Own Time*, ed. 1838, p. 290.

³ My old friend, Mr. Alfred Marks, whose masterly book, *Who Killed Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey?* (Burns and Oates, 1905), decisively establishes the suicide theory, and disposes of the counter-theory of Mr. John Pollock, did not dispute the fact of the vague plotting of Coleman. No one can say how much of such loose and futile scheming there was.

him as a mere scoundrel, we are led to realise how imperfectly moralised were all the men of his age in matters of religion and racial enmity. The friend of Locke can hardly have been a rascal.

For the rest, he was admitted even by the malicious and declamatory Dryden to have been a just Chancellor; it is proved that he opposed the Stop of the Exchequer; and he sharply resisted the rapacity of the royal concubines. In his earlier policy towards Holland he conformed odiously enough to the ordinary moral standard of the time¹ in politics, a standard little improved upon in the time of Palmerston, and not discarded by those Englishmen who continue to talk of Russia as England's natural enemy, or by those who speak of Germany as a trade rival that must be fought to a finish. His changes of side between the outbreak of the Rebellion and his death, while showing the moral and intellectual instability of the period, were not dishonourable, and are not for a moment to be compared with those of Dryden, most unstable of all men of genius, whose unscrupulous but admirably artistic portrait of the statesman has doubtless gone far to keep Shaftesbury's name in disesteem. It may be, again, that his sufficient wealth takes away somewhat from the merit of his steadfast refusal of French bribes; but the fact should be kept in mind,² as against the other fact that not only the king and some of the Opposition but Algernon Sidney took them.³ On the whole, Shaftesbury was the most tolerable of the Ministers of his day, though his animus against Catholicism made him grossly unscrupulous toward individual Catholics; and his miscalculation of possibilities, in clinging to the scheme of giving Monmouth the succession, finally wrecked his career. He had almost no alternative, placed and principled as he was, save to call in the Prince of Orange; and this would really have been at that moment no more feasible a course than it was to declare Monmouth the heir, besides being more hazardous, in that William was visibly less easy to lead. Of Shaftesbury, Burnet admits that "his strength lay in the knowledge

¹ How odious it was may be gathered from Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis* and Marvell's *Character of Holland*, pieces in which two men of genius exhibit every stress of vulgar ill-feeling that we can detect in the Jingo press and poets of our own day.

² Dryden's charge, in *The Medal*, of "bartering his venal wit for sums of gold" during the Rebellion, is pure figment. It is an established fact that even as Councillor of State, to which office there was attached a salary of £1,000, Shaftesbury, then Sir Anthony Ashley Cooper, received no salary at all. See note to Mr. Christie's (Globe) ed. of Dryden's poems, pp. 127, 128.

³ Christie's *Life of Ashley Cooper*, ii, 293, note. Perhaps it is not sufficiently considered by Mr. Christie that Sidney regarded France as a possible ally for the overthrow of monarchy in England. Cp. Hallam, ii, 460-61. His position was not that of an ordinary Parliamentary bribe-taker. See Ludlow's *Memoirs*, iii, 165, *et seq.* And the English Government had sought to have him assassinated.

of England"; and when he took a fatal course, it was because the whole situation was desperate. His fall measures not so much the capacity of Charles as the force which the royalist superstition had gathered.

§ 2

This growth can be traced in the clerical literature of the time. The conception of a "divine right" inhering in kings by heredity—a conception arising naturally as part of the general ethic of feudal inheritance—had been emphasised on the Protestant side in England¹ by way of express resistance to the Papacy, which from the time of Gregory VII had been wont in its strifes with emperors and kings to deny their divine right and to assert its own, formally founding the latter, however, on the "natural" right inherent in masses of men to choose their own rulers, even as the citizens of Rome had been wont to elect the Popes.² The total effect of the English Rebellion was to give an immense stimulus to the high monarchic view, not now as against the Papacy, but as against Parliament. When the learned Usher drew up at the request of Charles I his treatise³ on *The Power communicated by God to the Prince, and the Obedience required of the Subject*, he proceeded almost wholly on arguments from the Scriptures and the Fathers; not that there were not already many deliverances from modern authorities on the point, but that these evidently had not entered into the ordinary stock of opinion. On the papal side, from Thomas Aquinas⁴ onwards, the negative view had been carefully set forth, not merely as a papal claim, but also as an obvious affirmation of the ancient "law of nature." Thus the Spanish Jesuit Suarez (1548–1617) had in his *Tractatus de Legibus*, while deriving all law from the will of God, expressly rejected the doctrine that the power of rule inheres by succession in single princes. Such power,

¹ In 1603 Lord Mountjoy in Ireland laid it down as the doctrine of the Church of England that his master was "by right of descent an absolute king," and that it was unlawful for his subjects "upon any cause to raise arms against him." These words, says Dr. Gardiner (*History 1604–43*, i, 370), "truly expressed the belief with which thousands of Englishmen had grown up during the long struggle with Rome." For earlier discussions see Stubbs, i, 593, More's *Utopia*, bk. i, and Hooper's *Early Writings*, ed. 1843, p. 75.

² As Hallam notes (*Middle Ages*, 11th ed. ii, 157), the French bishops in the ninth century had claimed sacerdotal rights of deposing kings in as full a degree as the Popes did later. In that period, however, bishops were often anti-papal; and the papal claim practically arose in the Roman and clerical resistance to the nomination of Popes by the Emperor, though Pope John VIII had in his time gone even further than Gregory VII did later, claiming power to choose the Emperor. *Id.* pp. 165–83.

³ Buckle is wrong (i, 394) in dating the beginning of the revival of the doctrine "about 1681." Saunderson's edition of Usher was first published in 1660.

⁴ The words of Thomas are extremely explicit: "Si [principes] non habeant justum principatum sed usurpatum, vel si injusta præcipiant, non tenentur eis subditi obedire." *Summa*, pt. ii, q. civ, art. 6. The right of the Pope to depose an apostate prince was, of course, constantly affirmed,

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he declared, "by its very nature, belongs to no one man, but to a multitude of men,"¹ adding a refutation of the patriarchal theory which "might have caused our English divines to blush before the Jesuit of Granada."² At the beginning of the seventeenth century, again, while leading Englishmen were affirming divine right, the German Protestant Althusius, Professor of Law at Herborn, publishing his *Politica methodice digesta* (1603), declares in a dedication to the States of Friesland that the supreme power lies in the people.³ Hooker, too, had stamped the principle of "consent" with his authority, very much as did Suarez.⁴

But the compiler of *The History of Passive Obedience since the Reformation*,⁵ after showing that the tenet⁶ had been held by dozens of Protestant divines and jurists after the Reformation, and even strongly affirmed by Nonconformists, is able to cite nearly as many assertions of it in the reign of Charles II as in the whole preceding period. The clergy were, indeed, able to show that the principle of non-resistance had been a common doctrine up to the Great Rebellion; and, though the contrary view was on the whole more common,⁷ it well illustrates the instinctive character of political movement that the democratic doctrine had followed the course of action step by step, and not preceded it. There had been resistance before the right to resist was formulated in the schools. And Bishop Guthry records that at the General Assembly in Edinburgh in January, 1645, "everyone had in his hand that book lately published by Mr. Samuel Rutherford, entitled *Lex Rex*, which was stuffed with positions that in the time of peace and order would have been judged damnable treasons; yet were now so idolised that, whereas in the beginning of the work Buchanan's treatise, *De Jure Regni apud Scotos*, was looked upon as an oracle, this coming forth, it was slighted as not anti-monarchical enough, and Rutherford's *Lex Rex* only thought authentic."⁸ So Milton's answer to Salmasius,

¹ *Tractatus de Legibus*, lib. ii, c. ii, § 3.

² Hallam, *Literature of Europe*, ed. 1872, iii, 161.

³ Hallam, as last cited, p. 162. Bayle notes (art. "Althusius," and notes) that the treatise was much denounced in Germany.

⁴ *Ecclesiastical Polity*, bk. i, ch. x, § 8.

⁵ Amsterdam, 1689-90, 2 vols.

⁶ It is to be noted that "Passive Obedience" had different degrees of meaning for those who professed to believe in it. For some it meant merely not taking arms against the sovereign, and did not imply that he was entitled to active obedience in all things. See Hallam, ii, 463.

⁷ Filmer begins his *Patriarcha* (1680) with the remark that the doctrine of natural freedom and the right to choose governments had been "a common opinion.....since the time that school divinity began to flourish." Like Salmasius, he fathers the doctrine on the Papacy; and, indeed, the Church of Rome had notoriously employed it in its strifes with kings, at its own convenience; but it had as notoriously been put forward by many lay communities on their own behalf, and had been practically acted on in England over and over again. And it is clearly laid down in the third century by Tertullian, *Ad Scapulam*, ii.

⁸ *Memoirs*, 2nd ed. p. 177.

vindicating the right of rebellion as inherent in freemen, marks the high tide of feeling that sustained the foremost regicides. But in the nature of the case the feeling swung as far the other way when they had touched their extreme limit of action; and when the royalist cause came in the ascendant, the monarchical principle was perhaps more passionately cherished in England than in any of the other European States.¹ How it normally worked may be seen in Dryden's sycophantic dedication² of his *All for Love* to Lord Danby (1678), sinking as it does to the extravagant baseness of the declaration that "every remonstrance of private men has the seed of treason in it." It was in this very year that Charles and Danby made the secret treaty with France, the revelation of which by Louis soon afterwards brought Danby to the Tower; and Danby it was who three years before carried through the House of Lords a bill to make all placemen declare on oath that they considered all resistance to the king unlawful.

The handful of remaining republicans and political Liberals, appealing as they did to tradition in their treatises against the traditional pleadings of the Churchmen and royalists, could have no appreciable influence on the public, because the mere spirit of tradition, when not appealed to as the sanction of a living movement of resistance, must needs make for passivity. Algernon Sidney's posthumous folio on Government in answer to Filmer's *Patriarcha*, arguing the question of self-government *versus* divine right, and going over all the ground from Nimrod downwards, point by point, is a far greater performance than Filmer's; and Locke in turn brought a still greater power of analysis to bear on the same refutation; but it is easy to see that Filmer's is the more readable book, and that with its straightforward dogmatism it would most readily convince the average Englishman. Nor was the philosophy all on one side, though Filmer has ten absurdities for the other's one, and was so unguarded as to commit himself to the doctrine that the possession of power gives divine right, no matter how come by. Sidney himself always argued that "Vertue" entitled men to superior power; and though he might in practice have contended that the choice of the virtuous should be made by the people, his proposition pointed rather plainly back to Cromwell, acclaimed by

¹ Though it is substantially maintained by Grotius, *De Jure Belli et Pacis*, 1625, I, iii, 9-12.

² Johnson was moved to pronounce Dryden the most excessive of the writers of his day in the "meanness and servility of hyperbolic adulation," excepting only Aphra Behn in respect of her address to "Eleanor Gwyn." But Malone vindicates the poet by citing rather worse samples, in particular Joshua Barnes's "Ode to Jefferies" (*Life*, in vol. i of *Prose Works of Dryden*, 1800, pp. 244-47). They all indicate the same corruption of judgment and character, special to the royalist atmosphere.

Milton as the worthiest to bear rule. And to be governed by a military autocrat, however virtuous and capable, was as little to the taste of that generation as it was to the taste of Carlyle's. Even a clergyman could see that the political problem was really one of the practical adjustment of crude conflicting interests, and that there could easily be as much friction under a virtuous monarch as under a dissolute one. The conscientiousness of the first Charles had wrought ruin, where the vicious indolence of the second steered safely.

As Filmer and Sidney, besides, really agreed in awarding "the tools to him who could handle them," and as the most pressing practical need was to avoid civil war, the solution for most people was the more clearly a "loyal" submission to the reigning house; and no amount of abstract demonstration of the right of self-government could have hindered the habit of submission from eating deeper and deeper into the national character if it were not for the convulsion which changed the dynasty and set up a deep division of "loyalties," keeping each other in check. In the strict sense of the term there was no class strife, no democratic movement, no democratic interest; indeed, no ideal of public interest as the greatest good of the whole. Thus Harrington's *Oceana*, with its scheme of "an equal Commonwealth, a Government established upon an equal Agrarian, arising into the Superstructures of three Orders, the Senat debating and proposing, the People resolving, and the Magistracy executing by an equal Rotation through the suffrage of the People given by the Ballot"¹—this conception, later pronounced by Hume "the only valuable model of a commonwealth that has yet been offered to the public,"² although the same critic exposed its weakness—was in fact as wholly beside the case as the principle of the Second Coming. No man desired the proposed ideal; and the very irrelevance of the systematic treatises strengthened the case for use and wont. The political discussions, being thus mostly in the air, could serve only to prepare leading men to act on certain principles should events forcibly lead up to new action. But the existing restraints on freedom did not supply sufficient grievance to breed action. The dissenters themselves were almost entirely resigned to their ostracism; and the preponderance of the Church and the Tory party was complete.

Luckily the political fanaticism of Charles I reappeared in his

¹ Toland's ed., 1700, p. 55.

² Essay (xvi of pt. ii) on the *Idea of a Perfect Commonwealth*. Cp. Essay vii, on the tendencies of the British Government, where Harrington's unpracticality is sufficiently indicated.

son James; and that king's determination to re-establish in his realm the Church of his devotion served to break a spell that nothing else could have shattered.¹ The very Church which had been assuring him of his irresistibility, having to choose between its own continuance and his, had perforce to desert him; and the old panic fear of Popery, fed by the spectacle of Jeffreys' Bloody Assize, swept away the monarch who had aroused it. He would have been an energetic king; his naval Memoirs exhibit zeal and application to work; and he had so much of rational humanity in him that in Scotland he pointed out to the popes of Presbyterianism how irrational as well as merciless was their treatment of sexual frailty. But his own fanaticism carried him athwart the superstition which would have sufficed to make him a secure despot in all other matters; and when the spirit of freedom seemed dying out in all forms save that of sectarian zealotry, his assault on that brought about the convulsion which gave it fresh chances of life.

§ 3

While practical politics was thus becoming more and more of a stupid war of ecclesiastical prejudices, in which the shiftiest came best off, and even theoretic politics ran to a vain disputation on the purposes of God towards Adam, some of the best intelligence of the nation, happily, was at work on more fruitful lines. The dire results of the principles which had made for union and strife of late years, drove thoughtful men back on a ground of union which did not seem to breed a correlative malignity.² It was in 1660, the year of the Restoration, that the Royal Society was constituted; but its real beginnings lay in the first years of peace under Cromwell, when, as Sprat records, a "candid, unpassionate company" began to meet at Oxford in the lodgings of Dr. Wilkins, of Wadham College,³ to discuss questions of natural fact. "The University had, at the time, many Members of its own, who had begun a free way of reasoning; and was also frequented by some gentlemen, of Philosophical Minds, whom the misfortunes of the Kingdom, and the security and ease of a retirement amongst Gowns-men, had drawn

¹ Cp. Carrel, *Contre-Révolution*, p. 212, as to the "profound discouragement" that had fallen on the people in 1685. Cp. p. 213.

² "Our late Warrs and Schisms having almost wholly discouraged men from the study of Theologie." W. Charleton, *The Immortality of the Human Soul demonstrated by the Light of Nature*, 1657, p. 50. (Cp. Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, 1656; ed. 1835, pp. 95-100.) Charleton, as his title and that of his previous work on Atheism show, uses no ecclesiastical arguments.

³ The French Academy, formally founded in 1635, had in a similar way originated in a private gathering some six years before (Olivet et Pelisson, *Relation concernant l'Histoire de l'Académie Française*, ed. 1672, p. 5). There may of course have been many such private groups in England in the period of the Commonwealth.

thither."¹ In constituting the Society, the associates "freely admitted men of different religions, countries, and professions of life," taking credit to themselves for admitting an intellectual shop-keeper, though "the far greater number are Gentlemen, free, and unconfined."² Above all things they shunned sectarian and party feeling. "Their first purpose was no more then onely the satisfaction of breathing a freer air, and of conversing in quiet one with another, without being ingag'd in the passions and madness of that dismal Age;"³ and when they formally incorporated themselves it was expressly to discuss "things and not words."

It is noteworthy that the French Academy, which gave the immediate suggestion for the constitution of the English Royal Society, contained almost no authors save belletrists and ecclesiastics. In the list of members down to 1671 (*Relation* cited, p. 336), I find no writer on science save De la Chambre, the King's physician. And the first important undertaking of the Academy (projected about 1637) was a *Dictionary*. Sprat (p. 56) suggests that the Royal Society has usefully influenced the Academy in the direction of the study of things rather than words. (Compare the avowed literary ideal of the authors of the *Relation*, p. 373.) But although the French group from the first tended mainly to literary pursuits, they too aimed at a "free way of reasoning," "et de ce premier âge de l'Académie, ils en parlent comme d'un âge d'or, durant lequel avec toute l'innocence et toute la *liberté* des premiers siècles, sans bruit, et sans pompe, et sans autres loix que celles de l'amitié, ils goûtoient ensemble tout ce que la société des esprits, et la vie raisonnable, ont de plus doux et de plus charmant" (*Relation*, p. 7).

And even while Sprat was writing, the French were making up their scientific leeway. In 1664-65 there was published in English a translation of *A General Collection of Discourses of the Virtuosi of France upon Questions of all Sorts of Philosophy and other (sic) Natural Knowledge made in the Assembly of the Beaux Esprits at Paris, by the most Ingenious Persons of that Nation* (2 vols. sm. folio), wherein, though the scientific discussions are distinctly amateurish, there are many speculations likely to stimulate both French and English experiment. There is indeed little to choose in point of solidity between the early themes of the English Royal Society and those of the French Academy. On the other hand, the French Government specially promoted exact study. In 1666 Colbert established the *Académie Royale des Sciences*, for the promotion of Geometry, Astronomy, Physics, and Chemistry, building a laboratory and an observatory, and inviting to France Cassini and Huygens

¹ *History of the Royal Society*, 1667, p. 53.

² P. 67. Sprat mentions that many physicians gave great help (p. 130).

³ P. 53.

(Life of Colbert by Bernard, in ed. of Colbert's *Last Testament*, 1695). Colbert further founded the *Académie Royale d'Architecture* in 1671; and had set up what came to be the *Académie des Inscriptions* in his own house. All three bodies did excellent work. (See the acknowledgment, as regards science, in Lawrence's *Lectures on Comparative Anatomy*, etc., 1819, p. 13.) In France, besides, the philosophy and science of Descartes made way from the first, and it was his works that first gave Locke "a relish for philosophical things." On the other hand, Sprat, who was not without an eye to literature, and made a reputation by his style, acutely notes (p. 42) that "in the Wars themselves (which is a time wherein all Languages use, if ever, to increase by extraordinary degrees, for in such busie and active times there arise more new thoughts of some men, which must be signifi'd and varied by new expressions)" the English speech "received many fantastical terms.....and with all it was enlarg'd by many sound and necessary Forms and Idioms which it before wanted"; and he proposes an authoritative dictionary on the lines of the French project.

The English naturalists would have nothing to do with theology, "these two subjects, God and the Soul, being only forborn."¹ Reasoning from the development of military faculty in the Civil War, they decided that "greater things are produced by the free way than the formal"²—a principle already put forth by Renaudot, in the preface to the reports of the French Academy, as the guide of their procedure. By attending solely to results and questions of concrete fact, the inquirers were "not only free from Faction, but from the very causes and beginnings of it";³ and in the language of the time they held that "by this means there was a race of young Men provided against the next Age, whose minds receiving from them their just Impressions of sober and generous knowledge, were invincibly arm'd against all the enchantments of Enthusiasm"⁴—that is, of religious fanaticism. And with this recoil from fanaticism there went the stirring and energetic curiosity of people habituated to action by years of war, and needing some new excitement to replace the old. While many turned to debauchery, others took to "experiment."⁵ Says Sprat:—

| "The late times of Civil War and confusion, to make some

¹ *History of the Royal Society*, 1667, p. 83. The French *beaux esprits* were not afraid to discuss now and then the soul, or even God, contriving to do it without theological heat. See the *Collection* cited, Conferences 6, 16, 79, 87, 142, etc.

² *History*, p. 73.

³ P. 91.

⁴ P. 53.

⁵ So too with the non-combatants. Note, for instance, Locke's recoil from the scholastic philosophy, and his early eager interest in chemistry, medicine, and meteorology. Anthony à Wood records him as a student "of a turbulent spirit, clamorous, and never-contented"—that is to say, argumentative.

recompense for their infinite calamities, brought this advantage with them, that they stirr'd up men's minds from long ease and a lazy rest, and made them active, industrious, and inquisitive: it being the usual benefit that follows upon Tempests and Thunders in the State, as well as in the skie, that they purifie and cleer the Air which they disturb. But now, since the King's return, the blindness of the former Age and the miseries of this last are vanish'd away: now men are generally weary of the Relicks of Antiquity, and satiated with Religious Disputes; now not only the eyes of men but their hands are open, and prepar'd to labour; Now there is a universal desire and appetite after Knowledge, after the peaceable, the fruitful, nourishing knowledge; and not after that of antient Sects, which only yielded hard indigestible arguments, or sharp contentions, instead of food: which when the minds of men requir'd bread, gave them only a stone, and for fish a serpent."¹

Note.

Here too, then, there was reaction. It could not suffice to lift the plane of national life, which was determined by the general conditions and the general culture; nor did it alter the predominance of *belles lettres* in the reading of the educated; but it served to sow in that life the seed of science, destined to work through the centuries a gradual transformation of activity and thought which should make impossible the old political strifes and generate new. Out of experiment came invention, machinery, theory, new scepticism, rationalism, democracy. It is difficult to measure, but not easy to over-estimate, the gain to intellectual life from even a partial discrediting of the old preoccupation with theology, which in the centuries between Luther and Spinoza stood for an "expense of spirit" that is depressing to think of. Down even to our own day, the waste of labour and learning continues; but from the time when two-thirds of Europe had been agonised by wars set up or stimulated by theological disputes, the balance begins to lean towards saner things. The second generation after that in which there arose a "free way of reasoning"² saw the beginnings of "Freethinking" in those religious problems which were for the present laid aside, and the foundation of a new experiential philosophy. New and great reactions against these were to come; reactions of endowed clericalism, of popular sloth, of new "enthusiasm" generated in

¹ *History of the Royal Society*, p. 152.

² Sprat, of course, carried the "free way of reasoning" only to a certain length, feeling obliged to deprecate "that some Philosophers, by their carelessness of a Future Estate, have brought a discredit on knowledge itself" (p. 367); and "that many Modern Naturalists have bin negligent in the Worship of God"; but he still insisted that "the universal Disposition of this Age is bent upon a rational Religion" (p. 366). Compare the *Discourse of Things above Reason*, by a Fellow of the Royal Society (1681), attributed to Boyle, and published with a tract on the same theme by another Fellow.

new undergrowths of ignorance, of recoil from terrific democratic revolution. But the new principle was to persist.

§ 4

It is not easy, at this time of day, to accept as a scientific product the confused theory of constitutionalism which gradually grew up in English politics from William the Third onwards. The theory in all its forms is in logic so invertebrate, and in morals so far from satisfying any fairly developed sense of political justice, that we are apt to dismiss it in derision. In so far, indeed, as it proceeds on a formulation of the "social contract" it is always severely handled by the school of Sir Henry Maine, which here represents the anxiety of the upper classes since the French Revolution to find some semblance of rational answer to the moral plea that all men are entitled to political enfranchisement and social help on the simple ground of reciprocity, supposed to be canonised for Christians in the "Golden Rule." Locke, of course, was not thinking of the working mass when he wrote his Letters on Government, any more than when he helped to draw up a constitution for South Carolina endorsing slavery.¹ But he was at least much nearer rational morals than were his antagonists; the provisions for liberty of conscience in the South Carolina Constitution are notably far in advance of any official view ever previously promulgated; and in subsuming the "social contract" he was but following Hooker and Milton, and indeed adapting Aristotle, an authority whom Locke's later critics are wont to magnify.

Sir Frederick Pollock, in his *Introduction to the History of the Science of Politics* (p. 20), assumes to have saved Aristotle from the criticism which assails the "social contract" theory, by saying that Aristotle regards a "clanless and masterless man" as a monster or an impossibility, whereas the "theorists of the social contract school" take such a man to be the social unit. There is really no reason to suppose that Aristotle would have denied a pre-political state of nomadic barbarism such as is vaguely figured by Thucydides (i, 2); and as a matter of fact he does expressly posit a process of society-making by compact, first by the utility-seeking combination of families in a village, later by the villages *joining themselves* into a State, whose express purpose is "good life" (*Politics*, I, ii). It does not cancel this to say that Aristotle also makes the State

¹ If, that is, the section providing for slavery be his. It probably was not. See Mr. Fox Bourne's *Life of Locke*, 1876, i, 239. His influence may reasonably be traced in the remarkable provisions for the freedom of sects—under limitation of theism. *Id.* pp. 241-43. Mr. Fox Bourne does not deal with the slavery clause.

"prior" in the rational order to man, for his "prior" (I, ii, 12-14) is not a historical but a metaphysical or ethical proposition. In the third book, again (c. 9), he endorses a proposition of Lycophron which virtually affirms the social contract.

And just as the school of Maine attacks the social contract theory for giving a false view of the origin of society, so did Bodin long ago, and at least as cogently, attack Aristotle and Cicero for defining a State as a society of men assembled to live well and happily. Bodin insists (*De la République*, 1580, l. i, c. i, p. 5; l. i, c. vi, p. 48; l. iv, c. i, *ad init.* p. 350) that all States originated in violence, the earliest being found full of slaves. It is true that Aristotle at the outset implies that slavery is as old as the family, but he still speaks of States as voluntary combinations for a good end. As to the first kings he is also vague and contradictory, and is criticised by Bodin accordingly. Aristotle was doubtless adaptable to the monarchic as well as to the democratic creed; but Bodin's criticism suggests that in the sixteenth century he was felt to be too favourable to the latter.

It may be worth while to remark that the notion of an unsociable "state of nature" prior to a "social contract" was effectively criticised by Sir William Temple in his *Essay upon the Origin and Nature of Government* (1672). With a really scientific discrimination he points to food conditions as mainly determining gregation or segregation among animals, observing: "Nor do I know, if men are like sheep, why they need any government, or, if they are like wolves, how they can suffer it" (*Works*, ed. 1814, i, 9, 10). In the next generation, again, the ultra-Hobbesian view was keenly attacked and confuted by Shaftesbury within a few years of Locke's death (*Characteristics*, early edd. i, 109-11; ii, 310-21). As I have elsewhere pointed out (*Buckle and his Critics*, p. 395), the "contract" theory lent itself equally to Whiggism and to High Toryism.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century we find the Radical Bentham (*Fragment on Government*, 1776) deriding it as held by the Tory Blackstone. But Rousseau himself (preface to the *Discours sur l'inégalité*) avowedly handled the "State of Nature" as an ideal, not as a historical truth; and Blackstone did the same. It is therefore only a new species of abstract fallacy, and one for which there is no practical excuse, to argue as does the school of Maine (cp. Pollock, as cited, pp. 63, 75, 79, etc.) that the theories in question are responsible for the French Revolution in general, or the Reign of Terror in particular. Revolutions occur for reasons embodied in states of life: they avail themselves of the theories that lie to hand. The doctrine that "all are born equal" or "free" comes from the Institutes of Justinian, and is laid down in so many words by Bishop Sherborne of Chichester in 1536, and by the

) Note

) Note.

(orthodox Spanish Jesuit Suarez early in the seventeenth century (*Tractatus de Legibus*, l. ii, c. ii, § 3). The first-mentioned passage is cited by Stubbs, iii, 623-24, and the second by Hallam, *Literature of Europe*, iii, 160.

The derivation was bound to warp the theory; but such as it is, it represents the beginning of a new art, and therefore of a new science, of representative government. A variety of forces combined to prevent anarchy on the one hand, and on the other the fatal consolidation of the monarch's power which took place in France.¹ The new English king was a Protestant, and therefore religiously acceptable to the people; but he was a Dutchman, and therefore racially obnoxious; for fierce commercial jealousy had long smouldered between the two peoples, and war had fanned it into flames that had burned wide. Further, he was a "latitudinarian" in religious matters, and zealous to appoint latitudinarian bishops; and the retirement from London forced on him by his asthma deepened tenfold the effect of his normal coldness of manner towards all and sundry. In the very Church whose cause he had saved, he was unpopular not only with the out-and-out zealots of political divine right, but with the zealous Churchmen as such, inasmuch as he favoured the Dissenters as far as he dared. So hampered and frustrated was he that it seems as if nothing but his rare genius for fighting a losing battle could have saved him, despite the many reasons the nation had for adhering to him.

One of these reasons, which counted for much, was the political effect of a National Debt in attaching creditors as determined supporters to the Government. The highest sagacity, perhaps, could not have framed a better device than this for establishing a new dynasty; albeit the device was itself made a ground of hostile criticism, and was, of course, resorted to as a financial necessity, or at least as a resource pointed to by Dutch example, not as a stroke of statecraft. What prudence and conciliation could do, William sought to do. And yet, with all his sanity and enlightenment, he failed utterly to apply his tolerant principles to that part of his administration which most sorely needed them—the government of Ireland. Even in England he could not carry tolerance nearly as far as he wished;² but in Ireland he was forced to acquiesce in

¹ Thoughtful observers already recognised in the time of James II that if England developed on the French lines religious freedom would disappear from Europe. See the tractate *L'Europe esclave si Angleterre ne rompt ses fers*, Cologne, 1677.

² This may be taken as certain; but it is not clear how far he wished to go. Ranke (*History of England*, Eng. tr. iv, 437) and Hassencamp (*History of Ireland*, Eng. tr. p. 117) are satisfied with the evidence as to his having promised the German emperor to do his utmost to repeal the penal laws against the Catholics, and his having offered the Irish Catholics, before the Battle of Aghrim, religious freedom, half the churches in Ireland,

Protestant tyranny of the worst description. The bigotry of his High Church subjects was too strong for him. On the surrender of the last adherents of James at Limerick he concluded a treaty which gave the Irish Catholics the religious freedom they had had under Charles II when the Cromwellian oppression was removed; but the English Parliament refused to sanction it, save on the condition that nobody should sit in the Irish Parliament without first repudiating the Catholic doctrines. This was not the first virtual breach of faith by England towards Ireland; and it alone might have sufficed to poison union between the two countries; but it was only the first step in a renewal of the atrocious policy of the past.¹

At the Restoration the ex-Cromwellian diplomatists had contrived to arrange matters so that the monstrous confiscations made under the Commonwealth should be substantially maintained; though the settlement of 1653 had been made in entire disregard of the Act of Oblivion by Charles I in 1648; and though Charles II avowed in the House of Lords in 1660 that they had "showed much affection to him abroad." So base were the tactics of the Protestants that many Irish were charged with having forfeited their lands by signing under compulsion the engagement to renounce the House of Stuart; while those who had compelled them to the act now held the lands as royalists. But the decisive evil was the base indolence of the King. As Halifax said of him, he "would slide from an asking face";² and what Clarendon called "that *imbecillitas frontis* which kept him from denying"³ made him solve the intolerable strife of suitors by leaving possession in the main to those who had it. The adventurers and soldiers finally relinquished only one-third of their estates;⁴ and only a few hundreds of favoured Irish were restored to their old lands, under burden of compensation to the dispossessed holders.⁵

When the resort of James II to Ireland gave power to the oppressed population, it was a matter of course that reprisals should

and half their old possessions. For this we have only a private letter. However this point may be decided, the Treaty of Limerick is plain evidence. On the point of William's responsibility for the breach of that Treaty, see the excellent sketch of *The Past History of Ireland* by Mr. Bouverie-Pusey (1894).

¹ Cp. the author's *Saxon and the Celt*, 1897, pp. 146-56.

² *A Character of King Charles II*, ed. 1750, p. 45.

³ *Continuation of the Life of Clarendon*, in 1-vol. ed. of *History*, 1843, p. 1006.

⁴ Hallam, iii, 396, following Carte and Leland.

⁵ Bishop Trench (*Narrative of the Earl of Clarendon's Settlement and Sale of Ireland*, Dublin rep. 1843, pp. 84-93) declares that not only were all re-appropriations to be compensated, but the 54 nominees added to the original list of 500 loyalist officers to be rewarded had not received an acre of land as late as 1675. Hallam sums up on Anglican lines that the Catholics could not "reasonably murmur against the confiscation of half their estates, after a civil war wherein it was evident that so large a proportion of themselves were concerned." In reality, much more than half the land had been confiscated; and all the while the bulk of it remained in the hands of men who had themselves been in rebellion! The settlement was simply a racial iniquity.

be attempted. The English historian glibly decides that they should not have been permitted; that the King "ought to have determined that the existing settlement of landed property should be inviolable"; and that "whether, in the great transfer of estates, injustice had or had not been committed, *was immaterial*. That transfer, just or unjust, had taken place so long ago that to reverse it would be to unfix the foundations of society."¹ Thus does the race which claims to be civilised prescribe a course of action for that which it declares to be uncivilised.² It is further suggested that the English interest in the Irish Parliament would have "willingly" granted James a "very considerable sum" to indemnify the despoiled natives for whom during a quarter of a century it had never moved a finger. There is not the least reason to believe in any such willingness; and it was in the ordinary way of things that the wronged race should not exhibit a moderation and magnanimity of which the wrongers had never for a moment shown themselves capable. The Irish Parliament of 1689, indeed, took care to indemnify all purchasers and mortgagees, while dispossessing original holders under the Cromwellian Settlement;³ but it passed an Act of Attainder in the fashion of the age; and when the Protestant cause triumphed, the revenge taken was a hundredfold greater than the provocation.

It was the legislature, not the crown, that did the work. Under the tolerant and statesmanlike King, the Irish Protestant Parliament proceeded to pass law after law making the life of Catholics one of cruel humiliation and intolerable wrong. There is nothing in civilised history to compare with the process by which religious and racial hatred in combination once more set the miserable Irish nation on the rack. The extreme political insanity of the course taken is doubtless to be attributed to the propagandist madness of James, who had just before sought to give all Ireland over to Catholicism. Fanaticism bred fanaticism. But the fact remains that the Protestant fanatics began in the reign of William a labour of hate which, carried on in succeeding reigns, at length made Ireland the darkest problem in our politics.

Hassencamp (pp. 117, 125) insists that the penal laws "were not dictated by any considerations of religion, but were merely the offspring of the spirit of domination," citing for this view Burke, *Letter to a Peer* (*Works*, Bohn ed. iii, 296), and *Letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe* (*Id. ib.* p. 321). But this is an attempt to dissociate religion from persecution in the interests

¹ Macaulay, ch. vi, Student's ed. i, 393.

² *Id. ib.*

³ For a full account of the procedure see Thomas Davis's work, *The Patriot Parliament of 1689*, rep. with introd. by Sir C. Gavan Duffy, 1893.

of religious credit, and will not bear criticism. Burke, in fact, contradicts himself, assigning the religious motive in an earlier page (292) of the *Letter to a Peer*, and again in the *Letter to Langrishe* (p. 301). When the Protestants went on heaping injuries on the Catholics in the knowledge that the people remained fixed in Catholicism, they were only acting as religious persecutors have always done. On Burke's and Hassencamp's view, persecution could never take place from religious motives at all. No doubt the race feeling was fundamental, but the two barbaric instincts were really combined. Cp. Macaulay's *History*, ch. vi (2-vol. ed. 1877, i, 390-93).

As regards Irish trade, commercial malice had already effected all that religious malice could wish. Even in the reign of Henry VIII a law was passed forbidding the importation of Irish wool into England; and in the next century Strafford sought further to crush the Irish woollen trade altogether in the English interest, throwing the Irish back on their linen trade and agriculture, which he encouraged.¹ Strafford's avowed object was the keeping Ireland thoroughly subject to the English crown by making the people dependent on England for their chief clothing; and to the same end he proposed to hold for the crown a monopoly of all Irish trade in salt.² Cromwell, on his part, was sane enough to leave Irish shipping on the same footing as English under his Navigation Act; but in 1663 the Restoration Parliament put Ireland on the footing of a foreign State, thus destroying her shipping trade once for all,³ and arresting her natural intercourse with the American colonies. In the same year, a check was placed on the English importation of Irish fat cattle: two years later, the embargo was laid on lean cattle and dead meat; still later, it was laid on sheep, swine, pork, bacon, mutton, and cheese. In William's reign, new repressions were effected. The veto on wool export having led to woollen manufactures, which were chiefly in the hands of Dissenters and Catholics,⁴ the Irish Parliament, consisting of Episcopalian landlords, was induced in 1698 to put heavy export duties on Irish woollens; and this failing of its full purpose, in the following year the English Parliament absolutely prohibited all export of manufactured wool from Ireland.⁵

To this policy of systematic iniquity the first offset was a measure of protection to the Irish linen trade in 1703; and this

¹ Cp. the author's *Saxon and Celt*, pp. 160, 161, and note.

² H. D. Traill, *Strafford*, 1889, p. 81.

³ Lecky, *History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*, i, 174.

⁴ See Petty, *Essays in Political Arithmetic*, ed. 1699, p. 186.

⁵ The checking of the Irish wool trade was strongly urged by Temple in the English interest (*Essay on the Advancement of Trade in Ireland*, Works, iii, 10).

benefaction went almost solely into the hands of the Scotch settlers in Ulster.¹ Even thereafter the linen trade of Ireland was so maimed and restricted by English hindrances that it was revived only by continual bounties from 1743 to 1773. And this twice restored and subsidised industry, thus expressly struck out of native and put in Protestant and alien hands, has been in our own age repeatedly pointed to as a proof of the superiority of the Protestant and non-Celtic inhabitants over the others in energy and enterprise. As a matter of fact, many of the Scots who benefited by the bounties of 1703 in Ulster had recently immigrated because of the poverty and over-population of their own country, where their energy and enterprise could do nothing. Irish energy and enterprise, on the other hand, had been chronically strangled, during two hundred years, by English and Protestant hands, with a persevering malice to which there is no parallel in human history; and the process is seen at its worst after the "glorious Revolution" of 1688.

Modern English writers of the Conservative school, always eager to asperse Ireland, never capable of frankly avowing the English causation of Irish backwardness, think it a sufficient exculpation of their ancestors' crimes to say that Irishmen have not taken up the old industries since they have been free to do so. Thus the late Mr. H. D. Traill meets Irish comment on Strafford's treatment of the Irish woollen trade by saying that the complainants "in these days prefer other and less worthy industries to those which they have now been free to practise, if they chose, for generations" (*Strafford*, 1889, p. 137). This is a fair sample of the fashion in which racial and political prejudices prompt men otherwise honourable to devices worthy of baseness. It should be unnecessary to point out, in reply, that when the Irish industries had been so long extirpated as to be lost arts, it was simply impossible that they could be successfully restored *in competition* with the highly developed machine industry of England. Other countries set up new industries under high protective duties. This Ireland could not do. But the most obvious considerations are missed by malice.

The beginnings of modern parliamentary government thus coincide with the recommencement, in the worst spirit, of the principal national crime thus far committed by England; and this not by the choice of, but in despite of, the king, at the hands of the Parliament. In the next reign the same sin lies at the same door, the monarch

¹ See Dr. Hill Burton's *History of the Reign of Queen Anne*, 1880, iii, 160-63. This measure seems to have been overlooked by Mr. Lecky in his narrative, *History of Ireland*, i, 178.

doing nothing. The fact should serve better than any monarchic special pleading to show us that the advance towards freedom is a warfare not merely with despots and despotic institutions, but with the spirit of despotism in the average man; a warfare in which, after a time, the opposing forces are seldom positive right and wrong, but as a rule only comparative right and wrong, evil being slowly eliminated by the alternate play of self-regarding instinct. Gross and wilful political evil, we say, was wrought in the first stages of the new progress towards political justice. But that is only another way of saying that even while gross political evil was being wrought, men were on the way towards political justice. A clear perception of the whole process, when men attain to it, will mean that justice is about to be attained.

§ 5

Even while the spirit of religion and the spirit of separateness were working such wrong in Ireland, the spirit of separateness was fortunately defeated in Scotland, where it had yet burned strongly enough to make perpetual division seem the destiny of the two kingdoms. We learn how much political institutions count for when we realise that in Scotland, just before the parliamentary union with England, there was as furious an aversion to all things English as there has ever been shown in France of late years to things German. The leading Scots patriots were not only bitterly averse to union, but hotly bent on securing that the line of succession in Scotland after Anne should not be the same as that in England; this because they held that Scottish liberties could never be secure under an English king. The stern Fletcher of Saltoun, a Republican at heart, had to play in part the game of the Jacobites, much as he abominated their cause. But both alike were defeated, with better results than could possibly have followed on any separation of the crowns; and the vehement opposition of the great mass of the Scots people to the Parliamentary Union was likewise defeated, in a manner hard to understand. The heat of the popular passion in Scotland is shown by the infamously unjust execution of the English Captain Green and two of his men¹ on a charge of killing a missing Scotch captain and crew who were not even proved to be dead, and were afterwards found to be alive. The fanatical remnant of the

¹ Green's ship and crew were first seized without form of law in reprisal for the seizure in England, by the East India Company, of a Scotch ship belonging to the old Darien Company, whose trade the India Company held to be a breach of its monopoly. The charge of slaying a Scotch captain was an afterthought.

Covenanters was as bitter against union as the Jacobites. Yet in the teeth of all this violence of feeling the Union was carried, and this not wholly by bribery,¹ as was then alleged, and as might be suspected from the analogy of the later case of Ireland, but through the pressure of common-sense instinct among the less noisy. There was indeed an element of bribery in the English allowance of liberal compensation to the shareholders of the African Company (better known as the Darien Company), who thus had good cash in exchange for shares worth next to nothing; and in a certain sense the reluctant English concession to Scotland of freedom of trade was a bribe. But it is by such concessions that treaties are secured; and it needed a very clear self-interest to bring round a Scotch majority to union in the teeth of a popular hostility much more fierce than is shown in our own day in the not altogether disparate case of Ulster, as regards Home Rule. Burton and Macaulay agreed² that the intense wish and need of the Scottish trading class to participate in the trade of England (as they had done to much advantage under Cromwell, but had been hindered from doing after the Restoration) was what brought about the passing of the Act of Union in the Scots Parliament. No doubt the moderate Presbyterians saw that their best security lay in union;³ but that recognition could never have overridden the stiff-necked forces of fanaticism and race hatred⁴ were it not for the call of plain pecuniary advantage. A transformation had begun in Scotland. The country which for a hundred and fifty years had been distracted by fanatical strifes, losing its best elements of culture under the spell of Judaic bibliolatry, had at length, under the obscure influence of English example, begun to move out of the worst toils of the secondary barbarism, not indeed into a path of pure civilisation—the harm had gone too deep for that—but towards a life of secular industry which at least prepared a soil for a better life in the centuries to come; and even for a time, under the stimulus of the new thought of France, developed a brilliant and various scientific literature. The Darien scheme may be taken as a turning-point in Scottish history; an act of commercial enterprise then arousing an amount of energy and sensation that had for centuries been seen only in connection with strokes of State and sect. It is not

¹ On this see Burton, viii, 178-85; and cp. Buckle, 3-vol. ed. iii, 160, as to the rise of the trading spirit.

² Burton's *History of Scotland*, viii, 3, note.

³ *Id.* viii, 168.

⁴ "It is a marvel how the Edinburgh press of that day could have printed the multitude of denunciatory pamphlets against the Union" (Burton, viii, 131). "The aristocratic opponents of the Union did their utmost to inflame the passions of the people" (*id.* p. 137, cp. p. 158, etc.).

agreeable to idealising prejudice to accept Emerson's saying¹ that the greatest ameliorator in human affairs has been "selfish, huckstering trade"; but, barring the strict force of the superlative, the claim is valid. It is the blackest count in the indictment against England for her² treatment of Ireland that she deliberately closed to the sister nation the door which the Scotch, by refusing union on other terms when union was highly expedient in the view of English statesmen, forced her to open to them.

¹ Following Hallam, *Middle Ages*, iii, 327.

² Properly speaking, the action of "England" was the action of the merchant class, which in this case most exerted itself and got its way.

CHAPTER IV

INDUSTRIAL EVOLUTION

AT all times within the historic period trade and industry have reacted profoundly on social life; and as we near the modern period in our own history the connection becomes more and more decisively determinant. In the oldest culture-history at all known to us, as we have seen, the commercial factor affects everything else; and at no time in European annals do we fail to note some special scene or area in which trade furnishes to politicians special problems. Thus the culture-history of Italy, as we have also seen, is in past epochs inseparably bound up with her commercial history. But as regards the north of Europe, it is in the modern period that we begin specially to recognise trade as playing a leading part in politics, national and international. The Mediterranean tradition is first seen powerfully at work in the history of the Hansa towns: then comes the great development of Flanders, then that of Holland, then that of England, which gained so much from the influx of Flemish and Dutch Protestant refugees in the reign of Philip II, but which was checked in its commercial growth, under Elizabeth and James alike, by their policy of granting monopolies to favourites.

Sir Josiah Child puts "the latter end of Elizabeth's reign" as the time when England began to be "anything in trade" (*New Discourse of Trade*, 4th ed. p. 73). Cp. Prof. Busch on English trade under Henry VII, *England unter den Tudors*, i, 71-85, with Schanz, *Englische Handelspolitik*, i, 328, where it is stated that in the latter part of the sixteenth century there were 3,000 merchants engaged in the sea trade. This seems extremely doubtful when we note that the whole foreign trade of London was stated in Parliament in 1604 to be in the hands of some 200 citizens (*Journals of the House of Commons*, May 21, 1604), and the total customs of London amounted to £110,000 a year, as against £17,000 from all the rest of the kingdom. As Hume notes (ch. 45, *note*), a remonstrance from the Trinity House in 1602 declared that since 1588 the shipping and number of seamen in England had decayed about a third. (Cit. from Anglesey's *Happy Future State of England*, p. 128.) This again, however, seems doubtful.

Broadly put, the fact appears to be that after a considerable development of woollen manufacture in the towns during the Wars of the Roses (above, p. 393), when sheep-rearing must have been precarious and wool would be imported, there was a general return to pasturage under the Tudor peace, the towns falling away, with their manufactures. Attempts were made under Henry VIII and Edward VI to develop the English mining industries by means of German workmen and overseers, but apparently with no great success (Ehrenberg, *Hamburg und England im Zeit. der Kön. Elisabeth*, 1896, pp. 4-6). It was after the persecution of Protestants in the Netherlands under Charles V had driven many tradesmen to England for refuge that manufacturing industry notably revived; and in 1564-65 we find the year's exports of England reckoned at £68,190 for wool and £896,079 for cloths and other woollen wares; the whole of the rest of the export trade amounting only to £133,665 (Brit. Mus. Lansdowne MS. 10, fol. 121-22, cited by Ehrenberg, p. 8; cp. Cunningham, *Industry and Commerce*, ii, 82-83; Gibbins, *Industrial Hist. of England*, 3rd. ed. pp. 132-33.) After the fall of Antwerp, again, much of the commerce of that city fell to the share of England, some of her commercial and artisan population following it (Froude, *Hist. of England*, ed. 1872, xii, 1-2).

In the same period the commercial life of north Germany, which had hitherto been far more widely developed than that of England (Ehrenberg, pp. 1-11), was thrown back on the one hand by the opening of the new ocean route to the East Indies, which upset the trans-European trade from the Mediterranean, and on the other by the new strifes between the princes and the cities (*id.* pp. 34-49); and here again English trade came to the front.

The "Merchant Adventurers," ready enough to accept monopolies for their own incorporations, were free-traders as against other monopolists;¹ and not till all such abuses were abolished could England compete with Holland. And though they were never legally annulled even under the Commonwealth, "as men paid no regard to the prerogative whence the charters of those companies were derived, the monopoly was gradually invaded, and commerce increased by the increase of liberty."² France at times promised to rival both Holland and England; but she at length definitely fell behind England in the race, as Flanders fell behind Holland, by reason of political misdirection. In the middle and latter part of the seventeenth century, all the northern States had their eyes fastened

¹ Schanz, *Englische Handelspolitik*, i, 332 ff. The Merchant Adventurers were incorporated under Elizabeth (*id.* i, 350).

² Hume, *History of England*, ch. 62, near end.

on the shining example of Holland;¹ and commerce, which as an occasion of warfare had since the rise of Christianity been superseded by religion, begins to give the cue for animosities of peoples, rulers, and classes. The last great religious war—if we except the strifes of Russia and Turkey, which are quasi-religious—was the Thirty Years' War. Its very atrocity doubtless went far to discredit the religious motive,² and it ranks as the worst war of the modern world. Commerce, however, for centuries supplied new motives for war to men whose ideas of economics were still at the theological stage.³ The eternal principle of strife, of human attraction and repulsion, plays through the phenomena of commerce as through those of creed. The profoundly insane lust for gold and silver, which had so largely determined the history of the Roman Empire, definitely shaped that of Spain; and Spain's example fired the northern nations with whom she came in contact.

Prof. Thorold Rogers is responsible for the strange proposition (*Economic Interpretation of History*, p. 186; *Industrial and Commercial History of England*, p. 321) that the chief source of the silver supply of Europe, before the discovery of the New World, was *England*. He offers nothing but his own conviction in proof of his statement, to which he adds the explanation that the silver in question was extracted from sulphuret of lead. It seems well to point out that there is not a shadow of foundation for the main assertion. That the argentiferous lead mines were worked seems clear; but that they could produce the main European supply without the fact being historically noted is incredible. On the other hand, silver mines were found in Germany in the tenth century and later, and there is reason to attribute to their output a gradual rise of prices before the fifteenth century (Anderson's *History of Commerce*, i, 67). In any case, there is no reason to doubt the statement of the historians of the precious metals, that what silver was produced in Europe in the Middle Ages was mostly mined in Spain and Germany. See Del Mar, *History of the Precious Metals*, 1880, pp. 38-43 and refs.; also Ehrenberg, *Hamburg und England im Zeitalter der Königin Elisabeth*, 1896, pp. 4, 9; Menzel, *Geschichte der Deutschen*, Cap. 276, *end*; and Kohlrausch, *History of Germany*, Eng. tr. 1844, p. 261.

The direct search for gold as plunder developed into the pursuit

¹ Dr. Cunningham (ii, 101, 102, 104) notes the feeling under the first Stuarts.

² See Buckle, 3-vol. ed. ii, 42, 1-vol. ed. pp. 308-9, and his citations, as to the anti-ecclesiastical character of the Peace of Westphalia.

³ Cp. Storch, quoted by M'Culloch, *Principles of Political Economy*, Introd., and Schoell's addition to Koch, *Hist. of Europe*, Eng. tr. 3rd ed. p. 110. On the tendency of economic science to promote peace, see Buckle, i, 217, 218; 1-vol. ed. pp. 120-25.

of it as price; and wealthier States than Spain were raised by the more roundabout method which Spain disdained.

This was soon recognised by Spanish economists, who probably followed the French physiocrats, as represented in the excellent chapters of Montesquieu on money (cited above, p. 363). See the passage from Bernard of Ulloa (1753) cited by Blanqui, *Hist. de l'écon. polit.*, 2e édit. ii, 28. Cp. Samber, *Memoirs of the Dutch Trade*, Eng. tr. 1719, pref. Apart from the habits set up by imperialism, the Spaniards were in part anti-industrial because industry was so closely associated with the Moriscoes (Major Hume, *Spain*, p. 195); and the innumerable Church holidays counted for much. Yet in the first half of the sixteenth century Spain had a great development of town industrial life (Armstrong, *Introd. to same vol.* pp. 83-84). This is partly attributable to the new colonial trade; but probably more to the connection with Flanders. Cp. Grattan, *The Netherlands*, pp. 66, 88. About 1670, however, manufacture for export had entirely ceased; the trade of Madrid, such as it was, was mainly in the hands of Frenchmen; the Church and the bureaucracy alone flourished; and although discharged soldiers swarmed in the cities, what harvests there were had to be reaped by the hands of French labourers who came each season for the purpose. Hume, as cited, p. 285. This usage subsisted nearly a century later (Tucker, *Essay on Trade*, ed. 1756, p. 25)

Holland in the seventeenth century presented to the European world, as we have seen, the new and striking spectacle of a dense population thriving on a soil which could not possibly be made to feed them. "Trade" became the watchword of French statesmanship; and Colbert pressed it against a froward nobility;¹ while in England a generation later it had acquired the deeper rooting that goes with the voluntary activity and self-seeking of a numerous class; and already the gentry freely devoted their younger sons to the pursuits which those of France contemned.²

The turn seems to have been taken in the most natural way, after Parliament was able to force on James I a stoppage of the practice of granting monopolies. At his accession, the King had sought popularity by calling in and scrutinising the many monopolies granted by Elizabeth, which constituted the main grievance of the time.³ Soon, however, he conformed to the old usage, which had in some measure the support of Bacon;⁴ and in 1621 it was declared that he had multiplied monopolies twentyfold.⁵ The most careful

¹ See the so-called *Political Testament of Colbert*, Eng. tr. 1695, p. 351.

² Petty, *Political Arithmetic*, ch. x (*Essays*, ed. 1699, p. 273). Even noblemen are mentioned as sometimes putting their younger sons to merchandise. Cp. Toynbee, *Industrial Revolution*, p. 63; and Josiah Tucker, *Essay on Trade* (1751), 4th ed. p. 43.

³ Gardiner, *History of England, 1603-42*, ed. 1893, i, 100.

⁴ *Id.* iv, 2.

⁵ *Id.* iv, 1.

historian of the period reports that though they were continually being abused,¹ they were granted on no corrupt motives, but in sheer mistaken zeal for the spread of commerce.² It would be more plausible to say that when interests either of purse or of patronage lay in a certain direction, those concerned were very easily satisfied that the interests of commerce pointed the same way. At length, after much dispute, the Lords passed, in 1624,³ a Monopoly Bill previously passed by the Commons in 1621;⁴ and though some of the chief monopolies were left standing, either as involving patents for inventions or as being vested in corporations,⁵ mere private trade monopolies were for the future prevented.

It was a triumph of the trading class over the upper, nothing more. As for the corporations, they were as avid of monopolies as the courtiers had ever been; and independent traders hampered by monopolist corporations were only too ready to become monopolist corporations themselves.⁶ Under Charles I, for instance, there was set up a chartered company with a monopoly of soap-making, of which every manufacturer could become a member—a kind of chartered “trust,” born out of due time—the price paid to the crown for the privilege being £10,000 and a royalty of £8 on every ton of soap made. For this payment the monopolists received full powers of coercion and the punitive aid of the Star Chamber. After a few years, in consideration of a higher payment, the King revoked the first patent and established a new corporation. Similar monopolies were granted to starch-makers and other producers; the Long Parliament pursuing the same policy, “till monopolies became as common as they had been under James or Elizabeth.”⁷

Part of the result was that about 1635 “there were more merchants to be found upon the exchange worth each one thousand pounds and upwards than there were in the former days, before the year 1600, to be found worth one hundred pounds each.”⁸ The upper classes, as capitalists and even as traders, were not now likely to remain aloof. But all the while there was no betterment of the lot of the poor. “That our poor in England,” writes Child after the Restoration, “have always been in a most sad and wretched conditionis confessed and lamented by all men.”⁹ Child’s theory of the effect of usury laws in the matter is pure fallacy; but his estimate of men’s fortunes is probably more accurate than the statement of

¹ See Gardiner, as cited, iv, 8, for a sample, and in particular pp. 41-43 for the notorious case of Sir Giles Mompesson and the inn licences.

² *Id.* iv, 6, 7.

³ *Id.* v, 233.

⁴ *Id.* iv, 125.

⁵ *Id.* vii, 71.

⁶ *Id.* viii, 74, 75.

⁷ Hallam, *Constitutional History*, ii, 11.

⁸ Sir Josiah Child, *New Discourse of Trade*, 4th ed. p. 9.

⁹ *Id.* p. 87.